

## Mongolia

### Executive summary

In 2017, the first year of the UNICEF-Government of Mongolia Country Programme, UNICEF Mongolia continued to make tremendous progress in strengthening analysis and evidence related to child-related indicators, an area in significant need of the Government's attention in terms of policies and allocation of resources. UNICEF Mongolia also provided technical support to areas of uneven development to reach children and women left behind despite the country's middle-income status.

UNICEF Mongolia used solid evidence for policy advocacy combined with technical support, which contributed to the approval of the Law on Food for the Infant and Young Child and a finalized draft Maternal and Child Health Law. In addition, a costed essential services package including adolescent health and emergency preparedness was developed for government approval and implementation in 2018. UNICEF Mongolia also influenced the Government's decision to provide a monthly allowance for mothers looking after their children under three years of age as well as its approval of a National Programme on Child Development and Protection for 2017-2020. The latter contains specific goals on child poverty, child-friendly social protection and early childhood development (ECD).

The UNICEF Mongolia-led 2017 Fifth National Nutrition Survey indicated that overweight and obesity have reached alarming levels in all age groups, regions and socio-economic groups in Mongolia. This situation requires urgent action. Overweight is high in all regions and population groups, with 46 per cent of mothers and 49 per cent of men being overweight. The prevalence of overweight increased most dramatically in school-aged children, from 4.3 per cent (National Nutrition Survey [NNS], 2010) to 29 per cent (NNS, 2017), with nearly one in four overweight children obese (6.4 per cent), and over one in three school-age children overweight in the capital, Ulaanbaatar (34 per cent). Prevalence of overweight begins at a young age, with 12 per cent of children under five years of age being overweight. UNICEF Mongolia is continuing its high-level advocacy and technical support to reduce overweight and obesity through a comprehensive strategy of local, regional and national action.

Mongolia is on the brink of an environmental crisis, with harsh winters and extreme air pollution posing direct threats to child survival and development; the capital, Ulaanbaatar, is among the ten most polluted cities in the world. To build on the base of compelling scientific evidence, UNICEF Mongolia published a study on Mongolia's air pollution crisis and suggested urgent interventions to reduce the impact on child health. UNICEF Mongolia also developed and began to implement its child-centred air pollution action plan to reduce air pollution and protect children from its immediate impacts. Resulting from continued evidence-informed advocacy from UNICEF Mongolia, development partners and civil society, the Government approved a National Programme on the Reduction of Air and Environmental Pollution, incorporating many of UNICEF Mongolia's recommendations. To further highlight this important issue, UNICEF Mongolia called for action to fight air pollution and its negative effects on World Children's Day, using video content that reached more than 100,000 people.

Early childhood development (ECD) remained a critical component of the country programme's focus on equity. Together with international and national experts, UNICEF Mongolia launched a national digital platform on ECD for which over 65,000 parents accessed the website for information on key child development issues. In addition, 120,000 parents and caregivers subscribed to the mobile phone service to receive updates. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sport (MECSS) and UNICEF Mongolia developed guidelines on implementing environmental standards for preschools to benefit at least 300,000 children under the age of six, around 80 per cent of universal coverage, to access ECD services in a safe and healthy environment.

Adolescent mental and reproductive health is of growing concern in the country. To find new ways to engage and empower young people as drivers of social change and to nurture local innovation, UNICEF Mongolia organized an Innovation Challenge in partnership with Canada's Waterloo University. It resulted in Mongolia's first-ever Hackathon where young people came up with 19 ideas for information technology (IT)-based solutions to these issues, two of which are being supported by UNICEF Mongolia to build a final product: a mobile phone app on adolescent and sexual and reproductive health and connecting to services.

Throughout 2017, UNICEF Mongolia continued to build and develop collaborative partnerships with and among government agencies, international and local financial institutions and private businesses to support those children in most need. For example, a joint collaboration between ING Bank, Arig Bank and Wagner Asia, the Bayanzurkh district of Ulaanbaatar and UNICEF Mongolia helped more than 830 children access kindergartens with good water and sanitation facilities. UNICEF also provided Ulaanbaatar businesses with a better understanding of how to make their business operations more child friendly.

## Humanitarian assistance

Mongolia has experienced two consecutive dzuds – a long-lasting disaster that occurs when a summer drought is followed by particularly harsh winter conditions. There are strong indications that climate change is contributing to the increasing frequency of summer drought and thus the increasing risk of dzud during the winter. The 2016-2017 winter had a more significant impact than the dzud of the year before because harsh weather conditions began so much earlier with 77.8 per cent of the steppe covered in 25-45 cm of snow and 55-90 cm of snow in mountainous areas. This resulted in considerable loss of livestock, increased risk of maternal and child mortality, the collapse of thousands of people's livelihoods and interrupted delivery of basic services. Heavy snowfall closed roads and suspended routes to markets and public services in the soums (district) and aimag (province) centres. Mongolia's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) identified 16,000 herder households with a total of 7 million livestock as the most vulnerable herder households unable to meet one or more of their basic needs, including food and nutrition, warm clothing, heating and cooking implements, phone units for emergency communication and transport. According to the Ministry of Health (MoH), 15,800 pregnant women, 26,166 boys and girls up to five years of age, and 12,813 seniors were highly vulnerable.

The joint United Nations (UN)-Government field assessment mission in December 2016 with UNICEF Mongolia participation found the most vulnerable groups were the children under the age of five, as well as pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, who were in need of multivitamins and minerals.

With a generous financial contribution from the Canadian Government, UNICEF Mongolia supported the Government to protect the nutritional status of women and children in dzud-affected areas. A partnership with MoH and the National Centre for Public Health delivered life-saving micronutrient supplements, nutritional screening and counselling services to 26,054 children under five and 15,803 pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in dzud-affected herder households. Multiple micronutrient supplementation reached 98 per cent of children aged 6-59 months and 100 per cent of women who were pregnant in the target areas. A total of 26,200 children under five were screened for acute malnutrition and 101 children were identified with moderate acute malnutrition, while 11 children with severe acute malnutrition were referred for treatment supported by UNICEF Mongolia. This was a crucial part of the emergency response. With UNICEF Mongolia's technical assistance, MoH updated the national protocol on integrated management of acute malnutrition that increases both access and quality of severe acute malnutrition management during emergencies and in a development context.

UNICEF Mongolia's assistance enabled 157 target soum health centres to provide quality nutrition services including nutrition assessment and micronutrient supplementation, and counselling on good nutrition for parents of children under two years of age and women who were pregnant or breastfeeding. UNICEF Mongolia and the National Centre for Public Health supported the training and supportive supervision of 40 master trainers from 17 provinces on 'life-saving nutrition services in emergencies'. These master trainers then further trained an estimated 1,300 primary health workers from 157 soum health centres in 17 provinces. Three days of training focused on maternal nutrition and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) in emergency situations, nutrition assessment and management of acute malnutrition.

Children in target households were monitored through health workers' bi-weekly home visits that looked at usage of multiple micronutrient supplements and overall health and nutrition status. All 157 soum health centres in the target areas were provided financial assistance for fuel costs to ensure mobility for oversight of nutrition interventions.

Some 59,000 leaflets containing key messages on appropriate infant and young child feeding practices (breastfeeding and complementary feeding), and appropriate usage of multiple micronutrient supplements with recording lists were distributed to target populations to raise awareness.

## Emerging areas of importance

**Urbanization and children.** Rapid urbanization has resulted in unplanned settlements and increased air, water and soil pollution. In 2017, UNICEF Mongolia continued to build on air pollution work of previous years and conducted a study on the child health costs of air pollution, which covers urgent actions that are needed to protect children's health; many of these have been incorporated into national plans. UNICEF Mongolia secured initial funding of US\$200,000 to implement its Child-Centred Air Pollution Action Plan. UNICEF Mongolia support to urban water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and child-friendly communities (CFCs) also showed significant progress through activities conducted in 2017.

Nearly 60 per cent of Ulaanbaatar's 1.37 million inhabitants live in underserved areas. The city's air pollution has a devastating impact on child health, including reduced foetal growth, preterm birth, pneumonia and reduced lung capacity. UNICEF Mongolia began building a compelling base of scientific evidence on the impacts of air pollution on children in Ulaanbaatar in 2016 and has since published a study, convened an international expert consultation and

begun to implement recommendations arising from these.

