Executive Summary

Achievements
Extraordinary momentum is building for Nepal’s social movement towards total sanitation, with nearly 7 million people now living in open-defecation free (ODF) environments across 11 districts, 12 municipalities, and 1,056 villages. Led by the Government of Nepal with support from UNICEF, the Finnish Government, UN Habitat and other development partners, the movement is spreading to the densely populated lowlands where sanitation coverage is less than 35 per cent. The fifth ministerial South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) hosted by the Government further boosted the commitment of South Asian countries to an ODF South Asia.

To accelerate reduction in neonatal mortality, UNICEF helped develop an innovative, equity-focused National Newborn Action Plan using a health system bottleneck analysis. Nationwide implementation of the new Birth Preparedness Package prepared with UNICEF assistance is ensuring that increasing numbers of pregnant women, mothers and their family members are being advised on essential newborn care.

Nepal continued to demonstrate strong leadership in implementing its ground-breaking Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan initially in six districts, with UNICEF spearheading the technical support in coordination with Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger (REACH) and other partners. In 15 of the most disadvantaged districts, UNICEF’s nutrition-system-strengthening approach led to 100 per cent vitamin A coverage among children 6-59 months (2012 baseline 91 per cent), 92 per cent of households using iodised salt (2012 baseline 65 per cent), and use of multiple micronutrient powders among children 6-23 months reaching 71 per cent (2012 baseline 10 per cent). UNICEF advocacy and technical advice resulted in important budget increases for nutrition within the health sector and key non-health sectors as well as production of a new, fully-costed Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition Strategy.

Assisted by UNICEF and other partners, the Government drafted South Asia’s first National Education Equity Strategy following a wide-ranging consultative process. UNICEF advocacy also increased the national budget for early childhood care and education, from US$12.3 million (2012) to US$14.3 million (2013), representing 5.6 per cent of the total education reform budget of the Ministry of Education (MoE).

Shortfalls
The fluid political situation delayed national budget approval and limited funds release, which in turn delayed programme implementation. The absence of Parliament also hindered the adoption of new policies and the promulgation of new laws.

Although the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) is committed to child protection, counterparts in the MWCSW have limited resources to accelerate results. UNICEF is intensifying advocacy and coordination with key Government counterparts to formulate an inter-ministerial Child Protection Implementation Plan.

Partnerships
UNICEF supported the Government to launch a pioneering campaign to end violence against children, with a world-renowned Buddhist nun urging citizens, lawmakers and the Government to break the silence surrounding this issue. UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other partners also worked with faith-based leaders and adolescents to initiate a landmark movement to end child marriage.

As part of the child protection reform agenda, UNICEF and five international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) assisted the Government to develop the first-ever harmonised guidelines for case management; 3,584 children (1,294 girls) received various services meeting the agreed standards in 2013.

UNICEF’s strategic engagement with the Election Commission and political parties was instrumental in adding a provision against the use of children and school premises during the November national election.
Country Situation as Affecting Children & Women

Nepal’s complex political transition since the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord continues. The Constituent Assembly, elected in 2008, was dissolved in May 2012 without promulgating a new Constitution. A caretaker “unity” government was put in place until a new Constituent Assembly was peacefully elected on 19 November 2013. Strong public desire for a government capable of revitalising the economy and delivering a new Constitution was demonstrated by the 75 per cent turnout of voters. The election results created significant shifts in the balance of political power. Nepali Congress and United Marxist Leninist parties, which were dominant during the 1990s but fared poorly in the 2008 Constituent Assembly elections, emerged as the largest parties in the 2013 election, upstaging the erstwhile largest party, the Unified Community Party of Nepal-Maoists. This shift could affect the influence of parties during the formulation of the new Constitution and challenge the causes championed by the Maoists – secularism, republicanism and federalism. Local elections should be held in 2014, for the first time since 2002, and are expected to contribute to strengthening the accountability of local governance. The uncertain political transition delayed budget approval by nine months. The absence of Parliament also hindered the adoption of new policies and enactment of new laws.

Nepal’s annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth in 2013 has been estimated at 3.7 per cent and is expected to increase to 4.5 per cent in 2014.[1] Inflation remained high at 9.5 per cent.[2] National poverty measures were halved between 2004 and 2011, thereby achieving Nepal’s Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target for reducing poverty. However, with Nepal’s poverty headcount at 44 per cent for 2011 (as per the Multidimensional Poverty Index), the proportion of people living in poverty remains substantial. The data from the Nepal Living Standard Survey 2011 also suggests that regional differences in poverty are widening; the Far-Western Region had a poverty prevalence rate 23 percentage points above the national average.[3]

Nepal is the fastest urbanising country in South Asia with the urban population growing at a rate of 3 per cent per year.[4] Rural poverty is declining faster than urban poverty. The number of urban poor has been climbing by about 18,000 per year.[5]

While overall stunting rates are declining, the gap between the richest and poorest, and between the mountains and Terai regions (the country’s southern plain), is widening.[6] Stunting rates in the Western Mountains and Far-West Hills are around 20 per cent and 17 per cent higher than the national average respectively, and are 15 per cent higher in rural areas than in urban settings. Stunting and underweight have been consistently highest (50 per cent) amongst the Dalits, Muslims and other smaller ethnic/caste groups.

Such disparities are also reflected in the utilisation of maternal health services, although Nepal has the third lowest maternal mortality rate in South Asia[7] and is well on track to reach MDGs 4 and 5. Only 11 per cent of births among the poorest are attended by a skilled birth attendant, compared to 82 per cent among the richest.[8]

Disparities in education also reveal complex patterns, with poverty being one of the overarching factors. Among children aged 5 to 14, those in the poorest wealth quintile, disaggregated by gender and geography, have the lowest access to education. Only 84 per cent of boys from the poorest urban households have access to education, compared to 99.8 per cent of those from the richest. Children with disabilities in rural areas and girls with disabilities are the most disadvantaged. Only 69 per cent of girls with disabilities aged 5 to 14 in rural areas have ever enrolled in school. Among children aged 15 to 24, girls from the poorest wealth quintile in rural areas have the lowest attainment in education, with 53 per cent of them having received no formal education.[9] Entrance to grade one for children with early childhood development (ECD) experience is 56 per cent, while access to ECD for children from lower quintiles remains a challenge. [10]

Among all human trafficking cases registered in 2012, 55.1 per cent of victims were children. Similarly, 40.6 per cent of all victims in rape and attempted rape cases are children. About 3.14 million children are engaged
in work; 1.6 million of these children are labourers, with an estimated 620,000 involved in hazardous labour.[11]

Nepal has been confirmed to be on track to meet its MDG target for HIV prevalence among those aged 15 to 49 years of age. The prevalence rate of 0.39 per cent (2009) was reduced to 0.28 per cent (2012), though progress needs to be maintained until 2015 and beyond.[12]

Data on sub-national bottlenecks as well as their solutions is now influencing 15 priority district annual plans and budgets to facilitate more integrated social service systems for marginalised children. UNICEF worked with the National Planning Commission (NPC), ministries and departments to track barriers across social sectors. Examples include UNICEF’s support to health teams to improve maternal, neonatal and child health services in eight disadvantaged districts. The ten-year Strategic Plan of the MWCSW incorporated provisions to address bottlenecks related to fragmented statutory functions and lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities. UNICEF supported development of a National Education Equity Strategy to monitor bottlenecks in the education sector. The design of a comprehensive, multi-year Communication for Development (C4D) Strategy is being led by UNICEF to address various harmful social norms affecting children and adolescents. Other barriers are outlined in the Country Programme Analytical Overview section of this Annual Report.


Country Programme Analytical Overview

The following outlines the main barriers identified and addressed during 2013.

**Policy/legal framework:** Constitutional and legislative work was again delayed by the absence of Parliament. Various ministries were supported in preparing for Parliamentary endorsement of a range of bills in 2014. UNICEF helped clarify the roles of key child protection actors in the MWCSW’s draft Strategic Plan. Local authorities were assisted to better plan and budget for the needs of out-of-school children. UNICEF will also ensure additional national resources are allocated for non-formal education by working closely with the MoE.

**Budget/expenditure:** UNICEF and the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) jointly strengthened social protection data updates, and the birth registration and cash grant delivery systems to improve the sufficiency and timely release of the national Child Grant. A mapping exercise was conducted to identify district resource gaps in nutrition, with updated district budgets to be funded by Government, the European Union, and resources leveraged from key partners. UNICEF strengthened inter-ministerial coordination, systematic planning and resource allocation among the agencies working on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and their district-level representatives.

**Institutional Management/Coordination:** Capacity building, strengthening multi-sectoral planning, and systematic monitoring, including analysis of resource allocation for women and disadvantaged children, will be future priority areas to strengthen democratic functions of the Government’s Local Governance and...
Community Development Programme (LGCDP). Training commenced to strengthen Government capacity on disaster risk management (DRM). Joint advocacy on improved DRM coordination between ministries was ongoing in 2013.

**Access to adequately staffed services, facilities and information:** With UNICEF assistance, the MoFALD took steps to address low birth registration coverage among children under one year of age by revising the birth registration reporting process and introducing a Management Information System. Only 64 per cent of children that age have their births registered and only around 50 per cent receive the child grant. Through UNICEF's advocacy, revision of the National Health Management Information System (HMIS) was initiated to include disaggregation and new nutrition indicators. The chronic issue of inadequately trained human resources in the Mid-Western and Far-Western and Terai districts with low water coverage was addressed by intensifying capacity-building efforts.

**Social norms:** UNICEF helped to revise the parental early childhood education package to include information on how to address harmful social practices (abuse, corporal punishment and poor sanitation), that are tainting children's holistic early development at home and in ECD Centres. With UNICEF support, teachers, Young Champions and girls themselves have managed to change local attitudes to accept that girls can play sports in school.

UNICEF initiated a participatory bottleneck analysis exercise to identify root causes and possible solutions for other challenges faced by adolescent girls and boys. The meaningful participation of children and adolescents in local decision-making remains a challenge. Capacity building of government programme officers and child rights officers from 15 priority districts on how to facilitate children’s voices in the annual planning process will assist in the systematic collection of the demands of girls and boys in the coming years.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

Nepal is prone to multiple hazards, including earthquakes, fires, cold waves, floods, droughts and landslides. While no major disaster has occurred for several years, small-scale, localised disasters and extreme climatic conditions have increasingly negative impacts on service delivery. UNICEF continued to provide assistance in these events through cluster approaches in line with the Core Commitments for Children.

The Government is now taking full leadership of humanitarian cluster coordination at the national and sub-national levels as a result of continued UN advocacy and capacity building. The Government also showed commitment to integrating DRM at the policy and local levels through programme development and budget allocation. UNICEF, alongside other humanitarian partners, provided technical and financial support to the Government to develop District Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans in all 75 districts. UNICEF also supported the development of a National Disaster Response Framework as well as a DRM Planning Guideline to mitigate disaster risks and to mainstream DRM into local development plans and programmes.

In 2013, UNICEF supported emergency flood responses in 7 districts focused on WASH and nutrition (such as hygiene kits, aqua tabs, bed nets and supplementary feeding), benefitting 13,300 and 10,960 affected people respectively.

**Effective Advocacy**

*Fully met benchmarks*

UNICEF Nepal continued to engage in advocacy efforts on a wide range of issues in 2013.

UNICEF successfully advocated for the establishment of a National Immunisation Fund to bridge financial gaps so that vaccines are available for all girls and boys. Through UNICEF's advocacy, the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) drafted the first-ever sector “Programme Document,” including a special chapter on gender, equity, climate change, and women's/children’s rights. The national budget for ECD increased from US$12.3 million in 2012 to US$14.3 million in 2013 due to UNICEF advocacy. UNICEF advocacy also led to adolescents being mentioned for the first time as a special group in the National Three Year Plan, which
should lead to increased budget allocations for adolescent development and participation. Strategic engagement with the Election Commission and political parties was instrumental in adding a provision against the misuse of children and schools in the national election. UNICEF’s advocacy led to the MoFALD integrating child-centred DRM and climate change adaptation (CCA) into the district periodic (multi-year) planning process for the first time.

UNICEF, UNFPA and other partners supported nationwide consultations with over 500 young people from 42 of Nepal’s 75 districts. The outcomes of these consultations were consolidated by young people into a Post-2015 Charter advocating their views on Nepal’s development. The Charter was presented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the UN General Assembly, thereby ensuring that the ideas of Nepal’s young people for the post-MDG agenda were heard not just in Nepal but on the global stage as well.

UNICEF advocacy supported by major international child rights NGOs resulted in Government approval of the first-ever harmonised case management standards, and implementation of new child labour provisions through the Department of Labour and local authorities at the municipal, district and village levels. Implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPA) for the Reintegration of Children Affected by Armed Conflict was launched following UNICEF advocacy and technical assistance on introducing implementation guidelines. Nationally broadcast public service announcements developed by UNICEF on ending violence against children and strong partnerships on addressing violence and disability led to a series of awareness-raising initiatives throughout the year, culminating in a series of high-profile sporting events and a Career Expo for those with disabilities chaired by the Prime Minister in December.

Sustained advocacy was instrumental in generating private and public sector support to promote hand washing. Paras Khadka, Captain of Nepal’s cricket team, was nominated by the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), the Cricket Association of Nepal and UNICEF as the National Champion for 1,000 Golden Days and Hand Washing with Soap to reduce acute malnutrition among children in Nepal. The national hand-washing campaign was further supplemented by the appointment of Sachin Tendulkar as UNICEF’s Regional Goodwill Ambassador on hand washing and his promise to visit Nepal next year.


### Capacity Development

*Mostly met benchmarks*

### Communication for Development

*Mostly met benchmarks*

### Service Delivery

*Mostly met benchmarks*

### Strategic Partnerships

*Fully met benchmarks*

### Knowledge Management

*Fully met benchmarks*
Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation

*Fully met benchmarks*

Gender Equality

*Mostly met benchmarks*

The Nepal Country Office (CO) Gender and Social Inclusion Team met five times in 2013 to assess office-wide gender and social-inclusion initiatives, and to periodically review progress against the Gender Equality Marker of Intermediate Results and Indicators. Highlights are as follows.

