

Ghana

Part 1: Situation update in the country

This annual report sets out the progress made toward the Key Results for Children by the UNICEF Ghana country office in 2018, during the first year of implementation of the UNICEF-Government of Ghana Country Programme of Cooperation (2018-2022), and in accordance with its results and resources framework. It presents an analysis of changes in the programme environment in 2018 including opportunities, challenges and lessons learned that impact progress for children, and it highlights the adjustments that ensure its relevancy and purpose. The report reflects on the contribution of UNICEF Ghana to the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2022, and UNICEF Ghana's contribution to the Key Results for Children in the region of West and Central Africa.

Key programme changes relevant to children and young people

In 2018, the programme environment in Ghana, with an estimated population 29.6 million, continued to be characterized by underlying political and social stability, supported by a continued positive economic outlook. Real gross domestic product growth slowed slightly to 6.5 per cent (estimated) in 2018 from 8.1 per cent in 2017. The country further consolidated its economic position and brought inflation below 10 per cent. The Government appointed a special prosecutor and an independent attorney general in early 2018 to prosecute alleged corruption in public service and political life. The Government of the New Patriotic Party continued to promote a wide-ranging programme for job creation, economic diversification and prosperity through industrialization ('One district, one factory'), better infrastructure ('One village, one dam', and extension of rail and road network), and higher living standards ('One district, one hospital'). Increasing youth employment is a common objective of initiatives, and a number of national programmes aspire to reach the estimated six million adolescents and young people 15 to 24 years old, with opportunities for education and employment skills.

The President promoted the agenda 'A Ghana Beyond Aid' with the goal for the country to meet its development needs independently, including increased domestic revenue. Certain development partners are examining the development portfolios to shift from aid to trade, or scale down development support. However, despite positive macro-economic trends in 2018, underlying economic structural challenges, such as on-going fiscal consolidation and limited technical and human capital, temper progress and limit fiscal space for social programmes, potentially exacerbating vulnerabilities among children and families in Ghana. A new election cycle will begin with district elections in 2019; an active party-political landscape may heighten attention on government performance with respect to such challenges.

According to the Ghana Millennium Development Goals' Report (2015), Ghana halved poverty, boosted immunization coverage, increased access to safe water and achieved universal primary enrolment with gender parity. The president is personally committed to Ghana's

achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in 2018 played a high-profile role as the co-chair of the Secretary-General's Sustainable Development Goals advocacy group of eminent persons. The Government introduced a mid-term National Development Plan Framework (2018-2021) to facilitate integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union Agenda 2063 into national plans. However, constraints in resource allocation may affect an inclusive development agenda and ambitious policies. Accountability for development, efficiency in public spending and greater transparency remain challenging.

Monitoring progress on Sustainable Development Goals proved challenging. Ghana's 2018 Indicator Baseline Report by the National Development Planning Commission and Ghana Statistical Services, supported by United Nations Data Group and UNICEF, provided baseline values for 69 of 230 specific indicators. Baseline values for 21 of the 48 goal indicators related to children were derived from household survey data from 2013, 2014 and 2015. Given its commitment to report on the Goals' progress in 2019, Ghana made efforts in 2018 to improve the national monitoring and evaluation system, undertaking, with UNICEF support, a statistics' workforce capacity assessment to strengthen use of regular administrative data. High quality household survey data was published in 2018, namely the seventh Ghana Living Standards Survey and the sixth Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 6). The results profile mixed progress against key Sustainable Development Goal targets for children and young people.

Every child survives and thrives

The under-five child mortality rate decreased from 82 in 2011 to 56 in 2017, and the infant mortality rates fell from 53 to 41 per 1,000 live births (MICS). But the pace of reduction dulled compared to earlier periods. Neonatal mortality rates remained at 27 per 1,000 live births for nine years. There were disparities in the reduction of the under-five mortality rate by socioeconomic status and geography.

While full immunization coverage for children 12-23 months rose from 71 per cent according to the Demographic and Health Survey 2014, to 77 per cent in the MICS 2017/18, there were coverage disparities between the rich and poor; educated and uneducated mothers; and regions of the country. While Ghana consistently achieves high immunization coverage at national level, 29 districts achieved less than 80 per cent coverage for Penta-3. Equitable coverage for immunization is a key indicator for the Global Vaccine Action Plan and clusters of children who are not immunized are risk for disease outbreak. To ensure Penta-3 coverage above 80 per cent by 2020 in all districts (which is a targeted result for children in West and Central Africa Region), UNICEF and government and development partners, including GAVI, are working on the analysis of immunization coverage in priority districts, developing micro-plans to address barriers.

In Ghana, one of five children is stunted (Sustainable Development Goal 2, zero hunger). The problem's urgency is highlighted by the declining rate of exclusive breastfeeding – a key result indicator for UNICEF in West and Central Africa - from 52 per cent in 2014 (Demographic and Health Survey) to 43 per cent in 2017 (MICS). In 2018, Ghana advanced the integration of early childhood development into national health and nutrition programmes, adopting the nurturing care framework. The Ghana Health Service is a stakeholder to develop tools to integrate early childhood development into maternal, neonatal and child health programmes. UNICEF partnered with the World Bank and USAID to generate support for early childhood

development in the health and nutrition sectors. UNICEF engaged local non-government organizations to mobilize awareness and create demand at community level for breastfeeding.

Every child learns

The Education Strategic Plan for 2018-2030 incorporated key expected outcomes of the 2018-2022 Government of Ghana-UNICEF Country Programme for the education sector, although an adequate cost and financing framework is yet to be defined to support the Education Strategic Plan. The Ministry of Education launched reforms focusing on decentralization, restructuring the Ghana Education Service, and teachers and curriculum reform. Poor learning outcomes for children was a challenge: MICS 2017/18 shows that only one in five children (seven to 14 years old) has foundational literacy skills, and one in 10 has foundational numeracy skills, with disparities between rich and poor and urban and rural households.

UNICEF provided technical and financial support to improve teaching quality and better learning outcomes in basic education (kindergarten, primary, and junior high schools); and to mainstream inclusive education in sectoral policies and processes, including pre-service and in-service teacher training (Sustainable Development Goal 4, quality education, and a key result area for UNICEF in West and Central Africa). UNICEF led the local education group and advocated with Ministry of Education to address financing gaps in basic education by leveraging available education grants and focusing on accountability for children's learning outcomes, including targeting non-performing schools.