Following UNICEF Mongolia's advocacy, the Government developed and approved the National Programme on the Reduction of Air and Environmental Pollution (2017-2021), which incorporates many of UNICEF Mongolia's recommendations. UNICEF Mongolia conducted a study on the child health costs of air pollution, developed its Child-Centred Air Pollution Action Plan (2017-2021), secured initial funding of US\$200,000 from UNICEF Regional Thematic Funds and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and established partnerships with Wagner Asia, Arig Bank and ING Bank. This highlights the success of UNICEF Mongolia's advocacy on the need to invest in and engage with this agenda to safeguard a healthy and safe environment for children. UNICEF Mongolia's work in this area has helped to put air pollution in the limelight globally and across the organization.

In 2017, UNICEF Mongolia supported an urban WASH programme to revise the methodology for setting water tariff structures, which focuses on reducing the gap in per-litre water pricing between suburban and urban households. Currently, residents in the suburbs pay two to four times more than those in city centre apartments. The methodology was approved by the Water Service Regulatory Commission in June 2017 and is being piloted in two areas (Baganuur district and Zuunmod). It will be scaled up nationally upon pilot completion.

UNICEF Mongolia provided technical support to the local governments of its four new geographic focus areas (GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS AREASs) (urban centres). These governments formally adopted child-friendly cities strategies, including setting up children's councils, integrating child-friendly plans with local development plans, and putting in place mechanisms to ensure children take part in decision-making.

**Greater focus on the second decade of life.** UNICEF Mongolia supported a programme in Nalaikh district of Ulaanbaatar and Zavkhan province for adolescents on building life skills. It aimed to help adolescents improve skills such as looking after themselves, communicating effectively with their families and taking care of their own health. The programme was modified to form a life skills module for summer camps, providing them with tools for developmental programmes as well as allowing the Government to reach more children (14,000 children per year).

To find new ways to engage and empower young people as drivers of social change and to nurture local innovation, UNICEF Mongolia organized an Innovation Challenge. Its aim was to raise awareness around key adolescent issues, generate new ideas and approaches to specific problems and bring together stakeholders and resources around adolescent mental and reproductive health. The Challenge resulted in Mongolia's first-ever Hackathon, in April 2017, where young people came up with 19 ideas for IT-based solutions to these issues, two of which are being supported by UNICEF Mongolia to build a final product.

**Accelerate integrated early childhood development (ECD).** Holistic ECD was given management priority at UNICEF Mongolia in 2017. UNICEF Mongolia developed a strategy and a matrix of holistic ECD initiatives for the coming years, working cross-sectorally with health, nutrition, child protection, governance, adolescence/gender, WASH, monitoring and evaluation and environment. WASH in ECD has been successfully implemented in kindergartens with children from poorest families in target areas. Training in health and ECD was piloted, and once the content has been revised and refined, the module will be disseminated in the new target areas. Energy-efficient models of two integrated ECD centres are planned for the most poor and vulnerable groups of Bayanzurkh district, Ulaanbaatar in 2018-2019.

## Summary Notes and Acronyms

CFC	child-friendly community
C-IMCI	community integrated management of childhood illnesses
CMT	country management team
DCT	direct cash transfers
EAPRO	East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF)
ECD	early childhood development
GFA	geographic focus area
HACT	harmonized approach to cash transfers
IT	information technology
MECSS	Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sport
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoH	Ministry of Health
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NNS	National Nutrition Survey
NGO	non-governmental organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
IYCF	infant and young child feeding

## Capacity development

UNICEF Mongolia's support in this area has focused on strengthening institutional systems by developing local and national capacities. UNICEF Mongolia provided technical assistance to the National Centre for Public Health to conduct the country's most comprehensive nutritional assessment. The Fifth NNS is the first to assess both the wealth and food security of households and provide data by region on dietary diversity and the nutritional status of mothers and children.

UNICEF Mongolia supported an MoH-led working group to finalize the draft national protocol on integrated management of acute malnutrition, which the working group used to screen 35,931 children under five years of age. In total, 206 children were identified with acute malnutrition and referred for treatment.

In collaboration with education cluster members and led by MECSS, UNICEF Mongolia conducted a national comprehensive school safety assessment covering 96 schools, which revealed that only about 20 per cent of schools have some level of preparedness. UNICEF Mongolia also worked with the National Centre for Life-Long Education to map out-of-school children in four khoroos (communities) in Bayanzurkh district, Ulaanbaatar, identifying 96 children who were not at school, including 26 with disabilities; 64.5 per cent of these children of compulsory basic education age were transferred to formal and non-formal schools.

A national communication for development strategy on immunization was approved in all project areas, addressing vaccine hesitancy and the introduction of new vaccines. A counselling package was developed, and 84 health workers were trained to counsel parents in Bayanzurkh and Nalaikh districts. A total of 73,672 caregivers were reached. This helped to introduce the pneumonia vaccine in these districts, and 4,909 children aged between two and nine months were vaccinated, a coverage rate of 86 per cent.

## Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

UNICEF Mongolia made significant progress in generating solid evidence for policy advocacy, which, together with technical support, resulted in a number of national policies and programmes.

With UNICEF Mongolia's technical and financial support, the National Programme on Child Protection and Development for 2017-2020 was approved. This indicates that measuring and tracking child poverty, child-friendly social protection, the first 1,000 days of life and ECD are important goals for the Government. UNICEF Mongolia's support was also instrumental in the approval of the Law on Food for the Infant and Young Child, a national programme on reducing air and environmental pollution and a national standard for family health centres.

A major highlight was UNICEF Mongolia's continued policy advocacy on the importance of protecting women and children from the negative impact of air pollution, based on the findings of the public expenditure review of air pollution-related child health issues and analyses of the cost of inaction. The study examined short-term emergency interventions, as well as immediate and longer-term policy actions aimed at reducing the exposure of women and children to air pollution and mitigating its negative health impacts.

UNICEF Mongolia continued to provide technical assistance to the Government for the Fifth NNS. The provincial Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) findings helped UNICEF Mongolia understand the progress that had been made in the focus locations during the previous Country Programme of cooperation, and informed provincial plans.

UNICEF Mongolia's study, 'Mining-related in-migration and the impacts on children in Mongolia', created a solid foundation for stakeholder discussions and policy dialogue with the mining sector on children's rights. Furthermore, UNICEF Mongolia supported a legal review of business practices and children and family development, to provide evidence for opportunities and gaps in developing child- and family-friendly business in Mongolia.

## Partnerships

Throughout 2017, UNICEF Mongolia continued to build and develop collaborative partnerships with and among government agencies, international and local financial institutions and private businesses to support those children in most need. This included multiple programmatic priorities, such as ECD, WASH, nutrition and child protection.

A joint collaboration between ING Bank, Arig Bank and Wagner Asia, the Bayanzurkh district of Ulaanbaatar and UNICEF Mongolia helped more than 830 children access kindergartens with good water and sanitation facilities.

In addition, a partnership with industry, the Communications Regulatory Committee, the Family, Child and Youth Development Authority, MobiCom and others helped to raise awareness among industry, parents and children of online child protection through various promotional and educational activities. This national-level partnership was part of the global initiative Safer Internet Day, which included over 130 participating countries.

UNICEF Mongolia partnered with food and service industry companies and the Ulaanbaatar Department for Children and Family Development to provide Ulaanbaatar businesses with a better understanding of how to make their operations more child friendly, contributing to Ulaanbaatar's child friendly community initiative. International and local best practices were

shared and discussed with the companies, which are now committed to improving their business practices to benefit children and families in the capital. Through UNICEF Mongolia's efforts, SF & MNG, a Korean food company operating in Mongolia, regularly provided poorly nourished children in impoverished families with essential foods.

### **External communication and public advocacy**

UNICEF Mongolia, as part of the global Early Moments Matter campaign, used digital and traditional media to highlight the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life and the impact of early experiences on the developing brain.

The UNICEF Mongolia-led Consultation on Sanitation in Cold Climate, which brought together the Government and private sector, resulted in the approval of a National Programme on Reduction of Air and Environmental Pollution. This included soil pollution caused by poor sanitation conditions in peri-urban areas.

