Executive summary

The past year, 2017, was the final year of the 2011–2017 Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Myanmar and UNICEF. During the year, a new Country Programme of Cooperation for 2018–2022 was prepared in a consultative process that culminated in approval by the UNICEF Executive Board at its meeting in September 2017.

The achievements of the year were overshadowed by the attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on Government military posts in Rakhine State, and the aftermath, which led to over 650,000 refugees fleeing into neighbouring Bangladesh. The Army’s attacks took place on the day the Rakhine Advisory Commission, released its report and recommendations for addressing the situation in the State. The impact of these events on peace and development not only in Rakhine but also in the rest of the country is still unfolding and will continue to have a significant influence on UNICEF’s programme of support in the country for some time to come.

Despite the challenges, significant results for children were achieved over the course of the year. UNICEF and partners, with funding from GAVI, supported the Government to implement a major campaign to vaccinate children against encephalitis. To date the campaign has reached 12.55 million children, or 92.5 per cent of the target. A school construction programme in Rakhine State, originally conceived as a response to damage caused by 2015 floods and cyclones, has rehabilitated or reconstructed classrooms in 64 schools, with a further 38 underway. And in Chin State, a pioneering social protection and cash transfer programme targeting women who are pregnant and children under 2 years of age has been successfully launched with UNICEF technical support and funding from the multi-donor Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund. This programme is expected to be replicated in Rakhine State using government funds, and expanded to other states and regions in the future.

UNICEF supported major policy initiatives that reached important milestones in 2017. These include the launch of the Vital Registration Manual to support making birth registration available to all children in the country. Guidelines on the minimum Standard of Care and Protection for Children in Residential Facilities were launched in November 2017. Also, during the year the National Education Strategic Plan was launched and the Early Childhood Intervention Strategic Plan was adopted.

The Government introduced new approaches to coordination of development assistance, including the creation of the Development Assistance Coordination Unit and the adoption of a Development Assistance Policy. UNICEF engaged closely with these processes and is playing a key role in facilitating two of the sector coordination groups operating under the Development Assistance Coordination Unit – one for education and one for social protection – as well as participating in other relevant groups, including those for health and nutrition.

The preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the first
to be done in Myanmar and which is in the process of being finalized, has helped identify opportunities for closer partnerships among United Nations agencies. In particular, UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have developed two joint programmes to address gender-based violence and violence against children, and improve the capacities of social welfare agencies to respond.

The U-Report platform continues to grow in membership, now reaching some 18,000 members. Partnerships have been developed with Teen Radio and Myanmar Radio and Television to provide programmes for discussion of U-Report poll results. A forum of 60 U-Reporters and 80 Members of Parliament provided an opportunity for young people to influence key decisionmakers and help them better understand the needs to children in their constituencies.

A new partnership with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute is providing a platform for addressing the issue of orphanage and child sex tourism and, hopefully, acting early to prevent the kind of challenges seen in some neighbouring countries.

The new country programme document together with the country programme management plan were largely developed prior to the events of August 2017. The conditions under which they were developed have changed and there has been an impact on the availability of funding to support the proposed programme as originally envisaged. Should this continue, some adjustments may be needed to the planned results and means of achieving them.

The leadership of the UNICEF Myanmar Country Office went through a planned transition, with the incumbent Representative completing his tour of duty in September 2017 and the new Representative arriving to replace him later the same month.

**Humanitarian assistance**

Since January 2017, UNICEF Myanmar engaged in humanitarian response in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states, despite challenges of constrained access, limited funding, political instability and insecurity. The 2017 Humanitarian Action for Children for US$25.1 million was only 44 percent funded; nevertheless, UNICEF strengthened its collaboration and partnerships with the Government of Myanmar, local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other United Nations agencies to ensure access to life-saving assistance and support for the well-being of more than 100,000 children.

Through UNICEF’s water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme, access to water was extended to more than 59,000 children, women and men in 2017, and more than 18,000 people had improved access to appropriate sanitation services. Funding and access constraints caused by the armed attacks on police posts and subsequent military operations in northern Rakhine limited UNICEF’s ability to achieve more this year, yet through the efforts of community-based incentivized workers, hygiene promotion reached more than 95,000 people – 20,000 more than targeted in 2017. As WASH cluster lead, trainings were conducted for government officials and local partners, and protection and gender mainstreaming trainings were carried out at the national and state levels. UNICEF also supported the study on functionality of ceramic water filters in collaboration with the United States Centers for Disease Control.

Integrated maternal and neonatal child health services, including immunizations, emergency referrals and nutrition support, were provided to internally displaced persons and other vulnerable community members in hard-to-reach areas in Rakhine, helping to bridge
humanitarian health and nutrition interventions with development outcomes. In Kachin, UNICEF supported integrated health, nutrition and WASH services to conflict-affected and other vulnerable community members in both government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas. However, poor access restricted some achievements. Only 39 per cent of children targeted for measles immunisations were reached; however, more than 41,000 women and children accessed health services, over-reaching the target by 8 per cent. A total of 6,851 children with severe acute malnutrition were admitted for treatment, fewer than planned due to the cessation of assistance and the movement of people from Rakhine between August and November.

Altogether, nearly 16,500 school-age children accessed UNICEF-supported formal or non-formal education opportunities in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan states in 2017. UNICEF worked closely with government counterparts in Rakhine, focusing on continued education service delivery support for children in camps and host/surrounding communities. UNICEF also led the education in emergencies sector coordination. Moreover, the construction, rehabilitation and repair of 64 schools damaged in 2015 floods was completed in 2017. In Kachin and Shan, UNICEF and partners supported internally displaced children in government schools through the provision of teaching and learning materials and temporary learning classrooms. In non-government-controlled areas, UNICEF and partners provided teachers’ training, teaching and learning materials, and teacher incentives.

Through its partners in Kachin and Rakhine, UNICEF’s child protection programme supported nearly 90,000 children through provision of access to psychosocial services. Point-of-time access decreased from mid-year to the end of the year due to partners’ lack of access to northern Rakhine, where many children previously had access to these services. Conversely, UNICEF reached nearly double the target for provision of life skills management, reaching 13,563 adolescent boys and girls. Similarly, 1,648 child survivors of violence or abuse received case management services, achieving twice the target. More than 51,968 children received direct mine risk education lessons and 150 child victims of landmines/explosive remnants of war and children with disabilities received support services, including medical support, assistive devices, physical rehabilitation and peer-to-peer support. In addition, 341 staff members from the United Nations/international NGOs/community-based organizations were trained on the monitoring and reporting mechanism. Some 428 incidents of grave violations against children were reported in Myanmar, including 109 grave violations following the August conflict in northern Rakhine. Additionally, 49 children and youth were released from the Myanmar army, and socio-economic support continued to be provided to 219 children and adolescents released from the army since 2012.

UNICEF also contributed to national disaster risk reduction policies and measures through technical support for the formulation of the Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction. Warehouse management trainings – with components of inclusive disaster risk reduction – were provided to government officials.

The second child-centred risk assessment was developed and is awaiting approval by the Ministry. The UNICEF Myanmar Country Office also started a climate landscape analysis for children with inputs from government departments, United Nations agencies, and local and international partners.

More than 40 staff collaborated in the development of a risk profile for Myanmar, the first phase of the emergency preparedness platform process for which Myanmar is a pilot country. In
addition, 65 per cent of all Country Office staff participated in emergency preparedness and response training and simulations.

**Equity in practice**

Over the course of the country programme, UNICEF Myanmar has strengthened its focus on equity and reaching every child through its programming. UNICEF’s flagship maternal and child cash transfer programmes were launched in 2017. As lead technical partner, UNICEF has been supporting the Department of Social Welfare since 2016 to implement the first government-led, child-focused social cash transfer programme in Myanmar, with focus on nutrition outcomes. The transfers began in Chin in October 2017, with UNICEF ensuring the creation of systems-based approaches to the cash transfer, and technical guidance to the communication for development (C4D) and monitoring and evaluation components of the programme. The Department of Social Welfare plans to expand maternal and child cash transfer programmes, starting with Naga and Rakhine, and UNICEF will continue to support these efforts.

The past year, 2017, saw the successful culmination of two years of advocacy and technical assistance for the development of the revised Vital (Birth and Death) Registration Manual. The manual, endorsed by the Ministries of Planning and Finance and of Health, was launched in October 2017 and is enshrined in the principles of Universal Birth Registration. In particular, it confirms the right of every child under 10 years old to be registered in any location without fees and without discrimination.

The bylaw on persons with disabilities is due to be approved by the Attorney General, and includes provisions to implement the Law on Persons with Disabilities. Concurrently, a high-level workshop was held with the Department of Social Welfare and other key stakeholders to identify essential elements for a comprehensive, evidence-based communication for development (C4D) strategy to improve inclusion of children with disabilities.

The globally standardized Out-of-School Children Initiative, which supports countries to reduce the numbers of out-of-school children, was launched in 2017 with high-level engagement from nine relevant ministries, who pledged their informational and technical commitment. By developing comprehensive profiles of excluded children and linking them to determinants of exclusion, the Out-of-School Children Initiative allows for the identification and implementation of strategies that directly address exclusion and its causes. With more than 2 million school-age children being out of school in Myanmar, the Initiative provides the necessary evidencebase to address the needs of out-of-school childrenmore strategically. With technical support from UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Ministry of Education launched the Out-of-School Children Initiative and developed a roadmap to advance its implementation. Through an initial training, members of the steering committee and the technical team are now familiar with the Initiative’s approach, its framework and its five core dimensions, and have enhanced understanding of how to link the Initiative to policy planning and use its data to leverage funding and inform advocacy for the Department of Alternative Education, charged with action for out-of-school children. The Out-of-School Children Initiative study will be finalized by the end of 2017 and will establish a comprehensive profile of excluded children to guide strategic and context-specific interventions for out-of-school children.

Through continued expansion and strengthening of local partnerships, UNICEF has succeeded in reaching the most vulnerable children with an integrated package of essential services that includes immunization, micronutrient supplementation, health, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation
promotion, as well as emergency referrals. Of special significance is the coverage obtained in challenging locations, including Rakhine, northern Rakhine and the non-government-controlled areas of Kachin through partners, and in Nagaland and Sagaing through local health administrations.

UNICEF Myanmar strengthened the country’s capacity for equity-focused analysis through the introduction of EQUIST. This tool allows for analysis of country data across a range of variables to select priority populations and health issues. In a UNICEF-supported training, 23 stakeholders, including relevant divisions of the Ministry of Health and Sports, United Nations agencies and international NGOs, used EQUIST to select target populations, epidemiological priorities and appropriate interventions to address them. The training resulted in commitment to apply EQUIST to inform the Ending Preventable Maternal and Newborn Deaths 2018–2030 strategy as a tangible investment in equity-focused planning.

Over the course of this country programme, WASH has increasingly prioritized service delivery through counterparts that cover townships with the lowest access to water and sanitation, and having a high number of people with unimproved sanitation facilities, namely, Rakhine, Ayerwaddy and central Myanmar. In these locations, adapted community-led total sanitation (CLTS) approaches have been implemented to support vulnerable families through the provision of community-level materials and behaviour change communication to collectively achieve open defecation free (ODF) communities.

The child-centred risk assessment, which focuses on identifying inequity between townships for children across multiple deprivations, was launched in 2017. This forms the basis for inclusive disaster risk reduction and improved understanding of vulnerabilities across Myanmar. UNICEF also trained 265 partners from government, civil society organizations and volunteer groups, equipping them with knowledge and skills for ensuring inclusion of vulnerable children in disaster risk reduction plans.

**Strategic Plan 2018–2021**

The Strategic Plan 2018–2021 was being developed more or less at the same time as the Myanmar Country Programme Document 2018–2022, which was approved by the UNICEF Executive Board at the September 2017 session. Thus, the organizational discussions around the preparation of the new Strategic Plan influenced the content and structure of the new Myanmar Country Programme. As a result, there is good alignment between the outcomes and outputs of the Strategic Plan and the Country Programme Document. The indicators for both are also well aligned, with the slight exception of child protection, where perhaps some adjustment might need to be made. The engagement of UNICEF in the national process for monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, in partnership with the Central Statistical Organization, provides an opportunity to influence the development of national systems supporting the collection and compilation of quality data.

The preparation of the first UNDAF for Myanmar has also provided a good opportunity for alignment of outcomes, outputs and indicators, as well as more coherence in implementation processes, including opportunities for joint programming and harmonized business operations.

The definition of the Strategic Plan change strategies and indicators provide a key framework for reviewing approaches at the country office level. In general, the Myanmar Country Office is already following the majority of these strategies; however, the opportunity will be taken to review and address gaps and weaknesses, as part of the process of finalizing the 2018 workplan.
and annual management plan. Particular areas requiring attention include cross-sectoral approaches to early childhood development and adolescents, gender-responsive programming and business partnerships for children. The environment for a stronger United Nations working together has greatly improved through the UNDAF process in 2017, and this can be further strengthened in 2018, including in relation to developing greater harmonization between humanitarian, development and peace programming (the ‘nexus’).

The organizational effectiveness and efficiency results are similarly fairly well addressed by the Myanmar Country Office. However, the opportunity will be taken, as the annual management plan for 2018 is finalized, to review performance and monitoring indicators, to ensure that the Country Office is on track to deliver the required results. Particular areas where improvements can be made include reducing carbon footprint, implementing anti-fraud measures and minimizing fraud risk, and staff training and development.

**Emerging areas of importance**

**Climate change and children.** Myanmar is experiencing longer dry seasons and increasing groundwater salinity in coastal areas where an estimated 10 million people remain dependent on rain-fed surface water ponds as their main source of drinking water. Similarly, people living in the dry zone – which represents about 10 per cent of the country’s total land area – have been facing water scarcity mainly due to declining water availability, frequent droughts and intensifying weather events, especially flash floods and cyclones. UNICEF has supported the identification of high-risk communities to increase pond water storage capacity. Embankments have been raised to reduce flood risks and tools are under development to better monitor levels and predict water shortage. Both coastal areas and dry zone communities have been supported to install community managed solar-powered water systems which are able to better track and control water usage.

UNICEF’s support to the Government on immunization and cold chain systems strengthening includes efforts towards environmental sustainability by installing refrigerators that are solar-powered. More than 200 solar-powered refrigerators were installed in 150 townships, including the most hard-to-reach areas with no access to electricity.

**Children on the move.** UNICEF supported the Myanmar Police Force to design communication materials to address trafficking of women and girls to China, and to implement related prevention activities in Kachin and Northern Shan states. In 2017, a non-formal education module on prevention of unsafe migration and trafficking was produced and roll-out has started in Rakhine State. UNICEF’s technical and financial support has contributed to investigation of all cross-border child trafficking cases (one third of the total caseload) and reintegration of all repatriated girls and women in 2017.

Recognizing that cross-border trafficking is only a fraction of the problem and drawing on UNICEF’s new Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move, UNICEF has been advocating for more comprehensive prevention and response measures for safe internal migration of children and families. UNICEF is also advocating for the Government to extend existing cross-border protection mechanisms to cover irregular migrant children who may require family tracing and reunification, adequate services and safe return to the place of origin.

UNICEF’s facilitative role was instrumental in making education accessible for migrant and former refugee children from Thailand in Kayin State. UNICEF provided technical support to the State Education Department to develop a guideline that systematized and formalized the
modality of accepting returnee (both migrant and repatriates) students in schools. This was the first time clear government instruction on this issue was elaborated, providing student recognition and accreditation of different linguistic and academic backgrounds. UNICEF supported setting up a Migrant Children Committee chaired by the Kayin State Education Department and helped create a booklet containing information on education updates in south-east areas for refugee families. Technical support was also provided to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’ voluntary repatriation programme for Myanmar refugees in Thailand. As a result, all students of the first batch repatriated in 2017 (20 children) gained access to government schools.

**Alternative education.** UNICEF support to the Ministry of Education enabled the drafting of a comprehensive Alternative Education Sub-Sector (Policy) Framework to provide alternative-learning opportunities for disadvantaged children aged 10–14 years+ who have no or limited access to the formal education system. The framework has been submitted to the National Education Policy Commission as a foundational reference document for the subsequent development of an Alternative Education Policy for all learners, including adolescents outside the formal education system.

**Accelerate integrated early childhood development.** UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to lead the development and adoption of integrated Early Childhood Intervention Strategic Plan, benefiting all young children 0–5 years old through early identification and follow-up action on developmental delays, abnormal behaviours, disabilities and malnutrition. Preparatory work carried out this year will enable the roll-out of early childhood interventions in nine sites in 2018.

**Summary notes and acronyms**

**Notes**

*Japanese encephalitis* virus JEV is the most important cause of viral *encephalitis* in Asia. It is a mosquito-borne flavivirus, and belongs to the same genus as dengue, yellow fever and West Nile viruses. The first case of *Japanese encephalitis* viral disease (JE) was documented in 1871 in Japan, hence its name today. (WHO)

**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>C4D</td>
<td>communication for development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLTS</td>
<td>community-led total sanitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCT</td>
<td>direct cash transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMTCT</td>
<td>elimination of mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAC</td>
<td>harmonized approach to cash transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODF</td>
<td>open defecation free</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMTCT</td>
<td>prevention of mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUN</td>
<td>Scaling Up Nutrition</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDAF</td>
<td>United Nations Development Assistance Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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Capacity development

UNICEF Myanmar focused on strengthening national capacity to respond to increased reports of child sexual abuse in Yangon, Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy, where 36 district court judges and 392 township police officers were trained. Overall, 192 townships were covered, including 19 with operational Department of Social Welfare social workers. UNICEF continued supporting the Department of Social Welfare with the expansion of the child protection case management system to additional townships. This upstream work was complemented by training of village/township-level community-based organizations, NGOs and child protection actors in Mawlamyine (for lower Myanmar) and Pyay (for upper Myanmar), and will result in defining partnerships between these actors and the national case management system.

The first-ever National Education Strategic Plan, endorsed in February 2017, provided an entry point for UNICEF to support the Ministry of Education to guide the process of Annual Budget Planning and Performance Review. Subsequently, national and subnational education officers were trained in evidence-based analysis and planning, 80 state education officials were supported to prepare annual costed plans for 2018, and an additional 240 built their capacity in human resource development planning.

UNICEF’s support to capacity development of health staff at secondary level was strengthened by the implementation of the emergency paediatric care programme in 18 district hospitals. The six-month progress data show improvement in the capacity of clinicians: paediatric and neonatal resuscitation skills saw 28 per cent improvement, while systematic management of childhood pneumonia skills improved by 16 per cent.

Capacity building in C4D contributed to the maternal and child cash transfer programme outcomes, training of Health Literacy and Promotion Unit staff at the subnational level, and supporting the University of Community Health to strengthen their behaviour change communication curriculum. All of UNICEF partner radio stations across the country have been trained on strengthening their participatory broadcasting and public engagement skills and tools to give voice to the most marginalized.

Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

UNICEF Myanmar had produced an updated report on the situation of children in Myanmar, drawing on major sources of comprehensive data on women, children and other vulnerable groups (2014 Census, Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2015/16, other national surveys and administrative data). The report and the analysis has already been used extensively to inform policy discussions within several ministries, and to inform the Government’s vision for addressing key child rights issues. Specifically, the evidence on low budget allocations for key social sectors has been used to successfully advocate for the raising of budget allocations for children to the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement in the 2017–2018 national budget.

The development of cross-sectoral subnational data profiles on children, supported by UNICEF in selected states and regions since 2015, has led to the establishment of regular platforms for data sharing, and to an expansion of the amount of administrative data made available to local
policymakers. For instance, in Kachin State the local planning director leads a committee that meets regularly to review, discuss and address data issues on a set of indicators for children. In Kayin State, non-state actors have been contributing with information on the children’s situation in non-government-controlled areas, thus enriching and completing the understanding of the situation of all children.

A situation analysis on children with disabilities was launched in 2016 and used extensively in 2017 to advocate for the establishment of the national commission on the rights of people with disability (September 2017); to inform the shadow report on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the Myanmar Federation of People with Disabilities (information-sharing sessions led by UNICEF took place in November 2017); and to advocate accelerating the establishment of the national registration and certification mechanisms for people with disabilities, which will be piloted in two locations in January 2018, and includes specific modules on child functioning.

**Partnerships**

UNICEF Myanmar continued to build its partnerships to help build an environment conducive to the realization of children’s rights.

The partnership with the Myanmar Union Parliament, States and Regional Parliaments was expanded in 2017. A debate for 150 parliamentarians on child rights was delivered; workshops with the Public Accounts Committee ensured children’s budgeting needs were adequately considered; in depth briefings on the Child Rights Bill were conducted ahead of the review of the Bill; more than 150 parliamentarians in Kachin, Kayin and Shan states participated in humanitarian mine action workshops; and Members of Parliament were briefed on social protection policy to ensure they hold the Government accountable for its implementation.

The voices of youth were mobilized as an advocacy force through U-Report. Some 18,000 U Reporters have now signed up and are participating in weekly polls.

Partnerships with Teen Radio and Myanmar Radio and Television were established to discuss the poll results on monthly radio and TV programmes. A forum of 50 U-Reporters and 80 Parliamentarians was delivered to discuss how Parliamentarians can use U-Report to better understand the needs of young people in their constituencies.

The partnership with the Myanmar Interfaith for Children platform resulted in them producing a short video calling for peace and social cohesion, disseminated through social media ahead of the second Panglong Peace Conference.

Partnerships with state and non-state actors and local NGOs were expanded to reach children in hard-to-reach and conflict-affected areas such as Chin, Kachin, Nagaland, Northern Shan and Rakhine, to ensure equitable access to education, health, nutrition and WASH interventions.

UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (and the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute) on orphanage and child sex tourism, delivering awareness campaigns for stakeholders in tourist ‘hotspots’ and disseminating a pamphlet to raise tourists’ awareness of orphanage tourism.

**External communication and public advocacy**

Priority #1: Increased public finance for children – During the Parliamentary review of the 2017–2018 national budget, UNICEF met with the Joint Public Accounts Committee to make the case for increased budget allocations for children. An advocacy flier with key budget asks and messages was distributed to 660 Members of Parliament. The 2017–2018 budget allocation to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement increased substantially.

