Executive summary

During 2017, the Government launched a consultative process to define Malaysia’s vision 2050 to become one of the top 20 nations in economic development, social advancement and innovation. Despite a challenging global economic environment and increasing social inequities, the Malaysian economy performed well in 2017, and continued to be among the fastest growing in the East Asia and Pacific Region. This translated into further reduction in the national incidence of poverty, currently at 0.4 per cent and clear progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as reported in the Voluntary National Review presented in July at the High Level Political Forum in New York. UNICEF Malaysia, together with other United Nations agencies, worked with government partners, civil society organizations and the private sector to support Malaysia in its effort to achieve the SDGs and to generate evidence that informs timely decision-making reaching those left behind. Together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), UNICEF supported national efforts to report, monitor and evaluate progress against the SDGs and inequalities across the country.

In line with the national priorities and SDG Roadmap, UNICEF Malaysia supported the Government to improve the well-being of children and enhance inclusivity. Several equity-focused and evidence-based initiatives contributed to strengthening national policies, quality social services for development potential, and child-centred social inclusion and disparity reduction. As part of the multisectoral task force on sexual crimes, led by the Prime Minister’s Office, UNICEF Malaysia made significant contributions to the enactment of the Sexual Offences against Children Act 2017 and the accompanying standard operating procedures. The adoption of the Act marked a major advancement in the protection of children from sexual offences, including grooming and child pornography.

Another major milestone was the adoption by the Ministry of Education of the recommendations arising out of the Second Malaysian Indigenous Peoples’ Conference on Education held in 2016. The Minister of Education tasked UNICEF Malaysia to convene a national taskforce to mainstream the rights of indigenous children and communities for the preservation of their mother-tongue through education. UNICEF Malaysia was also invited to provide technical inputs on operationalizing the ‘National Indigenous Education Transformation Plan 2017-2025’. Findings and data from the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Study on Children with Disabilities were used to promote inclusion and positive behaviour change through various initiatives. These included the Borneo International Marathon, where over 10,000 participants, including children with and without disabilities, ran to promote social inclusion.

Strategic partnerships with reputable think-tanks such as the Institute of Strategic and International Studies and Institute of Dar Razwan, created inclusive policy dialogues. The dialogues drew extensive media coverage, and generated national debate on evolving trends such as demographic transition, social protection and an inclusive labour force for women, and established UNICEF Malaysia as a credible voice for children and women within the 2050 policy debate. This resulted in an invitation to present an investment case related to the first 1,000 days to the Prime Minister. Political and policy awareness translated into improved child and maternity benefits in the 2018 National Budget. Another significant partnership was with Petrosains, a high-profile national science and education centre, as a
"Champion for Inclusion". A memorandum of understanding was signed to implement a series of joint activities to model best practices around inclusion of children with disabilities within public spaces and services. The activities included disability equality training for Petrosains staff, a Makeathon event that brought together children with disabilities and private sector experts to make simple assistive household devices.

UNICEF Malaysia had a very successful year in its fundraising efforts. A key milestone was achieved at year-end with active pledge donors exceeding the threshold of 100,000. Gross private sector income grew by 15 per cent from around US$11 million to approximately US$13 million, excluding soft credits.

The most pressing challenge remains the ability to recruit qualified technical staff, due to the competitive labour market in Malaysia. For instance, nutrition is an emerging area for programming, but UNICEF has not been able to attract qualified national staff. Another challenge is the continued delays to secure the endorsement of relevant government authorities for the release of jointly planned reports and research findings. New partnerships and recourse to the existing research ecosystem have helped overcome this, providing inroads to critical areas, such as urban poverty and ensure wide ownership of the issues by stakeholders.

Continued efforts to streamline processes and move to a paperless environment within UNICEF Malaysia led to savings, a greener environment and efficiency gains, notably in procurement processing and finance.

Humanitarian assistance

No humanitarian assistance was provided through UNICEF Malaysia during 2017.

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

UNICEF Malaysia is well placed to support the implementation and monitoring of the Strategic Plan at country level for a number of reasons. Firstly, UNICEF’s Strategic Plan charts the course for the attainment of the SDGs, and UNICEF Malaysia’s 2016-2020 country programme is aligned to the 11th Malaysia Plan which constitutes the first phase of Malaysia’s SDG roadmap. Further, in lieu of a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the UN Country Team drafted the ‘UN SDG Framework’, which together with the newly established Results Groups, outline the UN’s support to the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs in Malaysia. The UN SDG Framework has a focus on poverty eradication amongst the bottom 40 per cent, climate change and environmental sustainability, human capital development, gender equality, human rights, and governance. The Framework is anchored on the principles of “leave no one behind” and “reaching those furthest behind first”, which are at the core of UNICEF’s Strategic Plan.

Malaysia is well advanced in mapping SDG targets and indicators to national development plans. The Department of Statistics identified data gaps, and at the Government’s request the UNCT is supporting the development of a central SDG data portal. National evaluation capacity development is being supported jointly by UNICEF and UNDP. The progressive move in Malaysia towards more centralised and open data will significantly enhance monitoring of progress against the SDGs, which together with ongoing country programme monitoring and evaluation, will feed into global efforts and inform UNICEF’s Strategic Plan targets and indicators.

UNICEF Malaysia programme priorities are aligned to the goals of the new Strategic Plan and to UNICEF’s East Asia and Pacific Regional Headline Results. The protection of children from violence and exploitation (Goal Area 3) constitutes a major component of the country programme, focusing on protecting children from both online and offline sexual
exploitation, abuse, and violence, eliminating harmful practices against girls, strengthening civil registration and enhancing access to justice and family-based care. Progress in the disability flagship programme will support Goal Area 5. UNICEF’s Malaysia’s support for tackling the double burden of malnutrition, the monitoring of learning outcomes and access to learning opportunities for disadvantaged and marginalized children and adolescents, will support UNICEF’s global efforts outlined in Goal Areas 1, 3 and 5. Ongoing social policy and advocacy promote increased investments in the first 1,000 days of life, a strengthened social protection floor, and an inclusive workforce for women and persons with disability directly contributing to Goal Areas 1 and 5. This is complemented by the introduction of new methodologies to capture multi-dimensional child poverty in urban areas to fill existing data gaps, child friendly cities and disaster risk reduction education (Goal Area 4).

Further, UNICEF Malaysia has a strong track record in engaging children and young people through various fora, and in developing and leveraging resources and partnerships for children across a broad spectrum from the private sector, academia and civil society with a strong corporate social responsibility component. The hybrid nature of the office - incorporating private sector fundraising with development programming cooperation - favours implementation of the IMPACT plan and winning support for the cause of children.

Data analysis and evidence generation, behaviour change communication, and innovation to accelerate results for children, are key change strategies underlying programme implementation in Malaysia, in line with the Strategic Plan.

Though well-positioned from both the perspective of programme priorities and UN Reform to support 2018-2021 Strategic Plan implementation, the biggest challenges internally lie in ensuring a staffing structure and flexible processes to support the ambitions of the programme and private sector fundraising. External challenges include changing public perceptions, social norms and beliefs in relation to women, children, as well as undocumented, migrant and refugee children living in Malaysia.

**Emerging areas of importance**

**Refugees, migrants and stateless persons.** To support the agenda of leaving no one behind, at its retreat in October the United Nations Country Team agreed to make the rights of refugees, migrants and stateless persons living in Malaysia a primary focus for joint planning and advocacy, starting with the eastern state of Sabah where an estimated 500,000 undocumented children are thought to live. A mapping by the UNCT was launched in December to better understand their number, origins and circumstance.

The emerging national debate around tolerance and inclusivity provided further opportunity to champion this cause during the International Day of Peace, the International Day of Tolerance and Human Rights Day. The inclusion in Malaysia’s Roadmap for the Sustainable Development Goals of actions to address poverty and exclusion amongst the refugee, stateless and migrant population, are directly attributable to the UNCTs advocacy efforts and considered a significant result.

UNICEF Malaysia was nominated to chair the UN Working Group on Inclusivity and tasked to lead the UNCTs support to Government and joint actions in this regard. In terms of direct support, a year-long human-centred design lab concluded with a sustainable model for vocational training to provide 21st century skills, emerging technologies and vocational fundamentals to over 800 migrant, refugee and out-of-school adolescents in the eastern state of Sabah, in the first two years. This private sector, civil society and community-based partnership model is being prototyped to be rolled out in March 2018.
Increased urbanization. A key feature that characterizes Malaysia’s development path is its rapid urbanization transition, from 19 per cent at the time of Independence to currently more than 70 per cent. While urbanization has been accompanied by an accelerated income growth and achievements across many non-income dimensions, the current national survey tools do not permit conclusions about the urban poor. In response, UNICEF Malaysia conceptualized an innovative model to contextualise urban poverty by focussing on strategically selected poor urban communities. The model vertically analyses deprivations, access to rights, and children’s integration into broader urban society and opportunities. A household survey was completed, and data analysis is in progress. Ongoing initiatives to illustrate from the perspective of a child what life is like living in high-density urban poor communities, will complement evidence generated through the survey to inform advocacy in 2018. These initiatives include: photography training for children with best picture award; young journalists training and competition to personalize stories; young research award and conference, and; a ‘Policy-thon’ where young leaders teamed up and competed to create a policy mix to find practical solutions for common existing problems related to children in urban settings.

The second decade. The concept of the “second decade of life” stimulated considerable youth and partnership engagement on the topics of bullying, sexual exploitation and abuse. In response to several cases of bullying and violence perpetrated by young people against their peers, UNICEF Malaysia convened a roundtable with key stakeholders to share best practices to prevent and reduce and develop an action plan to chart the way forward.

Project I/AM was launched to inspire young Malaysians to take ownership of social issues affecting them, notably bullying and cyberbullying, inspire them to act, and come up with creative solutions to address them. The outcome of the Children4Change survey, conducted in the run up to World Children’s Day, confirmed bullying and violence as top concerns amongst young people in Malaysia today. The survey findings gained public attention, making headline news in three national media outlets and coverage in 19 others, including five TV and nine radio stations.

The #Sayasayangsaya (I love myself) townhalls empowered 1,564 teens from 316 schools with the skills and knowledge to navigate the internet safely. Nearly all the participants (96 per cent) called for reproductive health education to protect teens from sexual abuse. This evidence contributed to advocacy with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders, resulting in a request from the Economic Planning Unit and the Ministry of Education for UNICEF Malaysia to convene stakeholders to share best practice and chart the way forward.

