

Ghana

Executive summary

A new government was installed in Ghana in 2017. Attesting to its commitment to leading the child rights agenda the Government, in partnership with UNICEF, made noteworthy headway on several issues: launch of the national strategic framework on ending child marriage; launch of the 'girls' iron folate tablet supplementation' (GIFTS) programme and National Breastfeeding Week by the First Lady of Ghana; launch of two national social drive campaigns (on sanitation and child protection), bringing issues of open defecation and violence against children to the forefront; and launch of the district league table (DLT) in an effort to bring an equitable approach to targeting and budgeting in districts.

UNICEF Ghana increased its focus on achieving balance between service delivery and policy advocacy and systems-strengthening, as Ghana progressively transitions to lower-middle-income status. This approach forms a critical part of the development of the new Country Programme 2018-2022 (CP), which is closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the newly endorsed UNICEF Strategic Plan (SP).

UNICEF invested significant time and resources into strengthening core systems and processes of the 'livelihood empowerment against poverty' (LEAP) cash transfer programme. As of the end of 2017, 213,000 families were enrolled in LEAP in all 216 districts, and 197,000 are receiving payments through the improved e-payment system. A campaign dedicated to support handwashing in all schools in the Volta Region, based on tippy taps, resulted in a near universal (95 per cent), low-cost solution for more than 3,900 schools (benefitting over 500,000 school children). Meanwhile resilient water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services enabled 130,000 people to access latrines; 100,000 to live in open defecation-free (ODF) communities; 130 more schools to have sanitation facilities; more than 27,000 people to access a source of water supply; and an additional 80,000 people practicing household water treatment and storage, while 60,000 more people are handwashing with soap.

Progress on new policies, such as the child and family welfare policy and justice for children policy (JCP) also experienced significant advances in 2017. UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Finance to develop tools and capacity to better assess and track spending against key sector priorities, resulting in performance-based budgeting. In education, guidelines for an education sector analysis of inclusive education (IE), with a focus on disability, were piloted. With UNICEF support the first-ever national micronutrient survey was conducted to inform programming for the next decade. A WASH equity study provided evidence about knowledge gaps and access inequities, informing government and partner strategies and shaping national indicator frameworks.

The year was one of great partnerships, alliances and collaborations. UNICEF Ghana renewed its partnership with MTN, the largest mobile provider, and made the Agoo platform free to all MTN users, reaching 2,500 people – of whom 87 per cent are under 24 years old – daily with information on social issues. Partnership in the education sector resulted in a successful application to the education sector plan development grant, leveraging funds from the Global

Partnership for Education (GPE), despite Ghana's non-recipient status. Ghana's first-ever national research network on inclusive development was established in partnership with University of Development Studies. Partnership with media outlets and national influencers enabled UNICEF to increase its reach to 3.8 million people, included 2.8 million through its social media platforms— leading UNICEF's West and Central Africa Region (WCAR) social media audience rankings during most of 2017.

The year under review was a transition year for UNICEF Ghana in regard to preparing for the shift to the new country programme and country programme management plan 2018-2022 (CPMP), as well as engaging with the new Government. Particular challenges were experienced with the high turnover of key UNICEF international staff, resulting in capacity gaps. Going forward, a detailed plan to address these issues will be implemented as a priority.

UNICEF Ghana, with the Government, completed all requirements for the successful transition from the current to the new country programme, which was submitted to the UNICEF Executive Board for approval at its February 2018 session.

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

The development of the UNICEF Ghana Country Programme for 2018–2022, which started in 2016, included priority areas and strategic directions as depicted in the draft outlines of the new UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021 as it was being formulated. As development of the country programme progressed, it kept close track of the changes and new developments proposed in the various iterations of the SP prior to finalization. Care was taken to ensure that SP priorities relevant to the Ghana context were integrated into CP programmes and strategies. As a result, the new CP is very well aligned with the SP.

The country programme made adjustments to align with the country context and the situation of children and women in Ghana. Of the 25 results within the five SP goal areas, new areas in the programme are:

Goal area 1: Adolescent health and nutrition was included, addressing especially challenges of anaemia among young girls, particularly pregnant teenagers.

Goal area 2: Addressing the emerging issue of secondary education and skills development, UNICEF Ghana will generate evidence on retention of adolescent girls and ensuring their transition to secondary school when addressing implementation of the Government's newly announced free senior high school. Early childhood development (ECD) is addressed within early learning, through strengthening kindergarten (KG) education, as part of free and compulsory basic education.

Goal area 3: The result on prevention and response services for violence against children is included in the child protection programme's initiative on systems-strengthening.

Goal area 4: Urbanization is being addressed through continuing and enhanced work around urban sanitation initiatives

Goal area 5: Child poverty and inequality are addressed through inclusive development and strengthening social protection systems, which forms the foundational premise of the country programme.

The country programme also includes plans to harness the power of business and markets through private sector partnerships, a new and prominent strategy of the SP. Extensive work with Ghana's private sector is ongoing and will continue to be expanded; for instance with MTN, the largest cellular phone company in the country.

Another SP strategy that is well-reflected in the country programme is work around systems-strengthening, taking services to scale to align with the direction of Ghana's lower-middle-income-country status. A new balance between policy work and systems strengthening as against service delivery was designed to ensure maximum impact with available resources for an emerging economy such as Ghana. Gender mainstreaming will continue to be a priority area and is well aligned with the SP and UNICEF's gender action plan (GAP 2), recently approved by the Executive Board.

Monitoring the commitments to the SP will be undertaken through continuous tracking and assessment of indicators as part of the country programme results framework, aligned with the indicators of the SP results framework. This will clearly demonstrate how UNICEF Ghana's work is complementing and supplementing the global targets set in the SP, and at the same time ensure that SP indicators are being monitored through a system embedded in the country programme results framework. In addition, relevant strategic monitoring questions will be monitored and reported on an annual basis, to provide input on UNICEF's progress globally on SP indicators. Various methods will be relied on to gather this information; e.g., national management information systems from various sectors, surveys such as multiple indicator cluster survey and demographic and health survey (DHS), and other surveys or studies undertaken during the country programme period.

UNICEF Ghana's country programme document was submitted to the February Executive Board for approval. Mid-term review (MTR) will take place in 2020, soon after that of the SP, and further adjustments can be made to the programme based on changes to the SP, as needed.

Emerging areas of importance

Greater focus on the second decade of life. Recognizing the increased vulnerabilities facing adolescent girls – from pregnancy, child marriage, school dropout, sexual and gender-based violence, to specific health risks such as anaemia – adolescent girls have progressively emerged as a focus area in Ghana. The global joint programme by UNICEF and the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) to accelerate action to end child marriage continued to provide an important platform for programming on adolescent girls in 2017.

UNICEF Ghana mobilized an additional US\$10 million for: 'Better life for girls in Ghana' (2017-2020), supported by the Government of Korea, and 'Empowering adolescent girls: Adolescent health and rights' (2018-2020)', a joint UNFPA-UNICEF programme supported by the Government of Canada.

UNICEF Ghana supported the launch of the national framework on child marriage, the iron folic acid supplementation programme and a basic package on dignified menstrual hygiene management; assisted in the development of guidelines for adolescent- and youth-friendly health services; and initiated a dialogue on the education sector response to managing teenage

pregnancy and a policy on gender in pre-tertiary education.

The First Lady of the Republic of Ghana was a critical UNICEF partner, championing adolescent girls' initiatives and serving as a powerful voice on girls' issues.

Prioritizing the need for and generation of data, Ghana's sixth round of MICS (MICS6) deliberately oversampled women aged 20-24 years to determine the extent of child marriage. Ghana Health Service (GHS) data on attendance at antenatal care for the age cohorts 10-14 and 15-19 was used to measure the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy and identify hotspots across the country.

A week-long social media engagement around the International Day of the Girl Child reached nearly 47,000 people, including adolescent girls. Nearly 230,000 adolescent girls and young women were reached with information on sexual harassment in school, menstrual hygiene management (MHM) and child marriage through the mobile phone platform Ageo. UNICEF Ghana influencers echoed and conveyed adolescent girls' messages on their own platforms. Child marriage, sexual abuse and gender socialization were some of the main themes in a newly launched 'Ghanaians against Child Abuse' social drive campaign championed by the vice-president's wife, the Second Lady of the Republic of Ghana.

An informal cluster with adolescent/gender focal points from UNICEF programme sections was established to support cross-sectoral coordination, monitoring and evidence-generation. An approach for tracking office-wide results on adolescent girls was developed informed by a theory of change and the UNICEF GAP 2018-2021.

Urbanization and children. The proportion of the Ghanaian population living in urban areas was 51 per cent in 2010, more than doubling from 23 per cent in 1960, while both overall poverty rates and child poverty rates remain considerably higher in rural areas (41.8 per cent of children in rural areas live in poverty, compared to an urban rate of 13.1 per cent as of 2012/13). Rapid urbanization means that the number of children living in poverty in urban areas is likely to increase. Sanitation access in urban areas is poor; fewer than one in five urban dwellers has a toilet in their own household and 66 per cent of the population share a toilet with one or more other households.

The 2016 expansion of the LEAP programme included targeting poor families living in urban areas throughout Ghana, using the existing rural model for cash transfers. In 2017 UNICEF conducted both an operational report on potential design and implementation modifications for LEAP in urban areas, and a thematic research paper on social assistance in urban areas to draw lessons for Ghana from African and global evidence. The modalities originally designed for the rural context such as targeting, delivery and benefit levels, require revision for an urban setting. Over the next two years, UNICEF Ghana will provide technical support for the development of an approach for urban areas.

Since 2015 UNICEF Ghana has been implementing an urban sanitation programme that has identified numerous challenges, such as: the high-cost of urban sanitation options, high interest rates for borrowing, the impact of tenancy on sanitation uptake and the acceptance of unhygienic public toilets as a sanitation option. UNICEF Ghana is investigating solutions to provide lower-cost technology options, and also working with local banks to explore the possibility of more affordable financing. Initial work began with an investigation into whether the LEAP mechanism could be used to target poor households for targeted financial assistance.

Acronyms

BCC	behaviour change communication
BCP	business continuity plan
BDR	Births and Deaths Registry
C4D	communication for development
CLTS	community-led total sanitation
CMT	country management team
CP	country programme
CPMP	country programme management plan
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	civil society organizations
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHS	Demographic and health survey
DLT	District league table
DoC	Department of Children (of the MoGCSP)
DOVVSU	Domestic violence and victim support unit
ECD	early childhood development
ESP	education sector plan
GAP	Gender action plan
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines
GHS	Ghana Health Service
GIFTS	girls' iron-folate tablet supplementation
GoG	Government of Ghana
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GSS	Ghana Statistical Services
HWWS	handwashing with soap
HWRS	Household water treatment and safe storage
IE	inclusive education
JCP	Justice for children policy
KG	kindergarten
KPI	key performance indicator
LEAP	Livelihood empowerment against poverty
MBFHI	mother/baby-friendly health facility initiative
MICS	Multiple indicator cluster survey
MNCH	maternal, neonatal and child health
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MoLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MTR	mid-term review
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODF	open defecation-free
ORR	Other Resources-Regular
RCT	randomized control trial
RR	Regular Resources
SMS	short messaging service
SP	UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018–2021
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDP	United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership

UPR	Universal periodic review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WCAR	West and Central Africa region
WCARO	UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office
WinS	WASH in schools

Capacity development

Workforce strengthening for improved service delivery remained a priority in 2017 across sectors in UNICEF Ghana.

In child protection, as an initial step 6500 front-line staff (including community facilitators, social workers, police officers, and probation officers working with and for children and women) were trained on a wide range of issues to support informed decision-making for the best interest of the child. Pre- and post-assessment of training participants indicated that the knowledge gap was the widest with reference to upholding the right of child offenders and skills required to communicate with children who have been victims of abuse and sexual violence.

In health, 337 healthcare providers were trained and mentored on essential and emergency obstetric and newborn care as part of a demonstration initiative on improving service delivery in 83 health facilities across four districts in Upper East Region. Institutional stillbirth rates (per 1,000) declined from 23 in 2016 to 18 in 2017, and access to improved quality of care and adequate breastfeeding support increased.

In education, 13,477 teachers and staff at regional, district and circuit levels completed in-service training for improved teaching-learning and monitoring, and 20 districts completed annual district education plans, involving district assemblies, civil society organizations (CSOs), school management committees and traditional leaders.

The education programme evaluation through a capacity development lens (2012-17) was also completed. The findings highlighted that while training was successful in building individual skills, sustainability remained a challenge because of the limitations of the cascade model, inadequate budgets and weak coordination. Evaluation recommendations have informed regular programming and the design of new interventions.

Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

A political analysis of the new Government to inform UNICEF strategy was completed. National dialogue on inclusive development was re-established through media and technical support.

The DLT tool for tracking development and promoting equity conceived by UNICEF Ghana has become increasingly well-known; in 2017 seven out of ten stakeholders reported using it. UNICEF reached agreement with parliamentarians to examine its use for allocating national resources.

In collaboration with the University of Development Studies, UNICEF established Ghana's first research network: Ghana Inclusive Development Research Network. With support from UNICEF, the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) and National Development Planning Commission conducted an assessment of the national statistical system, raising issues of data accessibility and statistical capacity.

Social protection studies on cash plus, nutrition, child marriage and women's networks were completed. An end-line impact evaluation was completed for the LEAP and used by stakeholders for action-planning.

A cross-sectoral policy advocacy strategy for sanitation was developed, leading to change in how sanitation is prioritized at the local level: districts are now directed to budget for sanitation.

Preparing the education sector plan (ESP) provided an opportunity to strengthen equity in KG, IE and WASH in schools (WinS). The formative assessment of UNICEF support to KG education from 2012 to 2016 served to build consensus on the importance of school readiness. An IE sector analysis focused on children with a disability and the draft strategy for WinS underlined infrastructure needs.

In child protection, UNICEF and the Government undertook a mapping and analysis of residential institutions for children, which informed policy design and monitoring. A formative assessment of strategies used in child marriage programming between 2014 and 2016 was carried out jointly with the Government and civil society.

UNICEF organized Ghana's first seminar on communication for development (C4D), creating a platform for integrating behaviour change into Government programming.

Partnerships

In deepening collaboration with the private sector, UNICEF renewed its partnership with telecoms operator MTN to provide key information on sanitation, education and protection through Agoo, an interactive voice response platform. UNICEF also played a key role in securing the commitment of three private sector companies to invest in newborn care units for hospitals and clinics. Additionally, UNICEF collaborated with the Ghana Telecommunications Chamber, convening major mobile phone operators to make concrete commitments towards child online protection.

The First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, as part of her commitment to addressing nutrition, established the 'reducing malnutrition and malaria in priority populations' initiative, for which UNICEF and the GHS serve as technical partners.

UNICEF and UNFPA collaborated to develop a three-year programme proposal on adolescent health and development. Submitted to the Government of Canada, the proposal is in final approval stages; implementation is expected to begin in 2018.

As an active development partner, UNICEF worked with the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the World Bank and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support Ghana's effective application for the ESP development grant and to submit an expression of interest in the proposed leverage fund of the Global Partnership on Education (GPE). UNICEF also established an agreement with the World Bank to lead advocacy on key UNICEF priorities using World Bank research products – a workshop and media discussions on taxation were held.

UNICEF collaborated with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Ghana's northern regions to promote quality care for the 'every mother, every new-born' initiative, referred to in Ghana as the 'mother/baby-friendly health initiative'. The partnership mobilized communities, raised awareness and facilitated community-level actions to reduce the number of newborn and

maternal deaths.

The Office entered into 16 partnership co-operation agreements with local NGOs, valued at just over US\$4 million, for programme implementation.

External communication and public advocacy

A snapshot of 2017 successes shows: 2.8 million people reached through social media platforms; approximately 1 million reached through traditional media; 70,000 new followers on social media; 295 traditional media mentions; five donor and one influencers' field visits; affiliation with a leading broadcaster to profile issues of poverty, inequality and right-age school enrolment; and the launch of two social norms campaigns.

The successful delivery of public advocacy campaigns – including 'No toilet, no love' during Valentine's; 'super dads' for Father's Day; and 'right age enrolment' – and the launch of the child equity campaign 'Let's Be Fair, Ghana' illustrate alignment with UNICEF's global communication and public advocacy strategy.

A visit by the steering committee of the global programme to accelerate actions to end child marriage was widely publicized through traditional and social media and production of a film.

UNICEF launched its first summit on ethical reporting for student journalists. Renowned broadcasters, journalists, regulators and academics in the industry shared their expertise with more than 120 students. Additionally, UNICEF Ghana led two presentations for journalists from Ghana and across West Africa on best practices for reporting on children. These initiatives formed part of UNICEF's efforts to strengthen capacity on ethical reportage on children.

UNICEF developed its strategic engagement with influencers to include two of Ghana's most popular artists and conducted its first influencers' field visit in 2017. Blogs on UNICEF issues written by one of Ghana's most popular bloggers increased UNICEF's digital presence. A strategic approach to online presence resulted in UNICEF Ghana taking the lead in UNICEF WCARO's social media rankings: remaining in first place for the number of Facebook followers (85,000) and second place for Twitter, with 14,500 followers. Short videos, infographics and photo-led posts on social media generated popular interest.

South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation

UNICEF Ghana, in partnership with UNICEF Nigeria and the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO), facilitated a learning exchange on pre-primary education between Ghana and Nigeria. Under the leadership of the deputy minister of education, Ghana participated in a national workshop on ECD in Nigeria to share its policy and practice journey toward making two years of kindergarten an integral part of its free and compulsory basic education policy and the lessons learned. In turn, Nigeria's holistic focus on ECD helped Ghanaian delegates to explore how links with health, nutrition and protection can be strengthened to support pre-primary education in Ghana. UNICEF Ghana actively advocated for prioritization of pre-primary education in Ghana's ESP, currently under development, and for increased inter-ministerial and partner coordination to improve KG service delivery, along with a focus on health, nutrition and child protection. In 2018 UNICEF will support the Ministry of Education (MoE) to review and develop the costed KG operational plan and policy for medium-term implementation.

Identification/promotion of innovation

During 2017 UNICEF Ghana effectively used emerging tools and innovations established in prior years to enhance progress towards results for children and the marginalized. UNICEF Ghana led multiple innovations, chief among which are the: child protection toolkit monitoring application, prevention of mother-to-child transmission/early infant diagnosis e tracker; and talking book programme.

In partnership with the Ministry of Local Government, a monitoring application was developed for the child protection toolkit and used in four regions to document real-time reporting on target audiences reached, as well as collective actions taken to create a safe and protective environment. About 8,000 girls, 12,039 boys, 7,323 women and 5,704 men have been actively engaged.

UNICEF, the GHS, School of Public Health and University of Ghana collaborated to pilot a mobile system called the 'prevention of mother-to-child transmission/early infant diagnosis eTracker'. The tool was used to track mother-baby pairs along the continuum of care in one district; 44 health facilities used the eTracker system. Since the pilot in July 2017, more than 532 mothers have been registered and can be tracked, regardless of the health facility visited.

UNICEF scaled up the TB programme, targeting more than 250,000 people in the most deprived regions. TB is an innovative audio computer designed specifically for illiterate people who have limited access to lifesaving information in their own language. An evaluation revealed that TB users wash their hands 22 per cent more often than non-users, register the births of their children 21 per cent more often than non-users and sleep under insecticide-treated mosquito nets 15 per cent more frequently than non-users.

Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages

An external formative assessment of strategies and approaches for addressing child marriage in Government and civil society organization (CSO) programming between 2014 and 2016 identified gaps, good practices and lessons from cross-sectoral programming. The recommendations informed programmatic strategies on adolescent girls, and were used for advocacy on cross-sectoral linkages and for addressing interrelated drivers of child marriage more holistically. The findings were also effectively used in the development of a cross-sectoral proposal on adolescent health and development submitted to the Government of Ghana.

The DLT, conceived and developed by UNICEF Ghana, emphasizes the multi-dimensionality of well-being and development by combining local-level indicators for six different priority sectors. As a result, the tool – implemented in partnership with Ghana's Centre for Democratic Development and government stakeholders – tracks national development in a holistic manner across all of Ghana's 216 districts. Awareness of the DLT is now high and stakeholders report routine use of the annual publication in social sector planning at the decentralized level.

Through networking and development of a systematic advocacy plan for sanitation, collaboration between UNICEF's social policy and WASH sections led to Ghana's first-ever integrated guidelines for budgeting and planning on liquid waste at the district level.

UNICEF facilitated collaboration between the GHS and LEAP, with the aim of increasing access to health services for poor families. Additionally, the child protection and social protection teams began to formulate a joint approach for strengthening the social workforce in districts.

Service delivery

Ghana's transition to its lower-middle-income status presented UNICEF Ghana with evolving considerations in increasing investments in evidence-based service delivery and facilitation and regulation of the private sector for scale-up. In 2017, UNICEF supported the Government of Ghana (GoG) to improve implementation strategies for national WASH and nutrition service delivery programmes.

Operational research contributed to refining UNICEF and sector-wide community-led total sanitation (CLTS) implementation in rural communities and empowering communities to identify and address their sanitation challenges. Recommendations from this research underpinned dramatic increases in the number of toilets constructed in 658 communities during 2017, contributing to the elimination of open defecation. Financing guidelines for rural sanitation were piloted, including demonstrating social protection mechanisms to enable the poorest households to access flood-resilient household sanitation facilities.

UNICEF's support for developing a national urban sanitation strategy, incorporating behaviour change approaches to facilitate demand for household toilets, will strengthen sanitation service delivery to the urban poor. Research is ongoing to identify options for more affordable sanitation services and financing approaches – the two main constraints to poor sanitation service access for the urban poor.

UNICEF Ghana piloted private-sector management of community water supplies to provide options beyond community-managed water supply, complemented by demonstrations of water safety planning at the community level, enabling communities and local system operators to safely manage their water supplies.

UNICEF partnered with the Government and CSOs to demonstrate demand creation for breastfeeding, maternal and new-born care at the community level in four targeted districts in Upper East Region, as part of implementing the mother and baby friendly health facility initiative. The approach included over 4,400 mothers (over 10 per cent of whom were beneficiaries of the LEAP cash transfer programme) to generate evidence for national scale-up.