While primary school attendance increased overall from 73 per cent in 2011 to 81 per cent in 2017 (MICS), completion rates dropped significantly (from 89 to 71 per cent), especially for boys. Overall, the relatively high enrolment in primary schools falls through the primary cycle, junior high school and transitions to senior high schools, with the sharpest decrease between those entering (40 per cent) and completing junior high school and the overall low transition to senior high school (20 per cent). Disadvantaged girls are especially at risk of not-transitioning to senior high school in some regions and districts, with early marriage and teenage pregnancy barriers to completing junior high school. Ministry of Education and UNICEF worked to address these barriers in Krachi East and Kpandai, with lessons to inform approaches in other districts.

The Government continued to implement the free senior high school education policy and initiated a double-tracking system for the 2018/19 academic year to accommodate limited school infrastructure, which may leave cohorts of students out of learning for up to six months in a calendar year. The free senior high school policy intends to eliminate financial barriers for children across all socio-economic backgrounds, to increase transition rates from junior high school to senior high school. However, the most disadvantaged children may have already dropped out of school before finishing junior high school level. The public raised concern that the free senior high school programme draws on the limited budget for basic education, while some parents can afford to send their children to senior high school.

Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

Ghana has a relatively young population, an estimated 44.7 per cent is under 17 years old and one third of the population is between 10-24 years. Poverty and gender inequality underpin vulnerability and well-being among young people. There are limited opportunities for their meaningful participation in decision-making on issues concerning their future. The situation of adolescent girls and young women (Sustainable Development Goal 5, gender equality) is of

concern: half of girls aged 15-19 are anaemic; 12 per cent of girls aged 15-19 years are child bearing; 95 per cent of adolescent girls sometimes miss school due to menstruation; and one of two girls 15-19 years old has experienced at least one act of sexual violence according to the MICS 2017/18.

Ending child marriage is a key result area for UNICEF in West and Central Africa. One in every five women (20-24 years old) were first married before they turned 18 years old. The rate is higher among girls from rural areas, poorest households and girls with primary-level or no education according to the MICS 2017/18. In 2018, the Government demonstrated high-level commitment to end child marriage in Ghana, most notably by hosting the second African Girls Summit on Ending Child Marriage in Accra in November 2018, which raised the profile of other issues that continue to impede progress for adolescent girls. Three per cent of the recurrent budget of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection for 2019 was allocated to implement the national strategic framework to end child marriage.

The use of violent methods of discipline against children (in all settings, including public schools) was prevalent and steady at 94 per cent over the last 10 years: almost every child between one and 14 years old is punished physically or with psychological aggression (Sustainable Development Goal 16, peace, justice and strong institutions). UNICEF worked at community and system level to reduce violence against children and harmful practices, including through the social movement Ghanaians Against Child Abuse. Effective community focus motivated an uptake in birth registration for children under 12 months, from 45.3 per cent in 2011 to 57.4 per cent in 2017.

Every child lives in a clean and safe environment

According to The Lancet 2017, in Ghana poor sanitation, hygiene and drinking-water quality contributes to high child-mortality rates associated with diarrhoea, and to high stunting rates. Over three of every four households' drinking water is contaminated with faecal waste according to the MICS 2017/18. This worsened in the four years since the Ghana Living Standards Survey (62 per cent), reflecting the continued poor source water quality management and low household water treatment rates. UNICEF is addressing this by supporting Ghana to implement the National Drinking Water Quality Management Framework, and supporting water safety planning from the utility level to the household level.

While there has been improvement in household access to improved sanitation facilities (that are not shared) over the previous decade (from 11 per cent Demographic and Health Survey 2008 to 21 per cent MICS 2017/18), open defecation - a key result area for UNICEF in West and Central Africa Region - has not decreased substantially, remaining at 22 per cent between 2011 and 2017/18. Half of the poorest populations practice open defecation, and only one in five Ghanaians have a household toilet. This is despite reductions in open defecation of up to 20 per cent since 2011 in Ghana's northern three regions and moderate reductions (4 per cent) in rural areas, where much of UNICEF and development partner sanitation investment has focused.

The lack of progress reflects the limited investment in districts that do not receive development partner support. UNICEF is working to address this challenge through advocacy for increased government investment in sanitation in all districts, particularly those without donor support, and through the development of a national strategy for household urban sanitation, with pilot approaches in three municipal and metropolitan assemblies in 2018 enabling over 40,000

people to access basic sanitation.

National hand-washing rates increased from 11 per cent in 2011, to 48 per cent in 2018, according to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), reflecting strong national social mobilization campaigns, some targeting schools and communities. However, inequities remain: the wealthiest children are twice as likely to have access to hand washing facilities than the poorest children. UNICEF continues to support the social norms campaign for hand washing at the national, regional and community levels, combined with the development of a national strategy to ensure that all schools have access to hand-washing facilities.

Every child has an equitable chance in life

The results of seventh Ghana Living Standards Survey indicated that the pace of poverty reduction in Ghana slowed between 2013 and 2017 (Sustainable Development Goal 1, No poverty), that inequality increased (Sustainable Development Goal 10, Reduce inequality), and that income, gender and geographical disparities between regions deepened. For example, poverty (including extreme poverty) rates fell in five of Ghana's 10 regions, but intensified in the remaining five.

In his mission report, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights drew attention to the diverse experiences of extreme poverty and growing inequality, calling for additional budget allocations to expand social protection and more effective implementation of poverty reduction programmes. A 2018 study by Oxfam attributed growing poverty and inequality to interconnected causes, spanning gender inequality, corruption, poor governance of essential services and prevailing economic conditions affecting households.

UNICEF and development partners' made the effort to strengthen social protection programmes (such as the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty cash transfer programme) to reach the poorest households, along with other initiatives including public finance management. In 2018, UNICEF supported a high level meeting on inclusive growth and development, raising awareness among policy-makers on inequality as a barrier to progress on Sustainable Development Goals.

