Executive Summary

In 2014, UNICEF and partners made a number of important achievements towards addressing the needs of children in Iran. UNICEF assisted the Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MoHME) to improve the quality of healthcare provision for newborn children through the Newborn Individualized Developmental Care and Assessment Programme (NIDCAP). In addition, evidence generated by UNICEF and partners from both the Government and academia highlighted severe micronutrient deficiencies among school-aged children. This led to the roll out of a programme that provided 1,050,000 school-aged female students with monthly vitamin D supplementation in 14 provinces. Additional achievements in the area of HIV prevention included improvement in monitoring, data registration and standards of services to eradicate mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

In the area of education, UNICEF kept focus on two fronts: working on policies and mechanisms to enhance the quality of education and facilitating access to basic education for the most disadvantaged children. UNICEF partnered with the Bureau of Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (BAFIA) and various Iranian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide alternative primary education services to over 3,500 disadvantaged Afghan children. These children would have had no access to education otherwise.

UNICEF continued to work in partnership with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), especially in the area of capacity building on juvenile justice standards. Positive law reform for children in conflict with the law took place in 2013 (revised Islamic Penal Code (IPC)) and 2014 (revised Penal Procedural Code (PPC)), resulting in a 50 per cent reduction (over a two year period) in the number of children deprived of their liberty.

With regard to collaborative partnerships, UNICEF worked closely with both the MoHME and nutrition academia to bridge the gap between empirical studies and policymaking. UNICEF also partnered with the Government to revive implementation of adolescent-focused, high-impact interventions in HIV prevention. These efforts followed the implementation of a UNICEF-supported pilot project on adolescent-friendly services in 2005-2011. In addition, since Iran is a leading country in the global consultations under the All-In initiative facilitated by UNICEF and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNICEF found new space to strengthen and expand national collaborations with various stakeholders and identify priority areas for HIV prevention interventions and data collection and analysis.

UNICEF and partners successfully piloted an innovative partnership model in the area of education to bring working Afghan children back to school while promoting corporate social responsibility of small businesses. UNICEF supported local NGOs to engage with 110 employers to provide approximately 300 working Afghan children with education services. UNICEF and counterparts are exploring options for scale up.

Despite the achievements, unexpected challenges arose. The implementation of the Country Programme was interrupted between June and November 2014. Activities in most units suffered
severe delays. UNICEF engagement in the areas of child protection and social policy was particularly affected by the halt. Nevertheless, by the end of the year, cooperation with all main counterparts resumed and biannual work plans were signed in December 2014.

**Equity Case Study**

Promoting equity in access to education for disadvantaged refugee children

During the past three decades, Iran has hosted one of the largest refugee populations in the world – from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan – and provided those refugees with basic services, often under the same conditions as Iranians. More than 300,000 refugee children have been integrated into the national education system. However, it is estimated that over a million Afghans live in Iran with limited access to public services, including formal education.

Education is a vehicle for children to receive support, rebuild their lives and gain the skills they need to secure jobs in the future. Closing the door on learning kills children’s hopes and creates conditions for the intergenerational transmission of poverty, in turn fuelling social instability and undermining prospects for recovery. Uneducated children are more likely to engage in child labour and early marriage. Empirical evidence shows that disadvantaged Afghan households living in poverty tend to prioritize expenditure on primary needs (such as health, food and shelter) over other basic necessities such as children’s education.

The UNICEF goal is to ensure that all children have access to formal education and to assist the Government to scale up its capacity to deliver education services. Therefore, in close collaboration with BAFIA, and in line with the national strategy for combating poverty and promoting equity, UNICEF is supporting the provision of alternative basic education to disadvantaged Afghan children. UNICEF built the capacity of NGO teachers and social workers on various issues including the fundamental features of child-friendly centres. In partnership with several NGOs and BAFIA, UNICEF helped to either set up or support a number of education centres, which facilitated the introduction of inter-cultural approaches for the benefit of Afghan children.

In general, the provision of the alternative education project targets disadvantaged Afghan communities in which children are at risk of not attending school. The objective is to give disadvantaged Afghan children a chance to access education, and to reduce the dropout rate. The project requires not only educational facilities, but most fundamentally, good communication channels between schools and parents (the latter are normally empowered/sensitised on the importance of education, when needed) and between schools and the authorities. In addition, the school curriculum is tailored to make classes more attractive, get students to learn the essentials, and keep them interested and motivated in attending school. In most of these centres, a daily meal is provided as an incentive for attendance, sponsored by the NGOs themselves.

At the institutional level, UNICEF advocated for policies to remove school fees, especially for those who cannot afford them.

The programme targets the most vulnerable Afghan children and not only provides them with basic education, but also supports the delivery of psychosocial services and the provision of healthcare and recreational activities. So far, in 2014, 3,516 Afghan children (1,826 girls and 1,929 boys) accessed these services. This number includes 391 working children.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFS</td>
<td>adolescent-friendly services</td>
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<td>AMP</td>
<td>Annual Management Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATS</td>
<td>amphetamine-type stimulant</td>
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<td>BAFIA</td>
<td>Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs</td>
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<td>BCP</td>
<td>Business Continuity Plan</td>
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<td>C4D</td>
<td>Communication for Development</td>
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<td>CCTV</td>
<td>closed circuit television</td>
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<td>CFS</td>
<td>child-friendly school</td>
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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Country Management Team</td>
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<td>CPAP</td>
<td>Country Programme Action Plan</td>
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<td>CPMP</td>
<td>Country Programme Management Plan</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCT</td>
<td>direct cash transfer</td>
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<td>DM</td>
<td>disaster management</td>
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<td>DRR</td>
<td>disaster risk reduction</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
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<td>EMTCT</td>
<td>elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV</td>
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<td>EWEA</td>
<td>Early Warning Early Action</td>
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<td>HACT</td>
<td>harmonized approach to cash transfer</td>
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<td>HQ</td>
<td>UNICEF Headquarters</td>
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<td>HRIF</td>
<td>high-risk infant follow up</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communications technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMEP</td>
<td>Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan</td>
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<td>IPC</td>
<td>Islamic Penal Code</td>
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<td>IRCS</td>
<td>Iranian Red Crescent Society</td>
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<td>JCC</td>
<td>Joint Consultative Committee</td>
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<td>JCRC</td>
<td>Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centre</td>
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<td>LTA</td>
<td>long-term agreement</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<td>MENARO</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa Regional Office</td>
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<td>MoCLSW</td>
<td>Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MoHME</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Medical Education</td>
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<td>MoJ</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
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<td>MOSS</td>
<td>Minimum Operational Security Standards</td>
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<td>NBCRC</td>
<td>National Body on the Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<td>NFI</td>
<td>NIDCAP Federation International</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>NIDCAP</td>
<td>Newborn Developmental Care and Assessment Programme</td>
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<td>NICU</td>
<td>Neonatal Intensive Care Unit</td>
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<td>OR</td>
<td>other resources</td>
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<td>ORE</td>
<td>other resources emergency</td>
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<td>ORR</td>
<td>other resources regular</td>
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<td>PAS</td>
<td>Performance Appraisal System</td>
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<td>PMT</td>
<td>Programme Management Team</td>
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<td>PPC</td>
<td>Penal Procedural Code</td>
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<td>QE</td>
<td>quality education</td>
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<td>QEC</td>
<td>Quality Education Committee</td>
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<td>RR</td>
<td>regular resources</td>
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In 2013, UNICEF successfully advocated for the application of NIDCAP in Iran. UNICEF organized a high-level international sensitization and training workshop on NIDCAP for 65 national experts with the support of NIDCAP Federation International (NFI), the Erasmus Medical University and the Sophia Hospital (Netherlands).