Human rights-based approach to cooperation

During 2017 the GoG, with support from UNICEF, finalized its national plan of action for the elimination of human trafficking and national strategic framework on prevention and response to child marriage. The latter was launched by the Government in April 2017. As part of developing the frameworks, the concluding observations from the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child from 2015, draft reports from 2017 and the outcome document from 2012 on the GoG universal periodic review (UPR) were extensively consulted.

With UNICEF support, a central adoption authority was established, in line with The Hague Convention on Intra Country Adoption, ratified by the GoG in 2016 and through amendments to the 2016 Children's Act, to oversee adoption-related cases. Regulations related to adoption and foster care were drafted based on provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and The Hague Convention. The regulations are ready to be presented to the Parliament in 2018.

Regional and global human rights conventions and treaties ratified by the GoG were considered as part of the situation analysis for UNICEF Ghana's new country programme. The United Nations country team carried out a human rights assessment to inform the development of the

United Nation Sustainable Development Partnership (UNSDP) programme (2018–2022). The team also played a convening role between the Government and civil society partners in the lead up to the UPR 2017 committee meeting. UNICEF Ghana contributed extensively to both the UN and the GoG report.

Gender equality

UNICEF Ghana's targeted and gender mainstreaming interventions contributed to important advancements in system-strengthening, policies and services for women and girls in Ghana. The first national strategic framework on ending child marriage in Ghana (2017–2026) was launched by the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection in May 2017. The GIFTS programme for control and prevention of anaemia among adolescent girls, championed by Ghana's First Lady, was launched in October 2017. Its first phase covers four of the 10 regions, aiming to reach all 600,000 adolescent girls aged 10-19 years through school and health facilities on a weekly basis. Guidelines for adolescent and youth-friendly health services were developed and piloted in four districts. Some 130 service providers from 84 health facilities were trained to support improved maternal and neonatal outcomes for teenage pregnancy, prevention of unintended pregnancy and access to social services, including education for teenage mothers. The education sector response to preventing teenage pregnancy and support for re-entry to school for teenage mothers was initiated by the Ghana Education Service (GES). The process was informed by stakeholder dialogue at different levels, background analysis and a case study on factors that facilitate or prevent girls' re-entry into school after delivery.

Gender mainstreaming was increasingly applied as a programme strategy by different sections. A WASH package on dignified menstrual hygiene management entitled 'Be Amazing! Period' was developed and rolled out to 100 schools, reaching 32,584 students (15,218 girls). The education section completed a module outlining a common framework and content for training girls' education officers, as well as a resource pack for 'safe schools' that includes training materials for teachers. In social protection, the LEAP 1000 impact evaluation was designed to generate new evidence on cash transfer and its relationship to women's empowerment, social networks, stress and intimate partner violence. UNICEF Ghana spent nearly US\$2.5 million on gender-targeted and gender mainstreaming programmes in 2017. In addition, UNICEF and UNFPA developed a joint proposal on adolescent health and development with a primary focus on girls; for which funding is expected for the period 2018–2020.

Environmental sustainability

UNICEF Ghana's programmes seek to ensure sustainable child survival and development, including identifying and mitigating environmental impacts of organizational and supported Government programmes, particularly at the local level. 2017 strategies included a strong focus on strengthening systems to build national and local capacity to assess and manage environmental impacts and the increasing use of web-conferencing to reduce travel and associated emissions. UNICEF demonstrated environmental impact assessments for household and school sanitation interventions, to ensure that the national strategy to eliminate open defecation will reduce environmental impacts at community, district and national scales. Local planning and management capacity was built in 41 districts to demonstrate how significant positive environmental benefits can be delivered locally (the level most important to children), including improving community waste management and reducing uncontrolled faecal and solid waste disposal.

This was complemented by national sustainability audits identifying challenges to the sustainability (including environmental) of Government WASH programmes, and providing

mitigation options to improve future sustainability. Sanitation entrepreneurs, artisans and a network of community volunteers were trained to demonstrate how locally designed and constructed affordable, sustainable toilets (using local materials to reduce environmental impacts) and water supply can be delivered at scale. Local supply capacity was complemented by increasing the capacity of local natural leaders to lead community sanitation behaviour-change programmes, reducing support required from district and regional offices. Localizing the national sanitation programme using these approaches had multiple environmental benefits, from increasing efficiency and effectiveness of environmentally positive programmes, to reducing field vehicle visits by more than one third across the national programme, reducing associated greenhouse gases.

UNICEF Ghana undertook a greening project in 2017, which identified needed changes to air-conditioners (installation of smart control units) and lighting (all changed to LED) across the compound. These improvements reduced lighting consumption by 46 per cent, air-conditioning power consumption by 19 per cent and CO² emissions by over 18,000 kg/year. Ongoing UNICEF support to refining electronic systems for social support cash transfer programmes are being replicated in other systems, dramatically reducing national paper-based systems.

Effective leadership

UNICEF Ghana held 12 country management team (CMT) meetings; the mid- and end-year meetings were attended by the majority of programme and operation staff members.

In addition to the regular standing agenda on programme and operations performance through systematic monitoring of key performance indicators (KPIs), country management team discussions in 2017 focused on the development of the new country programme and corresponding country programme management plan and on submission to the programme budget review. These deliberations ensured a thorough and transparent process, with discussion of core programmes, resources and functions, and were especially important for ensuring a smooth transition to the new country programme.

Emphasis was placed on compliance with the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT), programme results and expenditures, particularly those related to grant expiry. The year under review showed better performance on HACT implementation than earlier years. Annual management plan commitments were reviewed during the mid-year and annual reviews. Key performance indicators continued to address some audit issues, although all audit observations were closed in 2016.

While the chief and operations manager of the Tamale field office are regular members of the country management team, and participate online, the team also made provision for face-to-face participation every quarter. During 2017 the Tamale field office was also assessed and recommendations were being implemented. The staff association saw a change in executive committee membership, and led the CPMP process with the management. Prioritizing staff development and transition to the new country programme, the country management team allocated resources for results-based management, competency-based interviews, emergency preparedness and management master class training for staff.

All statutory committees (country management team, central review board, joint consultative council, contracts review committee and partnerships review committee) functioned efficiently and effectively by holding scheduled meetings and deliberating as necessary.

Financial resources management

The country management team continued monthly expenditure monitoring, with guidance to programmes on addressing implementation bottlenecks, to improve contribution management, budget control, financial procedures, bank reconciliation, accounting and liquidation of cash assistance by UNICEF Ghana.

InSight reports, donor tables, funds utilization and expiring grants reports were used by the country management team to determine monthly grant expenditure and prioritized actions on expiring grants to ensure full utilization. UNICEF achieved utilization rates of 100 per cent for Regular Resources, 92 per cent for Other Resources Regular and 100 per cent of the Institutional Budget. Of the minimum required HACT assurance activities to ensure proper use of UNICEF funds, 95 per cent of spot-checks and 120 per cent of programme monitoring visits had been completed by 22 December 2017. Six end-user monitoring visits were also conducted. Total outstanding direct cash transfers over nine months and more was zero, while those outstanding for six months stood at 3.4 per cent as of 22 December 2017. The roll-out of ezHACT was smooth, but not without challenges, especially with regard to VISION roles.

Following up on implementing partners audit recommendations, UNICEF Ghana undertook six capacity-building activities on HACT, public financial management and the public procurement act for 508 participants from 143 implementing partners. This resulted in significant improvement in the completion of appropriate forms and compliance with financial management/liquidation and procurement procedures, resulting in efficient utilization of UNICEF funds.

Of the 50 audit observations for implementing partners who received US\$500,000 or more, 34 were closed on time and the remaining 16 are being addressed by Ghana's Supreme Audit Institution. The Representative and chief of operations paid a working visit to the Ghana Auditor General, who assured his commitment to UNICEF in addressing the audit recommendations.

Fundraising and donor relations

UNICEF Ghana's success in resource mobilization was evidenced through the utilization of US\$34.6 million in 2017 (92 per cent) of Other Resources (OR), compared to US\$11.5 million in 2012 at the start of the CP. Overall funds utilized totalled US\$45.3 million (94 per cent), while 100 per cent of Regular Resources were utilized.

Income raised from new donors included the Government of Korea, UNICEF national committees for Italy and the Netherlands and the US Centers for Disease Control, for a total of US\$6.2 million. Donor relations were strengthened through field visits and joint donor-UNICEF events.

Enhanced partnership between UNICEF and UNFPA was evidenced when the two agencies co-hosted a visit from the steering committee of the global programme to accelerate actions to end child marriage. Subsequently, US\$300,000 was allocated to each agency. Additionally, a joint UNFPA-UNICEF proposal was submitted to the Government of Canada to support a programme on adolescent health and development, approval of funds for the period of 2018 – 2020 was imminent in late 2017.

Continued engagement with the private sector yielded collaboration with two companies. CAL Bank committed US\$22,000 to newborn health care facilities. Although not the direct recipient of funds, UNICEF was able to leverage programme priorities to achieve results. UNICEF Ghana

also renewed its partnership with MTN, valued through in-kind support at approximately US\$1 million over two years.

Challenges to reporting results emerged in difficulties in providing a headcount of people reached, as UNICEF invested in strengthening systems. Fundraising continued to be skewed, disfavoured health and nutrition.

Thirty-one donor reports were submitted on time. Progress was recorded on open-defecation free and urban sanitation communities where investment is highest. Investment in priority areas contributed to the delivery of high-profile launches on child marriage, violence against children and sanitation.

Evaluation and research

UNICEF Ghana continued to utilize the integrated monitoring and evaluation plan to manage its portfolio of evaluations, research and assessments. Evaluations/research carried out in 2017 included the 'Handwashing with Ananse' project, communication for development randomized controlled trial (RCT) and social norms research.

'Handwashing with Ananse' is a game that teaches children why, how and when to wash their hands with soap. The evaluation utilized an innovative approach that combined survey and motion detector cameras to collect data and video recordings of tippy tap handwashing to measure behaviour change. The results will provide inputs to WASH handwashing programming.

Innovations for Poverty Action is drafting a final report for the end-line evaluation for the C4D RCT. The main objective of the evaluation was to determine the impact of C4D and mobile for development programmes on health behaviours.

Results from the social norms research were used to inform interventions aimed at tackling behavioural bottlenecks related to maternal nutrition, delivery, postnatal care, breast feeding, infant and young child feeding and appropriate health-seeking behaviours for children under the age of five. The report is at a final stage of approval.

Policy, programming and advocacy efforts across all programme sections benefited from additional analysis of existing data sources undertaken/supported by UNICEF Ghana. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to GSS for implementation of the MICS6, for which data collection was underway in late 2017. Data from districts was used by UNICEF and partners to generate the 2017 iteration of the DLT, now in its fourth year.

Efficiency gains and cost savings

UNICEF Ghana played an active role in the UN operations management team, and as a result continued to benefit from common services and long-term agreements, common office generator (fuel and maintenance cost), joint compound fumigation, common UN dispensary and banking services.

The modality of full board accommodation option for UNICEF-organized workshops and meetings generated substantial savings: approximately US\$35,000 savings were achieved on the 2017 all-staff retreat and about US\$13,000 jointly from the results-based management workshop, mid-year review and master class management programme.

The basic cooperation agreement with the GoG involves an exemption on water and electricity costs as the Government's contribution towards programme support. In 2017 this yielded savings of approximately US\$32,000. UNICEF Ghana continued to save on office rental due to owning the office building, which at current rates is equivalent to savings of around US\$150,000 for the Accra office and US\$25,000 per month for the Tamale office. Both offices house nearly 130 staff.

Following implementation of the greening project, a significant reduction of CO² emissions resulted from the installation of air con-savers on existing air conditioning systems and replacement of all bulbs with LEDs to improve energy efficiency. This is expected to result in an annual savings of US\$27,000. Vehicle-tracking devices for tracking fuel consumption also contributed to resource efficiency.

Supply management

UNICEF Ghana's supply and logistics section worked closely with all stakeholders, ensuring that the 2017 total procurement throughput of US\$31,073,404.87 was processed and received on time. This included regular programme supplies and services (US\$4,372,332.16), operations supplies and international freight (US\$510,885.05) and procurement services (US\$26,190,187.66). The supply section continued to support the Ministry of Health on Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunization (GAVI) co-financing requirements, including completion of the cold chain equipment optimization platform application and regular procurement services. This was achieved through regular monitoring, follow-up and guidance to the expanded programme on immunization, including facilitating training on stock monitoring and visibility for vaccines tools for monitoring the status of vaccines.

To meet the diverse needs of UNICEF programme supplies, the supply unit sourced supplies from offshore, direct ordering and local procurement, using prequalified vendors and long-term arrangements when necessary. Major items procured included vaccines and medical devices, medical equipment, printing of advocacy materials, supplementary reading books, bicycles, vehicles and motorcycles.

2017 witnessed a 14 per cent decline in supply throughput as compared to 2016 figures (from US\$36 million in 2016 to US\$31 million in 2017). This trend reflects the country's strategic shift to a lower-middle-income country, with greater focus on evidence-generation through institutional services and upstream system-strengthening activities, which will be incorporated in the supply strategy for the next CP.

Below is the break-down of the value of major procurement components.

(1) Total value of supplies and services received (i.e. irrespective of procurement location)	(in US\$)
Regular procurement services	\$8,713,085.25
Gavi – procurement services	\$17,477,102.41
Programme supplies	\$1,622,090.61
Operational supplies	\$157,233.42
Institutional services	\$2,750,241.55
International freight	\$353,651.63
TOTAL supplies and services received	\$31,073,404.87

(2) Total value of construction projects, split by programme which UNICEF is delivering via a partnership (e.g. via HACT)	
Water supply	US\$234,839.78
Sanitation	US\$1,329,438.77

UNICEF continued to support improvements in the Government's warehousing capacity for stock management and prepositioning of emergency supplies.

Six joint end-user monitoring of supplies, and four HACT/procurement trainings were conducted in conjunction with programme staff and government counterparts. During these field visits and trainings, the need to reduce costs, eliminate waste and stock-outs, and provide end-user feedback was re-emphasized.

Security for staff and premises

Overall, security threats for Ghana are assessed as 'low', but occasional incidents occur. Northern Ghana (Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions) is characterized by armed robberies, civil unrest and border crossing by Togolese refugees. Southern Ghana (Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Eastern, Western, Central, Volta and Greater Accra regions) experiences crime and road traffic accidents. The situation, however, is containable.

Security in Accra and Tamale, including residences of international staff, are provided by Edern Security firm, and supported by Ghana Police patrols. There is also a 24/7 UN communication centre to monitor and report security incidents. During the reporting period, there were no security incidents involving staff or programmes.

UNICEF is represented by the Representative on the UN security management team. The chief of operations is UNICEF's security focal point. UNICEF Ghana has made integrated security risk management, minimum operating safety standards and residential security measures an integral part of management, which enhanced programme delivery. The speed of disseminating security-related information among staff has improved through a stronger communication tree and SMS messaging/social media.

Plans are in place to upgrade the office closed circuit TV, attaching it to the 24/7 UN communication centre for proper monitoring. The United Nations Department for Safety and Security has assigned a new security adviser, who plans to enhance the screening of vehicles, visitors and staff members entering the UN compound.

Human resources

UNICEF Ghana maintained its staffing mix, profile and competence level with 129 fixed-term positions and seven temporary appointments. This strategy sustained consolidated programme results and generated evidence for designing the next CP.

During the year, 12 vacancies were filled; five recruitments used flexible selection methods of lateral re-assignment, batch recruitment and national talent pool.

The new country programme structure was designed through a transparent and consultative process, with active staff participation. Staff members on abolished posts were provided six months' notice and supported through professional counselling, waiver of tour of duty, interview

skills training, coaching, briefings by human resources and meetings with the Representative.

A culture change in performance management was promoted through three sensitization trainings for all staff. This ensured clarity of output-targeted work-plan deliverables, regular performance discussions and focused feedback. Monthly reporting of e-PAS status to the CMR and staff commitment facilitated 100 per cent completion of 2016 e-PAS by July 2017 and timely completion of 2017 commitments.

A committee was established by the staff association and management to analyse UNICEF Ghana's 2017 global staff survey results. An action plan was approved by all staff, aligned with global and regional priorities. Systems were put in place to ensure work/life balance, one of the major areas of staff concern. Six new peer support volunteers were nominated.

Nineteen staff members were trained on the new emergency preparedness tool. The completion rate for mandatory courses improved, especially for ethics and integrity, HACT and results-based management.

Limited availability of ORR posed a challenge to continuity of posts. As an interim measure two OR-funded nutrition posts were supported by RR for a maximum of six months.

Effective use of information and communication technology

Staff are increasingly using OneDrive to remotely access work files, which has improved data and file sharing between Accra and the Tamale field office, which had been a challenge due to different shared drives for the two offices. Outlook was used to run quick opinion polls on issues concerning staff, and Skype for Business for meetings globally and online interviews. Digital to internet protocol-based desk phones are being phased out to reduce network infrastructure investment. Printers are set to economy mode to optimize toner usage and with PIN codes to manage paper usage, and also defaulted to two-sided printing for cost efficiency and alignment with UNICEF's global greening agenda.

The business continuity plan (BCP) at Tamale field office, which was previously not functioning or accessible, was revamped. A successful simulation exercise was carried out by critical staff, and in case of an unforeseen emergency, the office will be operational. Unrequired IT items (both functional and obsolete) were donated or destroyed through the property survey board.

Technical support was provided for technology-based initiatives and innovations, including U-Report Ghana, with SMS aggregation to solicit and gather information via the RapidPro platform. Technical support was also provided for the myU application, developed to consolidate in-depth information on UNICEF Ghana activities to staff members. This mobile application was installed on cell phones of staff members to permit easy access to information anywhere at any time.

With the roll-out and upcoming global migration to Windows 10, UNICEF Ghana made provisions in terms of workstation replacement and upgrades to ensure smooth migration.

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Outcome (1): Children, especially girls, are better served by an effective Child and Family Welfare System that protects them from violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination and neglect.

Analytical statement of progress

Implementation of the child and family welfare and justice for children policies experienced significant progress in 2017. Some important changes in the policy-to-practice process were documented from 20 pilot districts, which highlight enhanced collaboration between formal and informal actors, integration of child and family welfare issues into the selected district medium-term development plans and sensitization of the social welfare workforce. These long-term and lasting changes form the foundation of a revamped child protection system in Ghana.

The preliminary results of a formative evaluation commissioned to study the impact of a social welfare workforce strengthening initiative in 20 selected districts indicate that knowledge and awareness around key child protection policies have improved. They further indicate significant improvement in coordination between formal and informal actors related to child protection. The work in these 20 districts was an annual management priority for UNICEF's child protection programme in 2017. However, the results also indicate that frontline social welfare staff members still lack skills and competencies, requiring more focused interventions and specialized training.

At the national level, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) took the lead for improving the coordination, policy and legislative environment. To address specific gaps and bottlenecks in the policy framework, the national plan of action for the elimination of human trafficking and the national strategic framework on ending child marriage (2017–2026) were finalized. UNICEF worked closely with the International Organization on Migration (IOM) and UNFPA on the trafficking and child marriage programmes, respectively.

A comprehensive legal review process was kicked off to study all child-related laws and policies. While the process is still underway, priority areas for future work on legal and policy reforms were identified. Appropriate amendments to laws related to age of consent, corporal punishment and child online protection will bring the existing legal framework very close to the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights treaties ratified by the GoG.

In terms of community engagement, prevention of violence against girls and boys including child marriage, remained a priority area for the GoG, which launched a nationwide child protection social drive: Ghanaians Against Child Abuse (GACA) on 21st November 2017. The campaign was launched by the wife of Ghana's vice-president, with ministerial level participation from the ministries of local government, education and the MoGCSP. Campaign messages were picked up by both mainstream and social media. The messages are in line with the face-to-face interventions being implemented at the community level, using the child protection community facilitation toolkit. The results and findings from over 200 stories collected and analysed using the most significant change methodology, clearly indicate an increase in knowledge in targeted communities on child protection issues. However, attitudes and practices have not seen the same quantum of change.

The GoG led efforts geared to implement social welfare care reforms and improve the quality of child protection services. The strategy included both medium- and long-term initiatives. The provisions of the child and family welfare and the recently amended Children's Act continued to

be implemented to provide care and protection to children. Some of the areas that saw significant changes include the mapping of residential facilities and setting standards for running of such facilities. Child protection issues have been mainstreamed in the curriculum of 90 credit courses at the University of Development Studies. Further, to improve the quality of care for children, standard operating procedures for case management were drafted, along with standard forms that will be validated next year. Partnership with USAID was instrumental in supporting the GoG to implement laws and policies related to children without parental care.

Although the Births and Deaths Registry (BDR) continued to push for improved coverage of birth registration for children younger than 12 months, progress was constrained; and the number of registered births dropped further. The most significant change in this regard, however, was the nationwide scale-up of an automation project led by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD). Lessons learned from a pilot project supported by UNICEF Ghana, in partnership with TIGO Telecom, proved to be helpful in taking the birth and death registration system in Ghana to scale. UNICEF began collaborating closely with the EU delegation to jointly address bottlenecks. Lack of progress in 2017 was due to the transition from paper-based to the web-based system and confusion around the future role of the Registry.

This is the last year of the 2012–2017 Country Programme. UNICEF’s partnership with the Government of Ghana has been critical throughout the whole period. During the last five years, the child protection programme has steadily evolved. The legal framework for a robust child protection system is place now. However, implementation of the laws and actual provision of child protection services by social workers has not seen the same level of results. Key bottlenecks include limited capacity and insufficient resource allocation. Moving forward, UNICEF will work with the GoG to address these bottlenecks and strike a balance between support to system- strengthening and service provision.

OUTPUT 1 Output 1: By 2017, Child Welfare and Protection Laws and Policies are consistent with or better than international standards; and resources for implementation are increasingly available.

Analytical statement of progress

Led by the MoGCSP, and with support from UNICEF Ghana, staff from more than 66 metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs) – including regional coordinators, district coordinating directors, district chief executives and planning/budget officers – were engaged in advocacy forums in 2017. This has led to the inclusion of child protection-related budgets in the medium-term development plans currently being developed. In nine MMDAs in the 20 pilot districts, funds and other resources were released periodically for child protection activities.