UNICEF Mongolia advocated for innovative ways to improve water and sanitation in schools, kindergartens and dormitories. The consultation was widely covered by the media and served as both an opportunity and a tool for public education and a trigger for action.

Recognizing the growing issue of adolescent mental and reproductive health, UNICEF Mongolia launched an Innovation Challenge, a new initiative designed to offer fresh ways to engage young people as the drivers of social change and raise awareness of key social issues. It resulted in a Hackathon, at which young people came up with 19 IT-based ideas to address these issues.

Air pollution is a serious problem affecting Mongolia's children, and UNICEF Mongolia continued to work closely with the Government and other partners to highlight the need to protect children. UNICEF Mongolia reached over one million people with evidence-based, compelling messages and storytelling on air pollution and its impact on children's health, and called on key stakeholders to take immediate action.

UNICEF Mongolia also increased its efforts to tell the UNICEF story more powerfully, rolling out a new digital media strategy, creating new content for the website and regularly updating all of its social media platforms. As a result, engagement with audiences increased and organizational events, campaigns and activities were able to obtain strong media coverage.

### **South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation**

UNICEF Mongolia continued to advocate for the Government's implementation of the commitments made at the third High-Level Meeting in 2016. This resulted in the Government's provision of a monthly allowance for mothers looking after their children under the age of three; approval of the National Programme on Child Protection and Development, with specific goals on child poverty reduction and child-friendly social protection; and the approval of the Law on Food for the Infant and Young Child, linked to the first 1,000 days of life.

UNICEF Mongolia convened high-level discussions on child poverty and universal social protection with development partners, government policymakers, practitioners and civil society organizations, where UNICEF Indonesia shared its good practices and lessons learned. Indonesia's experience in these areas was invaluable in helping participants identify next steps in measuring and tracking child poverty in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to gain a greater understanding of the pros and cons of proxy means test targeting

methodology.

UNICEF Mongolia in partnership with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioner on National Minorities supported the participation of key officials of the Education Institute and the Bayan-Ulgii provincial education department at a multilingual education event in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The delegation shared Mongolia's experiences of supporting education for ethnic and linguistic minority students and learned from the experiences of Eastern Europe and Central Asian countries to further improve bilingual education in Mongolia.

UNICEF Mongolia facilitated an exchange of ideas among government education authorities and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on improving WASH in schools with other government partners in the East Asia and the Pacific region. The meeting on WASH in schools in Myanmar provided an opportunity for international learning and exchange of innovative solutions and ideas.

### **Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**

A key strategy of the country programme is the child friendly community initiative to ensure child-friendly local governance with participatory planning and budgeting processes putting the rights of children at the centre of public policies, programmes and decisions. In 2017, UNICEF Mongolia provided technical support to the local governments of its new GFAs in the 2017-2021 Country Programme. As a result, the three provinces (Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai and Zavkhan), along with Bayanzurkh district of Ulaanbaatar, formally adopted CFC strategies, including establishing children's councils headed by the provincial and district governors, integrating child-friendly plans with local development plans and coordinating work for children across all sectors. Bayankhongor's local government also developed and approved a cross sectoral sub-programme – Child Friendly Bayankhongor province – and budgeted US\$12,500 to implement it in 2018, despite financial difficulties. The success of this venture is evidenced by the growing number of decisions and increased budgeting for children.

UNICEF Mongolia supported 97 multi-disciplinary teams in the target areas to provide integrated child protection services to vulnerable children. In total, 1,253 professionals from sectors such as social work, health, education, welfare and the police were better able to apply the newly approved laws on crime, child protection and combating domestic violence. They work together to identify and assess child protection risks and collectively decide on the necessary action across various sectors.

In addition, UNICEF Mongolia provided technical support for a multisectoral working group to develop a national plan of action to promote adolescent mental health aligned with national programmes on non-communicable diseases and child development, protection and early childhood development.

### **Service delivery**

To contribute to closing equity gaps in social service delivery in three GFAs in Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai and Zavkhan provinces, UNICEF Mongolia advocated for the adoption of good practices and innovative approaches that were effectively demonstrated in the previous country programme. These include expansion of the locally tested inclusive education models for children with disabilities and disadvantages, innovative school WASH container facilities in schools, kindergartens and dormitories, and young child feeding counselling.

Around 90 boys and girls with disabilities were enrolled in regular schools in the GFAs as a result of the partnership of UNICEF Mongolia and the Mongolian Education Alliance. This partnership demonstrated inclusive education for children with disabilities and community participation in school management with added elements of parents' trainings on inclusive education and community participation, establishment of learning and recreational centres for children with disabilities, and operation of parents and community groups that resulted in increased parents and community participation in school management in six schools.

UNICEF Mongolia's partnership with the WASH Action NGO, MobiCom corporation and World Vision Mongolia resulted in the successful replication of container WASH facilities in one school and one kindergarten in Bayanzurkh district in Ulaanbaatar and in six rural schools in the GFAs, which benefited over 4,000 boys and girls and 60 teachers.

The UNICEF Mongolia package on infant and young child feeding counselling was successfully introduced in the GFAs, where 368 health workers from 74 primary health centres and district hospitals were trained on infant and young child feeding practices. Combined with multiple micronutrient supplementation, IYCF reached 16,103 children up to two years of age and 11,065 women who were pregnant and mothers who were breastfeeding in the three geographic focus areas and Bayanzurkh and Nalaikh districts in Ulaanbaatar. A lesson learned is the commitment and leadership of the local governments are essential in the successful replication of the good practices in the new geographic focus areas.

### Human rights-based approach to cooperation

UNICEF Mongolia supported the Government with finalizing the written replies to the Committee's List of Issues, and ensured the Government's high-level representation in the session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. This involved briefing delegates on the Committee's approach and facilitating the transparent participation of the national and international NGOs in the process, including dissemination of information contained in the alternative reports.

UNICEF Mongolia worked with the Government to improve accountability mechanisms for implementing the Committee's concluding observations. As a result, a national working group was established with representatives from the Ministries of Justice, Finance, Labour and Social Protection, Health and Education, and the Authority for Family, Child and Youth Development. A mix of senior-level and technical experts with responsibility for the implementation of this treaty was able to enhance follow-up to the concluding observations. Accordingly, a National Programme on Child Development and Protection was approved by the Government in September 2017, which is a costed plan of action that includes the recommendations of the national working group.

UNICEF Mongolia also engaged with the Human Rights Committee and contributed to the Committee's concluding observations on violence against children, children with disabilities, and child labour when it examined Mongolia's sixth submission on its implementation of the Convention on Civil and Political Rights.

UNICEF Mongolia's efforts to support the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities focused on improving the legal environment and reviewing the teacher training system. The aim was to build the foundations needed for a shift from a dual/parallel system of general and special education to an inclusive one where all children, including those with disabilities, can enjoy their right to quality education and learn in a fully inclusive

environment in their local area. The recently approved National Programme on Rights, Participation and Development of People with Disabilities has a component on increasing access for people with disabilities to quality education at all levels and will therefore play an important role in this area.

## Gender equality

Promoting gender-responsive adolescent health

UNICEF Mongolia chose gender-responsive adolescent health as a priority area for mainstreaming gender in 2017 in support of the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and the National Programme on Gender Equality. UNICEF Mongolia conducted a country case study on gender-responsive adolescent health as part of the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO)-led assessment to increase understanding of the role gender plays in adolescent health experiences. Once finalized, this will contribute to mapping adolescents' key mental health issues and the gender-responsive ways in which these issues are being addressed by UNICEF Mongolia and its partners, including adolescent life skills programming.

UNICEF Mongolia also worked with MECSS on developing the new core curricula on mental health, sexual and reproductive health, preventing gender-based violence and nutrition. This is part of ongoing advocacy work with the Ministry to re-establish health education as a stand-alone subject in the school curriculum. It will serve as a foundation for the detailed curriculum and will be supported by teachers' guidelines developed by MoH.

Meanwhile, UNICEF Mongolia highlighted the problems teenage girls have in managing menstrual hygiene comfortably and with dignity in schools. This is a neglected area of sanitation that contributes to girls missing days of education every month. UNICEF Mongolia conducted a study on this issue (in Mongolian and English), and to address some issues, a range of educational materials were developed and disseminated. This included a special website on managing menstrual hygiene ([www.namuu.mn](http://www.namuu.mn)) targeting young teenagers, and a basic package of materials, such as handbooks for schoolchildren, peer educators and teenage girls, posters for teenage boys and girls, videos and leaflets.

