Executive summary

It’s been six years since the conflict in the north of Mali started and, despite the Algiers Peace Agreement signed in 2015, the security situation in the country continues to deteriorate, leading to an increasingly complex, protracted crisis. The security situation is compounded by political fragility surrounding the constitutional review process and the legislative elections, which were again postponed to 2018.

In 2017, UNICEF Mali worked with partners to ensure access to quality, basic social services in crisis-affected areas that had a weak government presence, as well as other areas of the country, while striving to maintain its neutrality and humanitarian space. UNICEF continued to promote children’s rights nationwide and prioritized malnutrition, out-of-school children, education in emergencies, female genital mutilation/cutting, child marriage and children affected by armed conflict.

To find sustainable solutions to the nutrition crisis, UNICEF focused on upstream work and advocacy as well as ensuring the treatment of all children affected by severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and scaling up prevention interventions. As the lead agency of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) United Nations Network, UNICEF contributed to the development of a costed action plan for 2017 and worked to raise the profile of nutrition on the government agenda with a series of policy and research initiatives and discussions on innovative financing for nutrition. As a result, the Government renewed its commitment to nutrition and increased efforts to secure sustainable funding for the national multi-sectoral nutrition action plan. It reallocated its contribution of US$300,000 to the UNITLIFE initiative for nutrition interventions, despite the challenges of this regional initiative. However, limited resources for emergency nutrition and prevention activities significantly affected results in 2017.

With an estimated 1.2 million out-of-school children nationwide (seven to 12 years old), a majority of whom are girls, UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and partners to provide formal and non-formal learning opportunities to all children, with a focus on girls’ education. During the 2016-2017 school year, over 500 schools in the northern and central regions of the country closed due to the security situation, hindering the continuity of schooling for an estimated 150,000 children. With communication and advocacy efforts, however, UNICEF Mali secured resources and partnerships to reintegrate children into schools.

UNICEF Mali developed an integrated early childhood development (ECD) approach, linking nutritional support and cognitive stimulation for child development with a focus on the first 1,000 days of children’s lives. A collaborative effort between education and nutrition helped to develop Mali’s current Care for Child Development integrated ECD strategy in collaboration with the World Bank, Save the Children and the ECD Action Network. This multisectoral, innovative approach will be scaled-up in 2018 - 2019.

The Government of Mali committed to improve the legal framework and policy environment for child protection. In July 2017, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family (MPFEF) validated the preliminary draft law on gender-based violence, including criminalization
of female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage. This marked the first time in 10 years that the Malian Government made progress in terms of legislation against harmful practices, thereby addressing recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The MPFEF validated the national communication strategy on gender-based violence, now awaiting the signature by the minister, to address underlying social norms related to female genital mutilation and child marriage. The national strategy on the modernization of the civil status, validated technically since September 2016, remains to be adopted.

Finally, UNICEF continued to ensure that women’s and children’s rights are at the top of the international community’s agenda, despite an increased focus on political and security issues among partners in Mali. In March 2017, an action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and the use of children into armed conflict, sexual violence and other grave violations was signed by the Coordination of Azawad Movements, a group listed in the Security Council report of Children and Armed Conflict.

Cumulatively since the start of the country programme document (CPD) 2015-2019, and as of December 2017, UNICEF Mali has raised US$132.6 million in Other Resources-Regular (OR-R) funds, over half (56 per cent) of the total OR-R target for the five years of the CPD (US$ 235.3 million). While some programme sections secured resources above their planned budget (health, WASH), other programmes faced funding gaps, notably nutrition. Efforts will continue in 2018 and 2019 to strengthen partnerships and secure flexible, quality funding.

### Humanitarian assistance

In 2017, Mali faced protracted humanitarian needs and deteriorating security. Insecurity spread from the north to the central regions with a rise in attacks, inter-communal tensions and ethnic clashes causing significant population movements, and sometimes leading to children’s separation from their families. Some 59,000 people remain internally displaced due to conflict, while another 133,300 sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

As the lead agency for the WASH, nutrition and education clusters and the child protection sub-cluster, UNICEF contributed to ensure synergies across sectors, while working with line ministries and civil society to strengthen government capacities for enhanced coordination, disaster preparedness and response at national and regional levels. To mitigate the impact of the prevailing insecurity and worsening access in the north and central regions, UNICEF worked in close collaboration with local NGOs and government technical services, and used third-party monitoring in hard-to-access areas.

Lack of access to essential services and limited state presence and capacity in the north still drive the bulk of humanitarian needs. The education situation is increasingly worrying in areas affected by the security crisis, especially in the centre. At the end of the school year 2016-2017, almost one third of primary schools (500 out of 1,610) in the affected municipalities of Gao, Kidal, Timbuktu, Mopti and Segou remained closed, resulting in an estimated 150,000 out-of-school children.

In 2017, 54,124 children accessed non-formal education through accelerated learning or bridge classes in emergency situations, as well as informal education through the creation of community learning centres. In addition, 154,034 children took part in inter-school competitions and activities involving peace education and social cohesion, and 6,207 teachers were trained in peace education, psychosocial support and mine risk education in conflict-affected areas.
At the start of the school year 2017-2018, 1,925 children in all nine regions of Mali took part in the campaign “For Every Child, Education” as back-to-school ambassadors to inform over 30,000 households on the importance of enrolling and maintaining children at school while promoting peace-building, social cohesion, and gender equality issues, including the prevention of early marriage. Finally, UNICEF used the WASH-in-schools approach in 41 schools in the north as an entry point to strengthen social cohesion and promote a culture of peace among children, their parents and surrounding communities.

In 2017, 110,082 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition were admitted to treatment facilities, with a cure rate of 90.88 per cent, a death rate of 0.8 per cent, and a defaulter rate of 8.32 per cent nationally. This was achieved through the procurement and delivery of nutrition supplies, anthropometric equipment and essential medicines for the management of severe acute malnutrition in all 74 health districts and capacity building of health and community workers. UNICEF advocated for the Government to include ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) on the essential drugs list and distribution channels, to secure domestic financial support to procure this supply and integrate nutrition into the health information system to strengthen analysis and timely response.

Health humanitarian activities focused on immunization campaigns and provision of essential medicines. In northern regions, more than 500,000 children were vaccinated against polio (87 per cent of estimated children), 100 per cent of children were vaccinated against meningitis and 71 per cent of the annual target (35,077 out of 81,011) were immunized against measles.

UNICEF’s WASH humanitarian response combined addressing water access and needs in emergency situations and strengthening resilience by improving WASH infrastructures in the northern regions. As a result, 103,000 people in central and northern regions benefitted from short-term emergency distributions of household water treatment, products, water distribution and an improved access to water.

Finally, 11,696 children affected by the conflict received holistic support, including over 135 demobilized children who were identified and supported (food, bedding, recreational activities, psychosocial and medical support), 16 survivors from mine and explosive remnants of war, and over 10,580 children affected by the crisis who benefited from psychosocial support services in seven child-friendly spaces. Additionally, 965 survivors of gender-based violence received medical (20) and psychosocial care (945).

As of 31 December 2017, UNICEF mobilized 30 per cent of the US$35.2 million 2017 HAC appeal. Given the large funding gaps and significant needs, UNICEF used more than US$5.5 million from its regular resources to support key humanitarian interventions.

**Equity in practice**

In 2017, UNICEF Mali strengthened its equity focus in the field of immunization by addressing geographic, gender, education, ethnic and socio-economic disparities in order to improve immunization coverage nationwide. Mali is one of six countries in the sub-region where vaccination coverage for children under one year of age steadily declined since 2010: according to WHO/UNICEF estimates, immunization coverage with DTP3 decreased from 75 per cent in 2010 to 68 per cent in 2016. Moreover, only 20 out of 65 districts (31 per cent) had DTP3 vaccination coverage of 80 per cent or more by the end of 2016. Addressing disparities, especially in districts where the immunization coverage is the lowest, will accelerate progress in improving immunization coverage nationwide.
In 2017, UNICEF supported a national equity analysis in immunization that showed large socio-demographic disparities in access to and utilization of immunization services. On the supply side, the main bottlenecks identified in the analysis were the low availability of commodities with frequent vaccines stock-outs due to insufficient supply and weakness in the logistics chain, the lack of immunization micro plans at district and health facilities, the non-control of the target populations and the insufficient number of qualified health workers for immunization services.

On the demand side, main bottlenecks were the low level of utilization of immunization services, with high dropout rates due to inadequate engagement of communities as actors because of the lack of social mapping of stakeholders and partners, the lack of defaulter tracing, the lack of regular analysis of expanded programme on immunisation performance and inadequate supportive supervision. The analysis identified 11 health districts with the highest levels of unmet needs and hard-to-reach groups and communities, that became priority districts. In order to improve the situation in these specific districts, barriers and bottlenecks were identified and analysed, and micro plans were developed and integrated in local operational plans for all priority districts for 2018. This approach will allow more children in hard-to-reach areas to be fully vaccinated, and will contribute to improve immunization coverage in the country.

UNICEF Mali implemented innovative approaches to improve immunization coverage among hard-to-access communities. In Mali, these communities include nomadic populations, populations living in areas affected by the security situation, populations living in artisanal gold mining sites, peri-urban populations and extremist religious groups hostile to vaccination.

UNICEF Mali piloted a new approach to improve vaccination coverage in artisanal gold mining sites. In these areas, community leaders known as ‘Tomboloma’ and social workers known as ‘community relays’ followed mobile populations from site to site to explain the importance of vaccination. With social development service officers, Tomboloma were informed about immunization days and supported to design workplans on how to inform parents. Prior to National Immunization Days (NIDs), they held information sessions during rest days when all artisanal miners are ready to listen to messages. During NIDs, they explained to parents the need to gather children for vaccination. According to a knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey on key family practices released in March 2017, 72.4 percent of women interviewed had understood the importance of vaccination in the intervention zones of Sikasso and Mopti.

To strengthen immunization in more structured communities, women gathered in community-based organizations and men trained as ‘champion husbands’ in an approach known as ‘School of Husbands’ to help mothers and children receive all required vaccination throughout the year.

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

The domestication of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that Mali had adopted in September 2015 and officially launched in February 2016 was at the centre of the Government of Mali’s efforts in 2017. UNICEF Mali accompanied the awareness and prioritization workshops held at national and regional levels with a range of stakeholders. It ensured that most SDG targets related to child rights and are at the core of UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021, were selected as priority targets for Mali.

In 2018 the localized SDGs and their targets are available to inform the elaboration of the next National Strategic document of Mali, the UNDAF+ 2020-24 and UNICEF Programme of Cooperation in Mali 2020-24, in line with the Strategic Plan. For UNICEF Mali, a key reference framework will be the five KRCs selected from the regional priorities: protection against vaccine-preventable diseases, prevention of stunting, improved learning outcomes (especially for excluded vulnerable children and girls), open-defecation free (ODF) environment, and positive
social norms around child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting.

The Mid-Term Review of the UNDAF+ 2015-2019 was another opportunity for UNICEF to strengthen the UN collective contribution to achieve results for children in Mali. As co-lead with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Reference Group for the Mid-Term Review, a group comprised of representatives from UN organizations in Mali, five government representatives, and selected experts, UNICEF ensured that the Mid-Term Review focused on issues relevant to its mandate and the Strategic Plan, and produced quality results.

Joint programming for Delivering as One was a focus of the UNDAF+ Mid-Term Review. As UNICEF implements six joint programmes with other UN agencies in Mali, discussions were started on how to boost results and increase contribution to the common chapter’s objectives. In 2018, the office will document and analyse results under these joint programmes.

The UNDAF+ Mid-Term Review is expected to result in a revised UNDAF+ result framework matrix, better alignment with the SDGs, a stronger humanitarian-development nexus and clarity on the role of the MINUSMA in Mali, as well as recommendations on UN Country Team focus areas for the next two years. The report is expected in the first quarter 2018.

The UNDAF+ Mid-Term Review was informed by UNICEF’s own mid-term review of its Programme of Cooperation 2015-2019. Started early 2017, UNICEF’s mid-term review focused on the Strategic Plan’s most relevant areas in Mali and resulted in the better articulation of the cross-cutting priorities of the Strategic Plan that are now included in UNICEF’s programming and its 2018-2019 Rolling Work Plans. ECD, gender and ‘humanitarian’ were selected. Adolescents, the fourth crosscutting priority of the Strategic Plan, will be the subject of further analysis and reflection in 2018 through a multi-generational lens.

Each of UNICEF’s six main programme components (health, nutrition, WASH, education, child protection, social inclusion) and the C4D component has a robust theories of change and strengthened result frameworks for 2018-2019, instrumental in implementing the Strategic Plan. This entails risk-informed updated theories of change, refined intervention strategies with explicit cross-programmatic and crosscutting contributions, redefined or new outputs that contribute to outcomes, and indicators to measure achievements. The 2018-2019 rolling work plan reflects these changes and will be a key tool for UNICEF and its partners to track progress towards targets set in the 2015-2019 CPD.

In 2018, the new Strategic Plan indicators that were not available to country offices in 2017 will be selected to monitor the rolling workplan and track progress on the Strategic Plan. One of the key challenges is the lack of disaggregated data and information. UNICEF in 2018 will support the Government in strengthening key components of national data-collection systems to improve its monitoring of results for children.

The outputs, strategies, approaches and enablers underlying the 2018-19 RWP are now aligned with the Strategic Plan. However, full alignment of outcomes and focus priorities will take place in 2018, as UNICEF designs programme strategic notes and its 2020-24 CPD. The above efforts and results make UNICEF Mali ready to ensure this alignment and contribute to achieving ambitious and targeted results for children in Mali, using innovative and integrated approaches, fully taking into account cross cutting priorities, and taking full advantage of key enablers.

**Emerging areas of importance**
Greater focus on the second decade of life. In 2017, UNICEF Mali strengthened programmes tailored to the specific needs of young people, especially for the promotion of healthy practices. A total of 83,000 youth were informed about reproductive health with peer-education and social media. A youth-tailored TV series known as ‘The Life of Bijou’ used an innovative education-entertainment approach combining TV and social media to allow young people to exchange views on reproductive health. The TV show depicted the life of a young girl in an urban context, and allowed young people to dialogue on social media platforms while following the series.

Two Malian rappers produced songs conveying reproductive health messages that were video-clipped, shared on Facebook and shown on national TV. Over 200 adolescents were trained on the use of social media and U-report to promote reproductive health, and followed the Facebook page ‘Mali4Family’. According to a U-Report survey, the initiative contributed to improve youth perceptions on reproductive health: 89 per cent of young people believe they have specific reproductive health needs, 84 per cent say reproductive health has advantages for them and their communities, and 56 per cent believe that reproductive health can help avoid unwanted pregnancies. The end-line KAP surveys conducted in 2017 showed an increase in the use of reproductive health services and a rise in contraceptive use from 19.9 per cent to 21.3 per cent.

Urbanization and children. The National Equity Analysis in Immunization conducted in 2017 revealed pockets of vulnerability in urban areas. Two urban districts in particular were identified with many non-immunized children, especially in urban slums. Bottlenecks for routine immunization coverage in urban settings include the focus of health centres on curative versus preventive care, working hours that are not convenient for mothers, weak management of the expanded programme on immunisation, inadequate coordination, insufficient supervision, and the social norms and beliefs of parents.

To address the situation, the two urban districts developed micro-plans to be implemented in 2018 that include: 1) mapping slums with high burden of unimmunized children, 2) joint planning of immunization sessions with all stakeholders (community leaders, NGO, private sectors, health workers), and adapt immunization sessions hours to the needs of the community; 3) invest in data management and disaggregated data (e.g. lot quality assessment surveys to track progress and identify where to focus); 4) improve communication to address social norms. This example paves the way for a shift in UNICEF’s programmes towards a stronger focus on urban areas.

Accelerate integrated early childhood development (ECD). A collaborative effort between the Ministries of Health (MoH) and MoE, with the support of UNICEF Mali, led to the development of the Care for Child Development integrated ECD strategy, building on the linkages between nutritional support and cognitive stimulation for child development. The Care for Child development strategy was implemented in regions and communities most affected by the nutritional crisis and scaled-up with evidence-based programming. The C4D section supported the integrated ECD strategy by training mothers in target communities on how to support caretakers in nutritional and stimulation practices. In 2017, a total of 1,545 model women were trained as ‘Mama Yeleen’ on how to promote ECD in their communities. The women provided on-going support to 10 caregivers in their respective communities, providing support to caregivers to sustain the Care for Child Development strategy in target communities.

UNICEF Mali was one of seven country offices identified to pilot the implementation of the ECD Action Network. The network, initially established at the global level through a joint effort between UNICEF and the World Bank, fosters political engagement for ECD by the establishment of national inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms. The platform will
demonstrate the effectiveness of the Care for Child Development integrated ECD strategy and advocate for national scale-up of innovative ECD strategies.

In addition, the revised CMAM protocol included psychosocial stimulation into its care package for children with severe acute malnutrition. At the community level, the training guidelines for community nutrition support groups were revised to include child care practices focusing on psychosocial stimulation. At the upstream level, the participation of Mali’s Minister of Foreign in an event on ECD organized by Morocco during the September 2017 General Assembly showed the Government engagement on the issue, and its willingness to exchange good practices and participate in South-South cooperation initiatives to accelerate progress.

Summary notes and acronyms

BEmONC - basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care  
C4D – communication for development  
CEmONC- comprehensive emergency obstetrics and newborn care  
CMAM – community-based management of acute malnutrition  
CMT – country management team  
CO – Country Office  
CPD – Country Programme Document  
DCT – direct cash transfers  
ECD – early childhood development  
FAO – Food Agriculture Organization  
HACT – harmonized approach to cash transfer  
ICCM – integrated community case management  
ICT – information communication and technology  
IYCF – infant and young child feeding  
KAP – knowledge, attitudes and practices  
MICS – Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey  
MINUSMA – United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali  
MODA – Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis  
MoE – Ministry of Education  
MoH – Ministry of Health  
ODF – open defecation free  
ORE – Other Resources for Emergency  
PMTCT - prevention of mother-to-child transmission  
PPE – personal protective equipment  
PRIME – plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation  
RR – Regular Resources  
SAM – severe acute malnutrition  
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals  
SMART – Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions  
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund  
WASH – water sanitation and hygiene  
WCAR – West and Central Africa region  
WFP – World Food Program  
WINS – WASH in School  
WHO – World Health Organization

With the following partners UNICEF Mali achieved a range of results for children in 2017 (in alphabetical order): Belgium, Canada, CERF, Denmark, European Union (European

**Capacity development**
In 2017, UNICEF Mali continued efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Government on poverty analysis. This allowed the national technical team for poverty analysis to come up with preliminary estimates of the child multidimensional poverty data, using the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) methodology. The national technical team was capacitated to combine deprivation analysis with living conditions poverty analysis.

Two technical staff members from the National Statistics Institute and the Division of Social Affairs within the Ministry in charge of solidarity were trained to collect and analyse disability data during the child disability measurement workshop organized by UNICEF in November 2017. In order to strengthen national institutions’ capacity to perform social work, UNICEF equipped the national training institute for social workers with ICT material and books on social protection.

At the regional level, UNICEF Mali strengthened the capacity of leaders and community members in communication for development (C4D). Over 30,000 community leaders (including youth, women, and religious leaders) were equipped to promote positive practices related to health, nutrition, education, WASH, protection and inter and intra community tolerance. Also, 1,545 women were trained as ‘Mama Yeleen’ to raise awareness among mothers and caregivers on ECD and nutritional practices, and 235 midwives and obstetrical nurses were trained to improve reception in health centres. Thirty radio presenters were trained to produce and broadcast messages on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse. In the Kayes region, communities developed behavioural change strategic plans to reinforce girls’ schooling and reduce child marriage, after 88 leaders and over 40 radio presenters trained by UNICEF conducted community dialogue sessions.

At the start of the school year 2017-2018, 1,925 children, trained as back-to-school ambassadors helped inform over 30,000 households on the importance of subscribing and maintaining children at school.

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**
Using the MODA methodology, MICS 2015 data was analysed to provide estimates of child multidimensional poverty in Mali. Preliminary results of the MODA analysis show that 55.4 per cent of children are deprived in at least three dimensions.

An analysis of the national budget with a focus on social sectors revealed that the execution rate improved noticeably, from 81.8 per cent in 2012 to a projected 91.7 per cent in 2017. However, allocations to social sectors increased less than in other sectors, leading to a decrease in the share of social sectors in budget allocation in real terms.