With support from UNICEF Ghana, the MoGCSP’s Department of Children (DoC) started a comprehensive review of all laws dealing with children. As of November 2017, four regional consultations had been completed involving different stakeholders. The process will continue well into 2018 and will end with the drafting of legal provisions and position papers on key amendments required to bring domestic legislation in line with international obligations and national policy aspirations. The process covers all aspects of child protection, including social welfare, alternative care, justice for children, birth registration and online protection.

Through the national child protection coordination committee and regional committees in all ten regions, facilitated by the DoC, implementation of policies and implementation plans continued

to be tracked and reported from the regional to the national level. More than 80 per cent of the initiatives in the operational plan are ongoing.

Following the amendment to the Children's Act in 2016 to include articles that would enable the implementation of The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, UNICEF supported consultations with experts and parliamentarians to review draft regulations related to adoption and foster care. Both sets of regulations are ready for presentation to Parliament in early 2018.

UNICEF Ghana commissioned an external formative assessment of strategies and approaches supported during the 2014–2016 period to prevent and respond to child marriage. The findings highlighted lessons learnt, successful approaches, current gaps and recommendations for programme improvement. Lessons learned are being included in annual work plans for 2018–2019.

UNICEF Ghana continued to support the process of developing national early childhood care and development standards for children aged 0-to-3 years. Stakeholder consultations took place at the national level and in three regions to collect baseline information. The initial draft standards are being reviewed by a technical committee prior to a wider stakeholder validation in 2018. The process was delayed because baseline data collection took longer than estimated.

Due to limited expertise in the area, progress toward setting up a national database for children did not occur in 2017. Discussions about a nationwide comprehensive database and child protection information management system have begun. Work on conceptualization and implementation of such a system will continue in the coming two years.

OUTPUT 2 Output 2: By 2017, child protection service providers demonstrate strengthened and coordinated capacity to prevent and respond to child protection issues in line with national policies, standard, protocols and procedures.

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF supported several capacity-building initiatives to improve the quality of services for children led by the MoGCSP and the MoLGRD. Skills and competencies of over 860 child protection stakeholders (572 men, 291 women) working with and for children at the local level were improved through district- and regional-level engagement and consultations. This effort was a result of a comprehensive social welfare workforce strengthening initiative being implemented in 20 districts (of 216). This initiative also sought to integrate child protection issues into districts' medium-term development plans and to improve coordination, resource allocation and service quality

UNICEF supported the GHS to develop child protection guidelines for health professionals. Nearly 200 health professionals in 10 regions received training. A credited learning programme based on the guidelines was registered with Ghana's Medical and Dental Council to allow access by other health professionals. Further, to improve health outcomes for pregnant teens and young mothers and their new-borns, a 'SafeNet' programme was piloted in four districts of two regions, through which health workers were trained on age- and gender-responsive service provision. The results will be available next year.

The social welfare department of the MoGCSP, with support from UNICEF, completed a mapping of 24 residential homes for children (RHC) in four of Ghana's 10 regions. The findings informed the revision of the 2010 national standards for RHCs, standard operating procedures for monitoring and inspection of residential homes for children and draft procedures for case management for children without parental care. UNICEF Ghana supported the development and

implementation of a monitoring system and a database of children in residential care, and piloted the system in four regions.

As part of the UNFPA-UNICEF global programme to end child marriage, the MoGCSP launched the first national strategic framework on ending child marriage, accompanied by a two-year operational plan. Decentralized and cross-sectoral implementation began in 2017, including tracking of resource allocations for this framework.

UNICEF supported the MoGCSP to develop and finalize a national plan of action for the elimination of human trafficking. Commitments to address child trafficking as a matter of priority were included in the new plan, implementation of which began with the formation of an anti-trafficking unit, set up by the MoGCSP, to coordinate efforts.

Significant progress was made towards mainstreaming child protection into 90 credit courses being offered by the University of Development Studies, which began teaching the courses in September 2017, with an estimated 200 students. Preliminary work was also completed on the design of a child protection stand-alone certificate course, to be finalized in 2018. Introduction of child protection-related courses was based on a capacity needs assessment completed in 2017.

OUTPUT 3 Output 3: By 2017, children, parents, care-givers and community members in selected areas understand and demonstrate positive behaviour that protects children from violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination and neglect.

Analytical statement of progress

A nationwide child protection campaign was launched on 21 November 2017 by the wife of the vice-president of Ghana to engage all Ghanaians against child abuse. The key messages were developed in 2017 after extensive consultations with relevant stakeholders, including girls and boys. Three key ministries led the campaign, with support from UNICEF. A range of communication channels and tools – including social media (#iamgaca), TV and radio – were used to engage people and encourage them to stand up against child abuse in Ghana.

Further, over 1,000 communities were reached across all 10 regions by both the Government of Ghana (GoG) and NGO partners, with UNICEF support, through face-to-face engagement. This was achieved through use of the child protection community facilitation toolkit. An estimated 97,411 parents and caregivers (53,399 women, 4,4012 men) and 149,167 children (79,735 girls, 69,432 boys) were reached and engaged through dialogues on issues related to violence, child marriage, teen pregnancy, parenting, sexual harassment and sexual abuse, child development and other relevant topics. A further 727,625 individuals are reported to have been reached through radio by a partner NGO working in 120 communities across 12 districts.

Based on new and emerging issues, fresh content was added to the toolkit, covering issues such as birth registration, child online safety, alternative care, gender-based violence and adolescent girls. Development of an application – being used for reporting and monitoring activities implemented in communities – was also supported, and served to improve overall monitoring and reporting from communities to the national level.

UNICEF continued to support focused school and community-based engagement on child marriage, led by the GoG and NGOs. These efforts targeted adolescent girls and boys, families, community members and traditional and religious leaders in seven regions and 18 districts across Ghana. The interventions reached at least 11,139 adults and 7,776 girls, preventing or responding to 34 cases of child marriage. The targeted interventions used school clubs and safe

spaces to engage with adolescent girls and boys as well as community meetings, *durbars*, theatre, community radio and other participatory approaches.

An analysis of ‘most significant change’ stories collected from communities targeted with the toolkit was completed in 2017. The results, from over 200 stories collected in phase one, indicate increased community knowledge about child protection issues covered during the engagement. Attitudes and practices, however, did not change as significantly. In addition, a rapid assessment was commissioned in 2017 to provide baseline data on some of the most prevalent behaviours affecting children. Cultural acceptance of different forms of violence against children, especially girls, continues to pose the greatest challenge.

OUTPUT 4 Output 4: The birth registration system is more effective and efficient in registering children, especially those under the age of 5 years.

Analytical statement of progress

In February 2017 progress on implementation of the civil registration and vital statistics strategic plan for 2015–2022 was reviewed by an inter-agency technical working group. The review indicated that more than half of activities planned for 2016 had not yet been implemented. Based on recommendations from the review meeting, a secretariat was set up within the GSS to effectively monitor and track progress on a more regular basis and advocate for greater political commitment.

UNICEF Ghana continued to support the Birth and Death Registry to register at least 70 per cent of new births during 2017. Outreach activities carried out by the Registry, in collaboration with the GHS during child health promotion week were also supported. Over 60,000 births were registered during May and June 2017.

However, progress remained slow throughout the year. As of October 2017, only 53 per cent of children (455,132 of an estimated total of 861,447 new-borns) below the age of one year were registered, representing a considerable drop from 2016 and 2015. This low level of birth registration can be attributed to preoccupation by many Registry staff members with late registration of births, adoption of the new web-based system and confusion around the decentralization of the Registry. UNICEF is working closely with the BDR, the Government of Ghana and the EU to address these issues. The BDR and GHS have agreed to develop a new notification system for birth registration to facilitate the registration of births that take place in health facilities, which should help to increase birth registration in 2018.

The Birth and Death Registry, supported by UNICEF Ghana, conducted training for more than 40 staff members on the new requirements for registration and issuance of birth certificates. In addition, key birth and death registration stakeholders were convened in 2017 to develop an operational plan derived from the civil registration and vital statistics strategic plan, which aims to guide the registration of birth and death events at the sub-national level in a systematic and coordinated manner. The same forum was also used to draft a communication strategy for improving registration services. Drafts of both documents were finalized in 2017.

Based on lessons learned from the UNICEF Ghana-supported pilot automation project, and in collaboration with TIGO Telecom, the MoLGRD took the automation system to scale. The system is currently being deployed in all 216 districts in the country, which will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the registration system across the country. The results from the scaled-up system will be available from 2018 onwards.

OUTCOME 2 Outcome 2: Children are better served by formal and informal gender-sensitive justice processes that aim to protect and support children as victims, witnesses and offenders.

Analytical statement of progress

The GoG has made considerable progress toward strengthening the legal framework related to justice for children, as evidenced by national laws including the Children’s Act, 1998 (Act 560) and its 2016 amendments and Juvenile Justice Act, 2003 (Act 653). Further efforts are underway to review laws related to children, make them more child-friendly and bring them in line with recent policy developments, especially the justice for children policy (JCP).

During 2017 the policy’s operational plan was completed through an in-depth consultative process led by the DoC. The operational plan prescribed how relevant institutions will use their resources to implement the policy. Their work plans for the coming years are expected to be derived from the operational plan to achieve the policy objectives. The operational plan creates measurable milestones to be achieved by key stakeholders involved in implementation of the strategies, coupled with clear accountability for all institutions and timeframes for initiatives/interventions. It further outlines resources required for specific interventions and clear mechanisms for monitoring and tracking progress.

There is broad recognition by the GoG and relevant stakeholders, that justice sector reforms are central to the overall implementation of the justice for children policy. While the policy clearly spells out the role of legal, regulatory and 'justice' institutions and makes these actor key players in developing solutions to problems facing child offenders, victims and witnesses, it is imperative that this recognition be matched by a correspondingly clear sense of what should be done.

To bridge these gaps and better understand the bottlenecks, research into courts’ handling of children’s cases was completed. The report is currently being reviewed by criminal justice system stakeholders. Based on the draft findings, Ghana Judicial Services set aside a court room in Accra to be converted into a child-friendly court, which will be operational in 2018 and benefit over 200 children every year. Based on the lessons learned from this one court in Accra, the Danish aid agency Danida has committed to investing in the conversion of nine additional courtrooms (one in each of the other nine regions) into child-friendly courts.

Further, a desk review and data collection efforts are underway to understand the challenges that limit the role of the probation service in the overall administration of justice for children. The conclusions will inform the review of a manual on the role of probation and subsequent training of probation officers to improve their knowledge and skills.

At the national and regional level, UNICEF continued to build the capacity of Ghana Police Service, Judicial Services of Ghana, the domestic violence and victims support unit (DOVVSU) and the social welfare department to implement different provisions of the justice for children policy and its standard operating procedures. The latter spell out context-relevant and legislation-aligned procedures for handling all children in contact with the law and apply to all police officers. Training programmes were rolled out for staff working in key justice sector institutions, reaching over 5,500 personnel. Anecdotal evidence suggests that trained police officers are now more aware of their role when dealing with children in police stations.

Progress on setting up community-based approaches to justice, diversion and the role of informal actors (e.g. House of Chiefs and Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs) was delayed, pending outcome of the social welfare workforce strengthening initiative.

The allocation of appropriate resources to all the key departments and agencies responsible for implementation of the justice for children policy remains a major challenge. UNICEF will continue to advocate for the allocation of sufficient resources to the departments involved in child-friendly justice initiatives.

OUTPUT 1 Output 6: By 2017, juvenile justice laws and policies are consistent with or better than international standards with adequate resource commitment demonstrated.

Analytical statement of progress

The DoC, supported by UNICEF, led the development and finalization of an operational plan for implementing the justice for children policy. The new policy reflects the GoG's commitment to fulfil its international obligation to provide universal protection for the rights of all children.

The operational plan is based on the objectives of the new policy and covers areas related to; i) preventing juvenile offending; ii) promoting formal and community justice systems; iii) strengthening programmes for rehabilitation, social reintegration and resettlement; iv) protecting child witnesses and victims of crimes; v) promoting access to justice for children involved in family and other civil proceedings; vi) guiding the reform of laws, policies and procedures; and vii) ensuring the provision of financial and human resources.

The first year of implementation of the operational plan was an exploratory learning phase for all stakeholders. It represented departure from a criminal justice system meant for only adults to a child-friendly justice system that recognizes children's rights.

The justice for children policy and its operational plan are very progressive in nature. Some of the provisions are not fully supported by current laws related to children, including the Children's Act, Juvenile Justice Act and Criminal Offences Act. UNICEF is supporting a comprehensive review of the laws, led by the DoC. By end-2017, a comprehensive desk review and some regional consultations had been conducted. Initial gaps were identified and shared with stakeholders for comments and inputs. The review was undertaken of the report on legislative analysis of all treaties and conventions that Ghana has ratified, taking into consideration proposals by the Constitutional Review Commission, the child and family welfare policy and the JCP. Analysis and proposals for legal and policy reform are aligned to policy objectives and aspirations. Feedback from stakeholders was positive; some areas required position papers and further debate to reach a consensus.

The issue of inadequate resources to fully implement the justice for children policy and relevant laws is still a major challenge for nearly all of the institutions, which could cause delays in the delivery of child-friendly justice services. However, commitment by the heads of all involved institutions continued to bode well for implementation of the operational plan. UNICEF Ghana will continue to support the GoG to overcome the challenges to full implementation of the operational plan in 2018, to transform the criminal justice system into a child-friendly system.

OUTPUT 2 By 2017, justice system actors at national and sub-national level are guided by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), guidelines, court directives and other legislative instruments for the promotion of child justice. .

Analytical statement of progress

With support from UNICEF the Ghana Police Service, Judicial Services of Ghana, DOVVSU and department of social welfare continued in 2017 to implement provisions of the justice for children policy and its standard operating procedures in 2017; the latter provide context-relevant and legislation-aligned procedures for handling all children.

UNICEF Ghana continues to support implementation of the ‘integrating child-friendly policing into the Ghana Police Service’ initiative. Two sets of standard operating procedures for child-friendly policing were completed, validated and printed, and a related mobile phone application was developed and tested. The app allows Ghana Police Service staff to access the procedures on their smart phones. The curriculum on child-friendly policing for Regional Police Training Schools was completed and used in two rounds of training for new recruits at all training schools. The curriculum consists of a facilitator guide, student manual, pocket guide and package of slides for trainers.

A group of trainers was selected from within the police training schools, the anti-human trafficking unit, DOVVSU, and a small group from the Ghana Police Service. These trainers are based in all regions of Ghana, and are prepared to roll out training in the child-friendly policing curriculum and standard operating procedures in the near future. DOVVSU will receive a set of practical guidance notes to print and place in each of its offices. The anti-human trafficking unit will receive training through a specialized manual on combatting child trafficking.

Based on training schools records, 5,500 new police recruits were trained and hired in 2017, becoming part of 33,000 strong Ghana Police Service work force. Based on DOVVSU’s annual report, it is estimated that about 2,000 girls and boys will benefit from improved services because of this training every year.

A gender-based violence court has been designated as a child-friendly court. The court handles gender-based violence and child sexual abuse cases in Accra. UNICEF is supporting the Judicial Service of Ghana to convert this courtroom into a model child-friendly court, which should be operational in 2018. Once functional, the court will handle at least 200 defilement cases every year.

During 2017 the department of social welfare, with support from UNICEF, began a review of the manual that guides the work of probation officers; a desk review and data collection exercise were ongoing at end-2017. The probation officers’ manual will be revised based on the results of this review, followed by training for probation officers in 2018. This is expected to help launch implementation of the diversion mechanism spelled out in the JCP.

OUTPUT 3 Output 8: By 2017, justice system actors at national and sub-national level are guided by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), guidelines, court directives and other legislative instruments for the promotion of child justice.

Analytical statement of progress

Both the child and family welfare policy and JCP recognize, reinforce and support the roles and responsibilities of families and communities in protecting children from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Appreciating the important role of traditional authorities in Ghanaian society, both policies seek to promote their interest, active engagement and support for creating a safer, more protective environment for children at home and in their communities.

Initial engagement with traditional authorities commenced in partnership with the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs and the National House of Chiefs. However, due to the social welfare-strengthening initiative, it was deemed prudent to halt the engagement progress. Before the process was merged with the mainstream social welfare work force strengthening, UNICEF had supported interventions to understand traditional practices used by community stakeholders to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation. The learning from that process was documented in the draft guidelines and used in the effort to strengthen the social welfare workforce. Validation and finalization of the guidelines will remain on hold due to the shift in the overall engagement with traditional authorities.

However, due to the social workforce-strengthening initiative reported under output 2, at the end of 2016 the technical working group supervising implementation of the initiative decided that informal child protection actors (traditional leaders, queen mothers and chiefs) should be engaged through the same process. Thus engagement of informal actors became central to the social welfare workforce strengthening initiative. Queen mothers and chiefs were part of all district, regional and national learning workshops and informed the process. Pending learnings from this initiative, separate engagement with traditional authorities and informal actors through the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs was put on hold.

OUTCOME 3 OUTCOME 003 - Maternal, Neonatal and Child Nutrition: Maternal and Child under-nutrition rates are reduced through the scale-up of integrated, evidence-based high-impact nutrition interventions with a special focus on the five deprived regions.

Analytical statement of progress

2017 was a year of breakthroughs in health and nutrition. The first-ever adolescent girls' nutrition programme in WCAR was launched in Ghana to reduce anaemia; vitamin A supplementation through the routine health system reached over 50 per cent of children aged 6-59 months in focus regions and hospital managers were oriented on Ghana's breastfeeding regulations (Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes) for the first time.

While stunting declined from 28 per cent in 2008 to 19 per cent in 2014 and iodine sufficiency has been achieved with equity, progress on addressing iron and vitamin A deficiencies has been slow. According to the 2014 DHS report, 66 per cent of children under five years and 48 per cent of adolescent girls aged 15-to-19 years were anaemic. To better understand the different causes, UNICEF supported the first-ever national micronutrient survey, conducted by a consortium of research institutions: University of Ghana, Ground Works consultancy firm and University of Wisconsin. The report will contribute much-needed evidence for planning and monitoring micronutrient control programmes over the next 10 years.

Meanwhile, UNICEF supported several initiatives to curb anaemia among high-risk groups. Adolescent girls in public junior high, senior high and technical and vocational education training institutions received an iron and folic acid supplement once a week through the GIFTS programme, being implemented in four regions (Volta, Northern, Brong-Ahafo and Upper East). Girls of the same age group who are not in school are receiving a supplement from health facilities. The programme is expected to reach 350,000 in-school and 600,000 out-of-school adolescent girls. In addition, the integrated anaemia-control programme includes nutrition education for girls and boys, as well as women of reproductive age. A baseline survey was conducted as a benchmark for monitoring progress in girls in 60 schools in the Northern and Volta regions, with technical and financial support from UNICEF and US Centers for Disease Control.

To reduce anaemia prevalence among young children, during 2017 UNICEF supported the GHS to begin using micronutrient powders to enrich complementary foods for children aged 6-23 months in four pilot districts.

In addition, UNICEF Ghana continued to strengthen other nutrition programmes. Lacking resources for a campaign-style vitamin A supplementation, a national meeting was organized to review progress toward strengthening routine strategies in five learning regions (Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Northern, Volta and Western regions). This was a follow-up to bottleneck analysis and planning conducted in 2016. After one year, vitamin A coverage among the regions improved from 45 to 62 per cent in 2016 to 55 to 65 per cent in 2017. The review identified effective strategies for routine supplementation, best practices and lessons which were documented and shared with all regions in Ghana.

To save the lives of children with severe malnutrition, UNICEF continued to provide ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTF) for use in the community-based management of acute malnutrition programme. Over 6,939 children had received treatment by October 2017. While this programme significantly reduces mortality for affected children, the most significant challenge in Ghana is the shortage of funding for RUTF. Given the country's middle-income status, efforts need to be intensified to find resources for purchasing RUTF.

UNICEF support for breastfeeding continued through collaboration with political leaders, the GHS and CSOs. UNICEF supported the national launch of Breastfeeding Week by the First Lady of Ghana and a briefing for national mass media agencies. Over 150 medical officers drawn from major hospitals were trained on their roles in implementing breastfeeding regulations and support for breastfeeding management. The GHS and Food and Drugs Authority conducted joint monitoring for compliance with breastfeeding regulations at selected facilities.

To consolidate communications on infant and young child feeding, UNICEF supported the development of a communication strategy taking into account findings of a social norms study, production of a video on breastmilk expression and provision of communication materials. A total of 150 health facilities providing maternity services across the country were assessed on the baby-friendly criteria (10 plus three steps), of which 88 facilities (59 per cent) qualified for certification as baby-friendly. Health facilities that failed on one or two steps were tasked to work on these areas and prepare for re-assessment. Meanwhile, the national-level baby-friendly hospital initiative authority is considering the revised global guidance and its implications for Ghana.

In summary, 2017 was a very successful year with significant high-level involvement in nutrition activities. The engagement of the First Lady of Ghana in various UNICEF-supported nutrition programmes helped to bring nutrition issues to the attention of political, Government and traditional leaders.

UNICEF also had the privilege of showcasing nutrition interventions to the minister for international development of the Government of Canada during her visit to Northern Ghana.

OUTPUT 1 Output 009- Nutrition Policy and Data: Systems in place for development and implementation of evidence-based and equity-focused national nutrition policy and strategic plan

Analytical statement of progress

In a complex nutrition coordination environment with many stakeholders, UNICEF Ghana continued to engage in the donor group for Scaling-Up-Nutrition (SUN) in Ghana, which is led by USAID and co-led by UNICEF. A key achievement of the SUN agenda has been the preparation of 2017 self-assessment reports by all constituencies and the incorporation of nutrition in the national medium-term development framework, which provides guidance for developing sector and district medium-term plans.

A major development in 2017 was the launch of ‘reducing malnutrition and malaria in priority populations’, an initiative championed by the First Lady of Ghana with technical support from UNICEF, the GHS, USAID and other key stakeholders. The aim is to accelerate the reduction of malnutrition and malaria morbidity, thereby promoting the survival, health and well-being of children in Ghana. The initiative is leveraging high-level support for nutrition, as witnessed during the launch of the GIFTS programme and National Breastfeeding Week by the First Lady.

