The Philippine economy continued to perform strongly in the first half of 2017 (World Bank 2017), as gross domestic product grew by 6.4 per cent. The country remained among the fastest-growing Southeast Asian economies for the year.

However, significant regional inequalities remained and chronic poverty persisted. For instance, just three of the country’s 17 regions account for nearly two-thirds of the GDP and the National Capital Region’s income per capita is 13-fold that of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) (UNICEF Situation Analysis).

In July 2017, the Government launched the medium-term Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017–2022. The PDP aims to lay the foundation to achieve the long-term vision of the Filipino people. It takes into account the country’s international commitments such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Under the new administration, there were concerns related to the space for dialogue on human rights, its massive campaign against illegal drugs and criminality, the revival of the death penalty and lowering of the minimum age of criminal responsibility. An armed conflict that started on 23 May 2017 between Philippine Government security forces and non-state armed groups lasted for five months and led to the declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao.

The non-state armed group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was successfully delisted from the Annexes of the United Nations Secretary General’s Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict. This confirmed the successful implementation of the UN-MILF Action Plan, which culminated in the disengagement of 1,869 children (67 per cent boys and 33 per cent girls) and includes a follow-on programme of support for the disengaged children and their families.

In November 2017 the Philippines was declared a maternal and neonatal tetanus-free country by WHO and UNICEF experts. UNICEF contributed to strengthening the country’s immunization system by supporting a large-scale Immunization Campaign in the ARRM that reached higher than 90 per cent coverage in all three vaccination rounds.

A costing study was completed revealing losses caused by undernutrition amounting to US$4.5 billion. As a response, UNICEF Philippine supported the capacity-building of 241 national legislators and 35 local legislators who supported the “1,000 days” and extended maternity leave bills and ordinances. The House of Representatives approved the 1,000 Days Bill, which aims to strengthen health and nutrition programs to address malnutrition among young children and women who are pregnant and those who are lactating. The Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition 2017–2022 was approved by the governing board of the National Nutrition Council.

The Philippine Plan of Action to end Violence Against Children (PPAeVAC) drew from the findings of the 2015 national baseline survey on violence against children (VAC) and was guided by the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action to Eliminate Violence against Children and recommendations from the scoping mission report of the Global Partnership to end such
violence. UNICEF was a major participant in the development of the multisectoral advocacy plan of the PPAeVAC in partnership with the Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The PPAeVAC was finalized and disseminated in 2017 in close partnership with the Government, civil society organizations, children and parents. New partnerships were also forged with WHO on the INPSIRE initiative, which outlines approaches to eliminate violence against children.

Studies were conducted on the drivers of association of children with armed groups, and the mapping of services in conflict-affected communities were finalized, contributing to the “Normalisation” track of the peace process between the Government and MILF. The following evidence-generating studies were completed: Demand- and Supply-Side Assessments on Modified Conditional Cash Transfer for Indigenous Peoples; Equity in Subnational Public Finance Management Systems for Children; and a Climate Landscape Analysis for Children (a first for the Philippines).

UNICEF Philippines played a significant role in key pieces of legislation for children that were enacted in 2017. It strongly advocated for the incorporation of child online protection in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Free Internet in Public Spaces Law. It also advocated for the Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act, considered the first and only law protecting children and mothers in emergency and disaster situations.

**Humanitarian assistance**

The Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, and the fifth most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In 2017 UNICEF Philippines responded to a significant humanitarian event driven by conflict in Mindanao, a major earthquake, and a tropical storm that affected hundreds in Mindanao. There were 82 reports of grave child rights violations in 2017, with 65 per cent verified and responded to.

UNICEF Philippines continued to play an important role as partner in the Government-led clusters. Specifically, UNICEF provided direct cluster and information management support to the Quad Cluster (comprised of health, nutrition, WASH and mental health and psychosocial support), the child protection sub-cluster and the education cluster. Through the inter-cluster coordination mechanism led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNICEF contributed to cluster contingency planning exercises for a super typhoon, a mid-size typhoon and a 7.3 earthquake in Manila.

The Marawi conflict displaced 353,921 individuals, over half of them children, in the Provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte in Mindanao. UNICEF was among the first on the ground in evacuation centres, providing services with key government and NGO partners. The services supported or directly provided by UNICEF included: infant and young child feeding counselling to 9,087 mothers or caregivers of children aged 0–23 months; assistance to therapeutic care services for 100 per cent of children identified with severe acute malnutrition (SAM); providing sanitation and hygiene promotion activities that reached 94,229 affected; providing access to safe learning environments for 31,400 children aged 5–17 years; rolling out campaigns to promote psychosocial recovery and better child protection that reached 382,162 individuals.

UNICEF Philippines and partners developed and provided access to life-saving interventions for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). UNICEF also created 32 child-friendly sites that hosted orientations for more than 1,000 mothers and caregivers to prevent gender-based violence.
UNICEF Philippines facilitated the completion of the Joint Action Plan signed in 2009 between the MILF and the United Nations that resulted in the disengagement of 1,869 children (620 girls) from the ranks of the armed group. Consequently, the MILF was delisted from a 2016 report by the UN Secretary General that listed armed groups recruiting and using children.

This positive development needs diligent follow up to be sustained. UNICEF Philippines notes an increasing risk of radicalization among young people in Mindanao and the recruitment of children by other non-state armed groups.

Sector specific initiatives strengthened the Government’s capacity to mitigate and respond to humanitarian needs, linking humanitarian development programming to response capacity.


UNICEF provided technical assistance to the National Nutrition Council in the finalization of the Nutrition in Emergencies Strategic Plan 2017–2022. This plan defines the goals of the National Nutrition Cluster and elaborates its key strategies and targets over the next five years to help local governments and communities prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters to prevent the deterioration of the nutritional status of children and women.

Working with the Department of Education (DepEd), UNICEF played a key role in the finalization of conflict-sensitive Disaster Risk Reduction in Education in Emergency modules and provided technical assistance to the development of a national framework and school-based protocols to ensure continuity of education and protection of schools and learners during armed conflict.

UNICEF, through the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), provided significant technical support to the development of the Comprehensive Emergency Program for Children following the issuance of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act. The program will guide the implementing rules and regulations to ensure that the Government meets its commitments to children before, during and after an emergency.

**Equity in practice**

In the Philippines, the major issue in child health and nutrition is inequity in outcomes and coverage of essential services for vulnerable populations. UNICEF Philippines has been working towards closing this gap by focusing on population segments that are left behind. This strategy aligns with the Government’s efforts to progressively realize the goal of universal health coverage.

UNICEF employed a three-pronged approach in its effort to address the health needs of children with disabilities. First, to ensure financial risk protection, UNICEF worked with the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) to develop benefit packages for four major categories of disabilities among children: mobility, vision, hearing and developmental disabilities. In 2017, PhilHealth signed two rates circulars for mobility and developmental disabilities that improved access to health services for children with disabilities.
Service delivery points or “hubs” were being developed in target areas to serve as referral centres for subnational areas. These hubs strengthen service delivery networks that would cater to children with disabilities are located in apex hospitals within Metro Manila and Davao City, and will serve as models of service delivery that can be used to build investment cases. The hub in Metro Manila located in the Philippine General Hospital has been completed and will start operations soon. Plans are underway to build another hub in the Visayas (Tacloban City) and to establish a service delivery network (SDN) to connect tertiary care with community-based rehabilitation initiatives. Using survey data from 2017, UNICEF and partners are developing an advocacy and communication plan to support efforts to address demand-side barriers for accessing mainstream and disability-specific services.

UNICEF also supported DOH in scaling up services for the management of severe acute malnutrition in 21 additional provinces. Provinces were prioritized according to how they ranked in their children’s health and nutrition status. At the core of UNICEF’s technical assistance was building the capacities of regional and provincial health and nutrition staff from health offices and hospitals to train and provide evidence-based, life-saving therapeutic care for children with SAM. UNICEF also provided technical support to DOH in procuring essential SAM commodities.

In Mindanao, a monitoring of results for equity approach was introduced at the subnational level in five conflict-affected provinces to foster renewed and heightened commitment of provincial and local government to stronger planning and action for the most at-risk children. From May to November, data was collected from barangay (village) leaders on some 11 barrier-based indicators relating to services for children. Results clearly identified areas lagging behind in service coverage, thereby increasing accountability of local leaders and municipal mayors and gaining provincial governors’ commitments for action. The new data revealed large disparities within and across provinces and municipalities and led to the drafting of Executive Orders by governors and municipal mayors to mandate actions to reduce malnutrition and eliminate open defecation.

To address pockets of deprivation in immunization services coverage, UNICEF supported the conduct of a tetanus-diphtheria immunization campaign targeting women of reproductive age in the ARMM, where maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT) has been among the most common life-threatening consequences of unclean deliveries and unsafe umbilical cord care practices. Despite the difficult terrain, isolated islands and security concerns, the campaign in ARMM achieved more than 90 per cent coverage in all three rounds. As a result, the Philippines has now been declared as having eliminated maternal and neonatal tetanus.

UNICEF also supported the strengthening of routine immunization for urban poor communities in selected sites in Metro Manila. Aggregated health outcomes that indicate urban areas fare better mask the urban poor and informal settlers who suffer a disproportionate burden of disease. The UNICEF-supported project increased access to immunization services through hiring of additional health volunteers for defaulter tracking, capacity building, outreach activities and social mobilisation and advocacy strategies.

**Strategic Plan 2018-2021**


UNICEF Philippines will continue to work closely with the national Government but will increase participation at the regional, provincial and municipality levels to produce relevant catalytic
changes for changes for children that are at-scale and more far-reaching. UNICEF will approach ongoing and new challenges for children from a long-term planning perspective that will employ best practices and emerging strategies taking into account children’s multiple vulnerabilities and the inevitable impact of climate change.

**Creating impact from evidence:** The importance of generating strong, relevant evidence to effect change for children cannot be overstated. UNICEF commits to putting more resources into supporting studies and research that will provide critical information for localities to help them understand slow onset events and help them mitigate effects.

**Policy advocacy and influencing:** UNICEF’s work in the Philippines over the last 70 years has contributed to a positive and legislative environment for children’s rights. UNICEF will leverage its brand as a powerful and credible voice for Filipino children and will actively work in select policy interventions by focusing more intensively on evidence-based advocacy to influence enforcement and monitoring of relevant laws, policies, programmes and budgets.

**Winning support for the cause of children from decision makers and the wider public:** Perception surveys found UNICEF to have a high trust rating. This puts UNICEF in an important position to engage the public in meaningful debate and discussion around key issues affecting children. The Country Programme will adopt the Cause Framework to create a clear organizational vision and build One UNICEF to develop and promote a common public understanding of issues concerning children, encourage active discussion on ways to help children and influence positive social change.

**Developing and leveraging resources and innovative partnerships for children:** UNICEF will leverage its positive partnerships with the Philippine Government towards policy, legislative and budgetary changes in favour of children’s rights.

Through stakeholder mapping exercises, UNICEF will link up with key actors, advocates, opinion leaders, influencers, mass media, and digital, social media to strengthen UNICEF’s advocacy work in the country. The Philippines is a recognized leader in pushing for an end to violence against children in the region and through South-South Cooperation, UNICEF will support the Philippines as a leader in knowledge sharing and regional development, particularly in areas such as early childhood and cash transfers.

**Capturing the benefits from UN partnerships:** UNICEF will tighten its collaboration and cooperation with UN agencies in finalizing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is strategically aligned with the development priorities and strategies in the Philippines Development Plan as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNICEF will continue to contribute to the joint analysis of national development challenges and aspirations that will allow the UN system to deliver as one with government towards greater efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and increased impact in the development process in a meaningful and sustainable way.

**Equity-driven investments for children and gender-responsive programming:** UNICEF is taking a stronger focus on gender equality and highlighting the importance of using sex-disaggregated data; promoting gender-sensitive policies; generating evidence on the impact of policies on girls and boys differently; ensuring services are adapted to address the different needs of girls and boys; emphasizing gender discriminatory roles and practices; and engaging men and boys in addressing the root causes of gender-based discrimination and violence.
Harnessing the power of business and markets for children: UNICEF’s engagement with the private sector through the Children’s Rights in Business Principles initiative will continue through two main approaches: 1) influencing their conduct of business in all phases of their operation to ensure minimal negative repercussions on the lives of children and their families; and 2) strengthening corporate partnerships to achieve results for children.

UNICEF will ensure that outcome level indicators are aligned with the SDGs, the indicators in the Philippines Development Plan, UNICEF’s Global Strategic Plan and the Regional Headlines, which are highly relevant for the context in the Philippines. UNICEF will annually collate outcome level indicators to monitor progress with partners and for reporting to the Government of the Philippines via midterm and end of year reviews. As part of the UN family, UNICEF will also contribute to the monitoring of results in the UNDAF 2019-2023.

**Emerging areas of importance**

**Integrated early childhood development gathered more national attention in 2017.** As part of UNICEF Philippines’ Integrated Programming Strategy for the implementation of early childhood care and development - First 1,000 Days Program (ECCD-F1KD), technical assistance was provided to four focus local government units (LGUs) in integrated planning and programming. This resulted in the development of the national Situation Analysis (SitAn) of Children and counterpart priority F1KD programs and projects for incorporation in the 2018 Annual Investment Plan of the LGUs.

Some challenges were noted in preparing an integrated F1KD Plan with robust cost analysis due to the lack of updated and comprehensive data on children and a contextualized F1KD Results Framework. To address this, UNICEF supported five focus local government units (LGUs) (including the four units piloting the integrated F1KD) in adopting the Project CHILD (Children Information and Location Database), a technology for gathering information on all children in every household. The system was developed by the LGU in Sindangan as part of the UNICEF’s ECCD-Kindergarten-Primary Education Link initiative to aid planning and implementing interventions for disadvantaged and marginalized children.

UNICEF continued to advocate harmonized cross-sectoral ECCD policies and programming at national level throughout 2017 and secured commitment and agreement from the National ECCD Council to develop a cohesive and costed national ECCD strategic plan that will bring together national government agencies providing ECCD services and involve the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in 2018.

**Responding to the needs of children in conflict areas and in indigenous communities,** UNICEF drew from its operational experience in ARMM to produce a policy paper addressing the situation of children transitioning from day care to kindergarten and to Grade 1. From the policy paper’s recommendations, DepEd agreed to review a series of policies and standards for early grades that inadvertently make the transition to Grade 1 very difficult for the most disadvantaged children.

**Acknowledging the alarming increase in teen pregnancy and HIV,** UNICEF supported the Government in national, subnational and local efforts such as strengthening the capacity of DOH to make use of its resources to provide better support and address the needs of subnational and local health programs.
UNICEF influenced the revival of the Committee on Children and HIV/AIDS, which resulted in the formulation of the protocol on proxy consent and a joint administrative order on HIV testing of minors to be issued by DOH, DepEd and DSWD in early 2018. With support from UNICEF, six local government units trained social workers and developed operational guidelines on a citywide HIV service delivery network and reached more than 6,500 adolescents for HIV testing and services.

UNICEF also supported the National Youth Commission (NYC) in taking the lead on policy development and advocacy for young people. This included localisation of the Philippine Youth Development Plan and dialogues with young people to discuss emerging issues – including disaster risk reduction and peacebuilding – and formulating practical solutions that could strengthen platforms for participation and for partnership with the Government.

UNICEF supported the most vulnerable adolescents to access other social services such as basic education with complementary life skills on peacebuilding and arts. The first cohort of 27 out-of-school adolescents in Zamboanga City graduated from the SUGPAT Alternative School for Peacebuilding and the Arts, a collaboration between UNICEF, DepEd and Ateneo de Zamboanga that provided an eight-month scholarship to help the adolescents prepare for the accreditation and equivalency exams – an alternative pathway to earning a high school diploma. The graduates are provided with an option to either continue with formal education (with some scholarships and assistance made available to them) or take up technical-vocational training provided by the Out of School Development Alliance of Zamboanga City. In 2018, another 30 high-risk adolescents will be enrolled in the program, which will expand to include parenting interventions and community mobilisation.

The programme experience from these emerging areas fed into the design of the new country programme of cooperation and helped to integrate a more cross-sectoral approach to ECCD and adolescents in the new Country Programme 2019–2023.

Summary notes and acronyms

Acronyms

ARMM - Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
CHR - Commission on Human Rights
CLAC - Climate Landscape Analysis for Children
CMT - Country Management Team
CO - Country Office
CPD - Country Programme Document
CRN - Child Rights Network
CSO - civil society organization
CWD - children with disabilities
DBM - Department of Budget and Management
DCT - direct cash transfer
DepEd - Department of Education
DILG - Department of Interior and Local Government
DOH - Department of Health
DRR - disaster risk reduction
DSWD - Department of Social Welfare and Development
EBEIS - Enhanced Basic Education Information System
ECCD - early childhood care and development
Capacity development

In 2017, UNICEF Philippines supported capacity development for stakeholders as it transitioned into upstream work for children in the Philippines – a lower middle income country – to work for more significant results with stakeholders who are accountable for delivering quality, priority services for children.