An innovative approach towards stunting reduction in the highly burdened region of Sikasso documented in 2017. In the Yorosso district, child stunting was halved between 2014 and 2017. With the leadership of the Government of Mali and support of UNICEF, local actors implemented an innovative approach based on: 1) a multi sectoral approach to malnutrition; 2) empowerment of local authorities to manage nutrition issues in the community; and 3)
involvement of communities, especially role model women. This success was recognized globally with the “Healthy not Hungry” award granted to the Deputy Prefect of Yorosso.

The lack of quality data on WASH in Schools (WINS) is a barrier to identifying children’s needs and informing interventions. UNICEF supported the MoE to complete a baseline survey on WASH access and practices in primary schools in Mali. The objective was three-pronged: (1) update the WINS baseline; (2) advocate for the integration of WINS indicators in the national monitoring system of the MoE; (3) engage a multi-sector revision of the National Strategic Plan for the Promotion of Hygiene Education in Schools.

**Partnerships**

In 2017, UNICEF Mali continued working jointly with other UN agencies under the framework of Delivering as One. Joint initiatives include the MUSKOKA project on maternal and child health (WHO, UNFPA, UN Women) and a UNICEF-UNFPA joint child protection project on harmful practices.

In 2017, UNICEF played a key convening and coordination role with technical and financial partners in both the development and humanitarian spheres as lead of the WASH and education thematic groups, while continuing to lead the WASH, nutrition and education clusters as well as the child protection sub-cluster. These strategic roles allowed UNICEF to position the promotion of children’s rights at the centre of the international agenda in a context where security issues require more space, in particular with the recent establishment of the G5 Sahel.

UNICEF Mali explored innovative financing mechanisms, especially in the field of nutrition, where UNICEF was the sole provider of lifesaving RUTF and was advocating with the Government to continue the implementation of UNITLIFE, a sub-regional initiative launched in 2015 that uses a micro levy on the extractive industry to create cost-effective, scalable and sustainable solutions for maternal and child nutrition. So far, Mali is the only country in the region ready to pursue this initiative.

In 2017, UNICEF Mali explored shared value partnerships with the private sector. Building on the children’s rights and business principles, UNICEF explored engagement with the gold mining industry to leverage resources in delivering results for children. UNICEF Mali participated in the first training on the child rights and business principles in West and Central Africa that took place in November 2017 in Burkina Faso, that will inform its efforts to engage with the private sector.

**External communication and public advocacy**

In 2017, a UNICEF Mali-specific communications and public advocacy strategy was developed to identify: public advocacy priorities, primary and secondary audiences, key messages, and communications channels to reach advocacy goals. A digital sub-strategy with a focus on visual storytelling was developed and a steady stream of compelling multimedia content was produced. The roll-out of the new strategy increased the media space dedicated to children with 468 national and international press clippings secured in the first 11 months of 2017 and a substantial increase in digital audiences interested in children’s issues (118 per cent growth on UNICEF Mali’s Twitter in under one year).

In the area of nutrition advocacy, strategic media pitching, interviews and international press trips produced in-depth coverage of chronic and acute malnutrition in Mali, garnering more than 150 clippings in top-tier media and media of target donor markets such as the BBC, Reuters, the Mail & Guardian, Voice of America, RFI, and EFE.
UNICEF highlighted the situation of one million out-of-school children in Mali through the "For Every Child, Education" campaign, achieving high-quality reports on national and international radio and TV and a reach of more than 10,000 views on digital channels.

In the area of child-led advocacy, a network of 120 children from 10 regions and Bamako were trained in editorial techniques, social media and photography to constitute a network of children advocating for children’s rights both at national and international level. Two children participated in the launch of the Gen2030 report in Johannesburg and others led Facebook Live roundtables on nutrition and ECD, videos that reached thousands of viewers and were simultaneously followed nationally on live radio.

**South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation**

In 2017, UNICEF Mali provided technical and financial support to a delegation of officials from the Ministry in charge of social protection to undertake a study tour in Rwanda. The purpose of the study tour was to exchange knowledge and learn good practices from the Government of Rwanda, and was successful in reaching a high coverage of population with social protection. As a result, government officials in charge of social protection can handle personal data confidentiality. They started to establish the interconnection between databases from different social protection programmes to build a single registry for social protection beneficiaries.

As part of UNICEF’s efforts to strengthen the social protection system in Mali, an official from the Ministry in charge of Social Protection was sponsored to participate in the international conference on social protection in contexts of fragility and forced displacements, together with a high official from the Commissary to Food Security sponsored by WFP. The conference, organized by UNICEF, the European Union and other development partners, allowed delegates from fragile countries to exchange on evidence and experiences on the implementation of social protection systems in their contexts. The Malian delegation is expected to build on the lessons learned from other fragile countries to enhance the articulation between its humanitarian response and its social protection system.

Finally, the Director of the Malian Observatory for Human and Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction was able to participate in the "Regional Conference on Child Poverty in the Middle East and North Africa: from measurement to policy action" with UNICEF financial support. This regional conference provided an opportunity for the Observatory to identify good practices of the use of poverty evidence in policy making.

**Identification and promotion of innovation**

UNICEF Mali, in collaboration with the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, the Direction of Civil Protection and Alcyon, completed a pilot project to support decision-making for emergency response and preparedness using online data through a geomatics platform. Data was collected by drone flights hovering over the floods prone area of Markala (Segou). This project allowed the setup of an SMS tool serving as an early warning system in case of flooding. In 2018, UNICEF will continue supporting the Government to scale it up to other regions.

UNICEF supported the development of a national sanitation database covering community-led total sanitation (CLTS), post-open defecation free and liquid waste sub-sectors. In order to enhance data collection, a pilot project was undertaken to test and adapt a phone web technology tool for collecting, evaluating and displaying geographically referenced data using a simple Android smartphone app and an online dashboard. The pilot’s objective was to provide a user-friendly tool for data collection to the National Sanitation Directorate and to strengthen their
capacity on determining data needs, collection methods and management for effective programming, monitoring and evaluation.

Forty radio presenters were trained in Kayes to lead the approach known as ‘Radio in the Heart of the Community’. Within this approach, the radio host presents a radio programme and leads a project, ensuring listeners follow the six steps of behavioural change from pre-contemplation to adoption and promotion of positive practices. At each level, the radio host is called upon to take actions to orient, advise and accompany the listener into understanding and accepting to access the next level. “Radio at the heart of the community” is applied on female genital mutilation, child marriage and girls’ education but can be applicable to fighting malnutrition or promoting vaccination.

Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages
UNICEF Mali integrated ECD into the life cycle approach and continuum of care for children under five years old. A close collaboration between the Health and Social Protection Ministries led to the validation in 2017 of the revised national guidelines for the management of child malnutrition incorporating psychosocial stimulation/ECD into care services for children suffering from wasting. UNICEF supported Mali to join the ECD Action Network, a national platform involving UNICEF, the World Bank, Save the Children International and three Government Ministries. UNICEF Mali was one of seven country offices selected to partake in innovative research studying the linkages between ECD and social cohesion, with support from Queens University.

UNICEF supported cross-sector linkages through an integrated strategy focusing on enhanced WASH services delivery in 263 health centres in the Sikasso and Koulikoro regions. As a result, a national platform for WASH in health facilities was established, WASH standards were defined and validated, over 621 health agents were trained on WASH/infection prevention control and bio-medical waste management, and the WASH in health integrated national strategic plan was validated.

In 2017, UNICEF supported joint trainings for civil registration officers and birth declaration staff on birth declaration processes. An implementation research protocol to assess acceptability of health worker nomination as village birth registrar was developed jointly. The research will provide information on the involvement of health workers to improve birth and declaration rates. Government and civil society partners prepared a MoU to nominate community health workers as village birth registrars. The RapidPro civil registration and vital statistics platform roll-out produced real-time data on vital statistics registration. Joint efforts started to bear fruit: 26,858 births were registered in health facilities and 35,312 home deliveries were registered in four regions.

Service delivery
UNICEF contributed to position rural sanitation at the heart of the development agenda in Mali by: strengthening communication-led total sanitation and post open defecation free (ODF) implementation; strengthening monitoring and actions plans: developing WASH marketing approaches and tools; setting up a national sanitation database called SANIYA; and developing capacity-building plans for the National Sanitation Directorate.

In 2017, Kouniana and Wola (Sikasso region) were the two first communes in Mali to be certified open defecation free. This is a first step of the national plan to reach ODF certification in Mali by 2024 starting from the village level, reaching the communal level and eventually moving up to the district and regional levels.
Education in emergency aims to provide alternative learning opportunities for out-of-school children due to conflict and natural disasters by creating temporary community learning centres where schools are closed and cannot reopen. This approach involves organizing community meetings with local authorities, local leaders, women's and youth associations in order to explain the approach: what UNICEF and its implementing partners will do as duty bearers, and what the community will take on as their responsibility, for example, the community identifies a person with a background in functional literacy to mentor children. This facilitator is then trained in emergency education that covers psychosocial activities and the basic primary education programme, so that the acquisition of essential knowledge in reading and writing can take place. A centre is usually set up for 50 students.

**Human rights-based approach to cooperation**

In line with recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and in accordance with resolution 1612, UNICEF continued its efforts to end the use of children by armed groups and to protect children affected by armed conflict. In collaboration with MINUSMA, an action plan was signed by the Coordination of Azawad Movement, an umbrella of armed groups, in March 2017 to end and prevent the use and recruitment of children and sexual violence by armed groups against children.

This major step was followed by the development of a road map for the implementation of this action plan. In December 2017, child protection focal points were nominated within Coordination of Azawad Movement. The monitoring and reporting mechanism co-chairs, MINUSMA and UNICEF, will be involved in subsequent activities including capacity building of these focal points. A draft terms of reference for focal points was being finalized.

UNICEF Mali worked closely with other sister agencies and partners for the development and implementation of the United Nations 2018-2019 Joint Plan of Action for HIV/AIDS with the objective to reach all people affected by HIV/AIDS and avoid new infections. The joint plan of action is based on the National Strategic Framework to support Mali’s efforts in achieving progress towards the targets of universal access, the zero new infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths (the three zeros) with focus on vulnerable populations, pregnant women, women and girls, adults, adolescents and children. The joint plan of action contributed to the implementation of “90-90-90”, the WHO recommendation to “Test and treat everyone regardless of CD4 count" for the elimination of HIV by 2030.

**Gender equality**

UNICEF Mali mainstreamed gender at different levels within the organization and with its partners, in addition to working on ending child marriage and addressing gender-based violence in emergencies. The CO made progress in mainstreaming gender in the WASH and education sectors.

In 2017, UNICEF facilitated the training of the food security, nutrition, education, health and protection clusters on the IASC gender-based violence guidelines, integrating gender-based violence prevention in their activities. UNICEF sensitised 47,200 community members on gender-based violence and provided appropriate care (psychosocial, medical, legal and socio-economic services) to 1,789 survivors of gender-based violence in the regions of Mopti and Gao. UNICEF played a key role in the national Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse network.

Under the lead of the National Programme to end female genital mutilation/cutting and child
marriage, and with the support from UNICEF and partners, a national follow-up committee of the adoption of a comprehensive law on gender-based violence was set up. A preliminary draft of the gender-based violence law was completed and is currently under discussion at the level of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children and Family. Once endorsed by Government, the draft will be submitted to the National Assembly for adoption.

As part of the WASH in schools approach implemented in 41 schools, 249 (135 for boys and 114 for girls) segregated latrines were completed; menstrual hygiene sensitization was promoted among school children and teachers; 8,093 students and parents, especially mothers, were involved in clubs and trained on savings and income-generating activities in order to contribute to a sustainable supply of hygiene maintenance items for schools. Women represented at least 50 per cent of the members of each of the newly created 245 water point committees.

The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative coordination mechanisms at regional level were functional. UNICEF advocated for girls' education through: a) systematic inclusion of menstrual hygiene management in schools where WASH in school package is present; b) inclusion of cost of menstrual hygiene kit for adolescent girls; and c) synergies with protection on retention in school in order to reduce child marriage.

**Environmental sustainability**

UNICEF Mali contributed to the development and use of renewable energies through the promotion of solar energy in health centres to cover the needs for small scale water pumping and distribution networks (102 health centres were equipped), the use of specific solar fridges for vaccines conservation (559 health centres) and small-scale electrification (181 health centres). This switch to solar energy enhanced sustainability of the water facilities through maintenance management and operation cost reduction, and ensured continuity of the cold chain in health centres while contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Solar energy was promoted for small-scale water distribution networks in communities (30 small scale solar networks benefitting to 36,800 peoples) and integrated in the National Water Plan and in the WASH in health national strategic plan.

The Country Office conducted an assessment on its environment footprint in August 2017 that revealed high power and fuel consumption costs. The recent change of all office bulbs and neons with LED in the Bamako office and the installation of a tracking system for vehicle management will contribute to reduction of operating costs in favour of programme activities, while reducing environmental impact.

The office action plan on eco-environment was developed and monitored by the ad hoc committee established to implement projects such as the installation of solar panels, the use of the office borehole for vehicle cleaning and watering the office garden and actions for enforcing a paperless culture.

**Effective leadership**

Under the leadership of the Representative, country management team (CMT) members met 12 times in 2017 to ensure programmes and operations were progressing as planned and take corrective measures. The standing agenda of the CMT meetings included a) monitoring programme and operations performance in line with the corporate performance management tool on Insight; b) progress towards office management priorities including status of human resources performance, staff development, security of staff and working environment; c)
progress on HACT assurance activities; and d) status of audit self-assessment and revised work processes for simplification in line with UNICEF policies.

The country management team endorsed the list of key statutory committees and ensured that they were functioning well. As a result, 40 cases were submitted to the contract review committee; eight programme cooperation agreements were reviewed by the partnership review committee; four meetings of the property survey board were held.

Ad hoc committees were established to monitor the timely liquidation of direct cash transfers (DCT) and HACT assurance plan. The joint consultative committee met four times in 2017. Major issues discussed included: 1) organizing a retreat focusing on diversity and inclusiveness; 2) work and life balance activities; 3) follow up on the action plan to address the recommendations from the global staff survey. The office annual management plan was developed in a risk informed approach and in a participatory manner. Identified risks were updated once a year. An internal audit was conducted in June 2017. The final report submitted in November resulted in seven recommendations; two were considered high priorities: the security of staff and assurance of the use of direct cash transfers. The office action plan was developed to implement the recommendations under close monitoring of the country management team. The CO has an emergency preparedness and response plan and maintained sufficient emergency stocks. The office business continuity plan was successfully implemented.

Financial resources management

The contribution management, budget control and other office performance indicators were part of the standing agenda of the country management team and programme meetings. In 2017, 100 percent of donor reports were submitted within the deadline and with the required quality.

As of 31 December 2017, the status of assurance activities was the following: 74 spot checks; 29 micro-assessments; 19 audit and 163 programmatic visits were completed. Eight long-term agreements were used under the lead of UNICEF to conduct spot checks, micro assessments and audits, and shared with agencies.

The performance scorecard in the Insight portal showed good performance in quality assurance, financial management, people management, partnership management and programme management. Bank reconciliations were submitted on time.

An internal audit was conducted from 31 May to 20 June 2017. Seven recommendations were made; two were rated high priority. The CO action plan to implement the audit recommendations was monitored by the country management team.

At the end of the year, outstanding DCTs over six months represented 0.5 percent and expired grants US$ 1,424,984. The performance was attributed to regular CMT meetings, systematic reminder letters to implementing partners, ad hoc task force established during the last quarter to monitor DCTs, and change of DCT payment modality whenever possible.

In 2017, funds allocation and utilization was good, with 100 per cent utilization of Regular Resources, OR-R and OR-E funds (US$ 19,782,957, US$41,443,571 and US$10,696,727 respectively) and 99 per cent utilization for the support budget (US$ 695,050).

Fundraising and donor relations
In 2017, UNICEF Mali raised US$47.4 million ORR against the planned US$47 million, a performance of 101 per cent. Despite increasing humanitarian needs, ORE funding was relatively low, US$ 10.7 million against the target of US$ 35.2 million, or 30 per cent. In addition, US$ 51.7 million is currently in the pipeline, including 5.7 million in firm commitments.

In 2017, resource mobilization efforts focused on nutrition and education in emergencies. A nutrition resource mobilization action plan was developed, supported by advocacy and communication strategies. At the end of 2017, US$ 1.3 million was secured for Education in Emergencies and US$15 million was in the pipeline. For nutrition, while emergency needs were covered in 2017, funding gaps remain for 2018.

UNICEF Mali strengthened partnerships through regular engagement with donors and improved recognition. The CO continued outreach efforts with UNICEF National Committees and was selected as one of the five focus countries for the UNICEF Norway 2017 Telethon that resulted in almost US$4 million in funding for education in emergency. UNICEF France picked UNICEF Mali to host the visit of their President and Executive Director in July 2017.

In a context of protracted crisis and decreasing humanitarian funds, UNICEF Mali was focusing on securing flexible funding to implement the humanitarian-development nexus approach. The partnership with Sweden, that provided almost US$20 million in thematic funding to the CO since 2015, was particularly strategic to respond to emergency needs while investing in structural interventions. To improve planning and leveraging of resources for the UNDAF+, an interagency resource mobilization group was created.

Finally, the CO maintained its strong performance for contribution management, with 100 per cent of OR funds utilized and 100 per cent of donor reports submitted on time.

**Evaluation and research**

In 2017, the evaluation function of UNICEF Mali moved forward with the launch of three evaluations. The evaluation of WASH in health facilities was completed and its management response was being finalized. The evaluation of the humanitarian response of UNICEF Mali was being finalized, while the recruitment process for the UNICEF Mali field offices’ evaluation function was on-going.

These evaluations are an integral part of the 2017 Plan for Research, Impact Monitoring and Evaluation (PRIME). The PRIME compiled all evidence generation and statistical capacity building activities supported by UNICEF Mali. It translated UNICEF’s coordinated and coherent investment efforts to ensure that up-to-date and relevant data and information was available to inform programming and advocacy and resources mobilization. Documenting achievements and lessons learned and assessing changes in the life of children and their communities are key elements of the PRIME.

The PRIME was implemented and regularly monitored throughout the year, with an implementation rate of 81 per cent (19 per cent of activities completed and 62 per cent underway). Its implementation led to important new evidence available for better programming and monitoring results on health (Expanded Programme on Immunisation review), nutrition (SMART 2017), WASH (WASH in health facilities) and C4D (KAP survey on essential family practice).

Efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacity were hampered this year by the restructuring of the “Association Pour l’Evaluation au Mali” (National Evaluation Association). This
Restructuring was deemed necessary both by the association’s members and UNICEF Mali’s advice and recommendations. A renewed board is now in place and once the annual action plan is developed, activities will resume.

**Efficiency gains and cost savings**

In the frame of the “ONE UN” initiative and related business operations strategy, UNICEF Mali cooperated with United Nations agencies with the following:

- Joint procurement support for specific programmes. As such, UNICEF Mali led and coordinated with UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women on the procurement process for the establishment of Long Term Arrangements for audits and “spot checks” of implementing partners in respect of the HACT;
- Common procurement services (operations). UNICEF Mali was a leader in establishing long-term agreements and sharing with UN agencies in operational areas, e.g. travel services, procurement and supply of carburant;
- Organization of a forum for suppliers to inform them on the procurement procedures. More than 500 suppliers attended the forum and expressed interest in further bid. This will increase competitive suppliers in the United Nations database and sustained quality and availability;
- Common UN premises in the North of Mali (Mopti, Gao, Timbuktu) with WFP.

The cost savings were obtained through: a) reduction of duplication of work processes by providing services through a single channel (example common services for ICT, security guard, UN dispensary, building maintenance, joint long-term agreements); b) reduction of transaction costs (time spent on activities) for the UN and partners due to HACT; c) enhanced leverage of UN bargaining position when procuring goods and services in larger quantities (i.e. travel agencies, stationaries, hotel rate, conference room, other procurement).

The signature of the MOU between MINUSMA and the UN agencies allow all staff of three zonal offices to use the medical platform of MINUSMA. Staff from the field offices do not need to travel to Bamako for medical services.

**Supply management**

From total procurement performed by the office, local procurement represents 79 per cent vs. 21 per cent offshore. As per service contracts, 98 per cent is placed with Malian companies vs. 2 per cent with foreign companies.

Two physical inventory counts (first half and annual) showed 0 difference with VISION records.