Priority # 2: Children in Rakhine and Priority #3: Children Affected by Armed Conflict – The Myanmar Child Alert: Lives on hold, Making sure no child is left behind in Myanmar – was launched in May 2017. The report and strong multimedia materials focused on the challenges facing children in Myanmar despite moves towards national reconciliation and reform – with specific focus on the impact of conflict on children in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan states. There was wide pick-up globally: 56 stories in international and national media; 3,593 social media mentions (international public); 292 views of the UNICEF microsite (global Website); and 6,894 people reached through Facebook posts in Myanmar.

Media partnerships: UNICEF national media partnerships expanded to increase coverage and debate on the five advocacy priorities among key influencers in Myanmar and the public. Child Rights, ethics and journalism training workshops were conducted for Mandalay media, with journalists from ethnic media mobilized to cover stories on children’s rights. Public engagement through social media continued to expand, with the social media fan base increasing from 48,140 in December 2016 to 61,574 in December 2017.

South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation

UNICEF Myanmar supported the learning exchange of Myanmar health officials to Thailand on the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Members of the delegation from the Ministry of Health and Sports, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) from Myanmar met with health authorities in Thailand, who shared best practices and coordinating actions. The delegation also observed service delivery, data collection/recording/disaggregation and private/public facilities. The aim of the exchange was to expand capacities for Myanmar to develop the national elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT) of HIV validation framework and implementation plan through piloting in selected subnational administrative regions, and preparation for national validation.

The Ministry of Education hosted the sixth WASH in Schools International Learning Exchanges in 2017. This brought more than 50 participants from 11 countries of the South-East Asian and Pacific regions, representing governments, international organizations and research institutions, together with WASH experts. The event contributed to increased momentum for WASH in Schools and to growing the community of practitioners in the region.

UNICEF supported Myanmar to benefit from the South-East Asia Primary Learning Metric, the first regionally standardized assessment for use across the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that is designed to provide comparative evidence by measuring outcomes in reading writing, mathematics and global citizenship. A field trial was completed in 2017, which tested more than 2,000 Grade 5 students, and surveyed their teachers and parents, in five states/regions. The main survey is planned for 2019. When concluded, the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Matrix will contribute towards improving and redefining learning outcomes.
In the framework of developing a post-graduate diploma course in social work at Yangon University, UNICEF supported the first meeting between the Myanmar delegation and Thailand’s Thamasat University on exploring the scope of technical assistance required to strengthen the social service workforce in Myanmar. The Department of Social Welfare, Yangon University and Thamasat University agreed on the plan to revise the curriculum and strengthen social work education in Myanmar.

Identification and promotion of innovation

In 2017, UNICEF Myanmar continued utilizing digital technology to increase the reach and effectiveness of its programmes. UNICEF, in partnership with the Clinton Health Access Initiative, supported the Laboratory Information Management System to enhance data sharing among National Health Laboratories and the National AIDS Programme. The innovation features the introduction of an SMS printer in high-volume sites to reduce the time required to deliver reports to service providers, and the involvement of ‘expert clients’ to reduce loss to follow-up. As a result, the testing of HIV-exposed infants using polymerase chain reaction technology increased from 39 per cent in 2015 to 50 per cent among all live births of HIV-exposed children in October 2017.

Access to the mobile Internet in Myanmar has been increasing, providing new opportunities for penetrating hard-to-reach areas with information. UNICEF supported the development of a mine risk education application for iOS and Android mobile devices to reach communicates living in areas affected by landmines/explosive remnants of war. Educators, young people and community members can also access required safety information by using the programme directly on a computer.

Innovation was also advanced through information and best practice exchange within Myanmar. UNICEF successfully supported community and local government exchange visits between Ayeyarwaddy, Magway and Rakhine to introduce decision makers and engineers to new approaches to manage water supply. This has resulted in commitment of time, money and considerable group contribution into more than 50 community water supply systems in Ayeyarwaddy and Rakhine.

UNICEF launched a 21st Century Skills Programme to establish a new generation of social innovators – adolescents empowered to improve their lives and change their communities. In Rakhine State, the programme mobilized a cadre of adolescents from different religious backgrounds (Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim), and created a youth interfaith platform that promoted a climate of resiliency, cohesion and collective efficacy.

Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages

Integration and cross-sectoral linkages of UNICEF-supported sectors have strengthened considerably over the country programme. Several examples are highlighted, positioning UNICEF well to address multiple deprivations affecting women and children more effectively.

In 2017, UNICEF drafted its early childhood development country strategy and supported the Government of Myanmar towards operationalizing the national early childhood care and development policy, through a high-level multi-sectoral early childhood care and development committee and planning the roll-out of early childhood interventions in 2018. Following the Government’s new Nutrition Sector Coordination Group involving four ministries, UNICEF, together with Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) stakeholders, supported the Government to
begin drafting a national multi-sectoral costed plan for nutrition. Similarly, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement, as the Social Protection Sub-Sector Coordination Group facilitator, to start developing a costed sector plan with linkages to multiple sectors, which will guide the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategic Plan (2014–2024). Furthermore, Ministry of Health and Sports, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation jointly launched the national rural WASH investment plan for universal access to sustainable WASH services in communities, schools and health facilities.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement and the Ministry of Health and Sports to jointly plan the roll-out of an integrated model in Mandalay to prevent and manage sexual violence against children. With the launch of the Government's maternal and child cash transfer programme, UNICEF was instrumental in facilitating collaboration between the social welfare and health sectors to strategize social and behavioural change communication support for maternal and child cash transfers to contribute to improved nutritional outcomes for women and children. Using evidence from the situation analysis on children with disabilities, UNICEF brought together multiple stakeholders to develop a C4D strategy to improve inclusion across sectors. Strong collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Ministry of Education was evident in the success of the Japanese encephalitis campaign for schoolchildren, supported by UNICEF.

UNICEF expanded partnerships in Kachin and Rakhine with local NGOs for integrated health, nutrition and WASH interventions, reaching more than 20,000 women and children in hard-to-reach areas. UNICEF’s field offices have remained critical in driving subnational cross-sectoral coordination, particularly involving the sectors of education, WASH and nutrition.

**Service delivery**

During the current country programme, UNICEF Myanmar shifted from a project-oriented approach in targeted townships towards government systems strengthening and state-wide approaches aligned to national policies and legislation, where service delivery has been to bridge humanitarian and development efforts, expand coverage to hard-to-reach areas, fill critical government capacity gaps and demonstrate sustainable models.

In 2017, UNICEF supported set-up of 102 cyclone-resistant infrastructures for schools with WASH facilities in 10 townships across Rakhine. Furthermore, 17,410 children from all communities in Rakhine benefited from 64 reconstructed/rehabilitated schools. Some 31,031 girls and boys gained access to WASH facilities in 140 schools and 84,147 people (women: 51 per cent) benefited from community-managed water supply systems with UNICEF’s support in Kayah, Kayin, Magwe, Rakhine and Sagaing.

The Government successfully introduced the vaccine for Japanese encephalitis nation-wide with critical support from UNICEF. A total of 14 million children aged 9 months to 15 years old (more than 90 per cent of targeted coverage) were immunized under the first national Japanese encephalitis campaign. In 2018, the campaign will be part of routine childhood immunization.

In partnership with Terre des hommes, UNICEF supported the Government to develop the first formal foster care model, including training of foster care parents and panel members. Its operationalization will follow the endorsement of national Foster Care Guidelines, starting in Yangon, Mandalay, and humanitarian settings in Kachin, Kayin and Shan next year.

UNICEF played a vital support role to Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement in
rolling out the universal maternal and child cash transfer programme in Chin, which has so far benefited 11,500 pregnant women and children aged under 2 years old (95 per cent of targeted coverage). UNICEF supported the Government to facilitate discussions with stakeholders, including both humanitarian and development actors, on how the programme can be expanded to Rakhine.

Through its field offices, UNICEF supported the local government in identifying and monitoring service delivery gaps through bottleneck analysis and building strategic partnerships.

**Human rights-based approach to cooperation**

Human rights in Rakhine: In its public statements and in private conversations with authorities, UNICEF Myanmar has consistently raised concerns about the human rights situation in Rakhine State.

- On 3 February, UNICEF Myanmar put out a statement expressing its concern about serious violations of children’s rights in Rakhine State.
- In April, a UNICEF Deputy Executive Director visited Naypyidaw and Rakhine, and met privately with the State Counsellor and Commander in Chief of Defence Services, specifically calling for action for children in Rakhine State.
- On 23 May, UNICEF issued a Child Alert about Myanmar, highlighting its concerns about the impact on children of unresolved conflict in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan.
- And on 5 September, UNICEF’s Executive Director spoke out globally against the violation of Rohingya children’s rights.
- Additionally, UNICEF has provided regular reports on the situation of Rohingya children to the various United Nations entities, including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights.

Children and armed conflict: Eight parties to the conflict were listed in the annexes of the 2016 Secretary-General Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict for recruitment and use of children. Constructive dialogue to prevent grave violations of children’s rights continued with the Myanmar Army and with five non-state armed groups. In February 2017, the Government signed the Paris Principles on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups. The Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting continues to monitor/report the situation of grave violations; however, following the rapid escalation of violence in northern Rakhine State, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting has faced difficulties securing safe, full and unimpeded access to the affected areas.

Convention on the Rights of the Child reporting: UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to prepare the State Party Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which was due to be submitted in February 2017 but has been delayed.

**Gender equality**

Over the course of this country programme, UNICEF strengthened its focus on gender, contributing to creation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women through the United Nations Gender Thematic Group. More recently, UNICEF provided inputs to the Gender Thematic Group, which is one of the four Thematic Working Groups of the National Strategic Plan, and strengthened the Department of Social Welfare’s capacity to adopt gender mainstreaming approaches. Partners were supported to generate policy recommendations on SDG 5, gender training was conducted in Kachin State with 17 NGOs, and development partners working in Myitkyina were assisted in mainstreaming gender more effectively.
The WASH cluster made gender one of its key priorities and activated a thematic working group to address menstrual hygiene management. The purpose of the working group is to improve menstrual hygiene management response across Myanmar in both humanitarian and development contexts. The group started by tracking sanitary pads distribution and will eventually address the full menstrual hygiene management cycle.

A UNICEF-commissioned bottleneck analysis on gender dynamics affecting participation in secondary schools revealed that gender inequalities are perpetuated by the school system, contributing to further socializing adolescents into gender norms that result in a widening disparity in education outcomes between boys and girls. Responding to the recommendations from the analysis, gender mainstreaming was applied to School-Based In-Service Teacher Education activities as of 2017. This includes guidelines for ensuring gender balance between male and female teachers, and between boys and girls in illustrations for new School-Based In-Service Teacher Education modules, and applying gender balance when selecting facilitators for trainings and workshops. As a result, 60 per cent of such facilitators are now women, with a growing number of female Ministry of Education officers becoming focal persons at national and subnational levels and assuming leadership roles in these activities.

Through routine data collection, UNICEF noticed a higher prevalence of severely malnourished girls than boys being admitted to nutritional centres. Work with partners further confirmed this, observing differentiated feeding and health-care-seeking practices of mothers, which favour boys over girls. These findings will inform the next country programme ensuring that gender norms that contribute to unequal treatment of boys and girls are addressed in nutrition programming.

Environmental sustainability

In 2017, the Myanmar Country Office conducted an energy audit with the International Institute for Energy Conservation. Conducted in the Yangon, Myitkyina and Mandalay offices to get a sense of overall use and efficiency, the audit looked at use of lighting, air conditioning, energy consumption, inventory of supplies and equipment and proposes energy conservation measures at both no/low cost or medium/high cost. This will help with greening the Myanmar Country Office while such activities are supported and promoted with other partners. The office also identified that the use of vehicles and air travel are increasing emissions calculations.

The Myanmar Country Office started a climate landscape analysis for children with inputs from government departments, United Nations agencies, and local and international partners. This analysis, along with the child-centred risk assessment, provides good background for the new 2018–2022 Country Programme Document, which has strong integration of climate change and disaster risk reduction into development actions. The Myanmar Country Office worked with government officials to advocate for inclusive disaster risk reduction and climate change initiatives and used the U-Report platform for obtaining feedback from youth.

In its regular programmes, UNICEF supported green immunization and cold chain system strengthening through provision of solar-powered refrigerators. More than 200 solar-powered refrigerators were installed in 150 townships, including remote areas with no access to electricity. UNICEF also partnered with PATH to improve injectable waste management at health facilities in four townships to demonstrate cost-effective, safe, sustainable, and scalable improved health-care waste management practices. UNICEF’s school construction programme promoted environment-friendly design which consider flood levels, rainwater harvesting and
drainage, and protection of the environment during construction. In WASH, the National WASH Strategy (2017–2030) supported by UNICEF puts disaster risk reduction/climate change adaptation as the first strategic objective. The strategy is aligned with the Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction. UNICEF has a WASH resilience programme in four Rakhine State townships which looks at technological solutions for ensuring reliable, adequate, safe and sustainable drinking-water supply and sanitation for target communities through government and civil society organization partnerships. The programme is also seeking to increase government prioritization to providing WASH services in low coastal areas experiencing the impacts of climate change.

**Effective leadership**

This past year, 2017, saw a smooth transition in office leadership, with the outgoing Representative completing his tour of duty in September 2017, and the new Representative taking up the position later the same month.

The situation in Rakhine State, particularly after the events of August 2017, has been a major preoccupation for the office leadership, with substantial engagement in meetings and processes with United Nations and other development partners, to ensure appropriate response in line with guidance from United Nations global leadership.

The country management team led preparations for the new Country Programme 2018–2022, ensuring that all staff are engaged in the process. The Country Programme Document was approved by the UNICEF Executive Board in September 2017, and the country programme management plan by the UNICEF Regional Office in May/June. Senior staff took part in the preparation of the first Myanmar UNDAF and Business Operations Strategy. The annual management plan was prepared, including a comprehensive review and update of indicators. The office risk profile was updated along with the risk control self-assessment matrix. Throughout the year, efforts were made to streamline processes to improve efficiency and increase the strategic use of resources. Standard operating procedures relating to supply, human resources and finance were reviewed and updated and one new standard operating procedure on low-value procurement was issued together with a guidance note on procurement by Implementing Partners.

Office management supported initiatives to improve accessibility and reduce environmental footprint in all offices. Business continuity plans for country and nine field offices were updated and tested. The zone warden system was tested on a regular basis, particularly after increased levels of conflict in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan states, as well as small-scale explosions in Yangon. Support visits were made by the Regional Security Advisor and Regional Stress Counsellor.

**Financial resources management**

CCMT played a key role in ensuring effective management of contributions, budgets, bank accounts, DCTs and monitored performance of relevant key performance indicators on a quarterly basis. The programme and operations group met regularly throughout the year and reviewed budget utilization, outstanding DCT advances, DCT refunds and the harmonized approach to cash transfer (HACT) assurance plan implementation. Critical issues were escalated to the country management team.

An external audit of the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (China, Indonesia and Myanmar) was conducted in early 2017, with the management letter issued in April 2017.
Of the 16 recommendations applicable to the Myanmar Country Office, 7 were accepted by the United Nations Board of Auditors and an action plan was prepared for the remaining 9. As of 22 December 2017, 5 out of the 9 recommendations were closed and the 4 recommendations remain open with a target closure date of the end of the first quarter of 2018.

The Myanmar Country Office successfully transitioned to eZHACT at the end of October 2017 and is now processing all cash transfer modalities in this new system. The Myanmar Country Office submitted 2,585 to the Global Shared Services Centre for invoice processing including assets accounting, bank reconciliation, change of funding source, general ledger clearing and 409 cases for Master Data Management (as of 21 December 2017). The Global Shared Services Centre accepted 98.6 per cent of the cases for further processing. Bank reconciliations were prepared, reviewed and electronically submitted in the system within the deadlines and in accordance with the prescribed roles and responsibilities. There were no outstanding reconciling items for more than two months throughout the year. All accounting schedules and activities were efficiently managed. Capacity-building efforts during spots-checks and one-on-one meetings with counterparts were provided.

Internal and financial controls and work processes including release strategy, table of authorities and segregation of duties were effectively implemented and monitored. The Myanmar Country Office ensured efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in a transparent manner.

Efficiency gains were monitored and reported to the country management team quarterly.

### Fundraising and donor relations

During 2017, $13.4 million was raised in Other Resources Regular and $5.7 million in Other Resources Emergency funds. These were 50 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively, of the annual targets. The main donors included the Governments of Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, GAVI and the UNICEF National Committees of Japan and the United Kingdom. For the whole extended country programme period of 2011–2017, $169.2 million of Other Resources Regular was raised, compared with the ceiling of $174.1 million. An additional $14.2 million was raised on grants having validity in 2018 and beyond, which represents 11 per cent of the Other Regular Resources ceiling for the new Country Programme period of 2017–2022.

The fundraising strategy was revised in March 2017, in connection with the preparation of the new Country Programme 2018–2022. The strategy was based on a cautiously optimistic analysis of the situation in the country, based on a successful track record but also recognizing that donors were adjusting to the new opportunities in the country following the election of the new Government in 2016. The new country programme was presented to donors and positively received.

However, the events of August 2017 have brought a change in attitude, with many donors now cautious of investing in a country so negatively perceived internationally. Funding will follow the humanitarian needs, which are currently seen to be in Bangladesh but may shift to Myanmar if repatriation of refugees commences. Obtaining long-term stable Other Resources funding will be challenging. This may require the Myanmar Country Office to reassess its budget for the coming years.

Proposals for joint programmes with United Nations agencies have been prepared, including
two with UNFPA, for funding by the Peace Building Fund and the Government of Canada. Central Emergency Response Fund applications for humanitarian response have also been prepared and funded, coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The Country Office raised $1.9 million from UNICEF National Committees and hosted several visits, including one from Japanese Goodwill Ambassador Tetsuko Kuroyanagi.

**Evaluation and research**

UNICEF Myanmar continued to ensure in 2017 a rigorous preparation and implementation of the plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation, monitored by the monitoring and evaluation committee and the country management team. The Myanmar Country Office timely prepared management responses to the evaluations conducted in 2016, with three out of four rated among the 15 best of 2016 evaluations.

The Country Office contributed to the Evaluation of Health Systems Strengthening and the Evaluation of the Coverage and Quality of UNICEF Humanitarian Response in Complex High-Threat Environments, both led by the Evaluation Office, as well as the Accelerated Sanitation and Water for All Independent Monitoring and Evaluation of the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development. Although not a fully blown evaluation, the Country Office initiated, at the request of the Ministry of Education, an independent review of the Quality Basic Education Programme’s Child-Friendly Schools, to be completed in 2018. The planned evaluation of the National Universal Salt Iodization/Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders Programme has been postponed to 2020.

To promote utilization of evaluation, the Country Office focused on the communication and dissemination of the evaluations completed in 2016. This included the publication of evaluation briefs and the presentations at the national and subnational levels to influence public reforms, particularly in relation to child protection. The Country Office prepared a synthesis of lessons learned, good practiced and innovations emerging from the evaluations conducted during the country programme to promote knowledge management.

Staff members were trained on the use of the standard operating procedure for research, evaluation and studies that was included as good practice as part of the regional evaluation strategy. The evaluation shared position was positively reviewed in 2017 by the UNICEF Regional Office and as part of the peer review of the evaluation function of UNICEF, with a recommendation for replication across groups of countries where this may prove appropriate and useful to overcome scarcity of resources for evaluation at country level. Budget use for evaluation reached 0.31 per cent.

**Efficiency gains and cost savings**

Efficiency gains were achieved through the streamlining and simplification of business processes. Standard operating procedures relating to supply, human resources and finance (eight standard operating procedures) were reviewed and updated and one new standard operating procedure on low-value procurement was issued. The efficiency gains were monitored and reported to the country management team on a quarterly basis. Savings were made on operational costs and strategically used to achieve programme results. The total amounted to US$220,500 and was achieved in relation to the following activities: air travel, utilities including fuel, joint training, courier services, security services, vacancy announcements and co-location of premises.
With regard to air travel, the office continued the due diligence of comparing airfare options and costs offered by local agents with New York headquarters for entitlement travels. For outbound duty travels, savings were achieved by comparing two local agents. Further, three staff opted for economy class although they were entitled to business class. With regard to utilities, the efficiency gains aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions at all locations and reducing the electricity consumption and associated costs by switching off lights and devices while staff members are not at their desks. A new approach to courier service for United Nations agencies in Yangon resulted in reduced costs. With regard to joint raining activities UNICEF coordinated the peer support volunteers training on a cost-sharing basis for the United Nations system and attendee fees were remitted from other agencies, reducing the training costs. The issuance of a new bidding for security services resulted in rate reductions. The co-location of other agencies at UNICEF premises, including UN Women in the Yangon office and the United Nations Development Programme in Mandalay and Taunggyi, resulted in savings in rent and operating costs. By using electronic media, the office avoided costs of advertising in newspapers for a total of 115 adverts for consultants and staff vacancies.

Supply management

Supply and logistics support remained a strategic input towards achieving results for the country programme. Supply plans totalling US$39.5 million were prepared and monitored for implementation during the year, inclusive of offshore, regional, local procurement and programme, operational and construction services.

Procurement services worth US$24.2 million, including US$18.8 million through GAVI funding were managed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supplies / Services</th>
<th>Value (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>7,476,664.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>292,430.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement services</td>
<td>24,215,662.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services including construction</td>
<td>7,949,448.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39,934,205.72</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projects via HACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Value (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction – Education (temporary learning spaces)</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction – School rehabilitation/minor repairs Rakhine</td>
<td>448,818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction – Warehouses for the Department of Rural Development</td>
<td>350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint procurement with the Ministry of Education for KG kits, printing, national and international consultants</td>
<td>2,456,995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supply and logistics has 45 valid long-term agreements, of which 28 were established in 2017 for spot-checks, printing, graphic design, transportation, custom clearance, security, travel, fuel, event management and editing services; and emergency supplies (hygiene kits, tarpaulin, uPVC pipes, ropes and child-friendly schoolkits).
Award recommendations for 51 submissions were reviewed by Contract Review Committee with 23 committee meetings.

Construction projects directly implemented by UNICEF include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>School reconstruction/rehabilitation in Rakhine</td>
<td>$5,229,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Consultancy service for vaccine cold chain sub-depot</td>
<td>$36,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Health infrastructure repair/reconstruction</td>
<td>$222,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Yangon office compound alteration</td>
<td>$48,965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>Road improvement Sittwe warehouse compound</td>
<td>$7,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,545,719</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supply and logistics provided immense and timely support in successful execution of the Japanese encephalitis campaign during the last quarter of 2017. Goods/services worth US$8.5 million were procured, cleared and distributed nationally.