Part 2: Major results including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the Country Programme Documents

Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

The health and nutrition components of the UNICEF Ghana Country Programme supported Ghana to: end preventable deaths of newborns and children under five years old (Sustainable Development Goal target 3.2); end all forms of malnutrition; achieve international targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age; and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls (Sustainable Development Goal target 2.2). Central to this support were improvements in the access to and the quality of preventive and curative health care for children, adolescents and women of childbearing age, and better access to and utilization of high-quality nutrient-rich foods, supplements and relevant services.

In 2018, UNICEF helped strengthen national immunization systems, working to ensure that 803,000 children in Ghana aged 0-11 months are protected against vaccine-preventable

diseases by 2021 – part of the key result supported by UNICEF to reach 15.3 million children across West and Central Africa Region. This involved supporting the immunization system to vaccinate with DTP/ Penta-3at least 80 per cent of children in every district. The Ghana Health did not reach the target in 29 districts. Immunization coverage was constrained in 59 districts where measles-rubella 2 vaccine coverage was below 80 per cent, and in three high-density urban centres where targets were met but many children still went unimmunized.

In collaboration with GAVI, UNICEF led an equity assessment with partners (using the equity impact sensitive tool) resulting in micro-plans to improve and sustain vaccine coverage in the 91 districts. UNICEF strengthened vaccine management through a comprehensive cold chain equipment inventory, using the data for action tool, to inform the development of a cold chain equipment optimization platform and to strengthen country capacity to meet obligations under the Global Vaccine Action Plan.

With UNICEF support, maternal and newborn quality care standards were incorporated into the national health insurance scheme credential tool for health facilities. Of 195 health centres assessed, 63 per cent qualified. The work was key in implementing quality-improvement standards for mothers and newborns, although challenges were noted in the roll-out of initiatives.

In 2018, funding from the US Fund/Gates Foundation and other partners improved the quality of maternal and newborn care in the three northern (and most-deprived) regions, reducing neo-natal mortality and informing national policy frameworks and the scale up of essential newborn care. For example, in the four districts implementing the mother baby friendly health facility initiative/quality improvement model in the Upper East Region, the survival of mothers and newborns improved by 50 per cent since 2016. In three Upper East Region hospitals, neo-natal case fatalities declined by 45 per cent. Stillbirth rates in the four districts declined by 25 per cent. And 96 per cent of babies were breastfed within the first 30 minutes of life, exceeding the national new-born target of 85 per cent. With funding from UNICEF Italy National Committee, three newborn care units and kangaroo mother care units were established in the Upper West Region.

In 2018, UNICEF continued to strengthen early childhood development care systems, targeting better coordination between sectors and more integrated services. The nurturing care framework for early childhood development was launched, with UNICEF support, by national authorities including the Ministry of Health and the Ghana Health Service and with the advocacy of H.E. Second Lady of Ghana. The framework was incorporated into the national child health and health promotion policies, and the cross-sectoral early childhood care and development coordination committee was reconvened. With the World Bank, a study on the early childhood development landscape was conducted to identify system gaps and potential support by development partners.

Preventing stunting in 3.3 million children by 2021 is a Key Result for Children supported by UNICEF Ghana, with similar targets supported by UNICEF offices across West and Central Africa. However, MICS 2017/18 indicated slowing progress for children, including a decline in the rate of exclusive breastfeeding to 43 per cent. In 2018, partnerships with civil society engaged community platforms such as durbars and community radios in four regions to disseminate information on infant and young child feeding practices, particularly early initiation, exclusive breastfeeding and the use of children's micronutrient powders. The dialogue highlighted challenges to exclusive breastfeeding at community level, including the practice of

giving water and herbal preparations to children under six months old. A UNICEF-supported initiative on micronutrient powders in the four districts provided development partners with evidence to scale up distribution.

UNICEF continued to support the girls' iron folic acid tablet supplementation programme in four regions, which was the first adolescent girls' nutrition programme in Sub-Saharan Africa and combines efforts from health and education sectors. Adolescent girls and boys receive information on nutrition practices, and one iron-folic acid tablet per week is distributed to adolescent girls. In 2018, 448,594 girls across the four regions were reached with the tablets. An evaluation led by the U.S. Centre for Disease Control noted a 26 per cent reduction in anaemia levels among targeted girls within the first 12 months of the programme, with coverage over 90 per cent in all 91 districts in the four regions.

In 2018, UNICEF assumed leadership of the Scaling-up Nutrition partnership (combining United Nations and development partners), a key advocacy role for accelerating child nutrition. UNICEF supported the dissemination of the Ghana Micronutrient Survey 2017 and the Ghana Iodine Deficiency Survey (2015) to policy makers. The surveys highlighted challenges, with reduced stunting in northern Ghana contrasting with stagnating rates at national level. Despite lower levels of anaemia compared to Demographic and Health Survey 2014, the rates still remain high, especially among women and children. The Ghana Micronutrient Survey indicated a higher rate of global acute malnutrition with the inclusion of children with oedema in the survey, while levels of blood disorders such as thalassemia and sickle cell disease were documented for the first time. More positively, iodine sufficiency was achieved in all population groups and wealth quintiles. The findings have implications for the implementation of nutrition programmes for women and children in 2019.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

UNICEF's supported complemented efforts by the United Nations in Ghana to promote Sustainable Development Goal 4. Specifically, UNICEF worked to improve school readiness (target 4.2) and learning outcomes (target 4.6) at the primary level (target 4.1), and inclusive basic education and adolescent girls' education (target 4.5). Efforts in 2018 were informed by the equity analysis supporting the Education Strategic Plan 2018-2030 and reinforced by MICS 6 (2017/18), which showed that while most children continue to enrol in schools, only one in five and one in 10 children in Ghana are attaining foundational literacy and numeracy levels respectively. There is relatively low transition from primary to junior high school, and from junior high school to senior high school. Poor learning outcomes are more pronounced among children who have disabilities, are over-age, belong to a poor household or live in a rural area. Gender emerges as a driver of inequity in secondary education. Even in the wealthiest households, more boys attend secondary school than girls (GHDS 2014).

UNICEF focused on strengthening systems for improved learning outcomes for children – a key result for children across West and Central Africa. As part of a partnership with USAID on learning support, UNICEF reached over 400,000 girls and boys in primary schools in Ghana by supporting capacity development for training of teachers, education administrators, and school communities in disadvantaged districts on effective teaching-learning approaches. Approximately 3,500 teachers participated in in-service training or received intensive coaching to improve their teaching practices in lower primary grades; and an additional 900 administrators and 1,880 school management committees were trained to support schools.