As a follow up, UNICEF supported the MoHME to establish the National NIDCAP Committee, which is mandated to lead the national scale up of the programme. In 2014, with the support of UNICEF, the National Committee developed a two-year action plan to provide coaching and training by international experts. The plan identifies three neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) as centres of excellence for the nationwide rollout of NIDCAP training.

As a first step, seven neonatologists and nurses were exposed to best practices of NIDCAP and inpatient care for premature neonates during a study visit in the Netherlands. Following the visit, UNICEF facilitated the preparation a joint document featuring lessons learned. These recommendations are addressing the different categories of: a) parents’ privacy; b) NIDCAP principles; c) community engagement and support to NICUs; d) neonatal transport systems from NICUs to high care centres; e) documentation at NICUs; f) logistics and hygiene at NICUs; and g) the way forward for NIDCAP training in Iran. Experts and managers at the MoHME consider this a major achievement in the process of NIDCAP learning and adaptation. These measures can make a significant difference for premature neonates. The MoHME and UNICEF estimate that upon NIDCAP rollout, up to 80 per cent of premature neonates will have higher chances of survival and will be able to catch up with their developmental milestones.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

Responding to vitamin D deficiency among school-aged children

Despite significant achievements in the reduction of malnutrition and food insecurity, many women and children still suffer from micronutrient deficiencies. For example, recent studies have revealed high levels of vitamin D insufficiency and deficiency among Iranian children. To further verify these claim, UNICEF and the MoHME developed the following evidence production strategy:

- Support the implementation of the National Integrated Micronutrient Survey. This survey aimed to measure the status of selected micronutrients, such as vitamin A, vitamin D, iron and zinc among the different age groups of children, adolescents, women and the
elderly in Iran. The national data revealed that over 70 per cent of vitamin D inefficiency and deficiency is among children.

- Implement a national surveillance system on seasonal trends in vitamin D status. The National Food and Nutrition Surveillance System was established in six provinces. Within each province, 250 households and 650 children aged 5-18 are enrolled in the surveillance system. Their anthropometric, micronutrient and biomedical cardiovascular risk factors are being monitored on a seasonal basis. Initial findings show that over 90 per cent of screened children are suffering from vitamin D insufficiency and deficiency.

- Conduct an evaluation on the impact of administration of vitamin D fortified school milk on children's vitamin D levels. In this study (carried out in 36 schools), a total of 6,256 primary students benefited from fortified milk, and the impact of its consumption was measured. Results showed a significant increase in the serum vitamin D levels of those students who consumed fortified milk, compared to the control group. However, the amount of vitamin D obtained through only fortified milk was not enough to prevent the high prevalence of vitamin D deficiency among children.

Based on the knowledge generated through these initiatives, the former national policy to prevent vitamin D deficiency, which used a very low preventive dose or only fortified products, was changed. The new policy is to administer mega-dose supplementations. So far a national supplementation programme for children and adolescents is on-going in 14 provinces, where approximately 1,050,000 school-aged female students are receiving 50,000 international units of vitamin D every month during the school year.

Partnerships

In 2013, UNICEF established a partnership with MoHME and the nutrition academia to bridge the gap between empirical studies and policymaking. Achievements have included: a) implementation of the National Integrated Micronutrient Survey; b) implementation of the national surveillance system; c) evaluation of a pilot project on fortification of milk with vitamin D in schools; and d) implementation of the fifth National Periodic Monitoring of Iodine Status among school-aged children and adolescents. Findings contributed to the development of interventions for the prevention and management of micronutrient deficiencies. UNICEF also developed the National Nutrition Leadership Programme, which enhanced the capacity of 50 national managers active in nutrition and food security, as well as experts from neighbouring countries.

Iran is a leading country in the global consultations under the All-In initiative facilitated by UNICEF and UNAIDS to curb the HIV/AIDS epidemic among adolescents. The initiative has fostered investment in evidence-based programming and empowerment of adolescents to make informed decisions. At the local level, this initiative has created a new space for partnership and advocacy for UNICEF. Negotiations and technical exchange by UNICEF started in 2014 to strengthen and expand national collaborations with various stakeholders, identify priority areas for intervention and carry out data collection and analysis.

In 2014, the MoHME, the Iranian Volleyball Federation and UNICEF established a partnership to raise awareness on HIV prevention. Iran’s national volleyball team enjoys wide exposure, both nationally and internationally. Famous players supported the 2014 World AIDS Day campaign and participated in a national ceremony that was well covered by the media. UNICEF also conducted a training session on communication about HIV that targeted 22 members of the national youth team. In addition, the Volleyball Federation uploaded various messages on HIV
UNICEF also completed a pilot programme to bring working Afghan children back to school while promoting corporate social responsibility of small businesses. UNICEF supported two local NGOs to engage with 110 employers active in the informal sector to provide approximately 300 working Afghan children with education services. Scale-up opportunities are being explored.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

In 2014, UNICEF financially supported the Government to observe National Children’s Day (8 October) to raise public awareness on children’s needs. UNICEF coordinated 17 national partners from various ministries to hold a weeklong celebration for children and families. During the events, UNICEF efforts focused on equity and inclusion of the most disadvantage children and those with disabilities. Media coverage was extensive: many articles focusing on children appeared in both internet-based media and national newspapers.

In 2014, UNICEF increased its visibility on social and digital media. The restyling of the country office website resulted in about 600 additional daily visits. UNICEF also created a channel featuring a series of videos on the Iranian equivalent of YouTube (apparat.com). In three months, each video reached over 1,000 views. The videos were also uploaded on the Iranian social networking site ninisite.com, which has a membership of over 600,000 mothers.

**Effective Leadership**

By the end of 2014, implementation of the Country Program of Cooperation progressed fairly well despite several challenges. Weakened relationships and difficulties in communication with a counterpart led to a freeze of most UNICEF activities between July and November 2014. This halt significantly restricted the capacity of UNICEF Iran to achieve more results and optimize fund utilization over the year.

During the last quarter of 2014, relationships improved and partnerships were re-established. In November 2014, following a national Steering Committee meeting, national counterparts signed around 60 per cent of the new biannual work plans.

The Annual Management Plan (AMP) 2013-14 has been maintained as a live, rolling document. The AMP contains all essential information on the office governance system, such as programme and management objectives, composition and mandates of office statutory bodies, planning calendar, role mapping, the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP), the emergency preparedness and response plan, the Business Continuity Plan (BCP), office security plan, organogram, and resource mobilization plan.

The Country Management Team (CMT), Programme Management Team (PMT), Operations Management Team, and Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) met regularly. Both the CMT and PMT regularly examined standard management indicators. Weekly all staff information sharing meetings were also held.

To assess and address risks, the Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) system, enterprise risk management, roll mapping, BCP and work flow processes were reviewed and updated. All statutory office committees were active and fulfilled their mandates.
The main operational challenges in 2014 were the timely replenishment of office bank accounts, receipt of hard currency and exchange rate losses. Similarly, due to sanctions and the unstable United States Dollar-Iranian Rial exchange rate, the establishment of long-term agreements (LTAs) for various goods and services was not feasible. Due to the sanctions, several goods have either completely disappeared from the market or are not of acceptable quality. Moreover, many suppliers included in the Copenhagen Supply Division catalogue refused to supply goods to Iran. Since the supply component of the Country Programme is relatively small, these issues did not have a critical impact, but created barriers during the year.