The CO continued to follow global guidance on diversity and inclusion while recruiting new staff and also oriented all staff on the global gender policy. Technical and written inputs were provided to the national committee formed to oversee the national election. UNICEF advocated for non-violation of child rights during the election. UNICEF provided key technical support in the finalisation of the Disability Welfare Bill, successfully advocated for the adoption of an equity-, evidence- and gender-based approach in district health planning, and helped to revise the National Health Policy to include gender and equity. With UNICEF assistance, the draft outline of a WASH sector “Programme Document” for the first time included a separate chapter on gender, equity, women’s and children’s rights and social inclusion to address equity issues.

Studies conducted by the Social Policy and Economic Analysis Team in 2013 considered gender and social inclusion variables and incorporated analysis of these perspectives. UNICEF’s advocacy and lobbying led to Nepal becoming the first country in South Asia to draft a National Education Equity Strategy. In response to UNICEF’s advocacy efforts, the NPC launched the NPA on holistic adolescent development, leading to gender and equity being included as one of six domains of holistic adolescent development. An Adolescent Charter on the Post-2015 Agenda was launched by the Government together with young people. The ten concerns expressed in the Charter are: inequity; unemployment; lack of an enabling environment; corruption; lack of access to health services; access to quality and practical education; environment degradation; and gender-based violence. UNICEF advocacy also led to political commitment for accelerated reduction of stunting, with a focus on the most disadvantaged girls and boys.

With UNICEF support, periodic (multi-year) planning in targeted districts increasingly allowed children to voice their demands and incorporates issues related to disaster risk reduction (DRR), gender, social inclusion and disability. Local resource allocation for children exceeded the stipulated target in many districts. UNICEF contributed to the widespread dissemination of information on child rights through the 38,000 Ward Citizen Forums in Nepal (60 per cent of participants were women). Some 76,000 child club representatives are now represented and have a voice in these Forums (one boy and one girl at each forum). To address gender issues in DRR, the first-ever child consultations were held in Achham and Saptari Districts, where 47 children (25 boys and 22 girls – 14 Dalits, 4 Janjatis and 11 Muslims and Madhesis) helped to develop risk-informed local plans. UNICEF support led to over 1,000 community-based women’s groups having enhanced capacity to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse of girls, boys and women. To improve education access and equity for girls and marginalised children, UNICEF supported innovative strategies such as adolescent girls’ peer support activities and strengthening of reading skills.

Environmental Sustainability

*Mostly met benchmarks*

Nepal is highly exposed to geophysical and climatic hazards. Landslides, flooding, and deep and shallow earthquakes are common and frequent. Recent studies indicate that climate change and extreme disasters threaten to reverse development gains, dragging more than 18 million people into poverty by 2030. For instance, the flood and landslides in the Mid-Western and Far-Western Regions washed away water and sanitation facilities worth over US$1.6 million, leaving thousands of children and women without access to safe water and sanitation facilities, thereby increasing the risk of diarrhoea.
UNICEF’s child-centred approach to CCA and DRR recognises that addressing risks, vulnerabilities and inequalities is a prerequisite for environmental sustainability in the context of climate change and multiple hazards. With UNICEF’s strong lobbying and advocacy, the MoFALD initiated the mainstreaming of child-centred DRR and CCA into local-level annual planning and district periodic (multi-year) planning in 6 UNICEF focus districts in 2013. DRR components were also incorporated into the Government’s regular development programming under education, nutrition, WASH and child protection for sustainable development.

UNICEF promotes child-centred risk assessment as a fundamental step towards risk-informed development programming that seeks to protect development investments against natural hazards and to strengthen community resilience to adapt and manage risks. The Multi-hazard Risk Vulnerability Mapping carried out in Nepal heightened attention on the most vulnerable districts and villages. Working closely with District Development Committees, child risk assessments were initiated in three districts to help incorporate disaster risks affecting children into local level plans.

UNICEF’s programme takes into account environmental and climatic issues as part of DRR. Under WASH, greater attention was paid to human waste disposal and hand washing practices through a nationwide ODF campaign in 2013. This massive ODF social movement is a unique intervention towards total sanitation and has created an environment to further strengthen communities’ practices to consider environment sustainability in all development initiatives. In addition, UNICEF promoted rainwater harvesting, water safety plans, protection of water sources, waste management, and disaster risk-informed tube-well and hand-pump installation.

UNICEF support also led to environmental protection and CCA being considered in planning and programme design in the education sector. For example, the child-friendly school (CFS) and school-led total sanitation initiatives ensured environmental interventions such as school cleanliness, garbage disposal, greenery and plantations within school compounds contributed to larger community environmental sustainability.

**South-South and Triangular Cooperation**

South-South cooperation in the education sector was strengthened by inviting ministers and policy makers to the high-level Asia Pacific Child Rights Conference in New Delhi and the ECD Policy Conference for Asia and Pacific countries in South Korea. With support from the UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), authorities from Sri Lanka’s MoE joined in Nepal’s education sector review, learning lessons about the sector-wide approach.

UNICEF Nepal’s Social Policy and Economic Analysis team facilitated a meeting with senior officials from the Government of Bangladesh, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Australian Aid to explain Nepal’s experience in social protection. The delegation viewed Nepal’s social protection initiatives as potential role models for the region, particularly given the rights-based design of the Senior Citizens’ Allowance and the Child Grant.

A week-long study visit was organised for eight SAVE Bangladesh professionals and their Government partners to learn about Nepal’s CFLG Framework. The Government of Nepal’s leadership of CFLG and the participation of children in local governance processes were two major elements that the SAVE team viewed as particular highlights.

The NPC launched a series of initiatives to strengthen national evaluation capacity. UNICEF facilitated sharing by the Sri Lanka Evaluation Association on developing national evaluation capacity, and by the Malaysian Evaluation Society on institutionalisation of evaluation in the public sector. Both presentations assisted the NPC to develop new policy recommendations for national monitoring and evaluation.

Supported by ROSA, UNICEF Nepal hosted a group of Bhutanese youth to learn about Nepal’s highly popular and interactive radio programme ‘Chatting with my Best Friend.’ The possibility of establishing a similar radio programme addressing youth issues in Bhutan was explored. The Bhutanese delegation also learned about other ongoing adolescent and youth initiatives in Nepal.
Four senior Government officials, including two joint secretaries from the MoUD, were sponsored by UNICEF to learn about the successful experience of Uganda and Ethiopia on WASH programme document formulation and coherent sector monitoring and evaluation. The Nepal Government fully adopted the lessons from Uganda and Ethiopia and drafted its sector “Programme Document” in consultation with sector stakeholders. UNICEF sponsored the Deputy Director General and Senior Divisional engineer of the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS) to attend the South Asia Regional Consultation on Climate Change Adaptation in New Delhi on managing risks for resilience. The Department subsequently formulated its DRM strategy. UNICEF also supported the joint Secretary and Senior Divisional Engineer of MoUD to attend the Water and Sanitation Security and Delivery Mechanisms meeting hosted by the Finnish Government and the World Bank in New Delhi. An engineer from the Physical Infrastructure Development Section of DWSS was sponsored to learn about India’s experience in scaling up its WASH in Schools programme. As a result, a WASH in Schools Technical Working Group was established in the Department of Education (DoE), and WASH indicators will be included in Nepal’s Education Management Information System.
### Narrative Analysis by Programme Component Results and Intermediate Results

**Nepal - 2970**

#### PC 601 - Policies reformed

**PCR 2970/A0/05/601** By 2017, national policies, legislation, plans, budgets, and coordination and monitoring mechanisms are enabling the survival, development, protection and participation rights of children, adolescents, and women to be fulfilled with equity in all contexts, including humanitarian situations.

**Progress:** This outcome reflects intensive policy reform work in the context of preparations for a new constitution, and supports legislation and multi-sector policies that meet international human rights standards.

UNICEF advocated to ensure that both the revised NPA for Children and the National Strategy on CFLG integrate child protection and participation. The MWCSW was assisted to cost a multi-sectoral implementation plan towards establishing a comprehensive national child protection system. Even in the absence of this system, UNICEF contributed to safeguarding child rights at critical periods. For example, UNICEF’s engagement with the Election Commission and political parties was instrumental in protecting children and school premises from misuse during the national election. The Revised National Health Policy 2013 and the Immunisation Bill were prepared with emphasis on universal coverage, gender and equity dimensions. UNICEF’s lobbying led to Nepal becoming the first country in South Asia to draft a National Education Equity Strategy, a major step towards ensuring education for girls and marginalised children. Another first was the reference to “adolescents” as a special group in the National Three Year Plan, which will lead to increased allocation for adolescent development. In the WASH sector, UNICEF contributed to the drafting of the first-ever sector-wide “Programme Document” including a special chapter on gender, equity, climate change and social inclusion (to be finalised in mid-2014).

In addition to the national-level policy/legislation reform agenda, UNICEF technically and financially supported district-level planning processes. This included for the first time in Nepal the initiation of results-based and multi-sectoral integrated district planning in the 15 priority districts. Child-centred DRM and CCA are now being integrated in annual plans and programmes to mitigate, prevent and reduce vulnerability, with a focus on the most marginalised communities, and women and children. The planning process was informed by evidence from the District Planning Monitoring and Analysis System, enhanced understanding of bottlenecks to achieving equity-focused results, and the inclusion of the voice of children and girls. Important preparations were made for the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2014, which will provide data for programme monitoring and final MDG reporting for Nepal. Monitoring of key barriers in the social sectors for the most disadvantaged was established in 15 districts and was expanded to include issues for adolescent girls and boys in six districts.

UNICEF also stepped up efforts to influence national budget allocations to children and gender-sensitive social sectors. A significant allocation increase was achieved for nutrition, including, for the first time, the creation of a separate budget line for nutrition by the NPC. UNICEF advocacy led to the Government allocating over US$40,000 for the first time for the implementation of the national Gender-Based Violence Watch Groups programme. UNICEF’s advocacy also contributed to the endorsement and establishment of the National Immunisation Fund, an important mechanism to bridge the financial gap to ensure vaccine availability and focused activities for reaching currently unreached children.

**IR 2970/A0/05/601/001** By 2017, national and sub-national health-related policies and strategies address equity in maternal newborn, child and adolescent health including HIV outcomes with a continuum of care

**Progress:** UNICEF’s advocacy and lobbying led to the Government establishing a National Immunisation Fund to bridge current and potential financial gaps so that vaccine availability is assured and all girls and boys can be reached. UNICEF also successfully advocated with the Government to adopt an equity-, evidence- and gender-based approach in health planning, including district-specific planning and resource allocations.

The new draft health policy focuses on achieving universal coverage of quality high-impact interventions ensuring gender sensitivity and equity. The policy aims to strengthen the governance, financing and public/private partnerships to improve intervention coverage. UNICEF, as a member of the Health Policy Steering Working Group, ensured that the policy addresses equity and quality of care for newborns, child and adolescent girls and boys, and women’s health, including HIV/AIDS challenges. As of the time of writing, the draft National Health Policy had been tabled for endorsement by the MoHP and Cabinet.

To improve access, quality and availability of maternal, neonatal and child health services in disadvantaged districts, UNICEF supported five district health teams to develop equity-, gender- and evidenced-based investment case plans using a bottleneck approach focused on a range of barriers for the hardest-to-reach families. Implementation of these plans was ongoing as of the end of 2013. Three other district teams developed evidenced-based plans that will be implemented in 2014. These health plans will be incorporated into overall district development plans.

The Immunisation Act focuses on the right of every girl and boy to be immunised. UNICEF supported the MoHP to draft and finalise the Act through stakeholder consultation. To ensure the Government’s capacity to finance immunisation services for every girl and boy, UNICEF assisted the MoHP to establish an immunisation fund that was endorsed by the Ministries of Finance and Law and Justice. UNICEF provided technical assistance and vaccine supplies for the Government’s ongoing campaign to eradicate polio and disability associated with polio. Through vaccine procurement, UNICEF also assisted the scaling up of the national measles and rubella (MR) vaccination programme for the prevention of birth defects and disability caused by rubella infection during pregnancy.
Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):

Policy/Legislation: Endorsement of the Immunisation Act was delayed due to the absence of Parliament. Endorsement is expected by the next fiscal year. UNICEF is supporting the MoHP to prepare the necessary papers for Parliament’s endorsement.

On-track

IR 2970/A0/05/601/002 By 2017, the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan, targeting the most vulnerable newborn; infant and young children; adolescents, especially girls; pregnant and lactating women; HIV-affected children and women; and children and women with disabilities, has political commitment and sectoral budget allocation

Progress: Political commitment for the accelerated reduction of stunting with a focus on the most disadvantaged girls and boys was strengthened at the national, regional and district levels. UNICEF advocacy helped increase the budget allocation for nutrition within the health sector as well as within key non-health sectors. The first ever Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition strategies were developed and the associated plans costed.

A series of studies were completed on the determinants of stunting, including social norms and gender, to refine the Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan’s (MSNP) implementation. UNICEF also advocated for equity-focused and disability-friendly nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive services. The capacity of district and community stakeholders to develop evidence-, gender- and results-based nutrition plans was strengthened in six districts. District multi-sector nutrition plans were developed for VDCs selected as priorities through Disadvantaged Group Mapping. District nutrition and food security steering committees were formed to enhance multi-sector coordination. A nutrition surveillance working group was formed under the Nutrition Technical Committee and the NPC to develop guidelines for the first-ever national nutrition surveillance system to track implementation progress and improve early detection of malnutrition.

Initiatives to increase budget allocation supported directly or indirectly by UNICEF include: Feed the Future and Agriculture and Food Security Programme in the Ministry of Agriculture; school health and nutrition in the MoE; WASH programmes in the MoUD; and 1,000 Golden Days in the MoFALD. All these ministries committed to align to the MSNP. The NPC created a separate budget line for nutrition to fully fund the district nutrition plans in six model districts, which UNICEF had advocated for with the Ministry of Finance.

As a result of UNICEF advocacy and technical support, the strategies and costed plans were informed by analysis of existing qualitative and quantitative data, a comprehensive review of ongoing programmes, and consultation with all key stakeholders to address gender and social inequities.

Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):

Budget/Expenditure: Resource gaps identified through a mapping exercise and updated district plans will be filled by Government, European Union top-up funds, and leveraging resources from key partners.