UNICEF Malaysia was a partner to the “Child Online Protection in ASEAN” conference held in December, organized by the Malaysia Communication and Multi-Media Commission. UNICEF Malaysia organized the youth camp associated with the conference and spoke on the panel on “Mitigating the Danger of Cyber Threats to Children”. All three issues affecting young people are central to the global #ENDviolence campaign.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

ASEAN - Association of Southeast Asian Nations
C4D - communication for development
CMT Country Management Team (UNICEF)
CRBP Child Rights and Business Principles
CSO – civil society organization
ICT - information and Communications Technology
IRBM - ??
Capacity development

Capacity development initiatives remained a key strategy in the country programme in 2017. Disability equality training delivered to 103 participants from the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) aimed to change focus on disability as a social and rights issue.

Through three inclusive journalism workshops, trained reporters gained new knowledge on disability and improved reporting skills to portray children with disabilities in a dignified and respectful way.

UNICEF partnered with three key universities to support capacity development on communication for development (C4D) aimed at increasing understanding and capacity to design and implement child rights-focused C4D initiatives. UNICEF aims to strengthen partnerships at national and sub-national level training programs, integrating C4D modules in curriculum or creating a centre of excellence that promotes enabling environment for children in line with the vision in the 11th Malaysian Plan.

UNICEF supported the training and capacity building of at least 50 mother-tongue-based multilingual education educators from community learning centres in EthnoArts education. This aims to revive the use of the teaching in their mother-tongue of indigenous children in Sabah and Sarawak, leading to improved and meaningful learning outcomes.

The landscape analysis of national surveys to disaggregate data on nutrition outcomes provided an opportunity to build capacity of Ministry of Health statisticians. UNICEF sourced a domain expert who worked with Ministry’s team and provided hands-on learning exchange. In addition, UNICEF supported four government officers to attend a technical regional workshop on the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, and another workshop on disability statistics, which will ultimately contribute to better monitoring and reporting on the SDGs.

UNICEF partnered with the Natural Disaster Research Centre at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah to begin an earthquake education programme. The objective is to empower over 4,000 students from 114 primary schools in high risk areas in Sabah, as part of advocacy for and strengthening of child-centred disaster risk reduction.

Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

The completion of evidence-based and equity-focused research and investment cases strengthened policy dialogue and advocacy. Debate and extensive media coverage on demographics, the need to create an inclusive labour market for women and persons with disabilities, and to invest in a child’s first 1,000 days were stimulated by two position papers drafted by UNICEF Malaysia. This led to an invitation to present a proposal for universal child rights to the Prime Minister within the framework of Malaysia’s new development vision 2050. Provisions for children and maternity coverage in the 2018 National Budget reflected
arguments put forward in these papers.

Advocacy to establish the legal age of marriage as 18 across jurisdictions continued, strengthened by new study findings to fill knowledge gaps surrounding the incidence and drivers behind its occurrence in Malaysia. These findings also stimulated debate on the need for age-appropriate reproductive health education, previously a taboo subject. Advocacy, partnerships and awareness-raising activities to shift mindsets from a medical and charitable disability model to a social and rights-based model based on inclusion took centre stage following new evidence generated from the ‘Childhood Disability in Malaysia’ study which highlighted the stigma and discrimination faced by these children. The development of a plan to prevent and respond to violence against children, and a family-based care plan are ongoing and draw on recently completed study findings.

UNICEF and UNDP, initiated a ‘Review of National Evaluation Systems and Capacities for Evaluating Progress towards the SDGs in Asia Pacific Region’, and provided technical support to strengthen national capacities on evaluation and use of data. The UNCT submitted a joint report for the 69th pre-sessional working group UN Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in June.

**Partnerships**

Broad-based partnerships were key to building political capital and an enabling environment for the rights and well-being of children and women. Strategic engagement with reputable think tanks, including a partnership with the Institute of Strategic and International Studies and Institute of Dar Razwan, stimulated media attention and propelled a healthy national debate on the challenges and opportunities related to Malaysia’s new development vision for 2050. These partnerships helped position UNICEF Malaysia as a credible voice for children and women within the 2050 policy debate. Collaboration with ‘Lead Women’ and Johor Cooperation further proposed policy solutions for the retention and promotion of women in the workplace at two private sector fora.

A partnership with the Jeffery Sachs Centre on an executive leader’s course contributed to strengthening the SDG Agenda in Malaysia and the region. New partnerships with academia, including the signing two memoranda of understanding which aim to establish institutional mechanisms to ensure the ongoing availability of skilled practitioners able to conduct research on under-served issues, to support evaluation functions in the Government, and to hone C4D knowledge and skills to support behaviour change strategies in relevant fields.

**External communication and public advocacy**

The strategic use of external communication in support of social policy work gave voice to emerging issues such as the double burden of nutrition, the demographic dividend, and urbanization. Through the dissemination of data and statistical analysis, policy-makers were reached and public discourse shaped.

Awareness and public outrage stimulated by the ‘Predator in My Phone’ campaign launched in 2016 by youth journalists partner, R.AGE, contributed to the adoption of a new Act on ‘Sexual Offences Against Children’ in 2017. Initiatives by NGOs, social enterprises, sporting associations, and government institutions to build a more inclusive society were promoted and amplified in the media within the framework of the UNICEF Malaysia disability campaign under the hashtag #thisability. Together, these aim to challenge the prevailing stigma and discrimination towards children with disabilities.

In line with the global #ENDviolence campaign, conversations on healthy teenage relationships, online dating and sexual violence were held through eight #SayaSayangSaya
youth townhalls, reaching over 1,500 adolescents from 318 schools across the country.

The opinions of children and adolescents on key child rights issues, including online dating, corporal punishment, cybersafety, bullying, SDG awareness, migration, and climate change were presented through different online platforms, including over 10 polls of the U-Report.

On World Children’s Day, overwhelming media buy-in to a children’s takeover of the media provided print, broadcast and online platforms for children in over 50 media programmes. Over 130 media pieces were generated across the country featuring this initiative. Relationships with established media were strengthened and new corporate sector partnerships forged.

UNICEF increasingly worked with Malaysian celebrities, including Lisa Surihani, appointed as a National Ambassador in 2017, and the comedian Harith Iskandar to localize UNICEF branding and mainstream children’s rights.

UNICEF also contributed to UNICEF 70th anniversary, the new branding (#foreverychild), and the early childhood development campaign.

**South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation**

Benefiting from strengthened partnerships with Malaysia’s well-established infrastructure in research and institutions, UNICEF completed a very successful South-South programme in 2017. A visit was facilitated for a delegation of 15 government officials from Bangladesh to learn how the Voluntary Organisation for Professional Evaluations is working with the Government of Malaysia to support policy and programmes. Other areas of knowledge exchange found useful included: open data, capacity development with the Malaysia Evaluation Society, IRBM approaches to strategies and processes to support the development of the 8th five-year plan for Bangladesh.

UNICEF supported the University of Malaya to organize the Third International Conference on Social Protection, attended by more than 100 participants from Malaysia and abroad. UNICEF sourced an internationally recognized thought leader in social protection as a keynote speaker, who emphasized right to social protection being at the centre of the SDGs development agenda. UNICEF also sponsored three best papers award from other developing countries to encourage collaboration and cross fertilization of ideas.

UNICEF partnered with the newly-established Jeffery Sachs Centre on Sustainable Development to deliver a two-day learning programme aimed at equipping leaders in Malaysia and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) region with insights and customised approaches for sustainable development programming, policy interventions and multi-stakeholder collaborations. The UNICEF Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific delivered the keynote speech on urbanization and access to fundamental rights by children, which was very well received. UNICEF Malaysia provided technical support to initiative to promote social protection in Madagascar and Indonesia.

Malaysia also furthered the agenda on child rights and SDGs through forums such as Asia-Pacific Regional Technical Capacity Development Workshop on Effective Planning of Education Sector for Achieving SDG4, the Second International Conference on Special Education, the ASEAN Women of Tomorrow conference, and the Seminar on Child Online Protection in ASEAN.

**Identification and promotion of innovation**

Innovative private sector collaborations were formed around issues impacting Malaysia’s most vulnerable, notably children with disabilities and out-of-school children, to focus new
“problem-solvers” around entrenched challenges of inclusion

With the aim of influencing public behaviour change, UNICEF Malaysia engaged Petrosains, a high-profile national science and education centre, as its first “Champion for Inclusion”. A memorandum of understanding was signed and a series of joint activities designed to help model best practices around inclusion of children with disabilities within public spaces and services. This included disability equality training of their staff, a Makeathon event that brought children with disabilities together with private sector experts to make simple assistive household devices, aided by user observation and co-creation activities between their learning and development team and the children.

An innovative alternative education model was jointly developed for out-of-school children with local partners. Comprised of both vocational education and livelihood components, the ME.REKA Sabah Education Programme was designed to help marginalized adolescents to build marketable, 21st century skills within one of four updated vocational streams: ironmongery, artisanal crafts, food technology and digital start-up accelerator. A two-year pilot in the state of Sabah (East Malaysia) is planned for 2018, which has generated a lot of interest and ownership from stakeholders, especially the local Mayor.

Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages

The enactment of the Sexual Offences against Children Act 2017 and accompanying standard operating procedures on handling sexual offences against children marked a major advancement in the protection of children from sexual offences, including grooming and child pornography. UNICEF Malaysia significantly contributed to this outcome as part of the multi-sectoral task force on sexual crimes led by the Prime Minister’s Office, involving a range of stakeholders.

The adoption of a cross-sectoral approach to address stigma and discrimination faced by children with disabilities proved effective. It increased the understanding of disability as a social and rights issue and built partnerships across sectors including government, private sector, civil society, media, and children with disabilities and their families. Monthly task-team meetings ensured coordinated progress and the cross-fertilization of ideas to promote inclusion.

UNICEF Malaysia convened partners and engaged young people on several cross-sectoral child rights issues including cyber safety, bullying, healthy teen relationships, online dating and sexual violence. These not only led to several initiatives and pathways for addressing violence against children, but also enhanced youth engagement in critical issues affecting them.

Building on the momentum of previous years to address the needs of out-of-school and indigenous children’s education, UNICEF Malaysia broadened its partnership base beyond civil society to include local government authorities, mayors, UNCT, the diplomatic corps and private sector. This resulted in greater awareness and acceptance of the need for a multi-sectoral approach to address the rights of these disadvantaged children. Notable results were their inclusion in the SDG roadmap, the approval of a generic set of guidelines on alternative learning centres by the Minister of Education, the adoption of policy recommendations in respect of indigenous multi-lingual education, and discussions between the Government of Malaysia and Philippines to address health needs of the refugee/migrant Filipino population in the eastern state of Sabah.