Clearance and in-country distribution of program and procurement services supplies worth US$13.34 million was done. The volume of incoming shipments was high, comprising 100 air, 46 sea shipments with 118 containers and 4 shipments via the China border.

The Myanmar Country Office has three controlled warehouses: Yangon, Myitkyina and Sittwe. Supplies worth US$4 million were issued and US$5.6 million was managed by supply and logistics. Current inventory is approximately US$1.6 million, comprising US$1.2 million for programme and about US$400,000 of emergency prepositioned supplies.

Capacity development of government counterparts from the Department of Relief and Resettlement, Department of Public Health, in supply chain management was done through three training for 120 participants. Technical support and capacity development was provided to the Ministry of Education and the Department of Rural Development through joint procurements after procurement capacity assessments.

Four staff received several trainings organized by SD/RO – on procurement services, construction services and service contracting. S&L conducted learning sessions for all staff for sales orders' and low-value procurement.

**Security for staff and premises**

Staff safety and security of UNICEF premises is a key priority and management worked closely with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security and the Security Management Team to ensure that all precautionary measures were undertaken, emergency preparedness guidelines were adhered to and security advisories were shared with staff.

Business continuity plans were revised with up-to-date information of staff. A fire safety plan and building evacuation plan were prepared for the Country Office. The fire-evacuation drills were done six times per month in 2017.

As per the recommendations of Regional Chief of Security and Regional Security Manager, the following activities were planned/implemented/committed against the Security Improvements Fund:
• First aid training for staff, including drivers in Yangon and field locations
• ETB Training for field locations (nine field locations)
• Safe driving training for field drivers
• Satellite phones for field locations (Yangon and nine field locations)
• VHF handsets
• VHF mobile package for vehicles – (digital) Sittwe/Myitkyina/Lashio
• First aid kit for field offices
• Required security enhancement for Guard House to control pedestrians’ access to the premises
• Replacing the main entrance door; reconfiguring the Access Control Card System (card system)
• X-ray machine for Yangon office
• Safe and secured parking for two vehicles in Sittwe, Hakha and Hpa An
• Alternate emergency exit and safe room/area in Yangon, Sittwe, Lashio, Hakha and Hpa An
• Fencing of UNICEF Hakha, Hpa An, Sittwe offices
• Razor Wire for fencing of Hakha, Hpa An, Sittwe and Yangon offices
• Shatter-resistant films for Yangon and field offices
• Temporary appointment of Security Officer at NOA level

Human resources

In 2017, the Myanmar Country Office developed the new Country Programme (2018–2022), which resulted in a staffing compliment of 228 staff located in Yangon and eight zonal offices. To ensure that the Myanmar Country Office has the appropriate and diverse skills mix to support the new country programme, the staff composition comprised 20 per cent international professionals (IP); 48 per cent national officers (NO) and 32 per cent general service (GS). The office has prioritized the completion of the individual performance management reports by including this as one of the country management team indicators. While in February completion rates were 69 per cent, this increased to 97 per cent by the end of March.

It may be worth noting that as per the results of the 2017 Global Staff Survey, performance management was largely perceived very positively. The area that was identified as the most problematic related to office efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, each section was requested to review its own processes to consider internal improvements, which has largely been done. In addition, towards the end of the year, the front office compiled a summary of areas that impact/involve the office. Follow-up on this will be undertaken in 2018. One orientation training related to UN Cares was conducted jointly with the United Nations in 2017. In addition, all staff are required to complete their relevant mandatory training, of which HIV/AIDS is one. Ninety percent of staff have completed all required mandatory training certificates. One hundred and eighteen staff, representing 57 per cent of the current staff, participated in the training for emergency preparedness and response in 2017. No designated fixed-term Other Resources-funded positions were temporarily charged to regular resources funds during the course of 2017.

Effective use of information and communication technology

The installation of fibreoptic links at all UNICEF locations was finalized by the fourth quarter, contributing to a more robust and cost-effective Internet connectivity. All staff were able to use their own cloud storage with the newly implemented Internet connections.

The office continued to promote the use of UNICEF-standard, cloud-based office tools such as OneDrive for collaboration within small focus groups, most recently during the finalization of
operational documents for the country programme document. Adoption of the Myanmar Country Office team site and establishment of the section’s online calendar has facilitated planning within sections, and further adoption will strengthen coordination across sections within country offices and zones offices. The Country Office has migrated 35 per cent of computers to Windows 10. The rest are still ongoing, while the prerequisites for Windows Server 2016 have been completed.

**Programme components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** Malnutrition is prevented and treated among women of reproductive age and children under 5 through increased access to sustainable, quality integrated nutrition interventions.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Overall, the nutrition situation in Myanmar improved over the course of the country programme, where, according to the recent DHS, stunting decreased from 35 percent in 2009/10 to 29 percent in 2015/16. Key nutrition practices like exclusive breastfeeding have also substantially improved from 24 percent to 50 percent in the same period. UNICEF Myanmar has contributed to this achievement by supporting a conducive enabling environment for nutrition and increasing the Government’s capacity to deliver essential interventions. UNICEF’s ongoing advocacy and technical support to the Ministry of Health and Sports over the past years has also led to increasing and sustained fiscal resources for nutrition. Furthermore, joint advocacy, increased coherence and collaboration among SUN stakeholders, including United Nations agencies, has led to more effective multi-sectoral coordination for nutrition at various strategic levels. Subnational multi-sector coordination for nutrition has continued to be sustained and strengthened with the support of UNICEF field offices, particularly in Chin, Kayin, Kachin, Rakhine and Magway.

UNICEF continued to be a critical player in strengthening and enforcing nutrition legislation, with key milestones reached during the country programme, including supporting the establishment of a national body and market surveillance system for the Breastmilk Substitutes code, extension of maternity leave in both public and private sectors, and revitalizing universal salt iodization as consumption of adequately iodized salt in Myanmar is low. Over the past years, UNICEF’s strategic approach to building capacity of Government in nutrition has evolved from projects in targeted townships towards state/region-wide coverage under a health systems strengthening approach. This has resulted in the integration of evidence-based essential nutrition interventions into the Government’s essential package of health services and new National Health Plan (2017–2022), which is critical to sustain capacity-building gains in the coming years. While capacity in key technical areas has increased, quality and coverage of nutrition services is variable and limited. To scale-up equitable, effective coverage, what is required are costed implementation plans across relevant sectors, stronger supportive supervision and information management and community outreach strategies. These areas needing more attention have been included in UNICEF’s next country programme.

Despite reductions in stunting, the recent DHS shows that nutrition disparities across geographical areas and wealth quintiles exist. In 2017, UNICEF and its partner Alive and Thrive collaborated with the World Bank to conduct a ‘deep dive’, secondary analysis on DHS data for nutrition, to identify the main drivers of stunting and wasting in Myanmar. Full results of this
analysis will be available in early 2018, but data are revealing that maternal factors, socio-economic differences and sanitation conditions are strong predictors of risk of malnutrition, further highlighting the importance of multisectoral interventions at critical stages throughout the life cycle. Such analysis is expected to support the Government and partners in prioritizing resources to inform more equitable and effective programming.

In 2017, UNICEF also expanded its partnerships with local NGOs to increase coverage of integrated health, nutrition and WASH interventions in hard-to-reach areas, particularly in conflict and non-government-controlled areas in Kachin and Rakhine. Indeed, joint PCAs and ‘Expanded Programme on Immunization+’, services (including maternal, newborn and child health; nutrition; and hygiene promotion) resulted in an additional 15,474 children under 5 years old being reached in 2017. Strengthening and diversifying partnerships for evidence generation, outreach in additional hard-to-reach areas and behaviour change communication are key strategies of the next country programme.

Improving infant and young child feeding practices in Myanmar is an important unfinished agenda. While significant improvement has been made on exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, early childhood care and hygiene-related practices remain inadequate. A better understanding of barriers to practice through formative research, integration of early stimulation into nutrition programmes and more effective, evidence-based social and behaviour change communication strategies are required. Under UNICEF’s new country programme, one output result is dedicated to achieving improved demand and practices for health and nutrition among caregivers and communities.

Throughout the country programme, UNICEF has strengthened and maintained its nutrition sector coordination role and has continued to develop strategic partnerships for the provision of essential nutrition interventions in humanitarian areas, in line with the Core Commitments for Children, Humanitarian Response Plan and UNICEF’s Humanitarian Action for Children. However, substantial gaps were faced in 2017 in humanitarian funding and in the availability of nutrition partners in some areas. Recent events in Rakhine as of August 2017 have also disrupted the access of UNICEF and its partners to deliver in the most vulnerable areas. It is critical for UNICEF to continue its advocacy and dialogue with the Government, both humanitarian and development actors to strategize how affected populations could be reached through programme entry points with intended universal coverage at scale in Rakhine, including immunization, roll-out of community infant and young child feeding and the integrated management of acute malnutrition, and the health systems strengthening support UNICEF and its field office has been providing across the state for the past year. Moving forward in the next country programme, some challenges anticipated include adequate and sustained humanitarian funding given the recent context and needs in Rakhine, and the ability of partners, including UNICEF, to carry out assessments and surveys in affected areas.

OUTPUT 1 Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up nutrition interventions for women of reproductive age and children under 5.

Analytical statement of progress
Over the years of the current country programme, the enabling environment for nutrition has improved and become more visible. The Government’s annual budget for nutrition has increased yearly since 2014, with the National Nutrition Centre now procuring essential supplies like micronutrients. UNICEF will continue its advocacy and technical support in the new country
programme to ensure that resources are better planned, allocated equitably and tracked against national results. One major achievement of UNICEF’s joint high-level advocacy with SUN partners was the Government’s decision in early 2017 to establish and operationalize a stand-alone Nutrition Sector Coordination Group at the highest level, along with nine other sector groups. The Nutrition Sector Coordination Group is a multi-sectoral platform that involves the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Social Welfare and Education, chaired by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

Under the Nutrition Sector Coordination Group, SUN partners, including UNICEF as part of the United Nations network, are currently collaborating with partners like the World Bank, to support the Government in developing one national multisectoral plan for nutrition. This plan is expected to be monitored by the Nutrition Sector Coordination Group, costed and finalized by mid-2018, building on past United Nations and SUN partner efforts to update the national nutrition policy.

The SUN multi-stakeholder platform, which UNICEF has supported with technical assistance during the country programme, has become increasingly effective in bringing several sectors together to coordinate and plan for nutrition. New emerging nutrition players in Myanmar, such as the World Bank, have collaborated closely with UNICEF and other SUN stakeholders to ensure that nutrition features prominently in the Ministry of Health and Sports’ essential package of health services under the National Health Plan (2017–2022). While challenges remain for effective multisectoral coordination for nutrition, including timely decision-making based on consensus, the current enabling environment for nutrition is promising with tangible opportunities to accelerate nutrition scale-up in coming years.

At the subnational level, UNICEF continued to support multisectoral efforts for nutrition, by supporting local governments and partners in Kayin, Chin and Magway regions to operationalize multi-sector plans for nutrition, involving more than 50 local authorities and partners, including ethnic health organizations. This resulted in geographical convergence of key interventions and the implementation of nutrition-sensitive strategies in non-health sectors.

Progress was made in nutrition legislation. With UNICEF’s technical and financial support, the Food and Drug Administration established active market surveillance for Breastmilk Substitutes Code violations in November 2017, covering 50 major cities in the country. Surveillance findings will be used by the national Breastmilk Substitutes Code body to take necessary enforcement actions. UNICEF is currently exploring with the Government and the SUN Civil Society Alliance how Code monitoring initiatives at grass-roots level by NGOs/civil society organizations can be integrated into routine national surveillance. With UNICEF’s support, mandatory iodized salt and standards have been included in the updated national food law, where they were previously absent, the FDA has become a key universal salt iodization stakeholder with the role of setting, monitoring and enforcing market standards, and a five-year national strategy and plan for universal salt iodization (2018–2022) was drafted with a new technical committee to oversee it.

**OUTPUT 2** Increased national and subnational capacity to provide equitable access to nutrition interventions that prevent and treat malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women and children under 5.

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF Myanmar has shifted its strategic support in capacity building for nutrition, from a project-oriented approach in targeted townships towards state/region-wide coverage under a health systems strengthening approach. Capacity building of health workers to deliver
community infant and young child feeding and integrated management of acute malnutrition services according to new national guidelines was a key feature of the country programme. UNICEF’s ongoing advocacy and technical has led to the mainstreaming of these interventions in the National Health Plan (2017–2022). It is expected that the Government will gradually include provisions for community infant and young child feeding and integrated management of acute malnutrition in fiscal planning, budgeting, supplies and monitoring, in order to sustain capacity-building efforts. Through UNICEF’s support, all townships in Kayin and Magway regions and 29 percent of townships in Rakhine have now started to provide community infant and young child feeding services. Although a total of 2,820 basic health staff and 4,932 community health volunteers have been trained and equipped to provide community infant and young child feeding counselling, supportive supervision and monitoring of service quality is very limited and will be prioritized under the next country programme. The roll-out of integrated management of acute malnutrition has progressed slowly due to the National Nutrition Centre’s workload and human resource constraints. While both integrated management of acute malnutrition technical and operational guidelines have been finalized at township-level integrated management of acute malnutrition service delivery in government facilities will only be operationalized in 2018. Currently, severe acute malnutrition management through the national health system is limited to in-patient care at state/region hospitals.

UNICEF’s support has also helped the Government to continue maintaining high national coverage levels of bi-annual vitamin A supplementation and deworming (95 percent and 95.4 percent, respectively). However, limited disaggregated data and low coverage in hard-to-reach and non-government-controlled areas remain a challenge. The recent DHS survey 2015/16 found that adequate iron folic acid supplementation coverage for pregnant and lactating women was only 59.1 percent, compared with the estimated greater than 80 percent from health administrative data in previous years. This shows the need for UNICEF to prioritize its support to the Government on improving Health Management Information Systems for nutrition in the next country programme, to ensure that accurate and disaggregated data are available to inform effective programme strategies going forward. In 2017, while an additional 17,000 children in new areas benefited from multiple micronutrient powders, the effectiveness and sustainability of current delivery channels need to be evaluated during the next country programme to inform future scale-up.

At the subnational level, UNICEF continued to expand its partnerships with local NGOs to increase capacity to deliver integrated health, nutrition and WASH interventions in hard-to-reach areas, particularly in conflict and non-government-controlled areas in Kachin and Rakhine. In 2017, an additional 15,474 children under 5 and 5,751 pregnant and lactating women benefited from these integrated services, with coverage for children under 5 in vulnerable townships estimated at 58 percent based on immunization data. Areas requiring more support from UNICEF include building local NGO capacity in financial and information management and reporting of results. Lessons from these partnerships and integrated approaches will be used to strengthen local capacities in service delivery in other challenging areas, including Nagaland and Northern Shan, in the next country programme.

OUTPUT 3 003. Improved infant and young child feeding practices are adopted by more mothers/caregivers.

Analytical statement of progress
There is continued progress in improving infant and young child feeding practices among caregivers. The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in Myanmar was revitalized in 2015 by the
Ministry of Health and Sports with support from UNICEF and, as of the end of 2017, more than 29 hospitals with the largest maternity wards were reached with the Initiative’s support. Assessments conducted in nine hospitals show that 56 per cent of them still met Initiative criteria after six months. However, to ensure sustainability of the Initiative’s efforts, UNICEF is currently discussing with the Ministry of Health and Sports the possibility of integrating Initiative standards into national hospital accreditation and monitoring in the coming years.

In 2017, three times more community health workers (4,932) compared with 2016 were trained by the Ministry of Health and Sports, with UNICEF’s support, to provide community infant and young child feeding services. As a result, it is estimated that 28,200 new caregivers (compared with less than 5,000 caregivers in 2016) benefited from such services in Kayin, Magway and Rakhine. One highlight is UNICEF’s support to the Ministry of Health and Sports in developing a national standardized information, education and communication messages booklet for health workers, which includes key messages on nutrition, including infant and young child feeding and integrated hygiene promotion, to ensure that consistent messages are provided to caregivers. Continued social and behavioural change communication on infant and young child feeding practices through mass media broadcasts reached more than 1 million people in 2017 (11 percent increase from 2016).

UNICEF facilitated collaboration in 2017 between the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Health and Sports to strategize social and behavioural change communication support for the roll-out of the national maternal and child cash transfer programme, which has a key focus on infant and young child feeding, as cash transfers have the objective of improving nutritional outcomes within the first 1,000 days of life. UNICEF is a key member of the maternal and child cash transfer social and behavioural change communication taskforce, which was established in 2017 and has supported the Government to develop a social and behavioural change communication roadmap, as well as initial key infant and young child feeding messages and materials adopted from best practices in Myanmar that could be utilized in the short term.

While the recent DHS shows that exclusive breastfeeding rates have improved significantly over the past five years, appropriate complementary feeding practices of young children have not improved, with more than 80 percent of children aged 6–23 months old not receiving a ‘minimum acceptable diet’. One priority focus for UNICEF and the Ministry of Health and Sports in the coming years is increased infant and young child feeding policy, programming and social and behavioural change communication support, targeting complementary feeding practices. In 2017, UNICEF supported the National Nutrition Centre to create a child bowl promoting diversified child diets as a cue to action and social and behavioural change communication tool. A prototype of the bowl was created and passed tests for safety. UNICEF will support the Ministry of Health and Sports in production and distribution of bowls in 2018 in collaboration with partners. The child bowl has inspired other partners, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), to initiate with Government the development of a maternal food plate in collaboration with SUN partners, including UNICEF. To better address the demand side and the practice barriers for nutrition, under the new country programme UNICEF will diversify its partnerships with organizations including the World Bank, WFP, FAO, Alive and Thrive, Population Services International, Save the Children and the private sector to carry out formative research for evidence-based social and behavioural change communication strategies and joint national campaigns for nutrition.
OUTPUT 4 Preparedness and response for nutrition meet the core commitments for children in humanitarian action.

Analytical statement of progress

UNICEF Myanmar has maintained its nutrition sector coordination role during the course of the country programme. UNICEF continued to develop strategic partnerships for the provision of essential nutrition interventions in humanitarian areas, in line with the Core Commitments for Children, Humanitarian Response Plan and UNICEF’s Humanitarian Action for Children. However, substantial gaps were faced in 2017 in humanitarian funding and the lack of technical nutrition partners in Kachin is of particular concern. Lack of access to deliver humanitarian nutrition assistance in Rakhine has been a major impediment since events in August 2017. Continued advocacy, follow-up and contingency planning for Rakhine following these events has enabled UNICEF to continue dialogue with local authorities and partners to strategize how vulnerable and affected populations could be reached through entry points such as the national community infant and young child feeding and integrated management of acute malnutrition roll-out and health systems strengthening support that UNICEF has been providing across the state. In particular, the Ministry of Health and Sports plans to integrate nutrition into routine mobile health clinics and accelerate integrated management of acute malnutrition roll-out in Rakhine, including northern Rakhine, in early 2018. This should enable a better bridging of NGO-supported humanitarian interventions with government-led nutrition programmes. Some UNICEF partners have already started resuming health and nutrition activities in parts of central Rakhine.

In 2017, UNICEF achieved most of its targets for infant and young child feeding counselling and micronutrient supplementation for women who were pregnant or lactating and children aged under 5 years old. The limited coverage of severe acute malnutrition treatment is mainly due to the lack of access by nutrition partners since August. In total, 6,851 children aged 6–59 months old with severe acute malnutrition were treated (55 percent of the Humanitarian Action for Children target), with a cure rate of 79.8 per cent. For multiple micronutrient powder supplementation to children under 5 women who were pregnant or lactating, although targets were achieved, the limited number of nutrition partners available prevents UNICEF from further expanding the intervention, particularly outside camps for internally displaced persons. In Kachin, UNICEF partnered with an NGO to integrate preventive nutrition services into their emergency health interventions.

Although the Ministry of Health and Sports began integrating humanitarian coordination into routine sector coordination under the Myanmar Nutrition Technical Network in 2016, it has not been effective, as Network meetings were not regular in 2017 given ongoing nutrition sector coordination reforms. At the subnational level, UNICEF field offices succeeded for the most part in integrating nutrition into routine sector health and agriculture coordination in several states/regions. Although state health authorities in Kachin and Rakhine currently lead nutrition coordination meetings, leadership capacity and decentralized decisionmaking requires strengthening.

The persistent high burden of severe acute malnutrition and its multiple underlying causes in northern Rakhine requires integration of humanitarian sensitive strategies into development-oriented, multi-sectoral programmes in the region, in line with the Rakhine Advisory Commission recommendations and the Rakhine State Economic and Development Plan. This will be prioritized in the next country programme, along with more intensive community mobilization and social and behavioural change communication efforts. UNICEF will also support local
capacity on nutrition in emergencies in collaboration with the regional office and stakeholders in public health and emergencies.

OUTPUT 5 Timely and quality leadership and technical assistance (Nutrition).

Analytical statement of progress
Human resources for nutrition were adequate in 2017, except in Rakhine, which faced capacity gaps in nutrition towards the latter half the year, with two key posts becoming vacant. With the events of 25 August in Rakhine, staff in Yangon visited Rakhine frequently to provide cover support and a plan for surge capacity in nutrition that is being developed in collaboration with field services. Given the current situation in Rakhine, it has also been increasingly difficult to get Government approval of staff visas. As part of the new country programme, UNICEF is currently recruiting to fulfil one of the vacant posts, with the other pending due to lack of Other Resources funding (although such funding is expected to come through in early 2018).

Nutrition technical assistance to the Government focused on key areas of strategy development, analysis of DHS data and capacity building. Specific areas of consultancy support provided by UNICEF include universal salt iodization and the roll-out of community infant and young child feeding and integrated management of acute malnutrition. While in past years UNICEF provided consultancy support to the Ministry of Health and Sports in SUN multi-stakeholder coordination, this is now being supported by UN REACH on behalf of the United Nations network, as well as new emerging nutrition players such as the World Bank. These multi-agency efforts have brought additional and more harmonized technical assistance to support the Government’s national multisector plan for nutrition.