‘Strengthening Teacher Accountability to Reach all Students’ is a partnership between UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and Innovations for Poverty Action that builds on the principle of targeted instruction through ‘ability groupings’ (teaching at the right level) with a focus on instructional leadership, supervision and support. Designed as an impact evaluation of how remedial instruction improves students’ learning in upper primary grades, baseline data was collected and the intervention was rolled out during the first term of the 2018-19 school year in a national sample of 140 school clusters. The national ownership of the partnership; coordination of agencies responsible for implementation, including curriculum development, teacher training, school inspection and monitoring; and feedback among decision-makers enabled the partnership to gain support to scale up as part of the new basic education project under design by Ministry of Education.

UNICEF conducted a diagnostic exercise with the Ministry of Education and the GES to assess national institutional capacity to scale up improvements in kindergarten service delivery quality. The exercise helped to identify priority areas for the policy framework on early childhood education and costed implementation plan (expected in 2019). Given the presence of both over-age and under-age children in kindergarten, a national social and behaviour change communication campaign on “Right Age Enrolment” was launched with UNICEF support. The campaign engaged high profile influencers, including H.E. the Second Lady of the Republic of Ghana and reached 340 kindergartens and 700 school communities across 10 regions, enrolling 10,200 children who benefitted from early health screening.

UNICEF provided technical leadership and financial support for the development and dissemination of practical guidance manuals to promote gender equality, inclusion and safe schools in Ghana. In 2018, three key knowledge assets were finalized for teachers and administrators, namely: guidelines for an education sector response on prevention of adolescent pregnancy and retention of young mothers in schools (also supported under the ‘ending child marriage’ programme); a training manual to help identify gender issues in education, including understanding data at the district level and how to use it for planning and evidence-based advocacy; and a safe schools resource pack for teachers and students to address corporal punishment, bullying and sexual harassment in schools. Over 1,200 administrators nationally were oriented on the provisions of the education sector response to adolescent pregnancy, and a national cadre of trainers supported the roll-out of safe schools activities in 2,172 primary schools and junior high school with the involvement of teachers and students.

UNICEF facilitated mainstreaming inclusion in the pre-service teacher education curriculum reform, and the development and availability of an inclusive education in-service teacher training module. Based on UNICEF experience in early health screening in 20 districts and related advocacy, GHS and GES led the drafting of a national school health screening policy, applying an inclusive lens for primary and secondary schools. Ghana’s work on inclusive education was acknowledged internationally, including the Global Partnership for Education financing conference, Technical Round Table hosted by IIEP-UNESCO, and learning clinic for policymakers and implementers in sub-Saharan Africa organized by the World Bank.

UNICEF engaged in the development of the Education Strategic Plan 2018-2030 and strengthened its focus on learning, equity, inclusion, and water and sanitation in schools. UNICEF led the analysis on inclusive education and the development of a costed WASH in schools strategy, including modelling of low-cost toilet options and life-skills components. While funding was constrained, UNICEF continued to pursue opportunities to influence the design of

funds in the pipeline, especially through the World Bank and Global Partnership for Education funds for basic education.

In partnership with USAID, Innovations for Poverty Action and the Ministry of Education, UNICEF supported the establishment of the National Education Week, which replaced the annual joint sector review and focused on planning, monitoring, accountability and evidence-based decision-making for improved service delivery under the Education Strategic Plan. To align priorities at the sub-national level, UNICEF scaled up its technical support to decentralized planning with development of the annual district education plans in all districts. Regional and district education directors and their planning and statistics officers were trained and guided on the planning processes in their districts.

In 2019, UNICEF will support remedial instruction and evidence generation relating to teacher absenteeism and time-on-task; address learning difficulties in early grades; and further analyse MISC6 education data to inform programming for disadvantaged children. Work on safe schools, teaching and learning for adolescent girls will be advanced, and a more integrated approach to gender, skills development and adolescent engagement in the education sector will be developed.

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

UNICEF continued to support the Government in 2018 to strengthen the legislative framework, address gender norms especially affecting adolescent girls, improve quality and responsiveness of social welfare, sexual and gender-based violence, birth registration and justice services.

On UNICEF's policy and legislative support, foster care regulations and adoption regulations were approved by Parliament. Regional and national consultations on the comprehensive legislative review processes continued, especially around the Juvenile Justice and Children's Acts. The child protection case management standard operating procedures for children in need of care and protection were developed for the social welfare workforce and are being implemented. National standards for early childhood care and development, and the second national plan of action against the worst forms of child labour were approved and finalized (Sustainable Development Goal target 8.7).

UNICEF advocacy achieved three per cent of the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Protection recurrent budget for coordination and implementation of the National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage (2017-2026). The allocation will accelerate progress to end child marriage, reduce gender inequality in Ghana (Sustainable Development Goal target 5.3), and advance the Global Gender Action Plan. UNICEF secured budgeting for the Central Adoption Authority, established to implement The Hague processes for inter-country adoptions.

UNICEF worked with the Government to develop standard planning guidelines for districts, and engaged all districts during the preparation of their respective medium-term development plans (2018-2021) to include activities on ending child marriage and teenage pregnancy, and prevention and response to other child protection and sexual and gender-based violence issues (Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16). The majority of the 254 districts have included child protection and sexual and gender-based violence related activities in their plans. UNICEF supported the inclusion of key result areas and indicators related to child protection and gender-based violence in the performance management system of the local government to

facilitate decentralized monitoring. The initiative ensures leadership and accountability.

In partnership with the UNICEF Office of Research, the fund to end violence against children and Global Kids Online, UNICEF engaged the Ministries of Communication, Interior and Gender, Children and Social Protection in research on the risks and opportunities of children's online protection. The findings were used to design a national programme for child online protection, leading to the establishment of a child online protection unit and a framework in Ghana.

More than 7,876 children (5,820 girls, 2,056 boys) who experienced violence were reached by UNICEF-supported health, social services and law enforcement services in 2018 (Sustainable Development Goal 16). As part of strengthening the social welfare workforce and child friendly policing initiative, UNICEF supported capacity-building initiatives in over 70 districts, led by the various ministries and departments. As a result, in 2018 the skills and competencies of 2,966 social service workers and police officers were improved on child protection and sexual and gender-based violence case management and the implementation of child-friendly policing.

