

Rwanda

Executive Summary

Rwanda has made significant achievements in the areas of human development and is one of only a few African countries to have achieved all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In addition, the newly released Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and the Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV) show that the country has successfully narrowed equity gaps in a number of key social indicators and has made good progress in delivering essential services to the most vulnerable. UNICEF Rwanda contributed to these successes by implementing robust programming throughout the year.

Important achievements:

- Several policies and strategies were drafted and validated by the Government of Rwanda (GoR) in 2015 with UNICEF Rwanda engagement and support, including on: early childhood development (ECD); water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); and nutrition. Advocacy efforts in the WASH sector resulted in a 100 per cent increase in 2015-16 budget allocations. Research and analysis undertaken confirmed the need to continue strong programme integration and referral between sectors to maximise results. To this end, UNICEF Rwanda actively pursued and established linkages between social protection, nutrition and ECD through modelling in two locations, developing child-sensitive social protection services that link public works with child care services and nutrition-specific interventions for the poorest households.
- Ensuring the availability and utilisation of de-centralised child protection services remained a critical objective for UNICEF Rwanda and its partners in 2015. Important achievements included support to the child care reform process, which contributed to 870 children formerly living in orphanages being safely reintegrated into family-based care over the course of the year.
- Recognising the need to enhance the quality and efficiency of education, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) embarked upon an ambitious programme of curriculum reform, culminating in 2015 in the introduction of a new competency-based curriculum from pre-primary through upper secondary. UNICEF Rwanda coordinated with other UN agencies and partners to support this process and ensure the inclusion of cross-cutting issues into the new curriculum, such as inclusive education, gender, health and HIV/AIDS.
- The influx of over 72,000 Burundian refugees during the year required a coordinated response that was led by the Rwandan Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and supported robustly by UNICEF Rwanda, other UN agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). UNICEF Rwanda focused on providing critical services such as supplies for water, sanitation and hygiene, immunisation for over 28,000 women and children, more than 10,000 kg of ready-to-use therapeutic food as well as quality child protection services, temporary early learning spaces and ECD kits. This support drew largely on existing capacity in the Office but did not have a detrimental effect on progress towards planned programme priorities.

Significant shortfalls and bottlenecks:

- Stunting is one area where Rwanda failed to meet the MDG target; the national level remains high (38 per cent) and represents one of the biggest development challenges facing the country. Even in the highest wealth quintile, stunting affects one in five children. Inappropriate feeding practices remain a key issue; only 18 per cent of children consume the minimal acceptable diet. To address these bottlenecks UNICEF Rwanda supported the GoR to implement a national behaviour-change campaign, 'A Thousand Days in the Land of a Thousand Hills'. The campaign targets caregivers of children younger than two and pregnant and lactating women, as well as service providers, with messages on good nutrition practices. To date, the campaign has reached more than 8.5 million people through mass media channels.
- An additional challenge is the highly centralised decision-making structure. As a result decentralised bodies often face delays that can cause disruption in programme implementation and service delivery. UNICEF Rwanda is working closely with different line ministries to highlight these constraints and propose appropriate solutions.

Collaborative Partnerships:

- Within the One UN system, capitalising on the strengths and comparative advantages of the different agencies facilitated greater impact through more coherent programmes and reduced transaction costs. It also helped to align UN programmes and funding more closely to national priorities, strengthening Government leadership and ownership. Overall the achievements in support of advancing the rights of children in Rwanda were made possible through strong collaboration with many GoR counterparts, civil society organisations (including both international and national NGOs), the media and other development partners – particularly the governments of the US, UK, Japan, Netherlands and the Republic of Korea.

Humanitarian Assistance

UNICEF Rwanda invested in emergency preparedness across a range of intervention areas, including pre-positioning supplies, training partners and arranging contingency partnership agreements. The investment in early preparedness in the previous year yielded strong results in 2015, reducing costs and increasing the speed of the humanitarian response to the influx of refugees from Burundi. UNICEF Rwanda also supported the development of a National Preparedness and Response Plan for El Nino, to strengthen resilience and pro-actively contain the effects of this phenomenon. Within this plan, UNICEF Rwanda played a key role in coordinating the sector response for WASH, health, nutrition, child protection and education/ECD. The Country Office is fully compliant with minimum preparedness measures within UNICEF Rwanda's Early Warning/Early Action monitoring system.

When the Burundian refugees started crossing into Rwanda, a contingency plan on mass population influx was activated by Government and UN partners. By the end of the year, more than 72,000 Burundians had entered the country, of which about 46,000 (50 per cent children) were hosted at Mahama refugee camp.

MIDIMAR and UNHCR were the overall coordinators of the inter-agency response to the refugee situation. In partnership with NGOs, UNICEF Rwanda's response focused on critical services for women and children, including:

- WASH: The provision of pre-positioned WASH supplies and technical assistance benefited

over 46,000 Burundian refugees. The increased demand for additional water and sanitation facilities is being addressed through sustainable and permanent solutions that will be completed in 2016.

- **Nutrition:** Screening and monitoring of the nutritional status of all refugee children under five years was conducted, and children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) were effectively treated. This included the procurement and distribution of more than 10,000 kg of ready to use therapeutic food, counselling mothers on feeding practices and making referrals to health centres. As a result, more than 400 severely malnourished children under five were successfully treated, and the SAM rate among refugee children was significantly reduced.
- **Health:** Immunisation campaigns for polio, measles and routine immunisation were conducted, resulting in vaccination of over 28,000 refugee children and women. Capacity building of health workers was undertaken through trainings on key family practices and integrated community case management. Cholera preparedness measures were put in place in the camps through the establishment of isolation centres, prepositioning of cholera kits and procurement and distribution of training and communication materials to implementing partners.
- **Child Protection:** UNICEF Rwanda supported case management and psychosocial support for refugee children. Nearly 1,000 unaccompanied children were reached with tracing and alternative care by para-social workers, and more than 100 individual child protection cases were effectively managed. Eight child-friendly spaces were established and provided with recreational kits; more than 6,000 children benefitted from regular recreational and psychosocial support activities.
- **ECD:** UNICEF Rwanda supported the delivery of ECD services through the provision of temporary spaces and the distribution of ECD kits. Over 4,000 young children attended ECD programmes in the camps under the guidance of 60 trained refugee ECD caregivers.
- **Education:** In support of the education response strategy to integrate all Burundian school-aged refugee children into the national education system by 2016, UNICEF Rwanda supported education orientation classes through teacher capacity building and mentorship. Sixty school-in-a-box kits were provided and 18,000 student kits for refugee and local children were procured for distribution in 2016. By December, over 11,000 pupils were enrolled in education orientation classes at Mahama camp.
- **Planning, monitoring and evaluation:** Technical support was provided to conduct two rapid assessments. In May, an inter-agency rapid assessment led by UNHCR was undertaken. UNICEF Rwanda led in the areas of health, nutrition, education and child protection, and proposed recommendations in line with the Core Commitments for Children. In August, an inter-agency rapid gender assessment led by UN Women was undertaken; UNICEF Rwanda played a key role in ensuring the collection of data on children. In addition, supply and end-user monitoring for WASH, as well as joint field monitoring was organised in Mahama camp. Humanitarian performance monitoring was facilitated through the Human Performance Database and risk management in humanitarian interventions was strengthened.