Ensuring a fast and secure internet connection at a reasonable cost in Iran remains a challenge. Various measures have been taken to mitigate this risk through the creation of different backup systems with the support and collaboration of both the Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO) and Headquarters (HQ).

The BCP was updated several times to reflect the changing working environment and office personnel.

**Financial Resources Management**

In 2014, the CMT met regularly, discussing both strategic and management issues essential for programme implementation and operational performance. The Office Performance Management Report, in combination with the detailed implementation reports of each unit, was used to assess progress made towards budget allocation vs. utilization, the outstanding direct cash transfer (DCT) items and the actions needed to liquidate outstanding DCTs. Despite difficulties with cash management due to the sanctions imposed on Iran, UNICEF Iran managed to improve the process through additional measures. The monthly bank reconciliation has consistently been carried out on time without any major delays.

As a result of continuous efforts to liquidate the long-outstanding DCTs, at the end of the year the total amount of DCTs outstanding for over nine months was reduced to US$ 26,000, totalling 5 per cent of all outstanding DCTs.

In order to further mitigate the risks of low utilization due to the temporary halt of UNICEF programmes in 2014, UNICEF Iran established critical budget tracker mechanisms and tools to enable units to monitor and report the feasibility of planned expenditures considering the changing environment and the likelihood that activities would take place.

Budget utilization levels were high: approximately 99 per cent for other resources emergency (ORE), 97 per cent for other resources regular (ORR) and 86 per cent for regular resources (RR). The comparatively lower utilization of the RR is due to a partial suspension of the cooperation programme between August and November.

UNICEF Iran has no open audit recommendations. The results of the internal audit conducted in 2013 were discussed with all staff and followed by CMT revision and implementation of the recommended actions.

Savings in the cost of doing business are detailed in the section of this report on efficiency gains and cost savings.
**Fundraising and Donor Relations**

Despite the loss of some bilateral donors in 2014, UNICEF Iran mobilized US$ 2.6 million from the Russian Federation to invest in programmes for disadvantaged Afghan children in Iran in 2015 and 2016. However, the Country Programme Document was designed based on an expected average annual inflow of US$ 3 million in other resources (OR), and as a result, UNICEF Iran is struggling to secure the planned funds.

Although UNICEF Iran attempted to fundraise from the private sector (including main former donors and potential donor companies), the unstable economic situation, coupled with the international sanctions and the constraints on UNICEF visibility resulted in only a few newly established companies expressing interest with minimal funding. Such companies did not meet UNICEF fundraising and partnership standards.

In 2014, Unilever fully donated the US$ 19,057 pledged in 2013. The funding was utilized for the promotion of good breastfeeding practices under the Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme.

As for individual donations, a separate bank account was opened specifically for receiving donations. The account number is visible on both the UNICEF Iran website and the Facebook page. The hosting bank agreed to place tabs for ‘Donations to UNICEF’ on its cash machines to facilitate donations. In addition, visitors to the Facebook page will be able to donate online starting in 2015. These measures are expected to considerably increase the amount of individual donations.

UNICEF Iran maintains an updated Funding Strategy Paper, has prepared a package of high quality funding proposals and country programme brochures, and is maintaining regular contact with potential donors.

Two donor reports were due in 2014. Both reports were submitted on time. All grants expiring during the reporting period showed more than 95 per cent utilization. Utilization of funds was regularly reviewed throughout the year in PMT and CMT meetings.

**Evaluation**

The 2013, the IMEP was reviewed in a participatory manner with all heads of unit, under the supervision of the Deputy Representative. UNICEF Iran also sought input from MENARO. The outcome was a tighter, more focused IMEP encompassing fewer, yet more thorough, studies. The Child Protection Priorities in Iran study is currently in the final stage of revision. This study provides a comprehensive view of priority child protection issues in Iran, based on a thorough review of legislation, policy, practices and existing bottlenecks/barriers. The key findings and strategic recommendations of the report will inform national and sub-national policy-making/programming on child protection.

No major evaluations took place in 2014, also due to the freeze of most in-country activities in the second half of the year. The management response to the Adolescent Friendly Services (AFS) project for HIV prevention was reviewed and updated. Out of 33 recommended actions, 28 have been completed, one was cancelled and four are underway.

The main challenges in strengthening the UNICEF Iran evaluation function included a no-disclosure policy on most survey data adopted by the Government and no access to administrative data. A new monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officer was hired in May 2014.
Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

UNICEF is continuously implementing cost-saving measures. UNICEF has been hosting the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on its premises since March 2014, which allowed for approximately US$ 30,000 in operating expenses savings. Additional savings were achieved following the revision of office internet connectivity options. The outdoor lighting system was upgraded with LED projectors at the end of 2014, which will generate additional savings in the future. Most of the office lights have been fit with electrical sensors and timers to optimize electricity consumption.

Due to unstable market conditions, there have been no new LTAs. The existing LTAs (providing 3-4 per cent discounts for travels abroad) have been positively assessed and extended for another year. UNICEF is also enjoying discounts from several hotels as a result of the efforts of the Inter-Agency Operations Team.

Additional inter-agency initiatives, whose effectiveness could not be measured due to the absence of appropriate tools, contributed to improving office efficiency (e.g. an updated common list of translators/interpreters and unified rates for their services, updated list of pre-assessed suppliers, creation of the information and communications technology (ICT) backup system between several United Nations agencies, etc.)

Supply Management

In 2014, the supply component of the country programme represented 15 per cent of total expenditure. Out of a total of US$ 511,963 in procurement, 69 per cent was local and 31 per cent was offshore, via the Copenhagen Supply Division and the World Food Programme (WFP) procurement hub in Dubai.

Local market conditions remained challenging as additional sanctions were imposed on Iran in 2014 that resulted in higher inflation. Consequently, prices of commodities increased even further, while the local market continued to experience some shortages in important commodities. In this environment, suppliers insisted on giving quotations with extremely short validity. Moreover, it was often difficult for some suppliers to deliver as per the terms of purchase orders. In this challenging environment, it was not feasible to establish LTAs.

Procurement services provided by UNICEF in 2014 totalled US$ 1,057,233, for procurement of various items, including medications, vaccines, and long lasting insecticidal nets under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-managed Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria project.

The value of the inventory of programme supplies in the warehouse at the end of the year was reduced to US$ 2,758 (there are no supplies prepositioned for emergencies). UNICEF Iran has been aiming to close the warehouse through 100 per cent direct delivery of programme supplies to partners in order to save on warehouse administration and related human resource expenses.

Frequent training and orientation sessions were offered to staff to ensure adequate understanding of and compliance with corporate supply rules and procedures, and to further enhance staff capacity in supply management.
Security for Staff and Premises

In 2014, UNICEF Iran conducted a security assessment of the office premises with the assistance of the Regional Security Advisor and put an improvement plan into place. MENARO allocated US$ 29,000 to support the implementation of the recommended activities for strengthening premise security and enhancing staff awareness in security matters. This allocation was used primarily to upgrade premise security: a higher fence in the vehicle trapping area was installed, the door system of the main gate was improved, and the closed circuit television (CCTV) surveillance system was upgraded. Furthermore, the office improved the performance of the very high frequency (VHF) antenna with the support of the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), and enhanced the emergency lighting system on all floors. In order to improve the night lighting system, an outdoor lighting system was installed. Finally, the old generator was upgraded to better respond to electricity cuts.