On-track

IR 2970/A0/05/601/003 By 2017, a national WASH programme and finance strategy are formulated, approved and regularly monitored to improve equitable access, gender sensitivity, sustainability and efficiency of the sector

Progress: Through UNICEF’s advocacy, the MoUD drafted the first-ever sector “Programme Document” including a special chapter on gender, equity, climate change and women’s/children’s rights. Social inclusion was mainstreamed across the document. The MoUD committed to finalising the programme document by mid-2014.

UNICEF provided technical assistance for the 2013 Joint Review and Planning meeting led by the MoUD. Sector progress, gender analysis and resource utilisation were documented to harmonise sector planning and resource mobilisation. UNICEF advocated for universal coverage on sanitation that includes facilities for children living with disabilities. The Government was supported to host the fifth SACOSAN, at which a joint declaration by eight Member States was signed to accelerate the sanitation social movement with a focus on gender and the most disadvantaged and to achieve an ODF South Asia by 2023.

The Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan (SHMP) Implementation Guideline, awaiting Government approval, will foster local leadership, uniformity, and a "no subsidy" principle as well as facilitate a special support package to reach the poorest. UNICEF advocacy led to inclusion of clearly defined facilities for gender- and disability-friendly WASH facilities. UNICEF contributed to the Millennium Acceleration Framework on sanitation that is focused on gender and equity. Launched by the Prime Minister, the Framework has high-level political commitment and increased resource allocation.

The sector monitoring guideline will ensure systematic collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data for evidence-based planning and targeting of the unreached poorest communities.

Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):

Budget/Expenditure: To achieve the set results through improved sector harmonisation, UNICEF is strengthening inter-ministerial coordination, systematic planning and resource allocation among the concerned sector agencies and their district-level agencies.

IR 2970/A0/05/601/004 By 2017, national-level education policies and strategies demonstrate greater gender and social equity

Progress: UNICEF advocacy helped the Government draft South Asia’s first-ever National Education Equity Strategy through a wide-ranging consultative process.
After a series of consultations with stakeholders, a draft of the National Education Equity Strategy was shared for further inputs with the Access and Equity Thematic Group, consisting of education development partners and co-led by the Government and UNICEF. The Strategy calls for enhanced focus on education for marginalised children, especially girls, including children with disabilities and those from high-risk groups (e.g., HIV/AIDS-affected children, working girls and boys). The DoE, with the support of UNICEF, revised the parental education package to include the early detection of disabilities in childhood. To build a larger social network to ensure greater gender and social equity in national education policy development, UNICEF helped to organise a Youth Conference and identification of Youth Icons from different sectors (aged 16-40 years). The Youth Icons pledged to advocate for equity and gender with a focus on addressing children with disabilities in education, and committed to lobby in their respective sectors. The Youth Conference and Youth Icon launch led to the commitment of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the MoE to jointly develop and establish an equity-based youth education and training programme and to monitor it accordingly. With technical support from UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and in close partnership with the National Campaign for Education and Volunteer Service Overseas, a taskforce was formed by the Government to review Education for All. Consultations were held for the “Post-2015 Education Agenda” to address equity and increase the sector’s focus on gender and social inclusion.

The study of out-of-school girls and boys in targeted districts that started in 2013 will be completed by April 2014 and will provide a better understanding of gender and equity issues, including the number and profiles of out-of-school girls and boys in the 12 targeted districts. UNICEF is also supporting a review of Nepal’s CFS initiative, which will also be completed in April 2014.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
There were no substantive bottlenecks over the reporting period.

**On-track**

**IR 2970/A0/05/601/005 By 2017, the enabling environment, including governance system, strengthened to protect, inform and empower adolescent boys and girls to claim their rights, and provides opportunities for their participation**

**Progress:** A historic step forward was taken towards ensuring an enabling environment to protect, inform and claim the rights of adolescent girls and boys. For the first time, adolescents were mentioned as a special group in the National Three Year Plan, which should lead to increased budget allocations for adolescent development and participation.

The NPA on holistic adolescent development provides a framework for stakeholders to invest in six domains of adolescent development, namely: education and skills; healthy behaviour; gender equity; financial literacy and livelihood; civic engagement; and enabling environment. The plan has a particular focus on girls and also addresses adolescents living with disability. An advocacy package is being developed to ensure the needs of adolescent girls and adolescents with disabilities are well articulated, together with suggested actions for policy makers. The special needs of adolescents with disabilities were also taken into account in the participation guidelines developed as part of the NPA’s implementation. An Adolescent Charter on the Post-2015 Agenda was launched by the Government together with young women and men, and was presented at the United Nations General Assembly to amplify the voices of Nepali young people. The ten concerns expressed in the Charter are: inequity; unemployment; lack of an enabling environment; corruption; lack of access to health services; access to quality and practical education; environment degradation; and gender-based violence. Over 500 adolescents were consulted (59 per cent girls), representing 35 districts with a diverse group in terms of age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability, and religious and geographic backgrounds.

The multi-sectoral task team established with UNICEF technical support represents an important step towards institutionalising a multi-sectoral, gender-sensitive coordination mechanism to achieve and monitor results for adolescent girls and boys as stipulated in the NPA.

Analysis of Government budget allocation in accordance with the NPA is ongoing with support from UNICEF’s Social Policy and Economic Analysis Section.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Management and Coordination: In view of the national election and the political situation, the NPA’s finalisation process was accelerated, and it was launched in 2013 instead of 2014.

**Constrained**

**IR 2970/A0/05/601/006 By 2017, a national system to protect children and adolescents, especially girls, from abuse, neglect and exploitation is incorporated in legislation and policies, planned, resourced, monitored, documented and coordinated across sectors and actors at the national and local levels**

**Progress:** Supported by UNICEF, the MWCSW is developing a costed, multi-sectoral Child Protection Implementation Plan towards the establishment of a comprehensive national child protection system. New guidelines to harmonise child protection case management processes were also adopted.

The Ministry of Labour revised the Child Labour Act which, once endorsed by parliament, will address challenges in the informal sector. UNICEF supported the development of case management guidelines that standardise procedures for identification and referral of vulnerable girls and boys, clarifying roles of relevant stakeholders in the reporting/response and decision-making process. The guidelines were approved by the Government. With UNICEF technical assistance, new guidelines on rescue and rehabilitation as well as on child labour monitoring/inspection were drafted. An Alternative Care Guideline with a focus on promoting family support and substitute services as an alternate to institutional care will be finalised in 2014. Work is ongoing to revise the Child Rights Act (1992), Protection and Welfare of Disabled Persons Act (1982), the National Policy and Plan of Action on Disability (2006), and the Protection and Welfare of the Disabled Persons Rules (1994).
A costed Child Protection Implementation Plan will be developed in 2014 using findings of the UNICEF-supported Child Protection Mapping and Assessment report as a baseline. In its draft Ten Year Strategy, the MWCSW prioritised the establishment of a separate unit/section for children.

UNICEF supported the MWCSW and the Central Child Welfare Board to develop a proposal for the establishment of a database to track cases of violence against girls and boys. It was agreed that the new database will enable Government and other actors to better plan national- and local-level interventions.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

**Budget/Expenditure:** Despite the commitment of the MWCSW and recent achievements, counterparts have limited resources to accelerate results in the area of child protection. UNICEF is intensifying its advocacy and coordination with key Government counterparts to formulate an inter-ministerial Child Protection Implementation Plan.

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**On-track**

**IR 2970/A0/05/601/007** By 2017, Government institutions at the national and sub-national levels that promote the rights of children, adolescents and women are better able to generate and use evidence to develop, fund and monitor equity-focused, gender-sensitive, multi-sectoral planning, governance and social protection frameworks and related policies

**Progress:** Important preparations were made for Nepal’s MICS 2014, which will provide data for programme monitoring and final MDG reporting for Nepal. Monitoring of key barriers in the social sectors for the most disadvantaged was established in 15 districts and was expanded to include issues for adolescent girls and boys in six districts. With UNICEF support, periodic (multi-year) planning in targeted districts increasingly allows children to voice their demands and incorporates issues related to CFLG, DRR, gender, social inclusion and disability. Over 20 per cent of the participants at the planning sessions were women, and separate consultations involved children (50 per cent girls). The lessons learnt will be replicated nationally and provide inputs to the revision of the National District Periodic Planning Guidelines.

In 12 of 15 priority districts where analysis of barriers to achieving key results (bottleneck analysis) were undertaken with UNICEF technical assistance, the District Poverty, Monitoring and Analysis System (DPMAS) provided information for the situation analysis and is being used for district annual and periodic planning. The availability of disaggregated data by ethnicity and gender remains a challenge. The revised DPMAS guideline 2013 was finalised by the Government with UNICEF’s technical input. The baseline for the adolescent programme in 15 districts is being established.

The NPC in partnership with UN agencies launched a series of initiatives to strengthen national evaluation capacity. Recommendations from the evaluation networking meeting were endorsed by the Policy Forum Meeting and incorporated in the Government’s three-year Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. UNICEF-led evaluations of the Community Approach to Total Sanitation and Bottleneck Monitoring were undertaken.

UNICEF initiated an institutional assessment to support the process of finalising the Social Protection Framework. Technical and financial support were also provided for the process of drafting the Social Protection Bill, which is expected to be completed in 2014. Partnerships were initiated with academic institutions in Nepal to promote child-sensitive social policy research in graduate studies. A review of disability grants implementation procedures is ongoing.

The MoFALD prioritised strengthening vital registration and social protection as a major outcome in the LGCDP (2013-2017), focusing on nine priority districts.

The annual budget for fiscal year 2013/14 allocated additional resources for expanding the Juvenile and Central Child Emergency Relief Fund, indicating some measure of increased new investment in children and adolescents.

The Government’s Three Year Approach paper committed to bringing endangered and marginalised communities, girls and boys affected by HIV/AIDS, children with disabilities, and orphans into the net of social protection programmes.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

**Legislation/Policy:** The caretaker Government is not expected to take any policy decisions with long-term implications. The groundwork is being prepared in preparation for the new Parliament’s endorsement of key policies and laws (e.g. drafting of the Social Protection Bill). The DPMAS review was comprehensive, but delays in finalising the guideline and training prolonged the transition period. Web-based data entry based on DevInfo is being developed, and a training programme is being planned to roll out the new DPMAS.

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**Constrained**

**IR 2970/A0/05/601/008** By 2017, national and provincial legislatures and administrative authorities have improved capacity to draft, reform and implement legislation that complies with international child rights standards and to undertake priority advocacy actions for child rights

**Progress:** Despite the absence of Parliament, key policy reform milestones were achieved, including reviews of major laws related to children. UNICEF’s strategic engagement with the Election Commission and political parties was instrumental in adding a provision against the use of children and school premises during the national election.

Five pieces of legislation, draft bills and child-related policies (Social Protection, Children’s Bill, Draft Civil Code and Criminal Code, Disability Act, and Scholarship Policy) were reviewed and some policy changes made (social security guidelines revised and approved).
that do not require Parliamentary approval. Reviewed legislations and policies will be used to stimulate dialogue with Parliamentarians when Parliament resumes.

A first-ever Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNICEF and the National Human Rights Commission included advocacy for strengthening the Commission’s role in promoting child rights, monitoring child rights and including advocacy and lobbying for a separate child rights commissioner.

Joint advocacy by UNICEF, the Child Rights Consortium, Schools as Zones of Peace, and former Parliamentarians was successful in including articles against the misuse of children and schools premises in the Election Code of Conduct. UNICEF also organised public dialogue on violence against women and children and continued to promote attention to child rights concerns with political parties, successfully ensuring some new child rights concerns were prioritised in the 2013/14 budget. Examples include increased funding for child welfare homes and the expansion of new Juvenile Benches in eight district courts.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

**Legislation/Policy:** Constitution making and legislative work was delayed in the absence of Parliament. Redrafting work on the Child Rights Bill was commenced in anticipation of a post-election Constitution. Other relevant activities were prioritised such as influencing and monitoring the Election Code of Conduct to not misuse of children and schools during the election.

**Constrained**

IR 2970/A0/05/601/009 By 2017, policies, strategies, guidance and budgets of four sectors (WASH, education, child protection, and health and nutrition, including HIV/AIDS) integrate DRR and CCA for DRM with special attention to most-at-risk children, adolescents, especially girls, and women

**Progress:** UNICEF’s advocacy and technical assistance led to the MoFALD integrating child-centred DRM and CCA into the district periodic (multi-year) planning process for the first time. Other ministries also started to mainstream DRM and CCA.

Recognising the vulnerability of women, girls and boys, especially those with disabilities, to the impacts of disasters and climate change, UNICEF’s assistance led to various social sector ministries beginning to mainstream DRM and CCA.

WASH: With support from UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), the MoUD established the National Coordination Committee to harmonise the mainstreaming and implementation of DRM and CCA in the WASH sector. In addition, the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation is formulating gender-sensitive guidelines for mainstreaming DRM and CCA into the WASH Sector. Gender- and disability-friendly WASH facilities were included in the WASH Cluster Emergency Design Manual. In 75 districts, separate DRM sections were established and DRM focal persons identified to ensure incorporation of DRM and CCA into regular programme. This is the first phase of policy-level advocacy and support from UNICEF. In light of the Government’s limited capacity in this sector, these are significant achievements. The second phase will be the implementation of the plan for integration of DRM and CCA under WASH promotion.

Education: A School Safety Steering Committee was established by the MoE to oversee overall planning and implementation of school safety and DRM issues in the education sector. School safety and DRM was mainstreamed into the School Sector Reform Programme extension plan (2013/14-2015/16) to support actual planning and implementation of interventions.

Nutrition: With UNICEF’s technical and financial assistance, the Child Health Division of the MoHP developed a national guideline for nutrition in emergencies. The MoHP also reached the final draft stages of a guideline on National Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition, which will provide a comprehensive approach to DRM to prevent and respond to acute malnutrition.

Child protection: DRM activities were integrated into the work plan of the Central Child Welfare Board to mitigate, prevent and respond to child protection issues before and during emergencies. Advocacy for the integration of disability issues into sector guidelines for mainstreaming DRM and CCA will continue in 2014.

The Child Health Division, the DoE, the Department of Women and Children and the DWSS established new institutional mechanisms for DRM funding that targeted the most vulnerable districts. For example, the DWSS allocated US$80,000 towards DRM action.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

**Quality/Coordination:** There is a need to strengthen internal and government capacity on DRM and CCA and improve coordination amongst key stakeholders. Ensuring the robust integration of DRM/CCA into sectoral planning is a particular challenge. Training commenced for all UNICEF and government counterparts on DRM and CCA. Joint advocacy on improved coordination between ministries is ongoing.