As part of its advocacy for nutrition, UNICEF and NGO partners conducted workshops and forums for approximately 300 national and local legislators and their staff to increase knowledge and awareness on the importance of nutrition in the first 1,000 days of life. These efforts contributed to the passage of the First 1,000 Days bill in the House of Representatives and the maternity leave extension bill in the Senate.
In the urban poor areas of the cities of Manila and Taguig, UNICEF developed the capacity of 64 local chief executives who produced their Barangay Annual Investment Plan for Health and Immunization for 2018. UNICEF and partners conducted the Barangay Health Leadership and Management Program, which helped improve the skills of the participants in developing and implementing strategic plans to address low immunization coverage and high dropout rates in the context of rapid urbanization. The leadership program is seen as a model for replication in other urban communities.

UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Department of Education (DepEd) and the national WASH in Schools (WinS) technical working group (TWG) to finalise the guidelines and implementing mechanisms for the National WinS Policy. Thirteen regions have already implemented the program using the WinS Three Star Approach. UNICEF supported capacity development of the Department in eight regions and supported dissemination in selected provinces. As of November 2017, 37 per cent of primary schools and 34 per cent of secondary schools nationwide had accomplished their WinS self-assessment in the online monitoring system.

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**

UNICEF Philippines worked with the Government and partners to generate evidence on the situation of disadvantaged children and developed government capacity in planning, budgeting, executing programs, and monitoring and evaluating results for children.

Working with planning and budgeting agencies NEDA, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and DBM, UNICEF produced the ‘Equity in Public Finance Management: A Philippine Case Study,’ which analysed equity in government processes. From the study, UNICEF developed a policy paper advocating equity in evaluating funding proposals for government agencies to ensure that public funds assist those with the greatest need, especially children. UNICEF presented the paper in a Senate hearing on the Budget Reform Bill, emphasizing the need for equity for the Government’s aim of inclusive economic growth. The Government will use the study for advocacy and capacity development initiatives at the subnational level.

UNICEF published the ‘Climate Landscape Analysis for Children in the Philippines,’ which identified children’s vulnerabilities to climate change and recommended initiatives to address those vulnerabilities. The Government endorsed the study and worked with the Climate Change Commission on the recommendations. The study contributed to the 2017 Situational Analysis of Children and Women in the Philippines and the UN Common Country Assessment. UNICEF used the study to support climate action in country programme documents.

UNICEF, with Bangsamoro Development Agency, worked for inclusive quality education for children in difficult situations in the ARMM. UNICEF produced a policy paper, based on its operational experience, advocating more inclusive school admission and enabling regulations to accredit community-based Tahderiyyahs—more than 300 day care centres in Islamic communities. The Department of Education used the paper to improve the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten and refine services for disadvantaged children. UNICEF continued to improve enrolment for kindergarten, noting that fewer boys than girls were receiving early education.

**Partnerships**

UNICEF Philippines worked with partners such as the Child Rights Network (CRN) on retaining the minimum age of criminal responsibility at 15 years, nutrition and health for infants and young children, positive discipline and parenting, as well as the proxy consent policy agenda for
adolescents’ access to HIV and reproductive health services. These partnerships factored in
gender analysis in the design of age-appropriate advocacy platforms. Partnerships were also
used to raise awareness on the low age of statutory rape for girls and lower legislative
protection for boys victimized by sexual violence.

Technical support was provided to Congress to increase the level of legislative protection for
Filipino children. UNICEF Philippines also made use of various news and current affairs
programmes through media partners such as ABS-CBN’s ANC New Channel and other
international media outlets.

UNICEF also started working with DSWD through the Government’s modified conditional cash
transfer programme to increase the participation and economic empowerment of 3.9 million
women or mothers (89 per cent of current programme beneficiaries) through social protection.

UNICEF Philippines sustained existing links with the Philippine Government, foreign embassies,
donor aid agencies and NGOs. Partnerships also were expanded with: the private sector
through the Children’s Rights in Business Principles; academics on two parallel studies on child
online protection; think-tanks to pursue studies on child poverty and the cost of malnutrition; the
Japanese Government for the Marawi response and peacebuilding programmes in Mindanao;
the United Internet for UNICEF Foundation for child online protection and HIV awareness and
prevention; the global Nutrition International movement for children and pregnant women’s
nutrition; and local governments and national agencies for the Convergence Framework of the
First 1,000 Days.

**External communication and public advocacy**

UNICEF Philippines continued to speak up for children’s rights, safety, protection and
development, focusing particularly on those whose rights and well-being had been adversely
affected and violated. UNICEF enhanced its voice by forging partnerships with child rights
networks, individual advocates and spokespersons. UNICEF expanded its reach through
stronger partnership with mass media (national and international) and growing engagement in
social and digital media. Broadcast media outreach increased notably while social media
platforms continued to grow.

The Philippines offers a thriving yet intensely competitive media communication environment –
a complex public information marketplace with steep investments from private sector,
multinationals and government. In spite of influential competitors, UNICEF maintained its lead
among the most publicly recognized and widely trusted champions for children. UNICEF
represented a powerful brand in the Philippines as a credible voice for children.

Media key performance indicators reports confirmed that UNICEF retained its position among
top three sources of children’s issues, claiming its place alongside key departments of the
Philippine Government with extensive reach.

UNICEF commanded a much larger share of voice compared to key international agencies with
a similar mandate, maintaining an impressive 42 per cent media impact score in top tier media
with 98 per cent positive tonality. UNICEF’s social media followers continued to grow and have
greater engagement. Page views on the UNICEF Philippines blog that featured children’s
voices, stories from the field and staff profiles more than doubled.

The celebration of World Children’s Day provided opportunities for children’s participation,
including for marginalized and special needs groups from across the country, to voice their concerns during a Senate Takeover with policymakers via a Children’s Assembly.

**South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation**

UNICEF Philippines promoted South-South cooperation on the prevention of violence against children (VAC). UNICEF supported the Government in the development of a plan of action to end such violence, following the completion of the National Baseline Survey on Violence against Children (NBS-VAC). The plan was shared in the region as a model.

The Philippines is a designated ‘Pathfinding Country’, a recognition given to countries that have demonstrated their commitment to end violence against children. As a pathfinder, the Philippines provides leadership and guidance to other countries in addressing this violence and coordinates with countries in the region – such as Indonesia and Sri Lanka – to share good practices on engaging both government and civil society organizations (CSOs) to advocate prevention of such violence and to identify solutions.

The Philippines will present a case study with significant evidence on parenting support interventions (PSI) as a solution to such an affront to children’s rights in the upcoming Solutions Summit in Stockholm in February 2018. Efforts in the Philippines to localize Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH), a method focused on strengthening parenting to prevent violence against children, supported by UNICEF in partnership with government and local academic institutions, is viewed as a model in the implementation of the method in Malasyia and Thailand and serves as an important opportunity for continued learning and sharing of experience.

At a regional roundtable on parenting support interventions for East Asia and the Pacific held in Manila, PLH experts from South Africa and the United Kingdom spoke about the progress of the parenting programme in the Philippines. Similar initiatives in other countries were shared along with tools and resources. The program ended with the participants making a commitment to continue sharing best practices in the region.

**Identification and promotion of innovation**

UNICEF Philippines worked the Department of Education (DepEd) and other partners towards equity for marginalized children by providing greater access to quality basic education services, especially for indigenous children, children in conflict areas in Mindanao and those in multi-grade systems – a setup wherein several grade levels are handled by one teacher in a classroom.

UNICEF supported the Department’s participation in the global Data Must Speak Program by utilizing the massive school and learner data in the Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS). From this effort, a teacher hardship index was developed to inform proper incentivization of qualified teachers and encourage them to teach in challenging schools. For the first time, the Department is able to use real-time data from the EBEIS to generate a single objective measure to identify schools considered as hardship posts where many qualified teachers are discouraged to be deployed and where children are usually underperforming. DepEd has already used the hardship index formula to justify the budget for an equitable allocation of the special hardship allowance during the 2018 budget presentations in Senate.

The teacher hardship index now serves as a basis for DepEd’s allocating the special hardship allowance more equitably and in estimating budget requirements. The index factored in the results of online surveys, consultations and impact analysis of the factors affecting teaching-
learning in remote schools. Work also began on the automation and integration of the EBEIS data with the School Report Cards, an important element of DepEd’s thrust for stronger school-based management.

UNICEF supported these efforts by helping DepEd provide training to teachers to improve their skills in working with children and to make them responsive to gender issues, including the formulation of gender education performance indicators.

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

UNICEF Philippines continued cross-sectoral collaboration to develop scalable models for planning and adopting an integrated programme for F1KD. UNICEF coached and mentored four local government units (LGUs) involving their local chief executives, planning officers, health and nutrition practitioners, social workers, sanitation officers and agriculture officers to develop a causality analysis and theory of change on malnutrition. As a result, each unit developed integrated plans that reduce duplication of activities, improve outreach to children and families and promote cooperation across sectors. F1KD implementation was further enhanced by highlighting the roles of mothers, fathers and caregivers in providing responsive care.

UNICEF and the ECCD Council successfully advocated for the re-establishment of the multisectoral agency The working group (TWG) on ECCD. In addition to the regular members of the Council, the TWG will expand membership to include representation from the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), DBM, NEDA and UNICEF.

Acknowledging an alarming increase in teen pregnancy and HIV cases among adolescents, UNICEF supported the Government at national, subnational and local levels to strengthen capacity and improve use of resources to address the needs of this sector. Through UNICEF’s support, service delivery through public-private partnerships with civil society and local government units was either established or strengthened. Access of minors to HIV testing is now being considered as both protection and a health issue in public policy.

UNICEF also supported the National Youth Commission (NYC) in taking the lead on policy development and advocacy for young people. This included localisation of the Philippine Youth Development Plan and dialogues with young people to discuss emerging issues including disaster risk reduction (DRR) and peacebuilding and find practical ways to promote better government and youth partnerships.

**Service delivery**

NA

**Human rights-based approach to cooperation**

UNICEF Philippines is working with the Child Rights Center of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the independent national human rights institution of the Philippines, to improve their systems and capacity to monitor the Government’s implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNICEF made a commitment to support the development of the protocols and procedures for monitoring Government’s compliance to the Convention, including procedures for conducting a National Inquiry on Child Rights. UNICEF’s commitment includes providing support to capacity building of the Child Rights Center and the Child Rights desk officers or focal points in the 17
field offices of the Commission.

UNICEF commissioned a policy paper to look into the impact of climate change on children’s rights in the Philippines, which highlighted specific vulnerabilities of children to climate change. The paper was based on UNICEF Philippines’ recently completed Climate Landscape Analysis for Children (CLAC) in the Philippines as well as other relevant national reports, research and frameworks, scientific evidence and guidance from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and other human rights mechanisms. UNICEF will be submitting the paper to Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to support its National Inquiry on the Impact of Climate Change on the Rights of the Filipino People scheduled in the first quarter of 2018.

UNICEF provided support to strengthen capacity of Commission investigators to report and respond to recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, abduction, rape and other sexual and gender-based violations, attacks on schools and all grave child rights violations in the context of armed conflict.

UNICEF supported both the Government and civil society organizations (CSOs) in the preparation of country reports for submission to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Consultations are ongoing with boys, girls and self-identified LGBT children about their views on the realization of their rights as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A component of the CSO report will focus on the children’s views on the increasing violence in their homes, school, and communities.

**Gender equality**

UNICEF Philippines, the Government and key partners strengthened the integration of gender responsive and mainstreaming strategies in project implementation.

UNICEF continued to support the community approaches to total sanitation as its contribution to the national campaign on zero open defecation. UNICEF used vulnerability markers to identify women heads of households and persons with disabilities to address issues of access to toilets and the dignity and safety of women and girls. Access to hygiene education, safe water, proper sanitation for girls and boys in schools and the toilet-pupil ratio improved, with more elementary and secondary schools now having access to sanitary pads.

UNICEF supported sex-segregated toilets for 9,500 women and girls, incorporating inputs from women on design and construction. As a result, 10 provincial and municipal councils approved additional budgets for sanitation under their risk-informed and gender-sensitive water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector plans in 2017.

UNICEF and partners increased participation from girls and boys, women and men in risk assessments, early warning system, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and management planning, and DRR institutional structures which strengthened mainstreaming of child-centred DRR and climate change adaptation in development plans of LGUs. At the national level, UNICEF consultations with members of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council are ongoing to ensure that the revised Rapid Disaster Assessment and Needs Analysis (RDANA) tool captures key information and analysis on gender, including reporting of possible protection-related issues and concerns. The UNICEF co-led WASH cluster provided gender-sensitivity hygiene and dignity kits to 7,562 women and girls in emergencies in 2017.

UNICEF and partners adopted a framework to monitor the gender gap in the access to quality
ECCD services as a response to compelling evidence showing that fewer boys than girls receive early and basic education. UNICEF supported DepEd in several initiatives such as enhancing the National Early Learning Curriculum to respond to issues on gender, indigenous children, and disabilities; development and issuance of guidelines to integrate equality, gender equity, gender-sensitivity, non-discrimination and human rights in the delivery of the K-12 program; and ensuring the continuity of education and preventing the use of schools and attacks on schools in times of conflict.

Environmental sustainability

UNICEF Philippines significantly scaled up its efforts to address climate change action for children in 2017.

Working with the Government, NGOs, climate change advocates and other partners, UNICEF completed a climate landscape analysis for children (CLAC) in the Philippines. The analysis looked into the impacts of climate change on children and provided important recommendations for adaptation and mitigation initiatives for action. The Government, through the Climate Change Commission, endorsed the recommendations and committed to a formal partnership with UNICEF that will start in 2018.

UNICEF also provided significant financial and technical support to the National Youth Commission, particularly for their #nowASEAN Conference on Youth and Climate Action, held in November. Conference outcomes included the establishment of the Southeast Asian Youth Climate Action Network, the proclamation of 25 November as the ASEAN Day for Youth in Climate Action and the development of a joint ASEAN Declaration on Youth and Climate Change.

To contribute to the roll-out of the phased approach to total sanitation (PhATS), UNICEF continued to demonstrate how to move beyond open defecation-free communities (Grade 1), to basic sanitation services (Grade 2) and safely managed sanitation (Grade 3). PhATS likewise aims to address issues of access to toilets and concerns on dignity and safety of women and girls; and monitors vulnerability markers to identify women head of households and persons with disabilities for supplementary support. UNICEF worked with ACTED and WASTE to design a low-cost, environment-friendly faecal sludge management system in Eastern Samar. Feasibility and market studies were conducted and the site design to test vermicomposting and co-composting was finalised and agreed upon in consultation with the Municipal Council. A local social enterprise to manage the site and to market the treated sludge to local farming communities was identified. Construction at the site will begin once the final permits are secured. Partial funding for Stage 2 of the project – to expand piloting of the system in four municipalities in 2018 – was secured.

Effective leadership

UNICEF Country Programme 2012–2016 was granted a two-year extension to harmonize the programme cycle with UN agencies in line with UNDAF for 2012–2018, extension of the Philippine Development Plan to 2018 and impact of the national elections.

The country management team (CMT) met 10 times to analyse progress and constraints against annual management plan and UNICEF Regional Office benchmarks. The team also decided on issues raised by office committees, the harmonized approach to cash transfers assurance plan and progress implementing the internal audit action plan. Implementation issues were discussed in-depth at regular programme management and programme assistant
meetings, and fed into the CMT meetings. Additionally, the country management team spent a considerable amount of time and effort on UN coherence activities, including development of UNDAF and management of UN Common Premises activities.

UNICEF Philippines began implementation of the 2019–2023 Country Programme Document Road Map that resulted in the development of a Programme Strategy Note (PSN). The PSN is the product of an ongoing and participatory process initiated in November 2016 with results-based management training, SitAn Validation and Prioritisation Workshop, Strategic Intent and Theory of Change Workshop, sectoral and field-based consultations with government and key partners, a PSN writeshop and briefing presentation to the Regional Director, Deputy Regional Director, and other senior EAPRO staff.

To inform the Country Programme 2019–2023 and UNDAF, a research agenda was developed and operationalised with the following:

Evaluation of the 7th UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation 2012–2018
Evaluation of the 2012–2018 UNDAF
Climate Change Analysis for Children in the Philippines
Situation Analysis of Children in the Philippines
Situation Analysis of Children in the ARMM
Common Country Analysis for UNDAF 2019–2023
Stakeholders Survey of UNICEF in the Philippines
Equity in Public Financial Management Study (national and subnational) 2016–2017

**Financial resources management**

Total allocation of Regular Resources, Other Resources, Other Resources – Emergency and Institutional Budget was US$36.8 million, of which US$34.9 million (95 per cent) was utilized. The unused balance was for grants valid beyond 2017 and is included in the second year of the 2017–2018 rolling work plans.

In 2017, UNICEF Philippines developed its 2018–2021 Integrated Budget, which better defined, rationalized and equitably attributed rent and other operating expenditures across the institutional and programme budgets.

By year end, the outstanding direct cash transfers (DCT) amounted to US$3.37 million, of which US$61,483 (2 per cent) was outstanding more than nine months. Key performance indicators were monitored on a monthly basis during country management team meetings. Fund use levels were mostly on track. DCT management continued to be a challenge, particularly for government partners who have adopted a centralized approach to funds disbursement that delays payments to implementing partners and often delays activity implementation and reporting. UNICEF Philippines is working with the Government and other UN agencies to adopt a more streamlined approach.