Policy-to-practice implementation guidelines that facilitate nationwide scale-up of child protection policies were finalized based on a pilot in 20 districts. The initiative was evaluated in 2018 in five districts and the final report will be validated and disseminated in early 2019. For long-term capacity building of the social service workers, UNICEF and the University of Development Studies designed a child protection certification course, finalized in 2018 for rollout in 2019.

With the support of Global Affairs Canada, a child-friendly gender-based violence court was modelled in Ghana that provides separate, safe and secure interview rooms for child survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. In 2019, similar courts will be equipped in nine regions by the judicial service with support from DANIDA. Authorities have expressed interest in expanding the model to adult cases of gender-based violence (Sustainable Development Goal 16).

While the degree and incidence of abuse, exploitation and violence against girls and boys varies, MICS 6 and a rapid knowledge, attitude and practice assessment (2017/18) suggested that abuse, exploitation and violence is exacerbated by gender norms and traditional practices in Ghana. To address Ghanaian's tolerance of violence and progress towards Sustainable Development Goal target 16.2, the 'Ghanaians Against Child Abuse' campaign was scaled up and reached an estimated five million people in 2018 via different platforms. Various activities and events took place across the 10 regions in over 70 districts, reaching over 1,000 communities.

UNICEF supported communities' engagement using the tools in the child protection community facilitation toolkit, reaching 150,338 people (66,976 adults and 83,362 children including 25,117 adolescent girls). The toolkit was further developed with new modules and resources on alternative care, gender, adolescent girls, sexual and gender-based violence, child online protection, adolescence, and adolescence sexual and reproductive health. Community use of the toolkits is central to UNICEF's support to end child marriage. It also gathers evidence for UNICEF across West and Central Africa and for the Key Result for Children that by 2021, three million fewer girls will be married before the age of 18; 71,600 of whom are from Ghana.

UNICEF continued to support community mobilization and mobile birth registration campaigns

in the over 70 districts that registered less than 50 per cent of births in 2017. At the end of 2018, 610,669 births of girls and boys under 12 months old were registered through the UNICEF-supported birth programme, just over 70 per cent of all the expected infant births for 2018 (Sustainable Development Goal target 16.9).

In 2019, UNICEF will continue to support programmes that improve the quality and responsiveness of social and law enforcement services at the decentralized level. Gaps in the capacity of the social, health and law enforcement workforce continue to be a challenge. Child protection and sexual- and gender-based violence topics have not yet been mainstreamed in training programmes in all sectors. UNICEF will support the finalization of the inter-ministerial and departmental referral pathways and standard operating procedures for child protection and sexual and gender-based violence case management. UNICEF will continue to work with the Government to improve the legislative framework, set up a comprehensive child protection information management system and a national response plan for child online protection. There are plans to scale up programmes related to the prevention and response to child marriages and to advance child protection case management at the decentralized level.

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

Ghana's low sanitation coverage, poor drinking water quality and moderate hand-washing rates present challenges to providing a clean and safe environment for children in the home, schools and health facilities and may constrain progress towards Sustainable Development Goals 2 to 6.

In 2018, UNICEF mitigated challenges by building government capacity to implement social mobilization campaigns and demonstrate market-based approaches at scale, and by increasing advocacy for greater government investment in behaviour change and institutional infrastructure. UNICEF supported the Government to facilitate and demonstrate the changes required for decentralized government to evolve from service provider to facilitator and regulator of the private sector.

UNICEF supported social and behavioural change communication initiatives in 2018 to encourage the use of household toilets, informed by an operational research programme and budget monitoring, which identified the need to strengthen the municipal, metropolitan and district assemblies (MMDAs) commitment and investment to sanitation. A results-based funding approach was implemented for rural sanitation programmes, leveraging that investment and commitment and improve communities' open-defecation free status. UNICEF strengthened MMDA capacity through civil society organisations and financial consultants: civil society organisations provided programme support to MMDAs; consultants' built MMDA fiscal management capacity. MMDA support to the private sector to deliver sanitation results was strengthened by establishing technical service providers and business development partners in 41 districts that developed artisans' technical and business capacity to supply toilets.

In urban areas, moratoriums on prosecution for households without toilets or landlords who do not provide them were supported in two districts. Along with stronger regulation and private sector links to communities, the approaches increased urban toilet construction, enabling over 40,000 people access basic sanitation. The establishment of innovative financing (see Part 3) for urban and rural sanitation in 2018 is expected to accelerate toilet construction by households in 31 UNICEF-supported districts in 2019. Interim protocols for declaring urban areas open-defecation free were piloted to inform protocol development and ultimately the

preparation of the urban sanitation strategy, a key step in the programme theory of change and fundamental to achieving universal access to basic sanitation nationally (Sustainable Development Goal 6.2). As a result, 687 communities were declared open-defecation free (against a target of 500 communities), enabling 177,000 people to live in open-defecation free communities (against a target of 150,000) and over 240,000 people gained access to basic sanitation in 2018. (Reducing the practice of open defecation by 88 million by 2021 is a regional Key Result for Children; Ghana will support 2.6 million). Social mobilization to increase hand washing with water and soap implemented with the sanitation programmes resulted in over 205,000 people in households with facilities, against a target of 150,000.

In 2018, the low access to sanitation in Ghana's schools was addressed through the development of inexpensive gender- and disability-friendly school toilets, potentially reducing the costs of rural toilets by over 75 per cent. The inclusion of WASH in schools (infrastructure and life skills) in the Education Strategic Plan 2018-2030 reflected successful cross-sector advocacy. However, a limited allocation to WASH in schools in the 2019 national budget suggests further advocacy to ensure universal access to WASH facilities in schools (Sustainable Development Goal 4.a). The development of a costed national strategy for WASH in health facilities seeks to address similar challenges.

UNICEF continued to demonstrate sports and play-based approaches to develop life skills in schools, to inform operational research to adapt approaches to the Ghanaian context, and to assess whether these approaches should be mainstreamed into the curriculum. Ongoing demonstration of the national WASH-in-schools guidelines, and play-based approaches, provided 192 schools (63,661 pupils) with gender- and disability-friendly sanitation facilities (from a target of 72 schools) and resulted in 252 schools implementing play-based approaches teaching life skills, including menstrual hygiene management.