OUTCOME 2 Increased equitable access and use of quality, high-impact maternal, newborn and child health services.

Analytical statement of progress
Over the past few years, there have been modest improvements in under-five mortality and maternal mortality; however, disparities exist and mortality rates are among the highest in ASEAN still. Myanmar’s under-five mortality stood at 50 per 1,000 live births (Myanmar DHS 2016) as compared with the Millennium Development Goal target by 2015 of 36 per 1,000 live births. Significant disparity exists across geographic regions, urban-rural and wealth quintiles. Seven out of 15 states and regions contributed to 75 per cent of under-five deaths. With the majority living in rural areas, the poorest children are 3.6 times more likely to die due to common childhood illnesses, including vaccine-preventable diseases. UNICEF’s efforts in past years have therefore been concentrated on improving coverage of essential maternal, newborn and child health interventions, namely newborn care, immunization and the management of diarrhoea and pneumonia.

Newborn deaths make up half of under-five deaths in Myanmar, highlighting the critical importance of quality and coverage of newborn delivery and postnatal care. Unfortunately, the recent DHS in Myanmar shows that the percentage of newborns receiving postnatal care within two days of births (71.2 percent) is relatively low and has not increased substantially over the past few years. Furthermore, the percentage of live births attended by a skilled health personnel (doctor, nurse, midwife) remains low at only 60.2 per cent and the proportion of facility-based deliveries is only 37.1 per cent. Despite UNICEF’s support to the Government on evidence generation on the causes of under-five mortality and newborn care support in targeted
townships, national policies and systems still require strengthening to ensure universal access and coverage to quality newborn care. Furthermore, the majority of women from rural poor households still prefer to deliver at home. Continued policy advocacy and technical support by UNICEF Myanmar to the Government is required in the next country programme, coupled with strong social behaviour change communication for mothers to see institutional deliveries.

To demonstrate best practices and scaleable models for emergency paediatric care, UNICEF partnered with the Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health and the Myanmar Paediatric Society to implement an Emergency Paediatric Care Programme in 18 district hospitals across the country, which has yielded promising results in a short amount of time. The programme showed an improvement ranging from 16 per cent to 28 per cent (p=<0.005) in capacity of hospital teams to perform paediatric resuscitation, neonatal resuscitation, management of childhood pneumonia and the implementation of kangaroo mother care, per quality standards of care. In addition, UNICEF also supported an additional 2,150 facilities with newborn care equipment.

Over the course of the country programme, UNICEF Myanmar extensively supported the development of the National Health Plan 2017–2021 that sets the foundation for development of Myanmar’s health system. UNICEF also provided substantial support to improve the Government’s capacity for national immunization. With UNICEF’s support, the number of townships with at least 80 per cent coverage of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis-containing vaccine for children aged under 1 year old gradually increased from 75 townships in 2013 to 290 townships in 2017. Constraints towards universal coverage include high transportation costs to reach remote areas, including covering displaced populations in security compromised townships. UNICEF continues to expand its partnerships and explore alternative delivery modalities to overcome these bottlenecks. In 2017, with substantial technical support from UNICEF Myanmar, the Government of Myanmar successfully introduced the Japanese encephalitis vaccine nationwide. A total of 14 million children age 9 months old and 15 years old were immunized against Japanese encephalitis (more than 80 per cent national coverage).

UNICEF Myanmar provided continuous support to the Government to improve the quality of the management of childhood illnesses. The percentage of children aged 0–59 months old with diarrhoea receiving oral rehydration salts has slightly improved to 62 per cent over the past years; however, the percentage of children aged 0–59 months with pneumonia treated with antibiotics increased substantially from 34 per cent in 2009 to 58.2 per cent in 2016. The capacity of front-line health workers in managing childhood illnesses and communication skills in ensuring treatment compliance by caregivers are recurring key areas for improvement. As these interventions are also known to be challenging to track through the current health information systems, UNICEF Myanmar provided technical and operational support to the Government of Myanmar in tracking and accelerating progress in maternal, newborn and child health. As a result, the Child Death Surveillance and Response system is now functional nationwide.

Following attacks in August 2017, children in northern Rakhine, as well as those living in camps for internally displaced persons, had difficulties accessing health services. Continuous advocacy and coordination with authorities has led to slow but gradual access in some areas of Rakhine. Through the support of UNICEF and its partners, emergency health kits and critical immunization services were provided to children in conflict-affected areas in Kachin, Rakhine and Northern Shan, although coverage and quality remain variable. The role of both
international and national organizations, as well as local faith-based organizations and existing community networks, needs to be expanded, with UNICEF identifying new partnerships, to support the Government’s efforts in reaching children in conflict-affected areas and positioning health as a bridge to peace.

In 2017, UNICEF brought together more than 23 stakeholders from the United Nations, international NGOs and related divisions of the Ministry of Health and Sports to learn about UNICEF’s EQUIST tool. The exercise allowed stakeholders to identify feasible scenarios for scale-up considering impact and cost of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health interventions. Following the workshop, all stakeholders agreed to use and apply the EQUIST tool towards an investment case on Ending Preventable Maternal and Newborn Deaths, which UNICEF will support alongside the Ministry of Health and Sports in the next year.

**OUTPUT 1** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to plan and budget for the scaling up of equity-based, high-impact maternal, newborn and child health services.

**Analytical statement of progress**

The new National Health Plan 2017–2021 aims to strengthen the country’s health system with the goal of universal coverage and access to an essential package of health services, emphasizing equity and increasing financial protection for the entire population by 2020. Although the first annual operational plan for the National Health Plan has been developed by the Ministry of Health and Sports, detailed implementation plans which include disaster risk reduction and climate change elements have yet to be developed. UNICEF Myanmar is continuing to discuss with the Government on how to support the development and implementation of detailed plans for the National Health Plan.

Since 2017, national guidelines have been put in place which expands the provision of life-saving interventions by basic health staff and/or community health workers for children, including newborns. UNICEF supported the Government and implementing partners to scale up evidence-based interventions as per these national guidelines and international standards. In particular, UNICEF partnered with WHO and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to support the Ministry of Health and Sports in finalizing the facility-based guideline on management of newborn and childhood illnesses targeting hospital staff, as well as the guideline for essential care for every baby and essential care for small baby.

UNICEF Myanmar supported the Ministry of Health and Sports in organizing a national Newborn Child Survival and Development forum in May 2017. Information was exchanged and lessons learned were shared on the realization of child health and development across three key objectives: Survive, Thrive and Transform. During the forum, the implementation of the costed strategic plan (2015-2018) for newborn and child health care was reviewed. As a result, the integrated management of childhood illnesses by basic health staff and child deaths surveillance and response assessments, among others, were recommended to further improve the strategic plan implementation in coming years.

With UNICEF Myanmar’s support and in collaboration with WHO, the Child Death Surveillance and Response system was rolled out in April 2017, which complemented the Maternal Death Surveillance and Response system. These systems have greatly improved tracking and understanding about mortality and can better inform policy makers on decisions related to
maternal, new-born and child health policies, interventions and strategies. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Health and Sports in conducting bi-annual Child Death Surveillance and Response coordination meetings to track progress and address implementation challenges. Through these coordination meetings, Kayin State has been identified to model and document the Child Death Surveillance and Response implementation with focus on perinatal deaths.

The adaptation and testing of m-health (CommCare) application to improve quality of maternal, newborn and child health services provided through midwives, was completed in partnership with Jon Snow Inc. and the Ministry of Health and Sports. In three selected townships, 168 midwives received training on use of smartphones, the application and a range of modules. Of these midwives, 84 percent were active users of CommCare and routinely submitted service data to CommCare headquarters. A survey in August 2017 indicated that the vast majority (89 percent) liked to use the CommCare application and that it supported their work (83 percent). The CommCare knowledge-sharing session will be held in the first quarter of 2018, aiming to inform the Ministry of Health and Sports’ decision-making for scaling up and future investments.

**OUTPUT 2** Increased national and subnational capacity to provide equitable access to quality, high-impact maternal, newborn and child health services.

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF Myanmar, in collaboration with the Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health and the Myanmar Paediatric Society, rolled out the emergency paediatric care programme in March 2016. The programme combined the intensive short-course trainings, with sustained in-service mentoring by international volunteer clinicians and a growing national faculty of home instructors. The knowledge-sharing and exchange information national conference was held in November 2017 and attended by about 100 participants, clinicians, public professionals, and members of academia, hospital management and professional societies. UNICEF Myanmar also supported the Government in establishing newborn care corners in a total of 2,150 health centres/townships, aiming to improve access and quality of newborn care.

UNICEF Myanmar continued to support government efforts in eradication, elimination and control of vaccine-preventable diseases. In 2017, children in Myanmar benefited from a nationwide Japanese encephalitis immunization campaign, supported by UNICEF, WHO and GAVI. The campaign managed to immunize 12.55 million children aged 9 months old to 15 years old across 49,000 schools and 64,000 villages. This involved more than 15,000 health workers and 20,000 volunteers. UNICEF Myanmar largely supported the procurement and quality assurance of 15 million doses of the vaccines, essential supplies and equipment, as well as national communication and community mobilization, including information, education and communication materials. In addition, the expansion of cold chain systems was supported. Monitoring and supervision of the campaign was also supported, including capacity development on fund management and activity assurance.

To ensure that children in high-risk areas are protected against polio, UNICEF Myanmar also supported the Government with two rounds of polio subnational immunization days in July and August 2017. The campaign reached 351,344 (94 percent) and 332,038 (89 percent) children, respectively, out of the targeted 372,833 children aged 0–59 months old. UNICEF also provided support to the national expanded programme on immunization to implement measles outbreak response immunization in five townships, as 303,009 children were vaccinated with measles-rubella vaccine, representing 92 percent of targeted children aged 9 months old to 15 years old.
UNICEF Myanmar’s support for health system strengthening in Rakhine was achieved with dedicated technical assistance. Results were demonstrated in most townships of Rakhine State, except for Buthidaung, Maungdaw and Rathedaung, due to unstable security situation. Coordination meetings openly discussed issues on human resource situations, coordination between stakeholders and township operational issues.

UNICEF’s support of information and communication technology equipment greatly improved the information management, Health Management Information Systems/District Health Information System 2 reporting, data analysis, health planning meetings and continuous medical education sessions. Initiatives taken for District Health Information System 2 and Logistic Management Information Systems roll-out in Rakhine significantly improved the knowledge on information management and better understanding of bottom-up planning. UNICEF also supported Medical Store and Logistics Management training for all 17 townships in Rakhine State.

OUTPUT 3 More mothers and/or caregivers adopt appropriate newborn and child health practices.

Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF Myanmar provided support, both technically and financially, to the Ministry of Health and Sports in the development, production and dissemination of the Standardized Health Messages Book. This covered a wide range of key public health messages, including on nutrition, immunization, communicable and non-communicable diseases, water sanitation and hygiene promotion, adolescent health, road traffic accidents and prevention, and menstrual hygiene management. It was an important achievement for the Ministry of Health and Sports, as comprehensive, consistent and standardized health messages are critical for disease prevention and creating demand for health services. The standardized information, education and communication booklet also importantly harmonized the health messages used across different organizations, including international NGOs, local civil society organizations and ethnic health organizations. Ethnic health organizations can now more easily develop and implement communication materials and activities in their own local languages throughout different local media channels to reach diverse and hard-to-reach populations. This book and further implementation of communication strategies gained the momentum and high political commitments from the First Lady of Myanmar, the Ministry of Education and, especially, the Ministry of Health and Sports.

In 2017, UNICEF also continued its advocacy and technical support to the Government in reducing financial barriers to adopt healthy practices by linking health service provision with social safety nets, such as the maternal and child cash transfers.

A national communication strategy for the introduction of new vaccines was successfully developed and implemented by the Ministry of Health and Sports, with technical support from UNICEF, which improved the knowledge, attitude and practice of parents/caregivers on Japanese encephalitis vaccination uptake throughout the campaign. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Health and Sports in the strategic use of social media to promote uptake of Japanese encephalitis immunization services and to manage any false rumours about complications and deaths related to the vaccine.

In 2017, UNICEF Myanmar developed a cartoon animation micro-series with 12–16 episodes, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sports. By taking the ‘first 1,000 days’ approach as the basis of the concept, messages were developed on antenatal care, prevention
of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, institutional delivery, newborn care, homecare of a sick child, care seeking, handwashing, immunization and nutrition. Content analysis on audio health messages broadcasted via various FM radios and Myanmar Radio and Television radios was also finalized. This analysis was conducted with the Health Literacy and Promotion Unit and the Department of Medical Research of the Ministry of Health and Sports. The preliminary findings were shared during the workshop after the Standardized Messages book launching. The finalized findings will be shared with FM radios and other print/broadcast media in early 2018, which will be followed by a communication plan with FM radio/broadcast/print media, the Ministry of Health and Sports and UNICEF.

The SMS-based system to promote health messages to mothers and caregivers was postponed by the Ministry of Health and Sports due to challenges faced in negotiating with telecommunication companies to get free SMS. A new pilot on messaging to improve knowledge and changing behaviours for key maternal, newborn and child health practices will be taken forward in 2018 with support from UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sports and other health sector partners.

**OUTPUT 4** Preparedness and response for maternal and child health meet the core commitments for children in humanitarian action.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Humanitarian preparedness and response targets for health were partially achieved in 2017. Security and logistic issues affected the achievement of results, particularly measles immunization coverage resulting in 38.8 percent of targeted children aged 9–18 months old living in humanitarian situations were immunized against measles. UNICEF Myanmar continued to work with partners and health authorities in providing services as per the Core Commitments for Children in emergencies. In both Kachin and Rakhine, UNICEF Myanmar continued to strengthen and expand partnerships with local NGOs to deliver integrated maternal, newborn and child health services, including immunization, emergency referrals and nutrition services to internally displaced persons and surrounding host communities. UNICEF Myanmar supported the mobile health clinics of the Government and civil society organizations to operate in hard-to-reach areas.

The situation in Rakhine State, especially in Maungdaw district, affected the number of children receiving basic health services. About 22 per cent of communities in Maungdaw district were not able to receive services from mobile health clinics. UNICEF Myanmar continued to collaborate closely with WHO as the health cluster lead and State Health Departments to address access and coverage issues. UNICEF Myanmar has put together a contingency plan for Rakhine to support humanitarian needs through surge support from the Yangon team, planned to be mobilized in early 2018.

Funding gaps remain a major challenge for UNICEF Myanmar to operationalize the health preparedness and response plans. In 2017, UNICEF Myanmar could not implement humanitarian health activities in Northern Shan State due to lack of funding and availability of partners on the ground. In coming years, UNICEF Myanmar will continue to work with union and local authorities as well communities to identify new potential partners or alternative service delivery modalities.
OUTPUT 5 Timely and quality leadership, management and technical assistance in maternal, newborn and child health.

Analytical statement of progress
Health systems strengthening is a high organizational priority for UNICEF. UNICEF Myanmar sent four staff members to complete this training and course, in order to further strengthen UNICEF’s strategic and technical support efforts in Myanmar. UNICEF managed to sustain technical support in all areas, including recruiting a new budget officer fully dedicated to the expanded programme on immunization team, and a health information management specialist and supply officer in Rakhine. A lengthy Ministry of Health and Sports visa approval process affected on-boarding of a P-4 health system strengthening specialist. The position of health and nutrition specialist also remained vacant pending grant confirmation of GAVI Health System Strengthening.

OUTCOME 3 Water- and excreta-related diseases in children under 5 years of age are equitably reduced.

Analytical statement of progress
The WASH sector situation analysis, completed in 2014 was officially endorsed by the Ministry of Health in 2015. Based on one of its key recommendations, UNICEF Myanmar has supported the Government to develop Myanmar’s first National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan. In February 2017, the National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan (2016–2030), which was approved by the Government in 2016, was launched. The Strategy and Investment Plan have identified sector goals and pathways, giving direction to sector investments. The Strategy mainly covers three sub-sectors – rural WASH, WASH in institutions (schools and health facilities) and WASH in emergencies. The Strategy has set up goals and targets for the sub-sectors which are aligned with SDG 6. Myanmar is aiming to provide basic WASH services to all, including elimination of open defecation by 2030.

Based on lessons learned in the past, UNICEF Myanmar worked with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Sports and other key government partners to develop minimum requirements for WASH in schools and the Thant Shin Star guidebook which have embedded the Thant Shin Star (Three Star) approach as a central theme. This is expected to be finalized and endorsed in early 2018.

In 2011, the CLTS approach was introduced in Myanmar and is being used by 11 agencies, including UNICEF Myanmar. To review the relevancy of the CLTS approach and conditions for its scale-up, UNICEF Myanmar conducted a CLTS review in 2015. Based on the findings, CLTS toolkits and manual have been developed which can be used by any agency wishing to roll out the CLTS approach. UNICEF Myanmar is working with the Ministry of Health and Sportstodevelop sanitation policy and a plan for elimination of open defecation in Myanmar.

According to Joint Monitoring Programme 2015 estimates, access to improved water sources and sanitation facilities are 80.6 percent and 75.4 percent, respectively. Therefore, the targets set for water and sanitation have been met during the county programme period. However, according to the Joint Monitoring Programme 2017 update and SDG baseline of Myanmar, access to basic water supply, sanitation and hygiene services are reported as 68 percent, 65 percent and 80 percent, respectively. Under the leadership of the Director General of the Department of Rural Development and support of the Central Statistics Organization, an informal WASH sector SDG working group was formed. The working group reviewed the
definition of key indicators and agreed to use Joint Monitoring Programme 2017 estimates as Myanmar’s SDG baseline. The Joint Monitoring Programme report and other sources do not have data on access to basic WASH services in institutions due to lack of access to institutional WASH data and, therefore, an established baseline for WASH services in institutions has yet to be established.

The National WASH Strategy has identified and allocated institutional roles and responsibilities at national and subnational levels of the government structure. The Government formed the Development Assistance Coordination Unit and 10 sector working groups were created. WASH is included under the Rural Development Sub-Working Group, which is chaired by the Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, and UNICEF Myanmar is a member of the Sub-Working Group. Although good progress has been made for setting up a WASH institutional arrangement during the country programme cycle, UNICEF Myanmar needs to work further with government partners to strengthen sector coordination for establishing an inclusive coordination mechanism for the participation of a broad range of stakeholders.

During the country programme cycle, UNICEF Myanmar has contributed to the capacity development of government partners to fulfil the sector roles and responsibilities for sustainable service delivery at scale, including division of roles and responsibilities. One of the achievements is that three key ministries have done division of roles and responsibilities for sub-sectors such as the Department of Rural Development for rural water supply, the Ministry of Health and Sports for rural sanitation and hygiene and WASH in health-care facilities, and the Ministry of Education for WASH in schools. Although the National WASH Strategy has identified the Relief and Resettlement Department as lead agency for the Government for humanitarian assistance, the function is divided among other departments as well. In 2017, UNICEF Myanmar supported the capacity development of officials of implementing partners to engage them effectively in sector development. Increased emphasis was given to the human resource capacity development of government counterparts mainly in water safety planning, water quality monitoring, CLTS facilitators’ training, Thant Shin Star approach training and WASH in emergencies.

Some 204 villages with 87,326 people (51 per cent women) in three states/regions were verified and declared as ODF villages. Some 22,622 schoolchildren (51 percent girls) and 327 teachers from 140 schools have gained access to basic WASH facilities in schools and are practicing good hygienic behaviour. Establishment of Thant Shin Star Clubs and promotion of group handwashing in schools with emphasis on capacity development of school teachers is a means of systemically strengthening WASH in schools. Some 84,147 people (51 percent women) have gained access to basic water services in rural areas of three states/regions. The WASH cluster reached 224,254 people under the Humanitarian Response Plan and UNICEF Myanmar reached 109,495 people under the Plan and through other short-term humanitarian WASH responses to Cyclone Mora and central Myanmar floods. UNICEF Myanmar continued to provide WASH cluster leadership at national and subnational levels.

OUTPUT 1 Evidence-informed policies, standards and guidelines developed and implemented to build and sustain hygienic and healthy living conditions for women and children in Myanmar.

Analytical statement of progress
The WASH Sector Situation Analysis and Roadmap was conducted in 2014 with the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Sports. This Strategy and Investment Plan is the follow-up action of WASH Sector Situation Analysis Roadmap. The WASH Sector Situation Report provided the
most recent updates on the various WASH sub-sectors such as Sector Framework, Urban WASH, Rural WASH, WASH in Schools and WASH in Emergencies and offers measures necessary for ensuring development, use and sustaining quality and equitable water supply and sanitation access and improving people’s hygiene practices for optimal people-centred development outcomes.

Following the sector situation analysis, the Department of Rural Development, Department of Public Health and Department for Basic Education, with support from other relevant departments and technical support from UNICEF Myanmar, have developed the National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan (2016–2030). The process of developing the Strategy and Investment Plan has been based on wide consultation with their potential users: union and state/regional government departments, township government and civil society leaders, development partners, and international NGOs/NGOs.

In February 2017, the first ever National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan approved by the Government of Myanmar in 2016 was launched. The Strategy and Investment Plan have identified sector goals and pathways, giving direction to sector investments and covering three sub-sectors, rural WASH, WASH in institutions (schools and health facilities) and WASH in emergencies. Urban WASH is not covered by the Strategy, as there is no ministry responsible for urban issues at the national level. The Strategy has set up goals and targets for the sub-sectors which are aligned with SDG 6. Myanmar is aiming to provide basic WASH services to all, including elimination of open defecation by 2030. The National WASH Strategy has done identification and allocation of institutional roles and responsibilities of union, state and region, district and township-level governments.

After a successful launching of the Strategy, four departments (the Department of Rural Development, Department of Public Health, Department for Basic Education and Department of Planning) jointly rolled out the Strategy in all states and regions in September 2017. Participation of local government including chief ministers and parliamentarians in the roll-out events have shown strong local-level political commitments in the WASH sector. This event helped with strengthening local-level coordination and cooperation among the regional governments, parliamentarians, sectoral ministries and all WASH stakeholders.

The SDG working group reviewed key WASH indicators with definitions in the Myanmar context and agreed to use the Joint Monitoring Programme 2017 for Myanmar’s SDG baseline. The SDG baseline for WASH targets was established. Due to lack of data and information, the SDG baseline for WASH in schools and health-care facilities could not be established. In order to establish a national baseline on WASH in health-care facilities, the Ministry of Health and Sports conducted a nationwide assessment with support from UNICEF Myanmar, WHO and Water Aid. The findings of systematic review and fieldwork in three regions were shared to develop WASH in health-care facilities standards and guidelines.