Overall expenditure for this gender priority amounts to US\$30,000.

## Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability remained a top programme priority. Achievements in 2017 included the UNICEF Mongolia Environment Strategy (2017-2021) and the Air Pollution Action Plan, which UNICEF Mongolia has begun to implement. Other work included a climate landscape analysis for children; mainstreaming environmental protection throughout programmes; and continued support for efforts to protect and improve water sources and promote environmental sanitation.

Given the alarming levels of air pollution, UNICEF Mongolia began in 2016 to build a compelling base of scientific evidence on its impact on children in Ulaanbaatar. Since then it has published a study, convened an international expert consultation and begun to implement recommendations arising from these activities. UNICEF Mongolia's advocacy contributed to the Government's decision to develop and approve the National Programme on the Reduction of Air and Environmental Pollution (2017-2021), which incorporated many of UNICEF Mongolia's recommendations. UNICEF Mongolia also conducted a study on the impact of air pollution on children's health in Ulaanbaatar, which examines urgent interventions to better protect children's health. UNICEF Mongolia's Child-Centred Air Pollution Action Plan (2017-2021) identified five

key priorities for engagement. Initial funding of US\$200,000 was secured, as well as partnerships with the private sector, highlighting the success of UNICEF Mongolia's advocacy on this issue.

The climate landscape analysis for children examined the baseline situation of climate, energy and environment-related issues affecting children and how they relate to UNICEF Mongolia's priorities. The report, to be published in 2018, looks at stakeholders, government policies and relevant programmes in Mongolia and will provide recommendations on how UNICEF Mongolia could further incorporate and strengthen its work on climate, energy and environment-related issues affecting children in its Country Programme.

Energy efficiency was incorporated into the ECD programme, with support from donors to implement it, ensuring more energy-efficient and healthy environments for children in kindergartens.

The greening of the UNICEF Mongolia office is covered under the section Management E&E.

### **Effective leadership**

The UNICEF Mongolia country management team (CMT) approved seven priority results in its annual management plan and monitored these twice in team meetings; six were completed and one was in progress at the end of 2017. Achievements include the launch of the child-friendly community strategy in one district and three provinces; an inclusive education policy on children with disabilities that was finalized and submitted for Government approval; and an Advocacy and Partnership Strategy on Air Pollution. UNICEF Mongolia also organized an Innovation Challenge on adolescent mental and reproductive health, and completed a quality review for both programme and operations with a focus on results-based management. UNICEF Mongolia staff were trained in technical report writing to improve their capacity in results-based reporting. One result in progress at the end of 2017 was mainstreaming ECD in health, nutrition, WASH, early childhood education and child protection programmes.

The UNICEF Mongolia risk profile was updated, and of the 12 risk areas, one was re-profiled as high risk, one as medium risk and the remaining ten as low risk with mitigation measures in place as outlined in the annual management plan.

The programme coordination team and country management team each met 12 times to discuss programme performance and management indicators, while the joint consultative committee met three times. UNICEF Mongolia identified three key areas in the 2017 Global Staff Survey action plan for further attention.

UNICEF Mongolia led four clusters in the Humanitarian Country Team (nutrition, child protection, WASH and logistics/emergency telecoms) and co-led the education cluster. UNICEF Mongolia also led the food and nutrition emergency dzud interventions and conducted warehouse and logistics training to strengthen the capacity of the Sub-National Emergency Management Authority. The memorandum of understanding with the Mongolian Red Cross is continuing, with their premises identified as an alternative office location that would ensure business continuity in the event of an emergency.

### **Financial resources management**

To ensure UNICEF Mongolia continued to strengthen its financial and budget management and implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT), the country management

team reviewed the management key performance indicators and the performance dashboard, including budget and financial monitoring of HACT as regular a standard agenda item at country management team meetings.

The overall financial implementation was 100 per cent (100 per cent for regular resources, other resources and other resources emergency).

HACT assurance plan targets were met: 100 per cent spot checks, 104 per cent programme visits, and 100 per cent micro-assessments completed. Direct cash transfers (DCTs) were liquidated within the six-month timeframe, with none exceeding nine months.

Monthly bank reconciliations of the two bank accounts were completed according to the monthly closure datelines and there were no outstanding items. Month-end accounts closure was reviewed monthly to ensure open items were cleared quickly to avoid any discrepancies during the year-end closure exercise.

### **Fund-raising and donor relations**

UNICEF Mongolia continued to strengthen its fund-raising portfolio, raising US\$5.2 million – more than 100 per cent of the annual country programme other resources ceiling. An existing partnership with the Principality of Monaco around early childhood education was extended until 2019.

UNICEF Mongolia continued to successfully expand relations with the Korean Committee for UNICEF, securing support for nutrition and early childhood education at a larger geographic scale. As part of this effort, the Korean Committee for UNICEF and a key Korean donor visited the UNICEF Mongolia programme. In addition, a new partnership with the Asian Development Bank strengthened UNICEF Mongolia's work on hygiene promotion through the rehabilitation of dormitory WASH facilities. The Government of Canada continued to support the UNICEF WASH programme in 2017 and the Government of Switzerland further supported the UNICEF Mongolia air pollution work through the provision of additional funding in 2017.

The country programme in its first year of implementation was fully funded against the Board-approved other resources ceiling. Fund-raising efforts also accelerated to ensure funding requirements for the second year of the programme were met. The use of available funds was carefully monitored with a 100 per cent utilization rate and no outstanding balance against expiring other resources grants. Progress of the work plan implementation and grant management were monitored through regular CMT meetings and PCMs, mid-year and annual progress reporting and bilateral consultations with implementing partners. With efficient internal monitoring through programme coordination and a quality assurance system, all 15 donor reports were submitted on time and included human interest stories.

### **Evaluation and research**

In 2017, the research, monitoring and evaluation plan, which included two studies and a country programme evaluability assessment, had an implementation rate of 67 per cent. The MICS in Khuvsgul and Nalaikh and a study on the implementation of education rights for Uriankhai, Tuva and other minorities living within major ethnic minorities were completed. Studies on reducing the impact of Mongolia's air pollution on child health and on the assessment of WASH facilities in schools, dormitories and kindergartens were also finalized and discussed with government partners. They will be launched in early 2018.

The MICS findings were used to understand the progress made in geographic focus areas. As a result, adjustments were made to the Khuvsgul province long-term plan 2030, giving greater focus to awareness raising and behaviour change strategies for adolescents. In collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission, violations of the rights of Mongolian-speaking children who live among Kazakh communities were brought to the attention of the Government. UNICEF Mongolia's work to raise awareness of the impact of air pollution on child health boosted media coverage of the topic, attracting the attention of Government and NGOs as well as the public. Under the SDG framework, UNICEF Mongolia initiated dialogue on the understanding and use of multidimensional child poverty indicators. With the technical support of the UNICEF EAPRO regional evaluation adviser and the junior professional officer, an evaluability assessment was conducted, focusing on child protection and inclusive education. It made constructive recommendations to ensure the necessary conditions for an evaluation are in place, and that managers whose activities and Country Programme outcome components will be evaluated as per the costed evaluation plan are sufficiently prepared. The regional evaluation adviser also facilitated capacity building on evaluation quality assurance for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Monitoring and Evaluation Group.

### Efficiency gains and cost savings

UNICEF Mongolia's country management team continued to achieve efficiencies by encouraging all staff to travel economy rather than business class on official trips, with savings of US\$25,447. In addition, staff were encouraged to use cheaper and more efficient forms of communications, such as Skype for meetings and recruitment interviews.

In 2017, UNICEF Mongolia contributed US\$78,344 to the running costs of UN House compared to US\$126,970 in 2016, with savings of 38 per cent. As UNICEF Mongolia is in shared premises in UN House, the office achieved efficiency gains and saved approximately US\$34,000 in comparison with the open market rental cost of equivalent office space.

UNICEF Mongolia also established long-term agreements for three types of services and shared these within the UN system to achieve time efficiencies and economies of scale.