In addition to the Burundian refugee response, UNICEF Rwanda, in partnership with the Government of Japan and implementing partners, continued to support the GoR in providing education, ECD and child protection services to more than 30,000 refugees (20,000 children) from the Democratic Republic of Congo that live in three refugee camps across the country.

Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan

UNICEF Rwanda's lessons from the first two years of the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-2017 include:

- During the first two years of the Strategic Plan, MoRES has significantly strengthened the equity focus of UNICEF-supported interventions in Rwanda. The Rwanda UNDAF is strongly focused on inclusiveness and delivery of services to the most vulnerable. During the UNDAF planning stage, MoRES was recognised as an effective planning tool by partners. In addition, it is recommended to use the MoRES framework during the programme cycle as a tool for self-reflection. In 2015 UNICEF Rwanda developed a simple MoRES analytical package for this purpose.
- The Strategic Plan introduces “Support to integration and cross-sectoral synergies” as an explicit implementation strategy. This increased attention to programme integration guided the review of the UNICEF Rwanda Country Programme in early 2015. ECD has emerged as a national development priority in Rwanda and it was added explicitly to the UNICEF Rwanda Country Programme results structure, reflecting both an approach to reducing inequalities as well as an example of integration and cross-sectoral synergies to maximise development results.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

AIDS - Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AMP - Annual management plan
AWP - Annual Work Plan
BOS - Business operations strategy
C4D – Communication for development
CARE International - Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CCC - Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action
CDC - Centers for Disease Control (U.S.)
CEDAW - UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEO - Chief executive officer
CERF - Central Emergency Response Fund
CHW - Community health worker
CMT - Country management team
CPRD - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CRC - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CWD - Children with disabilities
DCT - Direct cash transfer
DHS - Demographic and Health Survey
ECD - Early childhood development
ECD&F - Early childhood development and family
ECD&FCs - Early childhood development and family centres
EDPRS II- Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II
EICV - Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey
EPF - Emergency Programme Fund
GoR - Government of Rwanda
GBV - Gender-based violence
HACT - Harmonised approach to cash transfers
HIV - Human immunodeficiency virus
HPM - Humanitarian performance monitoring

HR - Human resources
ICT - Information and communications technology
IKEA - Ingvar Kamprad, Elmtaryd and Agunnaryd
IMEP - Integrated monitoring and evaluation plan
IT - Information technology
LED - Light-emitting diode
LTA - Long-term agreement
MDGs - Millennium Development Goals
M&E - Monitoring and evaluation
MIDIMAR - Rwandan Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs
MIGEPROF - Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINALOC - Ministry of Local Government
MINEDUC - Ministry of Education
MOH - Ministry of Health
MoRES - Monitoring of Results for Equity System
NCC - National Council for Children
NGOs - Non-governmental organisations
NISR - National Institute of Statistics in Rwanda
OR - Other resources
PAS - Performance assessment system
PCA - Programme cooperation agreement
PME - Planning, monitoring and evaluation
PW - Public work
Rapid SMS - Rapid short message service
REACH - Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition
REB - Rwanda Education Board
RR - Regular resources
SAM - Severe, acute malnutrition
SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
SNV - Netherlands Development Organisation
SOP - Standard operating procedures
SRH - Sexual and reproductive health
SUN - Scaling-up Nutrition programme
UN - United Nations
UNDSS - United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR - United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund
VUP - Umurenge Programme
WASH - Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP - World Food Programme

Capacity Development

UNICEF Rwanda played a significant role in supporting the GoR to achieve the outcomes of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) II through strategic investments in capacity development. From strengthening systems at the national level to reinforcing service delivery capacities at decentralised levels, interventions aim for sustainable societal transformation.

At the national level, UNICEF supported the development of a new competency-based curriculum for basic education. Teacher training programmes were developed and 4,000 people

including national subject trainers, district master trainers and Rwanda Education Board (REB) staff were trained. This curriculum is expected to equip graduates with relevant skills required for future labour market and social demands.

Likewise, in order to strengthen national and sub-national collection, analysis and use of data, UNICEF contributed to the design of a national Social Protection Management Information System and revised the national socio-economic database of households. Capacity of the National Institute of Statistics in Rwanda (NISR), district governments and academics in data tracking, analysis and dissemination was strengthened through DevInfo. By the end of 2015, 22 districts were tracking nutrition interventions data and five districts had established DevInfo databases to facilitate district planning.

At the community level, UNICEF led a massive capacity-building initiative for qualified professional/para-professional social workers. A country-wide programme was implemented for 6,600 community-based protection volunteers called “Friends of the Family” (Inshuti Z’Umuryango) providing basic services and referrals to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect across villages in Rwanda.

With regard to emergency preparedness and response, UNICEF supported the training of community mobilisers in Mahama Refugee camp to support hand-washing and other hygiene behaviours. A national preparedness and response plan for the El Nino phenomenon was also developed with UNICEF’s contribution, to strengthen resilience and proactively contain the effects of potential weather events.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

Evidence-generation in support of programmes, policy dialogue and advocacy remained a core strategy in 2015. Main achievements include:

- Following a baseline study, case study and costing, a draft ECD policy and implementation plan were developed. The evidence gathered informed policy decisions and helped to enhance equitable access to ECD services.
- A pre-school costing study indicated that school fees present the most significant barrier to increasing access. The study supports UNICEF’s focus on scaling-up quality pre-school services, and will be used to advocate for increased investment in pre-primary education.
- Support to the DHS 2014/15 resulted in renewed political support for reducing stunting. This was complemented by support for ‘Renewed Efforts against Child Hunger and Undernutrition’ (REACH) to develop a comprehensive mapping of nutrition activities at the district level. DHS results also informed the revision of the draft national policy and strategy for WASH.
- Support to ECIV4 flagged gaps in equitable access to key social services and will guide UNICEF’s work on child-sensitive social protection by addressing bottlenecks in supply and quality of services.
- The RwandaInfo national database was updated with new DHS and EICV data. UNICEF strategically linked the official database launch to key advocacy initiatives such as School DevInfo, Reading Data with Children and public lectures, which have paved the way for the establishment of a knowledge exchange platform in 2016.