Human rights-based approach to cooperation
The rights of refugee, migrant and undocumented children to access basic services, such as education and health care, remained prominent in UNICEF Malaysia’s advocacy and editorial calendars in support of the Agenda 2030 principle of leave no one behind. UNICEF continued to support joint planning and advocacy initiatives with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). A mapping by the UNCT was launched in December to better understand number, origins and circumstances of refugees, migrants and stateless persons. UNICEF Malaysia also provided feedback on the consultation paper on the National Human Rights Action Plan and provided input into the UNCT report on Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women implementation in Malaysia for the pre-session working group of the treaty body Committee.

Implementation of treaty body recommendations were supported through various efforts. Data generated from a knowledge, attitude and practice study completed by UNICEF Malaysia is being utilized to promote inclusion and positive behaviour change towards children with disabilities through various initiatives with a wide variety of partners.

The study on lifting reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities completed in April 2017, contains detailed analysis of the social and legal context, identifies opportunities and barriers, and makes recommendations for Malaysia to progressively lift the remaining reservations.

As part of an inter-agency task-team, UNICEF Malaysia provided technical advice to the drafting process of the Sexual Offences against Children Act 2017, to ensure its alignment to international standards and best practice, as well as the Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.


**Gender equality**

Child marriage remained a programme priority for UNICEF Malaysia. A study on child marriage in the country was undertaken through UNICEF, at a cost of $US43,000. New evidence on the drivers of child marriage across ethno-religious groups will reinforce joint UN advocacy for the minimum age of marriage to be 18 for both girls and boys across legal jurisdictions and inform actions to address the causes. UNICEF Malaysia is broadening its partnership base to include religious leaders, Sharia court judges and media to advocate and raise public awareness on the issue.

In preparation for the 2018 Mid-Term Review of the country programme a working paper on female genital mutilation was prepared to guide programmatic interventions.

Advocacy for an inclusive labour market linked to the discourse on changing demographics, successfully placed the importance of retaining women in the workforce at the heart of Malaysia’s new development Vision 2050.

Strategic partnerships developed with reputable think-tanks, together with two position papers shared at various forums to promote productivity and an inclusive labour market, drew extensive media coverage and generated national debate. This resulted in an invitation to present to the Prime Minister.
Awareness raised at political and policy levels translated into several recommendations favourable to women in the National Budget for 2018. These included the announcement of 2018 as Women’s Empowerment Year, supported by extended maternity leave, time allocated to breastfeeding, tax incentives for women returning to the workforce after two years of career break and the provision of childcare facilities in government offices and new office buildings. Complementing this effort, UNICEF Malaysia’s partnership with Lead Women on the ‘ASEAN Women of Tomorrow’ Conference and the Johor Cooperation’s annual business event, provided opportunity for sharing of best practice with the private sector to achieve gender equality in the workplace. UNICEF sourced its global partner, IKEA, to present their experience and global best practice in achieving gender equality to other business leaders at the ‘ASEAN Women of Tomorrow’ conference.

UNICEF Malaysia jointly advocated with other UN agencies to ensure inclusion and prioritization of a more inclusive society and increased gender equality in the SDG roadmap.

**Environmental sustainability**

UNICEF Malaysia’s country programme does not have a climate change component. This is currently being addressed by other UN agencies within the UN Sustainable Development Framework environmental sustainability working group, chaired by UNDP.

Within the UNICEF office environment, recycling and energy saving initiatives continued. Efforts to move to a paperless culture resulted in a 50 per cent reduction in paper consumption.

**Effective leadership**

The country management team (CMT) management oversight function was complemented by monthly programme, operations and private sector fundraising team meetings. Monitoring of management key performance indicators was conducted in accordance with the annual management plan using management reports from INSIGHT and the managers dashboard for primary data.

To strengthen financial and contribution management, the CMT initiated the distribution of management reports prior to meetings to prompt corrective action. The CMT reviewed and endorsed membership of statutory committees and the table of authority, undertook quarterly monitoring of the integrated monitoring and evaluation plan and bi-annual monitoring of the annual management plan, enterprise risk management plan, and business continuity plan.

New initiatives endorsed this year included: standard operating procedures for knowledge management; a new mobile phone policy to ensure the equitable distribution and use of phones and SIM cards amongst staff and coverage for critical staff; and the inclusion of national staff amongst its members on a six-monthly rotational basis to enable their participation in management decisions.

As part of the enterprise risk management process, the CMT initiated an analytical political-socio-economic briefing by a national staff as a standing agenda item to anticipate potential risks to programme implementation or business continuity. As UNICEF Malaysia has minimal downstream programme implementation, from an operational perspective the biggest risks lie within private sector fundraising. These risks have been carefully assessed and mitigation measures put in place in accordance with the enterprise risk management plan.

A business continuity exercise was conducted in November. Recommendations were made
by the CMT to address identified weaknesses, including insufficient knowledge of certain staff to access UNICEF applications and systems remotely, and the need to foresee laptops or alternative premises for private sector fundraising operations in case of emergency.

**Financial resources management**

The utilization rate as at the end of the year 2017 was 99 per cent for Regular Resources, 100 per cent for the Institutional Budget and 100 per cent for Other Resources. These were achieved as a result of planned monthly reviews of activity completion against fund utilization by the programme management team and quarterly reviews by the CMT. The fund utilization in 2017 was higher than the previous year due to more intensive programme implementation and higher level of fund consumption, as well as a notable increase in fundraising activities, resulting in higher income and expenses respectively. This entailed having more than 60 percent of the country programme Other Resources ceiling consumed by the end of the second year of the programme cycle. UNICEF Malaysia plans to review the ceiling during the mid-term review planned for 2018.

UNICEF Malaysia consistently completed monthly bank reconciliation activities without having any open items outstanding for longer than two months. This also applied to the completion of monthly financial account closure activities.

The management of cash assistance was carried out in an organized and planned manner. The programme management team and CMT were regularly monitoring the status of direct cash transfers and the implementation of assurance activities. Although some advances were not reported against for over six months, by the end of the year these were only 7.64 per cent of the total transfers.

During the year there were several internal control check activities carried out. Among them were the management practices of petty cash, account closure activities and bank reconciliation processes. To further improve the banking and payment systems, with support and assistance from the Division of Financial and Administrative Management, UNICEF Malaysia moved its operating bank account from Maybank to Standard Chartered Bank. This will allow savings on transaction costs and more efficient use of staff time.

**Fundraising and donor relations**

In 2017, gross private sector income grew by 15 per cent from around US$11 million (49 million Malaysian Ringgits) to around US$13 million (MYR56 million Malaysian Ringgits), excluding soft credits. This increase was achieved despite changes in the national banking system, which meant a reduction in successful bank payments equivalent to a seven per cent income reduction.

These results were based upon record pledge donor recruitment of approximately 31,000 new donors in 2017, compared with 24,000 in 2016 (40 per cent increase). More importantly, donor recruitment increased dramatically in the latter part of the year, with the volume for the third quarter being 75 per cent higher than one year earlier. At year end, UNICEF Malaysia reached the milestone of 100,000 active pledge donors, plus had 10,000 donors making once-off gifts.

The key to success in 2017 lay in the development of profitable new channels for donor recruitment. These included broadening the agency base, telemarketing and the in-house face-to-face team. As such, UNICEF’s previous reliance on the agency APPCO to recruit over 90 per cent of all new pledge donors was reduced to 40 per cent.

UNICEF Malaysia’s country programme was fully funded from monies raised. All non-emergency funds, except for those received from companies and major donors, were un-
earmarked. This meant that in addition to keeping the UNICEF Malaysia country programme fully funded, some US$6 million was remitted to UNICEF Headquarters as Regular Resources, and US$700,000 to UNICEF regional thematic funds.

In line with the Global IMPACT Plan, UNICEF Malaysia developed a new strategy for 2018-2021 which will see both income and the number of pledge donors double within the next four years.

**Evaluation and research**

In 2017, UNICEF Malaysia continued to ensure a rigorous preparation and implementation of the Plan for Research, Impact Monitoring and Evaluation (known as PRIME), monitored quarterly by the country management team.

To promote evaluation, UNICEF Malaysia focused on the communication and dissemination of the evaluability assessment of the country programme and the evaluation of capacity development completed in 2016. The evaluation of capacity development led to a mapping of child rights non-governmental organisations.

UNICEF Malaysia partnered with UNDP Malaysia on a joint regional-led ‘Review of National Evaluation Systems and Capacities for Evaluating Progress towards the SDGs in Asia Pacific Region’. The findings and recommendations of the study, currently being completed, were presented by the Government in three international events: the 2017 Asia Evaluation Week, the UNDP Regional Knowledge Exchange, and the Fourth International UNDP National Evaluation Capacities Conference. Additionally, UNICEF Malaysia signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to promote research and innovation in evaluation methodologies and to build capacities. This led to the launch of an introductory course on evaluation, in partnership with the Malaysia Evaluation Society.

Staff members were trained on the use of the standard operating procedures for research, evaluation and studies that were recommended as good practice in the UNICEF Regional Evaluation Strategy. The evaluation was positively reviewed in 2017 by the Regional Office as part of the Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of UNICEF. It was recommended for replication across groups of countries where this may prove appropriate and useful to overcome scarcity of resources for evaluation at country level. The budget use for evaluation reached 0.99 per cent of programme expenditure.

**Efficiency gains and cost savings**

Several initiatives to improve office efficiency were undertaken in 2017. Work processes were reviewed and redundant steps removed, thus enhancing clarity in roles and responsibilities, and cutting staff and transaction time. The principal efficiency gains were noted in procurement processing. Process flowcharts were developed and act as job aids, thus making information easily accessible, cutting errors and supporting onboarding. The establishment of six long-term agreements for frequently required services significantly simplified and sped up contracting for editorial, translation, printing, and events services. Initiatives taken to move towards a paperless culture cut paper consumption by half over previous years. These included the introduction of codes for printing and copying, e-polling for certain meetings, and the creation of a shared drive to facilitate the sharing and editing of documents.

The automation of the process of producing cheques improved the quality and speed of the work of the finance unit. Another major initiative undertaken was the transfer of the operating bank account from Maybank to Standard Chartered Bank which came into effect in December. This has already cut the processing time of payments and reduced staff time.
spent on undertaking this activity. The Standard and Chartered Bank charges offered UNICEF were lower than Maybank and will thus result in cost-savings, which will be monitored for reporting in 2018.

Extensive use of available resources in AGORA resulted in cost savings of US$1,785 against the staff learning and development plan. A reduction in service fees negotiated with a recruitment company led to marginal savings of US$1,050. The introduction of mail polls for contract review board meetings cut the process from a maximum of 22 days to three days.