UNICEF supported the development and demonstration of household and community tools to enable water safety planning at these levels to be rolled out nationally from 2019. Support was provided to the national urban water utility, Ghana Water Company Limited, to develop water safety plans for major urban water supplies. In 2018, private sector models, including build-operate-transfer and fee-for-service, were explored to improve supply sustainability. Models were piloted and documented to inform Government on options for small systems and handpump supplies, to facilitate universal access to basic water supply (Sustainable Development Goal 6.1).

A gap in sector accountability was addressed with the re-establishment of the Joint Sector Report, assessing the performance of the water sector against key benchmarks, and supporting the Government to incorporate equity-based indicators into the core national sector indicators. UNICEF supported the sector's non-government organisation coalition, CONIWAS, to build their capacity for evidence-based advocacy. Mass media statements by CONIWAS called the Government to address WASH child-rights challenges with better funding. Work is ongoing to address the continuing gap in national sector coordination mechanisms, with commitments from the Government for ministerial sector-wide meetings in early 2019.

Dignity kits were provided to over 10,000 people following floods in northern Ghana, including water treatment and storage, menstrual hygiene management and hygiene materials, with a focus on maintaining individual dignity and reducing disease (particularly cholera) risks. UNICEF supported the Government to address gender gaps in WASH governance and engagement by supporting over 6,000 women and girls to participate in WASH programming

and addressing their WASH-specific gender needs, demonstrating the national guidelines for gender in WASH.

In 2019, efforts will focus on consolidating gains in urban sanitation with the completion of the national sanitation strategy, piloting innovative financing approaches for urban and rural sanitation and strengthening government's capacity to facilitate service delivery through private sector facilitation and regulation. These efforts will support positioning Ghana to achieve universal access to basic sanitation, water supplies and hygiene (Sustainable Development Goals 6.1 and 6.2).

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

In 2018, UNICEF supported efforts to reduce poverty and inequality (Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 10) by engaging the Government and civil society to advocate, adopt and implement pro-poor policies, programmes and budgets for women and children; by enhancing social protection policy, programme design, delivery and monitoring for increased coverage of vulnerable children; and by continuing to strengthen national monitoring and evaluation systems to inform national decision making for children.

UNICEF strengthened multi-stakeholder partnerships, engaging with the World Bank, Department for International Development (DFID), USAID and GIZ in the promotion of child-friendly policies and civil society organizations, media, and local universities in promoting evidence-based budget allocations for children.

In 2018, UNICEF supported a range of evidence generation and policy advocacy activities to focus public and decision-maker attention on inclusive growth as a component of Sustainable Development Goal progress, and to promote equitable national and sectoral policies and programmes. A high-level policy forum on inclusive growth, supported by UNICEF, identified priority areas for government action. UNICEF made timely and influential contributions to the development of analytical reports on equity and poverty, such as the Ghana Inequality Report 2018 and the report on the visit to Ghana of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, "Building a More Equal Ghana". UNICEF supported the establishment of an advisory group and a technical working group to support government ownership and commitment to the analysis of child poverty (Sustainable Development Goal 1.2.1. and 1.2.2.), which will be monitored by the national Sustainable Development Goal Implementation Coordination Committee from 2019 onward.

The Key Findings Report for MICS 6 was released in November 2018. Overall, the results profiled limited progress for children in Ghana since MICS5 (2011). MICS 6 complemented other surveys released in 2018, such as the Ghana Living Standards Survey, which showed slowing progress on poverty reduction and intensified disparities. The detailed MICS Survey Findings Report is expected to be released early 2019. Ghana was the first country worldwide to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The results of MICS 6 will be a central reference point for the country during the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2019.

Taking advantage of high-level commitment to Sustainable Development Goals and integration of Goal indicators into the medium-term national development policy framework 2018-2021, UNICEF supported the finalization of core indicators to monitor progress against district medium-term development plans. UNICEF advocacy and technical support helped ensure that

key indicators for children were included in the list of national Sustainable Development Goal indicators. With United Nations agencies, UNICEF supported the establishment of baselines for national Sustainable Development Goal indicators, while enhancing Sustainable Development Goal monitoring capacity by assisting the Ghana Statistics Service to undertake a comprehensive systems gap assessment.

The promotion of equitable and child-responsive public finance management was a key part of UNICEF's support in 2018. UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Finance to enhance monitoring of social sector investments financed through the national budget. In partnership with civil society and the media, UNICEF generated public advocacy around the 2019 budget, resulting in broadened dialogue between citizens and the Government, and increased attention from the Ministry of Finance to children's issues and equity in the budget.

UNICEF supported two social accountability initiatives: the District League Table, a weighted index of social progress indicators related to service delivery, and the social accountability platform comprised of civil society organizations working across the social sector. Results of the 2017 District League Table were published and disseminated, generating public attention and commitment among national and local level authorities to use the table to increase equity and quality in service delivery. Civil society and Parliamentarians were engaged by UNICEF in capacity development workshops to influence policy decisions for children. Parliamentarians gained better understanding of public finance allocation decisions on resource transfer to district assemblies through capacity development workshops.

To improve the institutional sustainability and legal anchoring of the social protection system, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Protection to advance progress on the draft Social Protection Bill through nationwide consultations with stakeholders. UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Finance to introduce a social protection budget monitoring tool to track allocations and analyse expenditure across social programmes, line ministries and development partners. At a decentralized level, UNICEF initiated efforts to strengthen the linkages between social protection and other social services, focusing specifically on social welfare and health services. UNICEF support to the Government involved enhancing the social welfare workforce, case management and referral systems.

UNICEF advocacy in 2018 helped maintain focus on vulnerable groups the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme, with the objective of extending the programme to all of the extreme poor. The result was due to collaboration by UNICEF with the Government, and development partners including the World Bank, DFID and USAID. UNICEF Ghana continued to strengthen the programme's core systems, including technical support to assessment of its e-payment system and updating its operational manual. An independent assessment of the e-payment process was completed, providing several short- and medium-term recommendations to improve the payment system. Updating the operational manual helped institutionalize procedures that had evolved as the programme grew over the past 10 years, to continue to meet demands.