- A rolling situational analysis was introduced during the year and a monitoring of results for equity system (MoRES) analytical package was developed to identify key bottlenecks.
- A rapid assessment of domestic child labour with the Kigali City Council highlighted associations between primary school drop-out, poverty and child domestic labour, and prompted a national dialogue and request for a national survey on the subject.

Partnerships

In the spirit of the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, UNICEF Rwanda, REACH and the Delegation of the European Union collaborated to support the GoR to develop a multi-sectoral monitoring and evaluation framework to track results for nutrition, in line with the National Nutrition Strategic Plan and Policy 2013-18. The system allows users to access data on key indicators through a highly interactive, web-based interface which enables trend analysis and maps to identify priorities for nutrition interventions.

Through ECD interventions, resources were leveraged with the GoR for water supply and sanitation services. The Government committed to supply safe water services to all 10 ECD centres supported by UNICEF Rwanda. This resulted in safe water not only for the ECD centres but also for entire nearby communities.

In education, under a new model of donor support, the Elma Foundation agreed to support UNICEF Rwanda for the first time through the matching of resources.

A programmatic partnership initiated in 2014 with the Religious Interfaith Council on Health, a faith-based organisation with networks in practically every village, was intensified to promote good nutrition through the 1,000 Days campaign.

Engagement with the corporate sector was initiated through UNICEF Rwanda's multi-country agreement with Airtel, and discussions were initiated on areas of complementary priorities. Common areas of interest in the sectors of education, youth empowerment and Information technology were identified and will be explored further in 2016.

Strategic media partnerships were established with the Rwanda Broadcasting Agency and NGOs to promote the ECD programme through radio 'edutainment', community theatre and social mobilisation.

Through the global 'All In' initiative, UNICEF Rwanda and UNAIDS engaged development partners and adolescents to conduct a joint assessment of adolescent programming aimed at identifying and accelerating priority programme interventions.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

Taking direction from UNICEF Rwanda's Integrated Communications Strategy, a number of activities were implemented in 2015 covering key components of communications, advocacy and partnerships. A UN media perception survey carried out in 2015 found that UNICEF Rwanda was the second most well-known agency by the general population and the most well-known by media practitioners in Rwanda. Effective documentation through online media, including the Country Office website and social media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube), increased awareness of UNICEF Rwanda's programmes and activities. In addition, it allowed UNICEF Rwanda to highlight support by donors and partners.

UNICEF Rwanda collaborated closely with the Network of Journalists on Ethical Reporting for Children on a youth mentoring programme. The network also published and aired information on flagship priorities of the Rwanda Country Office in both traditional and online media, generating increased awareness among the population.

High-profile advocacy events and commemorative days, such as the launch of the National Partnership for Children with Disabilities – with senior-level participation by UNICEF Rwanda –, complemented advocacy priorities among key stakeholders. In the area of child participation and innovation, a “Hackathon” was organised around the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Programmers and children worked in teams to develop web and mobile-based applications in order to suggest creative solutions to development issues in the country.

UNICEF Rwanda co-chaired the One UN Communication Group, comprising all UN agencies, and provided strategic media guidance to the UN’s work in Rwanda, as well as highlighting children’s issues. UNICEF Rwanda was instrumental in the re-opening of the UN I-Space, a centre for information and innovation accessible to youth and children through both online and print publications.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

UNICEF Rwanda promoted South-South Cooperation through knowledge exchange by sharing lessons and good practices. A notable example was in the ECD sector, where UNICEF Rwanda hosted a global ECD conference with representatives from 12 countries, including government officials, academics and other development partners, to exchange experiences in ECD programming.

Another example was UNICEF Rwanda’s participation on the Interagency Steering Committee for a three-country learning exchange on child care reform hosted by the GoR. With more than 60 participants from Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, this sub-regional event allowed participants to share practices, methods, tools and lessons on the implementation of child care reform in their respective countries, while also learning from the significant progress made by Rwanda. This exchange, followed by another bilateral visit from Zambia, represents an important step in building an evidence-based African agenda for child care reform.

In WASH, UNICEF Rwanda facilitated a study and exchange visit to Rwanda by a delegation from the Government of Cameroon. The visit provided an excellent opportunity to gain a better understanding of the water and sanitation sector policy framework in Rwanda and the strategies used by the GoR to enhance access to WASH. “The experiences of Rwanda will be reflected in the processes of development and implementation of our new National Water Policy”, said a delegate indicating the effectiveness of this cooperation.

UNICEF Rwanda, in collaboration with the Regional Office, facilitated a SUN leadership training by North-West University, South Africa. Through this training, a pan-African master trainer team was created with the capacity to effectively facilitate and develop leadership competencies among existing, in-country nutrition teams.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

RapidSMS Initiative:

UNICEF Rwanda continued to support the RapidSMS system, using mobile technology to track the first 1,000 days of the maternal and child continuum of care. RapidSMS was scaled-up by

the Government to all 30 districts. During 2015, it tracked 176,675 pregnant women and 173,465 new-borns accessing health care and 258,820 children under two years of age, including 132,559 children treated for malaria, 81,631 for pneumonia, and 44,630 for diarrhoea. A formative evaluation of the RapidSMS intervention is scheduled for 2016.

Real-time end-user supply monitoring:

A mobile data collection tool was tested for real-time monitoring of ECD kits, to review if the kits distributed by UNICEF were being used effectively. A six-month pilot was launched to monitor and strengthen the use of the kits in 130 pre-primary schools and 10 ECD and Family (ECD&F) Centres to ensure optimal use and maximum benefit for young children. Based on lessons learnt, the pilot will be expanded to monitor the emergency response efforts for the Burundian refugee population.

Reading data with children:

The NISR and UNICEF Rwanda held an event to discuss DHS and EICV data with children on African Statistics Day. Since the terminology of data can be difficult for children, the information was translated into child-friendly illustrations to make statistics fun for children and encourage discussion. The participants provided interesting analysis and insights.

Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

The UNICEF Rwanda programme structure is anchored on the metaphor “you cannot divide a child”. This entails providing support to children and families using a rights-based approach to programming in a comprehensive manner. To sustain programme integration, Country Office task forces were established, focusing on:

- ECD&F (covered under service delivery)
- Stunting reduction
- Children with disabilities
- Adolescents

Stunting reduction: 22 out of 30 districts developed integrated plans to reduce stunting, using a determinant analysis for planning and action. Combining interventions from several sectors (including agriculture, health and social protection), UNICEF Rwanda supported districts to strengthen M&E systems and to implement plans to deliver an integrated package of nutrition-specific interventions, including growth monitoring, kitchen gardens and saving-lending groups. Key results from this multi-sectoral programme included the scale-up of supplementation with micronutrient powder (Ongera) to reach approximately 200,000 children aged six-to-23 months in 19 target districts.

Support to Children with Disabilities (CWD): The Ability Task Force ensured internal coordination of sectoral interventions for CWD through joint programming and monitoring that resulted in an office-wide CWD vision and strategy document. A National Partnership for CWDs was established, chaired by the National Council of People with Disabilities and co-chaired by the National Council for Children (NCC); UNICEF Rwanda acts as the Secretariat and provides technical support.

Support to Adolescents: A draft adolescent strategy, validated through youth consultations, explores adolescent health (HIV prevention, reproductive health), education (reducing drop-out, promoting continuation), child protection (prevention of violence) and participation. This cross-sectoral approach includes age-appropriate HIV prevention information in the school curriculum;

efforts to reach adolescents with biomedical services such as HIV testing and medical male circumcision; and an integrated information package on HIV and gender-based violence (GBV) to promote behaviour change.

Service Delivery

UNICEF Rwanda is doing significant work in service delivery across each of the different programmatic sectors. UNICEF's 'Early Childhood Development and Family' concept is one comprehensive example of how coordinated and integrated service delivery maximised results for children in 2015. ECD&F service delivery achievements included:

- Three new ECD&F centres were constructed, bringing the total to 13, with the goal of reaching one centre per district as a model for local replication.
- Water and sanitation facilities were installed at ECD&F centres and water was provided to surrounding communities.
- Nutrition services included daily feeding at centres, distribution of micronutrient powders for vulnerable children, and setting up kitchen gardens and cooking demonstrations.
- Health service delivery focused on training of community health workers (CHW) and creating effective linkages between the CHW system and ECD&F centres.
- The social protection section modelled mobile crèches linked to the public works system.
- Early learning materials were developed, including children's books and toys, and distributed to centres and individual homes through an innovative mobile library.
- Home-based ECD groups were set up through training and mentoring of 300 parent leaders, expanding access to early learning in remote areas by hosting ECD groups at their homes.
- Extensive social mobilisation activities promoted demand for the ECD&F services, reaching more than 22,000 people through community theatre and a newly launched radio programme.

In addition, the quality of service delivery was improved through the completion of an essential package of ECD&F services, in combination with training, mentoring and supervision of 73 ECD caregivers, centre managers, home visitors and 10 newly recruited district supervisors.

As a result of these efforts, demand and usage of ECD&F services steadily increased, with more than 1,760 children and 3,000 families benefitting from ECD&F services to date.

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

Rwanda ratified the CRC and its optional protocols; the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The GoR has also enacted a series of legal and policy documents to enforce the provisions included in international conventions.

All UNICEF Rwanda interventions are informed by a human rights-based approach; over the past year UNICEF Rwanda supported the GoR to fulfil, monitor and report on its obligations as follows:

In support of the application of the CRPD, UNICEF Rwanda collaborated with the National Council of Persons with Disabilities to combat discrimination and stigmatisation through specific media programmes. UNICEF Rwanda also supported the MINEDUC to initiate the development of an 'inclusive and special needs education policy', which will foster equitable access to quality education for children with disabilities.

In line with the 2013 concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child report

submitted by the GoR, UNICEF Rwanda worked closely with the Government in all sectors, including:

- Scaling-up the availability of ECD&F services, including revision of the ECD&F policy, and support to availability of national data on ECD&F through the DHS;
- Introducing child-sensitive social protection options into the current social protection system to increase accessibility and acceptability of social protection programmes for households with children;
- Supporting the National Commission for Children to draft a public expenditure review of an Integrated child rights policy, with a view to support increased budget allocations for the child protection sector;
- Supporting the GoR to conduct a national survey to assess prevalence rates of violence against children and develop a response plan;
- Providing significant support to improving the quality of education in Rwanda through curricular reviews and assessments of education results.

Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

In 2015, UNICEF Rwanda actively worked to advance girls' education. UNICEF's substantive support to MINEDUC in the development of the new competency-based curriculum from pre-school through the end of upper secondary incorporated gender mainstreaming into the design of the new education system. The process was initiated in 2014, although the majority of inputs took place during 2015. More than US\$2,000,000 was used to support the development of the curricula overall and the entire Education team was involved throughout the process (six staff in total). Other staff were involved at strategic points, for example in reviewing the content. Thus the new curricula, including training and learning materials for all grades, are more gender-sensitive and promote gender equality throughout the range of subjects and also specifically where gender is discussed, for example in the social studies curriculum.

In addition, over the last 10 years the Country Office has been working in partnership with UN sister agencies and the Imbuto Foundation (a non-profit founded by the First Lady of Rwanda), to encourage high performance and retention of girls in school. This is achieved through awareness-raising initiatives at the community and family levels and by awarding the best-performing girls with annual prizes. The situation of girls' education has improved dramatically in the country since the inception of the programme, and remaining disparities in learning are now being addressed. A total of 3,836 girls have been recognised for their achievements since the inauguration of the programme.

Environmental Sustainability

In its efforts to contribute to protection and conservation of the environment, UNICEF Rwanda continued the promotion of water conservation through rainwater harvesting facilities in schools and ECD centres, with 46 schools and three centres benefitting during 2015. Behaviour-change communication aimed at promoting positive environmental behaviours reached over 550,000 people.

UNICEF Rwanda contributed to the development of a One UN multi-sectoral project that aims to enhance resilience and improve disaster risk management of high-risk communities and vulnerable populations in Ngororero District, considered one of the most vulnerable to climate change. The key components of the project, which will benefit 61,000 people, include livelihoods, health and capacity building for disaster risk reduction. The two-year project was approved for funding by the UN Human Security Trust Fund and implementation is expected to

begin in early 2016.