The security operating procedure was updated to reflect revisions in the Minimum Operational Security Standards (MOSS). One of the MOSS requirements is not in place yet, but its fulfilment is planned for 2015, using the MENARO security fund allocation. A UNICEF security trainer trained female staff members (as well as some of the spouses of the male staff) on women’s security issues. This training was also offered to colleagues from United Nations sister agencies. The capacity and the knowledge of some staff members was improved through their participation in several learning activities organized by UNDSS, in particular on massive casualty incidents and emergency trauma bags. Finally, UNICEF Iran organized fire drills in cooperation with UNDSS.

Human Resources

UNICEF Iran had another challenging year with regard to recruitments. On the one hand, due to the serious shortage of OR funds and delayed approval of work plans, recruitments for most vacancies were kept on hold. On the other hand, as per the office practice during the past several years, the recruitment of staff at the highest national level (NO-C) proved problematic, despite repeated efforts to attract high calibre candidates. The human resource gaps were filled through consultant/individual contract engagements and several temporary assignments.

The JCC completed follow up activities in 2014, following the 2013 retreat and the previous Global Staff Survey. The effectiveness of the actions taken will be verified with the results of the latest Global Staff Survey, held at the end of 2014.

The implementation of the UN Cares work plan for 2014 was carried out successfully. Five training/orientation support sessions on HIV and AIDS were offered to staff, one for adults and three for staff children in three different age groups, as well as one on post-exposure prophylaxis kits. A stock of condoms, good for approximately one year, was also purchased for distribution to staff.

The mid-year Performance Appraisal System (PAS) discussions were finalized on time. Following the departure of the Deputy Representative to a new assignment in August 2014 and the sudden departure of the Representative in September, programme staff PASs and the Representative’s direct reports were left with the Representative (interim) to be finalized at the end of the year.

The Local Learning Committee actively addressed the learning needs of UNICEF Iran and a number of learning/training events took place in both emergency and non-emergency areas. Despite the fact that Iran is not categorized as a country in emergency, several emergency and
security training sessions were held for the office staff, including: the Emergency Preparedness and Response training; the joint United Nations Country Team (UNCT)-United Nations Disaster Management Team (UNDMT) emergency retreat; the Emergency Response and Simulation Exercise; the Emergency Trauma Bag training; the Massive Casualty Incidents training; and the Women Security Awareness Training.

In 2014, two staff members benefitted from stretch assignments in the Republic of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Finally, the Human Resources Regional Retreat equipped the Human Resources Team with enhanced knowledge on organizational strategic developments and detailed insight into several recent changes in human resources rules and regulations.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

UNICEF Iran completed the rollout of Microsoft Office 365 in mid-2014, notwithstanding the problems of weak connectivity, which were solved in collaboration with MENARO and HQ. With the adoption of this new system, the quality of remote access to UNICEF online resources and telecommunications through Skype, teleconferencing equipment and Lync dramatically improved. The ICT Unit conducted several sessions for the staff on SharePoint and OneDrive to increase capacity to move from domestic local shared drives to OneDrive in early 2015.

In 2014, the ICT Unit achieved tangible results in leveraging knowledge and technology to implement programmes. Projects developed included:

a) New UNICEF Iran website (portal);

b) Mobile application (iOS and Android) on raising awareness on violence against children (VAC);

c) HIV prevention multimedia web pages.

The ICT Unit achieved reliable and speedy internet connectivity through improved collaboration with United Nations agencies. In 2014, the ICT Unit also made some improvements in the ICT report, which has become an ICT performance-monitoring tool for the CMT. In addition, the Unit contributed to monitoring and reducing paper consumption and ink/paper usage through a new way of using digital senders. Further savings were achieved by increasing the number of teleconferences by improving network performance.

**Programme Components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** By end of 2016, benefits from improved integrated and inclusive social services through strengthened national and sub-national capacities for child development are increased

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In 2014, UNICEF Iran worked closely with national counterparts to improve capacity to deliver social services, using an equity-based approach.

UNICEF supported the MoHME, to further promote the health and development of young children. Main achievements included: a) supported the MoHME to vaccinate 4 million children under 5 children against polio; b) assisted the MoHME to develop two models on management of under and over-nutrition among children; c) provided the MoHME with evidence on widespread vitamin D deficiency among children and adolescents, leading the MoHME to launch a new national programme for the provision of vitamin D supplementation to 1,050,000
female students; d) supported the MoHME to operationalize NIDCAP for the provision of good quality health and developmental care services in NICUs and special care nurseries.

In the area of education, UNICEF partnered with BAFIA and various Iranian NGOs to provide alternative primary education services to over 3,500 disadvantaged Afghan children. UNICEF also assisted the Ministry of Education (MoE) to strengthen the quality of education in Iran. These efforts resulted in the preparation of a draft national model for quality education and a corresponding quality education measurement framework. UNICEF also made progress on plans to implement the Iranian child-friendly school (CFS) model, and provided advisory services on education in emergencies.

In the area of child protection, progress was made with the MoJ to draft a national coordination mechanism for the prevention of VAC. In partnership with the MoJ, advocacy efforts on the role of religious leaders/institutions in preventing selected themes of VAC (e.g. discrimination, neglect) were intensified.

OUTPUT 1 By end of 2016, the policy and system capacity of ECD stakeholders at national and sub-national levels to implement, monitor and evaluate a quality and accessible national Integrated ECD programme, with specific focus on most vulnerable girls and boys, is enhanced

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF conducted a gap analysis of the national immunization programme and disseminated findings to 46 medical universities. These efforts led to the development of a national strategic plan of action for immunization, thereby strengthening the capacity of the national health system to manage and deliver vaccines. In order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the annual technical training sessions, UNICEF and the MoHME jointly developed a self-study package on managing the vaccine cold chain. In addition, UNICEF covered the supply needs for vaccinating 4 million children under 5 against polio. These children would otherwise have had no access to vaccination due to the sanctions imposed on Iran.

In 2013, UNICEF provided financial and technical assistance for the endorsement of an inter-sectorial ECD policy by the National High Council of Health. This policy now forms the basis for the delivery of integrated ECD services targeting children aged 0-8. After the ECD policy was formalised, in 2014, the MoHME launched an initiative for the screening and referral of children with developmental disorders prior to school entry. UNICEF also supported the enhancement of the capacity of the National ECD Secretariat through the provision of a short course on managerial, leadership and communication skills to 50 members of the national ECD committees.

Child injury is the second most common cause of death among Iranian children. To address the deadliest types of child injuries among children and adolescents ages 1 to 18, UNICEF will support the MoHME to develop a Communication for Development (C4D) strategy to avoid hazardous habits and behaviours. As a first step, UNICEF conducted a communication situation analysis in the provinces displaying the highest rates of injuries to: a) identify the most widespread risky behaviours; b) map key stakeholders; and c) select the most suitable media of communication to avoid hazardous habits and behaviours.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2016, the capacity of relevant stakeholders at national and sub-national levels to implement, monitor and evaluate quality and accessible programmes for promotion of breast-feeding for under-2 children is enhanced
Analytical Statement of Progress:
About 50 per cent of Iranian children under 2 do not currently benefit from proper feeding practices, which represents a risk to their health. Recent data by the MoHME shows no progress on breastfeeding practices in recent years, mainly due to two factors: a) inadequate practices by individuals and communities; and b) poor adherence of service providers to the national law on breastfeeding promotion.

The MoHME and UNICEF identified several socio-cultural factors that could be influenced to improve breastfeeding practices, and will develop a communications strategy to encourage exclusive breastfeeding accordingly. During the bottlenecks assessment phase, 60 healthcare personnel enhanced their capacities on communication for the promotion of good breastfeeding practices.