To support implementation of the national nutrition policy and strategic plan—as well as monitoring for 2018–2022 CP, UNICEF continued to support evidence-generation in several areas. The survey report on iodine was completed, and showed that 62 per cent of salt has some amount of iodine while 29 per cent is adequately iodized. More importantly, the report shows that the iodine in household salt and iodine obtained from other food sources, especially food condiments, are contributing to a state of iodine sufficiency in the population, across all wealth quintiles. UNICEF’s involvement in this area will mainly be to monitor support through MICS, DHS and other nutrition assessments.

A final draft report for the national micronutrients survey conducted early in 2017 was under review by stakeholders at year’s end. With UNICEF’s support, the survey collected data on anaemia, iron deficiency, vitamin A and malaria, along with wealth and anthropometric indicators. Further, in two regions implementing the GIFTS programme, a baseline survey was carried out, with support from U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Korea’s international cooperation agency, to facilitate measuring GIFTS’ impact in the future.

Five regions that had conducted bottleneck analysis on vitamin A supplementation in 2016 reviewed progress and shared lessons among all 10 regions in 2017. Coverage in the five regions ranged from 45 to 62 per cent in 2016, compared to 55 to 65 per cent in 2017. While the key distribution strategies tended to vary among by region, the most helpful strategies for older children included outreach services and distribution in outpatient services and at preschools. The experience on vitamin A drew key lessons on the bottleneck analysis approach and monitoring of nutrition interventions.

The next CP will need to build on the knowledge generated and high-level support achieved in 2017.

OUTPUT 2 Output 010 - USI National strategies and coordination: National USI Strategy and Action Plan finalized, disseminated and implemented.

Analytical statement of progress

Through the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Cabinet approved the universal salt iodization (USI) strategy III (2016-2020), and copies were printed and distributed to relevant agencies. To ensure compliance with USI standards, a monitoring exercise on USI regulations was carried out by the Food and Drugs Authority and the MoLGRD, during which some violations were prosecuted. Environmental health officers from 10 salt-producing districts underwent refresher training on law enforcement and prosecution. Weak enforcement of regulations continues to plague USI implementation in Ghana.

A regional study on the contribution of bouillon cubes to iodine nutrition was carried out in four countries, including Ghana. Major findings from the study showed increasing trends in bouillon cube consumption, and the willingness of manufacturers to use iodized salt in their production although no standards are yet in place. The study in Ghana showed that salt regulations do not explicitly require the use of iodized salt by the food industry; however law enforcers in Ghana insist that this is implied, as the law requires that salt meant for human and animal consumption should be iodized. This could be the reason for compliance by a food industry whose products contain significant amounts of salt, such as bouillon cubes, as they could technically lose their business license if they do not comply. Hence the combination of iodized salt in households and in processed food is contributing to iodine sufficiency among all age groups and across all wealth quintiles. This interesting development has mainly evolved during the last five years.

Ghana has never conducted a micronutrient survey, so data on vitamin A and iron are either non-existent or outdated. Learning from results on iodine nutrition, assessment of indicators at the impact level is always useful for setting strategic direction. A protocol for a national micronutrients survey was developed in 2017 and preparations are underway for implementation during early 2018. The survey will be conducted by a consortium comprising the University of Ghana, University of Wisconsin and GroundWorks, to assess the status of vitamin A and iron in children under five years and non-breastfeeding women in Ghana's three main ecological zones.

Additionally, UNICEF Ghana's anaemia prevention strategy experienced a major breakthrough. The Government decided to implement a high-impact intervention to address the high levels of anaemia among children aged 6-to-23 months, adolescents and menstruating women. UNICEF provided the initial supply of micronutrient supplements, and will soon embark on: capacity building in four regions and advocacy for joint efforts with other development partners interested in this area until the Government and/or private sector distribution system becomes stronger and more sustainable.

OUTPUT 3 Output 11 - IYCF and malnutrition: Systems are in place in 5 most deprived regions of Ghana to ensure access and utilization of high impact nutrition specific interventions.

Analytical statement of progress

Anaemia rates have remained high in Ghana for decades— over 60 per cent in children aged 6-to-59 months, and above 40 per cent in women of reproductive age (15-49 years). With UNICEF support, the GHS and GES are jointly implementing a weekly iron and folic acid supplementation programme for adolescent girls in four regions—Brong-Ahafo, Northern, Upper East and Volta. Overall, 4,200 teachers and 2,800 front-line health staff have been trained and are implementing the GIFTS programme at all public schools (junior high, senior high and technical and vocational education training institutions) and health facilities in the

four regions. For children aged 6-to-23-months-old, UNICEF has supported four learning districts to use micronutrient powders to enrich complementary foods. These programmes are currently ongoing.

To improve communication and address myths, social norms and misconceptions on breastfeeding and other nutrition behaviours, a national communications strategy is being developed following a review of relevant documents, consultations with stakeholders and field visits. The communication strategy will also support and strengthen other nutrition programmes, such as infant and young child feeding, iron and folate supplementation, and routine Vitamin A supplementation.

As a result of decentralization of baby-friendly health facility initiative assessment processes in the country, a national assessment of 150 health facilities providing maternity services across the country was carried out, of which 88 (59 per cent) qualified for certification.

In Upper East Region activities being implemented as part of the mother/baby-friendly health facility initiative (MBFHI) programme to strengthen maternal and neonatal health continued during 2017. Quarterly data review meetings in implementing districts, over 50 community mobilization and dialogue sessions and orientation for community-based groups by community-based organizations on appropriate exclusive breastfeeding and continued breastfeeding practices were held. The community-based organizations supported implementation of the MBFHI programme and held meetings with women's groups to discuss and solve issues, as well as engaging males in the communities to support maternal and child health. In addition, 660 baby dolls were procured to support capacity-building initiatives and counselling on breastfeeding at health facilities providing maternity services.

To further protect and promote breastfeeding, over 150 medical officers at major hospitals in the southern part of the country were trained on lactation management and breastfeeding regulations. Joint GHS and Food and Drugs Authority teams embarked on monitoring visits to promote breastfeeding regulations at selected health facilities providing maternity services and retail shops in four selected regions—Eastern, Greater Accra, Volta and Western. A video on breastmilk expression was produced to improve counselling and support for caregivers on exclusive breastfeeding.

UNICEF Ghana continued to support the community management of acute malnutrition programme in 2017, although the quantities of ready-to-use therapeutic food procured and delivered to partners declined from 11,746 cartons in 2016 to 9,438 cartons in 2017, due to funding constraints. A total of 7,894 children had been treated as of October 2017.

OUTCOME 4 - Maternal, neonatal and child health: Women and children have improved and equitable access to and utilize quality, high impact maternal, neonatal and child health interventions with a special focus on the 5 most deprived regions.

Analytical statement of progress

Progress was made in access and utilization of maternal and child health services as well as overall health outcomes of children and women. The proportion of pregnant women accessing at least four antenatal care visits had increased from 78 per cent in 2008 to 87 per cent by 2014 according to the GDHS 2014; skilled birth attendance increased from 59 per cent to 74 per cent in the same period and 72 per cent of women received postnatal care within 24 hours of childbirth. The country also sustained high immunization coverage of 99 per cent for Penta-3

and 95 per cent for measles/rubella-1, according to the 2017 expanded programme on immunization cluster survey report, and maintained its status as free of polio and neonatal tetanus.

This progress was mainly driven by social policies such as the national health insurance scheme and free maternal health policy to eliminate financial barriers to health, while the community health planning and services policy was implemented to bridge gaps in physical access between urban and rural settings. These improvements in access to health services contributed to a reduction of maternal and under-five mortality. Inclusive discussions with development partners and the MoH will support reform of the national health insurance scheme to achieve sustainability and equitable reach.

UNICEF supported the Government to strengthen the health system, where an assessment was conducted of application of the bottleneck analysis tool for planning, and the outcome used to develop planning guidelines for the GHS at all levels. In Upper East and Eastern regions, UNICEF supported implementation of the e-tracker system, a mobile application used to deliver health promotion messages to pregnant women and to track prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) clients and their children to reduce lost-to-follow-up and increase early infant diagnosis coverage. Applying technology for healthcare delivery and data management is one of the key priority areas for the Government; successful implementation of the e-tracker in the two regions will provide the required evidence for scale-up.

In maternal and newborn health, the UNICEF-led quality improvement MBFHI model was operationalized in 24 health facilities in four districts of Upper East Region. About 337 healthcare providers benefitted from training, coaching and clinical mentorship for maternal and new-born care, including breastfeeding and quality improvement. Kangaroo mother care guidelines and training modules were also operationalized. The proportion of newborns receiving key essential interventions at these healthcare facilities increased from between 0-to-75 per cent in 2016 to 80-to-100 per cent in 2017, contributing to a reduction in overall neonatal case fatality from 10.2 per cent in 2016 to 8.4 per cent in 2017. Similarly, UNICEF led advocacy for WASH in healthcare facilities, culminating in the incorporation of WASH into the infection prevention and control programme and the development of national indicators to be monitored through the district health information management system. Ten boreholes, 11 sanitation facilities and 47 hand-washing stations were provided for healthcare facilities in Kpandai and Tatala Sanguli districts.

UNICEF's contribution to PMTCT and paediatric HIV was guided by the Dakar call to action for acceleration of elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and antiretroviral treatment for children by 2020. A paediatric HIV services acceleration plan was launched and a national task team for its implementation was established. Through UNICEF support, 360 frontline health service providers from six high-burden HIV districts were trained to implement the plan, integrating PMTCT and EID in routine maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) services. A combined maternal and child health record book was developed to strengthen integration and reduce loss to follow-up. Through these interventions, the proportion of pregnant women counselled and tested for HIV in Eastern Region increased from 87 per cent by the end of June 2016 to 91 per cent in late June 2017. Of the 842 women who tested positive for HIV in Eastern Region, 87 per cent received antiretroviral therapy, compared to 52 per cent nationwide.

Health service delivery and the availability of vaccines faced challenges due to financial constraints. UNICEF will work with the Government in 2018 to improve funding provision,

particularly for securing vaccines and vaccine-related supplies. UNICEF provided technical support for vaccine quantification, provided procurement services for all vaccines and related supplies for Ghana and responded to the Government request to expedite procurement services during the period of vaccine shortage.

Other key challenges were the high turn-over of staff providing immunization services, inadequate training for frontline immunization officers and irregular supportive supervision, needed to promptly identify and address performance gaps. Low capacity to manage vaccine and immunization data at the operational level was also a challenge. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to build capacity through supportive supervision to national, regional, district and sub-district levels in Upper East, Upper West and Northern regions.

OUTPUT 1 OUTPUT 013 - Scale-up of PMTCT services: Health system in the highest HIV prevalence region has capacity to provide integrated PMTCT services.

Analytical statement of progress

National HIV prevalence increased marginally, from 1.8 per cent in 2015 to 2.4 per cent in 2016, according to the 2016 HIV sentinel survey. With support from UNICEF, a paediatric HIV services acceleration plan was launched by the First Lady of Ghana and a national task team for implementation at the national level, to increase access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) for children. Joint monitoring was conducted by relevant government agencies, including the GHS, Ghana AIDS Commission and Joint UN Team on AIDS (JUTA) in three high-burden HIV regions (Ashanti, Greater Accra and Eastern regions), which resulted in the identification of gaps in PMTCT and paediatric HIV services at the operational level; gaps included shortage of test kits and anti-retroviral drugs at the point of care, slow implementation of task-shifting and a widening gap between the number of antenatal sites and antiretroviral therapy sites. UNICEF Ghana, through JUTA, worked with stakeholders to address these gaps. In addition, data validation was conducted for PMTCT and paediatric HIV, resulting in the identification and correction of data inconsistencies.

At the sub-national level, UNICEF continued to support Eastern Region in the area of PMTCT and paediatric HIV during 2017. A total of 360 frontline health service providers from 149 health facilities in six high-burden districts were trained to implement the paediatric HIV services acceleration plan and standard operating procedures for integrating PMTCT into MNCH services. To reduce loss to follow-up and improve the continuum of care and uptake of anti-retroviral therapy, an innovative mobile technology (e-tracker) was implemented in Lower Manya-Krobo District. An electronic tracking module was also developed for PMTCT/EID, 56 computer tablets were provided and 135 health service providers from hospitals, health centres and community health planning and services centres were trained to use the tracking system.

UNICEF, through JUTA, worked with the Ghana AIDS Commission and the GHS to develop a successful proposal to the Global Fund, and supported the Eastern Region's health directorate to monitor and supervise PMTCT and paediatric HIV services at the regional, district and sub-district levels.

By mid-year, 91 per cent of women who were pregnant had been counselled and tested for HIV, out of 42,238 antenatal registrants, compared to 87 per cent during the same period in 2016. Of the 842 (2.2 per cent) women who tested positive for HIV, 87 per cent received anti-retroviral therapy, compared to the nationwide figure of 52 per cent. A total of 778 (92 per cent) of HIV-

exposed infants were tested for HIV by six weeks or before 18 months, compared to 31 per cent nationwide. High coverage of ART and EID for PMTCT in Eastern Region, a focus region for UNICEF, presents an opportunity to identify best practices for scale-up in other high burden regions.

OUTPUT 2 Output 14 - Coverage of Child Survival Interventions: Health systems in four focus regions have the capacity to deliver high-impact child survival interventions (immunization, ICCM of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea, LLIN) to all children under five years of age.

Analytical statement of progress

Despite various challenges faced by the expanded programme for immunization, UNICEF continued its advocacy for sustainable vaccine financing, using the development partners' group forum, health summit and other high-level meetings. UNICEF sponsored a three-member team to attend the cold chain equipment optimization platform workshop to enable them to develop a funding proposal for the GHS, including an international consultancy for successful development and submission of the proposal. UNICEF worked with the Government to quantify needs for vaccines and immunization devices and provided procurement services. Vaccines and safe injection materials were supplied as soon as Government payment was received by UNICEF's Supply Division. Two vaccines, meningococcal A and a second dose of measles-rubella, which are given to the age group 12-to-23 months were successfully introduced into the Immunization programme.

Communication activities aimed at increasing the uptake of vaccines given after infancy were conducted and reached 750,000 child care providers in three regions. Some 825,648 (72 per cent) infants received the third dose of the penta-valent vaccine and 776,711 (68 per cent) had received their first dose of measles vaccine by the end of September 2017.

Fiscal space was the major constraint in 2017. The MoH had no budget line for vaccine and other immunization supplies, resulting in stock-outs of oral polio virus and measles vaccines during 2017. Many health facilities did not have motor cycles or other appropriate means of transport to conduct outreach service delivery. A cold chain equipment inventory showed that 952 (22 per cent) of health facilities providing immunization services did not have adequate cold chain capacity. Other constraints included high turn-over of staff providing immunization services, lack of regular training, infrequent supportive supervision for early identification of performance gaps, and low capacity for vaccine management and immunization data at the operational level.

UNICEF supported refresher training for 750 frontline workers and training on the revised immunization policy and a field guide for 58 newly qualified health staff. This built their capacity to develop and implement micro-plans to increase EPI coverage with the target of reaching every child. Further, 125 motorcycles were procured and distributed to two regions to facilitate integrated MNCH and immunization service delivery.

As part of efforts to strengthen integrated MNCH service delivery, a combined maternal and child health record book was developed, bringing together antenatal care, delivery, postnatal care including immunization, HIV and nutrition. Use of this record book is envisaged to promote integration, improve continuum of care and improve overall quality of service delivery.

Under the global programme against child marriage, guidelines for adolescent- and youth-friendly health services were developed and implemented. A total of 130 health service

providers from 84 health facilities in four UNICEF convergence districts were trained to implement the guidelines.

OUTPUT 3 - Quality of maternal and newborn care: Health facilities in the Northern and Upper East Regions have the capacity to provide quality maternal and newborn care services.

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF's continued advocacy and technical support for strengthened accountability for maternal and newborn care through perinatal audits contributed to an increased proportion of audits in targeted hospitals in Upper East Region: from fewer than 40 per cent in 2016 to a range of 47-to-82 per cent in 2017.

UNICEF provided 50 computer tables to the National Health Insurance Authority to configure health facility credentialing software to incorporate revised quality standards on maternal and newborn care for facility credentialing. Under the MBFHFI, UNICEF supported the GHS to develop national kangaroo mother care (KMC) guidelines and a training manual, and built capacity of 25 health care providers from nine regions as national KMC trainers. This training resulted in capacity building of 33 hospital staff and increased advocacy in the regions, resulting in the establishment of a KMC unit in one municipal hospital and refurbishment and expansion of the KMC unit at the regional hospital in Bolgatanga. KMC coverage in the three hospitals implementing the MBFHFI increased significantly, rising from 62 per cent in 2016 to 99 per cent by the end of the third quarter of 2017, yielding survival rates of 98-to-100 per cent.

The proportion of newborns receiving key essential interventions (skin to skin contact at birth, breastfed within 30 minutes after birth, vitamin K, eye care and cord care) increased from 0-to-75 per cent in 2016 to 80-to-100 per cent in 2017 in targeted healthcare facilities in MBFHFI intervention districts. UNICEF supported these improvements through training, coaching, clinical mentoring of 337 healthcare providers on essential and emergency obstetric and new-born care and advocacy for essential drugs and supplies. Additionally, institutional stillbirth rates declined from 23 per 1,000 births in 2016 to 18 per 1,000 births by September 2017, resulting in as many as 150 stillbirths being averted. Overall neonatal case fatality rates in the three intervention hospitals fell from 10.2 per cent in first quarter of 2017 to 8.4 per cent by the third quarter, which translates to 67 new-born lives saved in 2017.

Baseline findings at the beginning of 2017 revealed that none of the facilities met 75 per cent of the MBFHFI standards on governance and safety of the physical environment. However, by the end of the third quarter, nearly 80 per cent of targeted facilities assessed met more than 75 per cent of the standards, following the development and implementation of quarterly quality improvement plans.

UNICEF provided WASH facilities for 26 health facilities as part of the WASH improvement initiative in Northern Region. In addition, capacity of 126 health service providers was built in hygiene and inter-personal communication. UNICEF supported a three-day national stakeholder meeting on new-born care – attended by parliamentarians, ministers of state, religious leaders, academia and CSOs – who pledged support and commitment to mobilizing resources for new-born care.

OUTPUT 4 Output 16 - National health sector policies: Ghana's maternal, newborn and child health policies, strategies and plans are evidence- based and equity-focused.

Analytical statement of progress

To improve health financing and secure commodities and supplies for continued implementation of key public health programmes, including EPI and nutrition, UNICEF along with the development partners group, successfully advocated for the development of a sustainable health financing strategy, which was included in an *aide-memoire* emanating from the April 2017 health summit.

During the summit, UNICEF worked with the Government to successfully develop a WASH in healthcare facilities strategy and national indicators to monitor its progress through the district health information management system. Progress on indicators will be reported on the DHIMS2 platform starting in the first quarter of 2018. To demonstrate an implementation module for improved WASH in healthcare facilities within the broader scope of the MNCH agenda, 10 healthcare facilities were provided with boreholes, sanitation facilities and hand-washing stations in Kpandai and Tatale Sanguli districts of the Northern Region to improve water supply and sanitation.

Following continued UNICEF advocacy, Ghana's health promotion department was elevated to divisional status, providing it with the needed leadership and human resource capacity to perform the important function of educating Ghanaians on prevention of both communicable and non-communicable diseases and promoting health. In addition, the GHS developed national guidelines for adolescent- and youth-friendly health services, with an emphasis on managing and preventing adolescent pregnancy. A total of 130 frontline health service providers were trained and the GHS guidelines implemented in four UNICEF convergence districts. This is expected to contribute to improved access to gender-responsive adolescent health services, reduce maternal and neonatal mortality among adolescent mothers and establish linkages with education and social welfare services for pregnant girls.

UNICEF, as part of the development partners group and health sector working group, provided technical support to the MoH for the development of the health sector medium-term development plan for 2018–2021.

OUTCOME 5: The needs of out-of-school children aged 6-14 years, especially girls, children with special needs and OVCs are systematically assessed and addressed in disadvantaged areas in five focus regions

Analytical statement of progress

The 2016-17 annual education sector performance review highlighted that Ghana continues to maintain high rates of participation at all levels of basic education. Gross enrolment ratios in kindergartens and primary schools have exceeded 100 per cent for the past several years, indicating that the system has the capacity to host all children of the appropriate school-going-age. Junior high schools (JHS) ratios are nearly there with 86.8 per cent gross enrolment in 2016-17. However, this does not consider the quality of school infrastructure.

Gender parity in school participation at the national level was achieved at basic education level, an important but a recent milestone that needs to be sustained. Adolescence is emerging as a critical area for girls' education, especially in relation to completing JHS and sharply widening

disparities for senior high school (SHS).

Despite high enrolment rates, the proportion of children aged 6–14 years who are not enrolled in either KG, primary schools, JHS or SHS remained at 7.3 per cent in 2014, and the share has stagnated since 2011. Stagnation, combined with projected rapid child population growth in the next decade, may contribute to the re-emergence of educational exclusion as a major policy issue.

Enrolment of over-age primary-school aged children in KG – currently a much more widespread phenomenon than exclusion or dropout – is a critical quality, equity and internal efficiency issue. It is part of a broader pattern of delayed enrolment, slow progression and low completion across education levels, from pre-primary to tertiary education, and particularly affects disadvantaged population groups. Massive disparities exist between rural and urban areas, between regions and between ethnic/linguistic groups; the disparities primarily reflect patterns of poverty as the key driver of educational inequality in Ghana.

Nearly 29,000 children living with disabilities were enrolled in basic education and SHS in 2016–17, of whom 6,130 were enrolled in special schools hosting mostly children with hearing impairment. Comparison with 2010 population census data suggests that data from the education management information system fail to identify many students as living with a disability. Most regular schools lack the equipment needed to facilitate access by children living with disabilities; special schools are better equipped than regular schools in relation to facilities (water, electricity, toilets).

UNICEF contributed toward the outcome through implementation of complementary basic education in four districts, reaching 1,856 girls and boys between the ages of 8 and 14 years, and through its inclusion in the new ESP as a critical issue for engagement. UNICEF Ghana also effectively placed a spotlight on the system's readiness to deliver on the inclusive education policy, through the education sector analysis and identification of data and system capacity gaps at the national and sub-national level and development of a strategy and knowledge resources to mainstream inclusion in both pre- and in-service teacher training.