**OUTPUT 2** Targeted rural communities in the Dry Zone, conflict-affected children and women in Mon and Kayin states practice key hygienic behaviours (consistent use of toilets—stop open defecation practice), handwashing with soap at critical times, and drinking safe water).

**Analytical statement of progress**
The CLTS approach was introduced in Myanmar in 2011 and is being implemented in different areas of the country by 11 agencies including UNICEF Myanmar. As of 2017, less than 1,000 communities have been declared ODF. Together with the Government, UNICEF conducted a
CLTS review in 2015 to identify successes and challenges, strengths and weaknesses and propose a way forward for the CLTS approach in Myanmar. Based on its findings, CLTS toolkits and manual were developed.

Under the National WASH Strategy, the Ministry of Health and Sports is responsible for rural sanitation and hygiene and WASH in health-care facilities. For capacity development, all basic health staff in CLTS-implemented townships were trained on CLTS and hygiene promotion through workshops and training. The Environmental Sanitation Division and Health Literature Promotion Unit had conducted CLTS facilitator trainings for basic health staff to provide continuous support, monitor progress and ensure that the ODF status was sustained. The Ministry of Health and Sports recently launched standardized health messages, which have included water supply, sanitation and hygiene key messages both for normal and emergency settings, and this will be used by basic health staff and school teachers.

Three government officials from the Ministry of Health and Sports participated in the CLTS Regional Conference on Fast Track to ODF Nation in Asia, in Cambodia in November 2017. After attending the conference, a country action plan was developed and submitted to the Minister of the Ministry of Health and Sports that includes seven action points to develop a roadmap on achieving ODF Nation by 2030 which is aligned with the targets in the National WASH Strategy.

Summary of key achievements of sanitation and hygiene works in 2017 included:

- 204 villages with 87,326 people (51 percent women) in four townships of three states/regions were verified and declared ODF. The CLTS programme was extended to additional 324 villages in six townships of four states/regions reaching 220,312 people (51 percent women) in 47,134 rural families. CLTS projects in Rakhine and Sagaing regions are making good progress and ODF verification will be done in early 2018.
- In Ayeyarwaddy and Rakhine, UNICEF Myanmar provided mould for fabrication of concrete rings for latrine pit lining for preventing latrine pits from recurrent floods. It is well accepted by the community to construct long lasting concrete floor latrine with concrete ring pits.

The CLTS in Kayin State has helped to bring the Government and non-state actors in one forum to work together for establishing ODF communities. As a result of four years of continuous efforts on working together with the Government and NSA, a total of 215 villages have been declared ODF in Kyar Inn Seikkyi Township. An additional 70 villages in Kyar Inn Seikkyi Township are implementing the CLTS programme, which will benefit 29,780 people from 5,910 households. During the various stages of CLTS implementation, the Government and NSA actors work together and, subsequently, UNICEF Myanmar has observed that CLTS has contributed in peace-building initiatives in conflict-affected areas.

**OUTPUT 3** Communities, schools and health centres have access to sufficient safe water in targeted rural communities in the Dry Zone, as do conflict-affected children and women in Mon and Kayin states.

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Myanmar supported the WASH Sector Situation Analysis in 2014 that was used by the Government of Myanmar to develop the National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan 2016–
2030. Under the new strategy, Department of Rural Development is the lead agency for rural water supply sector and the Ministry of Education is the lead for WASH in schools.

Since 2012, UNICEF Myanmar together with the Department of Rural Development continued to demonstrate and expand the community managed water supply projects in dry zone. In 2016/17, the approach was expanded to Mon, Kayin, Ayeyarwaddy and Rakhine and additional measures to improve climate resilience of systems were included. With support from UNICEF Myanmar, Department of Rural Development and two national NGOs have developed water safety planning and financial management manuals for WASH committees which were used in 125 villages for developing water safety planning and setting up financial management system.

At the end of 2017, 65 villages had built community managed household water metering systems which have provided basic water services to 84,147 people (51 percent women). In addition, 62 schools and 20 health centres were also connected with piped water supply. A further 133 water supply systems were under construction which will provide basic water supply to 126,277 people (51 percent women) across Ayeyarwaddy, Kayin and Rakhine.

In 2016/17, UNICEF Myanmar worked with the Government in developing the National WASH Strategy, which included WASH in Schools and Minimum Requirements for WASH in Schools. The National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan was endorsed by the Ministry of Education in 2016, which has set up targets on WASH for all schools by 2030. The Minimum Requirements for WASH in Schools and Thant Shin Star Guidebook were also drafted and are being tested in Chin, Kachin and Kayin. UNICEF Myanmar applied three different implementation approaches, including partnerships with NGOs, direct contracting to contractors and implementation through the Ministry of Education. Working through NGOs or contract was found to deliver high-quality results, but it is expensive and not feasible to scale up at the national level.

As part of mainstreaming of WASH in Schools in the Ministry of Education system, a township-wide approach by using the Thant Shin Star School Approach is being implemented in Kachin and Kayin through the State/Township Education Department. Training of Trainers on the Thant Shin Star School Approach are given to the state and township-level resource persons from the education department, who then train teachers, students and community members in the targeted schools. Through the Approach, 22,622 schoolchildren (51 percent girls) and 327 teachers from 140 schools have gained access to basic WASH facilities in schools and are practicing good hygienic behaviour.

With the support of UNICEF Myanmar and GiZ, the Ministry of Education successfully hosted the sixth WASH in Schools International Learning Exchange in Myanmar, where representatives of 11 countries from the Asia and Pacific region participated. These exchanges have helped to share innovative approaches, learn about what worked and what didn’t work and build the motivation of stakeholders in their pursuit of good WASH practices in all schools.

**OUTPUT 4** Preparedness and response for sufficient safe water, sanitation facilities and improved hygiene practices meet the core commitments of children and women in humanitarian situations.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Over the course of the country programme, three acute distinct humanitarian situations (Kachin, Northern Shan State and Rakhine) have emerged and developed into protracted,
complex humanitarian situations. These events have unfolded in locations already afflicted with chronic water and sanitation deprivations. The humanitarian context has led to short-term humanitarian funding for WASH activities in specific locations (primarily camps for internally displaced persons). Under the new country programme, humanitarian funding is expected to continue to dominate in these states. Increased focus is required to strengthen WASH sector enabling environments that can accommodate long-term humanitarian WASH issues as part of wider WASH sector improvement activities.

In 2017, the UNICEF Myanmar-led WASH cluster continued to support WASH coordination for protracted emergencies in Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan and has reached 224,254 people with humanitarian WASH activities. UNICEF Myanmar, in partnership with six international NGOs, four local NGOs and two government departments, reached 109,495 people with humanitarian WASH support. UNICEF Myanmar has maintained WASH cluster leadership at the national and state level with regular meetings, 4W reports and provision of funds to partners as providers of last resort. Extensive focus has gone into ensuring the mainstreaming of menstrual hygiene management, strengthening of protection and improving advocacy tools. With deteriorating access, the UNICEF Myanmar and cluster have devoted significant time to supporting partners with negotiating access and exploring alternative delivery mechanisms under an increasingly difficult operational context.

In Northern Rakhine State, UNICEF Myanmar worked with the Government and NGOs to distribute WASH hygiene kits to 28,285 internally displaced persons in early 2017. A cyclone recovery operation was initiated in July but cut short by the violent events of 25 August, which stopped all WASH activities. In the last quarter of 2017, UNICEF Myanmar regained limited access to Northern Rakhine State and is supporting negotiations for improved access for cluster partners. In central Rakhine, ongoing operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in 27 camps have continued. As consequences of the Mora cyclone in the second quarter and violence in in Q3 camp WASH services have seen significant disruption. Q4 has seen major repairs being undertaken across many camps.

In Kachin and Northern Shan states, access has deteriorated even for national NGO WASH cluster partners that previously could move with few restrictions. Situations in urban camps have improved slightly as camp populations and WASH services have integrated with municipal services; nevertheless, multiple short-term displacements and zero access to the United Nations in rural areas has led to increased people without WASH services.

Preparedness strengthening activities continued over the course of 2017. As part of the new WASH resilience programme, UNICEF Myanmar supported the Relief and Resettlement Department with budget planning and warehouse management training. The Department of Rural Development was supported to construct six warehouses for emergency contingency stocks, and through the cluster a WASH in Emergency training of trainers was delivered to 30 state-level government and civil society organizations across four states/regions. Training of trainers action plans were developed for government officials and partners across 74 townships.

OUTPUT 5 Timely and quality leadership and technical assistance in WASH.

Analytical statement of progress
The WASH team provided support for developing the Programme Strategy Note and Country Programme Document (2018–2022) and UNDAF (2018–2022). One of the key achievements in 2017 was the involvement of WASH officers/specialists in the country office and field offices to
strengthen the enabling environment by supporting the launching event of the National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan, establishment of a local organizing committee to host International Learning Exchanges for WASH in schools, supporting the Government to participate in the High Level Meeting on Sanitation and Water for All in Washington, D.C., and expert meeting on Enabling Environment Strengthening for WASH in Washington, D.C.

WASH officers in all the field offices, with support from the country office, provided technical assistance to the regional/state government to strengthen sectoral coordination and service delivery, including humanitarian assistances among key line ministries at subnational levels. WASH officers from all field offices, with support from the country office, co-facilitated to roll out the National WASH Strategy and Investment Plan in order to develop short and medium-term state/regional WASH plans in all states and regions. In addition, WASH officers in all field offices also provided support to the training institution to conduct training of trainers and trainings for WASH in emergencies in five disaster-prone states and regions. Quarterly WASH meetings bringing together WASH staff from Yangon and field offices provided opportunities to discuss good practices, lessons learned and the way forward of the programme.

The WASH sector in Myanmar is split across three ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Health and Sports and Ministry of Education). Roles and responsibilities of sub-sectors are well defined in the National WASH Strategy for rural water supply, sanitation and hygiene, WASH in health care and WASH in schools. The UNICEF Myanmar WASH section continued to provide sector leadership to the Government and partners, such as providing technical support to operationalize the National WASH Sector Strategy and associated Investment Plan for 2016–2030 to all states and regions and formation of a Technical Working Group of the WASH sector to establish SDG indicators and a baseline with representatives from three key departments, the Central Statics Organization and other relevant line ministries, and NGOs.

The UNICEF Myanmar WASH section will continue to provide sector leadership to the Government and partners for the WASH sector and to work effectively with the Government of Myanmar by using its capacity, field presence and extensive support both at national and subnational levels to achieve sustainable WASH services at scale. The WASH section will continue to provide technical assistance to the implementing partners at the national and subnational levels. UNICEF Myanmar continued to provide WASH cluster leadership at national and subnational levels.

**OUTCOME 4** Increased access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services for key adolescent populations, pregnant women and children living with HIV.

**Analytical statement of progress**
HIV prevalence in the general population in Myanmar has declined to about 0.6 per cent; however, it is estimated that the number of new HIV infections among low-risk women per year has not significantly declined in more than a decade. The National Strategic Plan of HIV and AIDS 2016–2020 was developed with technical support from United Nations agencies including UNICEF and WHO, and its focus is strengthened in ensuring that all pregnant women and HIV-exposed babies have access to HIV testing services at point of care and, if infected, have access to antiretroviral therapy through referral services. The National Strategic Plan also highlighted the need to increase access for HIV testing, and treatment services among adolescent and young people from key populations, including those who identify as transgender. In addition, technical assistance to the National AIDS Programme was provided in
developing concept notes for a new round of the Global Fund grant (2017–2020) with a new service delivery model approach through fast tracking access to integrated and high-quality services.

The percentage of pregnant women with known HIV status in Myanmar increased to 82 per cent and exceeded its target in 2017. UNICEF Myanmar has committed to support the Government’s ambition for EMTCT by 2025. UNICEF contributed to the expansion of point-of-care testing for pregnant women from 308 townships in 2016 to 320 townships in 2017. This, along with community mobilization, contributed towards 900,000 pregnant women (about 90 per cent) and their spouses being tested for HIV and knowing their result. This was a significant increase from 71.7 per cent in 2015 and 65 per cent in 2014. Reaching more pregnant women in 2018 onward would require concerted efforts of the Ministry of Health and Sports and partners such as WHO and the United Nations Office for Project Services in addressing issues related to supply, building capacity of service providers, and ensuring availability of adequate resources to enable further decentralization of point-of-care HIV testing in all 330 townships in Myanmar.

To ensure equitable scale-up of HIV testing, UNICEF continued to prioritize its focus on changing policies and strategies. Through continuous joint advocacy with the Human Rights and Gender working group, a draft HIV Law is being developed in the country and will be submitted to the Parliament. The law states that a person of 16 years old and above should be able to access HIV services at their own decision. Meanwhile, working group meetings for young people’s health, including prevention of HIV, were held to address the special needs and challenges faced by adolescent key populations regarding sexual reproductive health and HIV services. Since the beginning of 2015, the Ministry of Health and Sports, with support from UNICEF, implemented HIV testing interventions during mass gatherings such as festivals, with a focus on targeting adolescent and young key populations. These interventions were successful in reaching key populations for HIV testing, resulting in a yield ranging from 2 per cent to 5 percent of those tested were found to be HIV-positive. This result was considered as efficient as other existing HIV testing strategies in the country. In addition to increasing access, this initiative also resulted in sensitization of service providers to perform HIV testing of adolescents and young people, which in turn helps to remove the barrier of age being a limit to consent for an HIV test.

UNICEF’s support to Myanmar in reducing the AIDS burden has contributed to the increased number of people on antiretroviral therapy; more than 121,000 patients were treated, with almost 7,500 of them children. Additional activities were facilitated to ensure that 96 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV could life-long receive antiretroviral treatment. The increasing number of pregnant women receiving lifelong antiretroviral therapy was also amplified with follow-up testing of early infant diagnosis of HIV for a total of 1,189 babies. However, quality of care and monitoring outcome for PMTCT and paediatric HIV treatment is still a concern due to limited data and quality of treatment in both public and private hospitals.

The percentage of children infected by mother-to-child transmission of HIV in 2017 stood at 7.2 per cent, still above the target of having the transmission at less than 5 per cent. Despite increased performance in all aspects of the testing and treatment cascade, additional support is still needed to increase access to skilledbirth attendants in hard-to-reach areas and to ensure timeliness of testing of HIV-exposed children before 2 months of age. Further efforts would be required also to improve referrals in getting antiretroviral treatment of HIV-infected children as well as improving the quality of HIV testing and treatment during pregnancy.
Renewed focus is needed to ensure that all pregnant women in the country have access to HIV testing services at point of care. And if the women are infected, they should have access to treatment from the nearest centre. Innovative solutions need to be identified to reduce loss during referral for antiretroviral treatment based on needs at the subnational level and will remain a priority in 2018 to 2022. These efforts in increasing access to testing and reducing loss to follow-up will be supported further by modelling implementation of a subnational validation of EMTCT in at least one district of Myanmar by 2020. To sustain all the above efforts, particularly in achieving EMTCT by 2025 and in scaling up paediatric antiretroviral treatment, the programme would need additional funding of about US$750,000 per year.

OUTPUT 1 Strengthened political commitment, policy and data management systems to reduce new HIV infections in children, improve quality treatment for mothers and children, and reduce stigma and discrimination.

Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF is globally leading EMTCT, which Myanmar has committed to and is aiming to achieve by 2025. UNICEF Myanmar supported programme activities which are being directed for modelling implementation of subnational validation of EMTCT in at least one district by 2020. Joint support from UNICEF, WHO and UNAIDS to the Ministry of Health and Sports is directed towards digitalizing reporting of HIV services, including data on PMTCT of HIV. This also includes ensuring that all data are electronically interfaced with the District Health Information System 2, a web-based platform of the Health Management Information Systems.

In 2017, one of the key achievements was the incorporation of data on the syphilis testing for all pregnant women at antenatal care into PMTCT report. With this last step, then all main indicators of PMTCT programme have been incorporated into District Health Information System 2. Due to these efforts, the vision of dual EMTCT on HIV and syphilis by 2025 in Myanmar is closer to being reached. With a focus on improving the quality of HIV care and data management for antiretroviral treatment, UNICEF’s partnership with the Clinton Health Access Initiative resulted in the establishment of an electronic patient management system, where it was developed and piloted in five hospitals/sites. During 2017, the software training and installation was scaled up to a total of 46 antiretroviral treatment centres. This system will also link with the District Health Information System 2, collect and analyse real-time cohort data to track and improve programme performance, generate evidence for planning, and monitor quality of care and generate evidence to improve it.

In 2017, UNICEF Myanmar supported an additional assessment for policy and strategy formulation in paediatric and adolescent HIV treatment and care. In collaboration with the Department of Medical Research, UNICEF Myanmar supported the assessment on the quality of antiretroviral treatment services for children living with HIV. The study was completed and results are being finalized, and the findings will be disseminated in 2018.

World AIDS Day was commemorated with the support of UNICEF Myanmar at both national and subnational levels. In coordination with the Ministry of Health and Sports and all implementing partners, the theme of My Health My Right was launched. At subnational events, the World AIDS Day was organized with the participation of children and adolescents from formal and non-formal schools. The events were conducted with the support of the National AIDS Programme and the involvement of civil society organizations. UNICEF continued to prioritize working on improving policies and development of guidelines that will enable adolescent key populations less than 18 years of age to access prevention and testing services for HIV. The
need to increase access for HIV testing, prevention and treatment services among adolescent and young key populations, including those who identify as transgender, was addressed through continuous joint advocacy efforts from human rights and gender working groups and young people’s health working group.

**OUTPUT 2** Capacities are strengthened and communities are mobilized to increase access for HIV prevention, treatment and care services for adolescent key populations, pregnant women and children living with HIV.

**Analytical statement of progress**

As lead technical agency on prevention of EMTCT supporting the Ministry of Health and Sports, UNICEF Myanmar contributed to the increased percentage of infants born to HIV-positive women who received a virologic test for HIV within two months of birth. UNICEF, in partnership with the Clinton Health Access Initiative, continued to support the Ministry of Health and Sports in establishing a Laboratory Information Management System. The System improved the quality of data on testing of HIV-exposed infants and reduced the time in delivering test results to both health-care providers and caregivers. It also enhanced data sharing among the National Health Laboratory and the National AIDS Programme. The introduction of an SMS printer in a few high-volume sites has also helped to reduce the time required to deliver reports to service providers. Additional initiatives, such as the establishment of expert clients in high-volume sites, continued to reduce loss to follow-up. This has resulted in the increase in the number of infants born to HIV-positive women receiving a virologic test for HIV within two months of birth. In the townships that have PMTCT services using polymerase chain reaction technology, the coverage was increased from 39 per cent in 2015 to 50 per cent in 2017 among all live births of HIV-exposed children (January to October 2017 data).

UNICEF supported eight members of a Myanmar delegation to learn about EMTCT in Thailand together with a delegation from China as part of South-South cooperation in EMTCT. Additional townships were trained in PMTCT, making the service available for pregnant women in 320 townships, as compared with 308 in 2016. Partnership with the Kachin Baptist Association, for the first time in many years after the onset of conflict in Kachin, resulted in volunteers from non-government-controlled areas being trained by the Ministry of Health and Sports and the start of those areas reporting back to the National AIDS Programme on their service performance. UNICEF Myanmar’s support through partnership with the Kachin Baptist Association has provided 157 pregnant women with HIV testing services during antenatal care clinic visits. The test found eight pregnant women to be HIV-positive, as well as their spouses. These pregnant women came from non-government-controlled areas of Kachin and were provided with antiretroviral drugs for PMTCT. Since then they have been under active follow-up for lifelong treatment. Moving forward, through this partnership, UNICEF will continue to focus on increasing access in non-government-controlled areas that have a high prevalence of HIV, while also exploring other long-term sustainable solutions with the National AIDS Programme.

**OUTPUT 3** Timely and quality leadership, management and technical assistance in HIV.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Effective management and development of staff were ensured by capacity development and learning exchanges, including by:
· sending the HIV specialist, PMTCT to the UNICEF Health System Strengthening Course in Melbourne in 2017;

· sending the HIV specialist, Paediatric AIDS to participate in regional training for Comprehensive Case Management for Children and Adolescents living with HIV in Bangkok, Thailand; and

· Assigning the HIV specialist, PMTCT from the Country Office and the HIV Officer from the Mawlamyine office to be part of the Myanmar delegation, in recent triangular cooperation with Thailand and China, to learn about the EMTCT validation process in Thailand.

OUTCOME 5 Increased number and proportion of children accessing and completing quality basic education.

Analytical statement of progress
During the Country Programme 2011–2017, the primary school net enrolment rate steadily increased: from a baseline of 84.6 percent in 2011–2012 to 98.4 percent in 2017–2018. The primary school completion rate deteriorated during this period: from 69.8 percent in 2011–2012 to 65.6 percent in 2016–2017. This shows the persistent challenge of low school retention, which is a result of multiple reasons, including poor sector planning, the Government’s low budget allocation to education, and the poor quality of education.

As for kindergarten, enrolment decreased from 1,263,611 in 2016–2017 to 1,061,586 in 2017–2018. This may be partially due to the fact that kindergarten is not yet compulsory and that most schools do not have native ethnic language-speaking teachers, parents of ethnic minorities may be reluctant to send their young children to kindergarten, further indicating the need for enhanced awareness of the importance of the early years of education, advocacy for higher investment in the early years and mother-tongue-based early learning at the policy level and at the subnational level.

The Government remains committed to education, as demonstrated in the increase in its budget allocation to education, which rose from 3.7 percent in 2011–2012 to 7.8 percent in 2017–2018, although it remains low, compared with the international benchmark of 20 percent. To strengthen evidence-based analysis and planning, UNICEF Myanmar, with other partners, supported the Government to conduct a Comprehensive Education Sector Review from 2012 to 2016, which formed the basis for the development of the National Education Strategic Plan 2016–2021. The Strategic Plan provides Myanmar’s first joint policy framework to guide domestic and external investments for education. It outlines an inclusive approach to improving teaching and learning, and provides the vehicle for Myanmar to achieve SDG 4 for education. The Strategic Plan was approved by the State Counsellor and launched in February 2017.