**Supply management**

The supply component represented 22 per cent of total programme inputs and 46.8 per cent of the total country programme expenditure in 2017. Overall, 83 contracts of various categories were issued with a value of US$3,744,550.88. This was a 259 per cent increase in the number of contracts compared to 2016. Of these, US$3,740,555.52 was spent on Institutional Contracts and US$3,995.36 on Low-value Purchase Orders. Of the 83 contracts issued, 11 were single source selection. The segmentation of these contracts is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Contract</th>
<th>Contracts issued</th>
<th>Value (US$)</th>
<th>Single sourced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Contract – Programme</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>781,672.81</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Contract – Private Sector Fundraising</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2,855,409.39</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Contract - Operations</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>103,473.32</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Arrangements</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Value Purchase Order</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,995.36</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>83</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,744,550.88</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The office established long-term agreements for six services highly sought after by all sections. These cover hotel services, event management, copy writing and editorial services, graphic design, translation services and printing services. This arrangement has notably improved the customer service efficiency of the procurement unit cutting both the overall processing and staff time involved in different steps of the process. Established for UNICEF, these are available for all UN agencies in Malaysia who require these services, thus contributing to the overall operational efficiency of the United Nations in the country.

To meet the increased demand for procurement services resulting not only from an increased demand from all sections, but also the relocation of the UN premises, UNICEF Malaysia relied on the support of staff from other country offices on stretch assignment, and also established a temporary assistance position.
To increase procurement efficiency and streamline processes, UNICEF Malaysia initiated a revision of the procurement workflow process and conducted refresher training for contract review committee members.

**Security for staff and premises**

The opening of the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) station adjacent to the common UN premises in Kuala Lumpur had promoted negotiations with the Government to identify a suitable alternative location. The United Nations Country Team reviewed options proposed by Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister’s Office and selected new premises in the administrative capital of Putrajaya, after clearance from the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

The Security Risk Assessment was updated to reflect risks posed by the opening of the MRT station in December 2016. Additional security measures were requested and put in place by the landlord and the MRT contractors to shield the office from pedestrian traffic in accordance with the UN Minimum Operating Security Standards. UNICEF will relocate at the end of January 2018, and a satellite office will be opened for private sector fundraising operations for which UNDSS clearance has been obtained.

Programme implementation was not affected by security concerns. The UN Security Management Team met regularly and security clearance was obtained prior to all mission travel. In addition, two satellite phones were procured and provided to staff travelling to remote areas in the eastern states of Borneo, where there is no mobile phone coverage.

The warden system was updated and activated during the business continuity simulation in November.

**Human resources**

Five new positions were created to respond to emerging programme and fundraising priorities, and the increased volume in procurement. Coupled with the departure of eight staff (six national and two international) this put a heavy burden on recruitment and increased the workload.

The UN salary scale is uncompetitive in the current labour market and a deterrent to attracting talent, especially in private sector fundraising, delayed the filling of certain positions. To overcome challenges faced in attracting and retaining staff, and to mitigate the anticipated risk that this may worsen with the impending office relocation to Putrajaya, UNICEF Malaysia took the strategic decision to request exemption from the Standard Step in Grade Calculation to allow some flexibility in offering a competitive salary to new recruits.

The implementation of the office diversity strategy developed in 2016 last year, led to a four per cent improvement in the gender balance, whilst maintaining a balanced ethnic representation. Despite progress, more effort needs to be made to attract suitable male candidates. Staffing gaps were bridged through hiring of individual contractors, and by UNICEF staff on stretch assignment. The contributions of staff from other offices contributed to building the capacity of new staff.

An action plan to address areas identified as needing improvement from the Global Staff Survey was developed in a consultative manner. Activities are on-going, and progress will be monitored through CMT and all staff meetings.

UNICEF Malaysia was amongst the first offices to benefit from the performance management training organized by the Division of Human Resources which encouraged continuous constructive feedback. The need for open dialogue was further emphasised.
during a stress management workshop conducted in June by the Regional Chief of Human Resources and the UNICEF Staff Counsellor.

The UN Cares inter-agency team did not meet during the year and no activities were undertaken.

**Effective use of information and communication technology**

The information and communication technology (ICT) office profile was updated in compliance with internal audit recommendations and regularly used to support decision making on ICT-related activities. Shared mailboxes that link finance and supply with UNICEF’s Global Shared Service Centre in Budapest were created to streamline the payment process.

Digital cheque printing, printing controls, and an office SharePoint site were established to improve work efficiency and contribute to the office greening efforts. Full laptop-based operations contributed to improve workplace business continuity and facilitate the implementation of flexible work arrangements.

UNICEF was a member of the UN House ICT task team on the proposed infrastructure design and implementation plan for the new premises in Putrajaya. Support from UNICEF office and headquarters infrastructure team helped ensure that the design and planning for the new premises comply with global UNICEF standards. In addition to ensuring business continuity, UNICEF Malaysia performed regular simulation exercises and tests of the ICT Disaster Recovery Plan.

Open source platforms and social media were used extensively to engage children and young people on social issues, and promote child rights. A total of 57 RapidPro polls and five public U-Report polls were conducted. Awareness was raised through the amplification of data gathered through the media and digital platforms. The reach on Facebook and Twitter increased by over 20 percent, totalling 3,886,977; whilst Instagram reach increased by over 682 percent to 238,098 followers. Partnerships with social media youth influencers and celebrities boosted child rights messaging through their own digital platforms.

Digital media was used by the private sector fundraising team to acquire and engage donors, with over 800 new pledge donors recruited directly through the website and online marketing, and 3,200 cash donations made (US$250,000). E-news was used to inform donors of UNICEF Malaysia’s activities, engage support for key advocacy objectives on disability and online safety.

**Programme components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1 Management**

**Analytical statement of progress**

During this second year of the country programme cycle, an emphasis was placed on improving budget utilization, with strengthened planning and monitoring systems. Both the country management and programme management teams reviewed workflows and accountabilities providing oversight on programme deliverables. Key performance indicators (KPIs) were reviewed and aligned to the scorecard and Regional KPIs. The monitoring of management KPIs was conducted in accordance with the annual management plan using management reports from INSIGHT and the managers’ dashboard for primary data.
To strengthen financial and contribution management the CMT initiated the distribution of management reports prior to meetings to prompt corrective action. The CMT reviewed and endorsed membership of statuary committees and the table of authority and undertook quarterly monitoring of the integrated monitoring and evaluation plan and bi-annual monitoring of the annual management, enterprise risk management, and business continuity plans.

New initiatives endorsed included: standard operating procedures for knowledge management; a new mobile phone policy to ensure the equitable distribution and use of phones and SIM cards amongst staff and coverage for critical staff as per the business continuity plans; the inclusion of a national staff member on the CMT on a six-monthly rotational basis to enable representative participation in management decisions; work process simplification, and the establishment of service long-term agreements to improve procurement efficiency.

Performance progress against the management dashboard KPIs was monitored at monthly CMT meetings together with action taken against recommendations to address constraints and shortcomings against targets. This ensured overall good performance management and financial planning and implementation throughout the year.

OUTPUT 1 Financial Resources and Stewardship

Analytical statement of progress
The main office governance documents such as the table of authority, business continuity plan and statutory committees were regularly updated to reflect changes in staff, functions and UNICEF rules and regulations and incorporated into the annual management plan.

Statutory committees functioned as expected, although staff turnover constrained the Contract Review Board with negative impact on recruitment KPIs. The office risk management profile was reviewed in the first quarter and mid-year. To strength the enterprise risk management process, the CMT initiated an analytical political-socio-economic briefing by a national staff as a standing agenda item to anticipate potential risks to programme implementation or business continuity. As UNICEF Malaysia has minimal downstream programme implementation, from an operational perspective the biggest risks lie within private sector fundraising. These risks have been carefully assessed and mitigation measures put in place in accordance with the enterprise risk management plan. A business continuity exercise was conducted in November, and recommendations made by the CMT to address identified weaknesses such as insufficient knowledge of certain staff to access UNICEF applications and systems remotely, and the need to foresee laptops or alternative premises for private sector fundraising operations in case of emergency.

The Government’s approval to relocate the UN House to new premises in the administrative capital of Putrajaya prompted a decision to set up a satellite office in Kuala Lumpur to house UNICEF Malaysia’s private sector fundraising operations. This required detailed planning, close collaboration between the UNCT and operations management team members, UNDSS, as well as the administrative unit of the UNICEF Division of Finance and Administration and the UNICEF Regional Office. Close monitoring and the escalation of issues to senior management and UNCT ensured the mitigation of constraints and bottlenecks and that project implementation remained on schedule.

OUTPUT 2 Financial Resources and Stewardship
Analytical statement of progress
The office cash assistance mechanisms and processes were governed as per corporate procedural requirements. The harmonized approach to cash transfers (HA CT) Assurance Plan was developed and monitored on a quarterly basis. At year end, UNICEF Malaysia had 7.64 per cent of direct cash transfers outstanding for over six months.

Outstanding direct cash transfers were closely monitored and corrective actions taken to address alerts on the Managers Dashboard. The supply and procurement systems were revised. Long-term agreements were established for event management, printing, design, editing and translation to support the demand and for efficient delivery of services. Staff capacity was enhanced to support increased outsourcing of complex and big corporate service contracts in support of private sector fundraising, programme, innovation and communication activities. Eleven contracts (13.3 per cent of total contracts) were single source, notably for specialised services to support innovation and private sector fundraising operations for which the market is limited.

Recycling and energy saving initiatives put in place in 2016 continued. Initiatives taken to move towards a paperless culture cut the paper consumption by half. These included the introduction of codes for printing and copying, e-polling for certain meetings, and the creation of a shared drive to facilitate the sharing and editing of documents.

OUTPUT 3 Human Resources Management

Analytical statement of progress
Recruitment and the promotion of a “speak up and feedback” culture were prominent in human resource management this year. The departure of eight staff (six national and two international) and the creation of five posts to meet the needs of programmes and the IMPACT plan, increased workload in relation to recruitment and covering for vacant posts in 2017. Four of the national staff left with promotions, two securing international posts with UNICEF and two with sister UN agencies.

Implementation of the office’s diversity strategy to ensure an inclusive, ethnically and gender diverse workforce was respected. Efforts to attract suitable male candidates to edge towards a 50:50 male to female ratio delayed some recruitments but led to a four per cent improvement in the gender balance, with four of the nine posts filled going to male candidates. Nonetheless, more effort is needed.

To overcome challenges faced in attracting and retaining staff, and to mitigate the anticipated risk that this may worsen with the impending office relocation to Putrajaya, UNICEF Malaysia took the strategic decision to request exemption from the Standard Step in Grade Calculation to allow some flexibility in offering a competitive salary to new recruits.