UNICEF continued to coordinate among key stakeholders working in the area of KG education to develop a common approach, including operationalization of the national frameworks for in-service KG training and development of supplementary reading materials for early grades. Findings from the KG formative assessment also informed prioritization of pre-primary education during ESP preparation and highlighted the need for a revised operational plan to guide implementation over the next four years.

Adolescent girls' education remained a priority. UNICEF Ghana supported the development of critical frameworks and knowledge resources - addressing teenage pregnancy among school-going girls, a training manual on gender in education, and a gender in pre-tertiary education policy that when operationalized would support girls to remain in school. C4D activities also continued to gain traction within the sector, especially with reference to right-age enrolment, IE, keeping adolescent girls' in school and increasing parental and community engagement. However more reflection is needed to further integrate and institutionalize C4D in the education system.

With the transition to the new CP, addressing barriers to quality KG, IE and adolescent girls' education will remain priority areas, and C4D as an approach and strategy (rather than a standalone output) will play an important role in engaging with education stakeholders to

improve educational outcomes for all girls and boys. These areas are also highlighted in the new ESP.

The recent policy on free SHS– officially introduced to facilitate enrolment by students from disadvantaged families– risks making the distribution of public education expenditure more unequal than it is at present, as it does not benefit the most disadvantaged students who do not complete JHS. It may also crowd out public expenditure on other levels of education– especially KG, which if done right is known to have a high impact on equity and quality. Similarly, the anticipated decentralization is expected to make the system more responsive to local needs and improve accountability, but may increase disparities between regions and districts that have adequate management capacity and those that do not, all of which could have serious implications for UNICEF's work.

OUTPUT 1 IR17: Young children's school readiness improved through increased access to quality pre-school education programmes in at least 20 deprived districts

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Ghana's support for improved quality of pre-primary education programmes focused on: a) increased availability of quality learning materials, b) improved quality of teaching/learning in the classroom and c) enhanced coordination and evidence-based policy advocacy. Key achievements in 2017 are detailed below.

Led by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the national framework for development of early grade supplementary reading materials (initiated in 2016 to address low availability and poor quality of print resources for early grades) was finalized. The framework was applied to the development and piloting of 50 supplementary readers for KG one to Primary three (KG1 to P3) learners – with reference to age appropriateness, language, texts, font and illustrations. Testing was conducted in two districts and also served to guide the development of student lesson notes used to train early grade teachers across 100 districts as part of the USAID supported 'Learning Project'.

The national in-service teacher training framework for KG was finalized under the leadership of the National Teaching Council and the GES' early childhood education unit. An evidence-based process was used to develop the framework, which drew upon local good practices and involved key national stakeholders such as Sabre Trust, MASHAV, Lively Minds, Right to Play, and UNICEF. The new guidance provides a coordinated framework for building the capacity of teachers in developmentally appropriate, child-centred and play-based classroom pedagogy and assessment, using locally resourced teaching/learning materials and facilitating parental/community engagement. Some 5,285 (2,363 men, 2,922 women) head teachers/KG teachers/attendants across 20 districts were trained using the framework. In addition, 303 (238 men, 65 women) members of district training support teams received further training, enabling them to serve as coaches for KG teachers/assistants in their respective districts and regions.

Structured involvement by volunteer mothers in schools was piloted in one district, in partnership with Lively Minds. By year's-end, 27 play schemes were functional, involving 13 resource teachers, 1,034 volunteer mothers, and 2,860 children (1,421 girls, 1,439 boys). The volunteer mothers were trained in play-based teaching, health promotion around malaria prevention and addressing diarrhoeal diseases in children. The pilot focused on how best to engage the local education system, including KG teachers and circuit supervisors, to support community engagement.

UNICEF advocated for prioritization of pre-primary education in the ESP and for increased inter-ministerial and partner coordination, to improve KG service delivery. The advocacy was based on available evidence on the presence of over-age children in KG (2016 'Out-of-School Assessment', limited availability of trained teachers, and the uncoordinated, under-budgeted, and weak functioning of the KG sub-system (formative assessment of UNICEF support to GES for KG). UNICEF relied on multiple advocacy platforms: disseminating 5,000 additional copies of the national KG minimum guidelines to raise awareness on quality standards, convening a stakeholder consultation on the assessment findings, facilitating a ministerial delegation to participate in the national ECD workshop in Nigeria and remaining an engaged participant in the ESP preparation. In 2018 UNICEF will support the GES to review and develop a costed KG operational plan and policy for medium-term implementation.

OUTPUT 2 IR18: Complementary basic education opportunities expanded to out-of-school children aged 8-14 years in at least 5 deprived districts

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF formally concluded its support to the complementary basic education programme, which targeted out-of-school children in four districts (Krachi East, Nchumuru, Builsa North and Builsa South). Some 1,856 children (998 boys, 858 girls) between the ages of 8 and 14 years of age enrolled in the 2016-17 cycle. The final enrolment numbers include the 1,788 children reported in December 2017 and an additional 68 learners who enrolled later into the programme.

Nearly 97.5 per cent of the enrolled cohort completed nine months of community-based classes in June 2017 and were expected to enter formal primary school in September-October 2017. Provisional estimates from the supporting NGOs indicate that 1,678 learners (902 boys, 776 girls) – 93 per cent of the children who completed CBE – entered formal primary school for the 2017-18 school year. Final numbers will be available in January 2018 from the participating districts.

The numbers indicate that girls' participation continues to lag behind boys'; older girls facing greater challenges for enrolling in CBE. The near doubling of girls' enrolment in this cohort was a consequence of additional targeted efforts made by the GES and supporting NGOs to ensure that girls enrolled and regularly attended CBE classes. Once enrolled, they tend to continue with CBE and formal schooling with a bit of additional support: 97 per cent of girls (832) and 98 per cent of boys (978) completed CBE, and 93 per cent of girls enrolled in formal schools compared to 92 per cent of boys. As part of support from the Swedish National Committee, 1,550 bicycles were procured and distributed to 776 girls and 902 boys who entered formal schools, especially for those living in communities located at some distance from a primary school.

UNICEF and DFID continued to advocate with the Government to include CBE as a distinct sub-policy objective in the ESP, based on the 2016 out-of-school children update and the equity analysis completed for the ESP. The latter highlighted stagnating out-of-school numbers in Ghana since 2011, as well as the growing proportion of children who have never been to school or will have delayed entry and school drop-outs. In addition, DFID commissioned a tracer study on the CBE learners that will be completed in 2018, providing evidence on the programme's effectiveness.

Finally, informed by an earlier UNICEF-led experimental pilot in one district in 2013-15 with the

GES as the lead implementation agency, DFID is currently supporting GES to serve as implementation lead for CBE in 10 districts. However, sustaining the previous experiment – which utilized national service personnel as CBE community facilitators, as a cost-effective solution – remains a challenge in the absence of implementation of recommended policy reforms within the National Service Secretariat.

OUTPUT 3 IR19: Capacity of primary schools enhanced to provide appropriate care and support for children with special needs including children with disabilities in at least 20 deprived districts

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF championed and supported implementation of the inclusive education policy, focusing on: a) assessment of readiness of the education system for implementation; b) increased availability of IE-responsive resource materials for educators to create inclusive classrooms; & c) improved service delivery at the district level to identify and support children with a disability.

Key achievements in 2017:

Guidelines for an IE education sector analysis with a focus on disability were piloted. UNICEF, in partnership with the MoE-GES, hosted an inter-organizational global technical team to facilitate the pilot, including representatives from UNICEF headquarters and WCARO, IIEP-Pôle de Dakar and the GPE. The national team included representation from the MoE-GES, other relevant ministries (including the GHS), non-state actors and academia. The interim findings of the pilot indicated that Ghana has a well-developed policy and a conducive legislative environment. However, systemic gaps affected successful implementation of the policy, including: limited knowledge and understanding of IE at the national and sub-national levels, inadequate capacity and resources to support IE and weak mechanisms for data collection and common definitions on children with disabilities. The findings informed the draft ESP preparation process and were shared at the regional IE workshop in Dakar, Senegal.

Inclusivity is also a key guiding principle for both the pre-service and in-service teacher training curriculum. UNICEF supported the National Teaching Council and teacher education division to finalize the IE in-service training module for improved classroom management to support all children. Additionally, UNICEF supported the transforming teacher education and learning project to integrate inclusion into the development of the national curriculum framework for colleges of education in Ghana. The project, supported by DFID, is tasked with reviewing and developing the national pre-service teaching curriculum for the diploma in basic education.

Printing and distribution of seven IE-focused storybooks (developed in 2016) as part of the initiative on increasing supplementary reading materials in the 20 focus districts was also undertaken. Monitoring reports indicate that all 1,397 schools are using the stories to create awareness and understanding of children with disabilities among learners. Further, 10 regional centres were also equipped with assistive devices (hearing aids, crutches, eye-glasses, wheelchairs) and basic screening materials (Snellen eye charts, tossing rings, drums, tennis balls) as part of UNICEF's broader efforts to strengthen regional assessment centres and special schools as resource centres for IE.

The six remaining districts completed the screening of 22,098 students (11,705 boys, 10,393 girls) to identify children with disabilities. District inclusive education teams led the screening

process, which identified 3,323 children (1,747 boys, 1,576 girls) with disabilities related to vision, hearing and physical impairment, among others. Additionally, 12,959 students (6,588 boys, 6,371 girls) in 14 districts, who had been identified with some form of disability through an earlier screening in 2015, were also tracked and confirmed to be still attending school.

OUTPUT 4 IR20: Awareness on and demand for education increased among disadvantaged groups, especially girls in at least 20 deprived districts

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF support to increasing demand and awareness focused on prioritization of adolescent girls' education in sectoral discussions and frameworks and institutionalization of C4D to support enrolment, retention and completion.

UNICEF collaborated with girls' education unit of the GES to address knowledge and capacity gaps. Background research to inform guidelines for an education sector response to prevent and manage teenage pregnancy and support re-entry was finalized. The document was developed through a consultative process involving discussions with adolescents, parents, educators, civil society partners and traditional leaders. The document was also informed by the case study on adolescent pregnancy and schooling in three districts in Ghana conducted by the University of Cape Coast. In late 2017 the GES technical team was developing the guidelines, which will be available in early 2018 for validation by management. An indirect result of the consultations was the emergence of a nascent network of stakeholders committed to work on adolescent girls' education.

A draft manual for training and building capacity of was developed and was awaiting review and approval for printing and dissemination. It will serve as a reference manual for GES staff, especially those in the girls' education unit; the ten regional gender officers, and the 216 girls' education officers, supporting their efforts to address gender issues in education.

Lack of a comprehensive sectoral policy on gender in education was acknowledged to be a policy gap, and during 2017 agreement was reached to address it. Given that the girls' education unit mandate is restricted to pre-tertiary education, efforts were initiated to develop a draft gender in pre-tertiary education policy. Consultations were completed in 2017 and a draft document is available. However, further work on the policy was put on hold to ensure harmonization with ongoing policy work at the tertiary level and for technical and vocational education and training, to ensure a more comprehensive document relevant to the whole sector.

UNICEF's 20 partner districts developed and implemented context-specific C4D plans to coincide with schools re-opening in September 2017. During a review and planning workshop, 120 district officials (73 men, 47 women) from all 20 districts underwent refresher training in C4D messaging, promoting safe schools (including strategies to prevent teenage pregnancy) and use of data in planning. Armed with skills, the officials oriented a diverse set of 8,800 stakeholders (5,614 men, 3,186 women) – representing district assemblies, the GHS, agriculture extension officers, market association leaders, traditional leaders, religious leaders and staff of selected decentralized organizations. The stakeholders, in turn, reached out to nearly 88,000 parents and 600 communities across the 20 districts.

Adopting a targeted approach, the girls' education unit also partnered with the Muslim Relief

Association of Ghana to sensitize and inform nearly 1,000 key Muslim stakeholders in 15 Muslim-majority districts in northern Ghana about challenges faced by Muslim girls in participating in education, including socio-cultural norms related to teenage pregnancy and early marriage.

OUTCOME 6: Educational Quality and Outcomes of Pre-primary and Primary Schools Improved in 5 Focus Regions

Analytical statement of progress

Learning outcomes in Ghana's primary schools continue to be poor. The 2016 national education assessment showed that the majority of pupils in the fourth and sixth year of primary school did not reach the proficiency cut-off (55 per cent for the assessments) for English and mathematics. It also highlighted disparities in performance between pupils in urban and rural areas, non-deprived and deprived districts and between genders. The three regions in the north of Ghana (Northern, Upper East, and Upper West) had the worst results.

Further, 2015 early grade math and reading assessments showed that learning performance is enhanced if pupils are the right age for their classes, attended pre-school or kindergarten, attend school regularly, have exercise books, have books and reading materials at home, spend time reading on their own at school, practice reading aloud at home and have someone at home who reads to them.

Ghana's education system has benefitted from high levels of public expenditure in recent years, accounting for 6.5 per cent of GDP and 21.8 per cent of total public expenditure in 2015. However, limited capacity and a weak accountability framework to support implementation of policies, monitor results, and sustain the gains made is leading to persistent and widening implementation gaps. The lack of transparent and agreed standards and benchmarks for school/system performance, monitoring mechanisms to strengthen accountability and poor parental engagement and weak community oversight underlie inefficiencies in the sector.

Further, the distribution of public expenditure between levels of education does not appear to be equitable: a) expenditure on KG and primary schools grew slowly between 2011 and 2014, and declined in 2015, by 15.6 per cent for primary schools; b) unit costs increase dramatically from one level of education to the next. In 2015 they were very low for KG and primary school compared to junior and senior high school; c) regions with the highest incidence of poverty (Upper West and Northern regions) tend to receive lower levels of funding per student.

UNICEF has contributed to the improved quality outcomes through interventions that support teaching and learning in the classroom, learning environment in schools and district-level planning and monitoring. UNICEF support has helped to operationalize the use of available materials and tools in 20 partner districts. UNICEF supported KG interventions to help improve the quality and availability of classroom resource materials for teachers (see outcomes 5 and 17), with a view to promoting young children's school readiness. In addition, 4,213 teachers were trained on the use of school libraries and supplementary readers and 20 reading festivals were organized, reaching 7,000 learners and community members. Real-time data monitoring through the mobile school report card (mSRC) was expanded to an additional 10 districts, bringing the total to 20. Regular monitoring of the mSRC online dashboard indicates increased compliance by schools in providing data inputs for monitoring. District and school level planning tools were also revised and operationalized in the 20 districts and 1,192 schools.

As part of improving learning environments in schools, a safe schools resource pack to address bullying, corporal punishment and sexual harassment was completed and field tested in 2017, and is expected to be rolled out in 2018-19. UNICEF also formally concluded support to the enhanced-school health programme and shared lessons learned, especially relating to the need for effective coordination and coherence across interventions to promote school health and sexuality education, in order not to burden students and teachers with multiple, competing co-curricular interventions. Lessons on coordination and coherence are equally applicable to UNICEF, where different programmes (education, health, WASH, and child protection) use the education service delivery platform.

As an active member of the development partner's group, UNICEF also worked with DFID (then the coordinating agency and now the grant agency) to support the MoE to successfully access an education sector plan development grant from the GPE and to support preparations for the new ESP, with an enhanced focus on learning and equity. Drawing on UNICEF Ghana's experience, as well as specific evidence generated through operational research, assessment and evaluation, UNICEF contributions spotlighted school readiness and KG, keeping adolescent girls safe and empowered in schools, inclusive education (especially for children with a disability) and the need for a costed water and sanitation plan for schools as part of larger infrastructure needs.

During the new CP addressing barriers to quality learning for all children – spanning KG, primary foundational skills, IE and adolescent girls' education and skills development – will remain priorities, and are aligned with the new ESP priorities. However UNICEF's investments may not translate into results, in the absence of adequate financing and a national education performance accountability framework functioning across various governance levels. UNICEF Ghana will also systematically seek to promote innovative ways to increase financing and build capacity for national and sub-national planning and monitoring and increased citizen engagement, to strengthen accountability for improved service delivery.

OUTPUT 1 IR21: Issues of exclusion in and quality of education explicitly addressed in national and sub-national sector strategies and plans and timely and sufficient funds allocated to services/programmes for deprived districts and disadvantaged groups

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF support for sector planning and monitoring at the national and sub-national levels focused on: a) operationalizing planning and monitoring tools under the leadership of the GES basic education division, b) evidence-based advocacy to inform the draft ESP preparation process and c) finalizing the education programme evaluation.

The basic education division drew upon the implementation experience of the GPE grant that concluded in 2016, and completed the review of district- and school-level planning and monitoring tools, with a view to facilitate planning through use of an Excel-based tool with a drop-down guiding menu for interventions and facilitate involvement by key stakeholders. Thirty regional planning and statistics officers from all 10 regions were trained as trainers on the revised tools and to serve as a resource at the national level, influencing planning in Ghana's 216 districts.

In 20 districts, 80 officers were trained on the revised tools, and participatory planning involving 400 district staff and key stakeholders (district assemblies, CSOs, traditional leaders) was completed in 2017. Some 1,192 schools (85 per cent) used the new school-level tool to develop

their performance and improvement plan for 2018-19 academic year, and involved school management committees, parent-teacher associations and school alumni.

UNICEF collaborated with the GES and the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration to conduct an operational assessment of district- and community-based structures (district education oversight committees, school management committees and parent-teacher associations) in three districts to better understand the barriers to their functioning, to inform strategies to strengthen decentralized district accountability.

UNICEF advocated for inclusion of critical issues related to adolescent girls, safe schools, inclusive education and WASH in the new ESP. The formative assessment on KG helped to build consensus on the need to strengthen an intersectoral approach to school readiness. The pilot education sector analysis on IE provided new data on children with a disability, and the draft costed strategy for WASH in schools helped highlight the sector's broader infrastructure needs. UNICEF-supported pilot interventions on mobile school report cards and district quality monitoring system for education were showcased as part of a panel on 'innovations for accountability' during the national education sector annual review.

An evaluation of the 2012–2017 education programme through a capacity development lens was completed, and a validation workshop involving a vertical slice of stakeholders from the sub-district, district, regional, and headquarters levels was conducted. Findings highlighted that training had been successful in building skills of individuals in identified areas such as teaching-learning, district planning and monitoring and girls' education. However challenges remained in relation to transforming the organizational culture at the district level, due to inadequate budgets, weak coordination, limited school-community linkages and in some cases turnover of trained staff. The absence of a monitoring mechanism made it difficult to assess impact beyond trained individuals, and the limitations of the cascade model were also evident. Recommendations from the evaluation will inform regular programming and the design of new interventions.

OUTPUT 2 IR22: Quality of teaching and learning improved through the practice of child-centred, activity-based teaching in primary schools in at least 20 deprived districts

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Ghana's support for improved teaching and learning in primary schools focused on three areas: acquisition of reading skills and the habit of reading; use of real-time data to improve the quality of services; and experimenting with innovative ways to support enhanced accountability for learning.

A total of 4,213 teachers were trained on school library management, use of supplementary readers and how to organize reading activities for children, including reading festivals across 20 districts. Monitoring reports indicate that nearly 300,000 learners are accessing the supplementary readers from either the school library (fixed space or mobile) or in classrooms. Reading festivals also reached 7,000 learners, community members, traditional and civic leaders across 20 districts, creating awareness on the importance of reading.

The mobile school report card was expanded to an additional 10 districts and achieved its stated target of 20 districts. The expansion entailed provision of tablets to schools and circuit supervisors and training of 2,054 district directors, circuit supervisors, head teachers and selected teachers on application (1,703 men and 351 women). Regular monitoring of the online

dashboard revealed increasing compliance by schools in providing data inputs for monitoring. There is emerging evidence that mobile school report card data is being used to inform planning in districts, such as development of annual district education operational plans. In addition to the costing study completed earlier in the year, operational research will be commissioned in January 2018 to track and understand how this tool is being used by management to strengthen accountability.

As part of its support for experimentation for improved learning, UNICEF Ghana supported two key initiatives. It partnered with the national education assessment unit to experiment with the 'district quality monitoring system for education' tool in four districts to address district data gaps in learner performance and support results-based planning and monitoring at the district level. It is a cost-effective tool that helped to generate representative and diagnostic data on actual reading performance in districts, using the lot quality assurance sampling methodology. The baseline data generated was used to inform targeted interventions for the 2017-18 academic year. In one district education authorities met with all head teachers to agree on strategies to improve reading levels, including: introducing 30 minutes of reading before the start of official school day, using supplementary readers and redistributing teaching/learning materials to schools according to need.

UNICEF collaborated with Innovations for Poverty Action to initiate the development of an instructional model to help teachers provide targeted instruction to learners lagging behind in literacy and numeracy, especially those in primary grades 4, 5 and 6. There is global evidence, including in Ghana, that targeted instruction is cost-effective for accelerating learning gains among children in primary grades, especially those demonstrating low learning levels.

OUTPUT 3 IR23: Healthy, Safe and gender-sensitive environments established in primary schools in at least 20 deprived districts

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Ghana's support for the creation of a safe, healthy and gender-sensitive learning environment focused on streamlining of school health and associated life-skills interventions and development of the safe schools resource pack.

UNICEF's targeted support to the enhanced school health programme in 14 districts during the current country programme cycle was formally concluded. The programme was an integrated school-based life skills and health education initiative implemented during 2013-16 to support children and adolescents with appropriate knowledge, skills and values to enable them grow into healthy and productive adults. In particular, UNICEF partnered with the GES' school health education programme (SHEP) to disseminate, reflect on and validate the findings of the programmes' formative assessment, which was completed in 2016.

The findings and discussions, while acknowledging the importance of the issue, highlighted the unsustainable nature of a stand alone, donor-supported initiative, further complicated by weak coordination between the implementing partners: SHEP, the GHS and participating CSOs. In terms of content and methodology, integration and infusion of health-promoting practices into traditional school subjects showed the most promise; however the degree to which different content areas were addressed was often related to teachers' comfort with the issues. The latter is emerging as a key area requiring additional reflection given its importance for adolescent girls and boys.

These discussions triggered further reflection on the need for an organizational assessment of the SHEP unit to deliver on its operational mandate, which was undertaken to further explore the unit's vision, coordination mechanism and portfolio coherence to strengthen its functioning. The organizational assessment also led UNICEF's education and WASH sections to coordinate internally on school-based interventions to avoid burdening counterparts with competing and or duplicative interventions.