UNICEF Myanmar supported the development of education policies: the early childhood care and development policy was approved in 2014, State Language Policies in Mon, Kachin and Kayin were developed in 2016, and the alternative education policy framework was developed in 2017. The kindergarten curriculum was developed and rolled out during the 2016–2017 school year. The evidence base was strengthened through finalization of key studies, including the situation analysis of children with disabilities in Myanmar, a bottleneck analysis of gender dynamics in secondary school, initiation of the Out-of-School Children Initiative, and a review study on the non-formal primary equivalency programme, all of which inform dialogue with the
A capacity gap assessment of the Ministry of Education, undertaken by the Ministry of Education with UNICEF Myanmar and together with partners, identified human resource and institutional capacity gaps at central and subnational levels. Based on the findings, UNICEF supported a government-led approach to the Ministry of Education capacity development, including an initiative to build subnational capacity in Annual Budgeting and Planning and Human Resource Development planning. Further, UNICEF Myanmar support to capacity building of State Education Departments and Township Education Offices in evidence-based planning continued, with an increased emphasis on inclusivity and sensitivity to conflicts and disaster risk reduction.

During the period 2011–2017, about 46,000 (45 percent girls) out-of-school children aged 10–14 gained access to second chance education opportunities for primary and middle-school level non-formal equivalency programmes. UNICEF Myanmar supported the construction of 41 school buildings, totalling 126 classrooms, in 30 schools that enabled more than 4,300 children to fulfill their right to education in good quality, child-friendly schools in Mon and Kayin states and Yangon. In 2017, more than 2.5 million children received essential learning supplies. Some 70,000 kindergarten kits were distributed, helping 1 million kindergarten students have learning and play materials.

To achieve the 2017 targets of the Humanitarian Response Plan for Education to reach 76,000 children aged 3–17 years old in Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan, UNICEF Myanmar coordinated education in emergencies partners’ support which resulted in 50,300 children gaining continuous access to quality formal and non-formal education in schools and temporary learning centres. In Rakhine, UNICEF Myanmar has been taking a whole-state approach to reach children of all communities by working with the Government and partners to provide access to various learning opportunities and improve the quality of education. During 2017, some 17,410 children of all communities in Rakhine State became able to study in a child-friendly environment through the 64 schools that were reconstructed, rehabilitated or repaired, and 38 others underway.

Since 2012, UNICEF Myanmar has been co-leading the sector coordination, with Australia, to represent the development partners in supporting the Ministry of Education leadership to enhance sector coordination for strategic dialogue, and joint sector policy and planning. In 2017, as per the Government’s guidance, the Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training Sector Coordination Group was established, governing seven sub-sector working groups. UNICEF Myanmar plays the role of assisting co-chair for the basic education sub-sector working group. At the subnational level, UNICEF Myanmar has been supporting the State Education Department to lead sector coordination in Rakhine, Mon, Kayin and Chin. As part of subnational partnership, UNICEF Myanmar has contributed to the government partnership with non-state actors, which has resulted in students from non-state-actors schools being allowed to sit government examinations. UNICEF Myanmar has supported the Ministry of Education through the Ministry-led working group, to leverage Global Partnership for Education funds for National Education Strategic Plan implementation. Myanmar plans to submit an application to join the Global Partnership in February 2018 and submit a grant application in May 2018 for the amount of US$73.7 million to improve the equity, inclusion and quality of education.

**OUTPUT 1** Equitable policies and supporting systems in place, with increased provision of quality, inclusive early childhood care and development services.
Analytical statement of progress

In the final year of this Country Programme, many achievements were consolidated. The first National Early Childhood Care and Development Committee meeting was convened in October 2017, achieved as a result of concerted UNICEF Myanmar-led advocacy for implementation of the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy (2014). The 2014-drafted Five-Year Strategic Plan on early childhood care and development was updated in 2017, planned for endorsement by the Committee in January 2018 and will benefit at least 8.3 million children under 8 years old annually in the future. In terms of a further bolstered legislative environment for the early years, the early childhood care and development registration law was endorsed. However, while intended as a quality boosting measure, the law created challenges in a proliferation of services by community-based providers. Continued coordination and advocacy is required to ensure that standards are applied and maintained by all early childhood care and development service providers.

To further boost systems, several guidelines, models and training manuals were developed for system building in early childhood care and development. Early childhood care and development quality indicators were updated using ASEAN guidelines. Early peacebuilding storybooks and materials were developed and integrated into a parenting education module in 2016 to instil embracing diversity, tolerance and care among young children. The Early Childhood Intervention Strategic Plan was endorsed in April 2017 and preparatory works – adaptation of developmental screening, programmatic evaluation and procedural tools – are in progress for pilot in fourstates/regions in 2018. The steering committee and task force played key roles in achieving these results, having benefited also from UNICEF Myanmar’s technical advocacy on the long-term, societal benefits to early childhood interventions.

The kindergarten curriculum implementation was reviewed, and based on findings the development of a module for in-service training was initiated in 2017, with completion expected in 2018. The prioritization guideline for preschool expansion was reviewed in 2017 to be used in 2018 by the Ministry of Education.

In technical support to improved, quality, inclusive service provision, UNICEF Myanmar supported the Ministry of Education to translate training materials for early childhood care and development teachers into 19 ethnic languages to enrich understanding of key concepts and address issues of inequity in access. Also in support of improved quality service provision, mobile preschool services were pilot-tested to reach remote/small communities, and lessons learned were shared at the early childhood care and development technical working group.

The procurement process of the Ministry of Education was strengthened for the procurement and distribution of 70,000 kindergarten kits, which saved significant funding compared with 2016. While the Ministry of Education introduced KG, continuous advocacy is required to further promote early childhood care and development. School-based preschools for 3–4 years olds were replaced by kindergartens for 5-year-olds, resulting in a net effect of postponing early learning experiences for one year for some children. Further advocacy is required for professionalization of preschool teachers, due to their non-recognition as government staff because communities remunerate them.

The short form of the early child development scale, normed in the East Asia and the Pacific region, was adapted into Myanmar and five other ethnic languages and used to conduct a baseline for 3–5-year-olds in 2016. It was carried out through partnership between Yangon University of Education and the University of Hong Kong.
OUTPUT 2 Primary/Secondary/Alternative Delivery – Enhanced coverage, quality and inclusivity of child-friendly teaching and environments in primary and secondary schools, including the provision of quality alternative education.

Analytical statement of progress
The past year, 2017, saw a gradual transition from emphasis on service delivery to system building at both central and subnational levels. Through the Whole State Approach, aimed at building capacities at state, township and school levels in education planning, monitoring and leadership, 61 townships of five target states reinforced their capacity to enhance coverage, quality and inclusivity of basic education with UNICEF Myanmar support.

Five states demonstrated enhanced coordination and participation in the education sector through a state-level education coordination platform, the State Education Sector Working Group. With UNICEF Myanmar’s support, five state education departments have been able to lead this coordination mechanism, NGOs mobilized their human and financial resources to support it, and non-state providers of education started regular dialogue with the State Education Department, particularly in Mon and Kayin states. This coordination platform allowed multi-stakeholder dialogue relating to education equity and inclusivity in respective states, as detailed below.

UNICEF Myanmar continued to build subnational capacity in evidence-based education planning with an increased emphasis on inclusivity and sensitivity to conflicts and disaster risk reduction. The Ministry of Education, with UNICEF Myanmar’s support and based on the UNICEF Myanmar-supported evaluation of the Township Education Improvement Plan, revised the Plan’s guidelines. A total of 294 state/district education officers and head teachers in Kachin, Kayah and Mon states gained skills and knowledge to identify priority education needs through quantitative and qualitative analysis. UNICEF Myanmar advocated that these plans be partially budgeted by the Ministry of Education’s own annual budget, in line with its support to annual planning and budgeting. The benefit of the Plan is expected to reach more than 760,000 students (388,000 girls) in the aforementioned states. The Ministry of Education is aiming to scale up the Planto all 330 townships across the country within the Ministry of Education budget.

In the area of teacher quality improvement, 25,481 teachers and head teachers reinforced their competency in child-centred teaching methodology and/or instructional leadership through Child-Friendly School/Language Enrichment Programme training, School-Based In-Service Teacher Education and Head Teacher training in 2017.

Access to education of out-of-school children was supported. A cumulative total of 45,906 (of which 45 percent, or 20,862, were girls) out-of-school children aged 10–14+ years old re/gained access to second chance education opportunities for primary and middle school-level non-formal equivalency programmes during this country programme cycle. UNICEF Myanmar succeeded in mainstreaming this programme into the Ministry of Education system, a promising step towards scaling up implementation to reach marginalized children in townships not yet covered by the programme. Upstream work on policy framework is also underway.

As part of quality enhancement, UNICEF Myanmar support for innovation in assessment continued through the development of standardized tools for Grade 5 exam system improvement, under the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Matrix.
UNICEF Myanmar support for development of WASH in Schools standards and guidelines is ongoing, ensuring sensitivity to gender and menstrual hygiene management. UNICEF Myanmar supported construction of WASH facilities, health education and promoting good hygienic practices.

OUTPUT 3 Sector performance – Enhanced Education Sector performance, including improved planning, management, monitoring and evaluation capacity of key education actors at all levels.

Analytical statement of progress
Since 2011, with other partners, UNICEF Myanmar has provided technical and coordination assistance to the Government and other education stakeholders, for a comprehensive education sector reform process. The resulting, first-ever, National Education Strategic Plan, (2016–2021), was endorsed by the Government in February 2017.

To support National Education Strategic Plan implementation, UNICEF Myanmar, under the Quality Basic Education Programme, undertook a Multi-Level Ministry of Education Capacity Gap Assessment and Initial Targeted Capacity Building in Myanmar in 2016, which found critical weaknesses in the Ministry of Education budget planning. In response in 2017, UNICEF Myanmar, under the Building on Quality Basic Education Programme, provided Annual Budget Planning capacity building for 80 officials from states to enable them to prepare costed annual plans. This intervention empowered officials to participate effectively in 2017’s annual planning. Two orientation workshops on human resource development were provided to 200 state officials. The Ministry of Education was supported to draft human development plans with 320 participating officials, enabling them to be able to implement such plans effectively.

The Ministry of Education executed a five-year prioritization, identifying gaps and pursuing technical and financial assistance from partners to implement the plan. This made the first ministry ever to prepare an annual plan with an accompanying monitoring and evaluation framework aligned with the five-year strategic sector plan. In follow-up, UNICEF Myanmar and partners facilitated the Ministry of Education-led Annual Performance Review with relevant sector partners. Leveraging Annual Plan (2016–2017) experience, the Ministry of Education and partners prioritized focus areas for 2017–2018 and prepared the Multi-Year Work Plans for 2017–2018 and 2018–2019. This annual performance review was the first-ever Ministry of Education review of sector performance as a whole to inform the next planning cycle.

With co-facilitator Australia, UNICEF Myanmar supported the Ministry of Education to establish a sector coordination mechanism, the Education, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training Sector Coordination Group to ensure harmonized sector plan implementation, play a strategic role in enhancing aid effectiveness and sector results orientation and strengthen the framework for National Education Strategic Plan implementation monitoring. UNICEF Myanmar co-chaired the Basic Education Sub-Sector Working Group, bridging seven sub-sector working groups to support the Education, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training Sector Coordination Group. UNICEF Myanmar supported the state government to initiate education coordination mechanisms in line with the Coordination Group in Mon, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin and Chin, to enhance overall sectoral coordination and harmonized implementation between state and non-state actors, civil society organizations, international NGOs and United Nations agencies.

The National Education Strategic Plan has opened the door for Myanmar’s accession to the
Global Partnership for Education. UNICEF Myanmar, as member of the Ministry-led Global Partnership for Education Working Group, with UNESCO as Coordinating Agency and others, has provided strategic inputs to the application process and programme design. Opportunities for UNICEF Myanmar to be an implementing partner in the programme are being explored. Strategic dialogues in ethnically diverse, conflict-affected states of Shan and Kayah have resulted in proposals that language policy should be developed for both, as per Mon, Kayin and Kachin The Out-of-School Children Initiative has progressed, with national-level Steering Committee and Technical Teams formed, and nine line ministries involved. An Out-of-School Children Initiative country strategy has been developed, and profile builds of out-of-school children are in progress.

**OUTPUT 4** Humanitarian (Education in Emergencies/PBE/disaster risk reduction) – Enhanced emergency preparedness and response, including improved Education in Emergencies sector coordination and social cohesion programmes.

**Analytical statement of progress**
In 2017, UNICEF Myanmar responded to the educational needs of 16,343 emergency-affected children in camps for internally displaced persons and host communities in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan.

In Rakhine, UNICEF Myanmar partnered with international NGOs and the State Education Department to support children in internally displaced persons camps and host communities to access formal and non-formal education at temporary learning classrooms, through provision of teaching and learning materials, capacity building and monthly incentives to volunteer teachers to maintain teaching. Through coordination with Township Education Officers, UNICEF Myanmar and partners ensured that children attending temporary learning classrooms for formal education are registered in the nearby government schools. Through advocacy, these children were able to participate in the government final exams at the end of 2016–2017 school year following the previous years’ practice. As co-lead for the education in emergencies sector in Rakhine, UNICEF Myanmar provided technical support to partners, organized regular coordination meetings, took responsibility for providing quarterly Humanitarian Response Plan reports to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and facilitated communication and collaboration with State Education Department/Township Education Officers for Education in Emergencies partners in Rakhine. Ongoing education in emergencies programmes were severely affected by an ongoing humanitarian crisis in Northern Rakhine State. TLS were least affected, as they were self-managed by trained volunteer teachers, but school construction was delayed due to the ongoing security constraints.

In Kachin, UNICEF Myanmar continued to support children affected by armed-conflict in government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas through local partners and the State Education Department to access government schools or temporary learning facilities. UNICEF Myanmar led education in emergencies sector coordination in Kachin. UNICEF Myanmar successfully advocated the State Education Department/Township Education Officers to accept internally displaced persons children in government schools who moved from non-government-controlled areas to government-controlled areas with their families. Inability to access to non-government-controlled areas to monitor the education in emergencies situation is a persistent challenge and the access was possible only through local partners. In Northern Shan, UNICEF Myanmar provided coordination and communication for partners with State Education Department/Township Education Officers. A limited number of partners, limited access to affected areas, limited funding and protracted emergencies made it challenging for
UNICEF Myanmar to expand activities to reach the unreached children in affected areas of these states.

During 2017, some 17,410 children of all communities in Rakhine State had an opportunity to study in child-friendly environments, through 64 schools that were reconstructed (11), rehabilitated (36) or repaired (17), with 38 more underway. These children could not continue accessing safe learning environments as a result of damage to their schools in the 2015 floods, and have been made more vulnerable by chronic conflict. Aiming to reach the most vulnerable, UNICEF Myanmar agreed to support 102 cyclone-resistant school infrastructures including WASH facilities in 10 townships across Rakhine, the state with the lowest education indicators in Myanmar and which other partners are unable to reach. The process builds local capacity as UNICEF Myanmar works with the State Education Department, uses local contractors and local civil society organizations to act as community-contractor-government interface and is complemented by teacher training, education administrators, capacity building and non-formal education for out-of-school children.

OUTPUT 5 Effective leadership and technical assistance assured for delivery of results.

Analytical statement of progress
During this Country Programme period from 2011 to 2017, UNICEF Myanmar provided high-level technical assistance and leadership to the education sector in Myanmar. Particularly, UNICEF Myanmar demonstrated technical leadership in the areas of pre-primary and primary education by providing direct support to most disadvantaged children in selected townships, combined with policy development and capacity building, using various opportunities, including the multi-donor funded Quality Basic Education Programme 2012–2016. UNICEF Myanmar has been the co-lead for the education sector with Australia since 2012 in representing development partners to improve sector coordination and assist the Government in strengthening its capacity for education policy and strategic dialogue. UNICEF has also undertaken the co-lead role in selected states, notably in Rakhine, Mon, Kayin, Chin and Kachin. UNICEF Myanmar has acted as the education in emergencies coordination lead at the national level and in Rakhine and Kachin. Technical support has been central to the UNICEF Myanmar Education Programme for this Country Programme and will continue to be for the new Country Programme 2018–2022.

In 2017, as part of the Myanmar Office’s efforts to finalize the development of the new Country Programme Document 2018–2022, the UNICEF education team continued to lead the process of further consultation with the Government and partners, define the scope and focus for the new education programme. After the Country Programme Document was approved in September, the UNICEF Myanmar education team took steps forward to have a number of discussions to develop a Multi-Year Work Plan for 2018–2019. In addition, the team has been undergoing rigorous consultations with partners to clearly identify areas of collaboration and complementarity, which helps to improve effectiveness and efficiency regarding the use of UNICEF Myanmar resources.

In 2017 the team initiated a bi-weekly knowledge sharing session to enhance team members’ knowledge on various initiatives UNICEF Myanmar supports, and further clarify roles and responsibilities of each team member. A face-to-face education team meeting was originally planned to take place quarterly; however, given other priorities, the meeting took place only twice. Nonetheless, those two meetings were held at critical junctures relating especially to the new country programme document and a new multi-year work plan development, which allowed the section members to come together to have important discussions as a team. In addition, the
team increasingly used technology to facilitate the communication and discussions, such as Skype, which, though modestly, contributes to reduction of carbon footprint and carbon dioxide emissions.

HACT refresher training has helped enhance the section members’ knowledge and skills to apply HACT to ensure the appropriate use of resources accordingly. Distance support from the UNICEF Regional Office, particularly in the areas of early childhood care and development, out-of-school children study, Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics, evaluation and review study, and cross-border support were helpful and equipped the UNICEF Myanmar education team with further enhanced knowledge and technical support to assist the government counterparts. All the education section staff completed all the mandatory courses, including the latest one on sexual exploitation and abuse.

**OUTCOME 6** Children in need of support, care and protection are identified by and have access to public social welfare systems.

**Analytical statement of progress**
There has been significant progress in the policy and legislative framework for child protection in Myanmar in 2017. The country adopted the National Guidelines for the Registration and Support to Voluntary Organizations and the Minimum Standards of Care and Protection for Children in Residential Facilities. Official adoption contributes to improving the immediate protection and care for children living in institutions as a short-term response while formal family based alternative care arrangements are being put in place. The implementation of these guidelines and standards will help to prevent unnecessary family separation, orphanage proliferation and ensure where possible the child living in institution can be integrated back to his/her biological family. Similarly, the finalization and adoption of Foster Care Guidelines marked a milestone in introducing the first form of formal family based care in the national child care system of Myanmar.

In 2017, concluding a lengthy process of consultations, Myanmar’s Child Law has been fully revised and submitted to the Parliament by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. UNICEF supported the Parliament and its committees to gain better understanding of applicable international law and best practice, as well as national programmes and policies most relevant to the scope of the new Child Law. UNICEF Myanmar also contributed to the Child Labour Technical Working Group to shape Myanmar’s first National Action Plan on Elimination of Child Labour, and define the Hazardous Work List, which will support implementation of the child employment related regulations of the new Child Law.

Capacity development of professional and para-professional workforce in the child protection sector saw significant progresses as well. A total of 130 Social Work Case Managers received pre-service, in-service training and coaching/mentoring support which are institutionalized within the Department of Social Welfare training school system. Based on capacity development plans agreed with the Myanmar Police Force and Union Supreme Court in 2016, UNICEF supported them to develop curricula on child protection and child-sensitive procedures accompanied with a full package of training materials focusing on treatment of child victims and witnesses. The vision is to ensure full institutionalization of these materials and ensuring that police and judiciary have independent capacity to train their staff. Through a new partnership with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute, ad-hoc trainings and small scale awareness raising activities on orphanage tourism have been replaced with upscale and systematic series of trainings and awareness-raising interventions on child safe
tourism, directly benefiting a total of 1,944 stakeholders from the Government, tourism sector, NGOs and communities in the hotspot areas of Yangon, Mandalay, Inle, Bagan and Chaungthar.

In the violence against children high-prevalent areas such as Yangon, Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy, 36 judges from district courts and 392 police officers from township stations were trained with UNICEF’s support with the aim to address sexual violence against children more effectively. In total 192 townships and respective districts were covered with those trainings, with 19 of which also had trained Department of Social Welfare Social Work Case Managers. Presence of trained and capacitated child welfare, law enforcement and justice system actors at township level is the first step to ensuring that the continuum of child-friendly services is put in place. To ensure that this objective has an appropriate normative basis, UNICEF started supporting the Department of Social Welfare, Myanmar Police Force and the Ministry of Health, as first responders, to start drafting inter-agency standard operating procedures to respond to child abuse cases.

The social work case management system expanded from 27 townships in 2015, 37 in 2016 and up to 46 in 2017, across regions and states. The total number of cases received through the Department of Social Welfare CMS increased steadily from 1,757 (2016) to 2,311 (2017). Case Management systems in emergency settings have also been strengthened with the increase of community-based mechanisms which are the foundation to the reporting of violence and abuse cases. Trust-building activities have seen an increase in cases referred through these systems to case workers. UNICEF Myanmar also launched a model programme to address child labour in Hlaingtharyar Township of Yangon with interventions aiming to integrate response to child labour into the child protection case management system.

UNICEF Myanmar supported the efforts of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division of Myanmar Police Force and the Department of Social Welfare to ensure child-focused prevention, protection and law enforcement response. All identified child survivors of trafficking received assistance from the Department of Social Welfare during repatriation and reintegration, while UNICEF also advocated for increased government budget allocation for victim reintegration services. In 2017, a new module on safe migration and prevention of trafficking for EXCEL (a non-formal education programme for out-of-school adolescents) was published, and Training of Trainer trainings to support roll-out were conducted in Rakhine State.

UNICEF Myanmar continued constructive dialogue with the Myanmar Army and listed non-state armed groups to prevent grave violations on children. This led to a constant decrease of cases of new recruitment of children by the Army being reported as part of the implementation of the action plan signed in June 2012 with the Government of Myanmar. In 2017, 49 children and young people were released from the Army, bringing the total number released since 2012 to 849.

**OUTPUT 1** Conduct national study on institutional care.

**Analytical statement of progress**
A joint effort between UNICEF Myanmar and Department of Social Welfare which started with the inception of the current country programme in reforming the child care system saw fruits in 2017: The country adopted two critical policy documents in September, namely, *the Minimum Standards of Care and Protection for Children living in Residential Facilities* and *the National Guidelines on Registration and Support for Volunteer Organizations*. 