UNICEF Mali conducted an exercise of expression of interest to increase local suppliers’ base: 172 companies applied, from these 136 were retained as pre-qualified. The CO implemented new general terms and conditions as from 1 June 2017 and was guiding local suppliers to get the United Nations Global Market registration.

The CO led cooperative procurement exercises in the frame of ONE-UN initiative for the selection of suppliers of audit and spot-check services in the frame of HACT on behalf of UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women. Also, UNICEF Mali is lead in the frame of ONE-UN initiative in sharing operational long-term arrangements with UN sister agencies (travel agencies, fuel).

The CO cooperated with the Government and kept rate of Vaccine Arrival Report return to Supply Division to 100 per cent (and within the 72 hours WHO KPI).
Two supply staff were deployed on stretch assignments to the Supply Division and to Togo, and one supply staff was deployed to support Emergency operations in Bangladesh.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Total value of procurement performed by the office (in US$)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procurement for own office</td>
<td>10,824,849.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic supplies including PS-funded</td>
<td>2,513,139.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channelled via Programme</td>
<td>2,513,139.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>867,265.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>7,444,444.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL procurement performed by the office (in US$) | 10,824,849.88 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(2) Total value of supplies and services received (i.e. irrespective of procurement location) (in US$)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic supplies including PS-funded</td>
<td>36,577,890.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channelled via regular procurement services</td>
<td>5,941,758.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channelled via Gavi</td>
<td>18,446,556.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channelled via programme</td>
<td>12,189,576.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>944,372.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>7,444,444.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Freight</td>
<td>1,799,025.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL supplies and services received (in US$) | 46,765,733.33 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(3) Total value of supplies managed in the CO’s controlled warehouse(s) (in US$)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepositioned</td>
<td>299,907.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other inventories</td>
<td>10,172,764.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total supplies issued from controlled warehouses (in US$) | 10,472,672.02 |

**Security for staff and premises**

Staff safety and premises security remained a priority for UNICEF Mali in 2017. The Bamako CO and Gao field office were reinforced to comply with security recommendations. Technical improvements such as electrical installation fire safety were still needed and will be a priority in 2018.

Flat jackets and PPE were sent to critical field offices (Gao, Timbuktu and Mopti) that were not fully compliant with additional PPE for visitors. In order to increase access and mitigation capacity, four staff received an ‘Emergency Trauma Bag’ training (one in Timbuktu, one in Gao and two in Mopti).

Evacuation drill and active shooter sensitizations were provided to UNICEF staff.

Documentation and SOPs were updated, with a focus on field missions, security clearance and access to UNICEF offices, and a proper mission planning shared document was implemented. It ensured better follow up of staff movement and field offices support capacity.

All field offices were assessed and provided with a roadmap and security recommendations to implement.
The security staff supported field missions and high-level missions throughout 2017. Following the audit, security focused on scaling up SSAFE training registration for staff whose certification expired. Unless operational imperative, all newcomers where trained within the month of their arrival. RSM evaluation was scaled up.

Security staff received various training. However, delays in the recruitment of additional security staff prevented to scale-up UNICEF security support to programme implementation.

With the upcoming recruitment, 2018 orientation will focus on support to humanitarian access, staff capacity building, field mission support and relation with implementing partners.

**Human resources**

In 2017, UNICEF Mali continued to align its staffing with the needs analysis of the 2015-2019 country programme management plan. Twenty-three positions funded in principle by OR were temporarily supported by RR. Arrangements were being made to find sustainable funding, including new resource mobilization efforts. In total, 34 positions were filled to cover the regular turn-over gap.

The CO put an emphasis on learning and development activities. Seven all-staff briefing sessions were held and 34 external trainings were approved through the annual Learning & development plan. Job vacancies and stretch assignment opportunities were regularly shared with staff members. As a result, 10 staff went on stretch or surge deployment. The 2017 learning and development plan, with a focus on female staff, was implemented at 70 per cent. In 2017, the online results-based management and preventing sexual abuse trainings were added to the list of mandatory trainings. Three ethics discussion sessions were conducted in the office for all staff.

The revised performance management policy was rolled-out and explained to all staff.

The 2017 Global Staff Survey showed that despite overall positive results, Mali still needed to improve work/life balance, career and professional development and standards of conduct. Corrective measures were discussed at two all-staff meetings, and an action plan developed; 87 per cent of staff members renewed and re-signed their oath of office.

SECTO was in place since February 2017 and being used by staff in Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu. Staff in those three difficult locations benefited from the $1,000 ex-gratia payment to enhance their residential security.

In terms of UN Cares, a training on HIV was conducted and preservatives are regularly provided in wash rooms. A staff counsellor was appointed for all UN agencies as part of common services.

**Effective use of information and communication technology**

The main result for information and communication in 2017 was the improvement of the connectivity and Unified Communication Services (voice and video conferences) between Bamako and the five field offices, increasing effective communications and facilitating inter-office dialogue to the benefit of programme implementation.

The CO provided versatile communications systems consisting of MOSS telecommunication,
improved access to DATA service by increasing the bandwidth of the VPN connection to interconnect Bamako and all field offices on the same network, and installed a Telepresence Cisco Video Conference to allow all field offices to participate remotely in meetings such as CMT and programme management team.

Data access was improved through provision of Outlook services to all smart phone users. This improved the connectivity and availability of e-mail communication to a large number of staff on mission, while reducing costs and met the need for internet access through the use of the more economic 4G data service provided by local telephone companies. Additionally, up to 70 computers were purchased to meet the requirements for the migration to Windows 10.

A Hybrid Vehicle Tracking System was implemented to improve the management of vehicles and contribute to the reduction of CO2 emissions. As a matter of fact, this system allows real-time monitoring and control of vehicles, thereby leading to a reduction in fuel consumption by optimizing vehicle movements.

The ICT unit contributed to innovative projects using data collection through RapidPro and U-Report by identifying the right technology and hosting data collection services.

UNICEF Mali continued to cooperate closely with other UN agencies through the ICT Working Group.

Finally, in support to the business continuity plan for the office, the ICT section provided continuous failover services, using the established back-up site via Wireless bridges on the management’s residences.

Programme components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 By the end of 2019, boys and girls aged 0-59 months, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, particularly those living in the most disadvantaged communities, have access to and use an essential package of high-impact preventive, curative and promotional health interventions, including in emergency situations.

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017, vaccination indicators showed a significant decrease compared to 2016, due for a large part to the forty days health staff strike in March. According to routine administrative data, In Mali, 79 per cent (597,999 out of 756,614 children under one) received the measles vaccine and 80 per cent (610,712/756,614) three doses of the pentavalent vaccine. At district level, 45 per cent of health districts (34/75) reached at least 90 per cent immunization coverage for the three doses of the pentavalent vaccine among children under one year while 27 per cent (21/75) reached between 80 per cent and 90 per cent coverage for the same antigen. As for the measles vaccine, 75 per cent of the districts reached at least 80 per cent.

Regarding the management of childhood illness by community health workers, the integrated community case management programme was instrumental in extending access to care for children under five. Through this programme, community health workers treated 28 per cent of uncomplicated cases of malaria, 32 per cent of ARI and 21 per cent of diarrhoea.
For effective malaria prevention in children, a door-to-door approach was used for the seasonal malaria chemoprevention and micro-planning and micro-budgeting exercises were conducted to estimate needs. In 10 out of 65 health districts supported by UNICEF, more than 90 per cent (586,851/634,175) of children aged three months to five years were treated.

In 2017, an inter-sectoral innovative approach in the context of birth registration was promoted by the Government of Mali with UNICEF support. Health and birth registration services worked together to increase reporting rates of births in health centres but in communities through community health workers.

As for maternal care, data from the local health management information system showed that out of 943,800 pregnant women, 17 per cent (157,591) received four ANC compared to 15 per cent in 2016 and 25 per cent (238951) of births were attended by a skilled health professional compared to 50 per cent in 2016.

The major innovation in 2017 was the choice of three districts in the Sikasso region (south) for concentration of interventions through joint planning, implementation and monitoring by UN agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO and UNWOMEN) jointly implementing the MUSKOKA project. This integrative approach increased the coverage rate for ANC 4, the rates of assisted deliveries and caesarean section, and reduced the number of maternal deaths and new-borns deaths in these three districts.

The performance of the programme for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) was uneven due to the low utilization of ANC services, the inadequate number of PMTCT sites, the non-integration of activities and the poor management of the programme. Indeed, during the reporting period, out of 943,800 pregnant women expected for the entire year only 13 per cent (122,694) were counselled and tested for HIV. Even among pregnant women seen in ANC, only 31 per cent were counselled and tested for HIV. Despite the low coverage of counselling and testing services, nearly all HIV-positive pregnant women (95 per cent) and infants born to HIV-infected women (100 per cent) received ARV prophylaxis. Furthermore, 34 per cent of infants born to HIV-infected women received a virological test for HIV within two months of birth and 23 per cent at 18 months. Finally, 140 paediatric HIV care sites are functional in the country.

To achieve results for women and children at scale, UNICEF Mali focused its efforts on the implementation of High Impact Interventions to reduce preventable childhood morbidities and mortality, and improved governance and accountability as a main strategy. Improvement of vaccine storage capacity (559 solar refrigerators installed), cold chain and logistics, implementation and scaling up of immunization outreach strategies and capacity building for health workers were all used to strengthen the Expanded Programme on Immunisation programme. The development of the integrated management of childhood illness strategy and the implementation of SEC were strengthened in the regions of Kayes, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Segou, Mopti, Bamako (commune VI). UNICEF contributed to this result by drugs and commodities supplied, supervising community health workers in complement to USAID, PSI, NGO MUSO and Red Cross that provided the workers’ salaries and training. With UNICEF and partners’ support, community health workers contributed to cover 22 per cent (906,160 under five children: 4,118,906).

Development of basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care (BEmONC) and comprehensive emergency obstetrics and newborn care (CEmONC) were the basis of the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality by addressing direct causes. To accelerate the eMTCT and to improve
paediatric care for children born from HIV-positive mothers, a National Strategic Plan for the eMTCT of HIV was implemented since 2015.

Responding the lack of operational public health infrastructures in the north regions with insecurity, UNICEF Mali signed PCAs with international and national NGOs for lifesaving health interventions. Through these partnerships, 85 per cent of children under one year were vaccinated with three doses of pentavalent 3 in Timbuktu, and 72 per cent in Taoudénit. For the same target population, immunization coverage rate against measles reached 82 per cent in Timbuktu and 84 per cent in Taoudénit. Vaccination coverage is relatively good in these four regions (Timbuktu, Ménaka, Taoudénit and Gao). Data is not available for Kidal due to insecurity in this area.

For UNICEF Mali, insufficient funding for HIV activities and malaria control remained an obstacle to provide more robust support to the Government’s efforts towards eMTCT of HIV and malaria prevention.

OUTPUT 1 By 2019, the governance, funding and accountability framework for the health of mothers, newborns and children is strengthened, including in emergency situations.

Analytical statement of progress
As part of the implementation of the PRODESS, in 2017 nine strategy documents were developed and utilized. These include: the Data Quality Improvement Plan, the Cold Chain Maintenance Plan, the National Biomedical Waste Management Plan, the Cold Chain Rehabilitation Plan, the comprehensive multi-year immunization plan; the 2017 Expanded Programme on Immunisation Annual Operational Plan, the Expanded Programme on Immunisation External Review, the Every New-born Action Plan and the United Nation Joint Plan of HIV.

These policy and strategy documents provided national guidance on strategies for improving the quality of care, the situation analysis of various components of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation programme, and Expanded Programme on Immunisation national guidelines for the next five years. They provided evidence and data for planning and budgeting for cold chain maintenance and cold chain equipment needs for the next five years, helped health centres with policy documents for biomedical waste management and put newborns at heart of maternal and child health.

At the regional and district level, UNICEF supported the MoH programme PRODESS bi-annual planning and monitoring session (CROCEP 2016-2018) under the leadership of local authorities to cover 756,614 children under one and 943,800 pregnant women with high impact interventions.

Regional workshops were organised to track progress on child survival. During these workshops, the coverage of high impact interventions was analysed thanks to data provided by reviews of various programmes, namely Expanded Programme on Immunisation, CEC, EmONC, and PMTCT. The implementation of the District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS 2) in Bamako and six other health regions (Ménaka, Kidal and Timbuktu in the north, Kayes in the West, Mopti in the centre, Sikasso in south) facilitated the production of the 2016 regional health statistical bulletins that were then validated and compiled to produce the 2016 national health statistical yearbook. This exercise allowed timely decision-making to remove bottlenecks at local level in the six regions. In 2017, as part of the deployment of the DIHS2, UNICEF
equipped 181 health centres in the north regions (Gao, Timbuktu, Kidal, Ménaka) with computers and solar kits for managing health data and birth registration as well as lighting equipment.

The financial management of funds transferred to health sector implementing partners by UNICEF improved with the completion of 04 HACT training sessions (Sikasso in the south, Ménaka, Timbuktu / Taoudénit and Gao in the north), 16 programme monitoring field visits, 49 end-users monitoring and five implementing partners audits. The availability of human resources for health was strengthened with the recruitment of 71 doctors whose salaries were covered by GAVI funds. Moreover, Planning and Statistics Unit of the MoH capacity was reinforced by covering operational costs and staff additional allowances using GAVI funds. While the health programme was able to mobilize 171 per cent of planned resources, malaria control and HIV programme are still lacking adequate funds. Another key challenge under this result is the delay in producing the National Statistical Yearbook. The deployment of the District Health Information Software nationwide is expected to help mitigate this constraint.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2019, 90 per cent of children under five (boys and girls), particularly those living in the most disadvantaged communities, have access to and use a minimum package of health services, including in emergency situations

**Analytical statement of progress**
Out of 756,000 children under one in Mali, 72 per cent (547,808) received Penta3 vaccine. Furthermore, 28 per cent of health districts reached between 80 per cent and 90 per cent coverage for the same antigen and 40 per cent of exhibited coverage over 90 per cent.

With regard to creating an enabling environment for the Expanded Programme on Immunisation programme, several documents were developed. These include: External Review of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation, Comprehensive Multi-Year Immunization Plan, 2017 Expanded Programme on Immunisation Annual Operational Plan, Cold Chain Maintenance Plan, GAVI Support Renewal for 2018 and Update Performance framework.

The quality of vaccine supply improved with the development of Immunization forecast tools, support for vaccine procurement and co-financing of vaccines by the Government of Mali. As of November 30, the country received 48,798,753 doses of vaccines. Moreover, the storage capacity was reinforced with the acquisition of cold chain equipment, installed in 14 CSREFs and 543 CSCOMs.

Immunization services were reinforced through outreach and mobile vaccination strategies and 41 per cent of the targeted population were vaccinated through these strategies.

The quality of immunization was improved by: supervisions conducted at national, regional and district levels, the analysis of Expanded Programme on Immunisation data provided by DVDMT and SMT reports, the review of the 2011-2016 vaccination data focused on equity; and the training of 1,286 vaccinators on effective management of vaccines, 28 on solar equipment maintenance, 51 on LQAS, 892 on Reach Every District and 175 on preventive maintenance of refrigerator.

Curative service utilization rate among under-five children was 0.70 on 30 September 2017 against 0.80 in 2016. Nevertheless, access to services was expanded by the integrated community case management strategy: community health workers treated 28 per cent of
uncomplicated malaria cases, 32 per cent of ARI cases, and 21 per cent of diarrhoea cases.

The ICCM strategy was reinforced by conducting a national ICCM review to document the contribution of community health workers to child survival in 2016. ICCM services were improved by the supply of medicines and other medical consumables, and an increasing number of trained and equipped community health workers. More specifically, 646 community health workers in Sikasso and 339 community health workers in Mopti were trained on the revised ICCM tools, in collaboration with donors and partners. In total, 2,300 community health workers were supplied with drugs and commodities. UNICEF supported two rounds of seasonal malaria chemoprevention. As result, 92 per cent (586,851 out of 634,715) under-five children in first round and 95 per cent (601,452/634,715) in the second round.

In the scope of inter-operability between MoH and Ministry of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, UNICEF promoted a health-protection joint initiative to develop a pilot project to assess the recognition of community health workers as village birth registrars. As results, 26,858 births were registered in health facilities; 35,312 home births registered in the Sikasso, Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao regions - representing 40 per cent of birth registration rate reported by Community health workers in the project sites and birth certification rate was 88 per cent. Compared to all births occurred in those regions, the birth registration rate represents 20 per cent.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2019, 90 per cent of pregnant women, including those exposed to or infected with HIV, receive care during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period, including in emergency situations.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Data from the LHIS (31 October 2017) showed that out of 943,800 pregnant women expected for the entire year, 17 per cent (157,591) received four antennal care compared to 15 per cent in 2016 and 25 per cent (238,951) of births were attended by a skilled health professional compared to 50 per cent in 2016 due in part to the health workers strike.

During the same reporting period, only 35 per cent (198,368) of 564,044 pregnant women seen in antenatal care were counselled and tested for HIV. Even among them, only 21 per cent (198,368) of the 943,800 pregnant women expected for the entire year were counselled and tested for HIV. Despite the low coverage of counselling and testing services, nearly all HIV-positive pregnant women (96 per cent) and infants born to HIV-infected women (100 per cent) received ARV prophylaxis. Finally, 140 referral health facilities provided paediatric HIV care.

To improve the quality of EmONC, UNICEF ensured capacity building of health personnel. Indeed, 15 training sessions totalling 180 health personnel in total, on neonatal death audits and the approach "help mothers survive and help babies breathe", and five training sessions on essential care to new-borns in five districts of Sikasso region were organized. In addition, 28 supervision missions of BEmONC and C-EmONC were conducted in 13 districts, 16 of that were integrated with PMTCT / paediatric HIV care. Furthermore, three training sessions for adolescents and adolescent peer educators were organized in 17 CSComs and three CSRefs of three districts in the region of Sikasso. Finally, three teacher training sessions on adolescent and youth health were organized in 20 schools in these districts.

Regarding PMTCT and paediatric HIV care, providers' skills were strengthened through four training sessions in five districts and 33 monitoring field visits of PMTCT sites (16 of that were
integrated into EmONC / PMTCT and Paediatric HIV Care) in 20 districts. In addition, providers’ competencies in paediatric HIV care were strengthened through a training session of 24 staff and 14 supervision missions on HIV/AIDS sites.

Data analysis for planning and decision making at the local level improved thanks to 10 integrated review workshops for EmONC/PMTCT/Paediatric HIV care in 10 districts and the elaboration of three plans for eMTCT. Strengthening planning for the resolution of supply, demand and quality bottlenecks improved through the PMA monitoring and micro-planning sessions carried out in eight districts.

OUTCOME 2 By 2019, communities, particularly those living in rural and disadvantaged areas, have increased sustainable access to and use of safe drinking water, basic sanitation and hygiene, including in emergency situations.

Analytical statement of progress
According to the latest reviewed WHO-UNICEF JMP report for 2015, Mali made significant progress related to access to an improved water source with coverage having increased from 49 per cent in 2000 to 74 per cent in 2015, thus surpassing the MDG target of 65 per cent. Progress in sanitation coverage was lower, with access to an improved sanitation facility having increased from 19 per cent in 2000 to only 31 per cent in 2015.

Since 2015, although the sector is a government priority, the rate of progress was hindered by low national budget allocation. In 2016 only 1.6 per cent of the national budget was allocated to the sector against the five per cent pledged by Mali at the high-level meeting Sanitation and Water for All in April 2014. Besides, up to 85 per cent of the investments in the sector are supported by Mali financial partners.

In addition, the more ambitious WASH targets and standards under the new SDGs significantly raises the bar making Mali aim to achieve 100 per cent access to safe water supply and 100 per cent to sanitation by the year 2030. To achieve these targets, Mali will require yearly US$ 162 million to meet basic services and US$ 668 million to meet safely managed services, with significantly higher yearly investments in the short to medium term.

The switch from Millennium Development Goals to SDGs was introduced and required enhanced support and coordination between national and international WASH stakeholders. The main critical bottlenecks and challenges to overcome are the lack of services or poor-quality services for the poor in urban and rural areas (mainly in the area of sanitation and hygiene), inadequate government financing of WASH, weak sector capacity and governance (especially human resources, data inconsistencies), inadequate integration of WASH in education, health and environment, poor performance monitoring and regulation.