UNICEF and the MoHME jointly completed a national survey to verify stakeholder compliance with the breastfeeding law in 10 provinces. Findings will inform recommendations for law enforcement.

OUTPUT 3 By end of 2016, the policy and system capacity in the area of nutrition and food security at national and sub-national levels to implement programmes targeting the most vulnerable boys, girls and women is enhanced

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The UNICEF tripartite partnership with the MoHME and academia resulted in the completion of two applied research projects: the National Integrated Micronutrient Survey and an evaluation of a pilot project on fortification of milk with vitamin D in schools. UNICEF also supported the implementation of the fifth National Periodic Monitoring Survey on the iodine status of school-aged children and adolescents.

UNICEF supported the implementation of the National Food and Nutrition Surveillance System in six provinces. Within each province, 250 households and 650 children aged 5-18 are enrolled in the surveillance system, so that their anthropometric, micronutrient and biomedical cardiovascular risk factors are regularly monitored. Findings show that over 90 per cent of screened children are suffering from vitamin D insufficiency and deficiency. As a result, with the support of UNICEF, a national programme for the management of vitamin D deficiency was launched in 14 provinces. As part of this programme, 1,050,000 female students are receiving vitamin D supplements on a monthly basis during the school year.

UNICEF also provided the MoHME with technical and financial support to complete both the implementation and evaluation of a model for the management of malnutrition in the Bandar Abbas district. More than 200 health personnel (90 per cent female and 10 per cent male) working in health houses, centres and hospitals were trained on the new guidelines and 40,000 children under 5 (with equal distribution of girls and boys) benefited from upgraded services in growth monitoring, screening and referral for the management of malnutrition.

UNICEF supported the implementation and evaluation of a model on management of over-weight and obesity among primary school-aged children in Tehran. The results show that a combination of preventive measures, together with therapeutic interventions, can be effective in reducing over-weight and obesity trends. Leveraging such findings, the MoHME plans to roll out the services in the most-needy provinces.
OUTPUT 4 By end of 2016, the knowledge and system capacity of MoHME at national and sub-national levels in the area of follow up care for high risk infants and surveillance is enhanced towards reduction of neonatal mortality

Analytical Statement of Progress:
With UNICEF support, the MoHME established a pilot project on high-risk infant follow up (HRIF) care services in the East Azerbaijan province. So far, out of 652 eligible premature neonates, a total of 426 (65 per cent) benefited from HRIF services. UNICEF supported the MoHME to evaluate the coverage, effectiveness and quality of HRIF services, and contributed to improving the service package. The MoHME is currently developing a plan to roll out HRIF services in at least 50 per cent of NICUs in the country.

In 2013 and 2014, UNICEF successfully advocated for the application of NIDCAP. As a follow up activity, UNICEF supported the MoHME to enhance the technical capacity of 65 experts from NICUs. UNICEF also helped establish the National NIDCAP Committee, which is mandated to lead the scale up of the programme at the national level. In 2014, with support of UNICEF, the National Committee achieved the following:
- Initiated a national assessment on the status of the developmental care at NICUs.
- Finalized a two-year plan for an international coaching system on NIDCAP.
- Exposed seven neonatologists and nurses to best practices on NIDCAP and advanced NICU care during a study visit in the Netherlands.

Upon nationwide rollout of NIDCAP, UNICEF expects that up to 80 per cent of premature neonates will have higher chances of survival and will be able to catch up with their developmental milestones.

OUTPUT 5 By end of 2016, institutional capacity of Ministry of Education is enhanced to implement child-focused, inclusive quality education plans for boys and girls in primary and lower-secondary education

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Cooperation with the MoE gained momentum in 2014, and there are indications that the working relationship between UNICEF and the MoE is gradually improving despite a three-year suspension. A Quality Education Committee (QEC) was established within the MoE to set up such a structure with technical assistance from UNICEF. The QEC consists of members from pre-primary, primary and secondary education departments, the Centre for International Affairs and UNICEF. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to develop the capacity of 35 experts on the measurement of quality education (QE). As a result, the QEC and the group of trained experts can draft a model for QE and a corresponding QE measurement framework.

In a workshop planned for April 2015, the QEC will design an action plan for the integration of the indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, into the national education management information system. This will allow trained MoE staff to directly measure QE at different levels, and to ultimately monitor equity within the education system.

OUTPUT 6 By the end of 2016, the Iranian Child-Friendly School Model is developed to improve quality of education in selected primary and lower-secondary schools

Analytical Statement of Progress:
With UNICEF advocacy, a Working Group on CFS was established under the QEC to steer the cooperation programme in this area
UNICEF and the MoE started a documentation exercise to distil lessons learned, best practices and areas of improvement for the Rural Girls’ Education Programme, a pivotal component of the CFS model. The MoE is now successfully implementing the initiative, primarily supported by UNICEF, throughout the country. The documentation process, which will ultimately result in a multimedia product (including a documentary), is currently in the initial stages.

To promote the CFS model, the QEC is working on a national capacity development programme for CFS. The programme consists of a national training workshop and a study visit to a country that has successfully implemented the CFS approach. So far, the QEC has completed a meta-analysis of evaluations of CFS initiatives and identified Thailand as the destination for the visit (planned for 2015). As a first step, UNICEF translated the CFS manual into Persian for the MoE. A locally developed manual on community-based school management, a crucial component of CFS, has also been developed with UNICEF support to ensure the availability of all references for the national training workshop.

**OUTPUT 7** By the end of 2016, institutional capacity of the government counterparts is enhanced to implement equity based programs and strategies to increase access to quality primary education for refugee/migrant boys and girls.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Afghan children have enjoyed the support of the Government of Iran for decades. However, several categories of children remain excluded because of cultural practices and legislation. With the BAFIA, UNICEF commissioned a study to explore the socio-cultural barriers that Afghan children face in education, and developed a communication strategy to address these and an advocacy plan to abolish their school fees.

Disadvantaged Afghan children can hardly access primary school. In collaboration with BAFIA and national NGOs, UNICEF has long been supporting alternative educational services, which in 2014 covered 3,516 children in primary education, as well as 720 Afghan women and 150 fathers in literacy, health and protection of children. UNICEF supported various capacity development programs for NGO partners to ensure quality service delivery. Challenges impacted the work with local NGOs, slowing down implementation towards the end of 2013. In 2014, however, the partnership with BAFIA regained momentum and currently UNICEF and BAFIA are exploring ways to ensure undisrupted service provision.

UNICEF also completed a pilot programme to bring working Afghan children back to school while promoting corporate social responsibility of small businesses. UNICEF supported two local NGOs to engage with 110 employers active in the informal sector to provide approximately 300 working Afghan children with education services. The pilot project has been thoroughly documented to explore scale-up opportunities.

**OUTPUT 8** By the end of 2015, institutional capacity of the education sector for improved disaster risk reduction and disaster management is enhanced to ensure immediate resumption of quality education for all boys and girls after emergencies.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF initiated cooperation efforts to ensure adequate preparedness for proper disaster management (DM) and the incorporation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in schools in October 2012, and resumed this work in 2014.
Considering that DRR and systematic work on DM are relatively new subjects for our national partners, a considerably long preparatory phase was necessary. During this preparatory phase, the priority was to make knowledge products available to all stakeholders. UNICEF promoted awareness and dissemination of DRR international standards and best international practices for inclusion of DRR in school programmes. In June 2014, Iranian renditions of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies Minimum Standards and the United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/UNICEF publication on DRR in education were made available and are in the process of publication. A study commissioned by UNICEF and the MoE was completed to document the response of the education sector after recent major earthquakes to extract lessons learned and best practices as well as gaps for future planning and better preparedness. The report highlights that, despite improved response capacity, the country needs to improve preparedness, early recovery and M&E to be able to provide optimal educational services in emergencies and ensure quality education is not disrupted.