A harmonized approach to cash transfers assurance plan was developed for more than 100 implementing partners with an estimated annual throughput of more than US$10.7 million. The completion rate against the planned assurance activities mostly met KPI target levels:

- 9 of 9 planned micro assessments (100 per cent)
- 29 of 40 planned financial spots checks (72.5 per cent)
- 3 of 3 planned scheduled audits (100 per cent); and
• 151 of 77 planned programmatic visits (198.7 per cent).

In an effort to reduce the number low value payments in VISION as bank transfers/checks, the office established four petty cash accounts by functional area: operations, programme, PFP and the Mindanao Field Office.

Eighty-one per cent of donor reports were submitted on time in 2017, and by year’s end, none was overdue.

**Fundraising and donor relations**

UNICEF Philippines analysed the funding requirements of the programme results areas for the Country Programme extension period and funding status as of the end of 2017. Fundraising strategies resulted in a 10 per cent surplus for the allotments for the 2-year period, as summarized below:

**OR Funding Status for CP Extension Period 2017-2018**

Planned/target OR for CP Extension 2017-2018 = US$26,040,000  
Allotment, 2017-2018 = US$28,515,052  
Percentage Funded = 110%

In 2017, income came primarily from individual pledges and cash donors, and a corporate partnership with an airline through the Change for Good program. Income from individuals accounted for 83 per cent of total income, while income from private corporations was 17 per cent of the total. Fundraising efforts were focused on supporting three programme areas: children with disabilities, the first 1,000 Days, and emergencies.

UNICEF continued to mobilize support from individuals and companies through events such as the annual marathon organized by a national celebrity who is a UNICEF Advocate for Children. A high-profile fundraising dinner featuring four of the best female chefs in Asia was organized by a major UNICEF Philippines donor to jumpstart a strategy to engage with high net worth individuals.

To ensure quality and timely reporting of results, UNICEF sent progress and completion reports to corporate partners and major donors in addition to communication materials and field visits. Regular individual donors received print and online communications such as the Annual Report, SMS and monthly donor care calls.

To support the growing number of donors, tele-fundraising services were scaled-up to improve donor retention rates, which included upgrade and reactivation calls, pledge acquisition and one-off conversion to pledge calls. UNICEF Philippines also improved back-end operations and systems to be compliant with global and local data standards involving the migration of the donor database to a more secure data management system.

**Evaluation and research**

In 2017 UNICEF Philippines completed two strategic evaluations: an evaluation of the UNICEF Education Programme in partnership with DepEd; and an evaluation of the Country Programme in partnership with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) – the Government’s oversight agency for development agencies. Findings and recommendations from these evaluations were used as key inputs for both Government and UNICEF programme
planning for 2018 through the evaluation management response. They were also key inputs in the planning of the Country Programme 2019-2023. Recommendations from both evaluations were key inputs in the Strategic Intent and Theories of Change, with relevant recommendations being incorporated into the drafting of the new Country Programme Strategy Notes. Both evaluations were conducted by an independent third party and produced objective recommendations based on the findings and conclusions.

UNICEF also supported the Resident Coordinator’s Office in managing the UN Development Assistance Framework Evaluation, which contributed to the UNDAF 2019-2023 planning.

As part of National Evaluation Capacity Development, UNICEF continued to support the Government’s National Evaluation Policy. UNICEF worked with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to design a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) course with a national academic institution and trained an initial cohort of 50 Government staff. DBM is currently exploring options for mainstreaming the M&E course into government training programmes. As part of a joint regional initiative with UNDP, the Government has agreed to be part of a capacity assessment to determine its readiness to evaluate the SDGs.

**Efficiency gains and cost savings**

Negotiations with RCBC Plaza to secure favourable office rental were unsuccessful. The 2017 rate was US$17.21 per SQM with a 2 per cent annual escalation. The best offer from RCBC was US$21.88 with a 5 per cent escalation from Year 2 for a three-year lease only. For the agencies participating in the current common premises arrangement this increased rate was not affordable.

In parallel to the rental negotiation and after exhausting a government rent-free or subsidised solution, the UN Operations Management Team (OMT) undertook a search for viable commercial options.

Following a rigorous vetting process and a comprehensive feasibility/cost-benefit analysis, the UN Country Team identified the Rockwell Business Center-Sheridan North Tower as the preferred location. At US$10 per SQM, the Rockwell option offers considerable future rental cost savings of more than 50 per cent.

As has been the case under the current RCBC Common Premises memorandum of understanding (MOU), the Office adopted a similar model for the Rockwell Common Premises MOU whereby UNICEF is the lease holder (by virtue of its more favourable Basic Cooperation Agreement) for UNICEF by and on behalf of the other participating UN agencies.

UNICEF continued to play a leading role in the work of the UN OMT’s Procurement Task Team. A total of more than 90 long-term agreements were in place, supporting UNICEF and other interested UN agencies in securing favourable prices and reducing transaction times for commonly procured goods and services, e.g., tents, hygiene kits, warehousing facilities, transport and forwarding services, vehicle maintenance and repair services, hotel accommodations/conference facilities and harmonized approach to cash transfers assurance and auditing services.

**Supply management**

UNICEF Philippines continued to improve performance of the supply component of the country programme through a strategic focus on improvement in institutional contracts management and
administration, warehousing and in-country logistics.

Innovative procurement, service contracts management and in-country logistics strategies and concepts allowed UNICEF Philippines to conduct timely, efficient and cost effective procurement and significantly reduced operating costs for in-country logistics. UNICEF established 34 local long-term agreements (LTAs) for procurement of goods and continued to implement ‘direct delivery to partners’ modality to cut transportation costs and reduce controlled warehouse space.

The volume of procurement services (VPS) has increased compared to the previous year. The procurement services team closely worked with Government partners advocating for UNICEF Procurement Services to ensure an uninterrupted, sustainable supply of affordable and quality products such as vaccines.

Total value of Procurement: US$35,862,586.84
Programme Supplies: US$576,793.46
Operational Supplies: US$531,918.98
Institutional Services: US$5,536,129.04
Procurement Services: US$29,217,745.36

UNICEF-controlled inventory stocks at both Manila and Cotabato warehouses were reduced to the minimum emergency response preparedness levels. Delivery of supplies to end users remarkably improved. Average time for ‘Goods in Transit’ within the country did not exceed seven calendar days.

As in previous years, UNICEF Philippines actively continued to provide support to its implementing partners at the national and subnational levels, with a focus on building of partners’ capacity in warehouse and stocks inventory management, in-country logistics, etc.

Value of supplies received: US$405,616.74
Value of supplies dispatched: US$794,538.79
Value of in-country controlled stocks Inventory: US$1,082,965.97

UNICEF Philippines continued to provide necessary support to neighbouring UNICEF offices. UNICEF Philippines acted as the front line support to UNICEF Pacific in the emergency response in Palau and provided technical expertise and assistance to improve performance of the supply chain function at UNICEF Papua New Guinea.

UNICEF Philippines continued to play a leading role in the work of the UN Procurement Task Team. UNICEF co-chaired procurement officers’ meetings and shared its LTA and vendor database with other UN agencies. This initiative boosted the UNPTT to work as one team on development of common procurement strategy.

Security for staff and premises

The security situation in the Philippines is dominated by intermittent periods of armed conflict, insurgency, frequent natural hazards and political violence, with periodic reports or advisories on terrorist activity and crime. In 2017, UNICEF personnel were present in Manila and Cotabato City.

UNICEF operations remain conducive in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Security levels in
Mindanao remained complex and multifaceted – ranging from moderate to significant. Ongoing conflicts between non-state armed groups and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the implementation of Martial Law in Mindanao continued to limit access to communities and the implementation of humanitarian programmes.

The UNICEF office and zone office premises were assessed and determined to be compliant with the Minimum Operating Security Standards. Due to fire and earthquake risks, two building evacuation drills were undertaken, including a district-wide earthquake drill organized by the local government.

The UNICEF Regional Security Advisor for South Asia and East Asia and Pacific visited the Philippines in February 2017 to conduct a review of the current security scenario of the UNICEF Philippines office and provide advice on security challenges and concerns of UNICEF staff members. The Security Advisor also secured Special Purpose Security funding from Headquarters in support of one-time security costs associated with the move to the new UN Common Premises.

Security and administrative personnel managed and monitored the movement of staff throughout the Philippines. Staff members were required to obtain security clearance prior to any travel and to carry emergency telecommunications equipment while on mission, including mobile phones, satellite phones and VHF radios. UNICEF vehicles were equipped with high-frequency radios and first aid kits. Additional security measures were in force for travel to Mindanao, where missions were limited to essential travel only as determined by the Representative. Staff safety and security advisories were regularly shared with all UNICEF personnel.

**Human resources**

UNICEF Philippines human resources (HR) department assisted hiring managers to ensure a transparent and results-focused approach to recruitment; ensuring that teams had the right mix of profiles and competencies to achieve the planned results. The programme units hired individual consultants to support programme implementation, which resulted in the issuance of 78 individual consultant contracts in 2017 for a total cost of US$1,836,000. This high amount of contracts was noted to be a transitional measure until the new country programme starts in 2019.

HR facilitated regular sharing of ACHIEVE information throughout the year. It provided one-on-one support to address specific issues and held briefing sessions to encourage regular open performance discussions, providing constructive feedback and harnessing teambuilding both in the head office and the Mindanao field office (MFO). Specifically, HR conducted two separate visits to the field office to support learning sessions and to address queries on HR policies and performance management changes. HR also participated in the team retreat anchored on peacebuilding.

In preparation for the new country programme starting 2019, management conducted the Strategic Intent Workshop in September 2017 and embarked on strengthening core programming skills of all programme staff. The learning plan focused on skills crucial to the new country programme such as political economy analysis, budget management, performance management and the grievance systems in UNICEF.

Throughout out the year, UNICEF engaged external and internal experts to deliver monthly
thematic learning events related to the new UNICEF Global Strategy Plan, national priorities and other emerging areas, such as climate change, urbanization, and the Philippine Action Plan to End Violence against Children.

HR also organized a half-day ethics training with the Ethics Principal Adviser based on results of the global staff survey released in the second quarter of 2017.

**Effective use of information and communication technology**

The information and communications technology (ICT) unit maintained a reliable digital information system for UNICEF Philippines by providing innovative ways of supporting collaboration and 24/7 availability of systems. The ICT unit provided technical leadership on disaster recovery and business continuity of office operations, which had been critical to the work in the country office and zone office. In coordination with the ICT Division in New York and regional ICT adviser, front-end and back-end support was provided, including technical consultations for various Programme projects.

IT consultation was provided on web-based modified conditional cash transfer in coordination with the social policy section and Department of Social Welfare and Development. This included providing comments and review of terms of reference, systems design, and participation in technical evaluation of submitted proposals from system integrators.

The following tools were applied to support programme activities and decisions: ArcGIS mapping, Excel data analysis, and Sharepoint. Hardware and software specifications were provided for implementing partners based on specific project requirements and available budget.

Support was provided to the United Nations House task team by preparing or reviewing cost share calculations as annex to the inter-agency MOU.

For office relocation and business continuity during the relocation of the office, two temporary office spaces were set up with functional ICT infrastructure, including restoration of critical ICT services and supervision of support facilities.

Orientation on OneDrive For Business, UNICEF Enterprise Mobility Suite (mobile apps) and user practices against spam/phishing emails was provided to more than 150 end users (staff and consultants). Access of consultants and volunteers to shared office folders/files, Outlook groups, and Active Directory objects was reviewed to increase security administration.

Systems availability was maintained at 99.9 per cent and Internet utilization was reviewed using consolidated network/server monitoring systems.

**Programme Components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** Advocacy, resource mobilization, partnership, and monitoring & evaluation are addressed through internal management arrangements

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF Philippine’s Country Programme 2012-2016 was granted a two-year extension to harmonize the Country Programme cycle with other UN agencies in line with the UN Development Assistance Framework (2012-2018), the extension of the Philippine Development Plan to 2018 and the impact of the 2016 national elections.

The country management team (CMT) met 10 times in 2017 to analyse progress and constraints against the annual management plan and Regional Office benchmarks. The CMT also decided on issues raised by office committees (e.g. budget allocations), the harmonized approach to cash transfers assurance plan and progress in implementing the internal audit action plan.

The CMT also spent a considerable amount of its time and efforts on UN Coherence activities – including the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the management of UN Common Premises activities.

In 2017, UNICEF Philippines began implementing a comprehensive 2019-2023 Country Programme Document or “CPD” Road Map that resulted in the development of a Programme Strategy Note. The consolidated Strategy Note is the product of an ongoing and participatory process initiated in November 2016 with results-based management training, a Situation Analysis Validation and Prioritisation Workshop (August 2017), Strategic Intent and Theory of Change Workshop with NYHQ and EAPRO participants (September 2017), sectoral and field-based consultations with government and key partners, a ‘write-shop on the PSN’ (November 2017), and a briefing presentation to the Regional Director, Deputy Regional Director, and other senior EAPRO staff members. To inform the development of the Country Programme 2019-2023 and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), a research agenda was developed and operationalized.

The total allocation of regular resources, other resources, other resources – emergency and institutional budget was US$36.8 million, of which US$34.9 million, or 95 per cent, was utilized. The unused balance was for grants valid beyond 2017 and is included in the second year of the 2017-2018 rolling work plans.

Throughout out the year, UNICEF engaged external and internal experts to deliver monthly thematic learning events related to the new UNICEF Global Strategy Plan, national priorities and other emerging areas, such as climate change, urbanization, and the Philippine Action Plan to End Violence against Children.

OUTPUT 1 Governance and Systems: Office results are proficiently managed and systems efficiently applied that ensued maximum efficiency of resources.

Analytical statement of progress
The country management team met 10 times in 2017 to analyse progress and constraints against annual management plan and Regional Office benchmarks. The team also decided on issues raised by office committees (e.g. budget allocations), the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers assurance plan and progress in implementing the internal audit action plan. Programme implementation issues were discussed in depth at regular Programme Management and Programme Assistant meetings and fed into the County Management Team meetings.

The CMT spent a considerable amount of its time and effort on UN Coherence activities, including the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)
and the management of UN Common Premises activities.

In 2017, the office began to implement a comprehensive 2019-2023 Country Programme Document or “CPD” Road Map that resulted in the development of a Programme Strategy Note. The consolidated Strategy Note is the product of an ongoing and participatory process initiated in November 2016 with results-based management training, a Situation Analysis Validation and Prioritisation Workshop (August 2017), Strategic Intent and Theory of Change Workshop with NYHQ and EAPRO participants (September 2017), sectoral and field-based consultations with government and key partners, a ‘write-shop on the PSN’ (November 2017), and a briefing presentation to the Regional Director, Deputy Regional Director, and other senior EAPRO staff members.

To inform the development of the Country Programme 2019-2023 and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), a research agenda was developed and operationalized. UNICEF continued to update standard operating procedures, including invoice processing, e-recruitment, performance management, management of Programme Cooperation Agreements and travel planning, monitoring and reporting.

UNICEF continued to play leading role in the work of the UN OMT’s Procurement Task Team (UNPTT). A total of more than 90 long-term agreements were in place, supporting UNICEF and other interested UN agencies in securing favourable prices and reducing transaction times for commonly procured goods and services, e.g., tents; hygiene kits; warehousing facilities; transport and forwarding services; vehicle maintenance and repair services; hotel accommodations/conference facilities; and harmonized approach to cash transfers assurance and auditing services.

**OUTPUT 2** Financial Resources and Stewardship: Financial resources are acquired for commitments and efficiently managed to support realization of results.

**Analytical Statement of Progress**

The total allocation of Regular Resources, Other Resources, Other Resources – Emergency and Institutional Budget was US$36.8 million, of which US$34.9 million, or 95 per cent, was utilized. The unused balance was for grants valid beyond 2017 and is included in the second year of the 2017-2018 rolling work plans.

In 2017, UNICEF developed its 2018-2021 Integrated Budget that better defined, rationalized and equitably attributed rent and other operating expenditures across the Institutional and Programme budgets.

By year end, outstanding direct cash transfers (DCT) were US$3.37 million, of which US$61,483, or 2 per cent, was outstanding more than nine months. Key performance indicators were monitored on a monthly basis during country management team meetings. Fund use levels were mostly on track. DCT management continued to be a challenge, particularly for government partners who have adopted a centralized approach to funds disbursement that delays payments to implementing partners and often delays activity implementation and reporting. UNICEF is working with the Government and other UN agencies to adopt a more streamlined approach.
A harmonized approach to cash transfers assurance plan was developed for more than 100 implementing partners with an estimated annual throughput of more than US$10.7 million. The completion rate against the planned assurance activities mostly met KPI target levels:

- 9 of 9 planned micro assessments (100 per cent)
- 29 of 40 planned financial spots checks (72.5 per cent)
- 3 of 3 planned scheduled audits (100 per cent); and
- 151 of 77 planned programmatic visits (198.7 per cent).

At year end, no donor reports were overdue, and 81 percent had been submitted on time.

OUTPUT 3 Human Capacity: Staff members empowered to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate agreed programme and management results in a secured learning environment.