In collaboration with the Embassy of the Netherlands-funded nutrition programme, Catholic Relief Services and the Netherlands Development Organisation a pilot project was undertaken introducing solar lamps and energy-efficient cooking stoves through local markets in districts where UNICEF Rwanda is supporting nutrition activities. The idea is to provide rural populations with access to affordable green technologies for safer household environments, saving caregivers' resources on firewood and electricity, and contributing to overall environmental sustainability. The pilot and an evaluation in one district will inform the planned scale-up in 2016.

As part of the "Greening the Blue" initiative, UNICEF Rwanda conducted an environmental footprint assessment in 2015. Implementation of measures resulted in reductions in the consumption of fuel, electricity, paper and solid waste through;

- Replacement of office lights with ecological LED lamps;
- Installation of centrally managed printers with options preventing unnecessary printing through use of personal codes and automatic deletion of unattended documents;
- Bi-weekly travel plan encouraging joint travel of staff to the same location.

Effective Leadership

Strategic leadership was maintained throughout the year, using the Country Programme document to guide the overall direction of the programme and maintain a focus on results. The annual management plan was updated twice in 2015 and the practice of annual work-plans was re-established. Regular staff meetings ensured strong oversight of programme and operational areas and encouraged enhanced communication among teams. The emergency management team ensured a coordinated response to the influx of refugees as a result of the crisis in Burundi, effectively participating in inter-agency rapid assessments, interventions and fundraising efforts. Three joint consultative committees meetings were held, and a staff retreat in November served as an important forum to focus on team-building and staff morale.

The country management team (CMT) met monthly to review office-wide management indicators and monitor alignment with global and regional priorities. The CMT discussed progress and challenges and recommended appropriate action to improve performance. As a result, key management indicators are on track. Business continuity planning was updated on a rolling basis and risk management, mitigation and HACT implementation were regularly monitored.

Management of programme cooperation agreements (PCAs) was improved through the use of a performance monitoring database, and in 2016 this will be strengthened through refresher trainings and more frequent financial spot-checks. A real-time end-user supply monitoring system for nutrition and ECD&F was piloted and will be further explored with the Government during 2016 to build capacity in monitoring supply chain processes.

Many recruitments were not completed within 90 days, but this area is being reviewed. In the latter half of the year UNICEF Rwanda made use of temporary assignments to bridge recruitment gaps in key areas such as operations and education.

Financial Resources Management

The planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) unit regularly monitored: fund utilisation and expiring grants, direct cash transfers (DCT) over six and nine months and donor reports. This information was presented at weekly management meetings and monthly CMT meetings. Specific follow-up actions were agreed and tracked.

As a result of this close monitoring, DCT liquidations were timely, with less than 4 per cent between six to nine months (US\$167,359 of total DCT of US\$7,572,797) and zero outstanding over nine months. All funds (regular resources (RR), support budget, in-kind donations, other resources (OR) for the regular and emergency programmes) -- were 100 per cent utilised by the end of December 2015. Emergency programme funds (EPF) were not fully utilised due to support from other donors; the remaining EPF balance was returned in early 2016.

Allocation Utilised per cent / Allocation

- BMA - Institutional Budget US\$449,902 / US\$449,798 (100 per cent)
- GC - RR Allotment for Country Programme US\$8,455,890 / US\$8,459,561 (100 per cent)
- GE - Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) US\$800,000 / US\$545,201 (68 per cent)
- KC - Contribution-in-kind for Country Programme US\$37,429 / US\$37,429 (100 per cent)
- SC - OR Allotment for Country Programme US\$20,346,425 / US\$20,322,571 (100 per cent)
- SM - OR Allotment for Emergency Appeals US\$2,591,487 / US\$2,589,263 (100 per cent)

Grand Total US\$32,681,133 / US\$32,403,822 (99 per cent)

Fund-raising and Donor Relations

In line with the Regional Office's resource mobilisation strategy, UNICEF Rwanda developed an action plan on priority areas; donor profiling to identify new and potential donors for financial and non-financial support; and a funding gap analysis for specific programme sectors. The incoming Representative held introductory meetings with key donor counterparts.

Following the framework set out in 2014 for foundations and private sector fundraising, partnerships with two new donors – IKEA Foundation and Elma Foundation – saw the mobilisation of US\$ 5.3 million. This effort was complemented by the Irish and French National Committees raising US\$330,000 and the securing of US\$446,000 from the UN Trust Fund for Human Security under the One UN framework. The emergency response to the Burundi refugee crisis raised more than US\$ 1 million from UK Aid, the French National Committee and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Both online and social media were used to highlight donor engagement and support. UNICEF Rwanda had the opportunity to participate in a high-level visit by parliamentarians from the Netherlands, one of UNICEF Rwanda's largest donors, where the results of the partnership were showcased. Six successful donor missions were completed, including from National Committees and the CEO of the IKEA Foundation.

To ensure optimum utilisation of funds, UNICEF Rwanda employed a rigorous tracking mechanism that included monitoring of fund allotments, expiring grants and donor reporting. In 2015, a total of 32 donor reports were submitted to donors on time (100 per cent). Monthly reports on contribution management were closely reviewed by the CMT and at programme coordination meetings to ensure effective and timely use of funds. The total funds received and allocated in 2015 were US\$32,329,865, of which 99 per cent had been utilised by 31 December.

Evaluation

UNICEF Rwanda manages the integrated monitoring and evaluation plan (IMEP) through an in-house research committee, whose main responsibility is to provide technical input and oversight for planned research, studies, evaluations and publications. During 2015, a total of 17 evaluations, studies, research projects or assessments were initiated, continued or completed. These included a violence against children survey; sustainability check for the Netherlands-funded WASH project; analysis and publication of an ECD&F baseline survey; analysis and publication of a nutrition, markets and gender survey; and a costing exercise for expansion of pre-primary services. The Rwanda Community Health and Rapid SMS project evaluations were initiated in 2015 and will continue in 2016.

UNICEF Rwanda also supported data generation to inform various policy, programming and advocacy efforts:

- In collaboration with the University of Rwanda, UNICEF Rwanda conducted a nutrition baseline survey in 10 districts. Together with the end-line survey scheduled for 2016, these findings will contribute to the evidence base for multi-sectoral nutrition programming.
- In 2015, the concept of a rolling situation analysis was introduced, with an emphasis on continuously updating the knowledge base with newly released data. In addition, a MoRES analytical package was developed for programme interventions, with specific emphasis on bottleneck identification.
- UNICEF Rwanda collaborated with the NISR for the special event “Reading data with children”, which highlighted that successful advocacy relies on how data is communicated and shared with children and youth.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

UNICEF Rwanda leveraged the One UN business operations strategy (BOS) to capitalise efficiency gains and cost savings during 2015. The implementation of 13 long-term agreements (LTAs) within the framework of the BOS resulted in a total saving of US\$48,399.