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**PC 602 - Social sector systems strengthened**

**Constrained**

**PCR 2970/A0/05/602**

By 2017, in selected areas (the most disadvantaged districts and municipalities), social sector systems are providing integrated, quality services to fulfil the survival, development, protection and participation rights of children, adolescents and women with equity in all contexts, including humanitarian situations

**Progress:** This outcome focuses on strengthening integrated social service systems that bind together different programmatic interventions in a coherent, mutually reinforcing manner, especially focused on Nepal’s most disadvantaged districts. The Government’s CFLG Framework focused on equity as the organizing principle.
Transformation towards child-centred, results-based district planning began in 2013. Local government resource allocations for children exceeded the stipulated target in many districts. Information on child rights was widely disseminated through the 38,000 Ward Citizen Forums (60 per cent women participants). Assistance from UNICEF and the NGO Consortium on Disaster Preparedness enabled the Ministry of Home Affairs and the MoFALD to implement a shared framework for strengthening DRM systems. The capacity of local stakeholders to build community resilience in the most disaster-prone districts was strengthened with girls and boys being actively involved for the first time in risk assessment and planning.

Neonatal mortality is a lagging indicator, especially amongst the poorest and hardest-to-reach. UNICEF supported the first-ever National Newborn Action Plan using district health system bottleneck analysis, examining, among other issues, how social norms and gender affect coverage of nine key interventions. Nepal continued to demonstrate strong commitment on delivery of essential nutrition services with a focus on the first 1,000 days of life for accelerated reduction of maternal and child undernutrition. In priority districts, vitamin A coverage is now at 100 per cent (baseline 91 per cent); iodised salt coverage at 92 per cent (baseline 65 per cent); and multiple nutrient coverage at 84 per cent (baseline 14 per cent). With the support of UNICEF and other partners, Nepal’s sanitation social movement continued to generate extraordinary results, achieving ODF status in the most disadvantaged areas, benefitting over 6.9 million people.

To improve education access and equity for girls and marginalised children, innovative strategies such as adolescent girls’ peer support activities and reading skills strengthening were piloted for future nationwide scale up. For the first time, children’s right to uninterrupted services to be analysed in 2014.

UNICEF strengthened the capacity of child protection professionals from 75 districts to conduct improved planning and monitoring of responses by applying new case management procedures. In 2013, 3,584 children (1,294 girls) received various services following the agreed standards. A total of 109 Child Care Homes were monitored and staff are now able to apply minimum standards. Juvenile Justice Benches were expanded and introduced in eight additional districts, and justice professionals now have greater capacity to improve their performance and quality of services in dealing with children and to introduce child-friendly approaches in the selected districts, complying with child- and gender-sensitive procedures. The five most remote districts achieved 90 per cent birth registration of children under the age of 5 years (gender parity). Coverage of the child cash grant also reached 78 per cent in these districts as a result of UNICEF’s technical assistance to the Government’s social protection system.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Quality of care: Of the 175 identified cases, 49 HIV-positive pregnant women did not receive ARV prophylaxis (28 per cent) due to lack of compliance and insufficient follow up. A strong monitoring and follow-up mechanism will be developed and the provision of transportation cash incentives for clients is being explored.

Access to adequately staffed services, facilities and information: The national HMIS did not originally collect disaggregated data, but, through UNICEF’s advocacy, it was revised to include disaggregation. The revised system is being piloted in five districts, and results will be analysed in 2014.
2013. As of November, of 5,021 children under five with severe acute malnutrition (girls: 2,906) admitted in the 164 outpatient therapeutic centres of 11 districts, 3,567 children (girls: 1,760) were discharged. Of these, 87 per cent (86 per cent of girls, 89 per cent of boys) recovered and less than 1 per cent died, which is well above the global standards of recovery rate of >75 per cent and death rate <10 per cent (SPHERE).

All of the 575,016 targeted 6-59 month-old children in 15 priority districts received vitamin A during the April 2013 campaign (data for the October 2013 campaign will be available in March 2014). UNICEF provided the MoHP with technical support to develop public communication messages using multiple channels, with a focus on hard-to-reach population groups. A new strategy to reach the hardest-to-reach children (aged 6-11 months from poor and urban areas) was tested with UNICEF technical assistance in three districts (Jumla, Chitwan and Kavre). Of the targeted 14,217 children aged 6-11 months, 96 per cent received vitamin A supplements (95 per cent male; 97 per cent female). This effort is expected to prevent disability in children due to nutritional blindness. As a result of UNICEF support to mobilise Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) and health workers, 92 per cent of the 89,791 households in Doti and Achham Districts are using adequately iodised salt to prevent disability in children due to iodine deficiency. Of 141,591 children aged 6-23 months, 84 per cent received multiple micronutrient powders in 9 districts (gender disaggregation not available). Integrated with community infant and young child feeding promotion, use of micronutrient powders will help to prevent poor brain and physical development due to iron deficiency. The Vitamin A Supplementation, Universal Salt Iodisation (USI), and Maternal Iron Folic Acid Supplementation Programmes are fully owned by the MoHP, with UNICEF providing lead technical support on USI to undertake a comprehensive review to inform a five-year national action plan. The Micronutrient Powders and Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition Programmes are in an early expansion phase, with UNICEF providing lead technical and financial support to undertake comprehensive reviews, in close coordination with key partners, to inform MoHP policy decisions for scaling up both programmes.

The Maternal Nutrition Strategy now states that iron folic acid and de-worming for adolescent girls will be piloted in UNICEF-supported districts from 2014 onwards. Of a total 124,835 expected pregnancies in 15 priority districts, 60 per cent of the pregnant women received iron folic acid tablets for 180 days as well as de-worming medicine, helping to prevent impaired foetal brain development due to maternal anaemia.

A total of 6,920 FCHVs and 2,833 health workers developed their capacity to provide services to manage severe acute malnutrition in children. The HMIS indicators were revised to improve nutrition surveillance. The new indicators were successfully field tested in four districts (Morang, Lalitpur, Dang and Achham) and are now being incorporated into the system. The Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition guideline and training materials are being updated to strengthen integration between facility and community approaches, as well as key sectors, and to improve detection of children with severe acute malnutrition as well as those with disability for subsequent referral.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

Management/Coordination: Training of FCHVs was delayed in Dhanusha District, but through UNICEF advocacy and technical support, it was completed in November 2013. With UNICEF support, the MoHP initiated a technical review on the use of micronutrient powders to assess their cost effectiveness as an input to future policy decisions.

**On-track**

IR 2970/A0/05/602/003 By 2017, people living in selected districts, VDCs and municipalities (including schools and vulnerable communities) increasingly stop open defecation and utilise and participate in managing safe and sustainable, gender- and disability-friendly sanitation facilities and functional water supply facilities

**Progress:** With support from UNICEF and other partners, Nepal’s sanitation social movement continued to generate extraordinary results, achieving ODF status in the remotest villages and districts.

Very remote districts such as Achham and Kalikot were declared ODF even though they ranked low in the Human Development Index. Led by a women’s group, Achham also engaged in systematic efforts to declare two VDCs as chaupadi-free areas, ensuring that menstruating girls and women are no longer segregated in unprotected huts. The five districts declared ODF designed post-ODF strategies and engaged in systematic efforts to sustain results and reach ‘total sanitation’ status. UNICEF’s initiatives were replicated by the Government and many other agencies across the country, and the diffusion effects led to declarations of an additional six districts and seven municipalities as ODF. More than 30,000 sanitation actors across the nation enhanced their knowledge and skills on sanitation and became role models in continuously triggering improved sanitation behaviours.

The capacity of water and sanitation users committees was strengthened through UNICEF-supported training to continue the implementation of water safety plans. While 7,290 people (3,536 males; 3,754 females) benefitted with permanent arsenic-free water, over 5,000 children (50 per cent girls) in Bardiya District were the beneficiaries of a temporary arsenic mitigation option.

In the Mid-Western and Far-Western Regions, a regional workshop on improving functionality of water supply schemes and developing action plans led to increased commitment from regional water, sanitation and hygiene coordination committees to implement the plans.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

Access to adequate staff/services: The issue of inadequately trained human resources in the Mid-Western and Far-Western regions and the Terai (foothills) districts with low water coverage will be addressed by capacity-building efforts that were decided through regional sanitation conferences held in 2013.

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1 Chaupadi is the practice of isolating menstruating and/or post-partum women away from their family and friends. In the most western section of Nepal, the practice of Chaupadi is still in place. Chaupadi is derived from a Hindu tradition that relates to secretions associated with menstruation, and childbirth. These functions are considered, by those who practice Chaupadi, to be impure.
Management/Coordination: To address data collection issues, discussions are ongoing to develop and implement a uniform and robust monitoring and evaluation system for the sector. A forthcoming National Management Information Project report will also provide recommendations on this issue.

Legislation/Policy: To improve identification of families and communities unreached by WASH interventions, UNICEF is helping the MoUD to strengthen the joint WASH annual planning and review processes at the local level.

On-track

**IR 2970/A0/05/602/004** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, young children (up to 5 years of age), especially the most vulnerable, have increased access to holistic developmental opportunities for improved school readiness.

**Progress:** The national budget for ECD increased from US$12.3 million in 2012 to US$14.3 million in 2013. UNICEF mobilised ex-Parliamentarians who formed a very strong Early Childhood Education Caucus. Advocacy from the Caucus and UNICEF’s technical support resulted in the formation of the first-ever national steering committee in Nepal to foster and coordinate multiple sectors involved in ECD.

With UNICEF’s technical support, 9 of 25 districts developed multi-sectoral gender-sensitive, costed ECD plans. Resources from local government and communities are being mobilised for interventions incorporating parental education, nutrition, stimulation, early health detection, protection, and sanitation and hygiene practices in ECD centres. A focus on HIV/AIDS will be included in the ECD facilitators’ training.

Government data reveals that in the 15 UNICEF priority districts, an average of 56 per cent of children (gender parity) in grade one have been involved with ECD programmes. The 15 district average would be much higher but districts have much lower percentages (e.g. in Jumla and Rautahat, only 31 per cent and 39 per cent of children (with gender parity) respectively are with ECD experience), requiring an intensified approach to achieve gender parity.

Of 500 targeted ECD centres, 26 per cent (3,250 children, 50 per cent girls) applied six learning corners (science, library, creativity, language, building blocks, and math), assisted by the ECD kits provided by UNICEF (toys, games, picture books, puzzles). Through UNICEF advocacy, there was an increased focus on girls and boys with disabilities and enrolment into ECD in Saptari, Mugu, Humla, Accham, and Bajura. The parenting education package also included sessions for raising awareness on inclusion and participation of young girls and boys with disabilities in ECD (e.g., care and precaution during pregnancy to protect children from disability; early detection of disabilities and referral to nearby hospitals; accident prevention for young children). The ECD facilitators’ basic training package included how to teach young children with learning disabilities and HIV/AIDS. A rollout plan for the completed training package will be developed in 2014. To strengthen inter-sector collaboration, experts in health, nutrition and education will conduct training in 2014 for medical/nutrition staff in the Nutrition and Rehabilitation Homes associated with two hospitals in the Mid-Western and Far-Western Regions.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

Access to adequately staffed services, facilities and information: Standard measures endorsed by the DoE are not disseminated due to lack of DoE financial resources, limiting the capacity of teachers to facilitate children’s learning and of the ECD committee members to manage the centres. UNICEF’s partnership with national NGOs and the DoE included dissemination of the strategy (UNICEF will support dissemination in 15 priority districts) and institutionalisation of the ECD facilitators’ training system. A mapping baseline on the quality status of the ECD centres was initiated in eight targeted districts with UNICEF support.

Social norms: Parental practices (abuse, corporal punishment and poor sanitation) sometimes tainted children’s holistic development at home and in ECD centres. The parental education package was revised to include information on how to address harmful social practices.

Constrained

**IR 2970/A0/05/602/005** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, children, particularly girls and marginalised children, have increased access to and complete uninterrupted child-friendly basic and secondary education.

**Progress:** To improve education access and equity for girls and marginalised children, innovative strategies such as adolescent girls’ peer support activities and reading skills strengthening were piloted for future nationwide scale-up. For the first time, children’s right to uninterrupted access to education was included in the National Election Code of Conduct. During the election, political parties did not use schools as venues for speeches and meetings. According to the Central Child Welfare Board, schools were closed during the voting period, but opened immediately after (a much shorter period of closure than in previous elections) and fewer children were involved in political activities. In 9 monitored districts over the 2012 academic year, schools were open for 210 school days compared to 180 in 2011. Data for the 2013 academic year will be reported in May 2014.

To improve gender disparities in enrolment in higher grades, schools in Terai districts implemented sports and peer support tutoring activities, reaching 571 girls and 735 girls respectively (mainly Dalits, Muslims, and other disadvantaged girls). Results of a participatory review helped refine strategies for scale up. To improve school relevance in remote mountainous areas and contribute to increased school retention, over 8,600 children (gender disaggregation not yet available) in 48 schools in Bajura and Jumla Districts were exposed to more relevant content in social studies through the introduction of a local curriculum. To improve children’s school retention and learning outcomes in remote and disadvantaged districts, various learning support materials to strengthen reading skills (flashcards, word games, books etc.) were also developed that will benefit more than 7,000 children in grades 1-5 (with gender parity) in 40 schools. In total, 15 districts will be targeted in a phased approach. UNICEF is helping the Government pilot innovations, such as the programme for girl-adolescents and revised curricula in the mountain area, to make education more relevant and adapted to the local
context. UNICEF is funding non-government implementing partners (IPs) coordinated through the District Education Offices.

After more than 10 years of implementing the CFS Initiative, the DoE commenced a review with UNICEF technical assistance to provide recommendations and guidance for future approaches, interventions and the incorporation of new concepts, including strengthening of areas such as WASH and protection, especially for girls. The review will be finalised by April 2014. The CFS Initiative is ongoing, but no new components or schools will be added until the review’s recommendations are reflected in the new support modality and training package. A new Government school WASH standard initiated the construction of gender- and disability-friendly WASH infrastructures (details on number of such facilities will be received in early 2014). UNICEF’s advocacy led to significant Government resources allocated for WASH in schools, though not yet including menstrual hygiene. In line with the inclusive education aspects of the CFS framework, there was an increased focus on education for children with disabilities (notably through teacher training).