Analytical statement of progress
In preparation for the new country programme starting in 2019, management conducted the Strategic Intent Workshop in September 2017 and embarked on strengthening core programming skills of all programme staff. The learning plan focused on skills crucial to the new country programme such as political economy analysis, budget management, performance management and the grievance systems in UNICEF.

Throughout the year, UNICEF engaged external and internal experts to deliver monthly thematic learning events related to the new UNICEF Global Strategy Plan, national priorities and other emerging areas, such as climate change, urbanization, and the Philippine Action Plan to End Violence against Children.

HR organized a half-day ethics training with the Ethics Principal Adviser based on results of the global staff survey released in the second quarter of 2017.

The joint consultative committee (JCC) met four times in 2017, focusing on staff well-being and other issues identified by the Global Staff Survey, e.g., career development, performance management, and GS staff learning opportunities.

In terms of personnel evaluation, HR facilitated regular sharing of ACHIEVE information throughout the year. One-on-one support was provided to address specific issues and briefing sessions were held to encourage regular open performance discussions, providing constructive feedback and harnessing teambuilding both in the head office and the Mindanao field office (MFO). Two separate visits were conducted to the MFO to support learning sessions and to address queries on HR policies and performance management changes. HR also participated in the team retreat anchored on peacebuilding.

In 2017, UNICEF personnel were present in Manila and Cotabato City. The security situation in the Philippines is dominated by intermittent periods of armed conflict, insurgency, frequent natural hazards and political violence, with periodic reports or advisories on terrorist activity and crime.

UNICEF operations remain conducive in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Security levels in Mindanao remained complex and multi-faceted, ranging from moderate to significant. Ongoing conflicts between non-state armed groups and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the implementation of Martial Law in Mindanao continued to limit access to communities and the implementation of humanitarian programmes.
The UNICEF Philippines office and zone office premises were assessed as being compliant with the Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) and staff safety and security advisories were regularly shared with all UNICEF personnel.

OUTCOME 2 By the end of the country program, increased access to high-impact preventive services for pregnant women, newborns and children and household behavior change interventions (focused on skilled birth attendance & newborn/child care, nutrition, WASH and HIV) for resource-challenged vulnerable LGUs with high incidence of child mortality (selected regions with 31 per cent underweight) and HIV (selected high incidence LGUS with high-risk youth groups), WASH (selected LGUs with

Analytical statement of progress

In 2017, the Government of the Philippines showed its strong commitment to accelerate Human Capital Development including improvements in Health and Nutrition for All and WASH services, in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017–2022.

But, 2017 was also marked by the Marawi crisis in Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARRM), a five-month-long armed conflict between Philippine Government security forces and militant groups which started 23 May 2017 and led to the declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao. Response activities to the Marawi conflict emergency constrained selected programme activities in ARRM.

While economic growth in the Philippines remained strong, this growth has not been inclusive – notable inequities in access to quality services for health, nutrition and WASH continued.

In this lower middle income country (LMIC), the overall UNICEF strategy in the sector has been to strengthen local health systems to improve information and accountability for planning and basic service provision. The strategy for ARRM has been adjusted to focus on improving community based service delivery.

Progress in the reported health and nutrition indicators under this outcome was achieved through UNICEF's extensive relationship-building with key government partners, enabling health system strengthening, policy development, evidence-based modelling, behaviour change communication, and technical capacity-building both at ‘upstream’ or national and subnational levels. Only a few activities will be carried over to next year.

In November 2017 the Philippines was declared a maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT)-free country by experts from WHO and UNICEF. UNICEF supported a large scale immunization campaign in ARRM that reach a coverage level higher than 90 per cent in all three vaccination rounds.

UNICEF continued to transfer its technical knowledge and expertise into national and provincial government-endorsed policies for health, nutrition and WASH. The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), the National Health Insurance entity, issued two rates circulars for children with mobility and developmental disabilities, moving forward the implementation of the comprehensive Health Insurance Package for Children with Disabilities.

- The Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition 2017–2022 was approved by the governing board of the National Nutrition Council (NNC).
• The House of Representatives approved the 1,000 days bill, which aims to strengthen health and nutrition programs to address malnutrition among young children and pregnant and lactating women.

• The Department of Health (DOH) developed the 2018–2022 Adolescent Health and Development Programme (ADHP) Strategic Plan, which mainstreams HIV, sexual and reproductive health in other health programmes including mental health, injury prevention, and nutrition.

• The Department of Education (DepEd) completed implementation guidelines for the National WASH in Schools (WinS) Policy (passed in 2016).

UNICEF’s upstream policy work continued to contribute to significant progress in the development of key policy instruments and guidelines, including the nutrition in emergencies strategic plan, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) health insurance benefit package, effective vaccine management (EVM), phased approach to total sanitation (PhATS) and administrative orders to reduce undernutrition and eliminate open defecation in ARMM.

Operational modelling, programming and situational analyses to respond to Government requests on how best to bring key health, nutrition and WASH interventions to scale in different settings were developed with technical support from UNICEF, namely:

• An inclusive and culturally competent service delivery network (SDN) model for indigenous people (IP) was developed and will be rolled out in 2018 to support effective health coverage for mothers and children.

• UNICEF’s 1,000 days integration strategy was finalised in the beginning of 2017 and implementation was begun in four local government units (LGUs) to demonstrate nutrition governance models, which will enable these LGUs to manage essential 1,000 days services for Health, Nutrition, WASH, early childhood care and development (ECCD) and social protection.

• Throughout the year, large scale provision of services for families with SAM children was rolled out in 17 provinces.

• In mid-2017, a competency-based curriculum and tool for physicians, nurses and social workers and frontline service providers to improve the delivery of age-appropriate and gender-responsive adolescent health services was designed and tested.

• IDInsight conducted a randomised controlled trial in 196 schools evaluating the impact of a hygiene and sanitation behaviour change pilot on children’s individual handwashing with soap practices and toilet maintenance. Results will be available in early 2018.

• UNICEF’s Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) was utilized in eight target municipalities in ARMM, indicating poor access to nutrition and immunization services, and moderate to poor access to water supply and status of zero open defecation (ZOD). Strategic discussions with LGUs, government agencies involved and communities began and will identify best strategic approaches to rapidly increase services coverage for all communities in 2018.

UNICEF, as cluster co-lead, supported the Government in the implementation of nutrition and WASH in emergencies interventions, including nutrition and WASH cluster coordination and information management in response to the Marawi crisis.
OUTPUT 1 The health system has strengthened and evidence-informed environment and services to improve access of all children, particularly the most vulnerable, to essential health care.

Analytical statement of progress
In the 2017–2022 PDP, addressing healthcare needs of disadvantaged populations such as IP, persons with disabilities, and those in geographically isolated and disadvantaged and disaster-prone areas is well articulated, with special mention of poor health outcomes in ARMM. UNICEF’s goals and strategies align with those priorities.

The Philippines is an LMIC with a fast growing economy, increasing budget allocations for health and almost 91 per cent PhilHealth enrolment. However, health inequity persists, as reflected by one of the highest GINI coefficients in Southeast Asia. Reforms are still needed in the areas of governance and leadership, planning and budgeting, monitoring and cross-sectoral collaboration to address social determinants.

Many children under 5 years of age die of preventable causes. Neonatal deaths comprise 45 per cent of under-5 deaths. Most newborn and maternal deaths occur during delivery. Trends in immunization coverage fluctuate, with marked geographic inequity.

In 2017 the design of an inclusive and culturally competent health SDN was completed, the first of a two-phase project to increase health services for IP. In 2018 the SDN for IPs will be operationalized to address community-identified bottlenecks for effective health service coverage.

As an offshoot of the PhilHealth Circular No. 2016-0032 (Guiding Principles for the ‘Z-Benefits for Children with Disabilities’), two rates circulars – one for mobility and one for developmental disabilities – were approved by PhilHealth in 2017. Integration of services through hubs in Davao: Southern Philippines Medical Center and Davao Regional Medical Center, and Philippine General Hospital in Manila was nearing completion.

In late 2017, the Philippines was declared MNT-free by a joint UN mission composed of technical experts from WHO and UNICEF. After 30 years, the Philippines was one of the 16 remaining countries that had not eliminated MNT. The last stretch toward that goal was the Tetanus-Diphtheria immunization campaign in ARMM, fully supported by UNICEF, targeting almost 250,000 women of reproductive age. Despite difficult terrain, armed conflict and security concerns, the campaign covered more than 90 per cent in all three rounds.

EVM assessment in 15 out of 17 regions was completed in 2017. An EVM assessment identifies strengths and weaknesses in nine different areas of vaccine management and recommends ways to address any weaknesses. A draft EVM Improvement Plan was developed for refinement in 2018.

Work on urban immunization is ongoing to improve governance and leadership at the local level and develop innovations for scale-up. A qualitative research on understanding the reasons behind low immunization rates in highly urbanized areas of Taguig and Manila was completed and will be disseminated in 2018.

UNICEF provided technical assistance in the development, implementation and documentation of the 5K Kadre Formation Program for DOH-Health Emergency Management Bureau. UNICEF
also provided technical assistance for development of the Disaster Risk Reduction Management for Health (DRRM-H) Planning Guide scheduled to be launched in the first quarter of 2018 and support for Health Emergency Management Staff; ARMM DRRM-H planning to be done in the second quarter.

**OUTPUT 2** Target LGUs and School Divisions increasingly implement evidence-based approaches for improved WASH in communities, schools and ECCD centres.

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF continued to work with partner civil society organizations (CSOs) and LGUs to demonstrate the PhATS – including as part of an integrated First 1,000 Days programme—in priority municipalities, and to advocate and build capacities for province-led replication. Five provincial WASH Councils and 39 municipal WASH Councils allocated WASH budgets in 2017, with two additional provinces providing resources to take the WASH in ECCD programme to scale. In partnership with Community Health Solutions and Innovations, the ‘Goodbye Dumi, Hello Healthy’ social and behaviour change tools, designed to reinforce ZOD messaging, were demonstrated in five regions. As a result of these combined efforts, with support from UNICEF and partners in 2017, 179 communities with a population of 203,000 were certified as ZOD areas (Grade 1 under PhATS).

Programming approaches to move communities up to basic sanitation services (Grade 2) and safely managed sanitation (Grade 3) were also being tested. IDinsight conducted a process evaluation on Milagros Municipality’s sanitation subsidy program. The findings will be used to refine program design and implementation, and will provide lessons for other municipalities. With Action against Hunger, the WASH Facility Improvement Tool (WASH-FIT) was tested in health centres in two LGUs. In Eastern Samar, UNICEF and ACTED partnered to design a low-cost, environment-friendly faecal sludge management system. Feasibility and market studies have been conducted and the site design has been agreed with the LGU.

UNICEF provided support to eight regions for capacity building of DepEd staff on the WinS Three Star Approach and for dissemination within selected provinces. By November 2017, 36 per cent of all public schools had uploaded their WinS data in the Online Monitoring System. The data will be used to improve WinS planning and implementation at the school level, and to better target technical and budgetary support from school district, division and regional levels.

In 2017 DepEd, UNICEF and International Water Centre implemented an expanded pilot of the ‘Hi-five for Hygiene and Sanitation’ behaviour change package in two school divisions. To evaluate the impact on children’s individual handwashing with soap practices and school’s toilet maintenance, IDinsight conducted a randomised controlled trial in 196 schools (half in intervention group, half in control group). Post-intervention data collection was completed and the results will be available in early 2018. The evidence generated will guide adjustments needed to improve the tools and will inform DepEd’s decision on whether and how to integrate the tools into the curriculum for national roll-out.

UNICEF remained ready to respond to emergencies through pre-positioned contingency stocks, long-term agreements for critical supplies and services, and emergency clauses in WASH partnership arrangements. In response to Typhoon Nock-Ten (December 2016), UNICEF gave 10,550 people access to emergency water supplies. WASH assistance was provided in response to Tropical Storm Urduja (December 2017), including water kits for 1,300...
families and hygiene kits for 400 families.

**OUTPUT 3** By the end of 2018, capacities of the government of the Philippines to scale up quality nutrition services to improve child and maternal nutritional status have been strengthened.

**Analytical statement of progress**
With the launch of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition 2017–2022, UNICEF convened the Scaling Up Nutrition UN Network to complete 2016 reporting and undergo joint planning to identify collaborative areas that will inform the Common Result Framework in 2018.

A costing study revealed losses of US$4.5 billion due to undernutrition. Every dollar invested for nutrition can save around $12 in forgone earnings or expenditures. The capacities of 241 national legislators and 35 local legislators who supported the 1,000 days, extended maternity leave bills and ordinances were strengthened through learning sessions on the study results, influencing budget allocations.

The Philippine Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Strategic Plan 2011–2016 Review and Philippine IYCF Strategic Plan 2018–2030 development were delayed due to bottlenecks in hiring a technical expert. The communications plan development was constrained due to lengthy ethical review processes. Alive and Thrive and UNICEF supported the NNC in finalising its research protocol on IYCF practices.

A Milk Code Monitoring Training was held with assistance from IBFAN-International Code Documentation Center. Monitoring skills of 24 participants from government and NGOs were improved.

The DOH received UNICEF technical support to strengthen SAM procurement plans and roll out SAM Management Trainings across 38 out of 81 provinces. However, government procurement processes delayed implementation in the initial 17 provinces; 1,068 children with SAM received therapeutic care, of which 131 (46 per cent) recovered. UNICEF also supported PhilHealth in developing a SAM benefit package.

With UNICEF’s assistance, NNC finalized the Nutrition in Emergencies Strategic Plan and the first Human Milk Bank in Visayas was established at the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center.

UNICEF supported provision of nutrition interventions for displaced communities affected by the Marawi Siege. Nutrition cluster partners screened 27,529 children under 5 years of age and provided life-saving treatment to 162 SAM children. A total of 11,741 children were provided with Multiple Micronutrient Powder, and 16,338 were given Vitamin A. Approximately 5,764 pregnant and lactating women and caregivers were counselled on optimal IYCF practices. The capacities of 441 government health workers to provide nutrition services were built.

Because of the security situation, the majority of nutrition activities for ARMM were delayed.

A three-year WASH-Nutrition strategic plan was developed to map out strategies in two pilot LGUs. A total of 51 Barangay Nutrition Scholars, 123 community workers, and 84 community volunteers have improved capacities on basic services such as SAM management, IYCF, and WASH.
UNICEF’s integration strategy finalised in January 2017 aims to demonstrate that if appropriate technical support is provided, then LGUs will be able to manage essential 1,000 days services. UNICEF conducted four area-based planning workshops analysing the situation of children on health, nutrition, WASH, ECCD, child protection, and DRR and supported the LGUs in finalising technical assistance plans.

OUTPUT 4 Improved institutional framework, policies, guidelines and delivery of quality adolescent-friendly HIV prevention and care health services

**Analytical statement of progress**

Though overall prevalence of HIV/AIDS remains below 1 per cent of the population, the Philippines saw the highest increase in HIV infections across Asia and the Pacific between 2010 and 2016, affecting mainly the young. There’s a high level of unmet need for reproductive health care among young people linked to legal restrictions, notably parental consent requirements for their children under 18 years, as well as social barriers. The Philippines’ high adolescent pregnancy rate has been linked to poor contraceptive access.

In 2017, the 2018–2022 ADHP Strategic Plan was developed through leadership of the DOH and the National Youth Commission (NYC), mainstreaming HIV and sexual and reproductive health with other critical health programmes. UNICEF supported DOH to activate the AHDP Technical Working Group (TWG). The NYC passed a resolution to institutionalize the inter-agency coordinating body of AHDP.

UNICEF’s convening role influenced the revival of the Committee on Children and HIV/AIDS (ComCHA) after a five year hiatus. Promotion of a child protection framework for the HIV response resulted in greater involvement of the DOH, NYC, DSWD, DOJ, DILG, Council for the Welfare of Children and Philippine National AIDS Council, among others. Partner agencies allocated resources and designated permanent representatives to the ComCHA. Key policy achievements include the Protocol on Proxy Consent and Joint Administrative Order on HIV testing of minors, as well as the HIV country response plan, which enlists the meaningful participation of communities.

At the local level, with UNICEF support, six LGUs claimed ownership of the protocol on proxy consent by training social workers and developing operational guidelines on a citywide HIV service delivery network. As a result, more than 6,500 adolescents have been reached for HIV testing and services.

To strengthen people living with HIV care models, UNICEF assisted the DOH and DSWD in designing and testing a competency-based curriculum on age-appropriate and gender-responsive adolescent health services. Sixty-nine physicians, nurses, social workers and frontline service providers were trained to reduce stigma to adolescents when they access health services.

UNICEF provided quality technical guidance to National HIV Global Fund Grant TWG through Save the Children. Outside UNICEF-supported areas, 10 cities received technical support strategies to reach the most-at-risk adolescents.
UNICEF leveraged government investment in HIV initiatives for adolescents. DSWD committed to invest in the capacity-building of LGU social workers. One LGU funded the printing of HIV reference materials for Grade 8 students in 47 local high schools. Teachers in 10 additional high-HIV-burden cities were trained with support of the DOH. Ongoing process documentation and assessment of the HIV curriculum will inform the DepEd’s Comprehensive Sexuality Education curriculum.