51
The Department of Social Welfare, with the technical and financial support from UNICEF, launched the consultative process to review and finalize the above-mentioned policy documents, with a clear aim of improving the Department of Social Welfare’s capacity in monitoring the conditions for children living in institutions. The process was joined by other key ministries: Ministry of Border Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, General Administrative Department and the Attorney General’s Office. Following the adoption of the Minimum Standards, negotiations on the national assessment on children living in all forms of residential care, including religious institutions have also advanced and the terms of reference for the Assessment has been approved by the Department of Social Welfare. Such data will provide much needed baseline information on those vulnerable population and provide insight into the quality, scope and nature of case management currently undertaken by the statutory (or other) workforce for the area of institutional care, caseload. The Assessment will also plan to examine the existing scope and capacity of the administrative data generated from various institutions. Those findings will guide UNICEF and Department of Social Welfare to develop a short/medium/long-term strategy for case management information management strategy in the new Country Programme (2018–2022).

Continued efforts have been made with Terre des homes and the Department of Social Welfare to develop a foster care model in two townships in Mandalay and Yangon regions. Foster Care Guidelines were finalized and are awaiting adoption by the Department of Social Welfare in late December 2017. Foster-care panel members and potential foster-care providers were appointed/recruited and trained accordingly. The formal foster care model will be the first form of formal family-based care arrangement to be implemented in Myanmar.

UNICEF in collaboration with Ministry of Hotel and Tourism entered a partnership with the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute in early 2017. This new partnership aimed to promote child-safe tourism, in particular, prevention of orphanage tourism and child sex tourism at a nation-wide scale. The work has been rolling out throughout 2017, with 1,944 participants from all relevant sectors trained on child safe tourism across all tourist hotspot locations in the country, including Yangon, Mandalay, Inle, Bagan, Kawthaung and Changthya. A small-scale assessment on orphanage tourism was conducted, indicating that 90 per cent of orphanages in four hotspot areas do not have rules for visitors to interact with children.

**OUTPUT 2** Increased social welfare system capacity to respond to child protection cases.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In 2017, UNICEF supported the Department of Social Welfare to increase their budgetary submission to Parliament and the Cabinet of Ministers, by providing direct Public Finance Management technical advice to the Department of Social Welfare, especially the Division of Child and Youth, which directly manages the Social Work Case Management system. As a result, the budget allocation to the Ministry and the Department of Social Welfare saw an almost 200 per cent increase in their 2017/18 budget, which mainly focused on the implementation of the integrated social protection strategy, further allowing and enabling financing for social work case management scale-up.

UNICEF continued advocacy and technical support for the Department of Social Welfare at union and state/regional level to expand the Social Work Case Management system and to increase effectiveness of the response to child protection cases. The Department of Social Welfare expanded the Social Work Case Management system to the ninetownships in Chin...
State in early 2017, leading to a total of 46 townships covered by the social work case management system. Some 18 new Department of Social Welfare Case Managers were recruited and trained in child protection case management to implement the hybrid model of mother and child cash transfer (maternal and child cash transfer) programme and social work case management. The standard operating procedures and operational manuals with clear roles and responsibilities of these case managers in view of maternal and child cash transfer administration and social work case management under the hybrid model are to be further reviewed in 2018.

UNICEF entered partnership with KMSS based in Hakha to ensure the support needed to the Department of Social Welfare in handling child protection case management. 18 case managers were recruited by KMSS and received training by UNICEF. With technical and financial support from UNICEF, a total of 130 child protection social work case managers from the Department of Social Welfare received pre-service, in-service and coaching and mentoring that are institutionalized within the Department of Social Welfare training school system. Thoroughly guided by the adopted child protection case management standard operating procedures, Department of Social Welfare case managers are focusing their efforts on addressing statutory cases (children in conflict with the law, sexual abuse and violence against children) while non-statutory cases are handled by NGOs. Working together with civil society organization partners, Department of Social Welfare child protection social work case managers received referrals of families in need of social support or those children or women who have experienced violence, abuse or exploitation. The number of cases received through the national child protection case management system increased substantially since 2015, reaching the total of 2,311 cases by November 2017.

OUTPUT 3 Strengthened legislative and institutional capacity to provide adequate care and protection to children in contact with the law.

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017 significant progress was made on the way of improving legislative framework related of justice for children and the realization of the rights of the child in general. After a lengthy process of consultations, Myanmar’s Child Law (1993) has been fully revised and submitted to the Parliament by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. The draft Law has been published by the Parliament for public consultation. UNICEF, at the request of child rights NGO networks preparing joint feedback, supported relevant discussions by providing information about content and objectives of the law and the history of the revision process. UNICEF also supported the Parliamentary revision process while the draft Law is reviewed by relevant thematic committees. In 2017, child protection and advocacy, partnerships and communication teams of UNICEF collaborated to ensure that parliamentarians have a better overview of the various rights issues addressed by the draft Law and respective international legal obligations and best practice, and have a good awareness of Myanmar’s policies and programmes where the Law is applicable. Three events were organized to support this objective: two workshops in Nay Pyi Taw in June and July for all interested parliamentarians, and a field trip to Kayin State for the Women and Child Rights Committee in November 2017 to observe child protection programmes.

Increased public attention to sexual abuse cases resulted in acknowledgement by government agencies that the response capacity of the justice system requires significant improvement. In 2017, UNICEF supported Myanmar Police Force and the Union Supreme Court to follow up on agreed capacity-building plans put in place at the end of 2016. Capacity building focused on
longer term and immediate goals. From its long-term perspective, in order to ensure the professionalization of police and judiciary through pre- and in-service training, UNICEF supported drafting of training curricula on child protection and child-sensitive procedures for these two agencies, prepared trainers, manuals and supported to select and train police and judiciary trainers. Some 38 judges and 35 police officers have been trained as trainers in 2017, and discussion on roll-out plans relying on new materials and human resources is ongoing. To address immediate needs, UNICEF’s support to the Myanmar Police Force and Union Supreme Court focused on enhancing capacity of practitioners in 6 states/regions that have the highest reported numbers of child sexual abuse. In Yangon, Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy, 36 judges from district courts and 392 police officers from township stations were trained. Overall, 192 townships and respective districts have been covered with these trainings, including 19 that also have trained the Department of Social Welfare social work case managers. Presence of trained and capacitated child welfare, law enforcement and justice system actors at township level is the first step to ensuring that the continuum of child friendly services is put in place. To ensure that this objective has an appropriate normative basis, UNICEF started supporting the Department of Social Welfare, Myanmar Police Force and the Ministry of Health and Sports, as first responders, to start drafting inter-agency standard operating procedures to respond to child abuse cases.

OUTPUT 4 Increased efforts to protect children from exploitation including child labour, trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, UNICEF launched a model programme to address child labour in Hlaingtharyar Township of Yangon with interventions aiming to integrate response to child labour into the child protection case management system. Intervention model has been designed and will be subject to inter-agency discussion in early 2018. Work on child labour cases within the framework of the social work case management system in 2017 has been instrumental in identifying gaps in the system, as well as issues that need to be addressed by the model programme and possible scaling up.

In 2017 UNICEF’s work on child labour also included collaborating with the International Labour Organization and other stakeholders to shape Myanmar’s first National Action Plan on Elimination of Child Labour. The final draft is in place and, once adopted, the Action Plan will establish national priorities and define high-level responsibilities. UNICEF has also worked with the International Labour Organization and the Child Labour Technical Working Group to draft the Hazardous Work List, which is close to finalization.

Trafficking remains a significant issue affecting Myanmar’s children: in 2016 and 2017, approximately one third of victims identified by police were children. UNICEF supported the efforts of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division of the Myanmar Police Force and the Department of Social Welfare to ensure child-focused prevention, protection and law enforcement response. All identified child survivors of trafficking received assistance from the Department of Social Welfare during repatriation and reintegration, while UNICEF also advocated for increased government budget allocation for victim reintegration services. In 2017, the Department of Social Welfare’s budget increased three-fold, significant increase also observed for trafficking reintegration services. Subsequently, the weight of UNICEF’s focus will shift from supporting the Department of Social Welfare with direct service delivery to ensuring quality and child-centred service provision. In 2017 a new module on safe migration and prevention of trafficking for EXCEL – a non-formal education programme for out-of-school
adolescents – was published, and trainings for module facilitators were conducted in Rakhine State. Trainings for the staff of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division in 2017 were enhanced by using resources developed for police with UNICEF support. UNICEF-trained master trainers (staff of the Division) conducted roll-out training for trafficking police officers in Yangon, Mandalay and Lashio.

OUTPUT 5 National and international standards are implemented to prevent and respond to grave violations against children as per United Nations Security Council resolutions 1612/1882 and to contribute to on-going peacebuilding, including responding to emergencies.

Analytical statement of progress
Country has seen rapidly evolving complex humanitarian situations during the current country programme. The Myanmar Country Office has taken active leadership in preparing and implementing emergency response for child protection, particularly through the existing coordination mechanisms, such as the child protection working group and the country task force on monitoring and reporting.

Humanitarian child protection programming reached approximately 90,000 conflict-affected children across Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states. UNICEF expanded its adolescent programme and reached 13,563 adolescents with life skills programming that builds key protective skills and resiliency for vulnerable children. Para case workers in internally displaced persons camp settings are responding to the needs of 1,648 who are survivors of abuse or violence. In order to build the capacity of the sector in mental health and psychosocial programming, UNICEF provided key agencies with the building blocks to implementing and running community-based psychosocial programmes. Some 90 persons across Kachin, Shan and Rakhine states participated in the programme, improving service provision for more than 120,000 boys and girls.

As Co-Chair of the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting on the six grave violations against children, established in 2007, UNICEF continued constructive dialogue with the Myanmar Army and listed non-state armed groups to prevent grave violations on children. In 2017, 49 children and young people were released from the Army, bringing the total number released since 2012 to 849. Dialogue with non-state armed groups also resulted in positive engagements taken by some of the listed non-state armed groups.

To increase capacity of partners to monitor and report grave violations against children, UNICEF focused on building capacity and expanding monitoring and reporting mechanism partnership and network. Some 309 participants from community-based organizations, international NGOs and United Nations agencies have been trained on the monitoring and reporting mechanism. In 2017, 321 incidents of grave violations against children were reported. In addition, 109 grave violations were documented in northern Rakhine State after August 25. The most documented grave violations after use and recruitment remain killing and maiming, partly due to the landmines/explosive remnants of war contamination of 9 out 14 states in Myanmar.

In 2017, 141 new victims of landmines/explosive remnants of war were reported and assisted with various child protection services. UNICEF supported the roll-out of the common mine risk education tool kits and reached more than 51,968 children with lifesaving mine risk education messages. UNICEF supported to strengthen the union and four state-level mine risk working groups involving more than 12 ministries and departments and more than 41 national and
international organizations. This has allowed better coordination among mine action actors and increase mine risk education and victim assistance coverage.

UNICEF continued to provide socio-economic support to 268 children and young people formerly associated with the armed forces and armed groups in 2017. UNICEF also continues to co-chair the inter-ministerial working group on reintegration. UNICEF supported the development of a comprehensive life skill curriculum and mapping of 860 different types of vocational trainings which are being used for the reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups. In February 2017, the Government of Myanmar signed the Paris Principles on children associated with armed forces and groups on the occasion of a conference co-organized by UNICEF and France.

OUTPUT 6 Timely and quality leadership and technical assistance.

Analytical statement of progress
Most of 2017 experienced the absence of the critical positions in the child protection team in the country office (chief of child protection P5, child protection specialist P4), as well as in the field (child protection specialist P3 and child protection officer NOB based in Kachin). Despite the limited human resources, the team managed to achieve the expected results in 2017 and maintained its leading role in providing child protection technical expertise, especially in the case of Rakhine crisis, when comes to bilateral dialogue with the Government, United Nations counterparts, sector and sub-sector coordination groups, as well as Myanmar Country Office internal meetings. The team also received external technical support in the second half of 2017 through: (i) three-month stretch assignment of the child protection specialist P4 from the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office; (ii) a child protection in emergencies coordinator was deployed as a standby partnership (Irish Aid) to cover the vacancy in Kachin for six months; and (iii) an information management specialist deployed from Rapid Response/UNICEF – Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility (Child Protection Area of Responsibility) for six weeks to provide technical support to the Myanmar Country Office Child Protection team in harmonizing the case management IMS, including info in humanitarian and regular contexts.

Moreover, in supporting UNICEF’s response to the Rakhine crisis, the Myanmar Country Office child protection team maintained its leading technical role in weekly teleconferences and discussions with UNICEF headquarters, the UNICEF Regional Office as well as rendering support to the Bangladesh Country Office. Regular communications and exchanges are taken place between the Child Protection teams from the two offices. Technical materials were shared with the Bangladesh Country Office in dealing with child protection in emergency. The child protection specialist P3, monitoring and reporting mechanism is deployed on a regular basis to Bangladesh to support the establishment of the monitoring and reporting mechanism. In early 2018, the child protection specialist P3 (child protection in emergencies) will also be deployed for enhancing any response needed.

OUTCOME 7 By the end of 2017, boys and girls benefit from increased budget allocations under health, education, social welfare and protection, addressing the needs of the most vulnerable.

Analytical statement of progress
By 2017, social sector budget allocations (health, education and social welfare) in Myanmar had witnessed clear and sustained increases since 2013. Health and education in particular witnessed the largest investments over this period, rising from 0.76 per cent and 1.46 per cent of gross domestic product to 1.06 per cent and 2.09 per cent of gross domestic product, respectively. It is worth noting that these figures do not capture the commitments to greater increases in social sector spending articulated by the new government in 2016, which were confirmed only in the 2017/18 budget allocations. This is particularly so for the almost threefold increase received by social welfare between fiscal year 2016/17 and fiscal year 2017/18, going from 0.09 per cent of the total government budget to 0.25 per cent. What all these trends confirm is a clearly heightened understanding – and commitment – of the need by the Government to invest more in the social sectors after years of chronic underinvestment. The social policy and child rights monitoring programme’s initiatives to generate evidence, advocate for and provide technical assistance contributed to this development.

UNICEF Myanmar has managed to position itself as a leading agency on producing timely and impactful analyses on the situation of children. In 2017, building on efforts initiated in 2016, a detailed child deprivation index (highlighting deprivations and disparities across states/regions) and analysis was produced. This informed the development of UNICEF’s new Country Programme (2018–2022). It was also used widely in policy advocacy in areas such as the development of sectoral plans in health and education. Given the scale of child deprivations/disparities highlighted, this was powerful evidence in strengthening the case for increased attention to both the quantity and quality of social sector spending.

Moreover, the policy attention generated by such evidence also helped build on the gains of the New Vision for New Results for Children in Myanmar (2016), especially as Myanmar accelerated efforts to localize the SDG agenda. UNICEF successfully advocated for drafting an SDG Action Plan for Children in Myanmar, to articulate a set of child-related SDG indicators that would be at the forefront of SDG indicators prioritized by Myanmar. This work was led by the Ministry of Planning and Finance and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and UNICEF provided full technical support in helping develop this list, as well as a set of recommendations that would help in better monitoring of these priorities. The SDG Action Plan is expected to be launched in early 2018. UNICEF’s ongoing policy advocacy efforts for social inclusion of children with disabilities, particularly utilizing evidence from the first-ever Situation Analysis on Children with Disabilities (2016) that it jointly produced with the Department of Social Welfare also resulted in a key recommendation of the situation analysis being actioned, the formation of the National Committee on Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, whose first meeting took place in December 2017.

UNICEF maintained its role as a leading agency in providing technical assistance and capacity building in the development and implementation of key child-sensitive social policies and systems. The launch of the Vital Registration Manual in October 2017, after almost two years of dedicated technical support, marked an important development confirming the right to truly universal birth registration for all children in Myanmar. Similarly, UNICEF has also been exploring with Telenor the possibility of introducing mobile birth registration in Myanmar (building on the electronic platform that it has already helped introduce), something that could improve both the timeliness and equity of the birth registration process.

On social protection, UNICEF Myanmar continued to play a major role in both shaping the policy environment and providing technical and capacity assistance in the roll-out of child focused social cash transfer systems. UNICEF supported the Department of Social Welfare in undertaking high-level advocacy on social protection, this time with almost 300 parliamentarians.
in June. The cumulative contribution of such efforts was the continued policy priority accorded to social protection, also evidenced by its being retained as one of only 10 new sector coordination groups, compared with 17 previously. UNICEF was endorsed as the facilitator for this group. In this evolved role, UNICEF has supported the Department of Social Welfare in commencing the process of drafting a costed, medium term sector plan for social protection that will help operationalize the vision of the National Social Protection Strategic Plan (2014) in a systems-based, government-led manner. Finally, UNICEF’s contributions in supporting the Department of Social Welfare as the lead technical partner in rolling out the first ever universal (state-wide), government-led maternal and child cash transfer in Chin witnessed a landmark development in 2017 with the first cash transfers distributed in October 2017. Since late in the fourth quarter of 2017, UNICEF has also been supporting, in collaboration with other agencies such as the World Bank and World Food Programme, advising the Department of Social Welfare on the programme design of a universal, inclusive and government-led maternal and child cash transfer in Rakhine State.

Finally, UNICEF continued to scale up its support in ensuring planning and public finance is more child friendly. The technical/capacity support to the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement in strengthening its public finance management system, which concluded its second year in 2017, helped introduce more robust strategic and operational planning processes in the ministry. This was also acknowledged as being a key contributor in strengthening the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement’s case for an increased budget allocation, especially for social protection, which was ultimately realized. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Planning and Finance in finalizing and endorsing guidelines for local social planning.

**OUTPUT 1** The situation of children, with focus on disparities and vulnerabilities, is defined and analysed at national and regional levels.

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Myanmar has been supporting the Department of Social Welfare and the Central Statistics Office to convene and chair a working group on the SDGs for children, aimed at identifying the priority SDG indicators for children in Myanmar, and develop an Action Plan to monitor them at the national and subnational levels. Through the working group, 50 priority indicators have been selected, and the drafting of the Action Plan is in progress. The Action Plan will be launched in early 2018.

Using the analysis of census data, as well as data from the DHS and other national surveys, UNICEF Myanmar produced a situation analysis report, which is currently at the stage of final editing and translation, to be published in early 2018. The analysis contained in this report, arranged by lifecycle, has been used to inform the development of the upcoming UNICEF Government of Myanmar Country Programme Document (2018–2022), as well as in other advocacy and programming efforts by all UNICEF sections. Using analysis of census data carried out in 2016, UNICEF also produced the Child Deprivation Index, a four-page brochure presenting a dashboard of indicators by lifecycle, and maps to show regional disparities. The brochure has been widely used for policy advocacy, particularly around social spending.

At the subnational level, UNICEF continued to conduct Child Friendly Township Profiles, expanding them to new states and regions. In Shan State and Kayin State in particular, the data collection was completed by the end of 2017. The final report for Magway region was launched in December 2017. The child-focused township profile for Sagaing Region that had been
delayed due to heavy floods was finally launched in October 2017. Kachin State organized a forum on data at township level under the leadership of the local planning director, to follow up on data issues identified during the development of township profiles.

UNICEF also contracted a local organization to organize a data visualization hackathon in January 2018, for which the selection of participants has been completed. The data visualizations produced during the hackathon are expected to be a major component of a child data platform, a data-mining platform that UNICEF is developing with the support and help of the data strategy team in headquarters.

Finally, UNICEF has been supporting the Central Statistical Organization and Department of Public Health for the endorsement of the Birth and Death Registration Manual. This manual is aimed at nation-wide roll-out with the highlight made on all children under 10 years oldborn in Myanmar, regardless of geographic coverage and their parent’s nationality and citizenship will be registered and they will obtain a birth certificate. UNICEF also provided technical inputs to the Inter-Agency Working Group for Vital Registration, Vital Cluster and Coordination Committee on Birth and Death Registration on the entire system strengthening and integration.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2017, national and subnational policies and strategies are strengthened to address identified vulnerabilities of children.

Analytical statement of progress
On social protection, UNICEF’s engagement ranged from policy advocacy to sector coordination support and programme and system design/implementation. A major achievement was the launch of Myanmar’s first, government-led maternal and child cash transfer in Chin State. These transfers had reached more than 10,000 beneficiaries by December 2017. As the lead technical partner, UNICEF had supported the Department of Social Welfare from the programme design phase (since 2016) to providing on-ground technical assistance for implementation and helping develop the maternal and child cash transfer’s monitoring and evaluation framework in 2017. A dedicated social protection section was formed in the Department of Social Welfare at union level (recommended by UNICEF), and continuous capacity support was provided throughout the year in areas ranging from operational planning to social and behavioural change communication and monitoring and evaluation. Since November 2017, when the Department of Social Welfare announced plans to introduce the maternal and child cash transfer in Rakhine State, UNICEF successfully advocated for ensuring that key principles ( universality, inclusivity and sustainability) were accepted in its design. It has since been leading a technical reference group (comprising the World Bank, WFP, Save the Children and the International Rescue Committee, among others) that has been helping the Department of Social Welfare develop operational options aligned with these principles.

Social protection policy advocacy and reforms also witnessed successes. A first ever parliamentary advocacy session on social protection was organized in June, with UNICEF technical support, was attended by more than 300 parliamentarians. This contributed further policy prioritization for social protection, as evidenced by the retention of a Social Protection Sub-Sector Coordination Group as one of 10 sector groups (down from 17 previously). UNICEF was also nominated to be the facilitator of this group, and subsequently supported the Chair (Department of Social Welfare) to start developing a costed, medium-term sector plan on social protection as per the National Social Protection Strategic Plan. The plan is expected to be completed by early 2018.
In strengthening social inclusion for children with disabilities in Myanmar, UNICEF’s continued advocacy for the establishment of the national committee on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was also successful, and its first meeting was held in December 2017. UNICEF has also contributed to develop the national mechanism for registration and certification for persons with disabilities, and piloting will start in early 2018.