UNICEF Mongolia received US\$10,605 from UNICEF NY Headquarters to improve the greening and accessibility of the office. This was used to improve the central heating, install thermostats and valves for individual radiators in UN House and buy replacement air filters for the office air purifiers.

UNICEF Mongolia completed the 2016 Environmental Footprint Assessment exercise and a Greening Task Force was set up to improve greening of the office to reduce its carbon footprint.

### Supply management

In 2017, US\$776,358.25 was spent on procurement of goods and services: US\$270,247.96 (15 per cent) on institutional contractors, US\$305,599.55 (18 per cent) on programme supplies; and US\$43,149.14 (2 per cent) on operational supplies.

UNICEF Mongolia also assisted the Government of Mongolia with procurement services of US\$975,358.25 through its Supply Division, resulting in a total of US\$1,752,107.13 for procurement in 2017.

As there is no UNICEF warehouse in Mongolia, all programme supplies are delivered directly to implementing partners. In late 2016, a Rapid Logistic Assessment was carried out jointly with UNICEF and NEMA; report findings revealed that the current capacity to respond jointly to an emergency is very limited. To improve the situation, UNICEF Mongolia funded three days of capacity training for NEMA-owned warehouse managers on warehousing, supply chains, logistics, and safety and security in preparation for delivering an emergency response in the event of a harsh winter.

The UNICEF Mongolia supply plan was improved compared to the 2016 plan, as it was developed in accordance with the work plan. In addition, most of the small procurement for implementing partners was undertaken through DCTs, rather than direct procurement.

Table 1 – Procurement table for 2017

<b>Mongolia 2017</b>	<b>Value of all supply input (goods and services) (US\$)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Programme supplies	305,599.55	39
Operational supplies	43,149.41	6
Services	270,247.96	35
Freight cost	157,361.33	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>776,358.25</b>	<b>100</b>
Procurement of services by Government of Mongolia	975,748.88	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,752,107.13</b>	

Table 2. Total value of construction projects

<b>Mongolia 2017</b>	<b>Value of all Construction Project via DCT (US\$)</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Construction of WASH containers	118,989.00	DCT funding was issued to two NGOs: 1) World Vision to construct 6 WASH containers  2) WASH Action to construct 2 WASH containers.

		All containers were completed by the end of September 2017
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**Security for staff and premises**

Security in Mongolia remained at Level 1. Security in UN House premises was supported by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), overseen by the Security Management Team and implemented through the Operations Management Team.

The Operations Management Team and UNDSS continued to implement recommendations to improve the safety of staff and UN House, such as updating the fire safety and building evacuation plans, fire drills, security briefing for UN personnel, updating the security plan for Mongolia and UN House access control.

With the implementation of the agency carpooling initiative, a GPS tracking system was installed in all UNICEF vehicles, which monitored, tracked and recorded data such as speed, acceleration and braking trends for the safety of staff while on the road. During field mission trips, staff are given a satellite phone and portable wi-fi unit so that they can be in constant contact.

The business continuity plan and the emergency telephone tree system were updated regularly, and exercises were conducted twice a year.

The yearly rise in air pollution during winter months caused by the uncontrolled burning of coal in the city posed a health challenge for staff and their dependents. UNICEF Mongolia procured a number of monitoring devices to monitor air quality in the office and office vehicles, sealed all windows, procured and replaced all filters in the air filtrations units in the office, procured and installed air filters in all office vehicles, and continued to distribute masks for all UNICEF staff in the office.

**Human resources**

In 2017, UNICEF Mongolia had four international staff (50 per cent female/male), 26 national staff (69 per cent female and 31 per cent male) and one male International UN Volunteer, who is fully funded by the Japanese Government.

The human resources manager based in the UNICEF China office continued to provide support for UNICEF Mongolia, as part of the EAPRO Working Differently initiative. This post has provided high-level strategic planning and consultation, with a minimum of two visits to UNICEF Mongolia per year.

Four staff (two international and two national) received continuing contracts in 2017.

The 2017 performance planning for all staff was 97 per cent complete (deadline of 28 February 2017) and the planning phase for 2017 was 100 per cent complete. A one-day performance management workshop was held on culture change as part of a global initiative and an action plan was developed to address the culture change process in 2018.

Four staff members attended a management masterclass and one had external executive coaching for middle managers. UNICEF Mongolia hosted one colleague from UNICEF Indonesia (social policy specialist) on a staff exchange programme. The UNICEF Mongolia admin/human resources officer went to the UNICEF China office on a stretch assignment for six weeks to support the human resources team there.

UNICEF Mongolia worked closely with the staff association on the Action Plan from the 2016 Global Staff Survey results and agreed to work on three specific areas: personal empowerment, efficiency and effectiveness and ethics.

The EAPRO Human Resources Development Team granted UNICEF Mongolia US\$2,500 as part of the learning budget. This was utilized fully on a performance management workshop for all staff and training for report writing for key programme staff.

### Effective use of information and communication technology

UNICEF Mongolia continued to implement global application introductions and system upgrades in a timely manner. The upgrade of Windows 10 (with 100 per cent success rate) was within the deadline, and training was also conducted on Windows 10.

UNICEF Mongolia regularly used Skype and Office 365 tools (Skype for Business, Sharepoint and OneDrive) to conduct meetings and share information with the Khuvsgul outpost office, EAPRO and NY Headquarters, and to conduct recruitment interviews.

UNICEF Mongolia procured new information and communications technology (ICT) equipment based on UNICEF hardware and software standards and continued its efforts to phase out desktop computers and replace them with laptops to support mobile working arrangements and reduce electricity consumption. To maintain efficient wi-fi connectivity, two wi-fi networks were installed on the two floors occupied by UNICEF Mongolia.

UNICEF Mongolia was selected to join the pilot test for UNICEF EAPRO on the Emergency Notification System (ENS Everbridge) as part of the new business continuity activity in the office, spearheaded by UNICEF NY Headquarters.

### Programme components from RAM

#### ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

**OUTCOME 1** By 2021, the most disadvantaged children in Mongolia benefit from increased access to and utilization of services that promote health and nutrition, including WASH and interventions that mitigate the impact of air pollution on child survival

#### Analytical statement of progress

The legal environment for children and adolescents improved significantly in 2017 with the endorsement of several important policies. UNICEF Mongolia provided technical support for approval of the Law on Food for the Infant and Young Child, and the National Programme on Reduction of Air and Environmental Pollution (2017-2021) and development of a draft national plan of action for promoting adolescent mental health. Following a demonstration project, a new standard for family health centres was approved by the National Standard Office, which made an immunization unit a compulsory structural element in these centres to provide better access for peri-urban and unregistered children.

UNICEF Mongolia provided technical assistance to generate evidence on nutrition, urban immunization and adolescent health. The MoH completed NNS V, which assessed the current nutritional status of the Mongolian population, highlighted progress made since the 2010 NNS IV and identified shortfalls. The aim was to inform policy and programmatic action within the context of significant changes in socio-economic conditions and dietary practices. Key features of the NNS V include regional data on relevant nutrition indicators, as well as data on men's micronutrient status and household food security, which had not been included before. With technical support from the UNICEF EAPRO, stakeholder mapping and methodology to generate evidence for higher-level advocacy on urban immunization were completed by a joint team consisting of academia, Government, NGOs and the National Centre for Communicable Diseases. UNICEF Mongolia also conducted a country case study for the EAPRO Assessment on Gender-Responsive Adolescent Health, which will contribute to mapping adolescents' key health issues in the region (mental health and an adolescent life skills programme in Mongolia).

UNICEF Mongolia provided technical support to the Water Service Regulatory Commission for a new methodology to set equitable water tariffs that was demonstrated in two locations. In addition, national and sub-national staff received knowledge on equitable water tariffing and guidelines, and manuals were jointly developed to guide implementation.

As children have little access to adequate treatment for acute malnutrition, UNICEF Mongolia provided technical assistance to an MoH-led working group to finalize the draft national protocol on integrated management of acute malnutrition, in line with the 2013 World Health Organization-updated guidelines. As part of this initiative, 35,931 children under five years of age were screened for acute malnutrition in Bayanzurkh district, and 206 children were referred for adequate treatment.