**OUTPUT 9** By the end of 2016, institutional capacities of key stakeholders are enhanced for implementation and coordination of effective programs for the prevention of violence against children (VAC), taking in to the account national context, i.e. laws and regulations

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Procedures to establish a national coordination mechanism for the prevention of VAC were drafted under the supervision of the National Body on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (NBCRC) Technical Working Group for Inter-sectorial Coordination on VAC (established in 2013). This mechanism was developed based on a situation analysis of existing VAC-related programmes/interventions and pre-existing coordination mechanisms in Iran.

In partnership with the NBCRC, advocacy for the prevention of VAC through religious leaders/institutions was further promoted on selected themes, such as discrimination and neglect. Several technical sessions brought together experts from the Government, NGOs, universities and religious institutions to examine the causes, dimensions, and consequences of the selected themes from social, cultural, psychological, legal and religious points of view. The NBCRC will present outcomes of these sessions, particularly preventive actions to be taken by religious leaders/institutions, to the MoJ.

In partnership with UNICEF, the MoHME is scaling up two successful pilot projects promoting prevention, early detection and management of child maltreatment within the health system. Following a mapping/capacity analysis, the MoH and UNICEF selected 12 medical universities for the national scale-up of the Code of Conduct for Health Workers pilot project. In addition, the MoH and UNICEF completed a mapping/capacity analysis of health centres in Hormozgan Province to establish specialized assistance units for children suffering from maltreatment.

In an additional effort to prevent child maltreatment, the national broadcasting organization, in partnership with UNICEF and NBCRC, produced and broadcasted five episodes of a popular programme on national television, featuring messages on prevention of child maltreatment. In addition, UNICEF trained two famous television presenters on ethical communication on children.

**OUTCOME 2** By end of 2016, the most vulnerable children and women enjoy increased benefits from inclusive social welfare and poverty reduction policies and programmes through strengthened national and subnational capacities.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
The UNICEF partnership with the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare (MoCLSW) was revived in the last quarter of 2014. This culminated in the signature of a new biannual work plan centred on the themes of social inclusion, equity, and evidence-based decision making.

Engagement in 2014 focused on:

a. Capacity building: 50 officers were trained on various technical aspects;
b. Enhancing UNICEF understanding of the complexities of social protection in Iran: a mapping of social protection actors and initiatives was finalised and further efforts are underway to improve understanding of the local context;
c. Proposing to the MoCLSW different options for accessing best international practices in poverty measurement and targeting cash transfers: after a meta-analysis of social protection schemes in various countries, the MoCLSW singled out Mexico as the best positioned country to host a study visit, which will take place 2015.

In 2015, engagement will focus on capacity building, provision of technical assistance for better measurement of poverty – with a focus on child poverty – and technical assistance for design and implementation of child-friendly safety nets.

UNICEF also engaged the NBCRC under the MoJ to strengthen institutional capacities for knowledge management on child-related issues.

OUTPUT 1 By the end of 2016, national capacities for data collection, analysis and evaluation of child and women headed house-hold situation, deprivation and disparities are strengthened.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Since 2012, UNICEF has supported the participation of 45 technical experts from the MoCLSW in conferences, workshops and technical sessions to expose counterparts to best practices in both measurement of poverty and design of equitable, evidence-based policies. A study visit to Mexico is planned for 2015 to draw lessons for reform of several safety nets, in an attempt to make the foreseen reform as child-sensitive and equity-oriented as possible.

UNICEF continued to work closely with the NBCRC to strengthen institutional capacities for data collection/analysis on child-related issues and the preparation of good quality reports. A needs assessment of the NBCRC's four technical working groups (M&E, legal/judicial, education/information dissemination, support/coordination) conducted in 2014 reflected several capacity gaps. To address these, UNICEF supported a training workshop, which improved participants' understanding of CRC provisions and related guidelines.

UNICEF and NBCRC are in the closing stages of a study entitled Child Protection Priorities in Iran. The study spans 11 provinces and provides a comprehensive view of child protection priorities in Iran, based on a thorough review of legislation, policy and practices, and potential areas that may require strengthening. The key findings and strategic recommendations of the report will inform policy-making/programming on child protection.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2016, child-sensitive social protection mechanisms and initiatives are strengthened at the national and sub-national level targeting the most vulnerable children and families, including women-headed-households.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
After the change in administration of 2013, UNICEF is working on understanding current priorities in social policy, as well as the potential impact on child outcomes of the envisaged reforms. Efforts to understand capacity gaps both at national and sub-national levels are underway, and a capacity building strategy will be developed in 2015. In 2014, UNICEF completed a mapping of the active child sensitive social protection programmes. The results of the study will inform future planning and programming in the area of social protection. In February 2014, UNICEF held a child sensitive social protection seminar attended by approximately 40 senior officials from the MoCSLW, which helped refocus technical discussions with different counterparts.

OUTPUT 3 By the end of 2015, national capacities for development of a Child Poverty Reduction Strategy, including relevant implementation mechanisms are enhanced.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF is currently conducting a study on multidimensional child poverty measurement with the MoCLSW. Completion of the study has been severely delayed due to reasons outside of UNICEF control. There was no significant progress on this output in 2014. Recent exchanges with the MoCLSW indicate a renewed interest in completing the study in 2015. According to the recently signed work plan, the study will be followed by the development of a national strategy and action plan for the provision of effective and sustainable interventions for disadvantaged children for both prevention and support.

OUTCOME 3 By the end of 2016, national and sub-national organizations and institutions have increased capacities to develop, implement and/or strengthen programmes, systems and policies to improve health, development and access to opportunities for and with adolescents and young people.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF contributed to capacity development of various institutions in 2014. The UNICEF partnership with the MoJ continued, especially in the area of capacity building on juvenile justice standards. Positive law reform for children in conflict with the law took place in 2013 (IPC) and 2014 (PPC), resulting in a 50 per cent reduction (over a period of two years) in the number of children deprived of their liberty. Additional capacity building interventions resulted in other improved practices: for example a code of conduct was drafted for the police to define standard behaviours for police dealing with child offenders, victims and witnesses of crime.

On the HIV prevention front, UNICEF assisted the MoHME to develop technical capacity through the identification of successful, high-impact measures for preventing the further spread of the global pandemic. Consistent with the organization’s equity-focused approach, such measures were tailored to the most-at-risk groups of adolescents. Capacity building efforts to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV resulted in the development of toolkits, training manuals and reference documents for service providers.

OUTPUT 1 By end of 2016, the capacity of government and stakeholders for the enhancement of HIV prevention and response based on the requirements of adolescent and youth programming is increased.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
In 2014, UNICEF cooperation with the MoHME through the Centre for Communicable Disease Control led to a number of achievements. With technical assistance from an international consultant, UNICEF enhanced the technical capacity of 45 MoHME HIV experts, as well as other key national strategic partners, on successful high-impact interventions targeting most-at-risk adolescents and youth. UNICEF technical input for the development of the new five-year national strategic plan on HIV control resulted in the prioritization of HIV testing and counselling as the main national strategy for key young populations. Furthermore, Country Dialogue Team negotiations led to the mobilization of US$ 12 million (through 2017) from the Global Fund’s New Funding Model. In line with the above efforts and the global All-In Initiative, in which Iran is a leading country, UNICEF Iran supported the planning of a comprehensive minimum service package targeting most-at-risk adolescents, to be rolled out in two provinces in 2015. In addition, UNICEF enhanced the technical capacity of 80 practitioners and policy makers on high-impact interventions for adolescents in HIV prevention and treatment.