Five LTAs were added in 2015:

1. Common Internet service provider
2. Fuel supplies
3. Courier services
4. In-house printing services
5. Audit services

Other measures undertaken for efficiency gains and/or cost savings included:

- The Office continued to utilise a bi-weekly travel plan, avoiding unplanned travel and ensuring joint travel between sections when travelling in the same direction, thereby reducing the number of vehicles deployed for field missions. Combining the bi-weekly travel plan with the vehicle pooling system improved the efficiency of transport of programme staff for field missions.
- As part of the Greening the Blue Initiative, Rwanda Country Office staff were encouraged to use the stairs as opposed to the elevator. The replacement of office lights with ecological LED lamps also resulted in a reduction of the electricity bill by an estimated 25 per cent.

- In addition to the above measures, UNICEF Rwanda reviewed several standard operating procedures (SOPs): low-value procurements, supply and procurement workflow processes for administrative assets and consumables, procurement workflow process for institutional contracts, supply & procurement workflow process for sales orders, administration of communication devices and services, DCT and payment processes. Though not directly translated into monetary gains, the SOP review contributed to increased efficiency in processes and time.

Supply Management

UNICEF Rwanda invested a total of 16 per cent of its funds in procurement of goods and services in 2015.

The total value encompassing procurement services, programme and operational supplies undertaken during the year 2015 was US\$24,285,895.

UNICEF Rwanda 2015	Value in US\$
GAVI	18,556,782
Ministry of Health (MOH)	1,766,068
Total	20,322,850
Supply Input	
Programme Supplies	1,697,581
Operational Supplies	108,973
Services	2,156,491
Sub Total	3,963,045
TOTAL	24,285,895

Goods and services procured to support programme implementation totalled over US\$3.96 million. Of this amount, US\$1.6 million were programme goods, mostly nutrition and education supplies.

Local procurement totalled more than US\$2.7 million. No procurement was undertaken on behalf of other UNICEF Country Offices.

UNICEF Rwanda Local Procurement	Value in US\$
Programme Supplies	528,841
Operational Supplies	59,093
Services	2,156,491
TOTAL	2,744,425

A supply plan worth US\$3.2 million was instituted and implemented in 2015. A significant portion of this procurement was not in the initial plan, owing to the Burundi emergency. Contingency stocks worth US\$155,000 were issued to respond to the Burundi refugee crisis with a turnaround time of one-to two days.

UNICEF Rwanda supported the GoR, through the MOH, in the planning and procurement of vaccine-related supplies. A total of US\$20.3 million, mainly for vaccines, syringes and cold chain equipment, was procured.

Regular meetings with the supply chain coordination team at MOH resulted in discussions that led to the successful integration of nutrition commodities into the Government supply chain, subsequently ensuring sustainable and effective storage, distribution and utilisation of commodities procured by UNICEF Rwanda.

UNICEF Rwanda chairs the UN supply team, supporting UN agencies' supply management, thereby reducing transactional costs. UNICEF Rwanda saved US\$48,399.

For warehousing and distribution, UNICEF Rwanda has an agreement with WFP for 450 cubic meters of warehouse space. Contingency stocks worth US\$191,005 were being held in the facility at end-2015. Stocks worth US\$249,149 were issued in 2015, most of which were delivered directly to implementing partners.

Security for Staff and Premises

In 2015 UNICEF Rwanda requested UNDSS to conduct a security assessment of the Country Office premises and make recommendations on the number of security guards to be deployed for the safety UNICEF staff and premises. The recommendations were promptly implemented.

For all new staff and consultants, a security briefing was undertaken with UNDSS within the first week of arrival in Rwanda.

Eight UNICEF Rwanda staff members attended a UNDSS-organised training, supported by the Rwanda Police Fire Brigade, on fire prevention measures and firefighting skills. The skills gained will ensure that the Country Office is prepared in case of a fire-related incident.

To ensure the safety of its staff on field trips, all UNICEF Rwanda drivers underwent refresher trainings on life-saving first aid skills, through a course organised by the UN Medical Services and the International Red Cross.

UNDSS-mandated minimum operating residential security standards were strictly adhered to by UNICEF. All new international professionals' residences were thoroughly inspected by UNDSS before staff occupied the residences and security guards were assigned to each as per the requirements.

At UNICEF Rwanda premises, rigorous inspections continued to be undertaken prior to any vehicle entering the main compound and all staff and visitors continued to be screened at the entrance before gaining access to premises. In addition, UNICEF Rwanda conducted periodic security simulations with all staff, checking equipment to ensure it is well-functioning and to ensure that all staff are aware of what to do in case of emergency.

A problem with the fire alarm system at the UNICEF Rwanda premises was identified and at the time of reporting was being urgently addressed.

Human Resources

UNICEF Rwanda has 77 established posts, of which three were vacant at the end of December 2015. Fifty-five per cent of staff are female and 45 per cent male. Eight fixed-term positions, five temporary appointments and 43 long- and short-term consultants were recruited during 2015. The global performance assessment system (PAS) cycle was observed: objective-setting was completed at the beginning of the year; mid-year progress reviews were held; and end-year reports were completed, with 98 per cent completion of the 2014 PAS by April 2015.

Human resources clinics were held on a monthly basis to address HR-related issues identified by staff. Career development planning sessions with staff members holding the same position for over six years were also held. The online ethics and integrity course had been completed by 94 per cent of Rwanda Country Office staff by 31 October 2015.

Management, the HR unit and the Staff Association worked closely to develop an action plan for the 2014 Global Staff Survey. The action plan set a common framework for improvements and its implementation was tracked during all-staff meetings. In November, a three-day staff retreat was undertaken where team-building was a core objective.

UNICEF Rwanda maintained its commitment to UN Cares and the 10 minimum standards of HIV/AIDS in the workplace in 2015. Eighty-five per cent of staff and their dependents participated in HIV/AIDS orientation sessions during the December 2014 World Aids Day.