UNICEF Ghana's technical assistance and advocacy maintained the integrity of established processes for selection and identification of new families to access the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme. Nonetheless, challenges continued with enrolment and payment of eligible families and in ensuring that the expansion of the programme proceeds in line with agreed stipulations.

The Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty 1000, which expanded benefits to households with pregnant women and children under one year old, was evaluated in 2018. The findings highlighted the positive impacts of the initiative, including on levels of consumption, food security and diversity, and increased access to health insurance. It highlighted the need to strengthen linkages between the programme's beneficiaries and basic social services, particularly health and nutrition services.

Cross-cutting priorities

Gender equality

UNICEF contributed to national progress on policies related to gender and adolescent girls, and helped advance an integrated approach on adolescent girls' empowerment. In line with the Gender Action Plan, UNICEF Ghana promoted system strengthening, service delivery and an enabling environment for adolescent girls across sectors.

UNICEF supported the adoption and rollout of guidelines for an education sector response on the prevention of adolescent pregnancy and retention of young mothers in schools. MICS 2017/18 enriched the evidence base on gender equality and provided regionally-representative estimates on child marriage-related indicators for the first time. Gender-responsive nutrition services contributed to the 22 per cent reduction of anaemia among girls targeted with iron folic acid supplements and nutrition information through the GIFTS programme. Community dialogue on key issues affecting girls such as gender norms, inequality, child marriage, teenage pregnancy and violence reached over 355 communities and 5,000 girls. Public advocacy messages spanning across GAP areas reached more than 14.5 million people throughout the year via social media channels, with approximately 123,000 followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms.

UNICEF influencers championed adolescent girls' empowerment as a cause, participating in field visits, blogging, video messaging and documentaries for the public. U-Report was launched in Ghana, reaching a 60:40 male to female ratio among its 32,000 reporters, with weekly polls providing girls and boys with a platform to voice opinions on critical issues. UNICEF actively engaged in gender equality coordination with the Government, development partners and the United Nations Country Team contributing to improved alignment and collaboration on joint priorities, including the observation of International Women's Day, International Day of the Girl Child and the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women. Partnerships with the Government of Canada and the Government of Korea intensified around two programmes for adolescent girls, as well as the Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which continued to provide impetus to gender-equality work and cross-sector implementation of the Gender Action Plan at country level.

Young people

Building on the launch of Generation Unlimited, UNICEF Ghana engaged young people in dialogue to better understand their perspectives on emerging challenges and opportunities in programming for young people, including skills development and entrepreneurship. UNICEF Ghana explored areas of collaboration with young people, the business and academic sectors, and national authorities in the co-creation of technology-driven solutions for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, facilitating three hackathons across Ghana and moderating a special session with stakeholders on innovation and young people at the African Youth Sustainable Development Goal Summit. In 2019, UNICEF Ghana will continue to involve young people in programme implementation and in advancing the use and utility of U-Report for policy

advocacy.

Communication for development

UNICEF Ghana reached approximately 280,000 people in Ghana through social and behavioural change communication interventions linked to cross-sectoral programmes, including community dialogue, interactive theatre, radio and digital technology tools to promote positive social norms to prevent child marriage, open defecation, violence against children and to improve learning outcomes and maternal and child health.

Partnerships with non-government organisations facilitated dialogue and feedback mechanisms between community, traditional and faith-based leaders as well as government partners. A total of 507,604 people were reached via an interactive voice-recorded messaging platform, Agoo, while the 'talking book' programme reached 92,342 people. A total of 140 stakeholders, many of them policy makers, participated in UNICEF's second national communication for development seminar to share evidence and priorities for collaboration.

Emergency response

In 2018, UNICEF Ghana coordinated with the Inter-Agency Working Group on Emergencies to respond to the floods in the northern part of the country. The UNICEF Regional Office supported training for UNICEF staff on emergency preparedness and response. In 2019, efforts will continue to strengthen the capacity of government institutions in collecting data and enhancing coordination with all key actors, especially at decentralised levels, in order to reach affected populations in a timely manner.

Change strategies

UNICEF Ghana engaged communities in social and behaviour change activities and demand-generation for quality and effective social services (see Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4). Key results for children were advanced through policy dialogue, the provision of high-quality technical assistance across sectors and the promotion and demonstration of global best practices and evidence-based approaches in strengthening systems impacting on vulnerable children.

Gender-responsive programming supported efforts to implement two multi-year, cross-sectoral programmes for adolescent girls. In 2018, UNICEF Ghana explored multi-stakeholder partnerships for children and young people among the donor community and the business sector. Donor partners were widely involved in programme monitoring and advocacy. UNICEF explored transformative partnerships in finance, sanitation and technology, and leveraged innovation in shaping sanitation markets to respond to open defecation.

UNICEF Ghana continued to be a key partner for United Nations agencies in Ghana, combining efforts to deliver results through two joint programmes while sharing capacity and knowledge on initiatives ranging from advancing country readiness to report on Sustainable Development Goals to responding to natural disasters. The work was supported by a robust framework of governance and internal controls at the country and zone offices. Much of the progress in the three most-deprived regions in Ghana was facilitated through the Tamale zone office. Communications, human resources, information, communication and technology, administrative and supply-related support, and an active programme monitoring system over cash transfers were all internal enablers of Key Results for Children in 2018.

Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

The year 2018 was the first year of implementation of the 2018-2022 UNICEF Ghana Country Programme. Despite constraints to implementation, new opportunities and emerging programmatic areas of interest, revision of the theory of change for the country programme remained relevant. Nevertheless, there were notable observations in 2018 pertaining to the evolving programme environment, which may have implications for how UNICEF Ghana carries its work forward in 2019.

On 20th November 2019, the United Nations will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations General Assembly. Ghana was the first country to sign and ratify the Convention, and UNICEF Ghana will make the celebration of the 30th anniversary central to its advocacy.

The results of MICS 6 (2017/18) and other survey data suggest that progress for children and young people slowed since 2011. UNICEF will mobilize all stakeholders around key issues such as intensified poverty and disparities, low child nutrition, poor sanitation and unsafe environments, poor foundational literacy and numeracy attainment, and low transition to high school. While complementary analysis of the data is necessary, UNICEF Ghana will seek to leverage the 30th anniversary of the Convention as a key moment for reassessing and redirecting political and economic will towards results for children and young people, particularly in areas highlighted by MICS 6.