UNICEF’s advocacy to minimise the disturbance of schools during elections was reflected for the first time in the Election Code of Conduct. Although a few parties violated the Code, effective media mobilisation led to strong objections and close monitoring by stakeholders. The Election Commission issued warnings to violators but no action was taken. The impact of a 10-day strike called by an election boycott party was limited; schools remained open except for one day, securing access to education for more than 8.7 million children.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

Social Norms: Some parents and community members, especially in the Terai, did not accept that girls can play sports. Teachers, Young Champions and girls themselves, however, managed to change attitudes. Community-level communication campaigns will be organised to sensitise parents, community members, and girls and boys on gender stereotypes.

**On-track**

**IR 2970/A0/05/602/006** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, children and adolescents at risk or victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation, children affected by conflict and by AIDS, and children with disabilities benefit from quality social welfare services that address the specific needs of boys and girls

**Progress:** Child protection professionals from 75 districts have better capacity to conduct improved planning and monitoring of responses by applying new case management procedures. A total of 3,584 children (1,294 girls) received various services following the agreed procedures.

Gender-sensitive procedures on case management, including rescue and rehabilitation of child labourers, were developed with UNICEF assistance and approved by the Government. Training modules for local authorities representing different sectors were developed.

Authorities in six priority districts formulated district-level child protection plans that are part of the annual plan of the Government. An additional eight municipalities in five districts developed plans and allocated budgetary resources (5 per cent out of 10-15 per cent of local block grants) to prevent and address cases of child labour. Capacity-development activities on case management procedures were provided to 150 district professionals (male 47; female 103). A total of 109 Child Care Homes were monitored, and staff are now able to apply minimum standards. In 22 districts, 154 Village Child Protection Committees were formed and took part in capacity-development activities on child protection programming. Training materials and guidelines (e.g. alternative care) are being revised to focus attention on children with disabilities.

With UNICEF support: (i) 2,787 working children (952 girls) including 100 street children (21 girls) received various services in 8 municipalities; (ii) 386 out-of-school working children (232 girls) were directly enrolled into schools, and 1,207 (687 girls) were enrolled in non-formal education; and (iii) 797 young people (343 female) formerly associated with armed groups received reintegration services.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

Legislation/policy: Greater clarity is needed on the roles and responsibilities of key actors. Advocacy with the Government will be conducted to clarify roles in the Government’s draft Strategic Plan, which prioritised the establishment of a child protection structure.

Access to adequately staffed services: There is a need for stronger child protection services and referral mechanisms at the national/district/village levels. UNICEF will promote government joint planning and budgeting for effective coordination and use of existing resources.

**On-track**

**IR 2970/A0/05/602/007** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, children and adolescents who are victims, witnesses, offenders or who are in contact with the law for any other reason, have access to child- and gender-sensitive formal justice

**Progress:** Juvenile Justice Benches were expanded and introduced in eight additional districts, and the capacity of justice professionals was strengthened to improve their performance and quality of services in dealing with children and to introduce child-friendly, gender-sensitive approaches in the selected districts.

A new capacity development programme of the National Judicial Academy was introduced that resulted in 89 newly appointed judges and 100 justice professionals (no gender disaggregation available) from districts being sensitised on child-friendly measures, diversion, restorative justice and child victim/witness protection.

With eight new Juvenile Justice Benches established in 2013, the total number of functional Benches reached 48 (6 in priority districts). UNICEF advocacy and assistance also led to the commitment of the National Legal Aid Committee to better respond to cases of women and children referred to the 75 District Legal Aid Committees.
A total of 550 juveniles (11-18 year olds) were provided with legal counselling/aid (9.5 per cent girls, 28 per cent indigenous, 12.7 per cent Dalit, 3.4 per cent Muslims). Regular monitoring of the 57 detention facilities in 20 districts (1 priority district) was undertaken, and 14.5 per cent of child and adolescent cases (gender disaggregation not available) were diverted from detention, with 7 being released into parental custody. Almost 65 per cent of detainees (gender disaggregation not available) were brought before a judge within 24 hours in accordance with the law.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Management and coordination: Initial delays in the finalisation of the agreement with the police were resolved through improved communication and regular dialogue. While the appointment of the Secretary of the Juvenile Justice Coordination Committee was delayed, UNICEF continued to draft the implementation guidelines for legal aid services and advocated for immediate implementation once the Committee endorses it.

**Progress:** A full 78 per cent of children under 5 years of age (78 per cent of girls; 77 per cent of boys) are now receiving the child grant in the 5 Karnali districts. Mugu has the highest coverage at 84.8 per cent, while Humla has the lowest coverage at 64.4 per cent. Coverage of the child cash grant is low among children below 12 months. A comprehensive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Management Information System was developed and will continue to be rolled out in 2014.

Most remote districts in Nepal had remarkable success in increasing birth registration of children under five years of age; 90 per cent of births of children under five are registered in the 5 Karnali districts (89.9 per cent of girls, 89.2 per cent of boys; mid-line survey 2012), more than double the MICS 2010 rate of 42 per cent for the same districts. The district breakdown was as follows: Dolpa 93 per cent, Humla 84.5 per cent, Jumla 91 per cent, Mugu 91.5 per cent, and Kalikot 88.5 per cent. However, age disaggregation shows that children below 12 months are less likely to have their births registered, and, as a result, coverage of the child cash grant is also low among this age group.

The Karnali-modeled child grant has not yet expanded to other districts, but advocacy by UNICEF will aim to expand the child grant within the national social protection framework, the implementation of the Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan, and initiatives for children affected by AIDS. The Three Year Plan 2013-2015 committed to bring children affected by AIDS under the social protection net.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Coordination Mechanism: Despite increased birth registration and coverage of the child grant, only about 64 per cent of children below the age of 12 months have had their births registered and only around 50 per cent are receiving the child grant. The MoFALD took steps to address low coverage among children under one year of age by revising the birth registration reporting process and introducing a Management Information System.

Budget/Expenditure: Insufficiency of budget and delays in budget release hampered timely payment and coverage of the child grant. UNICEF and the MoFALD are jointly implementing capacity development activities focused on strengthening social protection data updates, birth registration and the cash grant delivery system.

**Progress:** A transformation towards child-centred, results-based planning was initiated within local government. Local government resource allocations for children exceeded the stipulated target in many districts. Information on child rights was widely disseminated through the 38,000 Ward Citizen Forums in Nepal (60 per cent of participants were women).

Advocacy efforts were carried out with the NPC and the MoFALD, as was support for building the capacity of high-level multi-sectoral teams from 15 priority districts, national line ministries, and regional administrations on result-based planning. Participants’ results-based skills were strengthened, and as a result, they are better able to put child and adolescent girls and boys, disability, and DRR-related issues at the heart of district planning and budgeting. There is evidence that districts are applying the results-based learning in their planning, for example in Accham and Parsa Districts.

The MoFALD made a decision to roll out CFLG nationally. CFLG is featured prominently in the new phase of the National Program on LGCDP 2013-2017. Of the 20 districts, 15 have almost completed the six-step CFLG adoption process that enables and commits local bodies to work towards making their districts child friendly. Five districts completed all processes. Of the ten municipalities, three completed all processes. The MoFALD led the "3rd International Child Friendly City Conference" jointly with UNICEF and the Asia Pacific Network on Child Friendly Cities. Two municipalities committed to declaring their cities child friendly by 2017.

UNICEF advocacy and technical assistance generated political commitment in all 15 priority districts to allocate block grants for girls and boys in line with local body resource allocation, management and operation guidelines. Ten priority districts allocated the minimum 10 per cent, while 6 districts (Jumla, Saptari, Parsa, Rautahat, Dhanusha, and Mahottari) allocated 15 per cent of their resources complying with the CFLG national strategy. Of the 10 targeted municipalities, 7 allocated the minimum of 10 per cent while 3 allocated 15 per cent of their resources. The CFLG training packages are being reviewed to see how disability issues can be incorporated in future capacity building initiatives.
Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):

Management/Coordination: Elections, absence of elected leadership, frequent officer transfers, and weakened local democratic functions delayed LGCDP implementation and monitoring. Capacity building, strengthening sectoral convergence in planning, systematic monitoring, reporting and documentation, including analysis of resource allocation for women and disadvantaged children, will be future priority areas.

On-track

IR 2970/A0/05/602/010 By 2017, selected hazard-prone districts and municipalities have strengthened capacity and systems for disaster preparedness and emergency response in line with National Guidelines for Disaster Preparedness and Response Planning and UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action

Progress: Through a joint effort between UNICEF and the NGO Consortium on Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO), the Ministries of Home Affairs and of Federal Affairs and Local Development are now implementing a shared framework for strengthening DRM systems. The capacity of government and community stakeholders to build community resilience in the most vulnerable and disaster-prone districts was strengthened with girls and boys actively involved in risk assessment and planning for the first time.

The Government is taking full leadership on humanitarian cluster coordination at the national and sub-national levels in WASH, education, health, nutrition and child protection as a result of continued UNICEF advocacy, capacity building, and financial and technical support. A Cluster Transition Plan was developed and endorsed by Government, with the cluster mechanism reflected in the National Disaster Response Framework 2013, which was also endorsed by Cabinet.

The capacity of UNICEF-supported humanitarian clusters was enhanced, including training of 407 officials (290 male, 117 female from Education, WASH, and Child Protection), and 250 health workers (no gender disaggregation available) to better prepare for and respond to disasters. A review of existing rapid assessment tools is ongoing to improve the collection of disaggregated data including children with disabilities. To improve preparedness, the DWSS established five regional hubs for prepositioning essential contingency stocks to ensure timely response.

With UNICEF support, 19 District Preparedness and Response Plans with a focus on preparedness and response were reviewed, involving 1,085 people (male 841; female 244) in the review process. With UNICEF support 7 out of 20 hazard-prone districts (including 2 districts that had a District Preparedness and Response Plan) now have operational DRM Plans. DRM Plans focus on the full cycle of DRM (preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, prevention and adaptation). Four of these districts developed gender-sensitive DRM plans, while an additional four districts initiated DRM planning, with, for the first time, girls and boys actively involved in risk assessment and planning.

Emergency flood responses were supported in seven districts (Saptari, Parsa, Rautahat, Darchula, Kailali, Kanchanpur, and Bardiya) in 2013. In three priority districts (Saptari, Parsa, Rautahat), in line with the Core Commitments for Children, UNICEF’s emergency responses included: the provision of hygiene kits; aqua-tabs (for water purification), bed nets and hygiene communication campaigns benefiting 13,300 people (50 per cent girls and women); and the provision of supplementary food benefiting 10,960 affected people (8,995 under-five children, 1,965 pregnant and lactating women). After floods in Darchula District, psychosocial support was provided to two women and three children in partnership with the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation. At least 120,800 schoolchildren (50 per cent girls) and 640 school teachers (27 per cent female) participated in regular simulation drills to improve their earthquake safety preparedness.

Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):

Management/Coordination: Limited accessibility, resources and capacity at the district level hindered timely distribution of emergency supplies. Further training on emergency preparedness, including contingency planning for district stakeholders, is required.

PC 603 - Social norms and behaviour changed

Constrained

PCR 2970/A0/05/603 By 2017, in selected areas, children, adolescents, women and men, and all relevant duty-bearers are engaged in social change and action to realise the survival, development, protection and participation rights of children, adolescents and women with equity in all contexts, including humanitarian situations

Progress: This outcome addresses the major harmful social norms and practices affecting children, adolescents and women in Nepal. With inputs from a range of stakeholders, including children and adolescent themselves, an innovative, long-term C4D strategy will be formally launched in 2014. The initial focus will be on ‘1,000 golden days’ (maternal, newborn health and nutrition), sanitation and hygiene, and ending violence against children and adolescents. Meanwhile, selected C4D initiatives continued to achieve significant results in tandem with system strengthening.

Through vaccine procurement, planning, monitoring, and communication, UNICEF supported the MoHP’s MR campaign, which led to 9.6 million children being vaccinated. The Ministry was also supported to introduce the MR vaccine into routine immunisation. With only nine cases of measles and no outbreaks reported in 2013, measles has almost been eliminated in Nepal. An increasing number of pregnant women and mothers together with their partners and other family members are now being advised on essential newborn care through nationwide implementation of the new Birth Preparedness Package that was prepared with UNICEF assistance.

UNICEF provided support for the training and mobilisation of 947 health workers and 6,511 Female Community Health Workers in nine disadvantaged districts. Their inter-personal and group counselling on maternal, infant and young child feeding improved the nutritional
intake of 29 per cent of children aged 6-23 months and 40 per cent of mothers in these districts.

With UNICEF’s assistance, capacity-development initiatives in eight municipalities and six districts led to parents and other stakeholders being engaged in developing integrated plans to improve quality learning opportunities for out-of-school children and to improve the educational retention of boys and girls from early childhood to adolescence.

Through participation in sports- and dance-based recreational activities, disadvantaged and most-at-risk adolescent girls and boys are now being equipped with knowledge, confidence and life skills to influence and take part in decisions that affect their lives. The first-ever roundtable debate between religious leaders and adolescent girls on ending child marriage was supported by UNICEF in 2013. Religious leaders are now using key events, mass media interventions, and sermons to raise public awareness about the need to end child marriage. Religious leaders also launched a collective action plan to address child marriage and violence against children on the World Day of Prayer for Children.

UNICEF provided support to the MWCSW to expand the number and capacity of over 1,000 new Gender-Based Violence Watch Groups. Over 4,000 protection cases were detected by these groups across 59 districts (74 per cent women, 17 per cent children – no gender disaggregation available). Sixteen per cent of these cases were referred to different service providers for further support, while 84 per cent were resolved by the groups themselves as per the guidelines.

New policy provisions now promote participation of girls and boys at key levels of local governance. For example, some 76,000 child club representatives now have a voice in the Government’s 38,000 Ward Citizens Forums nationwide (one boy and one girl per forum).

**On-track**

**IR 2970/A0/05/603/001** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, families, especially the most vulnerable, practice promotive and preventive health behaviours including reduced harmful social practices that affect girls and boys with the active involvement of males, and family and community members

**Progress:** Measles has almost been eliminated in Nepal. An increasing number of pregnant women and mothers together with their partners and other family members are being advised on essential newborn care through the nationwide implementation of the new Birth Preparedness Package.