To review and integrate the SDGs into the national WASH policies and strategic frameworks, UNICEF as lead of the WASH Mali donor coordination group is contributing to build a more favourable environment for the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services by supporting improved multi-stakeholder dialogue and building political will and engagement amongst decision makers. In that respect, several significant processes were supported by UNICEF in 2017, such as the preparation for the participation of the Government of Mali to the High-Level Meeting Sanitation and Water for All in Washington D.C in April 2017, the annual national water and sanitation sectorial review, and the elaboration of the new Governmental Water and
Sanitation Programme 2016-2030 - PROSEA 2 (consolidated draft expected in April 2018).

The ongoing Trackfin initiative was setting up an improved national monitoring system of financial investments and flows in the WASH sector to ensure: (i) coherence with the National WASH programme (PROSEA 2) and with SDG targets, (ii) follow-up of Government commitments (Sanitation and Water for All, N’Gore statements) (iii) a better analysis of sectorial funding situation to support strategic orientations.

UNICEF and partners were pushing the profile of rural sanitation in Mali by strengthening CLTS and post-ODF monitoring and action plans, developing WASH marketing approach and tools, setting up a national sanitation database called SANIYA and developing a capacity building plan for the National Sanitation Directorate. In 2017, the communes of Kouniana and Wola (Sikasso region-south) were the two first ever communes in Mali with a total population of 13,035 people (2,505 children) to be certified ODF. This is a first step of the national plan to reach by 2024 a Mali free of open defecation, starting from village level, then moving up to the communal level and finally to Circle and regional levels:

- 186,800 people (95,268 children) gained access to improved water sources in Sikasso, Koulikoro and south Mopti regions versus a target of 279,600 of that 34,000 were reached in 2017.
- 166,800 people (85,068 children) affected by the crisis in the north and central regions gained access to improved water sources
- 140,592 people affected by the crisis in the north and central regions of Mali were supported in emergency situations through short term distribution of household water treatment products and water trucking distribution,
- 942,789 people (480,822 children) gained access to basic sanitation in 1,264 open defecation free communities in Sikasso, Koulikoro, Mopti and north regions
- 212,714 children gained access to improved water and sanitation facilities in 950 schools in Sikasso, Koulikoro, Mopti and north regions
- 395 health centres were equipped with WASH facilities that meet minimum standards in Sikasso, Koulikoro and Mopti regions.

Water access in the north region was critical due to under-investment in the sector aggravated since 2012 by the conflict. Community resilience capacity and coping mechanisms are decreasing year after year, provoking seasonal displacements for water access, and creating new humanitarian needs. The WASH sector in Mali is facing a real challenge to address both structural needs and humanitarian needs while trying to create bridges between the two types of interventions. In this realm, UNICEF and partners were developing a Nexus approach to channel donor contributions and government investments and to support population resilience in this fragile context of the central and north regions.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2019, a more favourable environment is established for the provision of water sanitation and hygiene services, with a special focus on the sub-sector rural sanitation.

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF was building a more favourable environment for the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services, with a focus on the sub-sector of rural sanitation. UNICEF support is articulated around five building blocks to align the WASH sector with the SDG 6, with notable achievements in 2017.
In the area of sector policy and strategy development, the participatory preparation of the Government of Mali to the High-Level Meeting Sanitation and Water for All held in Washington D.C in April 2017 strengthened multi-stakeholder dialogue, and built political will and engagement amongst decision-makers. Also, the development of the new National Water and Sanitation Program 2016-2030 (PROSEA 2) was on-going. The evaluation of the former PROSEA was finalized in March 2017 and, with some delays due to a highly participatory process, the consolidated draft of the PROSEA 2 is expected in March 2018.

Regarding institutional arrangements, the national annual WASH sector review took place with in April 2017, with UNICEF support for its preparation and organization. UNICEF continued to lead the Mali Donor Coordination Group, and was re-appointed for two years. Through this group, UNICEF with partners is lobbying for stronger coordination between humanitarian and development partners and for additional investments in the rural sector and sanitation.

With UNICEF support, significant progress was made regarding planning, monitoring and review in the Wash sector, such as the national water resources real time monitoring system, through a phone-web technology approach. The first phase of the water point inventory that targeted the six southern regions was completed this year, the second phase targeting the five north regions was started with a co-financing UNICEF-KfW in September 2017. Moreover, to improve national and local monitoring and evaluation systems of the sector, a diagnostic study was finalized and validated with Government stakeholders in May 2017. A five-year investment plan (to respond to the identified priorities and challenges) was developed.

Finally, UNICEF was developing the sustainability audit approach in Mali through the DGIS project. This approach provides insight into the current sustainability bottlenecks of rural WASH at institutional and community levels. The audit 2017 was developed in close partnership with the Government and is co-financed by the Government of Mali.

Regarding sector budgeting and financing, the Trackfin initiative that aims at strengthening financial accountability through improved monitoring was ongoing. In 2017, its scope was broadened to specific sub-sectors such as integrated water resources management, hygiene, WASH in schools and WASH in health centres. Results are expected first quarter of 2018.

Finally, to develop sector capacity, the fifth building block, the capacity building plan of the National Sanitation Directorate was finalized and validated in May 2017, as it was done for the National Water Directorate in 2015. For both Directorates, UNICEF with partners advocated the Government for an exceptional public service competition to recruit additional agents as the human resources situation in terms of number is critical.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2019, at least one million additional people living in at least 1,500 rural communities, particularly the most disadvantaged, have gained access to safe water and have adopted good hygiene and sanitation practices.

**Analytical statement of progress**

During 2015-2017 with UNICEF direct support, over 942,500 people gained access to basic sanitation and live in 1264 ODF communities in Sikasso, Koulikoro, Mopti and north regions, against a 2019 CPD target of 1,000,000 people in 1,500 communities.

For 2017, UNICEF maintained high efforts to scale up CLTS coverage by partnering with eight
national and international NGOs in 363 villages, of that 353 were declared ODF, thus benefitting 274,081 people. The communes of Kouniana and Wola (Sikasso region) were the two first communes in Mali to be certified ODF. This is a first step of the national plan to reach by 2024 a Mali free of open defecation, starting from village level, then reaching the communal level and finally moving up to circle and regional level. In that frame, UNICEF supported the set-up of the protocol for communal certification.

UNICEF considerably strengthened post-ODF monitoring since 2015 and is currently supporting the National Sanitation Directorate in the roll-out of the national strategy:

- SANYIA, structured national sanitation database covering CLTS, post-ODF and liquid waste subsectors developed and launched in June.
- 22 database administrators at national and regional levels trained and are incorporating existing data in the new system.
- A pilot project in the commune of Bougouni (south) engaged to adapt and test Akvo phone-web technology tools for sanitation data collection
- Post-ODF action plans and setting up of monitoring mechanisms supported in 5 regions.
- Post-ODF activities integrated in all new UNICEF CLTS projects, and over 500 villages completed post-ODF implementation.

UNICEF scaled up the WASH marketing approach and reached over 1,100 communities, covering a population of 774,200. As the CLTS reduced open defecation rates, WASH marketing approach enables ODF communities to purchase latrine slabs, hand-washing facilities, soap and household water treatment products, and have access to improved sanitation in a cost-effective and sustainable way.

In 2017, a WASH Marketing Implementation Guide and a WASH marketing communication tool were finalized. As result to date, 95 private operators were developing WASH marketing activities in 115 communes in Koulikoro, Sikasso and Mopti regions: 4,539 latrines slabs, 666 household handwashing facilities and over 1,200,000 Aquatab 67 mg tablets were sold in about 640 villages to improve living condition and access to safe drinking water for about 320,000 people with 163,200 children.

During 2015-2017 with UNICEF direct support, over 186,800 people gained access to improved water sources in Sikasso, Koulikoro and south Mopti regions, against a 2019 CPD target of 390,700 people. In 2017 due to funding constraints, only 34,000 people in 65 ODF communities in Sikasso region gained access to improved water sources, through 45 boreholes equipped with hand pumps and 20 small solar water networks completed.

UNICEF supported Health and Sanitation’s National and Regional Directorates to celebrate Global Handwashing Day and Toilet Day, thus contributing to sensitize countrywide about 2,500,000 people directly, and about 12,000,000 people through mass media campaigns.

**OUTPUT 3** 2019, at least 1,100 institutions (schools and health centres) meet recommended WASH standards in terms of equipment, promotion of hygiene and local governance.

**Analytical statement of progress**
During 2015-2017, 1,344 institutions (950 schools reaching over 212,714 children and 395 health centres) against the 2019 target of 1,100 institutions gained access to improved water and sanitation facilities through UNICEF direct support.

In 2017, 41 schools in Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal regions, benefiting to 8,093 children (3,717 girls, 4,376 boys) reached the WASH minimum standards. Activities are ongoing in 90 additional schools in Sikasso and Mopti regions.

The local NGO federation for WASH in schools (REHA) is fully operational and elaborated an advocacy strategy for WASH in schools. UNICEF support stimulated an increased engagement at government level through the setup of a WASH in Schools (WINS) technical platform under the lead of the MoE. This technical committee brought together stakeholders of the sector and ensured cross-sectoral dialogue in order to influence political options and strategic orientations for WINS. Within the MoE, the Direction Nationale de l’Enseignement Fondamental was identified as the focal point for WASH in school and discussions are ongoing to formalize roles and responsibilities.

The lack of quality data on WINS coverage is a significant barrier to identifying children’s needs, establishing and carrying out effective programmes and monitoring progress. The MoE, with UNICEF support in collaboration with REHA, completed a baseline survey on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene access and practices in primary schools in Mali. This study aimed a three-pronged objective: (i) an updated baseline of the WINS situation for the governmental stakeholders and partners; (ii) advocate for the integration of robust WINS indicator in the national monitoring system to monitor progress of the SDGs; (iii) engage a multi-sector revision of the National Strategic Plan for the Promotion of Hygiene Education in Schools.

Regarding WASH in health centres, UNICEF supported 264 health centres in Sikasso and Koulikoro Regions to reach the WASH minimum standards. UNICEF supported the MoH for an enabling environment for the sub-sector. WASH FIT (Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool) was promoted by UNICEF Mali in partnership with WHO. This approach promoted continuous improvement of WASH standards in health centres through capacity building of government and civil society health actors and the roll out and monitoring of WASH action plans in health centres.

To date, main results achieved were:

- The national platform for WASH in health facilities empowered coordination among a larger number of active stakeholders and implementing partners;
- The content of WASH in health facilities package was approved and the WASH in health National Strategic Plan was validated in February 2017;
- WASH/IPC Training Module, Bio-Medical Waste Management Procedures were revised: 27 WASH in health trainers at regional level were trained and through a system of cascade training, 621 health agents were trained in the 264 health centres.
- 264 health centres in Sikasso and Koulikoro regions reached the minimum WASH package.

**OUTPUT 4** Communities affected by crises or conflict increased access to clean water, basic sanitation, measures to promote prevention of water and sanitation-related diseases.
Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, UNICEF contributed to address water access and needs in emergency situation following man-made or natural crisis as well as to build population resilience through structural WASH support in the highly fragile context of the north regions.

UNICEF supported short-term emergency distribution of household water treatment products to 27,276 people in Timbuktu, Gao and Menaka following several population displacements in those areas. Through the Regional Directorate of civilian protection of Gao, UNICEF supported in Gao Town water distribution by water trucking for 3 neighbourhoods (covering 15,000 persons) for three months all along the dry season.

UNICEF engaged construction and rehabilitation works for 180 water points in the north and Mopti (centre) regions. To date 111 water points were completed/rehabilitated serving about 61,200 people in 111 communities: 62 boreholes equipped with a hand pumps constructed (45 in Mopti, 05 in Kidal and 12 in Gao region), 39 boreholes equipped with a hand pump rehabilitated (27 in Mopti, 05 in Kidal and 07 in Gao region), 5 solar pumping water systems installed (04 in Mopti and 01 in Gao region) and 5 rehabilitated (04 in Mopti and 01 in Gao region).

As well, 107 staff from WASH regional Directorates and five local implementing partners from Mopti, Gao, Menaka, Timbuktu and Kidal regions were trained on social intermediation approaches and tools for community mobilization, management and maintenance of water points, and hygiene promotion. Also, 237 community water committees were set up and trained on technical and financial management of water points (127 in Mopti, 60 in Gao and 50 in Timbuktu region).

WINS activities were being finalized in 41 schools in the north, aiming to strengthen social cohesion and promote culture of peace among children and adolescents, including the most vulnerable, their parents and their surrounding communities through an integrated approach in schools. This approach focused through school communities and the provision of WASH infrastructures on promotion of peacebuilding education activities and inter-community dialogue.

Regarding WASH in Nutrition, UNICEF did not receive funding in 2017. UNICEF and the sector were largely underfinanced with a critical gap between the cluster 2017 target (96,368 Mother/caretaker – malnourished couple) and the 4,389 reached by all WASH partners up to date. UNICEF with WASH stakeholders advocated for stronger investments by donors to be able to meet the humanitarian WASH needs of population of central and north of Mali.

Decentralized coordination mechanisms in Mopti, Tombouctou and Gao are functional under the co-leadership of UNICEF and government WASH regional Directorates.

The prevailing insecurity and limited access remain important challenges to ensure proper implementation and monitoring. While activities in the north remain on track, they face some delays. To address this, UNICEF works in close collaboration with local implementing NGOs and local leaders, and set up additional monitoring mechanisms such as third-party monitoring to better keep track of progress.
OUTCOME 3 By the end of 2019, the nutritional status of children aged 0-59 months and women of childbearing age has improved, especially those living in areas with high prevalence of malnutrition, particularly Mopti and Sikasso.

Analytical statement of progress
Data from the 2017 nutritional survey using the SMART methodology showed little improvement in the nutritional situation of children. Over the last five years, the prevalence of global acute malnutrition hovered between 10-15 percent, with northern regions often exceeding 15 percent. In 2017, the prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition in Gao and in Timbuktu reached ‘critical’ levels by WHO’s standards (15.2 percent and 15.7 percent, respectively), and ‘serious’ acute malnutrition rates were recorded in Kayes (west), Taoudénit (north) and the district of Bamako. Chronic malnutrition (stunting) remains a significant problem with a national prevalence as high as 23.1 percent. Furthermore, Sikasso was the most affected region with 30.8 percent of children chronically malnourished.

UNICEF Mali focused its programme on the integrated management of acute malnutrition, the prevention of micronutrient deficiencies, and the improvement of maternal, infant, and young child feeding.

In 2017, 110,082 SAM children, or 103 per cent of the annual target of 107,000 children, benefited from the IMAM programme. Compared to 2016, the number of SAM cases admitted in the IMAM programme decreased slightly. This was a result of a lower number of cases expected in 2017 than a lower capacity of the programme to reach children with SAM. Indeed, in terms of coverage of the total number of SAM cases expected, the programme performed better in 2017 with a 82 per cent coverage compared to 81 per cent in 2016.

Limited funding continued to seriously impede scaling up of the IYCF programme in the target regions of Mopti and Sikasso. About 200,000 pregnant and lactating women were counselled through 2,136 community support groups that were set up, potentially benefiting about 400,000 children under the age of five in the regions of Mopti (centre) and Sikasso (south). Overall, this represented about only 37 per cent of the target in both regions combined.

Supplementation of Vitamin A suffered from severe funding constraints in 2017. As a result, only one round of Vitamin A Supplementation (VAS) was carried out, reaching 4,400,482 children six to 59 months (>90 percent of coverage) and 3,162,196 children aged 12-59 months with deworming tablets (Albendazole), according to preliminary data as of November 2017.

However, at policy level, a solid foundation was laid to support a sustainable VAS programme in Mali. Indeed, a VAS transition document laying out a strategy for strengthening routine supplementation was produced and validated.

Regarding evidence generating, increasing political commitment and partnership, results were achieved on several fronts. First, despite the collapse of the UNITLIFE initiative, the Government of Mali, with the advocacy of UNICEF Mali, committed to reallocate to nutrition its initial contribution of US$ 300,000 reimbursed by UNICEF. The Government continued its effort to leverage innovative financing mechanisms to secure predictable and sustainable funds for its national multisectoral nutrition action plan. Second, UNICEF Mali, in partnership with the World Bank and Save the children, secured the commitment and leadership of two Government’s ministries (health and education) for ECDANthat will initially focus on nutrition and education. Finally, the United Nations Network for SUN, under the leadership of UNICEF Mali, adopted its
2017 annual work plan aimed at supporting a multisectoral approach to the fight against malnutrition in Mali.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2019, the institutional and strategic repositioning of the nutrition sector has taken effect and facilitates integration across sectors, and the improvement of the sector’s funding framework.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In Mali, the Nutrition Information System does not provide readily available gender and residence disaggregated routine data. UNICEF Mali in 2017 continued to support the Government in strengthening it. UNICEF Mali seized the opportunity of the rolling out of the District Health Information Software to advocate for the inclusion of IYCF indicators in the Health Management Information System (HMIS). Mali was selected by the SUN Secretariat among a few countries globally to receive technical support as part of a pilot for an effective and comprehensive inclusion of nutrition data in the District Health Information Software. The implementation of District Health Information Software in Mali is still at the early stage but data on acute malnutrition, IYCF, micronutrient supplementation are now collected and disaggregated by sex, age, and residence.

In order to further strengthen data availability and quality, UNICEF Mali lead efforts to couple the 2017 SMART survey with a living standard survey (Modular and Permanent Household Survey – EMOP) in view of allowing a more in-depth analysis of the determinants of maternal and child malnutrition and supporting better programming decisions. In collaboration with the Nutrition Division of the MoH, the National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) and other technical and financial partners (FAO, WHO, WFP, USAID, and SIDA), the 2017 SMART-EMOP survey was completed with a nationwide coverage including the newly established northern regions of Ménaka and Taoudénit, and most notably the region of Kidal (north), that was not covered in the 2015 and 2016 surveys.

Throughout 2017, UNICEF continued to support the SUN movement and REACH initiative in Mali and was the Lead agency of the UN Network for SUN, that comprises UNICEF, FAO, WFP, WHO, UNFPA, and UN Women. The Network developed a costed Action Plan for 2017 and was actively involved in many initiatives aimed at raising the profile of Nutrition on the Government’s agenda such as the Cost of Hunger study, the zero hunger vision, and discussions on innovative financing for nutrition. Furthermore, Mali was represented at the Annual SUN Global Gathering with a delegation of six people, two of that were financially supported by UNICEF, namely the SUN Focal Point and the Coordinator of the Civil Society Alliance.

The nutrition technical groups’ coordination meetings at national and subnational level, that represent an important multi-sectoral coordination mechanism, did not take place as expected. While a three-month strike of health workers seriously constrained the activities, the limited availability and involvement of some members of the group, particularly at regional level, was partly responsible. As a result, only 50 percent of scheduled meetings took place.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2019, at least 70 per cent of pregnant women and children aged 0-23 months have access to a package of interventions to reduce chronic malnutrition in the target areas of Mopti and Sikasso.
Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, UNICEF Mali continued to promote and support IYCF, in collaboration with the Government. Its strategy covers three key areas (i) to build multi-sectoral engagement; (ii) favour local leadership; and (iii) strengthen community-based IYCF. All trained community nutrition support groups were equipped with monitoring and counselling tools to promote behaviour change on good feeding and child-care practices in communities. These tools were developed in late 2016, with UNICEF’s financial and technical support, and shared with NGOs engaged in setting up nutrition support groups in Mali.

With UNICEF support, the government set up 2,136 community nutrition support groups (1,127 in Sikasso and 1,009 in Mopti) that in turn reached nearly 400,000 children under the age of five. These groups benefited from supportive supervisions, where UNICEF Mali, in collaboration with MoH technicians, assessed programme achievements and provided technical expertise. To strengthen facility-based IYCF, over 250 health practitioners were trained on the IYCF guidelines, and are knowledgeable of the IYCF counselling package. Nearly 200,000 mothers of children 0-23 months in Mopti and Sikasso gained access to a counselling package on IYCF and child care practices at the health centre and community level. Community members engaged in group activities and received individual counselling on IYCF.

In addition to nutrition specific interventions, UNICEF supported nutrition sensitive actions. In this regard in 2017, multi-sectoral platforms coordinated actions in other sectors such as agriculture, water and sanitation, and education in view of ensuring the provision of an integrated package of services to children, with 14 meetings at district level and 49 meetings at commune level held. A champion of these interventions is the Deputy Prefect of Yorosso (Sikasso region, south) who was awarded the global prize “Healthy Not Hungry Award” this year, acknowledging the efforts of the Government of Mali and UNICEF to fight chronic malnutrition through multi-sectoral and community approaches.