A draft safe schools resource pack to address bullying, corporal punishment and sexual harassment was completed and field-tested in three districts. Its development benefited from a one-year pilot project on positive discipline implemented in two UNICEF-partner districts. The resource pack includes four components: a teachers' handbook, training manual, peer-to-peer manual for children and a set of fact sheets.

The consultative process of developing the safe school resource pack also helped to create awareness on safety and protection among the 1,000 national and sub-national participants across the country. The resource pack is expected to be rolled out in 20 districts in 2018-19. As part of a negotiated agreement with the Futbol Club Barcelona Foundation, UNICEF will be exploring the use of sports to introduce safe school materials in schools.

OUTCOME 7: Social Protection and C4D: Vulnerable and marginalized families with children across Ghana access and utilize improved social services and are empowered to adopt key family practices.

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF continued to use its technical expertise, close relationships with government partners and hands-on operational support to leverage broader improvements in the LEAP programme and social protection policy and implementation. UNICEF placed particular emphasis on initiating the policy's implementation plan, strengthening core operational processes of the LEAP programme, in order to enable effective expansion, consultation and advocacy with diverse stakeholders on both LEAP and social protection, thus enhancing monitoring and evidence-generation. Given the change of Government, UNICEF also helped to ensure continuity of activities despite staffing transitions in the MoGCSP.

At the policy level, one key area has been development and implementation of a communication strategy, including public lectures on social protection. In addition, regional consultations were held across Ghana with local governments, traditional and religious leaders and civil society on their engagement in social protection implementation, as well as with parliament and diverse media.

The LEAP programme's core systems and processes were also strengthened in 2017 through UNICEF support. Given LEAP's reach to just one in eight poor households and plans for further expansion, UNICEF worked with the Government to ensure that the programme is fit for purpose and has the capacity to expand. As of end-2017, the LEAP programme had 213,000 families enrolled in all 216 districts, of which 197,000 are receiving payments through the improved e-payment system. A major achievement this year was the Government's adoption and scale-up of the improved targeting approach tested by UNICEF, enabling the programme to identify an additional eligible 94,000 households to be enrolled in early 2018.

UNICEF also provided technical assistance to strengthen monitoring systems and evidence-generation to improve social protection policy and programming. Examples include support to

the development of a draft national Social Protection monitoring and evaluation framework, an ongoing system for independent monitoring checks and completion of the LEAP 1,000 end-line data collection.

In relation to UNICEF's C4D work, a programme assessment in early 2017 enabled reprioritization and strengthened strategy focused on capacity building, innovation, evidence-generation and advocacy.

In 2017 UNICEF built the capacity of more than 11,000 people from Government, civil society and religious faiths on interpersonal communication and social mobilization skills for effective community outreach. In partnership with six government institutions and 15 NGOs, UNICEF directly reached 1,195,560 people in 5,956 communities in five regions, and over 12 million people indirectly, through the mass media.

UNICEF maintained its support to the GHS to collect behavioural data through the district health information management system. This monitoring mechanism has enhanced government capacity in the areas of programme planning and implementation for social and behaviour-change communication.

UNICEF collaborated with the GHS and NGO partners to create demand during the flagship 'second year of life' (2YL) immunization programme. Nearly 200,000 people in 300 communities in the northern region were reached, leading to an almost 40 per cent increase in 2YL vaccination rates. The 'most significant change' story model was introduced as a participatory monitoring tool to capture changes in caregivers' knowledge, attitudes and practices. Stories revealed the need to improve health worker attitudes and skills to foster the uptake of positive behaviour.

UNICEF led innovative behaviour-change programming through the mobile-based platform Agoo and an audio-recorded device called the talking book. Agoo provided information on key issues for young people – including child marriage, education, and sexual harassment in school – and reached more than 2,500 people daily, 87 per cent of whom were younger than 24 years. UNICEF renewed its partnership with MTN, Ghana's largest telecom company, to make Agoo free to all of its users. An evaluation of the talking book intervention showed increases in knowledge and positive behaviours in a range of areas including handwashing, using insecticide treated nets and birth registration. As a result, UNICEF has scaled-up the pilot, seeking to reach 250,000 people in 10 districts in Upper West and Northern regions.

UNICEF played a key role in advocating for integration of social and behaviour change communication in Government policy and planning. It hosted the first national C4D knowledge seminar, involving 150 participants representing Government, development partners, NGOs, academia and research institutions. In addition, two studies (a social norms study and an impact evaluation of C4D approaches using randomized control trial), were nearly complete in late 2017. The social norms study, one of the office's annual priorities for 2017, will help UNICEF and partners to identify opportunities for addressing social norms around six key health and nutrition behaviours. The results of the impact evaluation study showed different degrees of impact through various C4D channels.

OUTPUT 1: Social Protection: The social protection system is strengthened through improving key features and elements that define the effectiveness, efficiency and reach of interventions

(particularly LEAP) and supporting policy development, policy relevant research and policy advocacy.

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF support enabled finalization of the social protection policy implementation plan. Policy and technical support was provided to develop the communication strategy, including a wide range of public consultation and communication activities. UNICEF also complemented MoGCSP activities with UNICEF-led communication initiatives advocating for social protection and the LEAP programme and to combat common misperceptions. Communication efforts included media coverage at critical moments, such as op-eds and TV/radio appearances prior to budget discussions. In advance of the 2017 budget release, UNICEF hosted six international experts to participate in a blitz of media activities to engage policy-makers and the public on thematic issues in social protection, such as 'cash plus', graduation, poverty and inequality. Among the events were: a research workshop with key government and civil society stakeholders, a social protection public dialogue with over 300 attendees, a public lecture, a discussion on a popular morning television show on Ghana TV and a webinar (co-hosted with the World Bank). Additionally, the experts recorded video 'shorts' that were used to spread social protection messages via national TV spots, and social media followed with tweets of the events at *#Support4All*.

Nonetheless, the formation of structures needed for cross-sectoral monitoring and implementation was delayed, to ensure endorsement by the new Government. The social protection intersectoral technical committee was re-inaugurated at the end of 2017, but is not yet fully functional, and additional structures need to be formalized at decentralized levels.

Support for the LEAP programme was a critical part of UNICEF's social protection work in 2017, strengthening its core systems and processes and ensuring that it is delivering effectively for programme participants. Priority was given to improving programme enrolment, targeting and payments, and to ensuring that these are working in the field. Guidelines and training for community-level verification of identified households were developed in preparation for the enrolment of new households in LEAP. This resulted in verification of 54,000 new households. Targeting was supported through assisting LEAP to manage the performance of the third-party data collection firm. Field monitoring and development of an automatic payment reconciliation module for the management information system facilitated transparent registration and payment of an additional 62,000 households, using an electronic payment platform.

The year under review experienced the fruition of earlier research and evaluation efforts and progress toward systematizing regular monitoring at the programme and policy level and generation of evidence. The 2016 LEAP impact evaluation final report and end-line data collection for the LEAP 1000 impact evaluation were both completed. Social protection thematic papers on 'Cash Plus' and 'Active Citizenship', and LEAP-related papers on nutrition, child marriage and women's networks and well-being were also produced in 2017.

LEAP has continued to produce quarterly reports; adjustments to report content and format are ongoing to improve usefulness for management and performance tracking. The MoGCSP, with technical support from UNICEF, drafted a monitoring and evaluation framework for the social protection system, which is expected to be launched in 2018.

OUTPUT 2 C4D: The capacity of Government, NGOs, CBOs, and traditional/religious leaders is built to mobilise and promote behaviour and social change through the adoption of key family practices.

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Ghana worked with six government partners and 15 NGOs to plan, implement and monitor participatory communication interventions (radio, drama and *durbars*) around 12 behaviours. Approximately 1.1 million people in 5,956 communities were reached directly in five focus regions, and over 12 million people indirectly, through nationwide mass media, demonstrating extensive reach. UNICEF also built the capacity of 11,567 people from Government, CSOs and traditional and religious authorities in interpersonal communication and social mobilization skills.

A new key programmatic objective for 2017 was to boost national advocacy with the Government to integrate C4D into its programming. As a result, UNICEF organized the first national C4D knowledge seminar, attended by 49 organizations from Government, development partners, NGOs, academic and research institutions. The seminar, to be an annual event, resulted in expression of interest by two universities (Baptist University College and University of Ghana) to seek UNICEF's support to set up C4D courses in their undergraduate curriculum. UNICEF plans to work closely with academic institutions to institutionalize C4D capacity-building efforts during the coming CP cycle.

UNICEF collaborated with the GHS and NGO partners for the campaign on second year of life immunization in Northern region. Nearly 200,000 people in 300 communities were reached through communication engagement, leading to an almost 40 per cent increase in vaccinations. Of 60 most significant change stories reviewed, 29 were selected to capture change in knowledge, attitudes and practices among community members.

UNICEF continued to use a mobile-based platform called Agoo to provide information to young people through interactive voice response. The platform reached 572,268 people (55 per cent female, 87 per cent below 24 years) with messages on child marriage, open defecation, malaria and right age school enrolment. UNICEF and MTN renewed their memorandum of understanding for two years, making the Agoo service free to all MTN subscribers. UNICEF also scaled up the talking book device to 10 districts in Upper West and Northern regions. The pilot evaluation showed that talking book users demonstrate significantly higher adoption of the behaviours covered by the messages than non-users.

UNICEF collaborated with the GHS and USAID to roll out the nationwide collection of behavioural indicators, as part of the district health information management system. UNICEF plans to work with the GHS to utilize behavioural data for its programming.

The study on unpacking social norms and behaviours related to child survival was one of the office's annual priorities. In partnership with George Washington University, UNICEF shared top-line results of the study with Government partners. The findings will be used for health and nutrition programming in Government, as well as in UNICEF's next country programme.

In addition, the impact evaluation of four key C4D channels (radio, drama, home visit and mobile messaging) using a randomized control trial, was finalized. The results demonstrated different degrees of impact by various communication channels.

OUTCOME 8 Outcome 8: Policy analysis and advocacy, M&E, and Communications: Policy analysis and advocacy, M&E, and external Communications are based on evidence, linked to functional M&E systems, and are used to reduce child poverty and encourage equitable development.

Analytical statement of progress

In relation to UNICEF's policy advocacy, 2017 witnessed adjustment related to the change in Government and the need to re-establish the conversation on inclusive development. As a result, change was addressed through two main channels – national media and technical policy support. This has meant that the issue of inequity has become more commonly discussed and acknowledged in Ghanaian society, as media mentions of the issue increased substantially. At the technical level, UNICEF Ghana provided hands-on support and inputs in such areas as social protection (see output), data accessibility, productive inclusion and taxation.

Overall a shift was witnessed in Government priorities between the election (in December 2016) and the end of the year: from messaging in the party's election manifesto focused on 'growth' and 'opportunity for all', to the new President's medium-term development plan, focusing on the outcome 'prosperity for all'. However the 2018 budget, released in November 2017, recognized that implementation of the vision will be gradual, as several areas saw budget freezes or even reductions. A new partnership with the Ministry of Finance established earlier this year was quick to produce potential channels for addressing this situation in the future.

In relation to social accountability, progress was made in firmly embedding the DLT in national consciousness (around 90 per cent of stakeholders are now aware of it) and promoting its use in national planning (seven out of 10 state that they used the previous DLT report). UNICEF worked with key stakeholders, including parliamentarians, to reach agreement on the need to revise the formula for allocation of local resources, to better address need and to explore use of the DLT to do so.

In relation to national capacity and production of research on poverty and inequality, UNICEF established Ghana's first-ever national research network– the Ghana inclusive development research network – entering into a partnership with the University of Development Studies in Tamale. Interest in establishing the network was high; more than 100 research teams submitted requests for participation.

Cross-sectoral policy advocacy deepened in the area of WASH as UNICEF established a policy advocacy strategy on sanitation that quickly led to a change in how sanitation is prioritized at the local level, meaning that from 2017 forward districts will be directed to include budget lines for spending on sanitation.

Strong policy-making depends on access to and use of quality data. UNICEF worked closely in 2017 with different ministries, departments and agencies to develop, support and improve decentralized monitoring and evaluation systems to collect and manage data for evidence-based decision making. UNICEF's support to the national basic sanitation information system – a district-based tool for monitoring sanitation interventions – allowed Ghana to track national progress toward achieving ODF status. UNICEF also led support for the deployment of a LEAP management information system to significantly improve monitoring of the cash transfer programme.

In 2017 UNICEF successfully supported the Government in planning the new MICS survey in

Ghana, raising additional funding and providing technical capacity to introduce new modules. As a result, the MICS will, for the first time, make available new information on children's learning, early childhood development and water quality.

Finally, UNICEF collaborated with the newly created Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation, intending to promote an M&E culture across Government and promote accountability for planned commitments.

Beyond policy advocacy and evidence, UNICEF Ghana also placed a priority on public advocacy. To strengthen engagement with and outreach to young people and influence public opinion, UNICEF Ghana strategically and consistently developed its online presence through its social media platforms. As a result UNICEF Ghana was at the forefront of UNICEF WCARO's social media rankings – remaining in first place for the number of Facebook followers (more than 85,000) and second place for Twitter, with 14,700 followers.

Given that Ghana's media reported on several cases of child abuse this year, strengthening the capacity of journalists in this area became increasingly relevant to protection of the rights, dignity and participation of children. UNICEF advanced its strategic approach to positively influence the ways in which children are reported on, holding its first all-day summit on ethical reporting on children for student journalists, and delivering presentations on the same topic to journalists at two other key events: an African-Union led workshop for West African journalists and an event on child marriage.

Prominent public advocacy campaigns on issues of sanitation, child marriage and education played an important role in shaping the conversation on these topics in Ghana's public sphere. Debates were held in national media fora, and Government figures have reiterated their commitment to developing these areas in Ghana. Through partnerships, alliances and collaboration with key influencers, the private sector and the media, broad awareness was raised in 2017 on issues of inequity and poverty impacting millions of Ghanaian children.

Engagement with the private sector yielded financial commitment between two companies to support new-born care equipment and deeper involvement in strengthening Ghana's child online protection system.

OUTPUT 1 Output 27: Policy Analysis and Advocacy: annual research and advocacy outputs on child poverty and inequality lead to increased equitability of resource allocation.

Analytical statement of progress

Advocacy in 2017 was informed by political analysis following the December 2016 election, carried out in partnership with the Institute of Democratic Governance in January 2017. UNICEF Ghana's policy work focused on: policy and budget analysis, social accountability and data and inclusive development.

In relation to inclusive development, an assessment of the 2016 advocacy strategy and a redrafting of the annual plan were carried out. The civil society coalition on inclusive development set up in 2016 was supported to produce a study capturing the main drivers of inequality in Ghana and to carry out media advocacy. In addition UNICEF Ghana, in partnership with the country's largest media outlet (Multimedia), developed a communications plan on inequity with the aim of increasing public awareness and understanding of the issue. A key 2017 result was the establishment of a national research network on inclusive development in

partnership with the University of Development Studies. Following expressions of interest by over 100 teams, the network was launched in December, and 10 research teams began receiving support to deepen research on inclusive development. An agreement with the World Bank to advocate directly on basis of the research results was reached, leading to panel discussions and a workshop on taxes and local-level financing.

In relation to policy and budget analysis, UNICEF established a partnership with the Ministry of Finance to develop tools and capacity to better assess and track spending against key priorities. The partnership led to the development of a draft tool for tracking key national budget commitments and a draft national social protection budget, as well as increased capacity for budget analysis in the Ministry's budget department. In addition, UNICEF produced annual policy and budget briefs for key sectors in advance of the 2018 budget.

In relation to budget analysis, a key Ghanaian CSO (SEND Ghana) received support to analyse the 2017 and 2018 budgets.

In the area of social accountability, UNICEF began in early 2017 to implement an advocacy strategy to increase awareness and use of the District League Table 2016. New approaches, including text messages and informal partnerships with other organizations, were used. The DLT was also revised for 2017 and successfully planned and launched in November. A mapping analysis of the DLT against resource allocation at the local level was carried out. Parliamentary select committees agreed to review the formula for allocating resources and consider how to use the DLT to do so. Finally, UNICEF established a national social accountability platform to take over from the previously UNICEF-led meetings, to promote rotating and broader ownership of the issues.

OUTPUT 2 The Government of Ghana is supported to generate and use equity-focused data, evaluations, and analytical studies to plan, monitor, and evaluate programmes that advance children's rights at national and decentralized levels.

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Ghana successfully initiated planning for the MICS6 at the beginning of 2017; data collection began in October. The current MICS features three new modules; foundational learning, child functioning and water quality testing. In response to growing demand for data reflecting quality and access to education, particularly in the early years, the foundational learning module was developed for MICS. The child functioning module assesses functional difficulties in different domains, including hearing, vision, communication, learning, mobility and emotions. The water quality module was developed by the MICS global team and the World Health Organization/UNICEF joint monitoring programme for water supply and sanitation. All modules were pilot-tested globally and the foundational learning module was tested in Ghana in 2016. UNICEF Ghana managed to raise an additional US\$1 million from USAID and the Korea International Cooperation Agency. About 160 field staff, including staff from the GSS were trained for data collection on MICS tools, protocols and methodology. Prior to this training, a master trainer's training was conducted to train staff from GSS. As a result, the main team training was undertaken entirely by GSS staff, with technical support provided by UNICEF Ghana, WCARO and UNICEF headquarters, as needed. Due to the utilization of computer-assisted personnel interviewing, data processing was carried out in tandem with data collection, allowing for real-time data quality monitoring through field check tables, which will be reviewed by UNICEF Ghana and WCARO throughout data collection to ensure quality. Data collection will continue through January 2018.

The National Development Planning Commission, in collaboration with the GSS and with technical support from UNICEF, conducted a national statistical assessment. As part of the assessment, ministries, departments and agencies were assessed on how well data collection systems embed SDG data needs. The assessment highlighted a number of issues, including data accessibility challenges and limited capacity related to data analysis, dissemination and storage. UNICEF will build on these findings to provide technical support to improve data accessibility, and will provide more statistical capacity-building opportunities for public institutions. In addition, UNICEF supported national reflection on how to ensure that the SDGs are reflected in national and decentralized planning, programming and activities.

With support from UNICEF, the Ghana Monitoring and Evaluation Forum organized a gathering under the theme 'Youth Participation in M&E: Trends, Prospects and Challenges'. The event aimed to create awareness on M&E among Ghanaian youth and to promote young and emerging evaluators, including young women. During the event student chapters of university-level young evaluators were formed, and will serve as platforms for capacity building and networking.

OUTPUT 3 IR 029: Increased evidence based public engagement on children's issues to fuel social engagement, support shifts in public perception, action and change.

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF developed and implemented strategic advocacy campaigns to inform and influence the public on issues of child equity, education, early childhood development, child marriage and sanitation. Sustained and prominent coverage enabled external communication to surpass its objective of reaching 2.5 million people, as it achieved a total reach of approximately 3.8 million people. UNICEF reached at least 2.8 million people across social media platforms and at least 1 million through traditional media. Due to its consistent and strategic approach to social media engagement, UNICEF Ghana's social media following stood at more than 85,000 for Facebook and more than 14,700 Twitter by end-2017. Many media outlets in Ghana do not capture exact audience data, thus the media outreach figure is likely to be much higher, since only media outlets with data capture were included.

Through aligning with priority campaigns identified in the cause framework, including ECD (#EarlyMomentsMatter), UNICEF's external communications team developed two films to encourage fathers to read to and play with their children, circulated a photograph collage of fathers at UNICEF Ghana for Father's Day and strategically engaged traditional and social media and influencers to promote right-age school enrolment. UNICEF Ghana also carried out a #kidstakeover of Ghana's leading broadcaster to celebrate the global priority World Children's Day, as well as promoting the Day heavily on its social media channels.

Overall UNICEF gained 22,000 new followers across social media and achieved at least 295 mentions of UNICEF by print, radio and television outlets (from January to October).

Approximately 120 student journalists attended UNICEF Ghana's first national summit on ethical reporting on children. As a result of thoughtful and engaged participation by 12 experts in the industry— including academics, respected broadcasters, senior editors and experienced journalists — the summit provided insight, learning and capacity strengthening of the next set of journalists on this important topic.

Long-term partnerships, coalitions and alliances formed to support and implement actions that contribute to the fulfilment of children's rights were developed, and the target of seven collaborations was achieved through a combination of engagements with private sector companies, influential stakeholders and media houses. UNICEF collaborated with Multimedia – Ghana's leading broadcaster – to share with a wider audience information on poverty, inequality and right-age enrolment. In developing its influencer engagement strategy, UNICEF added two of Ghana's most popular artists - Vera Hamenoo Kpeda aka MzVee and Kwame Tsikata aka M.anifest - to its team of influencers – both of whom produced strong social media outputs. The target of seven new alliances was achieved in 2017. Communication played a leading role in securing the interest of CAL Bank in funding new-born care units. UNICEF also engaged with General Electric to support the alliance to achieve fewer neonatal deaths in Ghana. In addition, UNICEF engaged the Ghana Telecommunications Chamber to convene major mobile phone operators to make concrete commitments towards child online protection.

OUTCOME 9 Outcome 009 : 54% of population have sustainable and equitable access to and use of basic sanitation services underpinned by improved hygiene practices and sustainable water services by 2016.

Analytical statement of progress

At the end of 2016 several challenges remained for universal access to sustainable, safe WASH facilities and services in Ghana. Significant progress in all areas occurred in 2017, with strategic changes evident in national approaches to urban and rural sanitation, WinS, handwashing, private sector engagement in service delivery and water quality.

Sanitation represented the greatest challenge; only one in seven Ghanaians has access to basic sanitation. The national strategy of raising rural demand for sanitation facilities had achieved only moderate success, and questions were being raised about the suitability of the national approach: community-led total sanitation. The complex nature and high costs of urban environments and the lack of a national urban sanitation strategy mean that millions of urban poor relied on shared and public toilets, with the poorest 15 times less likely to have access than the wealthiest.

Hygiene challenges were further exacerbated, since only one in five Ghanaian homes had handwashing facilities.

The situation in schools was similarly challenged: two of every five schools lacked toilets and three of five lacked water supplies, and only limited change had occurred over the past four years.

Although Ghana has relatively high access rates for improved water supply, less than two in five Ghanaians drink safe water; yet only one in 14 Ghanaians treats drinking water at home.