Piloting of a new indicator “delayed bathing of newborns within 24 hours” together with other indicators is ongoing in Accham and four non-focus districts. In UNICEF priority districts, an increasing number of pregnant women and mothers together with their partners and other family members are being advised to delay bathing until 24 hours after birth through implementation of the community-based newborn package and the new Birth Preparedness Package.

UNICEF supported the MoHP’s MR campaign through vaccine procurement, campaign planning and monitoring, and development of communication materials. The campaign vaccinated 9.6 million children ranging from under 9 months to 15 years. UNICEF also supported the Ministry to introduce the MR vaccine into routine immunisation. In 2013, only nine cases of measles and ten rubella cases were reported and there were no reported outbreaks. Advocacy from UNICEF and other partners led to the incorporation of gender into immunisation indicators with data disaggregation expected from 2014. UNICEF support in SMS reporting using mobile phone technology contributed to improvements in data quality and timeliness of reporting.

Data on hand washing with soap will be available only after a household survey in 2015. However, observation monitoring reports showed that 100 per cent of households visited by FCHVs in two districts were ensuring the availability of soap and water at the place where they usually feed their child (a relatively strong predictor of actual hand washing with soap).

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

Quality of care adherence to required quality standards: The timeliness and quality of reporting for WASH indicators are problematic. Supportive monitoring and follow up needs to be strengthened.

**Constrained**

**IR 2970/A0/05/603/002** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, families, especially the most vulnerable, practise essential maternal, adolescent, newborn, infant and young child feeding and early stimulation, hygiene and sanitation, with active involvement of male, family and community members

**Progress:** Interpersonal and group counselling delivered by health workers and Female Community Health Workers on maternal, infant and young child feeding improved the nutritional intake of 29 per cent of children aged 6-23 months (no gender disaggregation available) and 40 per cent of mothers living in 9 remote, disadvantaged districts.

UNICEF provided support for the training and mobilisation of 947 health workers and 6,511 Female Community Health Workers in 9 disadvantaged districts. Their interpersonal and group counselling on maternal, infant and young child feeding led to improvements in nutritional intake of children aged 6-23 months in these districts. Sixty-eight per cent were fed with minimum frequency, 32 per cent with minimum dietary diversity, and 74 per cent of children aged 6-8 months were introduced to complementary foods (no gender or disaggregation by ethnicity available). In the most disadvantaged districts in the Karnali zone (far-west mountains), as a result of the UNICEF-supported integrated child cash grant program, 68 per cent of children were breastfed within an hour of birth (well above the national average of 45 per cent), 80 per cent were exclusively breastfed, 43 per cent were introduced to complementary food at 6-8 months of age, and 92 per cent were fed with minimum meal frequency.

Nutrition counselling by health workers and Female Community Health Workers improved the nutritional intake of 40 per cent of mothers in 9 disadvantaged districts. This is in line with the Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan (2013-2017) and the draft Comprehensive
Maternal Nutrition Strategy, Infant and Young Child Feeding Strategy and the 1,000 Golden Days communication campaign.

Core messages on hygiene, sanitation, early child stimulation, responsive feeding and play were integrated into maternal, infant and young child feeding counselling materials in 15 intervention districts as an essential part of the 1,000 Golden Days campaign.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Access to adequately staffed services, facilities and information: There is currently no disaggregated data available in the HMIS. UNICEF advocacy and technical support, in close collaboration with other partners, led to inclusion of new nutrition indicators in the HMIS indicator list. After piloting of the indicators is completed in four districts, disaggregated data on infant and young child feeding indicators will be available in 2014.

**Constrained**

**IR 2970/A0/05/603/003 By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, parents and stakeholders support quality alternative learning opportunities for out-of-school girls and boys, and improve education attendance and retention of girls and boys, from early childhood to adolescence**

**Progress:** With UNICEF’s assistance, capacity-development initiatives in 80 municipalities and 6 districts led to parents and other stakeholders being engaged in developing integrated plans to improve quality learning opportunities for out-of-school children and improve the educational retention of boys and girls from early childhood to adolescence.

Of 5,974 children who completed a full cycle of non-formal education in 9 out of 15 UNICEF-supported districts, most were from marginalised communities, and 78 per cent (4,674) were girls. These programmes were all implemented in the Terai (southern border) region and the Mid-Western and Far-Western Regions, where 65 per cent of out-of-school children in Nepal live (Nepal Living Standards Survey 2011). In the Girls Access to Education (GATE) non-formal education programme implemented in Saptari (one of the UNICEF-supported districts), 57 per cent of those enrolled were Dalit and 22 per cent were Muslims who had never been to school. GATE targets adolescent girls.

In the GATE programme in Saptari, 2,341 girls completed the non-formal classes, out of whom 35 per cent were mainstreamed into formal schools. In 2013, 60 new non-formal classes started in October in four municipalities benefitting 728 girls and 469 boys.

Measures were developed and fed into the upcoming MICS to capture the perception of mothers on the importance of education. A separate survey will be undertaken in 2014 to capture other perception indicators in 15 districts.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Legalisation/policies: The required policy and strategy are available, but investment in terms of the number of places available for children who need non-formal education and financial inputs are far below the required levels. In addition, coordination of efforts to bring out-of-school children back into school is a challenge. UNICEF’s partnership with local authorities will support better planning and resource mobilisation to address the needs of out-of-school children. UNICEF will also ensure additional resources are allocated at the national level by working closely with the MoE.

**Constrained**

**IR 2970/A0/05/603/004 By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, adolescent girls and boys are applying age-, sex-, and issue-appropriate life skills to influence decisions that affect their development**

**Progress:** The NPA on Holistic Adolescent Development launched by the NPC highlighted the need for comprehensive social and financial skills training for adolescent girls and boys so that they can reach their full potential and become change agents.

Through participation in sports- and dance-based recreational activities, disadvantaged and most-at-risk adolescent girls and boys were equipped with knowledge, confidence and life skills to influence and take part in decisions that affect their lives. Participating adolescents (more than 60 per cent girls) included those commercially sexually exploited or injecting drugs, sexual and gender minorities, those affected with HIV and AIDS, and those living in the street or at risk of being trafficked.

A comprehensive social and financial skills training package for adolescent girls and boys will be rolled out in six districts in early 2014. The package includes disability-friendly games/exercises. UNICEF supported capacity building of IPs in the use of the Most Significant Change methodology so that they can capture changes in the lives of adolescent girls and boys during the programme. Peer leaders and facilitators are being identified and adolescent groups are being formed as platforms for training delivery and collective social actions. Girls will be a particular focus.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Social norms: Adolescents’ life choices are mostly decided by others. UNICEF is conducting a participatory bottleneck analysis exercise to identify root causes and possible solutions for various challenges faced by adolescent girls and boys.

**Constrained**

**IR 2970/A0/05/603/005 By 2017, children, families, communities and society acquire knowledge and attitudes and take action to protect all children and adolescents, especially girls, at risk or victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation, in selected districts and municipalities**

**Progress:** Community-based women’s groups enhanced their capacity to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse of girls, boys and women. A comprehensive strategy that includes social change communication, advocacy and technical work on ending
violence against children will be finalised in 2014 to prevent child violence, exploitation and abuse, especially of girls, and to increase reporting, referral and response.

A Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices Survey was finalised to support evidence-based advocacy and the national campaign on Ending Violence Against Children including corporal punishment in the community, schools and home. Regular media monitoring was initiated to identify trends related to violence against women, girls and boys and to track coverage of child protection issues. There appears to be an increase in the reporting of cases of corporal punishment including other forms of violence in the media. New partnerships with NGOs to promote awareness about protection issues concerning children with disabilities are being developed.

Contributing to improvements in women’s and children’s protection from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination, UNICEF provided support to the MWCSW to expand the number and capacity of over 1,000 new Gender-Based Violence Watch Groups. The Government allocated US$40,717 for the implementation of the programme. A new information management system was established with UNICEF’s technical assistance to increase the availability of disaggregated data on violence against girls, boys and women and to strengthen evidence-based advocacy, planning and service delivery.

Over 4,000 protection cases (74 per cent women, 17 per cent children, no gender disaggregation available) were detected by Gender-Based Violence Watch Groups across 59 districts. Sixteen per cent of all cases were referred to different service providers for further support, while 84 per cent were resolved by the Gender-Based Violence Watch Groups themselves as per guidelines.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**

**Budget/Expenditure:** Delays in financial processes through the Government’s District Development Fund led to changes in UNICEF’s fund transfer modality, with funding now transferred directly to district Women and Children Offices through the Government’s central treasury system.

- **Constrained**
  - **IR 2970/A0/05/603/006** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, public opinion, media, community networks, employers, government institutions, religious organisations, local political leaders and families address harmful social norms and practices affecting the rights of children, adolescents, especially girls, and women

  **Progress:** The NPA on Holistic Adolescent Development launched by the NPC highlights the need to develop the capacity of community stakeholders (media, religious and political leaders, parents, local bodies) to address harmful social norms and create an enabling environment for adolescents.

An orientation package is being prepared on adolescent development and participation to develop the capacity of stakeholders on how to identify and address harmful social practices affecting adolescent girls and boys. In order to foster intergenerational dialogue between adolescent girls and boys and adults (male and female) on harmful social practices, community youth are being trained to conduct interactive theatre. Disability issues, especially among adolescents, were included in programmes broadcast by ‘Chatting with my Best Friend’, a youth-led national radio station.

UNICEF built the capacity of religious leaders of all faiths in Nepal to play a key role in ending child marriage. The first-ever roundtable debate between religious leaders and adolescent girls on ending child marriage was supported by UNICEF in 2013. Religious leaders began using key events, mass media interventions and sermons to raise public awareness about the need to end child marriage. Religious leaders also launched a collective action plan to address child marriage and violence against children on the occasion of the World Day of Prayer for Children.

A training package is being prepared to develop the capacity of media personnel on adolescent development and communications on how to address harmful social norms and practices in culturally sensitive ways. Once trained, media personnel will be expected to continuously raise adolescent issues in an ethical manner in order to stimulate public advocacy and collective action towards the creation of enabling environments for adolescent girls and boys.

- **On-track**
  - **IR 2970/A0/05/603/007** By 2017, in selected districts and municipalities, children, adolescent girls and boys, women and other disadvantaged groups meaningfully participate in decision-making bodies

  **Progress:** For the first time, policy provisions are in place that promote participation of girls and boys at the key levels of local governance. For example, some 76,000 child club representatives are represented and have a voice in the 38,000 Ward Citizens Forums nationwide (one boy and one girl per forum), part of the Government’s LGCDP.

Almost 50 per cent of the planned child club networks were formed of the target of 15 district-, 7 municipality- and 800 village-level child club networks. A total of 376 children (174 girls, 202 boys) from 5 districts participated in capacity-development activities on CFLG and their role in decision making. Three district and two municipal child club network representatives participated in the 3rd International Child Friendly Cities Conference and contributed to the development of the conference’s declaration highlighting children’s participation in local governance. The training curriculum for Bal Bhela (children consultations during district planning) was reviewed and implemented in target districts to incorporate disability issues.

All 15 priority districts have children participating in district-level CFLG committees with representation of one girl and one boy on the committee. Municipal CFLG committees were formed in three of seven municipalities, and each ensured representation of one girl and one boy. One girl and one boy were also represented in 661 Integrated Planning Committees at the village level (395 in Mid-Western and Far-Western, 150 in Central Western, and 116 in Eastern Region). Of the 7,200 Ward Citizen Forums that exist in 800 villages in the
15 priority districts, 3,574 also ensured representation of one girl and one boy.

Seven District Development Committees incorporated children’s needs in their Annual Plan and two districts incorporated children’s needs in their periodic (multi-year) plan. There is also evidence that the local block grant allocations took account of demands from children, such as libraries, sports materials, extra-curricular activities, ECD centres and birthing centres, as well as sanitary pads to assist with menstrual hygiene in schools, stationery support for disadvantaged children, and emergency funds for children facing gender-based violence.

**Bottlenecks and solutions (either actioned or proposed):**
Social norm: Meaningful participation of children in local governance processes was a challenge. The capacity building of government programme officers and child rights officers from 15 priority districts on how to facilitate the inclusion of children’s voices in the annual planning process provided uniform understanding and will assist in the systematic collection of demands of girls and boys in the coming year.

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<tr>
<th>PC 604 - Cross sectoral</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PCR 2970/A0/05/804 Cross sectoral</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Progress:</strong> All 2013 indicator targets for internal management results utilising cross-sectoral budget were successfully met. Management of the cross-sectoral budget in 2013, including budget planning, monitoring and reviews, was efficiently carried out, resulting in about 99 per cent utilisation. Supplies and resources to partners were monitored and follow-up action undertaken. Chiefs of Zone Offices and some operational staff supported by the cross-sectoral budget coordinated programme implementation in the Zone Offices and performed local representational duties.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IR 2970/A0/05/804/001 Office Management Costs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Progress:</strong> Management of the cross-sectoral budget in 2013, including budget planning, monitoring and reviews, was efficiently carried out resulting in about 99 per cent utilisation. Staff, such as Chiefs of Zone Offices and some operational staff, supported by the cross-sectoral budget coordinated programme implementation in the Zone Offices and performed presentational duties. A budget analysis for the Office was prepared and follow-up actions were carried out efficiently throughout the year.</td>
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<td><strong>IR 2970/A0/05/804/002 Communications, Emergency and Other Cross-sectoral Programme Costs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Progress:</strong> Supplies and resources to partners were monitored and follow-up action undertaken by the CS team. Office management expenses were supplemented by the CS budget, which was efficiently utilised for the intended purpose.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IR 2970/A0/05/804/003 Efficient and effective Cross-cutting and Operating Costs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Progress:</strong> Management of the cross-sectoral budget in 2013, including budget planning, monitoring and reviews, was efficiently carried out resulting in about 99 per cent utilisation. Staff, such as Chiefs of Zone Offices and some operational staff, supported by the cross-sectoral budget coordinated programme implementation in the Zone Offices and performed presentational duties. A budget analysis for the Office was prepared and follow-up actions were carried out efficiently throughout the year. Supplies and resources to partners were monitored and follow-up action undertaken by the CS team. Office management expenses were supplemented by the CS budget, which was efficiently utilised for the intended purpose.</td>
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<th>PC 800 - Support</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PCR 2970/A0/05/800 Office Management Costs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Progress:</strong> All indicator targets for efficient governance, Country Management Team (CMT) functions, management and stewardship of financial resources and management of human capacity were successfully met during 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IR 2970/A0/05/800/001 Governance and Systems: Efficient governance structure developed and CMT functions as the key governance body providing guidance to the Representative for effective management of the Country Programme</strong></td>
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| **Progress:** CMT functions very effectively provided strategic guidance, programme and operational inputs in advising the Representative
in taking informed decisions.