Staffing gaps in programme, communication and supply, were bridged through hiring of individual contractors, and the use of seven UNICEF staff on stretch assignment. These staff on stretch from other offices contributed to building the capacity of new staff on UNICEF internal processes.

Staff concerns on the forthcoming relocation of the UN House in January 2018 to the administrative capital of Putrajaya situated 40 kilometres away, and the creation of a satellite office in Kuala Lumpur for the private sector fundraising team, were heard and addressed during a staff retreat in August, supported by the Regional Chiefs of Operations and Human Resources. The concerns were also discussed at quarterly joint consultative committee meetings, by country management team and at all staff meetings.
An action plan and initiatives were adopted to address areas identified by the Global Staff Survey for improvement.

In April, the Director of the UNICEF Division of Human Resources visited Malaysia and briefed staff on human resource reforms. Throughout the year, an emphasis was placed on promoting a feedback and speak up culture to promote open and constructive dialogue. In May, UNICEF Malaysia was amongst the first to benefit from the performance management training organized by the Division of Human Resources, and in June a stress management workshop was conducted by the Regional Chief of Human Resources and the Regional Staff Counsellor to promote a healthy working environment and interpersonal relations and communication.

The 2016 Performance Evaluation Report completion rate was 95 percent. All staff were trained on the latest performance management policy with the assistance of the Division of Human Resources.

Throughout 2017 the percentage of staff spending more than 10 days of planned learning increased by three per cent, due to efforts from supervisors to continuously encourage capacity and performance development. The Human Resource Development Team met to discuss initiatives to promote knowledge sharing and information dissemination, monitoring of learning and evaluation of learning gained from the various learning events.

**OUTCOME 2 Programme Effectiveness Outcome**

**Analytical statement of progress**

Innovative initiatives led to marked improvements in programme effectiveness and implementation. The finalization of an overarching ‘theory of change’ and narrative to demonstrate results for children enabled clarity and focus on priority areas for UNICEF. It also provided an opportunity to conduct a thorough gender mainstreaming exercise with involvement of all sectoral focal persons and led by a domain expert. This was coupled with finalization of the knowledge management framework with key linkages to monitoring mechanisms.

At implementation level, the introduction of monthly monitoring meetings between individual sections and the head of programmes proved effective in ensuring close monitoring of progress against workplan milestones and the timely address of bottlenecks. Consequently, programme implementation and fund utilization significantly improved over that of previous years, with 75 per cent of outputs on track. Closer collaboration with the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister’s Office on reporting against results and addressing bottlenecks strengthened results-based management and the Government’s ownership of results and reporting.

The introduction of a ‘deep dive’ component to programme team meetings on key programmatic issues strengthened cross-sectoral work around disability and inclusion, undocumented children, innovation, C4D, planning for the implementation of the Impact plan, and urbanization. Joint ownership for results through the application of a cross-sectoral approach was showcased through a disability flagship programme. Identified as a priority cross-sectoral programme area during a prioritization meeting held in January, this initiative ensured a coordinated and impactful approach to raising awareness on inclusion and children with disabilities. Child protection, corporate social responsibility, communication, private sector fundraising, social policy, education and innovation activities were monitored through monthly flagship progress meetings to ensure sustained momentum and coordination of activities across all sectors under the hashtag #ThisAbility.
OUTPUT 1 Programme Coordination

Analytical statement of progress
The year commenced with a focus on drafting the rolling workplans (2017-2018) with the Economic Planning Unit which were finalised on time by the first quarter. All commitments were followed up and reviewed together with key stakeholders at national and sub-national level twice a year (July and December). In this regard, the office initiative to fine-tune the modality of reviews between UNICEF and respective Government ministries to ensure equal participation by stakeholders during those meetings was appreciated and cited very positively by all stakeholders.

A number of implementation monitoring tools were established to track progress against planned targets as well as the timely response to new challenges and opportunities. The integrated monitoring and evaluation plan was monitored on a quarterly basis. UNICEF Malaysia also introduced monthly monitoring meetings between individual sections and the head of programmes to assess progress against workplan milestones and address bottlenecks in a timely manner. The meetings also included a review of budget utilization. This initiative had a positive impact as the level of utilization improved significantly compared to previous years.

In addition, the monthly programme management team meetings started to dedicate a deep dive component to strengthen cross-sectorality and collaboration on issues including undocumented children, innovation, and urbanization. A monthly disability flagship progress meeting was also introduced to ensure sustained momentum and coordination of activities across all sectors.

Based on recommendations from the Evaluability Assessment in 2016 which identified gaps in programme design, UNICEF Malaysia embarked on developing an overarching ‘theory of change’. This aimed to help fine tune the results structure and bring focus on priority areas for the country programme and clearly demonstrate results for children. A highly-experienced consultant was hired to facilitate the process and provide support to finalise the theory of change and the narrative, including assumptions and risks. UNICEF adjusted the results indicators and baselines to the finalised narrative.

The Early Warning Early Action tool was updated and finalized as per KPIs.

OUTPUT 2 Operational costs

Analytical statement of progress
With strong focus on child protection and nutrition, UNICEF Malaysia proactively issued 23 media products, including 14 press releases, six media statements, three opinion pieces and letters to the editor on child rights issues. The issues included corporal punishment, child marriage, bullying, the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017 and stunting. This strategy resulted in almost 560 UNICEF mentions in the news and contributed to further position the organization as a reliable source of information and to raise public awareness on children’s rights.

Key events organized in support of the disability flagship programme generated significant media coverage, including the Borneo International Marathon on #thisability (May), the launch of the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices research and #thisability Makeathon (October). The series of #SayaSayangSaya townhalls on teenage online dating, healthy sexual relationships and internet safety also garnered a lot of media attention. In addition, UNICEF Malaysia joined several key global campaigning efforts, including the celebration of
UNICEF 70th anniversary (February) and the Father’s Day (June).

On World Children’s Day, the #kidstakeover provided a platform for children to express their views in about 50 media programmes - print, broadcast and online. This initiative resulted in over 130 media pieces across the country and helped strengthen relationships with established media (for example, the New Strait Times) and the corporate sector, such as Kidzania. UNICEF Malaysia’s partnership with the youth wing of the Star Newspaper, R.AGE, and their investigative journalism and campaigning to combat online grooming, featured globally in this year’s edition of UNICEF’s State of the World’s Children report.

Over 80 reporters were trained under a new partnership with the Malaysian Press Institute, to improve their reporting skills to be more inclusive of children with disabilities. This resulted in a marked qualitative and quantitative improvement in reporting on children with disability.

Internally, UNICEF Malaysia’s work on child protection, disability, fundraising and youth engagement featured eight times on the ICON platform. Two young Malaysians also started contributing regularly to the UNICEF youth blogging platform on disability and digital citizenship (Voices of Youth).

Using celebrities and contests, the targets for social media following have already been exceeded, thanks to increased posting. The actor, Lisa Surihani, officially appointed as UNICEF National Ambassador in February, was involved on several occasions which drove interest and traction on social media. Wholly digital campaigns such as the Father’s Day initiative on early childhood development and a video with celebrity comedian, Harith Iskander helped introduce UNICEF to new audiences on social media.

However, the emphasis on social media has meant the website statistics were lower this year, slightly below target. However, UNICEF’s new Global Digital Transformation project should make the website more mobile friendly. This will likely happen in 2018, with the training on the new content management system scheduled to begin in April. In the meantime, the website is being updated on average four times a month to include press releases, reports, and announcements.

OUTPUT 3 Support to Country Programme Results through Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Analytical statement of progress
The UNICEF Malaysia knowledge management framework was finalized in September. This enabled a conscious effort in managing exchange of knowledge with clear accountabilities and a follow up and oversight mechanism headed by the Deputy Representative. Implementation of the knowledge management action plan was monitored and updates reviewed on a quarterly basis. All key standard operating procedures and guidance are in place to support the Framework, including a robust monitoring system finalized in September. This outlines the process for monitoring results at various levels in accordance with results-based management principles, and includes relevant information on a variety of tools that can be used for learning, accountability, reporting and decision-making. This is under implementation and further supported through monthly programme team and country management team meetings, which provide oversight and critical decision-making for programme and operations. In addition, other thematic meetings (such as flagship meetings, section meetings, one-to-one meetings with the Deputy Representative) also support the monitoring framework and timely decision-making on critical and emerging issues in a timely fashion.

UNICEF Malaysia participated in the Programme Monitoring Toolkit workshop in Budapest to
contribute to the development of a toolkit specific to upper-middle income countries.

Annual workplans were signed with the Government on time. Assurance plans are on track. Twenty-one programmatic visits were undertaken (in excess of the planned 20 visits based on projected cash transfers to 19 partners) and all four planned spot checks were completed.

The number of activities in the plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation were reduced from 25 to 17 (13 studies, two evaluations and two research). This was due to changes in work planning priorities and a demand to better focus evidence generation activities to emerging trends. At the end of the year, three studies were finalized: the Study on Lifting Reservations to Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the Child Poverty Study, and; the Study on Child Marriage in Malaysia. In addition, three were completed but are awaiting Government approval prior to public dissemination. Four activities were on track and one only activity, managed in cooperation with the UNICEF Regional Office, remained constrained. Other activities are planned to start in 2018.

The total budget use for evaluation in 2017 was 0.99 per cent at the end of December (thus very close to 1.16 per cent in 2016), which is in line with the Evaluation Policy and the Regional Evaluation Strategy. It is important to note that in 2017, evaluation planning focused mainly on national evaluation capacity development. Three programme evaluations are in the plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation for 2018.

OUTPUT 4 Operational costs

Analytical statement of progress
Cross sectoral planning meetings including deep-dives on disability, gender, undocumented children and C4D were conducted to strengthen integration and coordination. The knowledge management framework clearly identifies key performance indicators against each area to strengthen accountabilities and support oversight mechanism and to ensure progress against results for children.

Gender mainstreaming was strengthened following a thorough review of the ‘theory of change’ narrative, the results and resources framework, the gender markers in VISION and all standard operating procedures under the knowledge management framework to fine tune the integration of gender across programmes. Additional activities are being planned in liaison with the UNICEF Regional Gender Advisor.

Planned cross-sectoral C4D initiatives were carried out. New cross-sectoral messaging was developed, tested and approved and new partnerships established under the disability flagship programme. Cross-sectoral integrated collaboration under the hashtag #ThisAbility increased awareness on stigma and discrimination faced by children with disabilities and the need to shift mindsets from a charitable medical model to a rights-based model of care. In May, over 10,000 people were exposed to positive messaging on #ThisAbility at the Borneo International Marathon. Testimonies from participants demonstrated a positive impact on children (increased self-esteem), parents (more pride and reduced sense of isolation), and runners (more acceptance towards children with disabilities).