Thousands of children die from diseases that could be prevented by immunization, but many parents are still reluctant to vaccinate their children. To tackle this, a national and subnational communication for development strategy on immunization was approved in 2017 in all of the geographic focus areas. UNICEF Mongolia developed a counselling package and 84 health workers obtained skills to counsel hesitant parents in Bayanzurkh and Nalaikh districts, reaching 73,672 caregivers. As a result, 4,909 children aged between two and nine months were vaccinated against pneumonia, a coverage rate of 86 per cent.

Following UNICEF Mongolia advocacy and technical support, a Centre for Community Health was established at the National Maternal and Child Health Centre to support community-level child health care, and community integrated management of childhood illnesses (C-IMCI) planning handbooks were translated into Mongolian. A model for real-time teleconsultation for emergency paediatric and obstetric cases (developed in 2012 with UNICEF Mongolia support) was rolled out nationwide by MoH.

Health workers of geographic focus areas including 485 community health workers received knowledge on C-IMCI provided by the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences. An IYCF counselling service was replicated in the new area, beginning with the training of 368 health workers from 74 primary and secondary health facilities. IYCF counselling services combined with micronutrient supplementation went on to reach 16,103 children between 2 and 11 years of age and 11,065 pregnant and breastfeeding women in 5 focus areas.

Adolescent mental health is a growing concern in Mongolia. For the first time, guidelines for primary-level health professionals on adolescent mental health were produced, and UNICEF

Mongolia initiated development of innovative approaches and tools on gender-responsive mental health and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections.

Drinking water safety plans were developed for Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai and Zavkhan provincial centres and Nalaikh district in 2017. Technical working groups were established, training was conducted, risk assessments for the water supply were carried out, and control measures were defined, linking household water safety issues and adaptation to climate change, with UNICEF Mongolia's support.

As part of the UN Humanitarian Country Team, UNICEF Mongolia delivered life-saving nutritional assistance (micronutrient supplementation, nutritional screening and counselling services) to children and women in dzud-affected vulnerable herder households in 157 soums in 17 provinces. A total of 26,054 children under 5 and 15,803 pregnant and breastfeeding women received nutrition services, a coverage rate of 98 per cent and 100 per cent respectively in the target areas. Health professionals in the affected areas were also trained on nutrition services in emergencies and supportive supervision: 40 health officials at the national level as well as an estimated 1,300 health practitioners.

Challenges: The change of government resulted in the recruitment of new staff, which requires time investment in advocacy and capacity building. The country's economic situation is not favourable for the approval of budgeted policies.

**OUTPUT 1** Central and decentralized health authorities in targetted areas have improved capacity to roll out and sustain maternal and child health, sexually transmitted infection/human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention and adolescent mental health services through established subnational delivery systems

#### **Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Mongolia provided technical assistance to draft maternal and child health legislation with defined and costed essential health packages. The draft law includes provisions on adolescent health, equity and emergency preparedness. A new standard for family health centres was approved by the National Standard Office, which makes an immunization unit a compulsory structural element in these centres. This follows UNICEF Mongolia's advocacy efforts since 2008 to immunize unreached urban children through evidence generation and capacity development. As of 2017, there were 92 new immunization units in Ulaanbaatar (65 per cent), and 85 in provincial centres (80 per cent). The new standard brings the immunization service within closer and easier reach of children, particularly those living in remote areas or the outskirts of towns, or poor communities living in environmentally polluted conditions. Thanks to EAPRO support, stakeholder mapping and methodology for evidence generation for urban immunization was completed by a joint team of academia, government, NGOs and the National Centre for Communicable Diseases.

Thousands of children die from diseases that could be prevented by immunization, but many parents are still reluctant to vaccinate their children. To tackle this, a national and subnational communication for development strategy on immunization was approved in 2017 in all of the geographic focus areas. A counselling package was developed, and 84 health workers obtained skills to counsel hesitant parents in Bayanzurkh and Nalaikh districts, reaching 73,672 caregivers. As a result, the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV) was introduced in Bayanzurkh for 4,909 children aged 2 to 9 months, a coverage rate of 86 per cent.

Following UNICEF Mongolia advocacy and technical support, a Centre for Community Health was established at the National Maternal and Child Health Centre to support community-level child health care, and C-IMCI planning handbooks were translated into Mongolian. A model for real-time teleconsultation for emergency paediatric and obstetric cases (developed in 2012 with UNICEF Mongolia support) was rolled out nationwide by MoH.

Eighty percent of community health workers (485) in the geographic focus areas obtained knowledge on C-IMCI provided by the Mongolian National Medical Sciences University. The University completed a needs assessment for C-IMCI and immunization services among health workers and health department managers for curricula review.

UNICEF Mongolia provided technical support for a multisectoral working group to develop a national plan of action to promote adolescent mental health, aligned with national programmes on non-communicable diseases and child development and protection. For the first time, guidelines were developed for primary-level health professionals on adolescent mental health. UNICEF Mongolia initiated the development of innovative approaches and tools on gender-responsive mental health and preventing sexually transmitted infections. UNICEF Mongolia conducted a country case study for the EAPRO Assessment on Gender-Responsive Adolescent Health, which will contribute to mapping adolescents' key health issues in the region (mental health and an adolescent life skills programme in Mongolia).

Challenges: The change of government resulted in the recruitment of new staff, which requires time investment in advocacy and capacity building. The country's economic situation is not favourable for the approval of budgeted policies.

**OUTPUT 2** Central and decentralized health authorities in targetted areas have improved capacity to legislate, budget, design and deliver quality and equitable nutrition services

### **Analytical statement of progress**

On 12 May 2017, the Parliament of Mongolia endorsed the Law on Food for the Infant and Young Child, greatly improving the enabling environment for breastfeeding. UNICEF Mongolia was instrumental in developing this important new legislation, which bans all types of aggressive advertising and promotion of breast milk substitutes to the general public, caregivers and healthcare professionals, and bans industrially produced complementary foods for children under six months. It also defines the responsibilities of healthcare professionals in protecting breastfeeding from aggressive marketing and avoiding conflicts of interest, and increases the technical requirements of imported breast milk substitutes and complementary food according to international standards. The new legislation has provisions on coordination mechanisms to protect breastfeeding and promote stakeholder accountability.

As children with severe acute malnutrition have extremely low access to adequate treatment in Mongolia, UNICEF Mongolia provided technical assistance to an MoH-led working group to finalize the draft national protocol on integrated management of acute malnutrition, in line with the 2013 updated World Health Organization guidelines. As part of this initiative, 35,931 children under five years of age were screened in Bayanzurkh district, and 206 children were identified with acute malnutrition and referred for treatment.

To generate compelling evidence for policy and programmes on nutrition, UNICEF Mongolia continued to provide technical assistance to MoH to complete the NNS V analysis and report.

The survey assesses the current nutritional status of the Mongolian population, highlights progress made since the 2010 NNS IV, and identifies nutritional status shortfalls. Its goal is to inform policy and programmatic action within the context of significant changes in socio-economic conditions and dietary practices in Mongolia over the past several years. Key features of the NNS V include regional data on relevant nutrition indicators and data on men's micronutrient status and household food security, which had not been included before. The NNS V survey quantifies the prevalence of nutrition conditions that are of greatest concern to the population, particularly those of young children and pregnant women.

As part of the UN Humanitarian Country Team, UNICEF Mongolia delivered life-saving nutritional assistance (micronutrient supplementation, nutritional screening and counselling services) to children and women in dzud-affected vulnerable herder households in 157 soums in 17 provinces. A total of 26,054 children under the age of five and 15,803 pregnant and breastfeeding women received nutrition services, a coverage rate of 98 per cent and 100 per cent respectively in the target areas. Health professionals in the affected areas – 40 health officials at the national level and an estimated 1,300 health practitioners – were trained on nutrition services in emergencies and supportive supervision.

An IYCF counselling service was replicated in the new focus areas, starting with the training of 368 health workers from 74 primary and secondary health facilities in Zavkhan, Govi-Altai and Bayankhongor. IYCF counselling service combined with micronutrient supplementation reached 16,103 children up to two years of age and 11,065 pregnant and breastfeeding women in five focus areas.