Behavioural change on good infant feeding and child-care practices are constant challenges to the reduction of stunting in Mali. To date only 37 percent of mothers reported exclusive breastfeeding in 2017. Limited resources constrained UNICEF Mali’s ability to track programme activities and support Government and partners in the regions of Mopti and Sikasso. Finally, the absence of solid programmatic data on the implementation and functionality of the nutrition support groups at central level and the limited programme ownership at the national level are bottlenecks that UNICEF faces continuously. UNICEF Mali will continue to advocate for the intensification of preventive services.

OUTPUT 3 By 2019, at least 80 per cent of children aged 0-59 months (boys and girls) and women of childbearing age have access to a service for the prevention of micronutrient deficiencies.

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, UNICEF Mali continued to provide technical and financial support to the Government for the prevention of micronutrient deficiencies. Programme focus for this year was on vitamin A supplementation (VAS), and UNICEF provided technical support to the MoH to preposition vitamin A in the various regions of Mali for routine and campaign style events.

VAS in Mali was solely supported by UNICEF. Preliminary data reported 4,400,482 children 6-59 months supplemented during the VAS campaign, over 90 percent of coverage, along with
3,162,196 children aged 12-59 months who received deworming tablets (Albendazole). An additional 525,948 children aged 6-59 months received vitamin A in the routine settings throughout the year. In 2016, it was estimated that 99 percent of children aged 6-59 months received two annual doses of vitamin A supplement.

In September 2017, UNICEF supported the Nutrition Division in Mali to define a clear strategy for VAS. A transition document focusing on strengthening routine VAS for a more financially sustainable supplementation strategy was drafted and validated along with the National Vitamin A supplementation guidelines.

The 2017 SMART survey reported five out of 10 regions in the country with less than 95 percent iodized salt availability in households (iodine deficiency disorder elimination criteria) with levels as low as 55 percent in Kayes (west) region. The inter-ministerial decree on the production, import, storage and marketing of iodized salt was revised and awaiting validation. In the meantime, UNICEF Mali engaged in discussions to revitalize the cooperation between the nutrition division, the public hygiene division and the customs services for border and market-level salt control to increase the availability of iodized salt in the country, and provide salt testing kits to government entities.

While UNICEF does not directly support iron and folic acid supplementation, UNICEF supported malnutrition prevention activities during that key messages promoting an iron rich diet and the fight against anaemia in pregnant and lactating women were delivered. The community-based IYCF actions focused on micronutrient deficiencies. In 2017, health centres in Mali supplemented 78 percent of pregnant women and 6 percent of women in immediate postpartum with iron and folic acid.

The main constraint in 2017 was the lack of government funding to support Vitamin A supplementation campaigns. Several meetings were held for resource mobilization in country to fund the operational costs of vitamin A distribution. Under the leadership of UNICEF and the Nutrition Division, these meetings brought together the country’s nutrition stakeholders and served as an advocacy platform for government engagement in funding for nutrition intervention in Mali. Another challenge was the lack of operational guidelines for micronutrient supplementation such as iron folic acid, vitamin A, and iodine. This resulted in only one Vitamin A supplementation campaign in 2017, coupled with Polio National Immunization Day. UNICEF continued to work with the Government to determine VAS coverage in routine and campaign events, to avoid disturbances in the supply chain process for vitamin A in Mali.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2019, at least 80 per cent of children aged 6-59 months (boys and girls) have access to good quality services for managing severe acute malnutrition (including in emergencies).

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF continued to support technically and financially the Government of Mali to strengthen sustainably the Integrated Management of SAM (IMAM). The validation of the community mobilization strategic plan and the revision of the national protocol were key achievements this year. The implementation of these two documents, the capitalization of the URENI school (reference centre for the management of acute malnutrition), and the pilot study of the integration of screening of malnutrition in malaria campaign will strengthen the governance and ownership of the IMAM by the health system and communities.
UNICEF remains the sole provider of RUTF to the Malian health system. UNICEF Mali procured and distributed the following commodities to the country’s 74 health districts: therapeutic food (91,738 cartons of RUTF, 3,014 cartons of therapeutic milk), anthropometric equipment, essential medicine (systematic medical treatment) for the treatment of 92,267 severely acute malnourished children (including 9,057 cases with complications) in 2017. This represented 86 percent of the 2017 SAM target. The number of children treated is likely to be higher, as the completeness and promptness of data remains a challenge, despite the integration of IMAM indicators in the new District Health Information System. The SMART survey (seventh consecutive year with UNICEF support), continued to enable nutrition surveillance nationwide and contributed to a planning strategy for 2018 reflecting real needs.

Global performance indicators were in line with SPHERE standards: the cure rate is 90 percent, the death rate 0.8 percent and the dropout rate is 8.8 percent nationally. However, regional disparities remain with 22 districts having a dropout rate higher than the SPHERE norm for outpatient services, and the death rate higher in seven districts. To address these challenges, UNICEF supported capacity-building activities (training of health and community workers, formative supervisions in the low performing districts) that contributed to make IMAM services operational in over 1,300 health centres. In northern Mali, where security limits access to services, UNICEF as part of the humanitarian response plan, signed an agreement with the NGO IEDA-Relief to ensure quality services in Kidal.

Funding availability for RUTF, particularly to purchase and pre-position supplies remains a major challenge. The gradual withdrawal of NGO partners and the overall decrease in funding for nutrition in emergencies present serious risks to the performance of the IMAM programme and sustainability of gains. UNICEF Mali undertook short-term and long-term mitigating measures. Beyond mobilizing more financial resources in the short-term, with other development partners, continued advocating for the creation of a nutrition budget line and the inclusion of RUTF on the list of essential medicines. This would allow alternative financing mechanisms such as direct budget support.

UNICEF Mali and development partners were looking at options for private sector and academic institutions engagement in low cost local solution as alternative to importing RUTF. Finally, through its Nutrition Cluster leadership, UNICEF led the definition of the strategy for strengthening the humanitarian–development nexus, smoothing the phasing out of many humanitarian programmes.

OUTCOME 4 By the end of 2019, the barriers to school attendance for children aged 3-15, particularly girls and the most disadvantaged children, were lifted and children are able to access quality basic education and succeed at school.

Analytical statement of progress
The Mali Government allocated a considerable amount of its resources to education (28 per cent of the national budget, 2005-2015), though detailed analysis showed a discrepancy between allocations for different subsectors. Preschool received less than 1 per cent of National Budget versus 58 per cent for the 1st and 2nd cycle of primary schooling. Gross enrolment rate (GER) and gross admission rate (GAR) for 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years increased by 5-6 percentage points to 72.1 per cent and 68.7 per cent respectively. With respect to completion rate, there was an improvement of two percentage points between 2015-16 and 2016-2017 school years, from 46.2 per cent to 48.3 per cent.
Despite above positive trends, GER (72.1 per cent) and GAR (48.1 per cent) remain low (compared to 91 per cent GER as of latest Millennium Development Goal report against GER indicator and SDGs target by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes).

In addition, projection in population growth is another major challenge facing the education system. At primary school level, population is expected to increase by 56 per cent for the 1st cycle and 59 per cent for the 2nd cycle. This calls for greater capacity and availability of infrastructure capable of providing equitable access to education for all children of primary schooling age.

At national level, the new Education Sector Plan ("Programme Décennal de l'Education", PRODEC II, 2018 - 2027) will address these challenges. As preparation of the PRODEC II finally started, UNICEF as chair of the LEG and Managing Entity for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Strategic sector plan funds, played a key role in supporting MoE. Due to delays mainly outside of technical partners’ control, the timeline of the roadmap will need to be revised.

In addition to chairing the LEG, UNICEF was nominated in partnership with the World Bank and Save the Children International to lead ECDAN in Mali. This newly established coordination mechanism aims to act as an inter-ministerial coordination platform for ECD, with a key component focused on early learning. This is a unique opportunity for UNICEF to not only improve inter-sectoral coordination but showcase and advocate for preschooling.

In order to address high rates of Out of School Children, for the 2017-2018 back to school campaign "Pour chaque enfant une education" (For each child education), UNICEF developed a media and advocacy campaign that included three short films presenting barriers to education through the story of three adolescent girls. Each short film presented key obstacles to girl’s education (early marriage, domestic and child labour). In addition, there were six weeks of Facebook posts on the right to be educated on the UNICEF-Mali Facebook page, as well as a photo exposition on the theme “where I do my homework”, realized by a professional photographer in direct collaboration with children. Lastly, as part of the advocacy campaign, there was the development of "Unschooled stories", a document to narrate problems encountered by out-of-school children through the stories of individual children.

In 2017, UNICEF focused its efforts to improve coordination and governance at the regional level. This included contributing to establishing and maintaining pivotal national and region coordination mechanisms such as the education cluster and regional sub cluster, the United Nation Girl’s Education Initiative committees both at national and regional level, and committees for out-of-school children.

Decentralized education entities (Académie d’Enseignement and Centre d’Animation Pédagogique) have information systems that do not produce regular statistics. When data collection does occur, it is not effectively analysed leaving out important elements such as WASH in schools, and net enrolment and admission rates. Additionally, poor management of human, material and financial resources was particularly problematic at the decentralized levels.

At the school level, UNICEF and its partners (MoE, NGOs and INGOs) ensured the capacity building of 884 school management committees and provided access to quality education for 35,653 out-of-school children (including 20,640 girls) and children at risk of dropout, as well as
30,850 young children (15,117 girls) attending preschool. In addition, 54,124 (including 30,460 girls) children in crisis-affected areas participated in peace education activities supporting resilience and social cohesion.

Due to the protracted crisis in the north regions and the volatile and deteriorating situation in Mopti and Segou regions (centre), 500 schools remained closed by the end of the school year 2016-2017. UNICEF continued to advocate relentlessly at national, regional and local level for the reopening of closed schools. Along with its partners, UNICEF put in place a strategy to ensure the continuity of education for children who are out of school by creating ‘community learning centres’. In the conflict-affected areas of Gao, Menaka, Mopti and Tombouctou regions, 100 community learning centres were opened benefitting 4,357 children (2,278 girls and 2,079 boys). In 2017, the contribution made towards social cohesion was brought to the forefront with reporting on peacebuilding activities carried out in Mopti, Tombouctou, and Gao with 154,034 children (73,902 girls and 80,132 boys) involved in interschool competitions (poetry, essay writing, sketches) where children actively played a role in promoting social cohesion and a culture of peace school as well as at community levels.

**OUTPUT 1** By the end of 2019, the sectoral programme based on equity, inclusion, and risk analysis and management is validated and operational.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, UNICEF continued its upstream engagement to support the MoE in strengthening its capacity in sectoral planning, coordination and policy development. In its capacity as lead of the education thematic working group, UNICEF in collaboration with technical and financial partners, continued to provide technical guidance on the implementation of the road map towards the PRODEC II (10 year sector plan 2018-2027).

In supporting the MoE in the elaboration of its new sector plan, UNICEF played a lead role in completing the sector analysis (including the validation of chapter seven on risk management in the education sector), the national and regional validation of 18 sectoral studies, as well as the finalization of financial simulation modelling. The completion of these activities represented important milestones in enabling the MoE to appropriately inform and finalize its new sector strategy. Furthermore, UNICEF facilitated the process of identifying a managing entity for Global Partnership of Education funding that was allocated to support the implementation of the new sector plan.

UNICEF continued to play a key role in advocating for the revitalization of the following thematic working groups: (1) quality education (2) teaching and learning, and (3) governance (at national level and to the regional education coordination meeting), SCOFI coordination and cluster coordination.

UNICEF was sector lead agency through the provision of technical and financial support in elaborating various sectoral policy documents. Such documents as the “Early Learning Development Standards”, “Bilan des Competences”, and “the Core Functions Assessment” enabled UNICEF to advocate for structural and technical revisions within existing policies to strengthen national capacities for providing quality early learning programs and improving children’s school readiness to enter and succeed in primary schooling within the context of the new Education Sector Plan.

The lack of nationally validated, complete, reliable data supported by appropriate analysis is a
bottleneck in strategic planning for the education sector. Furthermore, current statistics collected within the education sector do not appropriately integrate and analysis data related to WASH in schools and inclusive education (including out-of-school children). In 2018, UNICEF will support the Planning and Statistics Unit of the MoE to establish a comprehensive data collection and analysis system, ensuring that data and statistical analysis produced by the MoE effectively contributes to sectoral planning and analysis and are inclusive of WASH and inclusive education data, including monitoring mechanisms for out-of-school children.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2019, children who are not enrolled or have dropped out of school have opportunities to enter formal education or opportunities for literacy/vocational training

**Analytical statement of progress**

To ensure appropriately contextualized and cost-effective strategies in support of out-of-school children, UNICEF was collaborating with the Government to develop a new strategy for the direct reintegration of out-of-school children into formal schools (ages 7-9) that will complement the accelerated learning programme already in use by the MoE. Additionally, to ensure the sustainability of new interventions, UNICEF sub-offices ensured that the out-of-school children agenda and regional strategy was integrated in regional and local development plans.

Efforts to support out-of-school children were strengthened through decentralized strategies that focused on developing partnerships with civil society organizations. As a result, UNICEF identified 65,286 out-of-school children (34,602 boys, 30,684 girls) through regional assessments carried out in Kayes (west), and the reinsertion of 35,653 out-of-school children (20,640 girls/15,013 boys) into formal schooling. To ensure appropriate monitoring of re-integrated out-of-school children and the effectiveness of strategic interventions in maintaining out-of-school children and vulnerable children in formal schooling, UNICEF is working with the Planning and Statistics Unit of the MoE to support the introduction of specific out-of-school children indicators and establish a tracking system enabling the regular monitoring of out-of-school children and their retention in formal schooling through the EMIS system.

UNICEF supported a country-level assessment of Koranic schools as to enable UNICEF programmatic interventions reach all out-of-school children, most notably the most vulnerable. The final report is expected to provide strategic recommendations to support UNICEF in defining its position on Koranic schools in order to engage in policy dialogue with the MoE and advocate for institutional reforms that would be inclusive of Koranic schools within the national sectoral strategy.

The primary constraint related to education access was the limited availability of infrastructure of 1st and 2nd cycle of compulsory education. For the 2nd cycle of compulsory education, the availability of structures is half that of the first cycle, with high regional disparities. Inadequate provision of 2nd cycle schools greatly reduces opportunities for children to complete compulsory education, directly impacting student retention at the primary school level. UNICEF’s institutional support to the MoE with respect to data collection and analysis will ensure that access barriers are reduced through improved sectoral planning and school mapping.

UNICEF considered the issue of out-of-school children a priority for its external advocacy and communication as well as fundraising efforts. In 2017, UNICEF obtained over US$ 25 million from three donors (Koika, NORAD and DevCO) for multi-year projects. UNICEF was appreciative of the financial support provided by these donors to enable the implementation of a multi-year out-of-school children strategy.
OUTPUT 3 By the end of 2019, children - especially in the regions of Mopti and Sikasso - complete a quality basic education.

Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF supported the Ministry of National Education in carrying out a variety of sub-sector analysis, including an early learning development standards study to strengthen national capacities for providing quality early learning programs and improving children's school readiness to enter and succeed in primary schooling. The results of the analysis will leverage the nation-wide scaling-up of preschool programming in the next sector plan.

UNICEF supported the development of harmonized tools to monitor adherence to national primary school norms and quality standards. Application of these tools will improve monitoring and assessment of systemic and school level quality of education. Analysis of results collected by these tools could inform strategic decision-making and actions to improve learner achievement. Piloting of these standards tools is planned for 2018.

In an effort to support access to quality ECD opportunities for pre-school-aged children, UNICEF’s technical, financial and material support improved the learning environment for 30,850 young children (15,117 girls) in 617 community-based pre-schools in the regions of Koulikoro and Sikasso (south), Segou and Mopti (centre), and Gao and Timbuktu (north) and in Bamako District. Also, 1,378 female animators increased capacities to deliver quality early learning programming linked with parental education. UNICEF expanded its Care for Child Development integrated nutrition/cognitive stimulation approach in the regions of Sikasso and Timbuktu. Consequently, 21,470 parents increased awareness to practice cognitive stimulation techniques with their young children.

Two priorities of the Direction National de la Pédagogie and the Direction Nationale de l’Enseignement Normale for quality education delivery benefitted from technical and financial support by UNICEF. As a result, 175 ministry agents (including 25 women) from decentralized ministry structures (12 AEs and 42 CAPs) from the regions of Kayes (west), Koulikoro, Mopti, Sikasso, Timbuktu, Kidal and Gao increased their capacities to ensure the application of the national reference framework assessment of learning and carrying out the strategy for generalization of the “Communauté d’apprentissage de Maîtres” (local in-service training platforms).

Moreover, as a key partner for carrying out decentralized capacity building at school level, UNICEF ensured that the capacities of 598 directors and teachers from 280 primary schools in 23 CAPs in UNICEF zones of intervention were strengthened to ensure the establishment and management of the “CA de maîtres”. To date, a total of 1,774 (including 288 women) primary school directors and teachers in Kayes, Mopti, Sikasso, and Koulikoro set up “CA de maîtres” in 886 schools, a 15 per cent contribution for the target of 4,373 schools (in 2017) of the DNEN’s “CA de maîtres” generalization strategy. Finally, a total of 884 School Management Committees were trained to date (18 per cent of the revised 2019 target of 6,000 Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention), aiming at improving primary school management, governance and community participation in UNICEF intervention zones, a key alignment with the new UNICEF Strategic Plan.
OUTPUT 4 In emergency situations, girls and boys have access to quality education in a safe environment all the while benefitting from education policies and practices promoting social cohesion and a culture of peace.

Analytical statement of progress
Due to the on-going insecurity in the northern regions and the volatile and deteriorating situation in the central regions of Mopti and Segou, 500 schools remained closed and/or were forced to close by the end of the school year 2016-2017, a significant increase in the number of schools closed compared to the same period last year (204 more schools than the 296 schools closed by end of 2015-16 school year).

In the Mopti region, since February the Education Cluster registered the highest number of schools closed in the country: 277 (or 55 per cent). At the beginning of the school year in October 2017, UNICEF Mali and government partners put in place a successful strategy for reopening schools mainly through community dialogues. This facilitated the reopening of 27 schools that had remained closed for two years or more, that enabled over 4,000 children to access to education.

In the conflict-affected areas of Mopti (centre), and Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu (north) regions, 54 124 school children (30 460 girls and 33 788 boys) accessed non-formal and informal educational interventions through the opening of 100 community learning centres as well as accelerated ‘bridge classes’ in emergency education. Among them, 44,000 students were provided with school kits, and they benefitted from 281 recreational kits, at the start of the school year (October 2017).

For the campaign "For Every Child an Education, 2017", 1,925 children participated as “back-to-school ambassadors” in eight regions: Segou and Mopti (centre), Gao, Timbuktu, and Kidal (north), Koulikoro, Kayes (west) and Sikasso (south) as well as Bamako district. The children gained competencies to improve their skills and capacity in interacting with adults on the importance of education and the reasons why children were still out of schools. For example, how domestic work prevented girls from attending school, or how early marriage was a barrier to girls’ schooling.

To ensure sustained quality of educational programming in emergency interventions, UNICEF is collaborating with education partners to implement an innovative in-service teaching training and school supervision package with the use of modern technology. Pre-recorded interactive radio programs in community learning centres is an innovative strategy used in emergency education to assure continuity of education for children who are out of school.

To support peace-building and social cohesion in the North and Centre regions of Mali, UNICEF’s Education for Peace involved 154,034 children (73,902 girls and 80,132 boys) who participated in interschool competitions on peace education and social cohesion. Over 10,000 indirect beneficiaries (community members, women’s and youth associations, local NGOs and authorities) in Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal benefitted from and were engaged in a number of activities aimed at and promoting social cohesion and a culture of peace.

OUTCOME 5 By 2019, children, especially girls, are better protected against violence, abuse and exploitation.

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, the Government of Mali showed an increased commitment to improve the legal framework and policy environment related to child protection. In July 2017, the MPFEF, supported by technical and financial partners including UNICEF and civil society organizations, validated the preliminary draft law on gender-based violence including criminalisation of female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage (comprehensive draft law currently with the minister). It is the first time in 10 years that the Malian Government made progress in terms of legislation against harmful practices by addressing the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to implement measures to prohibit female genital mutilation/cutting and early and forced marriages and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

The MPFEF validated the national communication strategy on gender-based violence. The strategy is finalised and awaiting signature by the minister. It will constitute a reference document for all actors engaged in ending gender-based violence. The strategy was a crucial opportunity to address in a systemic and structured way the underlying social norms related to female genital mutilation and child marriage. Efforts remained to be made to adopt the national strategy on the modernization of the civil status, validated technically since September 2016.