Two outputs were constrained in 2017. Results of the assessment to improve adolescent sex and reproductive health and HIV knowledge in programme cities will be available in 2018 due to delayed data gathering in one site and ongoing discussion with the Government about the M&E framework. Policy support on Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) was postponed for 2018 due to delays in securing funding for the requested technical assistance.

OUTPUT 5 At least 3 National Government Agencies have strengthened capacities to coordinate, plan, guide and monitor programming for equitable access to basic sanitation, drinking water and hygiene in households and learning institutions.

Analytical statement of progress
The DOH’s inclusion of the elimination of open defecation in the Philippine Health Agenda 2022 priorities provided a window of opportunity for WASH policy advocacy. UNICEF and DOH co-facilitated a national review of ongoing sanitation programming, along with the development of the ZOD Program acceleration plans for all Regional Health Offices.

In spite of these efforts, no significant progress was made in developing a national system for monitoring ZOD status of rural communities. Although DOH conducted a small pilot of their new system, this has not yet been shared for further scale-up.

A draft PhATS policy and guidelines were developed this year, and DOH committed funds to support regional consultations in early 2018. The DOH review process for the ‘Goodbye, Dumi! Hello, Healthy!’ policy guidelines was completed, with feedback from regional and national stakeholder consultations incorporated. DOH conducted the first Training of Trainers on this social and behaviour change strategy (covering all Regional Health Offices in the Visayas and selected WASH CSOs), with technical support from UNICEF and Community Health Solutions and Innovations.

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) also reinforced its commitments to WASH in 2017 by adopting the integrated WASH (iWASH) approach modelled under the Sustainable Development Goal-Fund Joint Programme on Promoting Water and Sanitation Access, incorporating it into the guidelines for its Salintubig (Province of Potable Water) and assistance to disadvantaged municipalities programmes. UNICEF provided technical assistance for the roll-out to all regional hubs and will continue to work with DILG to craft the iWASH policy and to advocate the inclusion of WASH indicators in the Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA).

In May, UNICEF, in partnership with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, hosted a regional forum examining how the poorest can be supported to access sanitation within the context of behaviour change-focused programming. Participants were provided with an opportunity to see how sanitation subsidies and rewards had been used
following Typhoon Haiyan. The forum identified good practice examples from across the region, and developed a set of emerging principles (http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/sites/communityledtotalsanitation.org/files/Supporting_the_Poorest_and_Most_Vulnerable.pdf). A one-day national workshop was held with government and development partners to share these insights and examine how they could be applied in the Philippines.

UNICEF provided technical assistance to DepEd and the national WinS TWG to finalise the guidelines and implementing mechanisms for the National WinS Policy (passed in 2016). Due to the significant technical support required for the regional roll-out, no progress was made in 2017 on developing the national guidelines on WinS in emergencies.

The national ECCD Council approved the ‘WASH and Learn Guidebook’ for integration into the Daily ECCD Class Program, and it was formally presented at the 2017 National ECCD Congress.

Challenges in convening stakeholders to review outputs delayed finalisation of a number of WASH in Emergencies materials, and the planned National WASH Cluster Forum was postponed until 2018.

OUTPUT 6 By the end of 2018, the capacity of the ARMM government and selected conflict-affected provinces in Mindanao to scale up quality MNCHN (Maternal, neonatal and child health and nutrition; 1st 1,000 days) services to improve child and maternal nutritional status has been strengthened

Analytical statement of progress
The updated situation analysis (SitAn) of children in the ARMM highlighted the poor health and nutrition situation of children and large disparities compared to other areas of the country. This includes some of the highest rates of malnutrition, lowest immunisation rates and lowest coverage delivery services in the country. The Marawi conflict emergency is expected to exacerbate these disparities as a result of large population displacements, severe burdens on already-inadequate health and nutrition services and loss of incomes.

In 2017, the first year of a two-year Peacebuilding ‘Normalisation’ programme in conflict-affected areas, the priority was to complete baseline data to highlight the extent of poor services coverage and secure government commitments to increase services coverage. Overall this was achieved. Planning with eight target municipalities in five provinces was completed, including baseline data collection in seven of them.

The introduction of a MoRES reconfirmed poor access of communities to immunization and nutrition services. On average, only 52 per cent of communities have access to immunization services, and 33 per cent to nutrition services. Coverage of nutrition services is especially poor. For example, in Matanog municipality, not a single community is covered by community-based nutrition screening, counselling and referral of malnourished children. The MoRES clearly identified areas lagging behind in services coverage, increasing the accountability of local leaders and gaining provincial governor’s commitments for action. New data led to drafting of Executive Orders by provincial governors and municipal mayors to mandate actions and draw down on government budgets for reducing malnutrition (and eliminating open defecation).
Strategic discussions began with LGUs, line agencies involved (DOH, DSWD, DepEd) and communities to identify best approaches to increase services coverage for all communities in 2018. Application of visualization for data techniques and mapping enhanced the understanding of local leaders and was identified as a good practice. In 2018, use of a mobile phone app for local data collection will simplify data entry and analysis for real-time review by local government teams and make it easier for local government authorities to introduce such monitoring results or change for equity into local governance monitoring systems.

Progress in implementation was constrained by the Marawi conflict emergency (ongoing since 23 May) and the need for UNICEF and Government to give highest priority to emergency response activities. In response to the Marawi crisis, UNICEF supported the Government to implement nutrition in emergencies interventions including Nutrition Cluster Coordination and Information Management. Approximately 13,682 children aged 6–59 months were screened for malnutrition in evacuation centres and host communities and 94 children with SAM were identified and referred to life-saving services. A total of 5,045 children aged 6–59 months were vaccinated against measles.

In 2018, implementation of the Peacebuilding ‘Normalisation’ component will accelerate and a more comprehensive approach to strengthening health and nutrition services will be adopted, including rapid expansion of local planning for integrated community health and nutrition services to reach children not currently covered.

OUTPUT 7 By end 2018, strengthened capacities for improved WASH environments and practices for children living in selected conflict affected provinces in Mindanao

Analytical statement of progress
An updated SitAn of children in the ARMM highlighted the poor health and nutrition situation of children and large disparities in their situation compared with others in the country. This includes widespread open defecation and poor hygiene and sanitation practices. The Marawi conflict emergency is expected to exacerbate disparities as a result of large population displacements, severe burdens on already-inadequate water and sanitation services and loss of incomes.

In 2017, the first year of Peacebuilding ‘Normalisation’ programme in conflict-affected areas, the priority was to complete baseline data to highlight the extent of poor water and sanitation coverage and secure government commitments to increase coverage. Overall this was achieved. Three municipalities in the province of Maguindanao were declared ZOD municipalities – the result of three years of capacity support for WASH planning and implementation, including community mobilisation by UNICEF and CSO partners. UNICEF contributed technical support and funding to two of the municipalities and used its advocacy to mobilise political will for the third. This triggered the province-wide adoption of the ZOD objective. Lessons and good practices learned from success in the first three municipalities will enable other municipalities to follow suit. The province, with technical support from UNICEF, drafted an Executive Order to achieve province-wide ZOD by 2019. In December, with technical and advocacy support from UNICEF, ten municipalities in Maguindanao province developed new municipal plans to eliminate open defecation by 2019.

Planning with eight target municipalities in five provinces was completed, including baseline data collection. Only two municipalities were found to have more than 80 per cent of barangays with 365-day access to water supply for drinking; three were found to have between 31 per cent
and 79 per cent access; and three were found to have less than 30 per cent access. For ZOD, one municipality had more than 80 per cent of barangays with open defecation-free villages, three had between 31 per cent and 79 per cent, and four had less than 3 per cent. Improving sanitation has not been priority in local development plans. The monitoring of results for equity approach more clearly identified those areas lagging behind in services coverage, increased accountability of local leaders and commitments for action.

Progress in implementation was constrained by the Marawi conflict emergency (ongoing since 23 May) and the need to give priority to emergency response activities. UNICEF supported the Government to implement WASH in emergencies interventions, including Cluster Coordination. Approximately 410,000 men, women and children were reached with key sanitation and hygiene messages; 94,229 were reached by sanitation and hygiene promotion activities; and 18,841 were reached by activities improving safe water access.

In 2018, implementation of the Peacebuilding ‘Normalisation’ component will accelerate expansion of provincial and municipal integrated planning for WASH and Nutrition, ending open defecation and, in selected municipalities, improving water and sanitation facilities in early learning centres.

OUTCOME 3 By end of CP, increased access to ECCD and elementary education by 20 per cent in 36 most vulnerable LGUs with special focus on gender parity and policy adaptation for national legislation and improved budget allocations.

Analytical statement of progress
The DOH’s inclusion of the elimination of open defecation in the Philippine Health Agenda 2022 priorities provided a window of opportunity for WASH policy advocacy. UNICEF and DOH co-facilitated a national review of ongoing sanitation programming, along with the development of the ZOD Program acceleration plans for all Regional Health Offices. In spite of these efforts, no significant progress was made in developing a national system for monitoring ZOD status of rural communities. Although DOH has conducted a small pilot of their new system, this has not yet been shared for further scale-up.

A draft PhATS policy and guidelines was developed in 2017, and DOH committed funds to support regional consultations in early 2018. The DOH review process for the ‘Goodbye, Dumi! Hello, Healthy!’ policy guidelines was completed, with feedback from regional and national stakeholder consultations incorporated. DOH has already conducted the first Training of Trainers on this social and behaviour change strategy (covering all Regional Health Offices in the Visayas and selected WASH CSOs), with technical support from UNICEF and Community Health Solutions and Innovations.

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) also reinforced its commitments to WASH in 2017 by adopting the integrated WASH (iWASH) approach modelled under the Sustainable Development Goal-Fund Joint Programme on Promoting Water and Sanitation Access, incorporating it into the guidelines for its Salintubig (Provision of Potable Water) and assistance to disadvantaged municipalities programmes. UNICEF provided technical assistance for the roll-out to all regional hubs and will continue to work with DILG to craft the iWASH policy and to advocate the inclusion of WASH indicators in the Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA).
In May, UNICEF, in partnership with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, hosted a regional forum examining how the poorest can be supported to access sanitation within the context of behaviour change-focused programming. Participants were provided with an opportunity to see how sanitation subsidies and rewards had been used following Typhoon Haiyan. The forum identified good practice examples from across the region, and developed a set of emerging principles (http://www.communityledtotalsanitation.org/sites/communityledtotalsanitation.org/files/Supporting_the_Poorest_and_Most_Vulnerable.pdf). A one-day national workshop was held with government and development partners to share these insights and examine how they could be applied in the Philippines.

UNICEF provided technical assistance to DepEd and the national WinS TWG to finalise the guidelines and implementing mechanisms for the National WinS Policy (passed in 2016). Due to the significant technical support required for the regional roll-out this year, no progress was made on developing the national guidelines on WinS in emergencies.

The national ECCD Council approved the ‘WASH and Learn Guidebook’ for integration into the Daily ECCD Class Program, and it was formally presented at the 2017 National ECCD Congress.

Challenges in convening stakeholders to review outputs has delayed finalisation of a number of WASH in Emergencies materials, and the planned National WASH Cluster Forum was postponed until 2018.

OUTPUT 1 Strengthened policy and institutional framework mechanisms and delivery of quality ECCD and Kindergarten education services, especially for disadvantaged and marginalized children

Analytical Statement of Progress
The ECCD program evaluation highlighted the sector’s unclear governance and coordination mechanisms necessary to develop common goals, frameworks, standards and data systems and communication channels to monitor progress and achieve targeted outcomes. To address these findings and achieve the Output targets, significant progress was made in the following areas:

- **Re-establishment/strengthening of the Council’s ECCD multi-agency Technical Working Groups (TWG) for greater cooperation and alignment:** The functions of the TWG were expanded to focus on ensuring harmonisation and consistency of policies, standards and programs across various agencies. Aside from the member agencies of the ECCD Council, the TWG will include DILG, given its crucial oversight role on LGUs.
  - **Formulation of costed National ECCD Strategic Plan:** The TOR for this initiative was finalized. The Plan will include the ECCD Results Framework as a basis for strengthening the National ECCD Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System with robust feedback and accountability mechanism.
- **Recognition of Kindergarten service providers covering children in difficult situations, including Tahderiyyah:** The policy paper ‘Towards a More Inclusive School Admission and Enabling Regulatory Environment for Community-Based Kinder**
Education’ prepared by UNICEF is now being used as reference in the review and enhancement of the Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten and in refining the regulatory framework of DepED for Kindergarten services covering children in difficult situations.

- **Refinement of the National Training Program in Mainstreaming ECCD in LGUs:** Refinement of DILG’s National Training Program was underway to ensure holistic planning, programming and implementation of ECCD programs and services at the local level. Through the training program, it is expected that ECCD will be integrated in the local plans, budgets and legislations, resulting in increased LGU investments for quality ECCD.
- **Adoption of Sindangan LGU’s Project CHILD (Children Information and Location Database):** Recognising the need for updated and comprehensive data on children to support integrated and cross-sectoral planning, programming and decision-making, five focus LGUs are now adopting the Project CHILD system, which complements the Community-Based Management System (CBMS) of DILG and covers comprehensive information of every child in the barangay related to health, nutrition, early learning, education, protection, WASH and DRR.
- **Enhancement of the link of upstream-downstream work:** A more deliberate and systematic process of engaging national and local partners in planning policy level and service delivery interventions resulted in a tightened ‘muddy-boots’ approach in implementing the ECCD program. Policy and program areas that will be enhanced with evidence generated from LGU level interventions are related to ECCD governance, provision of quality ECCD services to children in difficult situations and stimulating demand for and support to ECCD by parents/caregivers.

The original Output targets of adopting the National Competency Standards for ECCD Workers and National ECCD Communication Strategy by the ECCD Council as well as the National Strategic Plan for Inclusive Kindergarten to Grade 3 by DepED will be revised. They will instead form part of the National ECCD Strategic Plan and Basic Education Sector Plan, respectively.

**OUTPUT 2** Strengthened institutional mechanisms for policy development and program delivery at national and selected local levels for equitable and inclusive basic education with gender equity

**Analytical statement of progress**

Progress was made around the ongoing research, advocacy work for inclusive education and national level evidence based policy/programme development. Achievements in 2017 included:

- Conduct of a series of DepEd-led Education partners coordination which resulted into greater collaborations and sector information sharing on two priority areas of DepEd, making ALS responsive to needs of out-of-school children and youth conducted in July, and making education in emergencies responsive to learners’ needs conducted in October. UNICEF worked with DepEd on further analysis of issues affecting these children and development of disaster risk reduction management (DRRM) policy frameworks and guidelines promoting safe schools, with a focus on conflict-affected schools.
- The Southeast Asia-Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) Philippines Field Trial was completed in November, with a sample of 2,153 Grade 5 pupils in 36 public and private schools. A series of capacity-building activities on quality educational assessment was delivered through joint preparatory works.
- Data collection was completed for a multi-grade school review study with DepEd and SEAMEO Innotech, with a 78 per cent response rate from targeted multi-grade schools, and consultations with teachers, supervisors, pre-service institutions and policy
makers. Preparations began for the conduct of case studies in 10 sample schools nationwide aimed to better understand factors affecting good performance in different contexts.

- A third round of ECCD Longitudinal Study analysis tracing 4,000 Grade 1 pupils in nine LGUs was completed. Second round results highlighted the severe challenge of young children in conflict-affected areas (no growth in literacy development). The analysis and results of Round 3 will be available early 2018, incorporating expanded analysis of factors affecting learner performance.
- DepEd senior management gave a green light to formulate the policy documents for the implementation of the Teacher Hardship Index as the basis for a more equitable allocation of the special hardship allowance for teachers and learning facilitators in both formal and alternative learning beginning in school year 2018-2019. The international presentation to share the initiative conducted in July 2017 (organized by GPE).
- Active support under DepEd’s leadership to EDU DRRM preparedness and response through Cluster co-leadership and coordination with DepEd. Marawi support through provision of education in emergencies supplies, psychosocial support and technical assistance on learner tracking and information management.
- Video instructional materials for School Improvement Planning processes were developed to strengthen implementation nationwide. Automation of the School Report Card from the EBEIS was underway.

- Two international leadership summits on inclusive education were supported with more than 1,500 participants, resulting in a better understanding of the global inclusive education frameworks of UNCRPD and SDG4 as well as broader consultations informing the draft legislative bill on Inclusive Education. The results of the summits informed the discussions at the subsequent DepEd-led Education Summit in December.

- The capacity for education sector planning with the participation of DepEd executives in SDG4 planning and monitoring training in Kuala Lumpur was enhanced. The capacity of more than 200 national, regional and division planning officers was increased on use of analytical tools for education sector analysis and planning, and SDG4 data and reporting requirements.

**OUTPUT 3** Education and Peacebuilding Strengthened capacities for delivery of early childhood and basic education for children living in selected conflict affected provinces in Mindanao

**Analytical statement of progress**

An updated SitAn of children in ARMM highlighted the poor education and early learning outcomes for children and large disparities in their situation compared with other areas in the country. This included poor coverage of elementary (primary) education and early childhood education programmes.