In 2014, the MoHME, the Iranian Volleyball Federation and UNICEF established a tripartite partnership to raise awareness on HIV prevention. Iran’s national volleyball team enjoys wide exposure, both nationally and internationally. Famous players supported the 2014 World AIDS Day campaign and participated in a national ceremony, which attracted the attention of several media outlets. UNICEF also conducted a training session on communication about HIV targeting 22 members of the national youth team. In addition, the Volleyball Federation uploaded various messages on HIV prevention onto its portal. The website receives more than 400,000 clicks per day, thereby representing a major medium for reaching the youth in Iran.

OUTPUT 2 By end of 2016, targeted institutions dealing directly with children in contact with the law have increased capacity for applying juvenile justice and restorative justice programmes.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The revised IPC, which promotes alternatives to detention for children in conflict with the law, entered into force. In partnership with the MoJ, 70 judges were sensitized on child-related provisions of the IPC and their application, using a UNICEF-supported guideline. Implementation of relevant IPC provisions and training of judges on juvenile justice standards contributed to reducing the number of children deprived of liberty from almost 2,000 (2012) to an estimated 1,000 (2014).

The revised PPC, which improves penal procedures for children in contact with the law (e.g. establishment/improvement of juvenile courts, juvenile police units, juvenile correction/rehabilitation centres (JCRC)) was ratified in 2014 and will enter into force by 2015. In line with PPC provisions, the “Executive Regulations of JCRC” was drafted in cooperation with the Prisons Organization. Its implementation is expected to improve correction/rehabilitation services for children deprived of their liberty. Child-related provisions of the IPC and PPC were extracted from the bill on Addressing Children and Adolescents’ Crimes, developed with UNICEF support.

UNICEF provided technical and financial support to the police to draft the Code of Conduct for the Police as a key step towards establishing specialized juvenile police units. This Code defines standard behaviour of police dealing with child offenders, victims and witnesses of crime.

In parallel, UNICEF engagement with the MoJ in capacity development continued. Over 290 judges/prosecutors/lawyers/social workers were trained on juvenile justice standards in 10
provinces. To mainstream juvenile justice training within educational institutions, the Judicial Sciences University launched a master’s course on criminal law for children; 48 students have participated to date. Moreover, UNICEF, in partnership with the police, developed a textbook on the role of police in a juvenile justice system. UNICEF continues to advocate for the incorporation of a related course in the Police Academy curriculum.

OUTPUT 3 By end of 2016, an educational service package for prevention of new HIV infections amongst children exists across all four EMTCT component

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Despite some delays in the community-level rollout of services, the national programme on elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT) proceeded as planned. In 2014, with UNICEF support, 160 EMTCT centres in 16 provinces initiated service provision. In order to further enhance the quality of services, UNICEF devised monitoring forms at three levels (national, antenatal care clinics and reference hospitals) for the programme. Together with experts from the MoHME, UNICEF conducted a rapid gap analysis to identify tools, processes, standards and knowledge gaps for enhanced implementation within the 16 medical universities initially involved. UNICEF also continued its role as the co-convener of the EMTCT programme area. UNICEF Iran led technical discussions and fostered collaborations under the Joint Programme of Support, especially with the World Health Organization (WHO).

A challenge for reaching pregnant women with HIV prevention and care services was the lack of necessary tools, procedures and knowledge products to train service providers at the subnational level. At the end of 2014, UNICEF and the MoHME jointly embarked on developing the necessary tools through: 1) identification of gaps in the package currently delivered; 2) finalization of monitoring checklists, reporting and registration mechanisms; and 3) development of toolkits, training manuals and reference documents for service providers. This process will be completed in 2015.

OUTPUT 4 By the end of 2014, national policies and services on drug and psychoactive substance abuse prevention with due consideration to risk and especially protective factors amongst adolescents and young people are available

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Most of the achievements under this output were towards the planning process of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) area five and the work of its drug control and prevention theme group. UNICEF contributed technically to four drug working group meetings held mainly internally with other United Nations agencies. As a partner agency, UNICEF also contributed to consultancy work, which aimed to develop a narrative study and joint work plan for drug control and prevention. The respective UNICEF work plan with the Drug Control Headquarters has not been signed due to prolonged negotiation in the respective UNDAF theme group between the United Nations and the Government partner. While the work on drug prevention will continue in collaboration with the MoHME, this output will likely be discontinued following consultation with partners during the mid-term review.

OUTPUT 5 By the end of 2014, knowledge base to develop a multi-sectorial plan and related C4D plan for mainstreaming youth (with gender and age analysis) lens in programming is available.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
Given the high levels of youth unemployment in Iran, UNICEF and the Ministry of Sports and Youth started a collaboration to better understand challenges in youth employability. Joint efforts led to the finalisation of a comprehensive study on youth employability in 2014. However, due to serious delays (caused by changes in the administration of this newly created ministry), as well as other major obstacles in fostering this newly established partnership, UNICEF is considering deactivating this output.

OUTPUT 6 By end of 2016, the capacity of the Government to promote healthy life styles and promotion of resilience- based drug abuse prevention among adolescents and youth (boys and girls), with a specific focus on social health and prevention of traffic accidents is enhanced

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Road accidents are the second most common cause of death for children, adolescents and youth in Iran. UNICEF and the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) conducted joint research on the behavioural causes of traffic accidents to develop a model for road safety. The aim was to identify the cultural, psychological and social elements causing road accidents. In addition, UNICEF supported a study visit to Germany conducted by a delegation of nine representatives from IRCS, the traffic police, the MoHME and academia, with the aim of gaining exposure to best practices for reducing traffic accidents among youth. The research and the study visit will be followed by the development of pilot models to reduce traffic accidents involving young people.

Regarding healthy lifestyles promotion, UNICEF and the MoHME conducted joint research on adolescent health services. Findings were presented in a national meeting for the prevention of risky behaviours among adolescents, which included participation from government counterparts and university researchers. These efforts led the MoHME to design several initiatives to improve adolescent health.

The consultations on the prevention of amphetamine-type stimulant (ATS) use were initiated in 2013. In 2014, the process yielded several policy recommendations on ATS prevention. The final document, entitled Roadmap on ATS Prevention among Youth, is now ready for implementation. In addition, UNICEF supported the participation of three international experts at the eighth International Congress on Addiction, which focused on prevention science, held in Iran. This Congress, co-organized with the MoHME and academic institutions, addressed over 2,200 individuals, including academics, policy makers and practitioners. UNICEF is assisting the MoHME to further explore partnership possibilities in the area of national capacity enhancement through the Science for Prevention Academic Network and the European Commission.

OUTCOME 4 Cross Sectorial

Analytical Statement of Progress:
By the end of 2014, implementation of the Country Program of Cooperation progressed fairly well despite several challenges. Weakened relationships and difficulties communicating with a counterpart led to a freeze of most UNICEF activities between July and November 2014. This halt significantly restricted the capacity of UNICEF Iran to achieve more results and optimize fund utilization over the year.

During the last quarter of the year, relationships improved and partnerships were re-established. In November 2014, following a national Steering Committee Meeting, national counterparts signed new biannual work plans.

Internally, UNICEF Iran achieved a satisfactory level of coordination through regular CMT and PMT meetings. Key documents that constituted the basis for coordination included: the supply plan, the communication plan, the C4D work plan and the fundraising strategy.