In October, the launch of a knowledge, attitudes and practices study was synchronised with the #ThisAbility Makeathon 2017, which showcased the creativity of Malaysians living with disabilities and their families through the creation of assistive devices. This cross-sectoral event brought together UNICEF staff from protection, innovation, corporate social
responsibility and communications to create a positive and constructive environment that inspired people to act for a more inclusive society.

Bullying has been identified as a growing and re-emerging priority issue, with several cases of bullying of children by children were reported, one leading to the tragic death of a boy. UNICEF Malaysia issued press statements and revisited its programmatic work in this area. In October, a roundtable organized with HELP University convened stakeholders to discuss root causes and practical ways to curb bullying. UNICEF staff from education, innovation, child protection and communication actively participated in the discussion and will support recommended actions in 2018.

OUTCOME 3: By 2020, all children in Malaysia benefit from strengthened national policies, quality social services and capacities that enhance well-being and enable them to survive, thrive and develop to their full potential.

Analytical statement of progress
Several initiatives contributed to the development of new policies, legislation and capacities of stakeholders to enhance the well-being of children. Most notable was the enactment of the Sexual Offences Against Children Act (2017) for which UNICEF Malaysia’s technical advice contributed to its alignment with international standards and best practice.

UNICEF Malaysia continued to provide high-level technical advice to the Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office to further strengthen protection and support for child victims. As member of the committee to draft standard operating procedures on handling cases involving sexual offences against children, UNICEF Malaysia provided technical input into the draft procedures, which were launched in December.

A baseline survey to gauge current attitudes and practices in relation to the diversion of children who have committed petty crimes was delayed, pending Government approval to go ahead with the pilot. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development is engaging with the Attorney General’s Chambers to address concerns raised with a view to commence implementation in 2018.

A number of complex abuse and neglect cases involving parents, relatives, caregivers and authority figures dominated the child protection landscape and challenged the capacities of child protection officers who do not have sufficient knowledge and skills to adequately deal with such complexities. Awareness and improved legislation led to an increase in reporting by survivors and more efficient processing through the newly established Special Court. UNICEF Malaysia continued to provide technical and financial support to the Department of Social Welfare (DoSW) to strengthen child protection officers’ capacity to manage high risk cases of abuse and neglect. Through training and mentoring, 30 child protection officers from 14 districts across the country gained knowledge and skills in case management. This resulted in 72 children (21 male and 51 female) benefitting from improved case management practices. This practice model is being incrementally expanded to all districts in the country.

The supervisory and case management capacity of non-governmental workers in the child and family welfare sector of the states of Sabah, Perak, Johor and Penang was strengthened. Training of 100 child care workers was undertaken in collaboration with the Malaysia Association of Social Workers. Participant feedback indicated that this training was extremely useful, being their first time to be trained in these areas, despite the fact that many supervise staff and some have case management responsibilities.

Evidence generated by the study on “Children in Institutional Care” funded by UNICEF and Yayasan Hasanah, is informing the development of a family-based care plan of action to be
finalised by April 2018. UNICEF will continue to provide technical support as a member of the Committee established by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development to oversee the action plan formulation.

Awareness on the need to shift mind-sets from a medical and charitable model towards children with disabilities to a social and rights-based model with a focus on inclusion was raised. This was in part due to the numerous activities undertaken under UNICEF Malaysia’s disability flagship programme. Equality training and other key initiatives raised awareness on the importance of the issue and the stigma and discrimination faced by children with disabilities. At the launch of the “Childhood Disability in Malaysia Study” in October 2017, good practice examples of inclusion were showcased. These included assistive devices produced through a Makeathon to improve the lives of Child with Disabilities during play, at home or in school.

A study on child nutrition, “Landscape Analysis on the Double-burden Challenge in Malaysia, was completed. This critical analysis on malnutrition among children under five, provides the needed information for targeted training and capacity building within the national health structure and system. It also provides the evidence required for informed behaviour and social norm change, and desired legislative and policy reforms to address child malnutrition and obesity in Malaysia. The technical support provided by UNICEF was instrumental in building the capacity of the research team at the Institute of Public Health and the Ministry of Health’s Nutrition Division.

In education, the completion of two studies filled data gaps on out-of-school children in the eastern state of Sabah. UNICEF Malaysia’s Social Innovation Lab initiative to strengthen alternative learning pathways and skills development for children in alternative learning centres was completed. Vocational training was identified as a pathway to learning and 21st century skills for out-of-school children in Sabah and is to be piloted in January 2018. New guidelines on alternative learning centres will guide the quality of learning for non-Malaysian children who attend them.

In May, UNICEF Malaysia was invited by the Minister of Education to be on the committee to operationalize the Indigenous Education Transformation Plan 2017-2025. This was following the Minister’s acceptance of policy recommendations for the future direction of indigenous education in Malaysia emanating from the Second Malaysian Indigenous Peoples’ Conference on Education (MIPCE2), thus upholding the rights of indigenous children to mother-tongue language learning.

**OUTPUT 1**: Government and NGO service providers have increased capacities to provide comprehensive and well-coordinated prevention and response services to children and families at risk of, or victims of violence, abuse and exploitation and children in conflict with law.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Strengthening the capacity of child justice professionals remained a priority. UNICEF Malaysia was invited to be a member of the technical committee to draft Standard Operating Procedures on handling cases involving sexual offences against children. Technical input was provided into the draft procedures which form part of the guidelines launched in December by the Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office. A follow-up training on the ethnical representation of children was held in June for 18 members of the Child Rights Committee of the Bar Council, which enabled them to effectively engage in legislative and policy discussions related to children. A lack of practical experience in representing children in the criminal justice system remains a constraint for some Child Rights Committee members to effectively train others.
A strategy to develop the advocacy capacity of Child Rights non-governmental organizations was finalized and will be piloted with three NGOs in 2018.

UNICEF Malaysia’s recommendation to the Government on a new model of practice for probation was endorsed and will improve rehabilitation services for child offenders. Training materials to support the implementation of this new policy recommendation were developed, and the pilot is to begin early 2018, pending the selection of the location. In addition, the Judiciary agreed to co-host a roundtable in 2018 with UNICEF Malaysia on best practice related to the handling of child victims or witnesses of crimes. The roundtable will include senior justice professionals from the United Kingdom sharing their experiences of recent reforms. This will help further improve the criminal trial process for child victims and witnesses and promote sustainable training practices and specialisation of justice sector professionals.

Progress on piloting diversion, aimed at reducing the number of children who enter the justice system for minor offences, was stalled as the proposal did not receive the approval of the Attorney General’s Chambers. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development is engaging with the Attorney General’s Chambers to discuss the constraints, but it is unclear when and if the diversion pilot will be approved.

Preliminary work on data collection to identify unregistered children in the eastern state of Sabah began. To better understand mobile birth registration efforts and challenges in remote areas, two UNICEF staff accompanied a National Registration Department mobile team to a remote village in Sarawak. Subsequently, UNICEF Malaysia presented the findings and submitted a proposal to the National Registration Department aimed at strengthening remote birth registration using innovative approaches. The latter is pending feedback from the National Registration Department. Quality disaggregated birth registration data to measure progress towards the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Regional Action Framework targets and the SDG indicators remain a constraint and the focus of advocacy efforts.

In November 2017, UNICEF organised a training of trainers with NGO partners for 20 teachers from six Alternative Learning Centres in the state of Sabah to create awareness on the implications and impact of statelessness and build resilience among primary school children.

OUTPUT 2 Key government technical staff, service providers and teachers in target states have increased knowledge to support implementation of national nutrition strategy and action plan which promotes healthy living for all children and adolescents, especially the most marginalized.

Analytical statement of progress
the ‘landscape analysis on the Double-Burden Challenge in Malaysia’ looking at obesity and undernutrition will help identify sustainable and effective solutions using existing data, notably the most recent National Health and Morbidity Survey 2015 published by the Institute of Public Health.

The landscape analysis was conducted by the Nutrition Division of the Ministry of Health, and the research team of Institute of Public Health with direct technical and mentoring support from UNICEF’s Regional Technical Specialist. This approach built ministerial staff capacity to deepen secondary data analysis. The raw data analysis and drafting of the report are completed. The report is now awaiting release by the Ministry of Health. The completion of the landscape analysis is a key milestone, providing insightful data and evidence on why
malnutrition is occurring amongst children aged under five, a profile of those children, and will present recommendations to address the causes.

OUTPUT 3 Sustainable models of quality education for vulnerable children* developed and available for replication. (* undocumented, refugee and stateless children, those with disabilities, children on the street, out-of-school children, children from language minority communities)

Analytical statement of progress
The mapping of alternative learning programmes and stakeholders as well as two studies on Malaysian and non-Malaysian out-of-school children in the eastern state of Sabah, filled existing data gaps. They enabled continued advocacy on policy recommendations, which resulted in the introduction of three sets of guidelines on alternative learning in the country.

UNICEF Malaysia explored innovative approaches to improve and strengthen alternative learning pathways and skills development for undocumented out-of-school children through a process of human-centred design. A model was developed and will be piloted from January 2018. The latter will involve 800 undocumented and/or migrant out-of-school children over the next two years. Although gaining access to data, particularly on migrant and undocumented children, remains a challenge, UNICEF Malaysia is continuing to build partnerships at all levels to help generate evidence and disaggregation at national and sub-national levels that would support further changes at policy level. A study on the social and economic costs of out-of-school children as a means of strengthening advocacy in the area is also underway.

UNICEF Malaysia engaged with over 30 indigenous organisations, key partners and Government agencies to organise the Second Malaysian Indigenous Peoples’ Conference on Education. In addition, with many of the same partners, UNICEF initiated discussions on indigenous education policy and promotion of mother-tongue based multilingual education with the Ministry of Education. The series of policy recommendations from the conference for the future direction of indigenous education in Malaysia was presented to and agreed by the Minister of Education in May. Various consultations and discussions with key partners together with a review of education for indigenous children are on-going for a more effective and strategic approach to advocacy in this area. UNICEF Malaysia was invited on the committee to operationalise the national Indigenous Education Transformation Plan 2017-2025 and help the Ministry of Education to convene a national taskforce on mother-tongue based multilingual education. Strengthening the capacity of indigenous teachers and the quality of the mother-tongue based multilingual education curriculum is a priority for improving indigenous education.

OUTCOME 4 By 2020, strengthened commitment and environment promoting child-centred social inclusion, disparity reduction and resilience.