In 2017, the first year of a Peacebuilding ‘normalisation’ programme in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao, the priority was to complete baseline education data to highlight the extent of poor coverage and to secure LGU commitments to increase it. Preparation and assessment of the situation of children relating to education access was completed with eight target municipal local government units (MLGUs) in five provinces. Baseline data collection was completed for coverage of elementary school, early learning programmes and alternative learning services in
seven of the MLGUs and partially completed in the eighth (Pikit). Data shows a very poor coverage of alternative learning modalities, with only 2 per cent of sitios (villages) with access to alternative learning services. Only 29 per cent of sitios reported access to an early learning session and only 52 per cent of sitios reported access to a primary school within an acceptable distance for Grade 1-age children to attend. This data clearly highlights the poor coverage in many conflict-affected areas and major barriers to children’s access to education.

Identification of alternative learning strategies for children out of school or dropping out of school in conflict-affected areas continued in collaboration with DepEd ARMM through consultative processes of workshops, field visits, interviews, and validation meetings with implementers, partners and government counterparts.

Progress in implementation was constrained by the Marawi conflict emergency, which displaced more than 350,000 individuals, including some 200,000 children (since 23 May and ongoing) and the need for UNICEF and the Government to give highest priority to its emergency response activities. Implementation is estimated to be delayed by approximately five months.

In response to the Marawi emergency, UNICEF supported government education authorities in implementing education in emergencies interventions, including education cluster coordination and support for Back to School campaigns benefitting more than 30,000 children. Psychosocial recovery support was provided to some 20,000 affected school children and teachers through technical assistance and provision of supplies. Education emergency responses were provided to schools affected by typhoons, earthquakes, and conflict situations in northern and central Mindanao. Emergency education supplies were dispatched to respond to the needs for continuing learning in affected schools.

In 2018, implementation of the education and early childhood component of the ‘normalisation’ will be accelerated to make up for time lost due to the Marawi emergency response.

**OUTCOME 4** By end of CP, improved and inclusive access to well-coordinated national and local child protection services in 10 LGU’s; supported by a functional public sector institutional framework focused on protective elements of ECD, and promoting equity and social inclusion, in coordination with Social Protection and a broader Social Protection strategy.

**Analytical statement of progress**
Drivers of violence against children include poverty, drug abuse, migration and social norms that condone violent discipline. Evolving technology exacerbates the increasing problem of online exploitation of children, underscoring the need to engage new partners to ensure its elimination.

UNICEF prioritised using the evidence from the 2015 National Baseline Survey to end Violence Against Children (NBS-VAC) to inform the development of the Philippine Plan of Action to end VAC (PPAEVAC) which was finalised and disseminated in 2017 in close partnership with the Government, civil society organizations (CSOs), children and parents. The development of the PPAEVAC was guided by the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action to Eliminate Violence against Children and recommendations from the Global Partnership to end VAC’s scoping mission report. The key results areas are in line with SDG 16 and INSPIRE[ the Seven Strategies to end VAC. The PPAEVAC has been shared regionally and globally as a model.

The NBS-VAC survey revealed that 80 per cent of those surveyed experienced some form of violence at home. In light of this evidence, priority was placed on Parenting Support.
Interventions as a recognized form of violence prevention. Efforts are ongoing to localise an evidence-based parenting programme developed for South Africa and adapt it to the Philippine context through a partnership with a local research institution and in coordination with a government partner. Government partners supported plans to scale up this initiative in 2018.

The Philippines has been designated as “Pathfinding Country” by the Global Partnership to end VAC due to its demonstrated commitment towards violence prevention and has been invited to present a case study on parenting support as a tool towards violence prevention at the Global Partners Solutions Summit in Stockholm in 2018.

VAC partnerships were strengthened in 2017, particularly with WHO, through efforts to launch the global resource INSPIRE – a multisectoral tool to support implementation of the SDGs on VAC. The Departments of Health, Education and Social Welfare were engaged in plans for roundtable discussions to map out departmental commitments and actions to end violence, using INSPIRE.

Research and data collection progressed in 2017 in several areas, including Philippine participation in the Global Kids Online survey, a national study on the online sexual exploitation of children, and community research on social norms and child online protection. The research will be concluded in 2018 for appropriate programming and will be aligned to the Government’s National Response Plan to Prevent and Address Child Online Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Partnership with UNHCR on birth registration was strengthened in 2017 through the development of a ‘Joint Strategy on Childhood Statelessness’ as part of a global initiative emphasizing conflict-affected and excluded populations.

Support for justice for children included strengthened support for Family Courts focusing on juvenile justice and child online protection. The Comprehensive Juvenile Intervention Programme was enhanced through support from UNICEF and is poised to be localised and adopted in 2018, including the dissemination and use of the diversion toolkit to support the practice of restorative justice in community settings.

Challenges in 2017 included the increasing levels of community violence as part of the Government’s war on drugs and its impact on children. Threats to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR) – from 15 to 9 – also posed a challenge. The position of the Secretary for the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has been vacant for an extended period thus creating a leadership vacuum.

Priority was placed on efforts to address legislative gaps such as the MACR and the age of statutory rape. UNICEF worked with a network of CSOs to accelerate advocacy. It is anticipated that sustained efforts will be required in 2018 to prevent lowering the age of criminal liability amid the filing of a bill in the Senate, countering the successful lobbying in the House of Representatives.

There was significant progress in supporting child protection (CP) services for children in situations of conflict and emergency, including strengthening regional networks and structures, and support for the implementation of Republic Act 10821: Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act.

As of November 2017, 382,162 individuals affected in the Marawi crisis were reached with psychosocial recovery and other child protection messages through TV and radio and
interpersonal communications. A child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) infographic referral pathway was disseminated to aid survivors of GBV. Orientations on the referral pathway were conducted in 32 child-friendly sites and were attended by 1,360 mothers and caregivers.

Mine risk education programmes continue to be delivered and reached 5,585 schoolchildren and children in evacuation centres.

UNICEF supported programmes targeting adolescents, including both HIV and peacebuilding.

UNICEF will continue to focus on addressing the impact of violence through a multisectoral, rights-based approach to support transition to the new country programme. Support for VAC prevention and response efforts will continue through localising national frameworks and protocols, evidence generation, and programme development, with a sharper focus on social welfare systems strengthening and parenting support interventions and in legislative advocacy and communication for development (C4D). Core messages will continue to influence public discourse and emphasize that ‘no violence against children is justifiable, and all violence against children is preventable.’

**OUTPUT 1** Strengthened institutional frameworks to prevent and respond to violence, abuse and exploitation of children

**Analytical statement of progress**

The high prevalence of violence against children in the Philippines, as revealed by the NBS-VAC, caused the Government and its CSO partners to quickly develop a national plan of action to prevent and address the violence. The same impetus, driven by alarming reports on online sexual exploitation against Filipino children, encouraged the Government to adopt a National Response Plan to address this egregious type of online violence.

The localization of the PPEVAC was deferred to align with finalization of the National Plan of Action for Children. Operationalization for the National Response Plan to Prevent and Address Child Online Sexual Exploitation is still ongoing, with UNICEF assuming a technical and convening role. UNICEF contributed to and participated in international dialogues and workshops, including the design and organization of the Child Online Protection Summit led by the Government. Partnerships with both traditional and non-traditional CP partners, foreign missions, academe, and private sector, including Internet industry players, were enhanced and nurtured.

Partnerships supported included the Pathfinder initiative, the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children and the We Protect Global Alliance. UNICEF also worked with WHO to cascade the utility of INSPIRE strategies.

The present output provided support in drafting, or when applicable, amendment of laws, implementing rules and regulations and guidelines that increases the standards for child protection, both online and offline. This included advocacy to retain the age of criminal responsibility at 15; increase the age of statutory rape; and enhance child online protection. For juvenile justice, a national summit for family court judges was organized which focused on increasing awareness and encouraging utility of diversion. To help ensure that community-based diversion is used as an alternative approach to detention of children at the local level, support was provided to enhance the Comprehensive Juvenile Intervention Programme and develop a Diversion Toolkit for local juvenile justice practitioners.
Other evidence generation priorities included the Global Kids Online Survey, a national study on child online sexual exploitation, and a community and social norms research focusing on child online protection. Results will be launched, disseminated and programmed in 2018. The methodology and the research have elicited international attention noting that the Philippines is leading the process in the region. A legal audit of 30 per cent of the family courts was conducted to increase understanding of children’s access to justice.

The development of the Child Protection Management Information System (CPMIS) was put on hold as UNICEF and the Government carefully strategized the development of an integrated national CPMIS. A joint decision was reached to focus limited resources to the plan of action.

UNICEF provided cross-sectoral support to programmes on Children and Business Rights, Communications, HIV and Adolescents (formulation of HIV Proxy Guidelines and training of the HIV health sector workers) and Education. UNICEF provided support to the Government and CSOs for compliance and submission of the Country Report and shadow report, respectively, for the UN CRC.

**OUTPUT 2** The Social welfare system has strengthened approaches and evidence to improve services for children and families at risk

**Analytical statement of progress**

The 2015 NBS-VAC survey noted the high prevalence of physical violence experienced by both boys and girls, with the estimated total prevalence for boys at 81.5 per cent and 78.4 per cent for girls. More than half of the physical violence was identified as corporal punishment such as spanking with bare hand, rolled paper or small stick, pulling hair, pinching or twisting of ears. One third of the respondents suffered slapping, kicking, smothering, drowning or burning. The most common perpetrators of physical violence at home were mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, in that order.

Although there are existing child protection laws, the general view is that there is not, as yet, a fully functioning social welfare system due to the ‘symptom specific’ approach, and the practice of dealing with child protection issues reactively rather than proactively. Social welfare systems have been supported primarily through efforts to strengthen effective parenting interventions as an entry point for violence prevention. UNICEF provided technical support to the Government in developing the social welfare framework, including capacity-building of the local social welfare workforce.

Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH), an evidence-based parenting programme, was introduced and adapted to the Philippine sociocultural context. With UNICEF support, in partnership with the Government and other partner agencies, the programme aims to reduce VAC and child maltreatment. The PLH Philippines program was one of the main presentations at a roundtable meeting related to parenting led by UNICEF EAPRO.

A mapping of national parenting support interventions to better coordinate efforts was ongoing with UNICEF leadership in coordination with national government and local partners. Initial findings reveal the non-existence of national framework on parenting support interventions and the lack of coordination among implementing agencies at national and local levels.
To further emphasize the importance of parenting support as a tool towards ending violence, UNICEF supported an international conference ‘The Science and Art of Parenting Today’ attended by more than 2,000 participants. The conference provided an opportunity for sharing and discussing research on parenting. A mapping of parenting support interventions in the Philippines was undertaken in order to determine areas of strengths, opportunities and challenges aimed at encouraging coordination of efforts among partners.

A Strategy Framework on Social Welfare Systems Strengthening and Evidence Generation was developed with the Government. The sharing of current technical resources on social welfare systems and participation at the ASEAN Social Work Consortium with government partners provided guidance on strengthening social welfare services and supporting capacity of social workers and community-based volunteers.

UNICEF and UNHCR developed a Joint Strategy on Addressing Childhood Statelessness aimed at supporting law reform, with a focus on areas with low birth registration, particularly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

OUTPUT 3 Strengthened national, local and individual capacities and responses for child protection in humanitarian situations.

Analytical Statement of Progress
With support from UNICEF Philippines, the National Child Protection Working Group (NCPWG) continued to serve as the national coordinating body for child protection interventions in emergency situations. The Implementing Rules and Regulations for Republic Act 10821 mandated all regions to organize their Regional Child Protection Working Group (RCPWG). This legislation also incorporates provisions in the Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Bill still pending in Congress. To date, 15 of the 17 regions have issued a resolution creating RCPWG as a technical working group of their Regional Sub-Committee for the Welfare of Children (RSCWC).

Children continued to be affected by low-intensity armed engagements, as well as large-scale military operations conducted by government forces against armed groups, primarily in Mindanao. Owing to the intensifying activities of armed groups in ARMM, access for monitoring remained challenging. Verification and facilitation of response to grave violations decreased by 65 per cent, due to restricted access following the Marawi crisis and the declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao.

Nevertheless, the national-level coordination between the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) and the Government of the Philippines’ Monitoring, Reporting and Response System (GPH MRRS) was revived in October 2017. The Conclusion issued by the UN Security Council Working Group in response to the fourth country report on children and armed conflict raised concerns about the detention of children for alleged association with armed groups, accounts of attacks and threats of attacks on indigenous peoples (IP) schools, and civil-military activities in schools/communities and provision of services to children encouraged by Department of National Defence Circular Child Protection during Armed Conflict Situations.

As of November 2017, approximately 382,162 affected individuals in the Marawi crisis were reached with key psychosocial recovery and other child protection messages through TV or radio and interpersonal communications.
UNICEF Philippines and the regional child protection working group referred 25 cases of children who either were unaccompanied (9), separated (12) or orphaned (4) for appropriate social case work management interventions. Eight children were reunited with immediate caregivers and/or parents.

A child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) infographic referral pathway was developed and disseminated to aid survivors of gender-based violence and provide access life-saving interventions. A series of orientations on the referral pathway were conducted in 32 child-friendly sites and were attended by approximately 1,360 mothers and caregivers.

Mine risk education programmes continued to be delivered, reaching 5,585 schoolchildren and children in evacuation centres. Pursuant to the UN-MILF Action Plan, 1,869 children identified by MILF associated with its armed wing underwent formal disengagement in a series of ceremonies. Parallel efforts to pursue dialogues with other parties to the conflict will be sustained, particularly for the review and update of the proposed Strategic Plan for the AFP, and revival of CTFMR bilateral meetings with National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

**OUTPUT 4** By the end of 2018, Disengaged and at-risk children in conflict-affected MILF communities are empowered and protected by the families, communities and the child protection/social welfare system in order to prevent their (re) association with armed groups.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Studies on the drivers of child association with armed groups and mapping of services in conflict-affected municipalities were completed, disseminated and discussed with partners at the national and subnational levels in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Based on the findings of those studies, and in consultation with partners, a programme to support disengaged children, other children-at-risk and their families was developed. The child protection component of this programme began in October and will strengthen capacities of state and non-state social service providers to follow the situation of all 1,869 children disengaged from the Moro Islamic Liberation front (MILF) and provide support and referral to education, health and protection services as needed. The first family interviews were completed but no data is yet available.

Planning with eight priority municipalities in five provinces, selected on the basis of having large numbers of children dissociated and with severe gaps in services for children, was completed, including baseline data collection in seven of them (Pikit data partially completed) and data is now being validated. As of November 2017, data on key barriers reconfirmed poor access of communities to a functioning child protection system.

Considering the influence of Islamic religious leaders over the lives and actions of children and adolescents in MILF communities, and building upon UNICEF’s strong prior relationships with these religious leaders, a number of sermons (Khutbah) on child protection were developed in consultation with MILF religious leaders. In 2018, these sermons will be disseminated by religious leaders to communities in conflict-affected areas. It is envisaged that this work will lay the foundation for more significant work with Islamic religious leaders in ARMM in 2018 and beyond as a contribution to a peaceful struggle and preventing violent extremism and recruitment of children by non-state armed groups.

Progress in implementation was constrained by the Marawi conflict emergency (which began 23
May and continued at year end, with more than 350,000 displaced) and the need for UNICEF and Government to give highest priority to emergency response activities. In response to the Marawi emergency, UNICEF supported the Government in the implementation of child protection in emergencies interventions, including coordination and information management and assessments. UNICEF supported the RCPWG to refer 25 cases of children unaccompanied (9), separated (12) or orphaned (4) for appropriate social case work management.

Eight children were reunited with immediate caregivers or parents. In coordination with the DSWD and other communication partners, key child protection messages were broadcast on mass media, reaching nearly 400,000 individuals in evacuation centres and host communities. Approximately 1,360 mothers and caregivers affected by the Marawi armed conflict were equipped with knowledge and skills to support basic psychosocial support and protection guidelines to improve the protection of children in evacuation centres and host communities.

In 2018, priority will be given to accelerating implementation, expanding adolescent and youth engagement based on the Young Peacebuilders approach, as well as continuing to support recovery and peacebuilding in Lanao del Sur province as part of the continuing Marawi conflict emergency response.

**OUTCOME 5** By end of CP, equity driven national and local systems, inclusive social sector policies/plans (e.g. cash transfers, etc.) and increased budgets to address disadvantaged children, guided by strengthened knowledge management and advocacy.

**Analytical statement of progress**

According to the Asian Development Bank, the Philippine economy continued to perform strongly in the first half of 2017. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 6.4 per cent year-on-year in the first half of 2017, moderating from a 7 per cent pace in the same period in 2016 but in line with the average 6.3 per cent annual expansion since 2010. The Philippines remained among the fastest growing Southeast Asian economies in 2017. The Government is confident that the Philippine economy is on track to meet its full year-on-year growth of 6.5 to 7.5 per cent.

However, while the macroeconomy appeared robust, regional inequality remained and chronic poverty persisted. For instance, just three regions – National Capital Region (NCR), Calabarzon, and Central Luzon – account for nearly two-thirds of the GDP; and NCR’s income per capita is 13-fold that of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

In July 2017, the Government launched the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017–2022, the first medium-term plan to be anchored on the 0-10 point Socioeconomic Agenda of the new Administration. The PDP is geared towards laying the foundation to achieve the long-term vision of the Filipino people (i.e. AmbisyonNatin 2040) which articulates the Filipino people’s collective vision of a Matatag, Maginhawa, at Panatagna Buhay Para sa Lahat (All Filipinos enjoy a strongly rooted, comfortable and secure life). It also takes into account the country’s international commitments such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

One of the three main strategies in the PDP is called *pagbabago* which means ‘change’ and articulates the Government’s efforts to transform the economy so that development is equitably distributed and benefits those who have been left behind. This will be done by expanding economic opportunities in the private sector, increasing economic opportunities of the
workforce, accelerating human capital development and reducing the vulnerability of individuals and families.