OUTPUT 2 Programme planning, coordination and management

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In 2014, coordination with United Nations agencies improved. The Government and United Nations agencies created an UNDAF Technical Advisory Group, which convened quarterly to monitor UNDAF implementation. UNICEF was also active in the United Nations M&E Team, which is responsible for periodic reporting on UNDAF progress.

UNICEF Iran conducted an internal mid-year review of the implementation of its work plans in July. Over the year, the main challenge was keeping a stable relationship with all national counterparts. After an initial impasse, the year closed on a good note and partnerships were re-established with the signature of biannual work plans between December 2014 and January 2015.

Fortunately, no major emergencies arose in Iran in 2014. However, as a contingency measure, UNICEF and WHO developed a preparedness plan to counter potential outbreaks of polio and Ebola. In addition, UNICEF Iran undertook a review of its emergency preparedness plan and updated the EWEA portal. In line with the United Nations DM Team work plan, UNICEF facilitated the process of drafting the education, nutrition, WASH and child protection contingency plans. UNICEF, together with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and WFP, held the first United Nations/Government Joint Emergency Simulation Exercise in October in Kerman. In September, UNICEF held a DM Team retreat in Sari with OCHA and WFP to prepare an emergency preparedness plan of action.

In December 2014, UNICEF received a contribution of US$ 2.6 million from the Russian Federation to invest in programmes on education, health and protection of disadvantaged Afghan children in Iran. Despite this, UNICEF Iran has suffered from serious funding constraints, which in turn have affected its capacity to implement critical interventions to enforce children’s rights in Iran. UNICEF Iran maintains an updated Funding Strategy Paper, and prepared a package of funding proposals to be shared with potential donors.

OUTPUT 3 The knowledge of relevant stakeholders on child rights and the UNICEF mission in Iran particularly its focus on most vulnerable boys and girls is enhanced

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In 2014, UNICEF financially supported the Government to observe National Children’s Day (8 October) to raise public awareness on children’s needs. UNICEF coordinated 17 national partners from various ministries to hold a weeklong celebration for children and families. During the events, UNICEF efforts focused on equity and social inclusion of the most disadvantaged children. Media coverage was extensive: many articles focusing on children appeared on both internet-based media and national newspapers.
In 2014, UNICEF increased its visibility on social and digital media. The restyling of the UNICEF Iran website resulted in about 600 additional daily visits. UNICEF also created a channel featuring a series of videos on the Iranian equivalent of YouTube (apparat.com). In three months, each video reached over 1,000 views. The videos were also uploaded on the Iranian social networking site ninisite.com, which has a membership of over 600,000 mothers.

OUTCOME 5 Programme support

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Iran conducted the annual revision of the following documents: role mapping, workflow processes, list of committees and respective terms of reference, enterprise risk management, EWEA and the BCP.

The UNICEF Iran statutory committees met regularly and contributed to effective and efficient decision making in office management. Both the CMT and PMT regularly examined standard management indicators. Weekly all-staff information sharing meetings were held. UNICEF Iran established several task forces and committees with staff association representation on different issues and contributed to enhancing the consultative and participatory nature of decision-making processes.

UNICEF Iran has no outstanding audit recommendations. Due to the changes after the adoption of VISION, the office has put an internal audit committee into place that has audited the three main governance areas. The audit team report has been discussed with all staff members and the CMT, resulting in the closure of all issues raised.

Recent political developments challenged the capacity of UNICEF Iran to attract the required financial resources (OR) for the implementation of the Country Programme. Fundraising was regularly discussed as a standard agenda item at PMT and CMT meetings. In 2013, a new Country Programme Management Plan was prepared and a programme and budget review/approval was completed to revise the available resources for Country Programme implementation and human resources. During this submission, MENARO exceptionally approved an additional US$ 100,000 per year in 2014 and 2015 to assist UNICEF Iran to make up funds shortages. Another programme and budget review submission was done in 2014 with the aim of saving funds for the promotion and funding of the Global Shared Service Centre project. No posts were affected with this submission.

OUTPUT 1 Governance and systems

Analytical Statement of Progress:
With regard to governance systems, the two-year rolling AMP contains all essential information for staff on office governance systems, including programme and management objectives, composition and mandates of office statutory bodies, the planning calendar, role mapping, the IMEP, the emergency preparedness and response plan, the BCP, the office security plan, an organogram, and the resource mobilization plan.

At the beginning of every year the list of the office management committees and the committees’ terms of reference are collectively revised. The committees met regularly throughout the year. The CMT and PMT regularly examined standard management indicators. The emergency preparedness plan and the BCP were updated regularly and the last revision was done during the second half of 2014.
UNICEF Iran has no outstanding audit observations. With an eye on continuous improvement of internal control, the office initiated and conducted a self-audit in 2013. The findings were discussed by the CMT and an action plan was put in place that will reach full implementation by the end of 2014.

**OUTPUT 2 Financial resources and stewardship**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
With regard to financial management, at the end of 2014, the amount of DCT outstanding for more than nine months was reduced to 5 per cent of total outstanding DCTs.

In order to further improve asset management, in 2014 UNICEF Iran assessed the ICT equipment, including assets, and cleaned the storages. UNICEF Iran also renewed the fleet with two new vehicles, which yielded savings on operating and maintenance costs.

In terms of financial internal control activities, UNICEF Iran regularly performed bank reconciliations on time and internal control checks. The Table of Authority was updated to ensure continuity, maintaining the number of conflicting roles to a minimum and reflecting minor changes in procedures during the year.

Although UNICEF was able to include provisions for the harmonized approach to cash transfer (HACT) in the signed Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP), the UNCT opted not to implement HACT given the sensitive operational environment. UNICEF is therefore not HACT compliant. Following the instruction received from HQ, UNICEF Iran is revising this issue.

With regards to email management, in 2014, UNICEF Iran successfully shifted from Lotus Notes to Outlook. To support the implementation of this action, the internet and backup systems were revised and optimized at no additional cost. Furthermore, the quality of internet services has noticeably improved.

UNICEF Iran is making additional efforts to create a ‘greener’ office environment by taking steps to reduce energy consumption and paper utilization and making more efficient use of ICT equipment.

**OUTPUT 3 Human capacity**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
According to the organisational strategy and requirements, in June 2014, UNICEF Iran submitted an integrated budget to the Regional Programme and Budget Review to reflect planned activities towards making a one-time contribution for Global Shared Service Centre. No office posts were affected.

The completion of PAS was carried out according to global deadlines.

Despite several rounds of re-advertising, some key positions remained vacant due to difficulties finding suitable candidates.

The annual Learning Plan was jointly developed under the leadership of the Learning Committee to address office/staff capacity priority gaps and build staff capacity for long-term career development. Three staff members (all females: two national officers and one general service) benefited from external training financed by UNICEF, and four national staff members
(all females: one national officer and three general service) had the opportunity to benefit from stretch assignments with MENARO in 2013. Two staff members had this opportunity in 2014.

In 2014, UNICEF Iran established a follow up system to address the recommendations of the two-day office team building retreat organised in 2013. The results of this action will be assessed when the results of the 2014 Global Staff Survey become available.

UN Cares in Iran is very active and develops annual plans to address various issues for United Nations staff and their families.

### Other Publications

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<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Child Rights: A Comparative Study of Islam and International Instruments</td>
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<td>UNICEF Notebook with child rights messages</td>
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<td>UNICEF in Iran (Farsi+English)</td>
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<td>CRC booklet</td>
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<td>CRC in Child friendly language</td>
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