Challenges in improving WASH services are exacerbated by the challenging macro-economic situation in Ghana, limited available government funding and high interest rates, limiting options for the poor.

To address Ghana's sanitation challenges in 2017, UNICEF advocated for higher prioritization of sanitation by the new Government through direct engagement, mass media and social media, ultimately resulting in the president's launch of a national sanitation campaign, including an ODF social norms programme.

Improvements in rural sanitation programmes in 2016 as a result of innovative approaches were further strengthened in 2017, with even greater improvements in ODF conversion rates, which rose from about 9 per cent in mid-2016 to considerably higher than 50 per cent in 2017. This improvement was attributed to approaches that built decentralized technical, management and financial capacity and accountability. Partnering with CSOs to work directly in district government offices and implementing a results-based financing approach were also important factors. Social protection approaches demonstrated in 2017 enabled the poorest households to access flood-resilient toilets, and community volunteer and market-based models demonstrated approaches to deliver safe, sustainable options for households with different income levels and aspirations.

While UNICEF Ghana did not reach the targeted 1,000 ODF communities in 2017 (an annual management plan indicator) or the 2012-2017 outcome target of 54 per cent of people using toilets, the dramatic increases in conversion rates, resulting in 600 new ODF communities in 2017 and 350,000 people using toilets, indicate strongly that the change in approaches is making the difference needed in the sector. Further, strong sector-wide results indicate that partners are starting to achieve similar results, as UNICEF's long-term advocacy for CLTS is adopted and adapted by partners in the sector.

Innovative behaviour-change pilots were scaled up in high-density, poor urban areas to address low demand for household sanitation. Partnerships were explored with iDE and Global Communities to consolidate different supply approaches to complement demand-generation strategies in both urban and rural areas. Although UNICEF undertook considerable work with universities, international consultants and banks to explore options for affordable urban technologies and financing mechanism, affordable sanitation for the urban poor remained a challenge.

Low levels of water and sanitation access in schools were targeted through the development of a costed strategy for providing WASH facilities and hygiene education in all Ghanaian schools. Key studies to inform this strategy included the design of cheaper, safe and sustainable basic toilets and operational research into hygiene education through play and sports. A draft WinS strategy completed in 2017 was being incorporated into the ESP, and will be finalized in 2018. Although national rates for access to water (42 per cent) and sanitation (65 per cent) fell short of 2012-2017 outcome targets (75 per cent and 68 per cent respectively), the national strategy will provide options for affordable solutions and advocacy for greater WinS investment.

Challenges to low levels of handwashing with soap (HWWS) and poor water quality were addressed through support for the implementation of national strategies incorporating private-sector approaches for HWWS and household water treatment and safe storage (HWTS)—including building government capacity to facilitate and regulate the private sector. These strategies were complemented by a campaign to support handwashing in all schools in Volta Region using tippy taps, resulting in a low-cost and near universal (95 per cent) solution for over 3,900 schools (over 500,000 schoolchildren). While the 2014 DHS indicated that only 21 per cent of households have HWWS facilities, increases since the 2011 MICS (10 per cent) and ongoing programming experience suggest that 2017 MICS results will exceed the 2012–17 programme target of 24 per cent.

UNICEF's support to the Government in 2017 for developing strategic solutions to the delivery of sustainable WASH services enabled 130,000 people to access latrines, while 100,000 lived in ODF communities. Water supply has reached over 27,000 people and an additional 80,000 people are practicing HWTS. More than 160,000 additional people are practicing HWWS, and over 130 schools now have WASH facilities.

OUTPUT 1 An additional 500,000 people in 5 most deprived regions live in Open Defecation Free (ODF) communities and use improved latrines

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF's sanitation programming began to generate significant results in 2017 that were evident beyond directly supported districts. UNICEF behaviour-change communication programmes resulted in households self-financing the construction of toilets for over 130,000 people in over 600 ODF communities. Although below the 2017 target (1,000 communities), sector-wide results indicate that partners matched these results, as UNICEF's long-term advocacy for CLTS was adopted and adapted by sector partners.

Ongoing operational research identified key focus areas for UNICEF and partners to further improve results, including highlighting the importance of support from political, administrative, religious and traditional leaders at all levels.

UNICEF support enabled demonstration of the supply components of the rural sanitation model and strategy, complementing growing demand for household toilets. The main focus was on models for community technical volunteers in 30 districts, participatory technology development (PTD) and the artisan-led businesses. Technical volunteers are community members with skills in local construction, using a participatory technology development process to support households to construct more durable toilets suited to local conditions using locally available materials. Over 900 artisans developed technical and entrepreneurship skills, supported with results-based financing arrangements and a network of business development and technical support partners, to enable them to drive sanitation marketing in communities. District- and national-scale approaches to ensure sustainable supply chains were being explored, as were partnerships with Global Communities and iDE, in an effort to consolidate different supply approaches to complement demand generation strategies.

These initiatives supported the GoG/UNICEF WASH programme to reach the 1,000 ODF communities milestone set by the 2012–2017 CP.

Social protection components of the guidelines for national rural sanitation financing were demonstrated in flood-prone communities. A combined community/district government approach was demonstrated, based on the LEAP social-protection poverty targeting tool, to identify the poorest households and, through a combination of collective community support and a government voucher system, provided 500 of the poorest households with flood-resilient toilets.

The 2017 launch of the national sanitation campaign by the president of the Republic of Ghana, with open defecation as a key component, is expected to generate further demand for household toilets. UNICEF's campaign support included developing communication materials to be deployed through the mass media and at post-triggering events in communities.

UNICEF continued to support studies leading to the development of a national urban sanitation strategy in 2018. In 2017 three participatory behaviour change communication (BCC) approaches were adapted and piloted district wide: urban CLTS; urban community-led urban environmental sanitation; and urban community development for health, complemented by artisan and entrepreneurship training, and linking businesses and individual households to financing options through banks and micro-finance institutions. Over 1,000 urban households (about 7,000 people) have constructed toilets as a result of UNICEF interventions, with a further 6,000 households currently constructing or signed for construction. BCC approaches complemented partner programmes; the World Bank's GAMA programme adopted BCC

approaches across their targeted 11 urban areas, following strong results in the UNICEF-supported Ashaiman Municipality.

OUTPUT 2 Output 31 An additional 500,000 people in 5 most deprived regions practice handwashing with soap/ash

Analytical statement of progress

In 2016, UNICEF Ghana supported government partners in promoting HWWS as an integral part of sanitation and hygiene BCC programming. Handwashing promotion messages resulted in 160,000 people practicing HWWS at the household level. Between 2012 and 2017, UNICEF's support has contributed to over 617,000 people adopting the practice of HWWS (target: 500,000 people). This success was complemented by strong collaboration with the education and health sectors to demonstrate approaches for the provision of consistent, multiple-source BCC messages to reach children and mothers in communities. These pilots are informing the development of costed strategies for national delivery of WASH programmes in schools and health facilities.

A national social norms campaign was launched by Ghana's President in 2017, incorporating social norms around open defecation, handwashing and use of latrines, with subsequent ministerial launches in four regions. The campaign targets deep-rooted social norms through strategies targeting various layers of behavioural influencers, including traditional, religious, political and social leaders and champions. Materials were developed targeting different social sectors, including videos, animations, storybooks and other printed materials.

UNICEF continued to support Government efforts to address low national rates of handwashing in schools through the innovative tippy-tap campaign, scaling up the district-level results from 2016 to the regional level. Lessons learned from the district-level pilot, targeting issues of soap and water shortages, were incorporated into the campaign in Volta Region. Key media outlets were targeted as part of the campaign, resulting in high levels of national and regional radio, print and on-line coverage of events. Training for core government liaison personnel, combined with the media coverage, contributed to high awareness in the district, and resulting in 95 per cent of district schools (over 3,900 schools and more than 500,000 schoolchildren) constructing and using simple, low-cost, sustainable HWWS facilities via the tippy tap technology.

The campaign's success enabled the tippy tap technology to be included in the ESP; plans are underway to scale-up implementation nationally. This effort was complemented by the formalization of approaches to increase the transfer of tippy taps from schools to catchment communities.

UNICEF piloted an approach targeting mothers in perinatal and postnatal clinics for behaviour change approaches regarding handwashing with soap, focusing on simple approaches. Over 100 community health nurses were trained as part of this initiative to ultimately reach 150,000 mothers. This pilot will inform the development of the national costed strategy for WASH in health facilities.

OUTPUT 3 Output 32: An additional 500,000 people in 5 most deprived regions use HH water treatment and safe storage systems

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF supported the piloting of the water safety plan approach in communities. The process included capacity building for about 60 national and regional staff of the community water and sanitation agency, who are leading the process for subsequent scale-up at the district level. This was part of the roll-out of the national drinking water quality management framework.

UNICEF continued to support the promotion of household water treatment and safe storage in communities, enabling the Government to demonstrate implementation of the national strategy. This support led to an estimated 80,000 people practising HWTS in the focus regions, as of end-September 2017. In spite of evident improvement in implementation and monitoring, the achievement of the annual target of 350,000 was affected by slow uptake in communities. Lessons from this work were incorporated into the implementation cycle currently in progress, targeted to achieve district-wide practice in four districts in Northern, Upper East and Volta regions.

Implementation in 2017 also included testing of the national private sector participation model by two civil society partners in the north and south of the country. The results of the pilot and the modest gains made in implementation will provide an important basis for the review of the national strategy of shifting to more comprehensive implementation of the water safety planning approach at the household level starting in 2018.

Overall, from 2012 through September 2017, UNICEF has supported over 200,000 people (as at) to implement HWTS (against a target of 500,000). Ongoing work is likely to result in a further 170,000 people implementing HWTS, although this will still fall short of the overall programme target. The strategy of rolling out HWTS as part of CLTS resulted in slow uptake. UNICEF's support for the development of complementary civil society and private-sector approaches over the past two years, together with links to water safety planning, has seen a rapid increase in uptake during this period. These strategies position Ghana well to rapidly increase HWTS in the coming years to bridge the SDG gap on safely managed drinking water.

OUTPUT 4 Output 33: An additional 125,000 children in basic schools in 5 most deprived regions use WASH services in line with the Child Friendly Schools Model

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF Ghana supported the Government to develop a draft national costed strategy to provide WASH facilities and education programmes for all Ghanaian schoolchildren. The strategy was developed to address the minimal increase in access to drinking water, sanitation and handwashing facilities in schools. The strategy incorporated simple, low-cost sanitation and handwashing facilities and a strategy for shared community and school water sources to accelerate access in under-served schools. Inputs to this strategy formed the basis of other work under this output. Input from the draft strategy was incorporated into the ESP.

The Government piloted a simple, low-cost approach for handwashing with soap (tippy taps) at scale in all 3,900 public basic schools in the Volta Region, with support from UNICEF. Over 95 per cent of these schools (with more than 500,000 schoolchildren) now have functional handwashing facilities with soap, and school, district and regional staff have the capacity to maintain and expand facilities and use. Soap-making in schools and strategies to prioritize handwashing and ensure water availability, even during shortages, were incorporated as lessons learned from a district-level pilot.

Ongoing studies to inform the national strategy include: a costing study to review all aspects of

facility construction and management; development of basic, low-cost sanitation facilities; and assessment of the effectiveness and value of approaches to hygiene education based on play and sport.

UNICEF Ghana supported Government and civil society actors to develop a basic package on menstrual hygiene management to help girls better understand and manage their menstrual hygiene, and to facilitate understanding by others of girls' support needs. The package comprises flip charts, posters and flash cards that are used to facilitate open discussion around the sensitive subject of menstrual hygiene, including addressing myths, attitudes and practices. A multi-media campaign titled 'Be Amazing! Period', supported by media and music champions and traditional and religious leaders was launched to generate understanding and support among adolescent girls. Overall 32,584 pupils (47 per cent girls) in 127 schools were reached during the pilot of this package, supported by 568 teachers and 4,166 school health club members (54 per cent girls) trained in the use of the package.

UNICEF continued to support the Government to demonstrate and refine national minimum standards and guidelines, including the demonstration of sustainable, disability- and gender-friendly WASH facilities (84 schools) and empowerment of 1,760 children as ambassadors for WASH. These ambassadors were trained on WASH advocacy and behaviour-change promotion among their peers and communities, and are expected to reach a further 100,000 schoolchildren directly with key messages. Of these ambassadors, 1,490 also received media training and are advocating improved WASH behaviours through radio and television programmes, including on one Ga language station reaching about 6 million people.

Under the broader area of WASH in institutions, support was provided to the health sector to demonstrate the benefits of providing WASH facilities in health centres, to ultimately inform the development of a national costed strategy for WASH in health facilities in 2018.

OUTPUT 5 Output 34 An additional 250,000 people in underserved and recently freed guinea worm endemic communities have sustainable use of improved drinking water supply services

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF supported Government and civil society to roll-out the national drinking water quality management framework, through the development and demonstration of community and household-level water safety planning tools in 12 communities (target: 10 communities). This project provides national and regional authorities with tested tools for community water safety planning; the associated capacity building positions Government to support replication at scale.

UNICEF undertook several studies to provide information to the new Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, as it seeks to improve management of community-managed systems. These systems currently face multiple challenges; many are not sustainable, and new and/or improved approaches are required. Improved approaches in community-based management are also being reviewed as part of these studies. In 2017 a total of 100 gender-sensitive community water and sanitation management teams (target: 100) were formed and equipped with the relevant skills for day-to-day management of the services provided (55 communities); or supported to enhance the management of water services in the focus regions on an on-going basis, under a coaching programme (45 communities).

Two private-sector based approaches for managing water supplies were piloted to provide government with a better understanding of options and challenges for community water source

management. One, involving two small-town schemes, was implemented in partnership with the civil society organization Safe Water Network, to demonstrate the sustainability of water supply facilities through a market-based approach to service delivery. The other tested a private-sector based management model for clusters of small piped water systems, including five communities in the Central Region, in collaboration with the Community Water and Sanitation Agency. The model is yet to be reviewed for possible replication and scale-up.

In undertaking these studies, and in an effort to continue to address under-served communities in previously Guinea worm-endemic areas, UNICEF supported access to improved water services for an estimated 27,665 people in the Central, Volta, Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions of Ghana (target: 20,000 people), including through seven piped schemes, 10 new point sources and the rehabilitation of 38 point sources.

OUTCOME 10 Outcome 10: Enabling environment: Sector policies, strategies, knowledge base, systems and human resource capacity at national level and in 5 most deprived regions are improved for enabling decentralised, scaled-up, sustainable and pro-poor WASH services by 2016

Analytical statement of progress

While Ghana's WASH sector generally has a sound policy and strategic framework, key Government and community gaps in capacity, commitment and information remain in relation to implementing strategies and delivering equitable, sustainable outcomes. National and sub-national coordination mechanisms remain weak, and are yet to be fully re-established following the change of government at the start of 2017. Underpinning all challenges are limited government resources, compounded by weak decentralized budgeting and expenditure tracking.

Capacity building needs were identified in a range of areas, including sector coordination mechanisms at national and decentralized levels, and capacity to manage and implement decentralized WASH interventions, particularly BCC, which need to be supported by coordinated and functional sectoral information systems.

Equity is poorly reflected across the sector, with limited scope in existing indicators to reflect equity challenges, and limited understanding of how to implement the national gender mainstreaming guidelines to address gender equity issues.

Key research/information gaps dictated by the main challenges facing the sector include: improving success rates for CLTS, insufficient understanding of decentralized sanitation budgeting and expenditure tracking, cost-effectiveness of hygiene education through play and sports, cost of operation and maintenance of WinS facilities and education programmes and designs for affordable institutional toilets.

National fora were supported to review progress against national targets and strategic planning for ministerial commitment. However, delays in re-establishing national coordination mechanisms following the change of government in 2017 limited sector capacity for high-level engagement. Further, despite the formation of a dedicated ministry – the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources – a 28 per cent reduction in budget allocation to the sector is likely to continue to constrain progress.

In 2017 UNICEF Ghana focused on supporting key research to inform sector strategies and built on previous work to strengthen coordination mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation systems.

Significant progress was achieved in strengthening sub-national cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms, with significantly increased frequency in meetings of regional and district interagency coordinating committees on sanitation across the five target regions. Cross-sectoral work with the health sector included development of a national working group on WASH in health centres, providing a platform for the development of a national strategy and strategic planning in the interim.

UNICEF Ghana built technical, financial and planning capacity in 50 districts, enabling development of district-wide ODF plans. A capacity gap assessment tool was demonstrated in targeted districts to support capacity development plans and facilitate nation-wide district capacity self-assessment. Together with development of a model for direct CSO support to districts and tools developed to track sanitation budgeting and expenditure at the district level, these approaches are strengthening decentralized government capacity to deliver WASH services. The information emerging from these studies – that investment in sanitation at the district level is extremely low – provides strong evidence for advocacy for greater decentralized investment.

WASH gender mainstreaming guidelines were used to build the capacity of over 95,000 women and girls to support the CLTS process, hold key decision-making positions in WASH governance, develop income generation and business skills as latrine artisans and take on hygiene promotion responsibilities. These approaches are being documented to provide tools for national replication.

The UNICEF-supported equity study provided important evidence on knowledge gaps in inequities of access, helping to inform Government and partner strategies and shape national indicator frameworks. This work was complemented by ongoing strengthening of the sanitation information system and the incorporation of WASH indicators into health monitoring systems.

Operational research is improving understanding of both rural and urban sanitation BCC strategies, with results informing the refinement of the rural sanitation approach and the development of a national urban sanitation strategy. However, significant challenges remain in bridging the gap between affordability and cost of sanitation options in Ghana's challenging economic environment. UNICEF continues to work with other partners to reduce costs, identify more affordable options and identify the scope for innovative financing mechanisms.

Research on WinS costs and programme effectiveness informed the development of the draft national costed strategy for WinS, as well as WASH-related elements of the ESP. These strategies enabled WinS facilities and programmes to be mainstreamed into education sector planning and budgets, facilitating universal access to WinS facilities and education programmes.

UNICEF's equity focus throughout the 2012–2017 programme cycle, together with efforts by the Government and partners, was a significant factor permitting achievement of the equity target for access to water. Wealth and geographic disparities in access to water have declined significantly; access to water for the wealthy is only 40 per cent (ratio 1:1.4) higher than the poor (target: ratio 1:3) and geographical differences also significantly decreased (ratio 1:1.3) (target: 1:4), reflecting strong, targeted investment in water supplies. Sanitation equity however has not

improved significantly, reflecting the limited changes in access to sanitation as of the last national survey (DHS 2014). Both geographical and wealth inequities remain high, reflecting limited improvement since 2014. It is expected that these rates will decline significantly for the MICS and Ghana Living Standards Survey, but are unlikely to reach targets. These inequities highlight the significant sanitation challenges that remain in Ghana, which will be an important focus of the new CP.

OUTPUT 1 A system for effective WASH sector co-ordination, knowledge management and evidence-based decision-making is operational and resilient at national level and in 5 most deprived regions by the end of 2016

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Ghana continued to support strengthening of sectoral governance, with a focus on: sectoral coordination mechanisms, undertaking critical research to help define and refine government approaches and strengthening of government monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems. The WASH equity study enabled the Government and partners to identify inequities in WASH access and better align investments and strategies with needs. UNICEF continued as the national sector working group development partner lead, convening frequent coordination sessions to liaise with the newly established Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources. UNICEF continued efforts to re-establish national coordination meetings under the new Government.

Support for regional and district cross-sectoral government and partner coordination resulted in the re-establishment and increased frequency of meetings of both regional and district interagency coordinating committees on sanitation across the five target regions. During the year, 19 regional- and over 200 district-level meetings were held.

Research completed on costing WASH infrastructure construction and maintenance in schools, combined with ongoing research into school hygiene promotion approaches and low-cost toilet designs, formed the basis of the draft national costed strategy for WinS. Study results informed development of the ESP in the area of providing an affordable approach to ensuring that all Ghanaian schoolchildren have access to WASH facilities in school and education in hygiene practices.

UNICEF Ghana supported the WASH equity study, which identified strategies to address key inequities in access, a fundamental aspect of achieving access for all. An annual sustainability check on WASH programming was also completed, identifying national, regional and community-level approaches to ensure greater sustainability of WASH services, and will be complemented by an ongoing WASH budget monitoring study, tracking investment at the district level and assessing the sustainability of results. Tools were being developed to enable civil society partners to replicate the approach nationally. Study findings identified a trend of low investments into liquid waste sanitation at the local government level, which will be an advocacy target in 2018. Other knowledge management products developed in 2017 included a series of field notes to increase dissemination of UNICEF Ghana programming.

The capacity of the national coalition of sectoral NGOS, CONIWAS, was built to support increased advocacy (including advocacy plans), improved information dissemination and budget monitoring capacity and support for the national platform, the annual Mole WASH conference.

Government's capacity to monitor and report nationally was strengthened through roll-out of the basic sanitation information system in 41 districts. UNICEF Ghana continued to support enhancing the rural water district monitoring and evaluation system by including a water quality

testing component and incorporating WASH indicators into the district health information management system. Reporting and coordination were strengthened through ongoing support to the national basic sanitation forum, hosted by the environmental health and sanitation directorate of the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources.

No emergency response work was required during 2017, but UNICEF contributed inputs to contingency plans by the UN and Ghana's national disaster management organization.

OUTPUT 2 Output 36: Additional 30 District WASH Departments and 500 gender responsive community WATSAN Committees/WSDBs are better able to facilitate delivery of sustainable WASH services

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF Ghana supported the Government to demonstrate gender mainstreaming guidelines and decentralized capacity-building approaches to plan and implement sanitation strategies.

UNICEF supported the Government to rollout gender mainstreaming initiatives and activities under national WASH gender mainstreaming guidelines, establishing community-level institutions for promoting sanitation. At least 376 communities in 36 districts of the five focus regions were supported to mainstream gender in CLTS implementation, including empowering 95,278 women and girls (target: 25,000). As a result, women and girls in target communities are holding key decision-making positions, developing income generation and business skills as latrine artisans and taking on hygiene promotion responsibilities. Ongoing documentation of gender mainstreaming initiatives in WASH governance and service delivery will provide tools for other districts to replicate the approach.