How to come to grips with inequality and poverty is a central theme of the PDP 2017–2022. Among the main policy instruments are physical infrastructure development in regional hubs throughout the county to connect bypassed regions to the mainstream economy coupled with investments in human capital. The enhancement of Pantawid Pamilya, the flagship social protection program of conditional cash transfer (CCT) which benefits approximately 4.4 million households remains a priority under the PDP. The CCT program was largely credited for the significant decline in poverty rates in 2015. Program expansion is likely to continue in succeeding years following the Government’s lifting of its initial decision to suspend further expansion.

UNICEF continued to work with the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to reduce the vulnerability of children and families to economic shocks and stress by generating evidence that draws attention to children who are excluded from social protection, namely indigenous children in hard-to-reach areas.

The PDP articulates its alignment and contribution to the SDGs. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) is finalising the list of indicators which the Philippine Government will commit to measuring to track country-specific targets. This provides a significant opportunity to ensure that child rights indicators are prioritised, collected and used for monitoring the SDGs and the situation of children.

Congress is close to approving the proposed PHP3.767 trillion National Budget for Fiscal Year 2018. The proposed National Budget is 12.4 per cent higher than last year’s budget and amounts to 21.6 per cent of GDP. It aims to support the Government’s objectives of achieving robust and inclusive growth of 7 to 8 per cent in 2018.

However, the passage of the proposed National Budget is hounded by the chronic underspending of the Government because of poor planning, procurement issues and other implementation bottlenecks. In 2016 alone, underspending was at PHP596.6 billion and the top two agencies underspending were the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Department of Public Works and Highways. This is highly problematic, noting the significant increase in the budget by 32 per cent for DepEd and the Administration’s prioritisation of major infrastructure projects for next five years.

UNICEF continued to generate evidence and build the capacity of child rights civil society organizations on public finance for children, with a focus on drawing attention to equity issues and opportunities in both the national and local public finance management system.

UNICEF also continued to work with key planning and budgeting Government agencies like the NEDA, PSA and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to improve their capacity to plan, monitor and evaluate results for children.

**OUTPUT 1** Improved evidence and skills to strengthen national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for inclusive social policies and social protection measures.
Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF worked with DSWD, NEDA, PSA and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to generate evidence for socially excluded children and families, with the intent of improving social protection measures, planning and budgeting for children.

UNICEF completed the demand- and supply-side assessment on Modified Conditional Cash Transfer for Indigenous Peoples in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (MCCT for IPs in GIDA), which identified barriers experienced by indigenous children and their families in effectively accessing education and health services. DSWD is using the results to inform internal policy changes and program decisions.

The Equity in Sub-national Public Finance Management Systems for Children study shows where inefficiencies in public spending and bottlenecks in public finance occur and identified local governance issues that hinder the realization of child outcomes. In partnership with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the study was presented in a public forum that generated a request from partners for costing analysis of specific services for children and learning sessions dedicated to public financial management (PFM) for child rights. UNICEF also used the results of the study to inform deliberations in Congress of the Budget Reform Bill.

UNICEF completed two situation analyses (SitAn) on the women and children of the Philippines. The first was a national level SitAn; and the second recognized the severe and persistent disparities in child outcomes experienced by children in the ARMM. Both studies identified the key deprivations experienced by children nationally and in the ARMM region, the causes of the deprivations, and key policy and programme recommendations that can inform the Government and other stakeholders, including UNICEF, as they develop policies and plans for children in the future. A series of broad-based consultations and discussions with key experts in economics, climate change, anthropology, peacebuilding and governance contributed to the comprehensiveness of the study.

UNICEF worked with CHR to strengthen the capacity of independent monitors of child rights. The partnership will produce protocols and procedures that the Child Rights Center will use to monitor child rights violations, including a process for conducting a National Inquiry to aid the Commission to prepare its report on the implementation status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNFPA and UNICEF also supported the Longitudinal Cohort Study of Boys and Girls, which aims to track adolescent boys and girls over the next 10 years, coinciding with the SDG timeline. The study is ongoing and will be completed in 2025. It will produce information on how the development of adolescents is affected by their circumstances, their environment and government policies and services.

UNICEF initiated research on the situation of children with disabilities that will inform the design of a universal child grant on children with disabilities in partnership with DSWD. UNICEF also started work with PSA to update the data and analysis of child poverty.

OUTPUT 2 Improved local government unit systems to protect vulnerable children.
Analytical statement of progress
Building on the work from 2016, where UNICEF committed to develop a convergence strategy using the First 1,000 Days as the overarching theme, UNICEF continued to develop sub-national models of an integrated process for planning and a local mechanism that will be capable of delivering an integrated programme for the First 1,000 Days. At the end of December 2018, UNICEF plans to share these models with DILG, the National Nutrition Council, the Early Childhood Care and Development Council and the Office of the Cabinet Secretary as viable options for taking the First 1,000 Days to national scale.

In 2017, UNICEF secured the commitment of four local government units (LGUs): Quezon City; Monreal, Masbate; Mapanas, Northern Samar; and Leon B. Postigo, Zamboanga del Norte. The areas were identified on the basis of their different sociodemographic profiles and vulnerability to armed conflict and disasters. UNICEF completed area-based participatory planning processes with the LGUs that resulted in context responsive plans for developing the First 1,000 Days programme that will be implemented in 2018, with co-investment with LGUs, national Government and UNICEF. UNICEF developed a planning module that stresses the importance of child development during conception through the first two years of a child’s life; key interventions to ensure optimum health and nutrition, safety and security, early learning and responsive care; and a simplified process to develop a causality analysis and theory of change to address malnutrition in the areas.

With the GalingPook Foundation and DILG, UNICEF supported 10 municipalities and cities in a coaching and mentoring programme on adaptive and innovative leadership. Each locality is represented by their mayor, planning officer, health officer and social welfare officer. The teams were challenged to use the results of the 2014–2016 child-friendly local governance audit and identify indicators that need improvement and to design innovative programmes to improve their performance. The teams will continue with the programme until the end of 2018 and will present their experience and share lessons learned with other LGUs during the 2018 Governance Fair.

With Tebtebba, an NGO focused on IP, UNICEF completed the study ‘Pagsasalinlahi: Asserting and Safeguarding Indigenous Peoples’ Rights for the Next Generation,’ which highlights the state of indigenous children’s rights in the Philippines. Using the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the national Indigenous Peoples Rights Act as analytical framework, the study shows that indigenous youth and children across all the communities know what they want for themselves and for their communities, as well as their role as members of the next generation. They want to have a quality and culturally relevant education that is rooted in their identity and culture as IP. They also desire to inherit a healthy ancestral domain, play a role in its governance and to continually protect it the way their elders have done.

OUTPUT 3 Government has improved access to and ability to use child-centred data and evidence

Analytical Statement of Progress
As part of National Evaluation Capacity Development work with DBM, UNICEF designed and delivered a Monitoring and Evaluation course for government officials with the Asian Institute of Management, a recognized academic institution in the region. This work builds on the Government’s National Evaluation Policy signed in 2015. UNICEF trained an initial cohort of 50 national government staff from NEDA, DBM and select national government agencies in monitoring and evaluation using the National Evaluation Policy as the guiding framework. The DBM explored options for mainstreaming the learning course into government training programmes.

As part of a joint regional initiative with UNICEF and UNDP, the Philippines also agreed to be part of a capacity assessment to assess readiness to evaluate the SDGs. This ongoing work will be carried out jointly with NEDA, UNICEF and UNDP.

UNICEF also completed two situation analyses on children of the Philippines. To ensure relevance and usefulness of the studies to the Government, UNICEF ensured buy-in by involving them in the management and conduct of the studies. The national situation analysis was governed by a management steering committee chaired by UNICEF and co–chaired by NEDA. Other members of the committee included representatives of DSWD and the Office of the Cabinet Secretary. The in-depth ARMM situation analysis was jointly managed by UNICEF and the ARMM government.

Capacity-development work with PSA continued with the completion of child-focused equity profiles in 2017 on Stunting and Out-of-School Children. Two additional child- focused equity profiles are scheduled for 2018. PSA then plans to mainstream their production into their own processes.

UNICEF also took a lead role in supporting the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office in the management of the UN Development Assistance Framework Evaluation, which contributed to the UNDAF 2019–2023 planning.

OUTCOME 6 By end of CP, an improved and inclusive peace conditions and social service delivery achieved through conflict analysis, integration of child rights violations information and peace initiatives (UNICEF Action Plans with conflict parties on child soldiers) in national and local plans especially for conflict affected LGUs.

Analytical Statement of Progress
Overall there was mixed progress in 2017. The non-state armed group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was successfully delisted from the Annexes of the UN Secretary General’s Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict. This confirmed the successful implementation of the UN-MILF Action Plan which included disengagement of all 1,869 children (67 per cent male and 33 per cent female) from its ranks.

UNICEF contributed technical support, funding for communications and training, as well as sustained advocacy for this achievement. To fully capture lessons and good practices for global knowledge sharing, a review of the process and lessons towards delisting will be carried out in early 2018. A follow-on support programme for each disengaged child and their families started in October, with a visit by a para-social worker with each child/family scheduled on at least 10 occasions over the next 12 months to assess their situation, provide psychosocial support and facilitate their referral to support services (social welfare, child protection, education, health,
etc.).

_Tahderiyyah_ Islamic early learning classes were successfully expanded, bringing the third phase of this programme component to a close. During school years 2015/16 and 2016/17, more than 17,600 children aged 3–5 years benefitted from an Islamic early learning curriculum and responded to one of the highest priorities expressed by families in Muslim Mindanao. UNICEF contributed technical and funding support for more than 800 _Tahderiyyah_ centres in 16 provinces during the three phases as well as capacity-development support as a foundation for future expansion. UNICEF advocacy resulted in several policy and guidance adjustments. An evaluation of the _Tahderiyyah_ component is scheduled for completion in early 2018, with lessons to be used to inform further expansion of Islamic early learning in Muslim Mindanao.

Studies on the drivers of association of children with armed groups and on mapping of services in conflict-affected communities were finalised and disseminated to partners. Both studies fed into design of the follow-up programming for 2017–2018, considered to be a contribution to the “Normalisation” track of the Peace Process between Government and MILF. The ‘Normalisation’ programme introduced strategic adjustments in line with peacebuilding principles to reduce disparities and to restore faith of communities in the role of the State.

During 2017, greater focus was given to strengthening the role of local government units (LGUs) for planning and action for children and for strengthening social cohesion including through community dialogue and involvement of religious leaders. Dialogue on expanding services delivery for children in conflict-affected areas was broadened (beyond focus on early learning). The introduction of subnational ‘monitoring of results for equity’ approach highlighted gaps in essential services provision for children. For example, in seven conflict-affected LGUs for which data was available, only 2 per cent of villages were covered by alternative learning services for out-of-school children; only 52 per cent of villages were close enough to elementary school for children to attend; and only 29 per cent had an early learning programme – highlighting the extent of disparities in conflict-affected areas and the challenge of ‘normalisation’.

Initial cooperation with religious leaders of the MILF was underway and nine Islamic sermons were drafted, including on ‘peaceful jihad’. This cooperation with religious leaders, focusing on reaching Muslim adolescents and youth, will be expanded as a contribution to promoting a culture of peace in communities in conflict affected areas in Mindanao.

The major constraint during 2017 was the onset of the Marawi conflict emergency in May. This resulted in displacement of more than 350,000 individuals including some 205,000 children. The majority of them remain displaced at year end. Priority was given to emergency relief responses by Government partners and UNICEF in the second half of the year. During 2017, an overall deterioration in security in Mindanao hindered further peace dialogues. The Marawi conflict, imposition of Martial Law (extended to end 2018 for whole of Mindanao), the break off of peace dialogue with the New People’s Army and subsequent labelling of that group as terrorists by the Philippines Government all led to a significant increase in conflict. In response to reports of grave violations linked to the Marawi conflict, monitoring and reporting was strengthened in that province, and multiple reports were being verified.

In 2017, Outputs 805/002 and 805/003 associated with this Outcome were discontinued mid-year, with their objectives having been fully met. Only Output 805/004 (Field Support for cross-cutting support to programme results in Mindanao) was maintained throughout the year. In line with a broader approach to peacebuilding under the ‘Normalisation’ track, four new Peace Outputs were established for the year 2017 and 2018 end of cycle. These better reflect the
contributions of child protection, health and nutrition, water sanitation and education to normalisation. In line with revised management arrangements, these new Outputs are linked with Outcomes 801, 802 and 803 to maintain the holistic nature of the country programme.

**OUTPUT 1** During 2017 and 2018, effective and efficient field level operational management support to peace-building programmes in Mindanao

**Analytical statement of progress**

Efficiency and effectiveness measures were implemented in line with an annual management plan priority with examples in energy efficiency and more coordinated use of vehicles. Coordination and information sharing with other UN agencies through the new Mindanao Operations Management Team (MOMT), formed in May and initially chaired by UNICEF, led to additional efficiency-effectiveness and demonstrated greater UN coherence. A shift in programme charges for vehicle rental, fuel and stationery and other direct programme costs from the Field Support Output to other relevant Programme Outputs reduced the Field Support Output expenditure from more than US$700,000 annually to less than US$400,000.

Continuous IT connectivity was achieved without significant interruptions due to use of two lease lines of Internet providers on auto load balance mode.

Warehouse stock management was improved through stronger oversight by the Mindanao emergency management team for prepositioned stocks and through the move to outsourced third party private warehouse management beginning in April. Stock value was reduced from more than US$400,000 to US$217,000 at year end. Supply support was effectively provided to the Marawi emergency response, although lessons learned include the need for LTAs for emergency transport to cover all geographic areas of Mindanao.

Minimum Operational Security Standards (MOSS) compliance was maintained in 2017. Several security-related improvements were implemented in response to the deteriorating security environment and the recommendations of the Regional Security Adviser visit in February 2017. These included introduction of Mission Request Planning with assessment of residual risks to aid decision-making, pre-mission vehicle checklists as well as replacement personal protection equipment (PPE) and installation of new CCTVs.

To improve staff well-being, and in response to staff feedback, an office-wide ‘Beautification Plan’ was implemented, overseen by a staff committee under the leadership of the Mindanao staff association committee. Thanks to streamlining of some work processes and activation of Office Committees, there was an overall increase in teamwork, accountability, consultation and information sharing.

Staff capacity development was a priority in 2017, including through attachments of two Operations staff to support programme functions. In 2018, additional focus will be given to staff capacity development in support of strategic shifts in line with the new country programme strategy.

**OUTCOME 7** By end of CP improved capacity of public sector institutions at the national and local level to prepare for and mitigate risks from emergencies/hazards in line with UNICEF Core Commitments for Children.
Analytical statement of progress
As the Government continued to strengthen and assert its capacity and leadership in humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery initiatives, UNICEF was a valid partner. UNICEF served as cluster co-lead and provided technical support in the strengthening of overall systems (especially information management), child-centred disaster risk reduction (DRR) and pushing new areas of collaboration, especially in climate action. UNICEF’s field presence and partnership was particularly appreciated, most recently in its rapid response to the displacement of communities due to the Marawi conflict, as it easily liaised between the government of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and Northern Mindanao.

There was progress in 2017, with all targets on track. Institutional emergency preparedness and response systems were strengthened, with a child sensitive lens. The Department of Social Welfare and Development and line departments, with UNICEF’s support, drafted the Comprehensive Emergency Programme for Children. There was marked improvement in the capacity of target local government units (LGUs) to plan and deliver child-centred DRR initiatives, with target hazard-prone LGUs developing multisectoral plans with children for disaster risk reduction. New evidence and knowledge was generated to drive home the centrality of children’s vulnerabilities to the impact of climate change and children’s unique role as active change agents on climate action. The emergency management team is prepared for and can respond to humanitarian needs while initiating good practices that have been shared within the East Asia and Pacific region. In 2017, support was provided during the Marawi conflict in Mindanao. New partnerships with the Climate Change Commission (CCC), Department of Energy, Department of Education and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources were established.

The CEPC was drafted following the finalisation of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act in 2016. Across all sectors, UNICEF provided significant technical inputs and acted as a key convenor for the engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the process. The CEPC will provide guidance on how to implement national standards and protocols enshrined in the Law to support and protect children, pregnant, and lactating women during emergencies. In partnership with the Office of Civil Defence, and supported by the Emergency Response and Preparedness Working Group chaired by OCHA, UNICEF supported the revision of the Government’s 72-hour Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDANA) tool. The tool was revised to collect and collate information by age (with a range of children’s ages); gender; and with a greater focus on life-saving needs, including health and nutrition, education, child protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene. The revised tool will revolutionize the quality and usefulness of the information collected post-disaster by the Government, enabling informed, age-sensitive decisions in a humanitarian response.