Analytical statement of progress
Strategic partnerships, advocacy and the presentation of investment cases for children combined to promote social inclusion and disparity reduction. UNICEF Malaysia together with other UN agencies, worked with government partners, civil society organizations, and the private sector to support the Government in the successful presentation of its Voluntary National Review to the High Level Political Forum in New York in July 2017.

Advocacy on the principle of “leave no one behind” ensured the inclusion of marginalized groups in the SDG roadmap. In addition, UNICEF Malaysia and UNDP provided technical support on strengthening national capacities on evaluation and use of data. UNICEF’s
partnership with the Jeffrey Sachs Centre executive training course on the SDGs strengthened the understanding of Agenda 2030 in ASEAN and was well-received by delegates.

Two key equity-focused and evidence-based initiatives were finalized and are awaiting Government approval. These are ‘Profiles of Children in Sarawak’ and the ‘Out-of-School Children Study’. For the first time, an urban poverty survey was initiated to address data blind spots in survey tools in Malaysia. This work is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2018.

In its effort to create political capital in favour of policy formulation that supports children, UNICEF Malaysia partnered with the Institute of Strategic and International Studies and the Institute of Dar Razwan in a series of platforms to identify challenges in Malaysia’s path towards its the Transformational Agenda 2050. Specific investment cases were developed including one of the first 1,000 days of life. These platforms received media attention, generated healthy national debate, and led to UNICEF Malaysia being invited to present to the Prime Minister and the Economic Council.

Three new partnerships were forged with academia. A partnership with University of Malaya focused on social protection and the need to establish an inclusive and consolidated system. With UNITAR, the collaboration focused on promoting research and innovation in evaluation methodologies. Earthquake awareness and resilience amongst primary school children in Sabah is the object of the partnership with Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Natural Disaster Research Centre.

Further, UNICEF Malaysia organized three communication for development workshops with universities in the states of Sabah, Sarawak and Selangor. In total, 112 academicians, state officials, child rights practitioners participated in the workshops and gained new knowledge and skills to support behaviour change strategies in relevant fields.

In 2018, UNICEF will partner with key stakeholders, especially those who have contributed to strategic planning and research for the 11th Malaysia Plan and the Transformational Agenda 2050, to initiate a National Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Malaysia. The intent is to push child rights issues in Malaysia into a forward-looking strategy, hence influencing the Transformational Agenda 2050 agenda. Discussions are underway with various ministries, academic and research institutes and think tanks in this regard.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2020, strengthened availability of high quality disaggregated data, information and evidence with a focus on the most marginalized children to inform and plan better-focused national policies and programmes.

**Analytical statement of progress**

On July 19th, Malaysia successfully presented its Voluntary National Review and SDG Roadmap at the High Level Political Forum in New York. As part of the UNCT, UNICEF Malaysia provided technical support on areas related to the children’s agenda, and advocated for the inclusion of undocumented, refugee and migrant populations.

The Government also presented at the ‘Asia-Pacific Initiatives towards a Sustainable Future’ side-event organised by UNDP and the Government of Japan. The Malaysian Government, together with the Governments of Argentina and Bulgaria co-hosted a side-meeting entitled ‘Bringing Awareness and Action on the SDGs to the Classroom: A Presentation of Students’ Experience with the World’s Largest Lesson’ at which it reiterated its commitment to prepare youth to partake in world and policy affairs.
In partnership with UNDP, UNICEF Malaysia initiated a ‘Review of National Evaluation Systems and Capacities for Evaluating Progress towards the SDGs in Asia Pacific Region’, which will conclude by the first week of January 2018. Malaysia is part of this study amongst others in the region. Memoranda of understanding were signed with UNITAR to promote research and innovation in evaluation methodologies and to develop an introductory course on evaluations in partnership with the Malaysia Evaluation Society.

UNICEF Malaysia will work closely with the UNCT on a data and system mapping exercise, which is currently under discussion with the Economic Planning Unit. Previously, this has been challenging as data accessibility has been an issue. UNICEF Malaysia will work in partnership with reputable universities and the Department of Statistics on strengthening the data ecosystem in support of Agenda 2030.

In October, UNICEF Malaysia’s partnership with the Jeffrey Sachs Centre and Sunway University Malaysia on the Executive Training Programme ‘Leaders in Sustainable Development: Empowering leaders to elevate the region to the forefront of global SDG achievement’, gained positive reviews. The programme aimed to empower national leaders to elevate ASEAN and Asia to be at the forefront of global SDG achievement. It was attended by participants from the private sector, the United Nations agencies and government delegates from the ASEAN region.

The finalization of key studies and research filled data and evidence gaps related to the most marginalised children, notably on child poverty, child marriage, and out-of-school children. Discussions are on-going to initiate a national level (including sub-national chapters) Situation Analysis of Children; a Regional Standard on Primary Learning in Malaysia; and a Cost of Inaction Study for Out-of-School Children in Malaysia. The final ‘Report on Profiles of Children in Sarawak’ was submitted to Sarawak State Planning Unit for final approval.

The report on ‘National Statistics on Children’ is now led by the Department of Statistics, and produced annually.

Recognizing that urban poverty has been a blind spot in data survey tools in Malaysia, a study to better understand this issue was initiated. The data collection was completed and findings are on schedule to be published early in 2018. This study will make data on the urban poor available for the first time in Malaysia.

**OUTPUT 2** Adolescents and youth have improved knowledge on community risks and disaster risk reduction systems.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Due to lack of internal technical capacity progress has been slow. However, UNICEF Malaysia entered into a two-year partnership with the Natural Disaster Research Centre based at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah to begin an earthquake education programme. This will be a catalyst to empower over 4,000 students in 114 primary schools in earthquake-prone areas in the eastern state of Sabah, as part of its advocacy for and strengthening of child-centred disaster risk reduction. The goal is for this to be mainstreamed by Government agencies such as the Ministry of Education and the National Disaster Management Agency.

A strategy paper incorporating partner mapping was developed, outlining key actions to be undertaken and presenting the approaches to integrate disaster risk reduction into education and child protection programming.
OUTPUT 3 Government ministries and research institutions have strengthened institutional capacities for undertaking research-based social and behavioural change communication

Analytical statement of progress
To strengthen institutional capacities for research-based social and behavioural change communication, new cooperation agreements were signed with three Malaysian universities: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak/UNIMAS, Universiti Malaysia Sabah/UMS and Universiti Putra Malaysia/UPM. Three C4D training workshops were conducted in Kota Kinabalu, Kuala Lumpur, and Kuching, Sarawak in August and September. A total number of 112 researchers, post-graduates, state officials and NGO workers participated in these workshops. The participatory training methodology combined different modalities, including individual exercises, field trips and group work.

This collaboration initiated a series of follow-up activities to build behaviour change communication capacity in Malaysia at sub-national level which will be pursued in 2018. These included the training of Sabah state officials in collaboration with UMS Centre for Industry and Community Network supported by the Sabah State Planning Unit; the incorporation of a C4D module into the new Master’s programme on International Development at UMS; and the establishment of a centre of excellence at the UMS Centre for Industry and Community Network. Additionally, communication for development was included in the Centre for Industry and Community Network training package for Selangor State, and in the Social Development Institute’s training portfolio for Sarawak state officials.

National and internal C4D capacities remain a challenge to effectively address programmatic needs. Internal capacity gaps are being addressed and action plans will be developed in close collaboration with key partners to build national capacity.

OUTCOME 5 By 2020, enhanced capacities, partnerships and engagement for child rights fulfilment and monitoring, and for mobilization of national resources for all children.

Analytical statement of progress
2017 was a very successful year in terms of partnership and advocacy on child rights.

UNICEF Malaysia was the first office globally to support a telecommunication partner to conduct the “Mobile Operator Child Rights Self-Impact Assessment Tool”. The exercise provided opportunity to improve the tool to meet industry requirements and marked a significant step to institutionalize the assessment within DiGi’s (Telenor) process across sectors and reflect their commitment to child rights.

Further initiatives with key private sector partners to promote inclusion and the retention and promotion of women in the workplace forged new partnerships. These partnerships were selected based on their potential for impact and for creating a champion within the private sector which others would be inspired to follow. The partnership with Petrosains (Science Museum) mainstreamed inclusiveness in their core business and positioned them as a champion of inclusion. Activities included training of the management team on Children’s Rights and Business Principles, building of universal spaces to highlight the needs of children with disability, and disability equality training for Petrosains staff members to equip them with knowledge on disability and how to engage with children with disabilities and their families.

A new partnership with Sime Darby to support the creation of Malaysia’s first inclusive playground will potentially influence urban planning beyond this pilot.
Creating an enabling workplace for the female labour force is another area where UNICEF Malaysia expanded engagement with the private sector. Partnering with Lead Women as track sponsor for the ‘ASEAN Women of Tomorrow’ Conference in November, UNICEF sourced IKEA to showcase their practice to recruit and retain women in the workplace, as well as the UNICEF Deputy Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific as a panel speaker. UNICEF Malaysia responded to Johor Cooperation’s (JCorps) invitation to be a booth operator and speaker at their annual business event on the topic of childcare centres in the workplace.

UNICEF Malaysia completed a very successful South-South programme in 2017. This involved strengthening partnerships with Malaysia’s well established infrastructure in research and institutions. Specific actions included an exchange visit of 15 Government of Bangladesh officials to Malaysia, an international conference on social protection, and high-level training on sustainable development and leadership.

Unleashing young people’s potential continued to be a prominent feature of UNICEF Malaysia’s programme. The voices of thousands of children and young people were collected through a variety of tools, on numerous issues that affect their lives. The activities included eight townhall meetings across the country which engaged over 1,540 young people on the topic of online sexual abuse and how to protect themselves. Joining hands with the mobile operator, Digi, a ‘Digital City’ lab was established at Petrosains, providing 20,000 visitors in 2017 with the opportunity to learn about digital citizenship and online safety. Marking World Children’s Day, the Children’s Media Takeover provided 20 children a platform to participate in around 35 media programmes - print, broadcast and online media. The number of U-Reporters rose by 462 per cent from 928 to 5,219 (53 per cent female), following road-show activities held in five states to engage young people around social issues.

Mainstreaming innovation across programmes to accelerate results for children remains a core strategy. This year human-centred design and shared-value propositions with private sector partners strengthened UNICEF Malaysia’s capacity to meet the needs of both disabled and marginalised children. Of note were a private sector and civil society partnership arising from the 2016 Design Lab to find learning pathways for out-of-school children in the state of Sabah, and a Makeathon, conducted in partnership with private sector partners with disabled children and their families to develop assistive devices for daily use. In addition, nine NGO partners were trained in child-focused innovation and human-centred design, thus strengthening their capacity to propose sustainable projects.