The President promoted a 'Ghana Beyond Aid' agenda for Ghana to eventually cover its development needs independently. While demand for public resources across different sectors of the economy limits the fiscal space for social programmes, some development partners have re-examined their development portfolios and are preparing to shift from aid to trade, or to scale down their support, further constraining resources available for programmes for children. For this reason, UNICEF will explore the potential to both generate and leverage existing, new and varied sources of funding, while establishing a partnership and resource mobilisation function to ensure that adequate time and resources are employed in cultivating and sustaining donor partnerships.

UNICEF Ghana will advance its engagement with the business sector in shared-value partnerships, and expand the scope and content of its overall partnership focus with business to positively influence markets and value chains impacting key and emerging social issues affecting children. The launch of the basic sanitation fund in 2018, a partnership between UNICEF, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, regional banks and national authorities, is a notable example of this shift in partnership focus.

The transition to the new country programme, with its focus on outcomes and innovation, raises the need for UNICEF to be more flexible and adaptive to take on new challenges. In December 2018, UNICEF Ghana launched the Basic Sanitation Fund, a revolving finance scheme offering loans to households that have access to funds but struggle to save the capital investment required for a toilet. The situation is familiar to many urban slum households that are required to pay for public toilets (typically between US\$ 50 to US\$ 150 per year). Interest rates for microfinance loans generally exceeded 50 per cent per annum, which is unaffordable for most households.

The Basic Sanitation Fund, which provides affordable financing for both households and artisans, operates through rural community banks under the coordination of the regulatory

Apex Bank, providing loans at a 12 per cent interest rate. Capital for the rural banks is provided by UNICEF through the Apex Bank; the scheme is funded by the donor. The approach required that UNICEF Ghana loan donor money to banks, which is a new modality of engagement for UNICEF. Because the initiative generated legal, administrative and accountability challenges, it took approximately one year to negotiate these challenges before operationalizing the initiative, with additional issues arising in a sequential process.

Support from UNICEF headquarters WASH section advanced the initiative. Eventually, high-level recognition for the project by the UNICEF innovative finance advisory group accelerated progress and intensified internal engagement and support from Division of Financial and Administrative Management and the UNICEF legal office, which assisted in the identification and resolution of key challenges, enabling the initiative to start in late 2018. Within two weeks of the launch, loans amounting to over 40 per cent of the total available pool had been approved by the rural banks, demonstrating high demand for the innovative financing approach.

The key observation from the experience is the need to identify internal mechanisms that can quickly highlight and support innovation emerging from UNICEF that is likely to add value to children's lives but which may be complex to advance under the existing legal, administrative and financial guidelines and policies of the organisation. This would involve identifying key constraints early in the development process and establishing a mechanism to bring key cross-sectoral competencies from headquarters and country offices together to advance development.

Results-based financing works under certain conditions. Operational research undertaken in 2017 identified that most of the results reported in a UNICEF-supported government rural sanitation programme came from a limited number of districts. The research identified that a factor in achievement was the support from district political leadership. However, budget tracking showed that most districts in the rural sanitation programme made limited or no contributions from their own funds to achieve sanitation results. From the evidence, UNICEF concluded that results-based funding could be a mechanism to reward strongly performing districts, and encourage leadership in lower-performing districts to increase focus on sanitation results.

Under results-based funding, to continue receiving funding, districts involved in community-led total sanitation implementation were required to have a minimum of 80 per cent of targeted and funded communities certified as open-defecation free. Districts achieving between 50 per cent and 80 per cent success were provided with limited additional funds, together with technical support to increase their capacity to deliver results. Districts achieving under 50 per cent success were provided only with capacity building support. Districts receiving funds were required to commit district funds to the sanitation programme.

During the assessment, one in two districts that did not meet the qualifying benchmarks for further investment committed their own resources to achieve the targets, and subsequently re-qualified for funding. The results suggest a potential to leverage results-based funding approaches across other sectors. Going forward, where appropriate UNICEF incorporate results-based funding into district funds that are directed for children.

Linking social protection with social services to maximize impact for children
In 2008, the Government of Ghana launched the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty, which provides cash transfers to very poor and vulnerable households. In 2015, UNICEF with

support from USAID partnered with the Government to launch a pilot, Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty 1000, expanding benefits to households with women who are pregnant and children under one year old. The additional category was eventually mainstreamed into the larger Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Programme. As of December 2018, the Programme reached more than 203,000 poor families in all pre-existing 216 districts of Ghana.

UNICEF commissioned an impact evaluation study of Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty 1000 households, which was conducted by the UNICEF Office of Research, the Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research at the University of Ghana, the University of North Carolina and Navrongo Health Research Centre. Overall, the evaluation found that the programme impacted child and household well-being. Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty 1000 households were better able to maintain baseline levels of dietary diversity, eating more cereals, dairy, eggs, vegetables, oils/fats, and spices than comparison households. Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty demonstrated a protective effect for beneficiary households. For example, while poverty increased and household expenditures decreased in both treatment and control households over time, the Livelihood households experienced less of a decline than comparison households. The evaluation showed positive impacts on access to services, such as increased access to the national health insurance scheme, and social and economic impacts, including women's increased participation in social networks and empowering household investment in productive activities.

The evaluation did not find an impact on one programme objective, namely the reduction of child nutrition and stunting. While there were contributing factors for this, the findings prompted reflection about the pilot programme assumptions. Several cash transfer programme evaluations in Africa also found minimal or no impact on stunting or on final health outcomes for children. The findings indicate that child nutrition and stunting are determined by a complex set of factors such as sanitation, quality of health services and feeding practices, cash transfers alone can have positive impacts on some determinants but are unlikely have an impact on overall stunting.

In combination with global evidence, the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty 1000 households evaluation suggested that while cash and health insurance are important components to improve child welfare, strengthening linkages with health and social services are required to make an impact on overall nutrition. Reflecting this lesson, starting in 2018, UNICEF Ghana placed emphasis on building an integrated approach to social protection and social welfare and health services.

During the 2018 annual management review, UNICEF Ghana discussed the lessons learned and recommendations and incorporated related actions into the annual management plan for 2019. The county office will monitor its progress in implementing those actions in various fora, including at monthly country management team and programme management team meetings.

END/