**OUTPUT 3** Central and decentralized health and environment authorities in targetted areas have improved capacity to legislate, budget, design, deliver and coordinate WASH services and interventions to mitigate the impact of air pollution on child survival

### **Analytical statement of progress**

With UNICEF Mongolia's direct technical support, drinking water safety plans were developed for Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai and Zavkhan provincial centres and Nalaikh district. Technical working groups were established, training was conducted, risk assessments for the water supply were carried out, defining control measures were determined, linking household water safety issues with adaptation to climate change. At the same time, with technical and financial support from UNICEF Mongolia, a situation assessment on the implementation status of the water safety plans was conducted by the MoH and the National University of Medical Science of Mongolia. It recommended that the water safety plan development and implementation process be strengthened and extended to sub-provincial centres, linking household water safety and measures for adaptation to climate change.

At the national level, a National Programme on the reduction of air and environmental pollution (2017-2021) was developed and approved by the Government following UNICEF Mongolia's advocacy on the impact of air pollution on children's health, which was started in 2016 and continued in 2017.

In addition, a new methodology for setting equitable drinking water tariffs was developed with technical support from UNICEF Mongolia in cooperation with Oxford Policy Management, an international consulting institution, to guide the Water Service Regulatory Commission of Mongolia. It was demonstrated in pilot sites (Tuv province center-Zuunmod and Baganuur District of Ulaanbaatar city). In addition, national and sub-national staff from the water and

sewage service companies and operators received training on equitable water tariffing concepts and methodology. Technical guidelines and manuals were jointly developed to guide implementation.

**OUTCOME 2** By 2021, child-related national policies, budgets and systems, including the child protection system, are inclusive and equity-focused

### **Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Mongolia's efforts in generating quality evidence and policy advocacy in 2017 resulted in a number of programmatic and budgetary government decisions that aim to advance inclusive and equity-focused policies and systems. The National Programme on Child Protection and Development was approved by Government resolution in 2017, reflecting UNICEF Mongolia's priorities such as measuring, tracking and reducing child poverty in all its dimensions, promoting child-sensitive social protection, preventing and protecting children from violence, protecting children from exposure to air pollution, and the importance of ECD, among others. The Government is introducing new child-friendly social protection measures from 2018. Mothers looking after children under the age of three will become entitled to a monthly allowance, enabling them to take care of their children during their first 1,000 days of life. In addition, the Government is introducing a new social protection scheme to provide a quarterly allowance for single mothers or fathers with more than three children.

Following UNICEF Mongolia's policy advocacy, based on budget analysis and costing of the child protection services, the Government allocated US\$2 million to deliver services specified in the Law on Child Protection in 2018. This is in addition to the estimated current annual expenditure of US\$3.7 million on child protection. As there has never been such an allocation for child protection services from the state budget, monitoring and tracking expenditure is very important to further help the Government make informed decisions on budgeting for child protection and to improve the quality of services provided to children needing care and protection.

To further facilitate the translation of the Law on Child Protection and the Law on Combatting Domestic Violence into actual delivery of services, UNICEF Mongolia provided technical and funding support to the Government to develop standards and guidelines to implement the Law. Professionals from sectors such as social work, health, education, welfare and the police also learned more about identifying and delivering appropriate services, and 97 multi-disciplinary teams in UNICEF Mongolia's five target sites became operational, with 1,253 trained cross-sector professionals.

Building on previous work, UNICEF Mongolia conducted a study on air pollution and child health. The study summarizes the unfolding child health crisis and analyses three elements, including the current costs incurred by the health sector, the future costs if no action is taken, and immediate interventions that could be taken now to reduce the adverse impacts on child health. The report also highlights some of the urgent and medium-term policy actions that could be taken.

UNICEF Mongolia's technical support and advocacy contributed to the formal adoption of child-friendly strategies in four geographic focus areas. It also strengthened local governments' commitment and efforts to improve the quality of child-related local planning and budgetary

allocation and to implement CFC strategies to better integrate services for the most vulnerable children and replicate successful models.

UNICEF Mongolia also made considerable progress in promoting child rights and business principles. Companies from major industries and relevant government agencies gained a systematic understanding of how businesses could respect and support children's rights, and consequently their attention to and collaboration for children's well-being increased. As a result, more children have access to kindergartens, WASH facilities and interventions to mitigate air pollution, and a better awareness of online protection.

UNICEF Mongolia supported the Government as it prepared for the Committee on the Rights of the Child's dialogue on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF Mongolia worked with the Government to improve accountability mechanisms for implementing the Committee's concluding observations, and as a result, a national working group was set up with representatives from the Ministries of Justice, Finance, Labour and Social Protection, Health, Education, and the Family, Child and Youth Development Authority. A mix of senior-level and technical experts with responsibility for the implementation of this treaty could enhance follow-up to the Concluding Observations.

UNICEF Mongolia made significant progress in 2017 in strengthening inclusive and equity-focused child-related national policies, budgets and systems, including the child protection system, through quality evidence generation, policy advocacy and high-level technical support.

**OUTPUT 1** National authorities have increased capacity and evidence to enhance the equity and child focus of the national social protection system

### **Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Mongolia continued to generate high-quality evidence and data to inform policymakers, helping them make informed decisions on prioritizing policy and budget allocation, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged children. Real-time monitoring of the impact of government budget decisions informed by the macroeconomic and fiscal challenges is ongoing, in order to provide evidence of the impact of social protection measures, including the child money programme, on children and their families. The findings of the real-time monitoring will be shared with the Government on a quarterly basis to inform their ongoing social protection reform policies.

UNICEF Mongolia prioritized the health impacts of air pollution on children and worked to generate knowledge on its irreversible impact on children's health and development. For this purpose, UNICEF Mongolia undertook a study to analyse public spending on air pollution-related health problems and the cost of inaction and proposed a number of practical and costed interventions aimed at reducing children's and women's exposure to air pollution. The study report will be launched in January 2018 to raise public awareness on the issue.

Based on global and country-specific evidence and good practices, UNICEF Mongolia organized policy dialogues and advocacy in the areas of social protection, child poverty and public finance for children. A workshop on social policy targeting was organized jointly with the Government to help it make better informed and objective decisions in targeting some of the important social protection programmes planned in 2018, including the child money programme. Moreover, regular measurement and tracking of child poverty in its multiple dimensions was

discussed with the Government and partners at another workshop, and concrete actions were agreed to help the Government achieve the SDG goal on poverty alleviation. The two workshops also provided an opportunity to share experiences and learn lessons from other countries in the region, and provided a forum where important areas of child poverty and social protection could be discussed openly with development partners, civil society organizations and the Government.

UNICEF Mongolia provided technical assistance to help the Government better manage funds allocated for child protection and development, offering a methodology for funds allocation that aims to address local needs. This makes it easier for the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to allocate funds more effectively, based on evidence for delivering child protection and development services. UNICEF Mongolia shared the Convention on the Rights of the Child General Comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights with Government counterparts on a number of occasions, calling on them to implement Article 4 of the Convention.

Overall, UNICEF Mongolia's efforts in evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy and technical support to the Government contributed greatly to the Government's decisions in the form of policy documents and budget allocations.

**OUTPUT 2** Government's capacity to legislate, plan, budget and to provide child protection services has increased to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation at central level and in targeted areas

### **Analytical statement of progress**

The Government showed increased commitment to strengthening the child protection system in Mongolia in 2017, following UNICEF Mongolia's continued strategic advocacy and systematic technical support. This commitment is evidenced in the major steps it took, including approving the National Programme on Child Development and Protection as well as a series of standards and guidelines for child protection services, allocating US\$2 million from the state budget for child protection services, and capacity building for professionals across sectors at various levels.

UNICEF Mongolia provided support to the Government in developing standards and guidelines so that these laws could be translated into actual delivery of services, such as alternative care, community-based multi-disciplinary teams, referrals, and one-stop service centres, and then introduced to relevant professionals at various levels. Of more than 30 standards and guidelines, eight were supported by UNICEF Mongolia and approved by joint decrees of the Ministers of Justice, Health, and Labour and Social Protection. UNICEF Mongolia also assisted MECSS in developing a national and school-level child protection policy for educational settings, as well as reporting and referral procedures. This was accompanied by a sample of a child protection self-audit tool that can provide a practical assessment 'scorecard' to help schools measure how well they are meeting basic standards for protecting children and pinpoint areas for improvement.