In 2017, child protection service delivery was strengthened through capacity-building of government, community and civil society service providers. UNICEF focused on building technical and operational capacity of government partners engaged in child protection at central and regional levels.

In a context where a professional body of civil registry does not exist, a harmonized training module on civil registration was developed and 6,876 civil registry officials whose technical skills were strengthened were ready to provide high quality services in accordance with rules and procedures. This includes the free issuing of birth certificates for approximately 410,000 children. In addition, a pool of trainers was constituted at decentralised level.

The response to gender-based violence cases was strengthened with the development of national standard operational procedures, specialized staff training and information provided to survivors on services available. That allowed 3,505 victims to benefit from at least one kind of specialized service, of that 3,276 received psychosocial support, 1,193 health services, 157 legal assistance and 700 benefited from income generating activities.

In Mali, programme management remains a challenge and child protection services, including birth registration, were paper-based with few computers available at local level. To address these constraints, in 2017 UNICEF built capacities of child protection government actors in result-based management and promoted new technologies, RapidPro-Civil registration, that was piloted. This will contribute to reaching more children in 2018 and the years to come.

Social mobilization and awareness-raising for the elimination of harmful practices continued to be a key strategy of UNICEF Mali in 2017, with a focus on partnerships’ reinforcement and geographical expansion to deliver more results for children.

In addition, 352 villages (including 250 new villages and 17 new districts) in the areas of Kayes (West), Sikasso and Koulikoro (south), Mopti (centre) and District of Bamako benefitted from C4D related to harmful practices, with a total of over 200,000 people including authorities and leaders (half women) reached through awareness-raising sessions.

In Kayes region, 5,000 people in nine new villages declared themselves free of female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage in 2017 through a letter of abandonment registered at the
NGO, AMSOPT. Stronger political commitment to fight harmful practices at community level has been noted due to a trickle-down strategy used by UNICEF. UNICEF actively engaged with high-ranking authorities from national institutions who in turn led advocacy amongst local and regional authorities.

Despite the context marked by insecurity and limited humanitarian access in the north and central regions, and the scarcity of financial resources dedicated to humanitarian action, the coordination mechanisms and arrangements of assistance were maintained and reinforced by UNICEF’s role as co-lead of the gender-based violence sub-cluster and collaboration with MINUSMA.

In 2017, 3,578 people affected by the conflict (28 associated with armed groups and armed forces, 114 auto-demobilized, 965 gender-based violence survivors and 2,471 other vulnerable or at risk children) benefited from adequate case management services. In the northern region of Gao, 10,580 (5,252 boys and 5,328 girls) children affected by the crisis benefited from psychosocial activities and support through seven child friendly spaces and nine child protection community networks (RECOPE).

In collaboration with MINUSMA, the monitoring and reporting mechanism on the six grave violations against children was strengthened and enabled documentation and verification of 181 cases of grave violations. In addition, community-based complaint mechanisms on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by humanitarian actors were established in the regions of Bamako, Mopti (centre), and Tombouctou and Gao (north) with focal points in place, action plans available and 281 people from the UN (including UNICEF), NGOs and Government partners knowledgeable about the concepts of PSEA as well as early warning and early action procedures.

Finally, an action plan to put an end to and prevent the recruitment and the use of children, sexual violence and other grave violations, was signed on March 5, 2017 by the Coordination of Azawad Movements.

OUTPUT 1 By 2019, the policy and legislative framework for the child protection sector is harmonized and its institutional and budgetary components are reformed

Analytical statement of progress
Under the lead of the PNLE, the National Programme to end female genital mutilation/cutting, a National Follow-up Committee on the adoption of a gender-based violence law was set up (January 2017), bringing about a significant improvement in the coordination with state authorities, UN agencies and NGOs. A draft gender-based violence law was completed and handed over to the Minister for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family (July 2017). UNICEF provided technical support during the drafting of the gender-based violence law and supported the work of the committee.

Also under the lead of the PNLE, a ten year national holistic communication strategy to end gender-based violence – with a focus on female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage – was developed, based on recommendations from the critical analysis of actors of influence to accelerate the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting practice in Mali and with UNICEF support through an inclusive and participatory process. Based on this strategy, interventions contribute to social mobilization, community engagement and intergenerational dialogue to protect more than 80 per cent of women and children against female genital
mutilation/cutting and child marriage in the areas of intervention by 2027.

A draft memorandum of understanding on the nomination of community health workers as civil declaration agents was technically validated. This document allowed the health workers at community level to register all births or deaths occurred outside of health services. These interventions better target the most vulnerable areas and children who do not have access to a civil registry centre and propose strategies to enable more than 90 per cent of children to be registered in these areas.

OUTPUT 2 By 2019, the capacity of institutional and informal actors at the national, regional and local level is strengthened in terms of planning, implementing and monitoring interventions for the prevention and response to children's vulnerabilities.

Analytical statement of progress
Regarding civil registration, a harmonized training module was developed. During a workshop bringing together all actors involved, various existing modules were harmonised and content improved to integrate the Code of People and Family (law 2011) and strengthen the integration of civil registration in health services. Under the lead of the National Directorate of Civil Registration (DNEC), a pool of 71 trainers was set up in Kayes, Sikasso, Ségou, Mopti and in Bamako district. These trainers are expected to train 6,000 civil registry officials during 2018 on the procedures of declaration and registration of vital events, including birth registration. UNICEF supported these processes and advised on the design of the modules and facilitated the training.

Under the lead of the DNEC in partnership with the National Direction of Health and with UNICEF support, 6,876 civil registration actors had their capacities built in the regions of Sikasso (south), and Mopti (centre). In Sikasso region 1,251 civil registration centres were equipped with declaration and registration kits; Mopti will be equipped in 2018. As a result, civil registration actors can now offer quality birth registration services for approximately 410,000 children in these regions.

To improve the management of child protection services, RapidPro–civil registration was pilot tested and 81 civil registry officials trained. These users can develop and share monthly statistics of birth and death certificates and analyse stocks. The pilot result will inform scale-up. The capacity of 81 technical officers from the central and regional directorates of the MPFEF was strengthened on result-based and context-specific microplanning, monitoring and reporting. UNICEF-supported activities aimed at preventing female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage among 300,000 girls and women and promoting birth registration will directly benefit from the outcome of the training.

At community level, the capacity of more than 1,200 adolescent out of school and migrant girls in Bamako District, Gao and Tombouctou regions were strengthened to sensitize their peers on birth declaration and certification. In Mopti region (centre), 60 village health workers were trained on birth registration procedures. In 2018, these actors will be instrumental in boosting birth registration in their communities.

Standard operating procedures for gender-based violence case management were developed at national level and disseminated. The standard operating procedures were contextualised in Mopti region, providing information on available services to populations at risks or survivors of gender-based violence at local level. The technical capacity of 135 specialized actors
(facilitators, legal social workers, psychologists, assistants, doctors) was strengthened to offer holistic quality services to all identified survivors, under the lead of the PNLE, in collaboration with the Regional Directions for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family and five local NGOs (APDF, AMSOPT, Sini Sanuman, MSH/FCI and TAGNE).

In Kayes, Koulikoro, Mopti and of the District of Bamako, 3,505 victims benefited from at least one kind of case management service, including 3,276 who benefited from psychosocial support, 1,993 from health services, 84 from legal assistance, and 700 from income generating activities.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2019, communities in priority intervention areas adopt behaviours and practices that promote positive social norms against violence, abuse and exploitation towards children

**Analytical statement of progress**
Knowledge about the risks related to female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage improved in target communities through UNICEF partnerships with the DRPFEF and three national CSOs. In the regions of Kayes, Sikasso, Koulikoro, Mopti and District of Bamako, 201,251 people including authorities and leaders (half are women) in 352 villages were sensitised. Partnership with UNFPA (within the global programme to end female genital mutilation/cutting, and a joint-programme in Koulikoro region) contributed to this result.

The use of local cinema/films was promoted by UNICEF for mass communication on female genital mutilation/cutting, using a participatory approach and incorporating regional and local authorities in community dialogues. As a result, in most localities, the debate around female genital mutilation/cutting is not taboo anymore and is the subject of intergenerational dialogue.

In Koulikoro, in 150 villages of Kolokani ‘cercle’, thanks to the DRPFEF and the NGO ‘TAGNE’, 7,982 people were reached by awareness activities; opening space for dialogue in communities. In Sikasso, under the lead of the Regional Direction 86,500 people were sensitized on female genital mutilation/cutting and CM through «Cinema Numerique Ambulant».

In Kayes, 1,680 influential people were mobilised by the NGO, AMSOPT, with the technical and financial support of UNICEF with Swedish funds. They include community authorities, teachers, persons in charge of administrative and communal matters, presidents and members of women’s groups, teachers and students. They acquired knowledge on female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage and now influence behavioural change within their communities. As a result, nine new villages comprising 5,000 people declared their abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage through a letter of abandonment. This brings to a total of 147 villages (6442 persons) since the beginning of the programme cycle.

Engaging actors at different levels, such as elected members of national institutions and local authorities, proved successful to reach communities at a large scale. In Mopti, Gao (Bourem), Kayes, Sikasso and Bamako district, 673 members of elected national institutions (National Assembly; High Council of Local Governance; Association of Municipalities of Mali; Economic, Social and Cultural Council; National and Regional Council for Youth) were mobilised and trained by a local NGO, Sini Sanuman, with UNICEF support. They acquired knowledge and skills on advocacy and social norms change and in turn raised awareness of 600 local and regional authorities (political and administrative, religious and traditional, civil society, women and youth leaders). As an effect, 2,840 people, including 537 leaders signed a formal ‘Pact’
showing their support to the elimination of gender-based violence.

Community involvement remains essential for the prevention of harmful practices. In Segou region, 28 'vigilance committees' were set up in Barouéli and Segou circles, and are now part of the early warning mechanism and referral pathways for female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage. They led awareness-raising activities with other leaders, information sharing meetings, and supported the development of local plans of action to end child marriage.

**OUTPUT 4** At least 50 per cent of children affected by humanitarian emergencies benefit from protection and reintegration measures.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Under the lead of the Regional Director and with UNICEF support, the functionality of the child protection sub-clusters was ensured at the national (Bamako) and regional level (Gao, Tombouctou, Mopti). Thanks to the strengthening of technical capacities of 30 actors, 965 gender-based violence survivors benefited from psychosocial support and due case management.

With UNICEF and the National Direction for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family support, 28 children (boys) associated with armed group benefited from transitory case management services and 21 of them were reunified with their families. Seven remaining children continued to benefit from transitory management services. In addition to these children in transitional care; 131 other children at risk of whom 114 children self-demobilized (112 boys and two girls) were identified by the partner IRC and benefited from school reinsertion and were supported in family basic and socioeconomic needs in the northern regions of Gao / Menaka and Kidal.

Within the framework of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, a response mechanism is now operational in Gao. Partners were able to offer adequate assistance, including psychosocial support to identified children. UNICEF provided support to the rehabilitation and equipment of the Transit and Orientation Centre in Gao city and the strengthening of technical capacities of supervisory staff. Additionally, 40 host families benefited from capacity building on positive parenting, and are now ready to temporarily accommodate and assist children before family reunification takes place.

Seven child-friendly spaces and nine child protection community networks (RECOPE) were set up and equipped in northern region of Gao. This allowed 10,580 (5,252 boys and 5,328 girls) children affected by the crisis to benefit from psychosocial activities and support.

Under the co-leadership of MINUSMA and UNICEF, the monitoring and reporting mechanism was reinforced through the capacity building of 57 new child protection members in three regions. Furthermore, an action plan to put an end to and prevent the recruitment and the use of children, sexual violence and other grave violations, was signed on March 5, 2017 by the Coordination of Azawad Movements.

UNICEF was discussing with the Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission of Mali with the aim to provide technical assistance in dealing with children’s cases in the commission. UNICEF prepared, discussed and agreed with the commission on the terms of reference for the recruitment of an international expert on children’s rights to support the commission. This collaboration will contribute to documentation of grave violations against children under the
monitoring and reporting mechanism.

Finally, the national Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse was set up. Within this context, 281 people (125 UNICEF staff, 156 partners of the United Nations, the Government and international and national NGOs) were trained on coordination, prevention and response. They are now aware of what SEA entails and how to report cases. Terms of References for focal points, a notification alert and action plans are available in each region. They comprise community based complaint mechanisms and assistance to SEA victims.

OUTCOME 6 By 2019, national and sub-national social policies are more inclusive and equitable, promoting the resilience of families and vulnerable communities.

Analytical statement of progress
Mali adopted the SDGs in September 2015. After the official launch of the SDGs in Mali in February 2016, the Government of Mali moved ahead with implementation. In this regard domestication of the SDGs was at the centre of Government of Mali efforts in 2017. Awareness and prioritization workshops were held at national and regional levels with a wide range of stakeholders. UNICEF accompanied the Government of Mali in the prioritization exercise for the SDGs, by ensuring that most targets related to child rights are included in the list of priority targets.

2017 was the second year of implementation of the framework for economic recovery and sustainable development (CREDD 2016-2018), the ongoing poverty reduction strategy document in Mali. It is framework for the implementation of sectoral policies and strategies. The CREDD is divided into two prerequisites pillars (peace and security and macroeconomic stability), three strategic pillars (inclusive and sustainable economic growth, social development and access to basic social services, institutional development and governance), 13 priority areas and 38 specific objectives.

Progress recorded under pillar three (social development and access to basic social services) included: increase in crude enrolment rate at primary level, improvement of access to safe water and adequate sanitation, and increased social protection coverage for the population in need. Indeed, the national safety nets programme “jigisemjiri” expanded vertically with a public works programme and a nutritional preventive package to the 60,715 beneficiary households that were receiving cash transfers since 2015. At the same time, the national agency for health assistance speeded up activities to identify and register the most in need population that will benefit from the free health care programme.

In terms of financing for development, Government of Mali’s efforts to improve domestic revenues were acknowledged by Bretton institutions. Two International Monetary Fund’s missions undertaken in 2017 assessed that the fiscal reforms adopted by the country to improve public finances are being implemented at a satisfactory rate. These assessments were confirmed by the World Bank data that show that domestic tax revenue increased steadily in Mali from 11.9 per cent in 2011 to 15.3 per cent in 2017 as a percentage of GDP. However, it is worrisome that tax revenue was insufficiently channelled for additional social sectors’ expenditures that decreased from 7.5 per cent to 6.8 per cent of GDP over the same period.

OUTPUT 1 By 2019, the poorest families and children are regularly identified and monitored at the national, regional and local level, and the causes of their deprivation identified and analysed.
Analytical statement of progress

In 2017, a major achievement was the completion of the MODA II, an update of the 2014 child poverty analysis, using MICS 2015 data. The study was carried out by a team of major national institutions, with UNICEF financial and technical support.

Preliminary results indicate that 55.4 per cent of children in Mali were poor in a multidimensional way in 2015, compared to 65 per cent in 2010. This reduction was driven by the health dimension that dropped from 72 per cent in 2010 to 49 per cent in 2015 for children under five. At the same time, the proportion of children deprived in nutrition increased from 82 per cent in 2010 to 88 per cent in 2015. The results of the MODA were used to report progress on poverty reduction at the review of the ongoing framework for economic recovery and sustainable development (CREDD 2016-18) in June 2017. The final results of the MODA will inform the repositioning of UNICEF’s programme priorities in the second half of its CPD (2018-2019).

Two other data collection exercises were underway to provide analysis on the situation of children. First, data collection was completed and data analysis started for the modular and permanent household survey, an annual survey coupled for the first time with the SMART nutrition survey, under the auspices of the National Institute of Statistics and with financial and technical support from UNICEF. The routine household survey is more regular than the MICS will now collect data on nutrition, enabling a full assessment of child wellbeing. Indeed, the coupling of EMOP with SMART will provide a more complete data set (household living conditions, multidimensional use of services and subjective poverty) that can be used to assess major child deprivations and vulnerabilities. This will enable the Government of Mali and UNICEF to report on child poverty every two years (instead of every five years using the MICS).

The second exercise underway was the survey on poverty at commune level launched in July 2017. The first edition of the survey that started in 2006 led to the computation of a commune poverty index that assesses the availability of public services in each of the 703 communes of Mali. The fourth edition of the survey is at the data analysis phase and it will be supplemented by a trend analysis of the index since 2006. This will serve as basis for a poverty mapping whereby household poverty will be matched with availability of social services and infrastructure.

The application of the resilient Malian child model that was conceptualized in collaboration with the University of Tulane in 2016 was constrained. The study undertaken by USTTB to define the resilience factors for children and their communities applying the resilient Malian child concept has not yet given concrete results, since existing databases do not specifically address risk and resilience factors.

OUTPUT 2  By 2019, a larger number of vulnerable families benefit from social protection programmes.

Analytical statement of progress

The Single Registry constitutes a main pillar of social protection in Mali to enable social protection programmes to have information on individuals’ socio-economic characteristics, to ease targeting of beneficiaries. UNICEF contributed to its implementation through human and institutional capacity building. UNICEF supported an exchange visit of five officers from the National Directorate of Social Welfare and Solidarity Economy to Kigali to learn from Rwanda’s experience in coordinating different social protection programmes and interconnecting...
databases for the operationalization of the Single Registry. The IT department of the National Directorate benefited from additional IT equipment necessary to store the large stock of information related to the implementation of the Single Registry. To date the Single Registry is fed with interconnected databases from “jigisemjiri” and the free health care programme RAMED. An official from the DNPSES was sponsored to attend the international conference on social protection in contexts of fragility and forced displacement, to learn from the experience of other countries that were successful in safeguarding social protection in a fragile context.

The capacity of the ANAM database manager in handling large databases was reinforced, through training at a top Academy in Morocco. Thanks to UNICEF support, the two major national institutions in charge of social protection were able to store and share large amounts of data with other institutions, a skill crucial to run the Single Registry that is set to be operational in 2018.

UNICEF supported the coordination of social protection interventions via two strategies: strategic partnerships and data generation and evidence. Regarding strategic partnerships an ad-hoc social protection thematic group was established under the auspices of Government of Mali. This group gathered the main actors supporting the strengthening of the social protection system in Mali, such as UNICEF, FAO, WFP, the World Bank, Oxfam and the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). The purpose of the group was to discuss emerging and relevant issues on social protection in Mali, as well efficient ways to assist Government of Mali in strengthening its social protection system, to contribute to greater outreach and efficiency.

UNICEF supported the dissemination in the 10 regions of Mali (plus the district of Bamako) to the general public of the key messages of the national social protection policy adopted in 2017. UNICEF continued to be the major contributor to the third edition of the national social protection conference (24-26 October 2017) under the theme: A social protection floor for Mali.

Real-time data collection on household characteristics was being piloted in Mopti (centre) and Sikasso (south) regions. This enabled speeding up the identification of the neediest who will receive health care under the RAMED. As an illustration 34,000 of the poorest were identified in 2017, compared to 29,000 in 2016. The signing of performance contracts with 1,599 health facilities ensures that health care is effectively delivered to the most in need population. Free health care was provided to 3,175 people in Sikasso and 201 people in Mopti in 2017.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2019, policymakers and public and private actors have increased the percentage of resources allocated to social sectors and social protection programmes

**Analytical statement of progress**
In the second semester of 2017, UNICEF carried out two analyses related to public finance. First, the public expenditure review of the social protection sector was completed in collaboration with the World Bank. The review concluded that 78 per cent of all Malians were not covered by social protection. Furthermore, while public expenditure for social protection amounts to 5.12 per cent of GDP, social assistance represents only 0.6 per cent of GDP, with a Government contribution of as low as 13 per cent. It is worrisome that children are not adequately represented among the beneficiaries of social protection, since they account for only 24 per cent of public expenditure for safety nets.
A study recommendation for development partners, including UNICEF, was to intensify advocacy so that Government of Mali allocates more resources to non-contributed social protection programmes that benefit most children in the poorest households. School feeding programmes and nutritional programmes altogether account for only 0.17 per cent of GDP. On a positive note school feeding is among social protection programmes that receive a high contribution from the Government (58 per cent).