In 2015, one post had RR funds applied to bridge a funding gap. A significant challenge in 2015 was inadequate funding to cover salaries, particularly in the area of cross-sectoral support. It was being addressed by senior management in late 2015.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

UNICEF Rwanda adheres to the IT Solutions and Services Division ICT standards. To maintain effectiveness and efficiency, UNICEF Rwanda continued the implementation of Office365 in 2015 and adopted a team site for documents and information-sharing. ICT continued enhancing user efficiency through sharing of good practices for the utilisation of cloud-based tools, including Skype for Business and OneDrive.

In the areas of innovation, UNICEF Rwanda piloted real-time monitoring projects involving the use of open-source and mobile devices. The “1000 Days” questionnaire, targeting pregnant women and mothers who have children younger than 24 months, aimed to measure the impact of communication efforts related to the “1000 Days” programme in communities.

UNICEF Rwanda continued to provide technical oversight for the upgrade of the RapidSMS system to track maternal and child health, with particular focus on the development of the nutrition module and the dashboard (a high priority for the MoH).

To liaise with key persons of influence and stakeholders, UNICEF Rwanda maintains an active presence and updated content on social media through Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. UNICEF Rwanda also has a digital presence through its web page.

To contribute to efforts to reduce the ICT carbon footprint, UNICEF Rwanda adopted the policy of replacing desktop computers with laptops with docking stations, and centrally managed printers with options preventing unnecessary printing. UNICEF Rwanda is expecting to reduce by around 30 per cent the use of paper, toner and energy for printing through these initiatives.

Under UNICEF Rwanda’s chairmanship, the One UN ICT committee signed an LTA for a common Internet service provider for all UN agencies, leading to a 62 per cent reduction in Internet costs for UN agencies.

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Young children, adolescents and women use improved and equitable high-impact Health, HIV, Nutrition and WASH services

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In 2015 the Government of Rwanda attained MDGs 4 and 5. Maternal and child mortality rates now stand at 210/100,000 and 50/1000 live births, respectively, compared to 476/100,000 and 76/1000 five years ago. The new-born mortality rate declined to 20/1000 live births from 27/1000. The stunting rate in under-five children fell to 38 per cent in 2015 from 44 per cent five years ago.

These achievements were due to early adoption of the MDGs as national targets, strong political commitment, scale-up of effective interventions such as active screening for acute malnutrition, increased access to health facilities with new-born care services and the increased number of health centres providing adequate WASH facilities.

The UNICEF-supported CSD programme played a pivotal role in achieving these milestones through strengthening the enabling environment, enhancing service delivery and capacity building to improve the quality of services. UNICEF Rwanda supported the Government for child survival interventions at both the policy and implementation levels, and for both national development and the refugee response.

With UNICEF technical and financial support, the nutrition policy and implementation plans were finalised and printed, to guide national and local governments and partners in the fight to eliminate malnutrition in Rwanda by the end of 2018. New evidence generated from the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) multiple injection study guided the introduction of IPV in the immunisation calendar for 2016. UNICEF also supported the development of postnatal care guidelines to enhance the quality of services in communities and at health facilities.

The water and sanitation policy and strategy were developed and costed, setting the stage for universal access to water and sanitation. UNICEF Rwanda undertook advocacy activities for an increase in the WASH sector budget; as a result the GoR increased the budget allocation for 2015/16 by over 100 per cent.

UNICEF Rwanda provided technical support to conduct an end-term review of the national elimination of mother to child transmission (eMTCT) strategy, findings of which will inform the development of a two-year (2016-2017) operational plan for prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV. In collaboration with partners, UNICEF assessed adolescent programming through the “All In” initiative, which provides essential data to inform priorities in the coming years.

UNICEF continued its support for the promotion of dietary diversification, resilience and food security in vulnerable households, including the home fortification programme, reaching approximately 200,000 children aged six-to-23 months in 19 target districts. The RapidSMS system for tracking maternal and child health is now being sustained by the Government in all 30 districts. During 2015, the RapidSMS system tracked 176,675 pregnant women and 173,465 new-borns accessing health care; and 258,820 children under two for disease management.

UNICEF supported the Government of Rwanda to improve the quality of PMTCT and paediatric HIV services through a number of training activities. For HIV prevention among adolescents, UNICEF, in collaboration with One UN and CSOs, supported the capacity building of 22 communities through training of 440 community peer educators. This activity reached 90,000 boys and girls with comprehensive knowledge on preventing HIV and GBV.

With support from the Netherlands, Korea and USAID, UNICEF WASH activities provided more than 8,000 people access to improved water supply, while 40,000 people and 55,000 school children gained access to improved sanitation. In addition, over 500,000 people were reached with messages on safe hygiene practices through communication campaigns.

Following the influx of Burundian refugees in April 2015, UNICEF Rwanda, in collaboration with UNHCR and other partners, supported the provision of emergency health, nutrition and WASH services in refugee camps.

Key sector challenges include limited financial resources; shortage of skilled health staff, insufficient capacity of government counterparts, weak district-level multi-sectoral coordination and insufficient availability of medical supplies. One of the major shortfalls is the declining coverage of children on ART – from 54 per cent to 45 per cent – due to a change in treatment guidelines for HIV-infected children. Addressing these main bottlenecks will remain at the centre of UNICEF support in the coming year.

OUTPUT 1 Government capacity to develop/ review/ update policies, strategies, standards/protocols for health, nutrition, HIV/AIDs and WASH programming and system to track the first 1000 days along the maternal and child continuum of care improved

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In 2015 UNICEF Rwanda supported the drafting and finalisation of key sector policies. This included the finalisation and printing of the national food and nutrition policy and strategic plan and review of the water and sanitation policy. The nutrition policy and implementation plans will guide national and local governments and partners towards the elimination of malnutrition in Rwanda by the end of 2018. The updating of the water and sanitation policy was undertaken through the review of the existing sector policy and related policies and frameworks, preparation of a background paper, and consultation with sector stakeholders through a series of consultative workshops. These efforts resulted in the development of an updated draft of the sector policy, to be finalised in 2016.

UNICEF Rwanda also conducted research, reviews and longitudinal studies, which are critical pre-requisites to initiating policy reforms and associated strategy changes. The IPV multiple injection study was completed, paving the way for the introduction of IPV into the current immunisation schedule for the polio endgame. Support was also provided to conduct an end-term review of the eMTCT strategy to inform development of the 2016-2018 operational plan and review of the HIV guidelines.