Workplan activities aimed at improving LGU capacity to plan and deliver child-centred DRR and climate change action were also on track. Multisector and integrated child-centred DRR convergent programmes were piloted in five project sites, varying in geographical settings and sociocultural contexts. Lessons learned from this initiative will inform future scale-up and upstream work at the national level. An evaluation is planned for 2018.

Evidence and knowledge generation on Climate Change Action was also on track. A Climate Landscape Analysis for Children, a first for the Philippines, was conducted and published and has been key in the development of the Government of the Philippines and UNICEF’s Country Programme of Cooperation 2019–2023. UNICEF was invited to play a key role in the 2017 National Climate Change Consciousness Week, launching the Climate Landscape Analysis for
Children; receiving a public declaration of partnership from the CCC and supporting both financially and technically a youth-led ASEAN conference #nowASEAN that resulted in the establishment of a Southeast Asian Youth Climate Action Network; the proclamation of November 25 as the ASEAN Day for Youth in Climate Action; and the development of a joint ASEAN Declaration on Youth and Climate change. Six out of 10 ASEAN countries were represented. Thirty four delegates from all over the Philippines participated, including persons with disabilities and indigenous youth.

The publication ‘Building Safe Spaces for the Community: a practical guide for community disaster resilient community evacuation centres in the Philippines’ was finalised. It documents the lessons learned through a two-year project with the International Organization of Migration to build two disaster-resilient evacuation centres in Eastern Samar. The second of the two evacuation centres in Borongan was opened in September 2017.

One of the key challenges in 2107 was that UNICEF civil society partners, while willing, struggled to engage municipal and provincial government units in their work. As UNICEF pushes for better cross-sectoral coordination and the ‘up-streaming’ of lessons learned for longer-term strategic implementation, it will need to invest in supporting local CSOs to think beyond their comfort zones and explore the engagement of structures that are better positioned and budgeted to support and institute longer-term sustainable change.

Government partners have been very receptive to UNICEF support and advocacy for better inclusion of children’s issues on the agenda (climate action, community based child-centred DRR and better data disaggregation). In 2018, UNICEF will need to allocate both financial and human resources to support Government partners to move from commitment to action.

OUTPUT 1 National and local capacities for risk-informed and child-centred DRR are strengthened.

Analytical statement of progress
The Office of Civil Defence (OCD), as the Chair of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council, has endorsed a more directed child-sensitive approach to emergency and DRR. In 2017, with UNICEF’s technical and financial support, OCD led the revision of the RDANA tool to be more child-sensitive; took decisive steps to improve systems, procedures and tools to inform Common Operational and Fundamental Operational Datasets; and established a prototype data management and communication system to better enable emergency communication. UNICEF provided significant technical assistance to the drafting of CEPC that complements the implementation of the Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Law and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Improving local government capacity to plan and deliver child-centred DRR and climate change action is on track. Five municipal governments are better equipped to formulate and implement risk-informed, integrated and child-centred development and DRR programming through a range of initiatives that identified vulnerability and local hazards, and equipped children, community members and local officials with the knowledge and skills needed to participate and contribute to planning initiatives. In 2017, 11 target barangays (villages) drafted child-centred Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction Management Plans. These plans were informed by Multi-hazard and Child Vulnerability data mapping and analysis systems established in target LGUs (Milagros, Masbate; Paracale, Camarines Norte; Mapanas, Northern Samar; Carles, Iloilo; Itoyon, Benguet) and through participation and engagement of 3,252 girls and 3,052 boys
including adolescents, 3,132 women and 3,850 men equipped with the knowledge and skills to better prepare for and respond to hazards.

Generating evidence and knowledge on child-sensitive Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Action is on track. In partnership with the IOM, a second disaster resilient model evacuation centre was constructed in Borongan, Eastern Samar and a practical guide to constructing disaster resilient community evacuation centres was finalised.

The Climate Landscape Analysis for Children was conducted and results published. The assessment report looks at climate, energy and environmental action interventions in the Philippines with a focus on what is being done for children. It provides an overview of issues, national policies, and gaps, with a summary of key findings and recommendations. The report was launched jointly with the CCC and commitments were made to move forward on the report’s recommendations. The report recommends generating evidence and using it to advocate measuring and reducing the impacts of indoor and outdoor air pollution on children’s health; piloting small-scale mitigation and adaptation initiatives targeting the most vulnerable children; and supporting the increased participation of children and youth in climate action.

Humanitarian support was ongoing in response to the conflict in Marawi City in Mindanao. UNICEF raised US$1.8 million to support its interventions, through partners.

UNICEF Philippines’ Emergency Early Warning, Early Action Key Actions were up to date and Emergency Management Team meetings were held on a regular basis. A Standard Operating Procedure to guide local staff deployment in emergencies was approved.

OUTCOME 8 Country programmes are efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards in achieving results for children.

Analytical statement of progress
The planning process for the new Country Programme and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was discussed and agreed on at the Annual Management Retreat in March 2017 and with partners at the National Steering Committee Meeting in August 2017. All major milestones were on track for development of the UNICEF Country Programme. A number of significant pieces of analysis were put together to inform the country programme development process. These included the Government of the Philippines (GPH)-UNICEF Country Programme Evaluation, the National Situation Analysis (SitAn) and the ARMM SitAn. Four cross-sectoral working papers were developed to synthesize the findings from sectoral analysis and align to the Regional Headlines; Early Moments Matter, Adolescents – Potential Unleashed; Children Grown in a Safe and Sustainable Environment – Conflict and Natural Hazards and Climate Change.

In September, colleagues from the Regional Office and UNICEF Philippines came together in a participatory Strategic Intent meeting to agree on strategic priorities for the next country programme. The results of the exercise were used to develop a Theory of Change that followed a life-cycle approach and identified draft priorities, results statements and strategies for the next country programme of cooperation. These outputs were discussed in technical meetings with the National Economic Development Agency (NEDA), which coordinates the GPH-UNICEF country programme, and with other technical level partners. In November, based on the feedback from technical consultation with partners, colleagues drafted the Programme Strategy
Note, which includes a tentative results framework that will be discussed with partners in the next National Steering Committee Meeting in early 2018.

UNICEF chaired the UN Programme Group that drafted the approach and timeline to develop the UNDAF. The group drafted a working paper to outline the position of the UN in the Philippines context; identify common strategies and emerging priorities; and provide case studies to illustrate the different modalities for engagement. The Common Country Assessment (CCA) was also completed. It informed a major meeting with NEDA and UN to agree on three critical areas, outlined in the CCA, where national capacities could benefit from coordinated and coherent support. UNICEF led the monitoring and evaluation group and managed an evaluation of the 2012–2018 UNDAF, completed in time to inform the UNDAF planning process. These evaluations were taken into a workshop with national partners and the UN and three problem tree analyses were developed around the SDG Pillars: People, Planet/Prosperity and Peace. A smaller group of UN colleagues then developed theories of change from which a tentative results framework was extracted. This will be further developed by the UN Programme Group which UNICEF chairs and then discussed with partners.

Throughout 2017, in programme management team and country management team meetings, programme management indicators were regularly monitored and follow-up actions were tracked. Programme results were tracked and discussed with partners.

Activities to mainstream the Children's Rights and Business Principles were on-track, with ongoing efforts in knowledge- and capacity-building targeted to business associations, key conglomerates, Internet service providers and social media networks. UNICEF's external communication and advocacy work was on track. UNICEF employed strategic messaging, tools, guidance and resources for effective advocacy to generate public opinion for promotion and protection of children's rights and to influence policy and support resource mobilization. UNICEF maintained a significant Share of Voice among competitors and an impressive media impact score. Social and digital media efforts continued to grow in reach and engagement. Partnership for advocacy was important in speaking up on critical issues and raising the voices of children representing marginalized and special needs groups. UNICEF advocacy focused on upholding the access to services for children, children in emergencies and conflict, and reached out to donors, stakeholders, beneficiaries, children, youth and the general public.

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

**Analytical statement of progress**
To kick-start the Country Programme for Children 8 (CPC8) development process, a roadmap narrative was developed that outlines in detail the analytical works and activities with partners with an indicative timeline and ensures a rigorous evidence-based and consultative design process for CPC8. This included:

1. CP evaluation consultation with partners in July 2017 – the results of which influenced the reflection on the CPC8 implementation modalities
2. SitAn (national and ARMM) validation with partners in August 2017 which informed the strategic priorities of CPC8 based on evidence of severity of child rights deprivations
3. Political economy analysis introductory training in August 2017 to help UNICEF Philippines programme staff to build ‘development entrepreneurship’ skills that are necessary for upstream work in CPC8
4. Strategic Intent Workshop and Theory of Change Exercises on 11–14 September 2017 to determine the core pillars of CPC8 as well as its implementation modalities
5. Series of Technical Peer Review meetings in October 2017 to inform partners of the draft CPC8 results structure as well as implementation modalities
6. Strategy Notes Writing Week on 6–10 November 2017 to elaborate on the UNICEF Philippines programme framework to achieve CPC8 results (outputs).

These crucial steps were undertaken to collectively narrow down the strategic priorities of the next country programme, coherently grounded on the dynamic and continuously evolving national, regional and global environments.

These activities collectively allowed UNICEF Philippines programme staff to reflect so that they are able to strategically design a country programme that maintains its relevance and is set up to effectively and efficiently deliver sustainable results for the most disadvantaged children in the Philippines.

A mid-year programme review was conducted in August 2017 to monitor programme, advocacy and cross-sectoral priorities. During this meeting, UNICEF presented the CPC8 roadmap to government partners. UNICEF used the End-of-Year Review to discuss and agree on CPC8 priorities, results structure and strategies, as well as to institute a transition plan between CPC7 and CPC8 in 2018.

**OUTPUT 2** UNICEF staff and partners are provided tools, guidance and resources for effective communication on child rights issues with stakeholders.

**Analytical statement of progress**
In 2017, UNICEF seized a number of opportunities for greater share of voice, reach and engagement and in creating impact for Filipino children through public advocacy. Notable advocacies were executed from planned priorities and in response to threats to children in the socio-political reality. UNICEF’s statement on protection of children impacted by the war on illegal drugs unequivocally denounced the death of a teenager and other young victims and generated public discourse, concern and awareness. Advocacy against lowering of the minimum age of criminal responsibility continued amid politically charged debates.

UNICEF also advocated on the cost of malnutrition in infants and mothers; access to services for children with disabilities; Children’s Rights in Business Principles; children affected by climate change; violence against children; and the First 1,000 Days. Advocacy on children in conflict and emergencies peaked with disengagement of children from armed ranks of the MILF and subsequent delisting of the group from the UN Secretary General’s 2016 report. Emergency response to internally displaced persons in the Marawi conflict and inauguration of the Borongan evacuation centre brought to focus the importance of disaster risk reduction and protecting children during conflicts and disasters.

When Storm Tembin/Vinta hit Mindanao in late December, UNICEF was a prominent source of news, interviews on BBC and NBC.
Vulnerable and marginalized children across the Philippines participated in World Children’s Day 2017. ‘For Every Child, A Voice’ was translated into a high profile children’s takeover of the Philippines Senate and a Children’s Assembly. Children representing special needs groups powerfully voiced concerns and demanded attention and action.


Advocacy partnerships continued with the Child Rights Network, and Council for the Welfare of Children, national-international media, goodwill ambassadors, celebrity advocates and visiting national committees.

UNICEF maintained its lead as the most publicly recognized and widely trusted children’s agency. In spite of competitors with growing coverage and influence, UNICEF represented a powerful brand as a credible voice/actor and champion for children. Media KPI reports over 2016–2017 show UNICEF retains position among three leading sources on children’s issues, alongside key Government Departments. UNICEF commanded a much larger Share of Voice when compared to key international agencies. An impressive 42 percent media impact score in top tier media was maintained, with 98 per cent positive tonality. UNICEF messages reached millions of readers/viewers through multiple channels, with a growing reach and stronger voice in broadcast.

The number of social media followers increased by 13.66 percent from 2016. An average of 46,093 users engaged and contributed to discussion on Facebook every month. Page views on the UNICEF Philippines blog, which featured children’s voices, stories from the field and staff profiles, increased by 107.59 per cent in 2017.

OUTPUT 3 Strategies to address cross-cutting issues related to child rights are developed and applied

Analytical statement of progress
The new Country Programme (CP) draft was developed based on country analysis from the Country Programme Evaluation, the Situation Analysis of Children, the Common Country Assessment and other key research studies. Priorities and strategies to address significant equity issues for children in the Philippines were identified using a participatory process. Consultations focused on reviewing the analysis from a sectoral and cross-sectoral lens; sections critiquing the SitAn chapters from other section, and the Theory of Change for the CP followed a life cycle approach. Discussions were conducted with regional advisors, partners and young people. The results framework was drafted and was being mapped to the indicators in the SDGs, the Philippines Development Plan, UNICEF’s Global Strategic Plan and UNICEF’s Regional Priorities.

UNICEF played a key role in supporting the development of the UNDAF, chairing both the UN Programme Group and M&E Group. UNICEF supported the development the UNDAF workplan, provided critical technical inputs to the Common Country Assessment, managed the UNDAF
Evaluation, co-organised the UNDAF causality and TOC meeting; led the Youth TOC and refined the UNDAF results framework.

Technical guidance, regular monitoring and follow up ensured effective management of the current programme. Two-year rolling workplans were developed for 2017–2018. Key programme and management performance indicators were monitored monthly and prompt action was taken when required. Experiences from programme implementation were discussed in programme meetings and contributed to strengthening programme management.

The formal mid-year review was conducted by the National Steering Committee to discuss progress and constraints toward programme results, lessons learned and emerging priorities. Discussions focused on delays in signing some workplans due changes in key government personnel and national financial processes. The review builds on the regular technical level reviews with partners led by the results managers.

Commitment to cross-sectoral planning in the office was strengthened. The adolescent team conducted consultations with young people; the ECD team undertook joint field visits to identify opportunities for cross-sectoral programming; drafting working papers aligned to the Regional Headlines (Early Moments Matter, Adolescents; Children Grow Up in a Safe Environment).

The gender focal points continued to play an active role in strengthening the mainstreaming of gender in programmes through forums such as the SitAn, the Strategic Intent, the Working Papers and the UNDAF discussion.

Programme learning sessions prioritised emerging and existing priorities and included Equity in Public Financial Management Systems, Political Economy Analysis, Designing Good Pilots, Costing Methodologies, Urban Programming, Climate Change, and Budget Management Skills.

The Children’s Rights and Business Principles were launched in a public media event in June. The Makati Business Club, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and two of the largest conglomerates in the country publicly endorsed the Principles and declared their organizations’ commitment to receive training, adopt the Principles into their operations and integrate CRBP standards into their annual sustainability reporting.

Partnership with Smart Communications, Globe Telecom and Facebook continued, with the goal of changing business practices to stop the creation and circulation of online child sexual abuse content.

### Document center

### Evaluation and research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sequence Number</th>
<th>Type of Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the UNICEF Philippine Country Office 'Early Childhood Care and Development' and 'Basic Education' components of the 7th</td>
<td>2017/001</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WASH in Schools: Three Star Approach: National Guidelines: What you need to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation and Maintenance Manual: Tacloban Septage Treatment Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH and Learn Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation Learning Exchange: Accelerating Sustainable Rural Sanitation in the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Landscape Analysis for Children in the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Friendly Learning Materials on Disaster Risk Reduction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lessons learned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type/Category</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Learned</td>
<td>Designing a pilot program to inform scale-up decisions: ‘HiFive for Hygiene and Sanitation’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Learned</td>
<td>Lessons and Good Practices on Integrating Programs for 1000 Days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Programme documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMEP</td>
<td>Promoting real-time governance for children and the disadvantaged</td>
<td>Philippines_rCHITS case study final.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Convergence</td>
<td>Vulnerability Analysis and ICMC selection</td>
<td>unicef vulnerability analysis and ICMC selection.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMR</td>
<td>Strategic Intent Memo</td>
<td>Strategic Intent Memo.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
<td>Philippines_Theory of Change explained</td>
<td>Philippines_Theory of Change explained.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
<td>Philippines_Pathways of Change by IRs</td>
<td>Philippines_Pathways of Change by IRs.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment convergence</td>
<td>Philippines_Investment Convergence Maps</td>
<td>Philippines_Investment Convergence Maps.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Philippines_Equity Analysis of Convergent Investment for GPH-MDG</td>
<td>Philippines_Equity Analysis of Convergent Investment for GPH-MDG.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
<td>CPAP- Equity Begins with Children</td>
<td>Philippines_CPAP- Equity Begins with Children.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
<td>CPAP and the Theory of Change</td>
<td>Philippines_CPAP and Theory of Change.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Title of Report</td>
<td>Folder Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom-up budgeting</td>
<td>Philippines Bottom-up Budgeting</td>
<td>Philippines_Bottom-Up Budgeting.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORes</td>
<td>Philippines MORes progress</td>
<td>Philippines_MORes Progress.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAP</td>
<td>Philippines_CPAP_2012-2016</td>
<td>Philippines_CPAP_2012-2016_draft.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Philippines CPD_2012-2016</td>
<td>Philippines_CPD_2012-2016.pdf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>