**OUTPUT 1**: The Malaysian private sector has increased knowledge and commitment to its responsibility to respect children’s rights, and can access quality technical support and capacity for implementing the Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP).

**Analytical statement of progress**

New partnerships and initiatives raised private sector awareness on children’s rights. UNICEF and Digi (Malaysia’s leading telecommunications service provider and UNICEF’s long-standing corporate partner), jointly conducted the UNICEF Mobile Operator Child Rights Self-Impact Assessment Tool. This provides guidance for mobile operators on assessing their policies and processes in relation to their responsibility to respect, and commitment to support, children’s rights. UNICEF Malaysia is the first country office to initiate and conduct such an assessment in partnership with the private sector. Doing so provided insights to better adapt the tool to meet industry requirements and helped Digi identify gaps across sectors of their business portfolio in relation to the principles of children’s rights and business.
UNICEF Malaysia and Digi are collaborating on the production of a feature of the partnership thus far (known as a sustainability journey), to showcase how the corporate sector can contribute to the achievement of child rights in the country. Upon completion, the sustainability journey will be widely circulated and promoted to a variety of stakeholders including the general public.

In September, a memorandum of understanding was signed with Petrosains a cross-collaborative partnership initiated in support of the disability flagship programme, incorporating child rights and business principles, innovation, and child protection. Activities included child rights and business principles training to the management team, building of disability friendly-spaces/universal spaces to highlight the needs of disabled children, and disability training for Petrosains staff members to equip them with knowledge on disability and how to engage with children with disabilities and their families.

UNICEF Malaysia also worked with Sime Darby Properties to bring children with disabilities into the public sphere via a corporate champion to influence behaviour change and promote inclusivity. UNICEF Malaysia and Sime Darby are looking to build the first inclusive playground in Malaysia. Company staff were trained on children's rights and business principles and disability as part of the cooperation.

UNICEF Malaysia’s partnership with Lead Women on the ‘ASEAN Women of Tomorrow Conference’ held in Kuala Lumpur in November, highlighted best corporate practice in achieving gender equality in the workplace. UNICEF’s global partner, IKEA, was invited to present its experience and best practice in achieving gender equality in the workplace. The UNICEF Deputy Regional Director for East Asia and Pacific spoke on the panel at the Conference. The Johor Cooperation’s annual business event provided a further opportunity for knowledge sharing and best practice, with UNICEF Malaysia speaking on the establishment of childcare centres at the workplace.

A children’s rights and business knowledge hub is being established with identified academic partners. It aims to provide technical expertise to the private sector to scale up their child-related practices and policies, and to conduct business in a manner that respects children’s rights.

OUTPUT 2 Strengthened participation of adolescents and communities in local development and child rights monitoring.

Analytical statement of progress
Continuing UNICEF Malaysia’s work on digital safety for children, eight #SayaSayangSaya (I love myself) youth town halls were run, reaching 1,541 adolescents from 318 schools in Johor, Kedah, Kelantan, Pahang, Penang, Terengganu, Sabah and Sarawak with messages on healthy teenage relationships, online dating and sexual violence. The initiative is a collaboration between Digi, R.AGE, WOMEN:girl and UNICEF Malaysia with support from the Royal Malaysian Police and the Federation of Reproductive Health Associations of Malaysia.

UNICEF Malaysia is partner to the Digi ‘Digital City’, a first of its kind permanent cybersafe learning lab at Petrosains which provides adolescents with a fun way to learn about how to protect themselves from online risks. It had around 20,000 visitors during 2017. Digi also printed 25,000 copies of the UNICEF booklet on internet safety (cybergrooming) for distribution to secondary schools.

Through the World Children’s Day programme, UNICEF and its partner provided children with the opportunity to participate in print, TV, radio and online media and to share their
views (35 news programmes in 10 media outlets). Over 40 children participated in a two-day Child Online Protection Youth Camp co-facilitated by UNICEF as part of a regional seminar organised by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission in December.

The U-Report user base grew by 462 per cent to exceed 5,000 users, through an innovative rebranding strategy and campaign (Project I/AM), and collaboration with local partner Empower Plus. High user engagement rates and the quality of information collected laid the groundwork for future youth community-and capacity-building activities planned for 2018 and provided new insights to decision-makers on key social issues. U-Report “road-show” activities were successfully held in five states (Selangor, Penang, Kelantan, Sarawak, Sabah) and drew 620 participants (aged 14-26) with the aim of mobilizing new U-Reporters, introducing concepts of evidence-based advocacy and generating youth-led solutions for addressing bullying in schools. From these events, 10 youth-led projects received mentorship and financial support to realize their creative, anti-bullying activities, which are currently being implemented. Collaboration is being explored with six new Government and civil society actors, who currently use the platform to collect and share information around bullying, education, unity, online protection and sexual grooming.

A study commissioned by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development on lifting reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was completed and submitted in April 2017. The report contains a detailed analysis of the social and legal context, identifies opportunities and barriers, and makes recommendations for Malaysia to progressively lift the remaining reservations. The report will also be used by the Government to inform the respective treaty bodies on the steps taken to ensure that everyone in Malaysia enjoys the rights set out in the respective treaties.

OUTPUT 3 Strengthened commitment by social innovators, social entrepreneurs and private sector to child rights and equity.

Analytical statement of progress
Mainstreaming innovation across programmes remained a core strategy, with a focus in 2017 on building capacity for human-centred innovation, service design and delivery among key child protection and alternative education partners.

In mid-2017, UNICEF Malaysia piloted a new approach to the proposal submission and partnership process, requiring all NGOs seeking collaboration with the child protection programme to participate in a blended-learning activity. Designed and delivered by Tandemic, a local social innovation firm, the ‘NGO Impact Academy’ included in-person workshops, take-away exercises and remote coaching covering aspects of issue-identification, project design, prototyping, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation and proposal submission. Eight organizations focused on child protection and the inclusion of children with disabilities who were invited to participate and submit proposals upon completion of the final module in October 2017. An internal evaluation of the activity is underway to assess the potential of mainstreaming this approach across all programmes in 2018.

To help address some of the key findings emerging from the 2016 UNICEF Malaysia Knowledge Attitude and Practices Study on Disabilities, a high-visibility Makeathon was launched in collaboration with corporate partner Petrosains. A country-wide call for innovative ideas to enable greater independence and inclusion of children with disabilities was launched in mid-2017. More than 20 ideas were submitted by teams of children with disabilities and their caregivers and friends, and eight teams were shortlisted to participate in the Makeathon activity. During a one-day event, teams were paired with private sector
experts – engineers, product designers, 3D modelers and occupational therapists - to help turn their ideas for innovative assistive devices into a physical prototype. Over the following two months, teams worked with existing local “maker labs” – KakiDIY, MACRO and Biji-Biji – to further refine their prototypes into final products. Participating teams were invited to display their products and a winning team was awarded seed-funding to help bring their product (an assistive finger-grip to support fine motor skills) to the local market.

Building upon the research conducted by UNICEF and Tandemic into alternative learning opportunities for undocumented children, an innovative, project-based learning framework was developed and tested with out-of-school adolescents in Sabah. Encompassing 21st century skills, emerging technologies and vocational fundamentals, it aims to prepare out-of-school adolescents to independently acquire new skills in response to the fast-changing and informal economies of the future. A detailed syllabus and curriculum was developed across four streams – ironmongery, food technology, digital skills and artisanal crafts – in collaboration with local partners.

The Biji-Biji Initiative to teach participants high-value immediately marketable skills is embedded within an innovative social enterprise model that enables successful programme graduates to generate income through an “apprenticeship and livelihood” track. This programme will be launched in Sabah early 2018. Establishment of a vocational centre equipped with emerging technologies and industry-standard tools is currently underway, with the goal of educating 400 out-of-school children within the first year of the pilot programme. Training of over 80 reporters with the Malaysia Press Institute resulted in a qualitative and quantitative improvement in reporting on children with disabilities.

**OUTPUT 4:** Increased advocacy and technical leadership by Malaysia at regional and global level on child rights.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Malaysia continued efforts to further the agenda on child rights issues in ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific Region, increasingly making linkages with the dialogue on Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

In collaboration with UNICEF Bangladesh, a visit of 15 Government officials from Bangladesh was facilitated. The objective was to exchange knowledge on how the Voluntary Organisation for Professional Evaluations and other bodies and networks work with Government to shape the evaluation function to support policy and programmes. The Bangladeshi delegation reported that the learning, particularly in open data, capacity development with the Malaysia Evaluation Society, and following IRBM approaches to strategies and processes will significantly support the development of the 8th five-year plan for Bangladesh.

In October, UNICEF Malaysia supported the University of Malaya in the organization of the Third International Conference on Social Protection. This conference was attended by more than 100 participants from various backgrounds and organizations, both in Malaysia and abroad. UNICEF Malaysia sourced an internationally recognized thought leader in social protection as a keynote speaker to establish the right of social protection at the centre of the SDGs development agenda. As part of the partnership, UNICEF Malaysia sponsored an award for the three best papers from other developing countries to encourage collaboration and cross fertilization of ideas.

UNICEF Malaysia also partnered with the newly-established and reputable Jeffery Sachs Centre on Sustainable Development to deliver a world-class two-day learning programme. It aims to equip leaders in Malaysia, the ASEAN region and beyond with the insights and
customised approaches for sustainable development programming, policy interventions and multi-stakeholder collaboration to galvanise sustainable development. The learning programme was well attended by high-level leaders from governments and private sector, and contributed to shaping the debate at China’s Annual Dialogue on Basic Public Services co-hosted by UNICEF China and the National Development and Reform Commission. The UNICEF Regional Director delivered the keynote speech on urbanization and access to fundamental rights by children, which was very well received and placed children at the core of development.

UNICEF provided technical support to initiate social protection in Madagascar and Indonesia, based on the experiences of Malaysia.

Malaysia also furthered the agenda on child rights and the SDGs through other key engagement forums. These included: the Asia-Pacific Regional Technical Capacity Development Workshop on Effective Planning of Education Sector for Achieving SDG4, held in Kuala Lumpur in July with UNICEF and UNESCO support; the Second International Conference on Special Education: Access And Engagement, held in July in Kuching, Sarawak by the Southeast Asian Ministry of Education with UNICEF Malaysia; the AEAN Women of Tomorrow Conference, held in Petaling Jaya in October, and the Seminar on Child Online Protection in ASEAN, held in December in Putrajaya.

### Evaluation and research

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Childhood Disability in Malaysia: A Study of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
Childhood Disability in Malaysia: A Study of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP)
For Every Child – PSA
“Tune in to Me” – your little guide to understanding us children better
“Tune in to Me” – your little guide to understanding us children better

Lessons learned

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