The Office budget was efficiently managed and monitored monthly at CMT. The IB utilisation rate was 99.5 per cent, exceeding the target of 98 per cent, and expenses were in line with the intended purpose.

Membership of seven statutory office committees (CMT, JCP, CRB, CRC, PSB, Human Resources Development Team [HRDT], PCA) were revised and approved by CMT in April 2013, two months ahead of target. Each of the committee functions effectively according to their Terms of Reference (ToR) and are monitored to ensure they achieve desired results.

Ten results-oriented, risk-informed, cost-efficient and simple Standard Operations Procedures (SOP) were prepared in line with VISION and approved by CMT on 30 September 2013. All staff were oriented on the SOP by 30 November 2013 meeting the set target.

The contract to renovate the UN Nepal Country Office in the UN House building was awarded on 15 July 2013. Weekly project management meetings were held to effectively monitor the project to successful completion on 24 December 2013, one month earlier than the target of 31 January 2014. A pleasant refurbished office is now in place, and staff morale and motivation have improved, which is expected to lead to increased productivity.

The VISION Business Support Centre (BSC) concept was introduced, and existing units operating under the old system of Common Services Units, i.e. Finance, Supply and Administration, were converted into the BSC. New BSC programmes were established and implemented on 9 October 2013 and all are reporting to the Chief of Operations. The BSC is functioning well and supporting ROSA. The Bhutan Country Office will be supported effective March 2014.

Progress:

**IR** 2970/A0/05/800/002 Office Management Costs

**Met**

**Progress:** The New York Headquarters (NYHQ) interim closure deadline was met and the year-end closure deadlines were progressing successfully at the time of writing.

The Table of Authority was revised and staff signed the relevant extracted portion, making them accountable to the delegated authority assigned to them by the Representative.

Segregation of duties (SOD) violations were monitored monthly and addressed within five days according to the set target.

The macro-assessment of the financial management system of the Government of Nepal for the new Country Programme Cycle 2013-2017 was completed. Similarly, 37 micro-assessments of 39 planned IPs were completed – a 95 per cent completion rate. Various assurance activities, including 50 spot checks, were conducted, and one joint audit with UN agencies for government IPs and one special audit for NGO IPs were carried out in 2013.

**IR** 2970/A0/05/800/003 Office Management Costs

**Met**

**Progress:** The achieved 95 per cent of recruitment of all approved posts by May’s Integrated Budget Review (IBR), 5 per cent higher than the target.

By the end of the year, 90 per cent of recruitment cases had been completed within 60 days for General Service (GS) posts and 90 days for National Officer (NO) posts (from advertisement until submission to ROSA).

There were a number of staff changes at the CO due to shifts in the Operations Section and the formation of the BSC. This necessitated recruitment of 18 national positions and 7 international positions. The Office witnessed drastic improvement in its recruitment processing time, averaging 67 days for GS level positions and 81 days for NO positions. Though the average period is longer than the standard target, it is noteworthy that the majority of these posts become effective only on 1 January 2014. Staff selection was completed and letters of offer issued to successfully selected staff members and external candidates in a timely manner. In addition, the Office put in place risk management mitigation in respect to the recruitment of consultants and individual contractors through the issuance of the SOP and the development of a checklist to ensure completeness of documentation. The CO systematically embarked on the use of Talent Groups for national recruitment of personnel leading to the timely appointment of qualified individuals on Temporary Appointments. In support of the structural changes especially for the Operations Team, different learning activities were carried out. These include competency-based interviewing, customer service and VISION training.
Effective Governance Structure

The 2013 Annual Management Plan (AMP) established clear accountabilities, including delegation of authority, resource mobilisation strategies and management of Zone Offices. Oversight structures included the CMT, three Programme Component Result Teams, the Programme Team, and the Operations Team. The CMT met 10 times in 2013 and focused on key strategic issues, such as simplification of SOPs, aid effectiveness, efficient use of resources, improved monitoring and evaluation, innovation, implementation of the strategic learning plan, strengthened implementation of assurance plans, risk management, testing of emergency preparedness, revised Office Committees and ToRs, and staff safety and welfare. Key indicators were regularly monitored and remedial actions taken before the next CMT meeting. Enhanced CMT oversight led to improved performance by the Programme and Operations Teams, timely completion of staff assessments, and greater involvement of Zone Offices in decision-making.

A BSC was established and became operational from 9 October 2013, with Finance, Supply and Programmes the initial shared functional areas. BSC Supply and Finance began supporting ROSA and will support the Bhutan CO as of March 2014. Remaining Operations Units will be incorporated into the BSC in 2014.

To comply with occupational health and safety standards and to improve staff productivity, the Nepal CO renovated its office within UN House. Administration and Supply Teams overseeing the renovation also extended their support to the ROSA office refurbishment. The Nepal CO relocated to commercially leased premises for six months while the renovation was completed. The CO initiated actions to address mobility of staff in the remotest areas of Nepal, namely Jumla, Humla, Dadeldura and Accham, by relocating drivers and vehicles to those areas. In this regard, special arrangements were put in place to address hardship and to promote work-life balance of the staff stationed at these locations. Monthly/quarterly travel was extended by two additional days, coinciding with the Zonal Team Meetings, to enable programme officers and drivers to stay with their families at the Mid-Western and Far-Western Zone Office in Nepalgunj.

Through several informal discussions between management and the Staff Association, the majority of staff issues were resolved. Only three Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) meetings were required during the year. Every effort was made to maintain the standards that led to the satisfactory audit ratings in Governance in the 2009 Internal Audit. The Office is preparing for the 2014 internal audit to sustain the addressed audit recommendations.

UNICEF management participated actively in Inter-Agency meetings where the Representative contributed effectively in the UN Country Team (UNCT), calling for a number of initiatives, such as a UN House Space Audit, a review of the UN House Board ToR, and review of the UN Common Services budget. The Deputy Representative attends Joint Programme meetings. The Chief of Operations participated effectively in the Operations Management Team (OMT) discussions and proposed initiatives for efficiency improvement through various Working Groups, i.e. Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Procurement, and the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). The Chief of Operations is also a member of the UN Dispensary Board that oversees the operation of the dispensary services, advocating for a thorough review of activities and budget of the UN Dispensary.

Strategic Risk Management

Risk management continues to be a priority of UNICEF Nepal in view of the natural hazards and environmental challenges in the country. The Office reviewed the Risk Profile and Risk Control Self-Assessment in August 2013, and the following are the high risks identified and the mitigating strategy put in place:

- Low earthquake preparedness and response capacity within UNICEF and Government could lead to high staff security risk, loss of lives and ineffective response; and
- Lack of earthquake preparedness at home among staff members could endanger their lives during an earthquake emergency.
As a mitigating strategy, UNICEF Nepal’s Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan was reviewed and tested. The Plan was found to be adequate with lessons learned/recommendations noted and addressed. UN Nepal conducted an earthquake simulation for two days in November 2013 in which UNICEF played an active role.

Retrofitting of the UN House for earthquake resistance will be completed in 2014. Staff were encouraged to strengthen their homes through a free seismic assessment conducted by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

The UN planned regular simulation events with Government partners to strengthen the line ministries’ preparedness and response capacities.

Regular briefing sessions were held for staff including those at Zone Offices and the CMT. UNICEF staff and consultants were trained on the Election Code of Conduct, which brought about increased awareness and precautionary measures taken by staff and their dependants during the election period.

The Office took steps to better integrate risk management and preparedness into all programmes, and fully reviewed and updated the online Early Warning and Early Action system for Kathmandu and the three Zone Offices in Bharapur, Biratnagar and Nepalgunj.

The Office saw an improvement of risk awareness among staff, and incorporated risk and mitigation strategies into programme work plans and discussions with key partners during programme review meetings.

Peer reviews of each programme’s workplan were organised to ensure that relevant risks are identified and mitigating strategies put in place. The Deputy Representative has an oversight responsibility to ensure that risk measures are adequately addressed in all programmes and adequate funding is provided where necessary and possible.

The Office placed high emphasis on risk management and particularly SOD. SOD violations were promptly reviewed and addressed. The Office also performed half-year Operational Oversight visits to the Zone Offices to ensure sustainable risk management measures were in place in the areas of finance, inventory and transport management.

The Business Continuity Plan (BCP) was updated and tested. The Office continues to search for an appropriate location for the BCP site. It is being recommended that UNICEF ROSA serve as the BCP site for UNICEF Nepal and vice versa. The recommendation will be reviewed on completion of the renovation work ongoing at ROSA.

### Evaluation

The multi-year rolling Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP), corresponding to the Office's Rolling Work Plans 2013-2015, was prepared based on the Country Programme's five year IMEP. The IMEP's annual review shows that out of 85 planned activities, 15 per cent were completed, while 61 per cent are ongoing and 8 per cent are in planning. Concept papers for two planned evaluations are under development: the evaluation of the NPA for Children 2004/05-2014/15 (to inform planning of the next NPA); and the Joint Evaluation of the Community-based Watch Groups for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (to provide data and lessons for national scale up within the health system). Implementation of the management response plan for the Evaluation of Community Management of Acute Malnutrition was closely monitored and reported on in the evaluation database. Nepal was selected as a case study to contribute to two global evaluations led by NYHQ's Evaluation Office: Evaluation of Community Approaches to Total Sanitation; and Formative Evaluation of the Monitoring Results for Equity System Approach. UNICEF Nepal's rigorous and innovative approaches to foster a social movement for total sanitation as well as apply bottleneck monitoring by local governments contributed to organisation-wide learning.

Team will ensure and provide quality assurance in the implementation of the Evaluation Policy’s principles and actions agreed in the Regional Evaluation Strategy.

There are two active national fora for sharing evaluation knowledge effectively: the Evaluation Society of Nepal; and the recently established Community of Evaluators-Nepal. The latter successfully co-hosted the Evaluation Conclave on Evaluation for Development from 26 February to 1 March 2013 in Kathmandu.

The NPC launched a series of initiatives in September 2013 to strengthen national evaluation capacity in partnership with UN agencies and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The initiative enhanced the dialogue and cooperation on evaluation among government agencies, networks of professional evaluators, civil society and training institutions. As part of the initiative, national evaluation capacity was assessed, and on 9 and 10 September, the NPC facilitated in-depth discussions among stakeholders on evaluation capacity strengthening. This network meeting identified the way forward to support the Government on results-based monitoring and evaluation as an integral part of policy formulation and planning. At this event, Sri Lanka’s Evaluation Association shared their experience in developing an evaluation culture and capacity, while the Malaysian Evaluation Society presented its experience in institutionalising evaluation in the public sector. The network meeting also analysed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats on critical themes of evaluation: policy regulatory framework; capacity-building; use of evaluations; and quality and independence of evaluations. Recommendations from this meeting were presented at the Policy Forum to senior policy makers and endorsed by the NPC for incorporation in the national three-year Monitoring and Evaluation rolling plan.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The ICT unit provided efficient and satisfactory support through timely, reliable, client-focused and secure information technology services.

a) Office relocation and renovation: The Nepalgunj Zone Office was relocated to a newly constructed building. All ICT infrastructure services were installed including a state-of-the-art data centre and meeting room. The ICT unit facilitated a similar infrastructure setup in the temporary location for the CO during the retrofitting/renovation of the main office in UN House.

b) Improved Internet Connectivity: All Zone Offices were equipped with alternate secondary ISP links to provide for redundancy, automatic failover and load balancing. This initiative further improved the preparedness of these Offices for emergencies. Wireless networks were enhanced to provide internet accessibility to portable devices and for official visitors. To accommodate VISION-related and other corporate data, internet bandwidths were increased from 10/10mbps to 13/13mpbs in the Kathmandu Office and 1.5/1.5mpbs to 3/3mpbs in the Zone Offices.

c) Implementation of Global ICT projects: The Office successfully implemented the Global ICT initiatives to meet business continuity requirements. The Office was selected to test Skype-PBX integration, which will help to further reduce communication costs.

d) Contribution to the maintenance of the Office BCP site: Simulation exercises and telecommunications training were conducted for staff members on the use of the voice and data communication system and to process VISION transactions remotely. Although BCP sites for the Zone Offices are yet to be finalised, they do maintain a minimum stock of emergency telecom equipment for emergency response. Network folders were backed up at the BCP site and other portable devices on a daily basis. Connectivity between the Office network and the BCP site was improved with the establishment of a fibre optic connection. Almost all staff members were issued laptops with Cisco VPN installed for remote computing. All vehicles were equipped with telecom equipment to comply with Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS). The Office maintains a BlackBerry Enterprise Server that provides email services to critical staff of both the CO and ROSA.

e) Innovations and Initiatives: The Office acquired a new system called the SAN Display system to monitor the status of key information, such as upcoming events, staff members on leave, staff members on travel duty and official visitors in-country. ICT is increasingly collaborating with Programme Sections on the
integration of ICT in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

f) Disposal of Obsolete ICT equipment: Obsolete ICT items were replaced with equipment up to the latest standards. Property Service Board (PSB)-approved equipment items were disposed of through public auctions, with the unsold items being disposed of in an environmentally secure and safe manner.

g) Inter-Agency Collaboration: Joint Long-Term Arrangements (LTAs) were established with vendors for the maintenance of ICT equipment and a Help Desk Support function to provide a high-quality service at reduced cost. UNICEF continues to play an important role in the inter-agency ICT Task Force and Telecommunication Working Group, including implementation of IP telephony in the UN common PABX systems.

Fund-raising and Donor Relations
The CO sent all 33 required donor reports (100 per cent) on time and ensured each met quality standards.

Successful lobbying with the Norwegian Government, the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), the EU, and National Committees led to the mobilisation of just over 100 per cent of planned Other Resources Regular (ORR) 2013; against the planned ORR ceiling of US$20,451,098.60, UNICEF Nepal raised US$20,457,338.39. For 2014, the CO is currently funded to US$24,847,412 against the same ORR ceiling.