UNICEF Ghana demonstrated decentralized capacity through support for developing district-wide ODF plans in 50 districts, and subsequently incorporating these plans into district medium-term development plans, to ensure up-scaling of sanitation interventions. Technical capacity development was complemented by targeted capacity building of regional- and district-level staff on procurement, financial management, contract management and logistics to support improved delivery of WASH services in districts. A comprehensive capacity gap assessment was on-going in 11 targeted districts at year's end to support capacity development plans and serve as a tool to facilitate nationwide district-level capacity for self-assessment. This work will form the basis for decentralized capacity building to support piloting of approaches under the 2018–2022 CP.

OUTCOME 11: Cross cutting and programme coordination

Analytical statement of progress

During 2017 several key documents were developed: UNICEF Ghana's new country programme document (CPD) 2018-2022 and CPMP, programme strategy notes and the UNSDP. These inter-related documents were developed based on office-wide consultation and engagement with the Government and the UN. Their development involved renewed discussions with the new Government, which took office in January 2017, and necessary adjustments were made to align with national plans, UNICEF's SP and the SDGs. The CPD will be submitted for approval by the Executive Board in February 2018.

During the development of the CPD, discussions were held on a staffing structure that took into consideration three main criteria: Ghana's lower-middle-income country status, results for children and funding availability. Draft sectoral proposals were reviewed by all staff at a retreat held in late May 2017. The CPMP was developed accordingly, reflecting adjustments to posts, and submitted to WCARO for review by the programme budget review committee; systems are in place to implement the PBR recommendations.

The UNSDP for Ghana was developed through a series of consultations led by the office of the Resident Coordinator. It is at its final stage of approval. The CPD is totally aligned with the UNSDP, which in turn is aligned with the Government's coordinated programme of economic and social development policies for 2017–2024. Within the UNSDP, UNICEF engaged actively in the areas most relevant to children's well-being: health, nutrition, social protection and education in the social sector; water and sanitation and emergency in the environment sector; social policy and child protection in governance and human rights; and cross-sectoral issues related to gender, adolescents and monitoring and evaluation.

UNICEF Ghana managed the transition to the new Government through increased engagement and development of strategic partnerships for advocacy for children. This resulted in the Government championing major initiatives, such as the First Lady's launch of the GIFTS programme and National Breastfeeding Week; the Second Lady's launch of the campaign on Ghanaians against Child Abuse; and the launch by government ministers of social norms campaigns on sanitation (Ministry of Sanitation) and child protection (MoGCSP).

Investment in capacity building of UNICEF staff was particularly high in 2017. All staff participated in training on leadership and results-based management. The latter, using the three-day condensed session format, was conducted in three batches covering almost 100 staff and ensuring representation from both Accra and the Tamale field office, including operations staff. This helped facilitate common understanding between the country office and field office and between programme and operations staff. It also helped in the development of the CPD results matrix. To address staffing issues, competency-based interview training was organized for key programme and operations staff. As part of the global pilot initiative, UNICEF Ghana also hosted a five-day management master class programme, attesting to UNICEF Ghana's commitment to the mid-level manager's improvement programme. The new emergency preparedness tool was rolled out through training by WCARO of emergency focal points from both Accra and Tamale.

With the launch of UNICEF's gender action plan 2.0 and increasing requirements for engaging the private sector, UNICEF Ghana sourced technical support from WCARO, UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office and UNICEF Headquarters. UNICEF's Africa regional manager for private sector initiatives supported the development of UNICEF Ghana's private sector strategy. The mission included an all-staff presentation highlighting key trends in Africa and specifics on private-sector alignment with the SDGs. One of the first recommendations, undertaking a mapping of Ghana's private sector, commenced in 2017. A team of three UNICEF gender experts from WCARO and HQ supported UNICEF Ghana to formulate an approach for strengthening measurement of gender results. The approach seeks to facilitate more structured tracking of progress in key areas and to strengthen UNICEF Ghana's narrative around its contributions to adolescent girls' empowerment and gender mainstreaming. Ghana is the first UNICEF office in WCAR to pilot such an approach.

Despite 2017 achievement of key milestones in CP design, strategic partnerships and staff capacity building, challenges also arose, particularly with regard to human resource transitions

and management. Critical management staff, the Representative, the chiefs of child protection and health & nutrition transitioned out of UNICEF Ghana; only a chief of child protection had been recruited by September 2017, while the unit heads of monitoring and evaluation and C4D were vacant until September 2017 (as the new CP was being developed), placing an additional workload on remaining staff. Uncertainty due to the new staffing structure created anxiety and low morale among staff, which was managed through open and transparent communication and processes.

UNICEF Ghana continued to comply with KPIs, workplan commitments, periodic reviews and tracking of progress and sustained and consolidated work on technology for development. Fundraising for adolescent programming witnessed success by mobilizing nearly US\$10 million for the next three years, testifying to increased intersectoral collaboration.

OUTPUT 1 - Programme support and Field Monitoring

Analytical statement of progress

To ensure adequate resources for the effective and efficient management of Accra operations in 2017, a total of US\$936,543 was earmarked for technical support and travel costs for Accra-based cross-sectoral operations staff. Of this amount, US\$551,576 was from regular resources and US\$384,967 from other resources. All funds were fully utilized.

Efficient contribution management was prioritized and facilitated through different tools, with internal support mechanisms under the Deputy Representative's Office. Rigorous funds monitoring was carried out through the generation of monthly utilization reports, particularly for expiring grants and expected fund releases.

HACT compliance remained an office priority and standard agenda item for country management team (CMT) and programme group meetings, resulting in the achievement of over 100 per cent (292 out of 243) of required programme monitoring visits, 95 per cent (101 out of 106) of required spot checks, and enhanced capacity of 508 staff of 143 implementing partner agencies across the country on HACT, public financial management and supply chain and procurement management, as well as information sharing on UNICEF procurement services. One required micro assessment was also completed. Internal staff capacity on HACT was also increased through regular briefing, country management team and programme group meeting discussions and one-on-one mentoring.

In 2017, three new Land Cruisers were procured to supplement the office vehicle fleet and ease internal logistical challenges related to field monitoring and other work-related travel. During the year under review, long-term agreements for in-country haulage services, clearing and forwarding and printing were renewed, to improve UNICEF service delivery and programme efficiency.

UNICEF currently serves as chair of the UN operations management team and spearheaded the roll-out of the business operations strategy in Ghana.

OUTPUT 2 Output 41 - Programme Support and Field Monitoring - Tamale

Analytical statement of progress

A total of US\$1,986,310 was earmarked for ensuring the smooth, effective and efficient management of operations of the Tamale field office in 2017. Regular Resources constituted US\$762,958 of the total amount the balance of US\$1,223,352 was from Other Resources. The main expenditure lines for these funds were technical support (staff salaries and engagement of consultants to augment staff capacity), travel, operating costs, furniture and equipment and the cost of common services.

Quality technical support was provided by Accra-based staff to the Tamale office through scheduled visits by section chiefs and heads of operations units. Senior management (Representative, deputy representative and chief of operations) visited the Tamale office frequently, providing management oversight and support. Accra-based staff also made substantial contributions to Tamale's work plans and setting of management priorities, while Tamale colleagues participated in UNICEF Ghana's mid-year and annual review meetings and made significant contributions to programme discussions and learning. All Tamale staff also actively participated in the development of the new CPD.

An assessment of the Tamale field office conducted to assess its present and future role and how better to deliver programme results in line with the new CPD was finalized, and the recommendations were implemented.

Regular field monitoring by programme colleagues was conducted to provide oversight and support to implementing partners and ensure that UNICEF resources were used efficiently and effectively. Required spot-checks for which the Tamale field office was accountable were completed, and actionable recommendations made to improve the financial management system. All four planned end-user monitoring of supplies were conducted as part of field office assurance activities for 2017. Additionally, all planned programme monitoring visits were conducted.

The Tamale field office shared operating costs with other UN agencies and USAID, which share the same building. Increased sharing of motor vehicles across programmes for field monitoring and the use of IT-based software for vehicle allocation reduced paperwork and administrative time required to manage vehicles.

The field office was also instrumental in hosting donor visits, which have been highly commended by the donors, thus playing a critical role in donor engagement and visibility.

OUTPUT 3 Programme Coordination: processes are strengthened in the UNICEF Accra and Tamale offices to support planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring of UNICEF supported activities.

Analytical statement of progress

The new CPD was finalized and posted on the UNICEF Executive Board website for comments. Along with the CPD, programme strategy notes and the new CPMP were also finalized, following a participatory and consultative process with staff and partners. UNICEF also actively engaged in the development of the UNSDP document (formerly the UNDAF), and ensured that key priorities for women and children were included.

As part of CPD development, UNICEF Ghana also commissioned an assessment of the Tamale field office, to better align results, roles and responsibilities for delivering the new CP.

All 2017 annual work plans were signed jointly with the Government by the end of the first quarter, enabling timely commencement of programme implementation. With the installation of the new Government, structured meetings and engagement were undertaken with newly appointed regional and sectoral ministers, district chief executives and other key regional and district stakeholders, which mobilized leadership support, accountability, quality assurance and technical oversight of UNICEF-supported programmes.

The annual management plan and its key office and programme priority results were completed on time, progress was tracked and implementation bottlenecks brought to the attention of the country management team. All of the plan's commitments (with the exception of one facing challenges due to software development) were achieved.

Internal results-monitoring systems and management mechanisms were systematically implemented. The mid-year and annual reviews, monthly programme group (both in Accra and Tamale office) and sectoral meetings were well structured to facilitate monitoring of key results and foster cross-sectoral learning. TrackMe, a software tool, continued to be essential to meeting the objective of monitoring activity and output progress; tracking of activity/output indicators was linked to financial resource utilization.

The harmonized approach to cash transfers continued to be a standing agenda item at programme group and country management team meetings, with challenges identified during implementation and assurance activities discussed and resolved. With close monitoring for quality and compliance, the office completed 292 programme monitoring visits (representing 120 per cent of the required 243).

UNICEF Ghana continued to maintain timely and high-quality donor reporting. All donor reports (31) and contributions to regional and headquarter reports were submitted on time. Major strides were made in 2017 on cross-sectoral work; all programme sections worked together to successfully raise US\$10 million for adolescent programming. This process promoted the integration of programmes and greatly increased cross-sectoral interaction – leading to the achievement of respective programme objectives that require cross-cutting inputs.

The office completed and approved its emergency preparedness and response plans on the emergency preparedness platform, through a participatory process and engagement of the CMT for endorsement.

OUTCOME 12: Travel of Core Staff and Country Programme Implementation

Analytical statement of progress

Operations continued to be a strategic business partner to programme by providing technical support and ensuring that all operational areas (administration, finance, ICT, supply and human resources) provide needed technical support to ensure efficient and effective management of the office and its programmes.

UNICEF Ghana successfully rolled out e-ZHACT amid a few challenges, which were effectively managed by e-ZHACT focal persons. Eight programme assistants and 15 programme officers were trained in the Accra and Tamale offices on the new e-ZHACT transaction processing module, which facilitated the smooth transition to its use.

The cross-sectoral budget was efficiently managed and regularly tracked, and budget plans and utilization was reviewed quarterly by the CMT. This rigorous monitoring resulted in timely utilization of funds and ensured transparency.

As a result of the financial control systems in place and periodic spot-checks, no major fraud was recorded in 2017. Issues arising out of spot-checks were followed up at both the sectoral and senior management levels. Audit observations and recommendations by the Ghana Audit Service made during 2016 audits of implementing partners were followed up; 34 of the 50 observations were closed and 10 were submitted to the Parliament's public accounts committee, while the remaining six are being addressed by Ghana Audit service. In total, 101 of the 106 required spot checks were completed. Six training sessions were organized on public financial and procurement management to boost the capacity of 143 implementing partners across the country.

The supply unit continued to provide support to programming, with a combined value of supplies and services received in 2017 totalling US\$31.07 million: US\$26.19 million in procurement services, and US\$4.88 million in programme supplies and services.

Recruitment for 12 positions (10 fixed-term and two temporary), through the talent management system were completed, and all were approved in the first round, validating the thoroughness, efficiency and compliance with staff selection policy. Ten new staff members joined UNICEF Ghana in 2017.

Although the BCP for Tamale field office was non-functional for a period of time, posing a great risk in case of an emergency, it was revamped and tested in 2017. A successful simulation exercise was carried out by critical staff.

IT items, both functional and obsolete, were donated or destroyed through the office's property survey board.

Technical support was provided for technology-based initiatives and innovations, including U-Report Ghana with SMS aggregation, to solicit and gather information via the RapidPro platform.

Technical support was also extended for use of myU App, an application developed to consolidate in-depth information on the activities of UNICEF Ghana to staff members. MyUis a mobile application installed on staff cell phones to enable easy access to information about UNICEF Ghana. An online vehicle request system application was also developed to replace the environmentally unfriendly paper-based vehicle request system.

With the roll-out and upcoming migration to Windows 10 Desktop and 16 server-based applications globally, UNICEF Ghana made provisions in terms of workstation replacement and upgrades to accommodate and be ready for the migration process.

2017 witnessed a steep decline in the volume of contract review committee cases handled for institutional and individual contracts over US\$50,000: from 79 cases in 2016 to 34 cases in 2017. The committee met regularly to deliberate on the submissions. UNICEF Ghana also held regular partnership cooperation agreement and property survey board meetings.

OUTPUT 1 Governance and systems for Country Programme Implementation

Analytical statement of progress

The table of authority and segregation of duties were reviewed, conflicts were mitigated and updated to monitor financial risk management, in recognition of office needs and high staff turnover. Statutory office committees were reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness and maximum participation by members. Committees met regularly as stipulated in their various terms of reference.

Twelve country management team and four joint consultative committee meetings were held in 2017. Country management team deliberations focused on efficient operations and programme delivery, based on results of the annual management plan and monitoring of key performance indicators. Two property survey board meetings were held, leading to the proper disposal of unutilized UNICEF assets. The partnership review committee reviewed 17 new partnerships and seven amendments, and recommended a total of over US\$4 million in partnerships for approval. 34 contract review committee submissions for supply and service-related contracts, with a total value of US\$3.02 million, were processed.

The enterprise risk management risk library was updated in August 2017, with no significant changes to previous levels. The risk level for funding and leveraging resources was maintained at 'high' as a result of Ghana being a lower-middle-income country, with many donors planning transition strategies.

One successful BCP simulation was conducted during the year at the off-site facility.

Property survey board meetings were held in 2017 to review and dispose assets that were obsolete and not in use. Reports on missing items were reviewed and recommendations proffered.

OUTPUT 2 1 Salary and Allowances

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Ghana maintained a staff structure of 129 established positions (35 international professional, 46 national professional and 48 general service), which resulted from re-alignment during the 2016 mid-term review. This ensured competent technical expertise strategically positioned to sustain the momentum, consolidate programme results to the end of the 2012–2017 CP and generate evidence for designing the next CP.

All recruitment recommendations received approvals, indicating thorough processes and compliance with staff selection policy. With guidance from human resources (HR), the talent management system recruitment tool was used effectively to fill 12 vacancies during 2017. As part of the global HR reform and best practices, HR partnered with managers to complete two lateral re-assignments, one batch recruitment and two from national talent pool. UNICEF Ghana recorded a consistently balanced gender ratio of 51 per cent female, 49 per cent male and a fluctuating geographic ratio which was 61 per cent from programme countries and 39 per cent from industrialized countries at year's-end. Candidates' decline of offers resulted in repeated recruitment exercises. HR introduced group consultative sessions with managers and created a streamlined approach for timely hiring of 69 individual consultants in 2017 (17 internationals, 52 nationals) to accelerate the delivery of programme results.

HR coordinated staff training and development through implementation of the 2017 learning plan, including unplanned training for emerging priorities. Group trainings completed included: results-based management; competency-based interviewing; management masterclass programme; E-ZHact; emergency preparedness; webinars on the new performance culture; and ethics and integrity. Individual learning involved 11 external trainings and three mission assignments. Promotion of four staff testified to opportunities for career advancement. Consistent advocacy for learning through AGORA had a positive impact. The completion status of mandatory courses showed:

Ethics and integrity	Basic security	Advanced security	Results-based management	HACT	Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
100%	52%	34%	82%	73%	72%

Three group briefing sessions on the new performance culture and ACHIEVE system increased the practice of setting smart workplans, regular performance discussions and developmentally focused feedback. Monthly reporting of e-PAS status to the CMT, online tracking and staff commitment facilitated 100 per cent completion of 2016 personnel evaluations by July 2017 and 100 per cent for the 2017 planning phase. To motivate commitment, prizes were given to staff who met the deadline.

UNICEF Ghana's action plan for the 2017 global staff survey was developed through a participatory process with all staff. Management assured collaboration for full implementation of the plan. Best practices to address staff welfare and work/life balance included four joint consultative committee meetings, circulation of minutes, flexible work arrangements, obligatory observance of headspace, and a reduced workload, using temporary back-up during staff absences. One orientation session on HIV/AIDS in the workplace and two health topics webex sessions were conducted.

HR significantly contributed to a transparent and participatory process for designing the new CP by: guiding staff structure changes, producing quality reports/documentation, classifying job descriptions, providing six months notice to staff on abolished posts, and undertaking entitlements administration, waiver of tour of duty, counselling and interview coaching. A recruitment action plan was developed to facilitate filling newly established positions within KPIs.

OUTPUT 3 005: Travel of Core Staff and Country Programme Implementation

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017 UNICEF Ghana received a total of US\$181,540 in BMA (Institutional Budget) funds. Of this amount, US\$178,959 (98.6 per cent) was spent on staff salaries and other related operational costs. The total forecast for cash disbursement amounted to US\$33,643,473 and the actual total of US\$27,289,669 was remitted to UNICEF Ghana by DFAM treasury, of which 98 per cent was consumed. Expiring grants and regular resources funds were fully expended by the end of the year. Bank signatories were updated regularly and all bank reconciliation was performed and submitted to DFAM on a timely basis, with zero reconciling item during the year.

To ensure an effective financial resource management system, monthly indicators were compiled and reported to the CMT, including timely receipt of grants and allocation, utilization of funds prior to grant expiry, invoice tracking for timely payments to vendors and liquidation of

cash transfers.

To ensure full utilization of cross-sectoral funds, grants were continually monitored and reports on cross-sectoral budgets were presented to the senior management team.

High-level advocacy meetings were held with the new auditor general of the Ghana Audit Services to discuss continuous partnership with UNICEF, and especially to follow-up on the closure of the 50 audit observations for 22 government implementing partners from last year's audits. With continuous follow-ups, 34 of the 50 observations were closed, while 10 were submitted by the Auditor General Ghana to the Parliamentary Accounts Committee. The remaining six observations are being cleared by the auditor general. In response to some of the audit observations, six capacity-building sessions were organized for implementing partners to enhance their capacity on public financial management, procurement management and the harmonized approach to cash transactions.

As a result of rigorous reviews of programme implementation, timely grant utilization and status of cash transfers at CMT, programme and operations group meetings, UNICEF Ghana was able to sustain outstanding DCTs below the agreed threshold for all four quarters. As of 22 December 2017, outstanding DCTs over nine months was zero per cent, and for six-to-nine months were 3.4 per cent.

The roll-out of e-ZHACT went smoothly, with some challenges due to the existing structure of UNICEF Ghana's table of authority, which were resolved. Eight programme assistants and 15 programme officers from the Accra and Tamale offices were trained to ensure smooth implementation of the new process.

UNICEF Ghana continued to manage risks associated with the management of assets through clear identification and conducting of physical counts of property, plants and equipment controlled and managed by UNICEF. Assets were effectively managed and accounted for in accordance with international standards.

Document centre

Evaluation and research

Title	Sequence Number	Type of Report
Evaluation Report of the UNICEF Ghana Education Programme (2012–2017): A Capacity Building Perspective	2017/024	Evaluation
Knowledge, attitude and practices of healthcare workers concerning infection control in two districts of the northern region of Ghana	2017/020	Study
Assessment of the Application of the Bottleneck Analysis approach for decentralized monitoring and planning in Ghana	2017/019	Study
End line Evaluation of the Project for Improving Access to Quality Health and Education Services in the Northern and Upper East Regions of Ghana	2017/018	Evaluation
Formative Assessment of UNICEF's Support to the Ghana Education Service's Kindergarten Programme	2017/015	Study
LEAP Urban Programming (Operational Review)	2017/010	Research

Baseline Assessment Report: An Evaluation of the “Mother-Baby Friendly Facility Initiative”, Quality Improvement Implementation Research in Communities in the Upper East Region of Ghana.	2017/017	Study
LEAP Benefit Level Analysis: Base Grant and Generosity Review	2017/008	Research
Assessing the effects of the placement of the video-clip and song ‘Wash Wana Hands’ in the Ghanaian mass media	2017/007	Survey
Evaluation of the “Mother-Baby Friendly Facility Initiative”	2017/016	Research
Linking Social Rights to Active Citizenship for the Most Vulnerable: The role of rights and accountability in the ‘making’ and ‘shaping’ of social protection	2017/006	Research
How to Make ‘Cash Plus’ Work: Linking Cash Transfers to Services and Sectors	2017/005	Research
The Influence of Policy and Legal Frameworks on the Development of National Social Protection Systems (with a special focus on Ghana)	2017/004	Research
Child Malnutrition, Consumption Growth, Maternal Care and Price Shocks: New Evidence from Northern Ghana	2017/003	Research
Ghana LEAP 1000 Impact Evaluation: Qualitative Midline Report	2017/002	Study
Analysis and Assessment of strategies and approaches for addressing child marriage in Ghana supported by UNICEF	2017/014	Review
Handwashing with Ananse: Evaluation of the effectiveness of an innovative intervention promoting handwashing with water and soap (HWWS) to generate learning and behaviour change	2017/001	Review
Capacity strengthening of the Police with focus on routine data management related to cases involving children.	2017/013	Review
Undertake mapping and analysis of 'hot spots' of high concentration of residential care facilities.	2017/012	Research
Justice for children research on processes, strengths and weaknesses on children in the court system	2017/011	Research
Assessment of the affordability of WASH services at Ashiaman, Ho and Tamale Metropolitan areas	2017/023	Study
WASH Baseline Study for Northern Region Small Towns	2017/022	Study
Sector Equity Study / Analysis	2017/021	Study

Lessons learned

Document Type/Category	Title
Lesson Learned	Assessment of Strategies and Approaches to address Child Marriage in Ghana (2017)