UNICEF Mongolia helped organize national training for 60 trainers on a multi-disciplinary approach to child protection, who went on to train 600 multi-disciplinary teams in all 21 provinces and 9 districts of Ulaanbaatar. UNICEF Mongolia also supported 97 multi-disciplinary teams in the target sites to become operational and provide integrated child protection services

to vulnerable children. In total, 1,253 professionals from sectors such as social work, health, education, welfare and the police were better able to apply the newly approved laws, work together to identify and assess child protection risks, and collectively decide on necessary cross-sectoral responses.

Following UNICEF Mongolia's policy advocacy, based on budget analysis and costing child protection services, the Government allocated US\$2 million to deliver services specified in the Law on Child Protection in 2018. This is in addition to the current estimated annual expenditure of US\$3.7 million for child protection.

UNICEF Mongolia supported the Government as it prepared for the Committee on the Rights of the Child's dialogue, to ensure it sent the best possible high-level and multisectoral delegation to the session. This involved briefing the delegation on the Committee's approach and helping to prepare written replies to the Committee's List of Issues. UNICEF Mongolia worked with the Government to improve accountability mechanisms for implementing the Concluding Observations, and as a result, a national multisectoral working group was established. A mix of senior-level and technical experts with responsibility for the implementation of this treaty could enhance follow-up actions. The National Programme on Child Development and Protection that was approved by the Government is a costed plan of action inclusive of the recommendations.

**OUTPUT 3** Local authorities in target areas have adopted child-friendly strategies, improved knowledge of the situation of children and enhanced capacity to design and deliver integrated and equitable supply of services

#### **Analytical statement of progress**

A CFC strategy – in which the rights of children are an integral part of public policies, programmes and decisions – was piloted in Khuvsgul province and Nalaikh district as part of UNICEF Mongolia's 2012-2016 Country Programme. In 2017, these good practices were replicated in three provinces and one district in Ulaanbaatar, the four new geographic focus areas of UNICEF Mongolia's 2017-2021 Country Programme. UNICEF Mongolia provided technical support to the four local governments, and as a result they formally adopted CFC strategies. This included setting up children's councils, integrating child-friendly plans in local development plans, allocating a budget for children, and putting in place mechanisms to ensure children can take part in decision-making. The success of this venture is evidenced by the growing number of decisions and increased budget allocations for children, as well as the approval of a sub-programme called the Child-Friendly Province by three local governments. One local government reported they increased the budget for children in 2018 by twenty times compared to 2017.

The children's councils – advisory bodies to the local administration on child rights-related matters – are headed by provincial and district governors and are leading this initiative. The councils improved coordination between different sectors, so that they all prioritize the interests of children with child-centred decisions and planning. The provincial governor's declaration of a monthly 'Listen to Children Day' underlined local governments' commitment to encouraging children to participate in decision-making processes. About 300 children in Bayankhongor province attended the 2017 Children's Conference and shared their concerns and views with decision makers.

Local governments conducted a self-assessment of children's situation in the focus areas using the CFC governance assessment checklist with UNICEF Mongolia's technical support. It yielded good quantitative and qualitative information for planning CFC programmes and boosted local authorities' understanding of the issues affecting children in their areas. To support provincial and district authorities in implementing child-friendly planning and budgeting, UNICEF Mongolia organized training jointly with Khuvsgul government for 210 local authorities on CFC initiatives, including governors and health, education, family, and child development department heads. A practical guide and assessment tools were also prepared as a useful reference for local authorities. The significant decline in the Local Development Fund in 2017 made it challenging for local governments to deliver the CFC initiatives. Against this background, UNICEF Mongolia continued to advocate for low-cost, high-efficiency service delivery models that were piloted in the previous country programme and to provide technical assistance to build local government's capacity to work with the extractive sector, so that children's needs are prioritized in local plans and budgets. This could ultimately result in additional revenue for local governments.

Good CFC practices in the previous and current target areas were used as benchmarks to advocate for a wider, nationwide scale-up. UNICEF Mongolia partnered with the Khuvsgul local government to organize two experience-sharing trips that showcased the province's good practices to about 35 policymakers from relevant ministries and agencies, including the Cabinet Secretariat and the National Development Agency.

**OUTPUT 4** The private sector (and in particular extractive industries) has increased capacity and commitment to its responsibility to respect child rights, including implementation of children's rights and business principles

#### **Analytical statement of progress**

Capacity building is a core implementation strategy and helped to prompt new ways of thinking. Through UNICEF Mongolia's efforts, more than 160 people gained a better understanding of how the private sector could support children's well-being through their day-to-day business operations in areas where they interface with children, such as the marketplace, the workplace and in the community. They represented 70 businesses (textile, information and communication technology [ICT], mining, food and services sectors), relevant government institutions (Family, Child and Youth Development Authority, the Communications Regulatory Commission, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection), business associations (the Business Council of Mongolia, the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Council for Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility) and academic institutions. Private sector champions (Arig and Wagner Asia) increased their capacity to support children as child-friendly corporate institutions.

Throughout 2017, UNICEF Mongolia continued to build and develop collaborative partnerships with and among government agencies and businesses to support children in need, by building on the children's rights and business principles, the UNICEF systematic approach for businesses developed jointly with key stakeholders around the world. Other notable achievements included a private sector partnership (ING, Arig and Wagner Asia) with the Bayanzurkh district and UNICEF Mongolia, which helped more than 830 children access kindergartens with good sanitation facilities and clean air. A partnership between industry, the Communications Regulatory Committee, the Family, Child and Youth Development Authority, Mobicom and others helped to raise awareness among industry, parents and children of online child protection through various promotional and educational activities. This national-level partnership joined the global initiative Safer Internet Day with over 130 participating countries.

UNICEF Mongolia also partnered with food and service industry companies and the Ulaanbaatar Department for Children and Family Development to provide Ulaanbaatar businesses with a better understanding of how to make their operations more child-friendly and so contribute to the Child-Friendly City initiative. International and local best practices were shared and discussed with the companies, which are now committed to improving their business practices to benefit children and families in the capital.

In 2017, UNICEF Mongolia continued to generate evidence that supported the Government and businesses in improving their practices and highlighted the role of the private sector in children’s well-being. Mining has huge potential for Mongolia and is expected to play a central role in its economic and social development, bringing many benefits to communities, such as employment in often remote areas. However, it can also cause negative impacts, particularly on children. UNICEF Mongolia’s study, “Mining-related in-migration and the impacts on children in Mongolia” created a solid foundation for stakeholder discussions and policy dialogue with the mining sector, and its recommendations urged mining companies and communities to work together to address these negative impacts. Other important research included an independent study on the existing legal and policy environment regarding business practices for children and family development, which provided evidence of the opportunities as well as the gaps in developing child-friendly businesses in Mongolia. This was led by the Family, Child and Youth Development Authority in partnership with the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and UNICEF Mongolia.

## Document centre

### Evaluation and research

Title	Sequence Number	Type of Report
MICS report Kuvsgul 2016	2017/002	Survey
MICS report Nalaikh 2016	2017/001	Survey

### Other publications

Title
UNICEF@70, For every child, hope
UNICEF@70 Postcards
C-IMCI counseling cards
General comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children’s rights (art. 4)
World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) poster
Results of a survey on importation, trade and consumption of breast-milk substitutes
Results of a survey on importation, trade and consumption of breast-milk substitutes - Infographics
Research Report on Indoor Air Quality in Schools, Ulaanbaatar
A Study on Menstrual Hygiene Management in Mongolia: Understanding Practices and Impacts on Adolescent Schoolgirls education and Health (In English and Mongolian)
“Tuva language -4” student’s book
Children’s book “My special friend”
Children’s book “Friends in Buulhun’s dream”
Children’s comic book “Summer camp adventure”

Mining-related in-migration and the impact on children in Mongolia research findings and recommendations
Obligations and actions on children's rights and business
Children's Rights and Business Explained

### Lessons learned

Document Type/Category	Title
Innovation	Container WASH facilities for schools, dormitories and kindergartens in Mongolia

### Programme documents

Document Type	Title	Name
CPD	Mongolia Costed Evaluation plan 2017-2021	Mongolia_CEP_2017-2021.pdf
CPD	Mongolia Country Programme Document	Mongolia_CPD_2017-2021.pdf