Second, UNICEF undertook an analysis of the national budget with a focus on social sectors that revealed that the budget execution rate was improving noticeably since the crisis (from 81.8 per cent in 2012 to a projected 91.7 per cent in 2017). However, a thorough look at budget data (available from the Ministry of Finance) indicated that allocations to social sectors increased less than allocations to other sectors, and less proportionately than domestic resource mobilization efforts. As a result, the share of social sectors in budget allocation and execution in real terms was steadily decreasing since 2012.

The Strategic Steering Committee for Social Protection Interventions that existed at national level only and that was under the presidency of the minister in charge of social protection was reinforced with the signing of the decree setting its presidency under the Prime Minister in September 2016. The same decree led to the creation of the coordination mechanism at local level (region, circle and commune). Meetings at this level are held under the auspices of the local development committees.

The three social protection sub-committees (safety nets, social insurance and mutual benefit insurance) were functional and met quarterly. It was crucial to ensure that decentralized institutions were strong enough to plan and implement development activities, especially since service delivery falls under the responsibility of local institutions. The national committees tasked with coordination of development interventions at regional and local levels were revitalized and strengthened in particular for resource mobilization. UNICEF technical and financial support was instrumental in strengthening the capacities of local leaders in planning, in prioritizing activities and in integrating social protection interventions into local development plans, in order to strengthen the resilience of communities at the most decentralized levels.

OUTCOME 7 UNICEF activities are enabled while ensuring the safety, security and well-being of personnel and the security of UNICEF premises and assets.

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, the security office increased its liaison with programmatic sections and implementing partners contributing to better access and results for children. In view of the deteriorating security context, the security office focused on ensuring that UNICEF was compliant with UNSMS MOSS, especially with regards to physical security and staff equipment. All UNSMS documentation (SRM security plan MOSS etc.) was translated into standard operating procedures to ensure proper communication and a harmonized level of understanding within UNICEF. Mission planning, security assessment and basic support service were reinforced. In 2017, the security office succeeded in implementing a more systemic approach of security, with updated and easy to use template SOPs and assessment tools.

Due to limited human resources in the security office with only 40 per cent of the posts being filled, a soft security approach through programme design was yet fully enabled. However, security office provided ad hoc support and tailor-made recommendations for specific missions and sensitive programming. Three security postings (NOA, NOB, P2) were opened and
UNICEF Mali operates in a context of an integrated mission (MINUSMA) with the presence of a stabilisation and peacekeeping operation. Like in other similar contexts with ongoing conflict and presence of many actors, there are challenges associated to humanitarian advocacy, space, access and principles. In collaboration with UNDSS, UNICEF Mali was active in the review of security documentation, liaising with implementing partners, field mission support and security assessment and advocated for the inclusion of soft security measures, such as community acceptance and the respect of humanitarian principles.

In 2017 the main objectives to set-up the structure of UNICEF safety and security was achieved. Continuous work needs however to be maintained with regards to regular communication and endorsement/compliance to all UNICEF personnel, including with the high turnover of staff.

Building on the progress, security in 2018 will focus on increasing support to programmatic approaches, field operations and staff capacity building. Trends and contextual analysis indicate a likely deterioration of the security situation in Mali for 2018. A reinforced and more sustainable security structure will maintain a high level of programme delivery including in high risks areas.

**OUTPUT 1** By end of 2019 UNICEF is compliant with country security documentation such as MOSS SRM security plan and RSM

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Mali ensured to reach MOSS compliance and comply with security recommendations through:

- Providing regular information to staff
- Updating all documentation and make it available to all staff in the share drive
- Staff were regularly informed of security changes (policies and context)
- Monitoring through systemic tools was strengthened that answer the internal audit recommendations:
  - Excel sheet with systematic follow up of RSM assessment.
  - Systematic briefing of staff regarding RSM and SSAFE training.
  - Follow up of SSAFE training and registration for SSAFE within 60 days of arrival
  - Common mission planning template available to all staff and updated on monthly and when needed bases.
- Physical security was reinforced in Bamako and Gao offices. Technical improvement remains needed (electrical installation fire safety) and will be a priority in 2018.
- The security section ensured that the design of Mopti new office would be compliant with UNSMS security and safety recommendations, and followed-up during the construction work.

In 2017, priority was given to critical field offices; flat jacket and PPE were provided to Gao, Tombouctou and Mopti that are now fully compliant with additional PPE for visitors. Four staff received an ETB training (one Tombouctou, one Gao and two Mopti) in order to increase access and mitigation capacity. Security staff supported field missions and high-level missions throughout 2017.

Regarding capacity building, staff received training on evacuation drill and active shooter sensitization provided by UNICEF security. Additionally, capacity of security staff was
strengthened in various areas (local security assistant training, security certification progress, women security awareness training of trainer, emergency trauma bag training).

Following the audit, UNICEF security focused on scaling-up SSAFE training registration for staff whose certification expired. Unless there is operational imperative, all new comers are trained within the month of their arrival. Furthermore, RSM evaluation was scaled up.

However, delay in staff recruitment prevented to scale-up UNICEF security support to programme implementation. With the upcoming recruitment, 2018 orientation will focus on support to humanitarian access, staff capacity building, field mission support and relations with implementing partners.

Despite additional resources of US$ 30,000, financial needs remain for the purchase of security equipment with priority to PPEs and armoured vehicles. A minimum of two additional armoured vehicles are needed for Gao and Tombouctou in order to increase UNICEF access capacity while complying with security standard.

OUTCOME 8 The identity, direction and well-being of UNICEF and staff are managed efficiently and effectively to enable the achievement of results for children in the country.

Analytical statement of progress
The 2016-2017 rolling management plan was developed in a participatory manner and shared with all staff. The rolling management plan was reviewed during the last extended CMT in December with the representation of staff from each section, the staff association and all zonal offices. This participatory meeting allowed the CO to assess the relevance and progress of the defined priorities, identify constraints and propose new priorities for the next Annual Management Plan 2018-2019.

Statutory committees and other internal committees were established and updated, whenever a change was needed. Delegation of authority and internal procedures were established. Access to VISION was provided through user IDs and roles assigned to staff through the Approva system. Monitoring of internal control was done through Approva and Insight. Mitigation actions were taken to maintain sound segregation of duties. Staff delegated with roles that appear on the TOA formally acknowledged the understanding of their responsibilities associated with the roles by signing an acceptance of delegation.

Coordination and monitoring mechanisms such as the CMT, programme meetings, operations meetings and section meetings were defined and activated to track office performance.

The CO developed more than 15 memos and standard operating procedures to clarify procedures, work processes or for compliance with rules and security measures.

The CO strived to address the challenge related to the gender diversity that was at 46 per cent versus 54 per cent for IP, 27 per cent versus 73 per cent for NO and 27 per cent versus 73 per cent all in favour of men (31 December 2017), by using all tools in line with the selection principles while ensuring the quality of the selection. One study on UN gender in recruitment in Mali was conducted to develop appropriate recruitment and retention strategy for national staff. The action plan will be developed in 2018.

Staff well-being and the outcome from the global staff survey were addressed during the Joint
Consultative Committee meeting, held on a quarterly basis. A general meeting and a joint action plan was developed with the participation of all staff and reviewed as part of the annual management review held on 15 December 2017.

Emergency Risk Management, Business Continuity Plan and the seven elements of the Organizational Resilience Management System were updated regularly in consultation will staff.

The assessment on the environment footprint was conducted in August 2017 and showed high power and fuel consumption costs. The recent change of all office bubbles and neon with LED in the main office and the installation of a tracking system for vehicle management will certainly contribute to a significant reduction of those operating cost in favour of programme activities. The office action plan on eco-environment was developed and monitored by the ad hoc committee established to implement some projects such as the installation of solar panels, the use of the office bore hall for vehicle cleaning and watering the office garden and actions for enforcing paper less culture.

In 2017, the main activity was the improvement of the connectivity and unified communication services (voice and video conferences) between Bamako and the five zonal offices, increasing effectiveness of communications and further facilitating inter-office dialogue to the benefit of programme implementation.

ICT provided versatile communications systems consisting of MOSS telecommunication, improved access to DATA service by increasing the bandwidth of the VPN connection to interconnect Bamako and all zonal offices on the same network and installed a Telepresence Cisco Video Conference to allow all field offices to participate remotely on meetings such as CMT and Programme Management Team.

Data access was improved through provision of Outlook services to all smart phone users. This improved the connectivity and availability of e-mail communication to a large number of staff on mission, while reducing costs and met the need for internet access through the use of the more economic 4G data service provided by local telephone companies.

In line with UN Coherence and “Delivering as One” requirements, UNICEF participated in 12 UN interagency groups: the four UNDAF results groups (peace, security and national reconciliation; governance; basic social services; and inclusive growth and sustainable development), four inter-agency working groups (Programme Management Team, OMT, UNCG and M&E TG), and four OMT sub-groups (HACT, NOC, Procurement and Finance).

In the frame of the “ONE UN” initiative (and related Business Operations Strategy) UNICEF Mali actively cooperated with other UN agencies both in:

- Joint procurement support for specific programmes. As such, UNICEF Mali led and coordinated with UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women the procurement process for the establishment of Long Term Arrangements for audits and “Spot Checks” of implementing partners in respect of the HACT.
- Common procurement services (operations). UNICEF Mali was leader in establishing Long Term Arrangements and sharing them with other UN Agencies in operational areas, e.g. travel services; procurement and supply of carburant.
- Organisation of a forum for suppliers to inform them on the procurement procedures. More than 500 suppliers attended this forum and expressed their interest to any further
bid. This will increase competitive suppliers in the UN database and sustained quality and availability.

- Common UN premises in the North of Mali (Mopti, Gao, Tombouctou).

Security infrastructure was upgraded in the Zone Offices and Bamako to improve staff safety. The Zone Office in Mopti was constructed in the land donated by the Government to reduce the cost of rent and other costs associated with the management of a rented premises.

**OUTPUT 1** Human resources have the capacities, skills, morale and motivation to support country operations.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, the CMT endorsed the list of key statutory committees: CMT, Programme Management Team, CRC, PSB and Joint Consultative Committee with appropriate membership and terms of reference. As a result, the CMT met 12 times; 39 cases were submitted to the Convention of the Rights of the Child; 17 Programme Cooperation Agreements were reviewed by the Partnership Review Committee; four meetings were held by PSB. Ad hoc committees were established to monitor the timely liquidation of DCT and HACT assurance plan.

The Joint Consultative Committee met four times. Major issues included: i) organizing a retreat focusing on diversity and inclusiveness; ii) work and life balance activities; iii) follow up on the action plan to address the recommendations from the global staff survey.

Five staff were volunteers to conduct discussion on ethical issues. Two ethics discussions were organised in 2017: values of the organisation versus personal values and on sexual harassment in the office. A memo on the prevention of fraud and corruption was established and shared with all staff.

Two peer review support staff were nominated and functioned well.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan was prepared and updated in 2017 and sufficient emergency stocks in Bamako were maintained.

In view of the 2017 internal audit, a self-assessment exercise was undertaken to ensure continued compliance with previous 2014 audit recommendations. Corrective actions were taken where necessary. Fifteen standard operating procedures out of 21 planned were issued to improve management results. The pending planned standards were postponed to 2018 to focus on the main organizational changes occurred in 2017. Also, the e-tool planned in 2017 was postponed to 2018 for the Mali CO along with the standard operating procedures associated to this new platform.

The cloud-based office automation tools were implemented such as use of One Drive for business and SharePoints. This allowed staff to respond to business continuity.

There were improvements on the connectivity and Unified Communication Services (voice and video conferences) between Bamako and the five zonal offices, increasing effectiveness of communications and further facilitating inter-office dialogue. The Office Business Continuity Plan and a disaster recovery plan was updated at the end of 2016. As of 31 December 2017, more than 90 per cent of the Business Continuity Plan action plan was completed.
The CO introduced innovations for data collection and information sharing, in particular with the use of RapidPro as a real-time monitoring technology platform and U-Report through partnership with two national telecom companies (Orange Mali and Malitel) for SMS, and Agence Malienne de Régularisation des Télécommunications.

A tracking system for vehicle management was installed in 30 vehicles to contribute to significant reduction of operating cost. The office action plan on eco-environment was developed and monitored by the ad hoc committee established to implement some projects such as the installation of solar panels, the use of the office bore hall for vehicle cleaning and watering the office garden and actions enforcing paper less culture.

**OUTPUT 2** Human resources have the capacities, skills, morale and motivation to support country operations.

**Analytical statement of progress**
Mali CO is composed of one main office located in the capital city and five zonal Offices. Two offices (Bamako and Mopti) are UNICEF-owned premises and the others are rented premises. Zone Offices in Mopti, Gao, Timbuktu are common premises shared with other UN Agencies. The security infrastructure in all offices was upgraded with the financial support of the Regional Office through the security capital investment funds. The office in Bamako is being renovated to accommodate the increase of staff. MOUs and loans agreement were monitored and posted in the SharePoint.

Bank reconciliations were processed on time, as well as accounting activities. Additionally, quarterly cash forecasting was ensured maintaining not more than 25 per cent liquidity levels. A close monitoring of the budget and financial oversight was conducted during the CMT and section meetings, thus contributed to a satisfactory level of financial indicators as per Insight. Finally, all open items were processed within three months.

By the end of 2017, 14 travel authorizations were opened, from that three were aged more than 30 days. Open travel authorisation reports were shared weekly with all staff. These reports indicated each time that more than 80 per cent of trips are closed within the timeframe. The roll out plan of etools initially planned during the last quarter 2017 was postponed to the first quarter 2018 as this system was not fully operational.

Four PSB meetings were organized. The PSB recommendations were fully implemented. The last PSB was held in December 2017 and the recommendations were ongoing. Physical asset count was undertaken before the deadline of 15 October 2017; 618 assets were found and 12 items of old computers were not found and submitted to the PSB for decision making.

Out of 42 vehicles, three were submitted to the PSB and five new vehicles were purchased to improve field missions. Vehicle tracking system was installed on 30 vehicles used for field missions to reinforce security and contribute to cost saving on fuel and vehicle maintenance.

Financial support to field offices was maintained through inclusive participation of zonal offices to statutory meetings, delegation of authority, internal training on work processes. Field visits and joint spotchecks of IP by the Main Office and Zonal Offices are organised.

An internal audit was conducted from 31 May to 20 June 2017. The final internal audit report submitted in November resulted in seven recommendations from that two required high
priorities: a) security of staff and b) the assurance of the use of direct cash transfers. The Office Action plan was developed to implement audit’s recommendations.

The transition to the Global Shared Service Centre in Budapest was a success due to a smooth preparation that involved redefining tasks within the offices and ensuring staff were aware of the SOPs developed by Global Shared Service Centre on transactions through several training sessions. The colleagues interacting with Global Shared Service Centre participated to the webinars conducted by the Regional Office and Global Shared Service Centre thus contributed to improve the quality of requests sent via MyCase and the timely processing of transactions.

**OUTPUT 3** Human resources have the capacities, skills, morale and motivation to support country operations.

**Analytical statement of progress**

The CO continued to align its staffing on the needs analysis of the 2015-2019 Country Programme Management Plan. Twenty-three positions funded in principle by OR were temporarily supported by RR. Arrangements were being made to find sustainable funding, including setting some targets in new project proposals.

Concerning staff recruitment, in total 34 positions were filled this year to cover the regular turnover gap; 95 per cent of the vacant posts were filled in less than 90 days. One stand-by partner staff was deployed to help with WASH emergency aspects.

In 2017, there was greater emphasis on learning and development activities. Seven all-staff briefing sessions were held and 30 individual learning opportunities were approved through the annual learning & development plan. In addition, more than 22 individual coaching sessions were provided. Job vacancies and stretch assignment opportunities were regularly shared with staff members. As a result, 10 staff went on stretch or surge deployment, while the CO hosted five colleagues from other COs.

The 2017 approved learning & development plan, with focus on female staff, was approved on 1 June 2017 and a second batch was approved on October 18, 2017. In total, 35 staff members were granted an external training supported by the organization. To date, the learning and development plan was implemented at 70 per cent. This year the online results-based management training and the protection against sexual exploitation and abuse training were added to the list of mandatory trainings. Two ethic sessions were organized: a) value of the organisation versus personal values and b) on sexual harassment at the office workplace. The two peer support volunteers were functioning well.

The revised performance management policy with focus on the changes was rolled-out and explained to all staff through meetings held in Bamako, as well as in the field offices; 99 per cent of the staff entered their planning phase in ACHIEVE and are currently working on their year-end evaluation.

While the 2014 Global Staff Survey action plan was implemented at 80 per cent, 2017 Global Staff Survey showed that despite the overall positive results, Mali still has room for improvement in work life/balance, career and professional development and standards of conduct. Corrective measures were discussed in a series of all-staff meetings, and a joint plan was finalised and posted in Intranet; 87 per cent of the staff members renewed and re-signed their oath of office.
In terms of UN Care, a training on HIV was conducted and preservatives are regularly provided in toilets.

OUTCOME 9 Country programmes are efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards in achieving results for children.

Analytical statement of progress
Coordination of sectoral programmes was done at two levels. First, through PMTs that were held, when possible, twice a month. A focus on scorecards and overall office results helped keep track of programme indicators on a regular basis with the development of budget tools showing sections’ commitments at financial, fundraising and reporting levels and monthly efforts by sections to uphold those commitments. As such, the office managed to submit all donor reports on time, keep quarterly levels of unjustified DCTs to partners to less than 0.5 per cent, and have an overall level of programme implementation of 100 per cent by the end of the reporting period.

Participation of zonal offices helped reinforce mutual accountabilities and understanding of the nature of joint work in a decentralized office, as evidenced by the timely prepositioning of critical supplies in response to natural emergencies during the rainy season. The programme management team offered a forum for discussion of global and regional priorities such as SDGs, the new Strategic Plan, UNICEF WCARO key results and facilitated integration of these into the office annual management plan and into sectoral workplans.

Second, regular weekly meetings with managers helped the UNICEF Deputy Representative keep track of major policy and technical benchmarks in all sectors through follow-up of rolling work plans and of a number of high-visibility efforts such as the installation of solar fridges with remotely controlled temperature nationwide, the design and implementation of two innovative programmes such as WASH facilities in health centres, and solar panels in civil registrar offices.

In addition, as of 31 December 2017, 101 per cent of planned OR-R for 2017 as per the CPD 2015-2019 were mobilized. While some programme sections already secured resources above the planned overall budget (health, WASH, child protection), other programmes still face important funding gaps, notably nutrition.

Cumulatively since the beginning of the CDP 2015-2019 and as of 31 December 2017, UNICEF Mali raised US$ 119.2 million in OR-R funds, or about half (50.7 per cent) of the total OR-R target for the five years of the CPD (US$ 235.3 million). The UNICEF Mali HAC 2017 estimated humanitarian funding requirements to US$ 35.2 million for 2017. As of 31 December 2017, about one third (30 per cent) of planned emergency funds in the HAC 2017 or US$ 10.7 million were mobilized. All sections still faced important funding gaps for OR-E, but these gaps were especially important for nutrition, education and protection.

OUTPUT 1 UNICEF staff and partners are provided guidance, tools and resources to effectively design and manage programmes

Analytical statement of progress
At mid-year of implementation of the current country programme cycle, several key processes are on course, all representing an invaluable opportunity for the CO to better respond to recent
changes in the external environment and to new global, internal guidelines.

Firstly, an internal audit was conducted by OIAI during the month of June: the analysis of programme focused on risks that might affect implementation and opened doors for a number of actions aiming at strengthening coherence and achievability of results. Within this context, work progressed to review all CPD outputs and indicators, to ensure relevant and appropriate means of verification for better accountability at both national and regional levels.

Secondly, a mid-term review of the country programme is planned for early 2018. In prelude to this, several analysis were undertaken during the second semester of 2017. The analysis focused on how to better mainstream ECD, fragility and gender questions. In addition, an update of the MODA was undertaken in conjunction with the Government and its outcome will serve as a basis for the review of the indicators as mentioned above. All these findings will support the CO to adapt its programme content and strategies for a very fluid environment.

Finally, UNICEF is contributing to the UNDAF mid-term review by inputting in the terms of reference and analysing implementation results, through the co-leadership of the Interagency Programme Management Team and the leadership of the UNDAF Interagency M&E Group.