The Deputy Representative closely monitors the implementation of all grants on a monthly basis, while grants that are expiring in three months are monitored weekly. As a result, the Office utilised almost 99 per cent of expiring grant amounts in 2013. The CO requested three grants for extension during 2013, of which two were extended because additional funds were received from the donors. One grant was extended due to delayed implementation (monsoon and national elections).

The Office maintained close links with the Geneva Funding Marketplace and continued its excellent association with UNICEF National Committees, hosting a total of seven visits from the Dutch (twice), Finnish (twice), Korean, German and Japanese Committees. UNICEF Nepal received a total of US$4,840,000 during 2013 from the Canadian, Dutch, German, Japanese, Korean, Swedish, Swiss and US National Committees. An additional US$271,000 was received from Zinc International. Several visits by UNICEF National Committees are already scheduled for 2014.

Management of Financial and Other Assets
UNICEF is an active player in scaling up the joint HACT initiative within the UNDP and UNFPA in Nepal. Several assessments of IPs and Government financial management systems were carried out, and areas for improvement were identified. The macro-assessment of the financial management system of the Government of Nepal for the new Country Programme Cycle 2013-2017 was completed. Similarly, 37 micro-assessments of 39 planned IPs were completed – a 95 per cent completion rate. Various assurance activities, including 50 spot checks, one joint audit with UN agencies for governmental IPs and one special audit for non-governmental IPs, were carried out in 2013. The Office was engaged in a discussion with the Ministry of Finance, implementing ministries, departments and the Supreme Audit Institution to further promote the harmonisation and alignment with the Government’s processes as mandated by the HACT framework. UNICEF also supported capacity strengthening of 58 IPs in financial management, particularly on issues related to HACT and Funds Authorisation and Certification of Expenditures (FACE).

The Office was effective in disbursing funds to the concerned IPs within the average record time of one month and successfully managed to keep its outstanding direct cash transfers (DCTs). The Office had zero DCTs in excess of nine months as of 31 December 2013. The CO efficiently managed its financial resources and adequately maintained its overall liquidity position throughout the year. In 2012, a new bank payment system was introduced. The shift was successfully implemented in 2013 for the CO and Zone Offices as well as ROSA. Training for the CO and ROSA paying officers led to reduction in payment lead time and improved overall efficiency in payment processing. Electronic bank transfers for all transfers in Nepalese Rupee and US
dollar bank accounts were properly applied. The electronic bank reconciliation process was implemented for ROSA and CO bank accounts, resulting in timely submissions of bank reconciliations. Open items were promptly reviewed and cleared in a timely manner.

Technical support on financial management was provided to Programme Sections and Zone Offices by reviewing Programme Cooperation Agreements and Small Scale Funding Agreements budgets prior to submission to the Local Project Cooperation Agreement Committee. Support was also provided to facilitate DCT receivables, FACE training and follow-ups with NYHQ on service calls on behalf of Programme Sections.

Year-end closure and reporting for 2012 was done successfully in VISION, and financial reports were submitted to NYHQ within deadlines. The Office successfully completed the mid-year account closure and met all the deadlines of the 2013 account closure. Value-added tax (VAT) claims up to June 2013 for all offices, including Zone Offices and ROSA, were processed. The CMT monitors the implementation of programme funds and grants resulting in high utilisation rate of programme funds for intended purposes. By 31 December 2013, 100 per cent of Regular Resources (RR), 92 per cent of ORR and 95 per cent of Other Resources Emergency (ORE) were utilised against planned allocations.

**Supply Management**

The supply throughput in 2013, amounting to US$6.2 million, was managed in close collaboration with the Operations and Programme Sections. The Supply Unit leveraged its good relationship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Customs Department to improve on the turnaround time of processing duty exemption certificates.

The 2013 procurement status as of 6 January 2014 was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order Type</th>
<th>2013 Value in US$</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies - Offshore</td>
<td>2,148,833</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>562,058</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional - General</td>
<td>2,131,305</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>444,634</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets + Consumables - Operations</td>
<td>945,799</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,232,630</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The supply component comprises both programme supplies and institutional contracts for the CO and ROSA. Major items procured include office furniture, printing supplies, vaccine and injection safety devices and refurbishment work of the office premises (civil works).

To improve the Supply Unit's efficiency and leadership, it will be headed by an international Supply and Logistics Specialist at the P3 level from 2014. Other areas of strengthening included the creation of a dedicated post for contract management at the NOA level. With these changes, the Unit will be adequately staffed to also support ROSA and the Bhutan CO effectively in 2014. The international position is earmarked for two years for capacity building and transfer of knowledge to national staff. At the beginning of 2016, the post will revert to a National Officer post at NOC level.

Cost-effective and risk-informed work processes were undertaken with special attention to procurement management. The aim is to reduce the processing time by 30 per cent, i.e. from 10 to 7 days.

Following the market survey carried out in 2011, the CO continued to use the competitive bidding process for the majority of product categories, while LTAs were established in conjunction with the UN Inter-Agency Procurement Task Force of which UNICEF is the lead agency for customs clearance, vehicle rentals and printing services. An LTA with Unilever for WASH prepositioned emergency items is under development and will bring efficient cost savings to the organisation. Intensive efforts are being made to expand the number of
LTAs at the Inter-Agency level. A market survey exercise will be undertaken in 2014 with the aim of expanding the pool of qualified suppliers to improve competitive bidding, value for money and services.

Through decentralisation of low-value procurement of US$2,500 and below to ROSA and the Zone Offices, the Office engaged in fewer transactions, and those Offices were able to procure low-risk items promptly without reference to the CO, as had previously been the practice.

In Warehouse Management, the CO reduced programme supplies in the warehouses (in Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Bharatpur and Nepalgunj) from US$1.3 million to US$0.5 million (a 62 per cent reduction). The majority of the remaining items in the warehouses are pre-positioned emergency supplies. The Office is reviewing the appropriate level of pre-positioned supplies to be maintained in the coming years (estimates are not to exceed US$0.3 million per year).

The stock level in the warehouses as at 6 January 2014 was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount in US$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supplies received in 2013</td>
<td>315,163.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current inventory</td>
<td>426,769.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies issued in 2013</td>
<td>806,012.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Office undertook an assessment of government warehouses, which assisted in faster direct deliveries of supplies to end users compared to previous years. This will be continued and improved in the future.

Offshore procurement constitutes 70 per cent of the total procurement of goods. The Office effectively coordinated with Supply Division, national government counterparts and freight forwarders to track and follow up on orders, ensuring target delivery times were met. This was done through close order tracking and monitoring of arrival information and ensuring prompt clearance of duty exemption papers prior to arrival of goods in the country – formerly a common cause of delays. The major challenge in managing offshore shipment is the fact that Nepal is landlocked and highly dependent on the ports of neighbouring countries for sea shipments. Any policy change will affect the lead time and pose procedural difficulties in meeting the target delivery dates, in turn leading to increased transaction costs of storage and demurrage.

Three supply staff members attended contract management training organised by Supply Division in India in September 2013. Further training was provided for all Operations staff including those in the Supply Unit on customer service. Evidence of the training was realised in the prompt preparation of contracts and a more service-oriented approach to clients.

In terms of procurement services on behalf of Government, the Office procured goods worth US$2.2 million in 2013, mainly vaccines and cold chain equipment.

**Human Resources**

A revised Operations Team structure (deferred from 2012) was submitted to the Integrated Budget Review in early 2013 with structural changes approved for various functional areas in Operations Management including establishment of a BSC.

**Change Management**

Guiding Principles were issued for the 2013 national recruitment exercise. Capacities of internal applicants, especially those on abolished posts, was strengthened through several learning interventions including competency-based interviewing, customer service, managing performance for results, and VISION.

**Recruitment**

A total of 39 positions were filled (29 Fixed Term, 3 Temporary Appointments, 4 UN Volunteers, 2 Junior Professional Officers and 1 KOICA-funded post). Recruitment was simplified through the use of Talent Groups. Every effort was made to improve gender balance. Workforce diversity data is included in recruitment
The Office initiated LTAs with a number of suppliers, resulting in shorter solicitation processes, saving up to $24,774 in cost savings.

**Learning and Staff Development**

The HRDT is a joint committee between Nepal CO and ROSA to oversee submission of learning activities prior to approval by the Nepal CO and ROSA management. Learning plans were developed aligned to global and regional learning priorities and based on individual needs assessments. Group learning activities in 2013 included managing performance for results, ethics, VISION, UN Cares, first aid, conflict sensitivity, and competency-based interviewing. A full 95 per cent of the CO's learning plan was achieved in 2013. Five staff members benefited from development assignments both in-country and internationally. HR also supported the organisation of a teambuilding exercise and a staff retreat to facilitate a harmonious working environment. Staff orientation on HR was conducted in August 2013, attended by 25 staff members. A budget of approximately US$14,000 from the Regional Learning Budget was allocated and utilised for Nepal CO learning, especially for group training. Additionally, programme resources of US$51,000 were spent to accommodate other learning needs.

**UN Traineeship**

UNICEF Nepal was an active participant of the UN Nepal Traineeship programme, which involves young graduates from socially excluded groups. Nine trainees were recruited under this scheme to support programme implementation at various Zone Offices.

**Efficiency Improvement**

To improve business continuity, the Office took the initiative of establishing an electronic records management system for staff data. The system proved functional and responsive to the needs of the Office as evidenced during the simulation exercise in September 2013. The Office is establishing an online consultant roster that will be instrumental in simplifying the CIC work process. A similar concept will also be applied in the development of Talent Groups for national recruitment.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

The Office achieved a total cost saving of $190,173 with savings from travel and transport management amounting to $152,299, representing 80 per cent of the total. This was the result of an effective competition put in place using three LTAs with three travel agencies. Good discounts, competitive service deliveries and cost effectiveness in ticketing were achieved. Efficiency gains were achieved by reducing the volume of Travel Authorisations (down by 23 per cent from 3,390 in 2012 to 2,612 in 2013) using quarterly travel planning and combined destinations. Extensive efforts were put into the timely closures of open TAs with a reduction of 95.2 per cent (from 1,618 open TAs as of the end of 2012 to 77 as of the end of December 2013), contributing to better budget management.

A thorough review of office work processes was undertaken and implemented, bringing about a number of efficiency gains, including a 30 per cent reduction in document processing time from 10 to 7 days within the Supply Unit and from 5 to 3 days for the Finance Unit.

The Office also made efficient use of ICT equipment and facilities such as WEBEX, Skype, VOIP and video-conferencing for communication with staff members and partners at national and international levels, leading to cost savings of $24,774.

The Office initiated LTAs with a number of suppliers, resulting in shorter solicitation processes, saving up to $190,173.
$13,100. The office spends an average of $749 for each non-LTA procurement in comparison to $94 when an LTA is applied. With a cost saving of $655 per transaction, more initiatives are envisaged in 2014 through a new market survey and establishment of more LTAs. The summary of the cost savings achieved in 2013 is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Savings Area</th>
<th>Estimated Cost Savings in US$</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel and Transport Management</td>
<td>152,299</td>
<td>Cost savings resulting from LTAs with three travel agencies instead of two previously. Effective price and services competition was achieved within the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Management</td>
<td>13,100</td>
<td>Savings from the use of LTAs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT Management</td>
<td>24,774</td>
<td>Using video-conferencing and webex during CMTs, Programme Team meetings, staff meetings and Skype with partners resulted in cost savings through less travel and associated cost reductions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>190,173</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Changes in AMP & CPMP**

The 2013 AMP was developed following the key principles defined in the 2013-2017 Country Programme Management Plan (CPMP). The full activation of the revised Office structure should be completed over the first quarter of 2014. In view of the UNICEF decision to go establish a single Global Shared Service Centre, the Office is considering some adjustments to its structure to be presented to the 2014 Integrated Budget Review (IBR). A revised Office structure will be prepared and the CPMP (2013-2017) staffing modified. The key priorities of the Operations Team will be revised in the 2014 AMP in view of the proposed changes.

**Summary Notes and Acronyms**

AMP – Annual Management Plan
ARV – Antiretroviral
BCP – Business Continuity Plan
BSC – Business Support Centre
C4D – Communication for Development
CCA – Climate Change Adaptation
CFLG – Child-Friendly Local Governance
CFS – Child-Friendly School
CIC – Consultants and Individual Contractors
CMT – Country Management Team
CO – Country Office
CPMP – Country Programme Management Plan
DCT – Direct Cash Transfers
DoE – Department of Education
DPMAS – District Poverty Monitoring and Analysis System
DRM – Disaster Risk Management
DRR – Disaster Risk Reduction
DWSS – Department of Water Supply and Sewerage
ECD – Early Childhood Development
FACE – Funds Authorisation and Certification of Expenditures
FCHV – Female Community Health Volunteer
HACT – Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
HMIS – Health Management Information System
HRDT – Human Resource Development Team
IBR – Integrated Budget Review
ICT – Information and Communications Technology
IMCI – Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
IMEP – Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
IP – Implementing Partner
IR – Intermediate Result
JCC – Joint Consultative Committee
KOICA – Korean International Cooperation Agency
LGCDP – Local Governance and Community Development Programme
LTA – Long-Term Arrangement
MDG – Millennium Development Goal
MICS – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoE – Ministry of Education
MoFALD – Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MoHP – Ministry of Health and Population
MoUD – Ministry of Urban Development
MWCSW – Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NGO – Non-governmental organisation
NPA – National Plan of Action
NPC – National Planning Commission
NYHQ – New York Headquarters
ODF – Open Defecation Free
ORR – Other Resources
PCR – Programme Component Result
ROSA – Regional Office for South Asia
SACOSAN – South Asian Conference on Sanitation
SOD – Segregation of Duties
SOP – Standard Operating Procedures
ToR – Terms of Reference
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund
VDC – Village Development Committee
WASH – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO – World Health Organization

Document Centre

Publications

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<tr>
<td>1 Nepal Thematic Report on Food Security and Nutrition 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Trends and Determinants of Maternal and Child Nutrition in Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Capacity Building to Strengthen Local Government and Community Participation in Multi-sectoral Nutrition Programs in Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Evaluation of Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 MSNP Operational Guideline and Training Materials NUTRITION (English &amp; Nepali Version)</td>
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