Finally, UNICEF’s advocacy and technical assistance in improving the situation of public finance for children also saw gains. Analytical efforts continued in helping highlight the very low social sector budgets in Myanmar. Similarly, technical/capacity support to the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement in strengthening its public finance management system concluded in 2017, contributing to stronger strategic and operational planning processes in the ministry. This was acknowledged as being a key contributor to buttressing the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement’s case for increased budget allocations, especially for social protection. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Planning and Finance in finalizing and endorsing guidelines for local social planning, building on previous good experiences of Chin State and Tanintharyi Region. With UNICEF support, and utilizing these guidelines, the Shan State Government commenced the process for developing a new Local Social Plan in late 2017 to develop planning and budget priorities to address the significant child deprivations and inequities in Shan State.

OUTPUT 3  Timely and quality leadership and technical assistance.

Analytical statement of progress
The scaled-up nature and increasing opportunities to influence social policies and budgets for children in Myanmar firmly reiterated the need for continued investments in in-house analytical and staff capacity to seize them in a timely manner. This was firmly acknowledged in the new Country Programme Document for 2018–2022, while a number of interim measures leading to this new structure proved crucial in social policy and child rights monitoring’s work, mostly focusing on supporting the development and capacity building of systems for social policy delivery and their resourcing. What was also important was the continued investment of regular resources in funding crucial positions such as that of a data analyst (TA), social protection specialist (TA) and the social policy specialist (FT) on public finance.

OUTCOME 8  The regular and humanitarian response is effectively supported through enhanced management, planning, monitoring and evaluation, advocacy and partnership, communication, supply and operational supports.

Analytical statement of progress
The AMP was prepared in the first quarter and progress has been monitored on a regular basis throughout 2017. Management committees were active during 2017 and regular meetings took place as follows: six country management team, three joint consultative committee, six programmes/operations. In addition, the following advisory committees met and reviewed recommendations namely: 9 central review body, 17 programme review committee, 21 contract review committee (51 submissions), 1 property survey board as of 8 December. The Greening and the Ad Hoc External Committee met once. The Myanmar Country Office maintained high performance against global, regional and country key performance indicators through monitoring on a regular basis and submission of timely reports to the country management team and the UNICEF regional office.
OUTPUT 1 Operating costs for staff and non-staff for Communication for Development and UNICEF Capacity for Supply and Logistics.

Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF provided technical support to the Ministry of Education in procurement of kindergarten kits, printing, repairing of schools, and consultancy services by participation in the whole process.

The approximate value of procurement being US$3 million, the Ministry of Education successfully completed the agreed-upon procurement and DCT was fully liquidated.

Provided technical support related to procurement to the Department of Rural Development in construction of six warehouses – approximate value of procurement being US$350,000. The Department of Rural Development successfully completed the agreed upon procurement. The construction of warehouses are ongoing, and UNICEF’s construction engineer, the Department of Rural Development’s in-house engineers and third-party engineering consultancy firm are closely monitoring the contractors in order to ensure the quality and timely delivery of works.

UNICEF also provided assistance to the Department of Public Health of the Ministry of Health and Sports for a market survey to find a suitable warehouse in Yangon for a short-term plan. Warehouse management training was conducted for Relief and Resettlement Department staff from central and states/regions with the collaboration of other United Nations agencies.

UNICEF organized the medical supply management training for health staff in Rakhine State in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Rakhine State health department.

UNICEF collaborated closely with ministry officials for the smooth process of pre-clearance permission and customs clearance, and supported the logistics consultant for the Ministry of Health and Sports to expedite the pre-clearance permission process. There were a total of 100 air shipments, 46 sea shipments with 118 containers and 4 shipments by road through the border which included Japanese encephalitis vaccination campaign supplies.

OUTPUT 2 Social norms and behaviours related to child survival, development and protection are improved through effectively coordinated C4D initiatives, technical oversight and institutional capacity building.

Analytical statement of progress
The past year, 2017, saw a consolidation of C4D activities across the office, with C4D support being provided more synergistically to sections and partners.

Emphasis has been placed on strengthening C4D capacity of both partners and staff. All the new recruits of the Health Literacy and Promotion Unit were trained in C4D principles and approaches and have been supported to apply these to their work. Concurrently, meetings have been held with the University of Community Health to review their C4D-related curricula and identify a longer-term institutional capacity-building strategy. Radio stations across the country were trained in participatory techniques to develop programmes that can more effectively promote change, and two radio stations applied the learnings to their work in addressing child protection and health issues. UNICEF staff in both the country office and field offices have
received C4D orientations to improve their understanding of how C4D can support their programme outcomes.

In health, C4D has supported the Ministry of Health to develop and launch the Standardized Health Messages Booklet which provides key messages around 11 topics and is due to be distributed to all basic health staff for harmonized messaging country-wide. The Japanese encephalitis campaign was launched and successfully reached 8.4 million children in the first phase, which was the school-based phase. The community-based phase is currently being implemented and set to reach the intended number of children.

OUTPUT 3 Decentralized actions for the most disadvantaged children are guided by effective programme coordination and strategic leadership at the subnational level.

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017, UNICEF field offices continued to play a key role in supporting implementation of programme and policies across 11 states and regions, with technical guidance and support from the Country Office, leading on supporting child rights advocacy, multisectoral coordination, generation and use of data at the subnational level and engagement of non-state actors in extending services to children in conflict-affected areas.

Key achievements in engaging non-state actors included work undertaken by the Shan Field Office to strengthen the partnership between the Shan and Kayah State Public Health Departments and ethnic health organizations by facilitating dialogue, organizing joint health meetings and supporting the development of joint workplans. The South-East Field Office supported collaboration between government and non-state actors, with a focus on developing common standards for service delivery and facilitating the extension of government services to non-state-actor-controlled and marginalized ethnic areas, organizing coordination meetings and workshops on education, infant and young child feeding, HIV and mine risk education. All field offices played a critical role in working with the health team to extend the nationwide Japanese encephalitis campaign to hard-to-reach areas, with the Shan, Kachin and South-East field offices working to ensure coverage in non-state-actor-controlled areas through supporting dialogue with and training for ethnic health organizations. The Rakhine Field Office played a critical role in working to extend both humanitarian and development programmes to camps for internally displaced persons and other hard-to-reach areas, as well as supporting UNICEF to re-establish its presence in Northern Rakhine, following the attacks on Border Guard Police on 25 August and the subsequent military operations.

Working with social policy and child rights monitoring, the Kachin Field Office supported the Kachin State Planning Department to institutionalize approaches for integrating locally generated data into planning and the Shan Field Office supported the launch of a local social planning exercise. The Chin Field Office supported the Chin State Government to organize a Chin State Development Actors’ Conference, bringing together development actors to identify priority development issues and strengthen mechanisms for coordination, establishing a platform for further collaboration between development actors. The Dry Zone Field Office supported the Magway Regional Government to develop multi-sectoral action plans for supporting rural development, including pillars on WASH, education, health and nutrition, which will be financed by the regional government and line ministries next year.

However, despite progress, significant challenges remain. There were significant deteriorations in peace and security over the course of 2017 in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan. Progress towards
decentralization remained slow, with limited fiscal and administrative decentralization and gaps in communication between central and subnational government and the continued engagement of the military in subnational decision-making. There is still space for UNICEF Myanmar to further strengthen its internal procedures and ways of working so that it supports stronger coordination between subnational and central government, as well as inter-sectoral coherence in programming, building on progress made to date.

OUTPUT 4 Effective and efficient management of country programme results.

Analytical statement of progress
Throughout the Country Programme, planning, monitoring, and evaluation continued providing leadership and coordination role in support of results-based management and quality assurance.

Planning, monitoring, and evaluation extensively supported the development of new country programme 2018-2022 including technical guidance and coordination for development of Theory of Change, Programme Strategy Notes and review of Results and Resource Framework. The Country Programme Document was approved by the Executive Board in September 2017.

During 2017, planning, monitoring, and evaluation closely monitored the UNICEF Regional/Office dashboards and office performance scorecard, including quarterly inputs to UNICEF Myanmar response/action plan and regional key performance indicators. Planning, monitoring, and evaluation coordinated compilation of 28 management oversight indicators for country management team meetings. Additionally, planning, monitoring, and evaluation provided technical support for review of mid–end year RAM reporting. Overall coordination for the compilation of semi-annual progress against the annual management plan, and development of Country Office Annual Report 2017, including reporting against results, Strategic Monitoring Questions and key performance indicators, were also led by PME.

UNICEF Myanmar implemented the new work planning procedure introduced in mid-December 2017 for the development of the Multi-Year Work Plan 2018–2022.

Assurance activities and implementation of HACT continued during the year. The HACT Assurance Plan was developed in January 2017, and 42 spot-checks and 99 programmatic visits were conducted. The office organized an internal HACT/FACE refresher training on 15 June for 39 Myanmar Country Office staff. During the year, two Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation staff participated in the Regional Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation/HACT Network meeting for eZHACT training. As a follow-up, two office-wide trainings were conducted on 14, 15 and 21–22 September. These trainings were attended by 55 staff. UNICEF Myanmar officially moved to eZHACT in October 2017. To further strengthen the implementation of eZHACT, the HACT Officer and finance specialist conducted a training session after going live on 29 November, which was attended by 26 staff.

Discussions are in progress with other United Nations organizations on macro assessment, due in 2018. A workshop to familiarize government officials on the HACT process and seek buy-in was held on 27 December. Altogether 22 participants from the Auditor General’s Office and other related ministries participated, in addition to focal points from UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and the Resident Coordinator’s Office.
During the year, Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation continued to provide technical support for quality assurance of 53 donor reports, all of which were submitted on time.

The evaluation specialist (based in Phnom Penh) continued to provide technical guidance for evaluations and studies. In 2017, Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation provided inputs to two evaluations and supported tracking of management responses for four evaluations completed in 2016.

With the joining of Chief of the Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Section on 8 December, the planning, monitoring, and evaluation team is further strengthened to take leaps in programme planning, results and implementation monitoring, and systems strengthening.

**OUTPUT 5** The rights of Myanmar children are better promoted through effective advocacy and communication, resource mobilization and partnerships.

**Analytical statement of progress**

**Increased public finance for children:** During the Parliamentary review of the 2017/18 national budget, UNICEF Myanmar advocated with the Joint Public Accounts Committee to make the case for increased budget allocations for children. An advocacy flier with key budget asks and messages was distributed to 660 members of Parliament. The 2017/18 budget allocation to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement increased substantially.

**Children in Rakhine:** In its public statements and in private conversations with authorities, UNICEF Myanmar consistently raised concerns about the human rights situation in Rakhine State. UNICEF’s Deputy Executive Director visited Rakhine and Naypyidaw, and met privately with the State Counsellor and Commander in Chief of Defence services, specifically calling for action for children in Rakhine State; UNICEF issued a Child Alert on the impact of conflict in Rakhine (see below); and UNICEF Myanmar provided regular reports on the situation of Rohingya children to the various United Nations entities, including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights.

**Children affected by conflict:** The Myanmar Child Alert: Lives on hold, making sure no child is left behind in Myanmar, was launched in May 2017. The report and multimedia materials focused on the challenges facing children in Myanmar despite moves towards national reconciliation and reform, with specific focus on the impact of conflict on children in Rakhine, Kachin, and Shan states. Constructive dialogue to prevent grave violations of children’s rights continued with the Myanmar Army and with five non-state armed groups. In February 2017, the Government signed the Paris Principles on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups. The Country Task Force continues to monitor and report the situation of grave violations.

**Convention on the Rights of the Child reporting:** UNICEF Myanmar supported the Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement to prepare the State Party Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which was due to be submitted in February 2017 but has been delayed.

UNICEF continued to build its partnerships for advocacy, including by:

The partnership with the Myanmar Parliaments was strengthened. A debate for 150 parliamentarians on child rights was delivered, in depth briefings on the Child Rights Bill were conducted, more than 150 parliamentarians in Kachin, Shan, Kayin states participated in humanitarian mine action workshops.
The voices of youth were mobilized as an advocacy force through U-Report. Some 18,000 U-Reporters signed up and participated in weekly polls. Partnerships with Teen Radio and Myanmar Radio and Television were established to discuss the polls results. A forum of 50 U-Reporters and 80 Parliamentarians was delivered to discuss how Parliamentarians could use U-Report.

The partnership with the Myanmar Interfaith for Children platform resulted in their producing a short video calling for peace and social cohesion, disseminated through social media ahead of the second Panglong Peace Conference.

National media partnerships expanded to increase coverage and debate on the advocacy priorities among key influencers in Myanmar and the public. Public engagement through social media expanded with the social media fan base increasing from 48,140 in December 2016 to 61,574 in December 2017.

OUTPUT 6 Increased capacity at national and sub-national levels to incorporate child-sensitive elements in disaster risk reduction (and resilience) platforms and actions.

Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF Myanmar contributed to national-level disaster risk reduction policies and measures through direct technical support to the Relief and Resettlement Department as well as through its coordination with other disaster risk reduction working group partners both individually and through joint UN programmes. UNICEF supported the Myanmar Action Plan for disaster risk reduction, Disaster Management Handbook, and the Capacity Development Strategy of the National Disaster Management Training Centre. UNICEF also provided technical support and coordination for United Nations Volunteers. Finally, UNICEF provided technical support to the Environmental Conservation Department and Myanmar Climate Change Alliance to develop and finalize the Climate Change Policy, Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan to be implemented through integrated disaster risk reduction approaches in Myanmar.

The second child-centred risk assessment was finalized in 2017 with technical support from the Relief and Resettlement Department, Department of Social Welfare, Environmental Conservation Department, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology and disaster risk reduction working group members. It was approved by the Union Minister of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in late December and will be published in early 2018.

UNICEF continued its support for systems development in financial management, procurement, monitoring and reporting within the RRD and broader Ministry of Social Welfare through multi-year funding from the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development preparedness programme. This was enhanced by capacity development of the RRD’s logistics and supply mechanisms through inter-agency warehouse management trainings and Direct Cash Transfers for procurement of family kits, warehouse trolleys, and IT equipment. Lastly, UNICEF successfully closed out the Myanmar Consortium for Capacity Development on Disaster Management programme funded by USAID. The programme supported capacity development of government officials and partners at national and subnational levels through inclusive disaster risk management training, integration of inclusiveness in policies, research and curriculums and distributed to more than 280,000 information, education and communication materials to all states/regions on the eight most significant hazards in Myanmar, floods, earthquake, fire, cyclone, drought, tsunami, landslide and lightning.
Long-term agreements were signed with several suppliers for goods and services, including for relief items, transportation and customs clearance. Field office kits and staff deployment kits were also procured and distributed across all field offices and to all staff. Field office kits included life jackets, sleeping supplies, generators, first aid supplies, visibility items and water purification tablets to ensure offices have some supplies on hand in case of an emergency. Individual kits provide a bag for each staff member who may deploy in an emergency setting.

A risk profile exercise for Myanmar was undertaken through a collaborative internal process, enabling response and contingency planning in October 2017 as part of the transition to the Emergency Preparedness Platform. Altogether, 65 percent of Country Office staff participated in Emergency Preparedness and Response workshops.

OUTPUT 7 Management and operation support.

Analytical statement of progress
An external audit took place in February and the office received 16 Audit Observations and the office provided responses. As per the United Nations Board of Auditors report, only two recommendations relate to the Myanmar Country Office, and they are being addressed. The preparation of the Country Programme Management Plan for the UNICEF programme in Myanmar for the period 2018 to 2022 has taken place concurrently with the preparation of the Programme Strategy Notes and the Country Programme Document, thus ensuring proper alignment. The Country Programme Management Plan was prepared through a consultative process that included three All staff meetings, three joint consultative committee meetings, as well as smaller meetings at section and unit level, and in field offices. The process was steered by the country management team, under the overall guidance of the Representative.

In addition, during 2017, the Myanmar Country Office played a value-added, strategic and results-oriented role in working with sister United Nations agencies to formulate the first UNDAF for Myanmar. Further, Myanmar Country Office staff were fully engaged with the operations management team and the working groups. To improve Eco-Sustainability and Greening, the Myanmar Country Office conducted an energy audit in Yangon and two field locations and improved accessibility at Yangon and Hpa An Offices. To ensure staff safety and security of UNICEF premises, Myanmar Country Office implemented recommendations from United Nations Department of Safety and Security and the Regional Security Chief. With regards to the effective use of communication technology, fibreoptic links in Yangon and field locations were installed to improve connectivity and accessibility to various applications. Sharepoint was used to enable information sharing and improve communication between and within country office and zone offices.

Learning activities both individual and group were completed with support from regional resources. Nine peer support volunteers—two from Yangon and seven from zone offices, attended a five days training facilitated by the Regional Stress Counsellor along with 9 staff from different United Nations agencies in Myanmar. In addition, a half-day resistance workshop was offered to all staff and attended by 27 staff. Both activities were part of the staff welfare action plan. Further, as part of human resources mitigation, competency-based interviews training was offered to staff whose posts were impacted by the new structure. With regard to efficiency gains, cost savings of US$220,544 were realized in 2017 from co-locations with other agencies, reduction in fuel and electricity consumptions, purchase of airline tickets and use of electronic media for advertisement.
OUTCOME 9 Special purpose

Analytical statement of progress
Staff safety and security of UNICEF premises is a key priority and management worked closely with the United Nations Department of Safety Security, the Security Management Team and the Operations Management Team to ensure all precautionary measures were undertaken, emergency preparedness guidelines were adhered to and security advisories were shared with staff.

Business continuity plans were revised with up-to-date information of staff. A fire safety plan and building evacuation plan were prepared for the Country Office. The fire/evacuation drills were done six times per month in 2017.

According to the safety and security recommendations, the activities are planned and implemented utilizing CIF Fund provided from UNICEF headquarters. Progress towards results achievement is on track.

OUTPUT 1 Security improvement for Minimum Operating Security Standards.

Analytical statement of progress
Staff safety and security of UNICEF premises is a key priority and management worked closely with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, the Security Management Team and the Operations Management Team to ensure all precautionary measures were undertaken, emergency preparedness guidelines were adhered to and security advisories were shared with staff.

Business continuity plans are revised with up to date information of staff, fire safety plan and building evacuation plan are prepared for the Country Office. The fire/evacuation drills were done six times per month in 2017.

As per the recommendations of the Regional Chief of Security and Regional Security Manager, the activities were planned/implemented/committed against the CIF Fund. The activities included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned activities</th>
<th>Status (committed/implemented)</th>
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<tr>
<td>• First aid training for staff including drivers in Yangon and field locations</td>
<td>Committed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• ETB training for field locations (nine field locations)</td>
<td>Committed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Safe driving training for field drivers</td>
<td>Implemented</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Satellite phones for field locations (Yangon and ninefield locations)</td>
<td>Implemented</td>
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</table>
- VHF handsets | Implemented
- VHF mobile package for vehicles – (digital) Sittwe/Myitkyina/Lashio | Implemented
- First Aid Kit for Field Offices | Implemented
- Required security enhancement for Guard House to control pedestrians access to the premises. | Committed
- Replace the main entrance door; Reconfigure the Access Control Card System (card system) | Committed
- X-ray machine for Yangon Office | Committed
- Safe and secured parking for two vehicles in Sittwe, Hakha and Hpa An | Implemented for Hakha Office and committed for Hpa An Office
- Alternate emergency exit and safe room/area in Yangon, Sittwe, Lashio, Hakha and Hpa An | Implemented for Hakha Office and committed for Yangon Office
- Shatter-resistant films for Yangon and field offices | Committed
- Razor wire for fencing, Yangon, Hakha and Hpa An offices | Committed
- Security surveillance system | Committed
- Recruitment of Security Officer | Implemented
- 60 KVA generator for Hpa An and Mandalay | Committed

**OUTCOME 10** Effective and efficient programme management and operations support.

**Analytical statement of progress**
The country management team played a key role in ensuring effective management of contributions, budgets, bank accounts, DCTs and monitored performance of relevant key performance indicators on a quarterly basis. Programme and operations group met regularly throughout the year and reviewed in details budget utilization, and outstanding DCT advances, DCT funds, HACT Assurance Plan implementation. Critical issues were escalated to the Country Management Team. Other oversight and advisory bodies such as Programme Review Committee, Contract Review Committee and Central Review Committee convened on a regular basis throughout the year and provided recommendation to the Representative. Internal and financial controls and work processes including release strategy, table of authorities and
segregation of duties were effectively implemented and monitored. The Myanmar Country Office ensured efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in a transparent manner. Efficiency gains were monitored and reported to the country management team quarterly.

With regards to systems, the office successfully transitioned to eZHACT at the end of October 2017 and has been able to process all cash transfer modalities in this new system. In addition, the office continued to promote the use of UNICEF cloud-based office tools such as OneDrive for collaboration within small focus groups most recently during the finalization of operational documents for the Country Programme Document. Adoption of the Myanmar Country Office Team Site and establishment of section online calendar has facilitated planning within sections and further adoption will strengthening planning across sections within country and zone offices. The Myanmar Country Office has migrated 35 per cent of computers to Windows10; the rest are still ongoing, while the prerequisites for the Windows Server 2016 have been completed.

OUTPUT 1 01. Effective and efficient governance and systems.

Analytical statement of progress
The country management team played a key role in ensuring effective management of contributions, budgets, bank accounts, DCTs and monitored performance of relevant key performance indicators on a quarterly basis. Programme and operations group met regularly throughout the year and reviewed in details budget utilization, and outstanding DCT advances, DCT funds, HACT Assurance Plan implementation. Critical issues were escalated to the country management team. Other oversight and advisory bodies such as programme review committee, contract review committee and central review committee convened on a regular basis throughout the year and provided recommendation to the Representative. Internal and financial controls and work processes including release strategy, table of authorities and segregation of duties were effectively implemented and monitored. The Myanmar Country Office ensured efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in a transparent manner. Efficiency gains were monitored and reported to the country management team quarterly.

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Document centre

Evaluation and research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>2017/001</td>
<td>Study</td>
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Other publications

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<tr>
<td>Standardized Health Messages Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for Parents and Caregiver (Early Childhood Care and Development)</td>
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<td>Let's Support the Development of Young Children!</td>
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<td>Myanmar Investment in Early Childhood Intervention</td>
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<td>Lives on hold: making sure no child is left behind in Myanmar</td>
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<td>Delivering Results for Children 2016: The Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Union of Myanmar and UNICEF</td>
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Lessons learned

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<td>Lesson learned</td>
<td>Programming in Health Systems Strengthening</td>
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Programme documents

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