In terms of more efficient partnerships as raised by the audit, ad-hoc and formal meetings with International NGOs and local civil society were in preparation to address issues of mutual concerns to ensure more objective and transparent selection criteria. Based on this, a consultant came on board to support the CO to organise sectoral bids for the selection of NGO partners. Also, a shorter and more streamlined analysis process for the signature of Project Cooperation Agreement was put in place: this will reduce negotiations timeline and ensure more efficiency for quality and timely programme implementation. Additionally, internal assurance processes were strengthened by launching a third-party monitoring process for activities implemented in northern insecure areas.

OUTPUT 2 UNICEF staff and partners are provided tools, guidance and resources for effective communication on child rights issues with stakeholders (Action related to external relations, management of partnerships with donors, and public advocacy).

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, a communications and public advocacy strategy specific to UNICEF Mali was developed, identifying the prevention of all forms of malnutrition and the response to out-of-school children as key public advocacy priorities and in accordance with the annual management plan. Target primary and secondary audiences, key messages, and communications channels to reach target audiences were laid out. A digital sub-strategy was developed to specifically expand digital presence and leverage on new storytelling platforms; in parallel, a steady stream of compelling human-focused multimedia content was produced to support advocacy objectives (more than 10 human interest stories and blogs, over 10 videos and seven published photo stories).

The roll-out of the new strategy accelerated engagement with national and international media as primary channels for public advocacy for children, 483 articles and broadcasts on children’s issues in Mali containing mentions of UNICEF were achieved. Going beyond quantity and share of voice, quality and substance of reporting on children was strengthened. In close collaboration with the regional office, the Africa Services Unit in Johannesburg and other UN agencies, and through strategic media pitching, interviews and international press trips, in-depth coverage of
child nutrition and education was secured in top-tier international media as well as respected media in targeted donor markets, including the BBC, Reuters, the Mail & Guardian, Voice of America, RFI, France24, EFE, Spanish National Radio, and Swiss Radio Television.

Social media channels were overhauled and quality of content drastically improved into child-centred content, with a new focus on visual storytelling. Reach and engagement of digital audiences on UNICEF social networks (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) increased, with a notable 118 percent growth on Twitter achieved completely organically in less than a year due to quality human-focused content, digital campaigns and influencers, and child-led social media.

Regarding child participation, UNICEF Mali and partners hosted the largest-ever edition of its annual child participation event, Oxyjeunes. One hundred and twenty children from all regions in Mali gathered in support of advocacy for nutrition for every child, and produced hundreds of photos, radio broadcasts, social media posts and articles. These children now constitute a network of child journalists and photographers actively involved in advocacy for children's rights at national and international level. Two children participated in the launch of the Gen2030 report in Johannesburg and three others led Facebook Live roundtables on nutrition and ECD, videos that garnered hundreds of comments and questions from adult and child viewers and were simultaneously followed by listeners across Mali on live national radio.

The new UNICEF branding was successfully adopted, with brand training conducted for all staff on the correct use of the UNICEF look and feel, and production of new branding assets. Numerous field missions were hosted in order to garner support for the situation of children in Mali, including for the Deputy Executive Director, the UNICEF WCAR Regional Director, UNICEF Natcoms from France and Norway, and delegations from Denmark, Germany, Italy and Sweden. Four international press trips were hosted.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2019, policymakers and actors involved in advocacy, programme planning and management, and policy have access to and use disaggregated data (by gender, geography and equity) and findings from studies and evaluations.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, decision makers had access to updated statistics on children and women in the Statistical Bulletin ‘Femme Enfant’ 2016, thanks to partnership between UNICEF, sectoral CPS and the Department for the Promotion of Women, Children and the Family. The bulletin included 214 indicators (against 188 for 2015) and provided consolidated data especially useful for intersectoral interventions analysis.

New and updated statistics were available online in the national information system Malikannafuni including indicators from the CREDD to track progress towards national priorities and results for children. This results from INSTAT leadership, with UNICEF support. Data from the MICS 2015, conducted by INSTAT with UNICEF, UNFPA, and PSI-Mali support was available on INSTAT’s website. The report’s dissemination was delayed, due to a calculation error at global level requiring production of errata, to be available early 2018.

Only 19 per cent of activities in the PRIME 2016-2017 were completed, and 69 per cent are ongoing. New information is available on health (Expanded Programme on Immunisation review), nutrition (SMART 2017), WASH (Evaluation of WASH in health centres), and C4D (KAP survey on essential family practices) for better programming for children in Mali. In 2018, special attention will be given to PRIME development, and an analysis of bottlenecks and reasons for
delays conducted.

Oversight of the Programme of Cooperation UNICEF-Government of Mali (CPD) was effective with bi-annual reviews at regional and central levels and two missions of the Steering Committee. Within the UNDAF+ mid-term review, that UNICEF steered by chairing the UNDAF Technical Reference Group comprising all UN agencies and five government partners, UNICEF conducted its mid-term review, resulting in: analysis of progress since 2015; thematic analysis of relevant priorities from UNICEF New Strategic Plan – ECD, gender and resilience; and reworking on outputs and indicators for better results and their measurement. Reports are under finalization and findings informed the 2018-2019 rolling workplans.

In the regions of Kayes, Sikasso and Mopti, capacity of 122 partners’ staff (only 19 women) was strengthened on RBM, under CT/CSLP leadership in partnership with the DRSIAP. This will enable partners to effectively contribute to development of the new programme and local plans.

Risks associated with UNICEF-funded programmes in areas with limited access were mitigated with third-party monitoring operational since March 2017 in the north and central regions of Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal, Taoudéni and Ménaka. Third-party monitoring of 21 partners provided UNICEF with evidence on the progress and effectiveness of interventions and propose corrective actions. UNICEF’s priority is now to strengthen third-party monitoring quality and oversight, and ensure their optimal use in real time, resulting in better outcomes for children.

Decentralized monitoring through Monitoring Results for Equity System started in two districts of Mopti and Sikasso regions was interrupted in 2017 due to lack of clarity about effectiveness and demand from local actors and regional offices, and funding limitations. In 2018 UNICEF will identify bottlenecks and develop a less-costly decentralized monitoring.

OUTPUT 4 Communities living in disadvantaged areas of Mali adopt priority behaviours for the survival, protection and development of children, utilize basic social services and equitably promote inter-community tolerance and social change.

Analytical statement of progress
In the area of health, knowledge of the importance of immunization increased considerably. According to the Independent Monitoring of National Immunization Days in 2017, 70 per cent of the Malian population understand the importance of completing all vaccines for under-five children and pregnant women. Immunization knowledge among parents and caregivers rose from 80 per cent in 2015 to 84 per cent in 2017 and 70 per cent among them know the disease children are vaccinated against, thanks to communication and social mobilization led by UNICEF. In the region of Gao (north) the community attendance of healthcare structures increased from 104.2 per cent in 2015 to 108 per cent in 2017.

Over 580,000 women and girls used reproductive health services in Segou (centre), Sikasso and Koulikoro (south) and Bamako in early 2017. In addition, 5,978 social mobilizers, health workers and community leaders conducted outreach activities. Among them, 700 religious leaders promoted family planning. Over 83,000 youths were informed about reproductive health through peer-education and social media, and 180,000 by mobile cinema. Baseline and end-line KAP surveys showed contraceptive use rose from 19.9 per cent to 21.3 per cent, while the FP rate is at 15.6 per cent at national level.
In a context of a high number of out-of-school children, UNICEF continued to ensure children were maintained at school. A total of 400,000 children were able to remain in school through activities conducted by “Peace Ambassadors” in north and central Mali. A total of 30,000 households were encouraged to enrol and maintain children at school by “back to school ambassadors” who conducted home visits, community dialogues and radio programs on education across the country.

Innovative approaches continued to be leveraged to maximize the impact of C4D, including “Radio at the heart of the community” on female genital mutilation and child marriage and “Mama Yeleen” on nutrition and ECD. Knowledge on ECD and nutrition is being increased among 16,000 women who benefit from the coaching of 1,545 women trained as “Mama Yeleen”.

To increase knowledge on other key family practices, 25,500 community leaders trained by UNICEF conducted outreach activities. As a result, 95.9 per cent of women know the importance of using mosquito net and 70.6 per cent practice exclusive breastfeeding in Sikasso (south) and Mopti (centre). Communities in Kayes (west) developed behavioural change strategic plans to reinforce girls’ schooling and reduce child marriage. To reinforce community involvement, the community participation approach pilot project conducted in Selingue (south) resulted in 10 village action plans on nearly all sectors.

The National Policy on C4D was adopted in March 2017, with UNICEF support to the Ministry of Communication. UNICEF and the social development regional directorates supported the development of multi-sectoral plans based on the overarching policy, and tailored to regional context and priorities. The policy still needs to be officially launched for resource mobilization and inclusion on the application of national implementation. This will lead to a more strategic implementation of C4D country wide directly benefiting children and communities.

**OUTPUT 5** The Government sets up systems to prevent and respond to risk-sensitive crises and communities strengthen their resilience to humanitarian crises.

**Analytical statement of progress**

With UNICEF technical and financial support, the Ministry in charge of Humanitarian Affairs displayed improved capacities in the coordination of humanitarian action at national level, in large part through support provided by a special advisor funded by UNICEF. With the support of the advisor, the ministry identified persisting issues of weak humanitarian information management and emergency preparedness at local and regional level. Plans were developed to address these issues next year with the support of the special advisor.

In the frame of its preparedness programme, UNICEF implemented an innovative pilot project to generate contingency plans using drone technology. Situated in the locality of Markala (Segou, south region) to focus on floods, the project generated a geomatic platform, through the mapping of the locality relief and the digitalisation of more than 18,000 buildings. This platform, supervised by the General Directorate of Civil Protection will help put in place and automatically update contingency plans for floods. Another component of the project was the integration of an improved version of the SMS flood-warning system developed in Mopti in 2015. The platform is fully functional but has not been used yet.

In addition, UNICEF provided technical and financial support to the Government of Mali to
update the 2017 National Contingency Plan. To this end, UNICEF advocated for the roll out of the Emergency Response Plan, a newer planning methodology, to ensure that the national contingency plan better benefits the most disadvantaged populations. In line with the new National Plan it aims to support, UNICEF’s internal contingency plan premised on this inclusive methodology, enabled the dispatch and prepositioning of contingency Non-Food Items across the country. In fact, 44 metric tons of non-food items able to cover about 50,000 people were prepositioned eight Regional Directorates of Civil Protection and Social Development and in several districts of Bamako to assist flood-affected and conflict-affected internally displaced populations.

In terms of emergency response, pre-positioned non-food items and WASH items were distributed to flood-affected populations and internally displaced persons (4,774 households i.e. about 28,644 people, including over 14,600 women, were assisted in the central region of Mopti and north regions of Gao, Ménaka and Timbuktu).

While significant results were achieved regarding emergency preparedness, coordination and sectoral response, lack of funds remains a major constraint as UNICEF Mali received 28 per cent (US$6.5 million) of the US$35.2 million appeal. As a result, relief items bought and prepositioned in regions were not sufficient to cover affected population needs. This constraint limits UNICEF and its partners’ capacities to better respond to the humanitarian needs of the population, especially vulnerable children and women of Mali in regions affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts.

**OUTPUT 6** UNICEF staff and partners are provided tools, guidance and resources for effective communication on child rights issues with stakeholders (Action related to external relations, management of partnerships with donors, and public advocacy)

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, a communications and public advocacy strategy specific to UNICEF Mali was developed, identifying the prevention of all forms of malnutrition and the response to out-of-school children as key public advocacy priorities and in accordance with the Annual Management Plan. Target primary and secondary audiences, key messages, and communications channels to reach target audiences were laid out. A digital sub strategy was developed to expand digital presence and leverage on new storytelling platforms; in parallel, a steady stream of compelling human-focused multimedia content was produced to support advocacy objectives (more than 10 human interest stories and blogs, over 10 videos and seven published photo stories).

The roll out of the new strategy accelerated engagement with national and international media as primary channels for public advocacy for children, 483 articles and broadcasts on children’s issues in Mali containing mentions of UNICEF were achieved. Going beyond quantity and share of voice, quality and substance of reporting on children was strengthened. In close collaboration with the Regional Office, the Africa Services Unit in Johannesburg and other UN agencies, and through strategic media pitching, interviews and international press trips, in-depth coverage of child nutrition and education was secured in top-tier international media as well as respected media in targeted donor markets, including the BBC, Reuters, the Mail & Guardian, Voice of America, RFI, France24, EFE, Spanish National Radio, and Swiss Radio Television.

Social media channels were overhauled and quality of content drastically improved into child-centred content, with a new focus on visual storytelling. Reach and engagement of digital
audiences on UNICEF social networks (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) increased, with a notable 118 percent growth on Twitter achieved completely organically in less than a year due to quality human-focused content, digital campaigns and influencers, and child-led social media.

Regarding child participation, UNICEF Mali and partners hosted the largest-ever edition of its annual child participation event, Oxyjeunes. 120 children from all regions in Mali gathered in support of advocacy for nutrition for every child, and produced hundreds of photos, radio broadcasts, social media posts, and articles. These children now constitute a network of child journalists and photographers actively involved in advocacy for children's rights at national and international level. Two children participated in the launch of the Gen2030 report in Johannesburg and three others led Facebook Live roundtables on nutrition and Early Childhood Development, videos that garnered hundreds of comments and questions from adult and child viewers and were simultaneously followed by listeners across Mali on live national radio.

The new UNICEF branding was successfully adopted, with brand training conducted for all staff on the correct use of the UNICEF look and feel, and production of new branding assets. Numerous field missions were hosted in order to garner support for the situation of children in Mali, including for the Deputy Executive Director, the UNICEF WCAR Regional Director, UNICEF Natcoms from France and Norway, and delegations from Denmark, Germany, Italy, and Sweden. Four international press trips were hosted.

OUTPUT 7 Operational support to programme delivery.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, the CO strengthened field office support and contributed to the management of risks related to finance and administration. To do so, the office ensured compliance across offices in participating to spot checks of implementing partners, and sustainability of audit recommendations by performing self-assessment. Moreover, the harmonization of business processes was enhanced.

As of end of December 2017, 100 per cent of the operations budget were utilised and 67 per cent of the budget was mobilized to support adequate working environment. In 2018, it is expected that the implementation of the resource mobilisation strategy and systematic inclusion of key operating cost in donor proposals will secure funds to cover recurrent operating cost as to provide effective support to programme activities.

OUTPUT 8 Operational support to programme delivery.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, priorities were given to enhance the structural security of some zonal offices. Also, the transfer of one zone office from a rented premise to an owned one was ongoing to secure the office premise with further savings and allowing more spaces to other UN agencies to implement the business operations strategy that is one pillar of the Delivery as One approach.

Despite the shortfall in budget, the zonal offices were equipped with adequate security infrastructure and working environment. The planned purchase of cars will be postponed to 2018. The office will rely on the CIF in 2018 to obtain armoured cars to address the high level of insecurity in the field.
In 2018, it is expected that the implementation of the resource mobilisation strategy and systematic inclusion of key operating cost in donor proposals will secure funds to cover recurrent operating cost as to provide effective support to programme activities.

**OUTPUT 9 Efficient and effective programme management**

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, efforts to fill vacant posts were continued. As a result, 23 new staff came on board. To date no international post is vacant. One-on-one coaching for hiring managers on the use of TMS was ongoing and gave good results so far. The global human resources indicators in terms of time to recruit and diversity were continuously green since October 2016 for Mali. Though gender balance remains a challenge, especially for national officers, progress was made this first semester: current gender ratio for international staff is 54 per cent versus 46 percent in favour of female staff.

As of December 2017, 118 per cent of the budget was made available to cover the increase in the salary: 23 per cent for NO and 18 per cent for general staff. 85 percent of OR positions were charged to OR funds while 15 per cent are still against RR funds due to shortfall in mobilizing more OR funds for some positions. The Office continued its strategy to attract more funds to cover the shortfall.

**OUTPUT 10 Supply & Logistics: Effective management of supply.**

**Analytical statement of progress**

A supply plan for goods and services for all Programme Sections was developed and approved by management. It was systematically monitored and execution rates were shared during monthly CMT. By year-end, 96 per cent of it was executed for all programme sections, except for Nutrition Section due to funding constraints (71 per cent). Total combined execution rate was 82 per cent. To avoid gaps in the pipeline, UNICEF facilitated supply of 13,580 cartons of RUTF from the regional hub in Douala and 15,679 cartons from the logistic hub in Accra. The CO explored innovative finance with the UNICEF Regional Office and Supply Division.

Local procurement represented 79 per cent vs. 21 per cent off-shore. Service contracts: 98 per cent placed with Malian companies vs. two per cent with foreign ones. Total value of supplies delivered to all the regions of Mali was US$ 12.1 million. To favour timely and cost-effective deliveries, CO established Long Term Arrangements with local transport companies. Due to security concerns, the CO experienced challenges to get transport services from Bamako to Kidal, Ménaka and Taoudéni regions (North). The CO established a system where goods were now transported from Bamako to Gao and contracts with local transporters cover the legs from Gao to security challenged destinations.

A massive programme of reinforcement of the cold chain for vaccines and medicines at health centre level resulted in the distribution of 559 solar fridges including solar panels and installation poles. Also, CO managed the solicitations and established contracts for the project of renovation and modernization of the Cold Chain Capacity at the Malian MoH/National Centre of Immunization, with Gavi funds.

With a view to develop local markets, obtain better pricing and incur shorter lead time in the procurement of goods and services, the CO conducted an Expression of Interest for 23 areas of
expertise to increase local suppliers’ base, 172 companies applied and of these 136 were retained.

UNICEF Mali implemented new GTCs as from 1 June 2017 and is actively guiding local suppliers to get UNGM registration.

The CO followed up with the freight forwarders in respect of “goods in transit”. As a result, no item was left behind at ports of arrival. All sea shipments through Dakar port were delivered to our warehouse within 90 days.

Stock: 0 per cent items expired whilst in stock in 2017. No difference between VISION and the physical stock was recorded (mid and end-of-year physical counts). Stock rotation was monitored and distributions organized before items age reached 24 months.

The CO led cooperative procurement exercise within the ONE-UN initiative, including the selection of suppliers of audit and spot-checks services in the framework of HACT on behalf of UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women. The CO was lead in sharing operational Long Term Arrangements with United Nations agencies (travel agencies, fuel).

The CO kept rate of Vaccine Arrival Report return to Supply Division to 100 per cent (and within the 72 hours WHO KPI) and supported UNICEF in Niger to avoid shortage of vital items for water sanitation and purification during floods.

**Document center**

**Evaluation and research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sequence Number</th>
<th>Type of Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revue finale du Programme Education pour la consolidation de la Paix dans les régions de Gao et Tombouctou</td>
<td>2017/008</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilan de Compétences. Enfants à l’Entrée au Primaire</td>
<td>2017/007</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enquête par Grappes à Indicateurs Multiples (MICS)</td>
<td>2017/006</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enquête Nationale Nutritionnelle Anthropométrique et de Mortalité rétrospective suivant la méthodologie SMART, Mali 2017</td>
<td>2017/005</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapport de l’enquête finale du projet : Amélioration de l’accès et de l’utilisation de services de santé de la reproduction de qualité pour les femmes en âge de procréer dans les régions de Koulikoro, Sikasso, Ségu et le District de Bamako</td>
<td>2017/004</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enquête CAP (Connaissances, Attitudes et Pratiques) sur les Pratiques Familiales Essentielles (PFE) en Santé, Nutrition, Éducation, WASH et Protection</td>
<td>2017/003</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Elargi de Vaccination : Revue Externe 2017</td>
<td>2017/002</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation du projet sur la promotion d’EAH dans les structures de soin au Mali</td>
<td>2017/001</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other publications**

| Title |
UNICEF Mali 2018 calendars & notebooks

Unschooled Stories (interactive report): voices and faces of out-of-school children in Mali
Unschooled Stories (video series on out-of-school children) - Fasirma, Siramadi, Diabou
L'eau, c'est la vie
Mali - On the way to end malnutrition (French & English)
Mali: Nutrition crisis deepening in conflict-affected areas
Les Super-Papas s'impliquent

Stakeholder satisfaction evaluation of handmade boreholes in Mali

Action plan for strengthening national and local monitoring and evaluation systems of the WASH sector

Diagnostic study of national and local monitoring and evaluation systems of the WASH sector

Client satisfaction survey - WASH Marketing programme, 2017

Operational guidelines - WASH Marketing in Mali

National Baseline survey on WASH in schools

**Programme documents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>