UNICEF Rwanda supported a paediatric development clinic initiative (PDCI) currently being implemented in five health facilities covering all villages in Kayonza District with the design and implementation of a model district-wide approach to caring for children with disabilities as well as high-risk infants and children. The effort focuses on reducing barriers to quality care and integrating ECD activities into the continuum of health care. By end of December 2015 over 300 children were enrolled in the programme and were being tracked and evaluated on a monthly basis. The long-term medical and developmental outcomes for children served under the

initiative will be used to generate a strong evidence base for implementing the model at scale.

UNICEF Rwanda provided technical support to document two eMTCT best practices, which were shared with the African Union and disseminated for learning and possible application by other African countries. In collaboration with UNFPA and the Rwanda Education Board, UNICEF supported the integration of HIV/AIDS and adolescent and sexual reproductive health (SRH) in the school curriculum. UNICEF Rwanda and UNAIDS jointly supported the Government to conduct an assessment on adolescent programming under the 'All In' initiative. Capacity building in early infant male circumcision (EIMC) services was provided through modelling in four district hospitals; lessons learnt are being used to develop national training materials and protocols for EIMC and scale-up of services to six new facilities.

Key WASH sector advocacy initiatives were supported through the preparation of a progress report on the 2014 'Country Commitments for Sanitation and Water for All' high-level meeting; a country report for the African Conference on Sanitation-4 (AfricaSan); celebration of World Water Day, Global Handwashing Day, and Mother and Child Health Week; and support for the participation of two Government officials in AfricaSan-4 meeting held in Senegal in May 2015.

OUTPUT 2 Young children, adolescents and women have equitable access to health services

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Rwanda continued support to strengthen the RapidSMS mobile technology to track the first 1000 days of the maternal and child continuum of care. The RapidSMS system is functional in all 30 districts. Technical assistance (two RapidSMS managers) and supportive supervision, mentoring and on-the-job training were provided to the MoH in 10 districts. During 2015, the RapidSMS system tracked 176,675 pregnant women and 173,465 new-borns accessing health care; as well as 258,820 under-two children, including 132,559 children who were treated for malaria, 81,631 for pneumonia, and 44,630 for diarrhoea.

UNICEF supported district coordination of the maternal child and community health (MCCH) programme and trained 13,489 CHWs on key RapidSMS messages and on the use of RapidSMS handbooks; 4,501 maternal health CHWs were trained on integrated home-based maternal and new-born care. Finally, 323 health providers, 24 district hospital providers and 300 health centre providers learned essential new-born care to enhance services at 162 health facilities located in 10 districts.

To facilitate real-time data transmission, a RapidSMS handbook was developed and provided to 6,000 CHWs in four districts, and 610 health facility staff from 12 district hospitals and 150 health centres were trained on using harmonised RapidSMS and MCCH monitoring tools. Advocacy meetings were held with sector leaders to raise awareness on the importance of RapidSMS. Equipment was provided to CHWs to improve the quality of community care for 1,851,608 children under five.

To sustain high coverage and quality of immunisation, UNICEF conducted an effective vaccine management (EVM) assessment, which informed the development of an improvement plan and approval from the GAVI Alliance to introduce new vaccines, including IPV. To implement the EVM improvement plan, UNICEF provided an additional working cold room, vaccine temperature monitoring devices, freeze tags and IT equipment for stock management and supported training of EPI staff on the supply chain, preparation of the polio vaccine "switch", and the polio eradication strategy. UNICEF participated in the GAVI joint appraisal and reporting to the GAVI Alliance, which influenced the second instalment of the "health systems strengthening"

funds as well as the GAVI performance-based funding received in 2015.

Key sector challenges included limited financial resources to support emergency obstetric care and integrated community case management, shortage of skilled health staff, insufficient capacity of government counterparts, weak district level multi-sectoral coordination and insufficient availability of medical supplies. Addressing these main bottlenecks will remain at the centre of UNICEF support in the years to come.

OUTPUT 3 Communities, schools and health centres have increased and equitable access to safe water and improved sanitation and hygiene services

Analytical Statement of Progress:

During 2015 UNICEF Rwanda made tremendous headway in garnering key WASH results through multiple service delivery initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life through improved access to safe water and sanitation facilities. UNICEF Rwanda provided gender-segregated latrines in 45 schools, resulting in increased access to improved sanitation in schools impacting 27, 000 boy and 28,000 girls in primary schools. The water and sanitation programme, aimed at improving water supply to ECD&F centres, was on-going and by the close of 2015, some 800 children aged zero-to-six years had access to safer water and improved sanitation facilities.

As part of hygiene and sanitation promotion interventions, 3,200 community hygiene club members were trained on hygiene and sanitation promotion; 2,060 masons were trained on the building of improved latrines and now have the knowledge and skills to build low-cost models of latrines for community members. As a result more than 8,000 community members gained access to improved water supply, through new and rehabilitated water points, while more than 40,000 people gained access to improved sanitation facilities through the construction of over 10,000 new, improved latrines. To sustain the knowledge and skills pool attained through capacity-building activities, over 500,000 people were reached with messages on safe hygiene practices.

UNICEF Rwanda, in partnership with USAID, supported the MoH in the organisation of a national stakeholders' workshop on the community-based environmental health promotion programme (CBEHPP). The workshop resulted in a review of the progress of CBEHPP, the flagship programme of the Government for promotion of safe sanitation and hygiene practices, launched in 2009. Based on the workshop deliberations, UNICEF supported the MoH in the development of an action plan for the national-level scale-up of CBEHPP.

Technical assistance was provided for the development of a concept note on sustainable operation and maintenance of rural water supply systems, which contributed to enhanced sustainability of water supply systems. Based on the concept note, a national stakeholder's workshop on sustainable operation and maintenance of rural water supply systems is planned, organised by Rwanda Water and Sanitation Corporation Ltd. in early 2016. The workshop outcomes will feed directly into the development of an action plan for enhancing the sustainability of rural water supply in Rwanda.

In capacity development, 14 district staff and nine private operators were trained in effective operation and maintenance of water supply systems. The private operators are expected to offer low-cost operation and maintenance services to communities. Private businesses have been sensitised on the potential of investing in sanitation marketing, which will result in supplies being more accessible and at a lower cost to the community. Finally, 1,500 members of water

point committees and community WASH teams were trained on their roles and responsibilities within the context of public-private partnerships, with a focus on operation and maintenance of water supply systems, tariff collection and consumer protection

OUTPUT 4 Young children, adolescents and women have improved access to HIV/AIDS treatment, care, prevention and protection services

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Coverage of HIV prevention services is high in Rwanda; however, the quality and efficiency of services provided to HIV-infected pregnant women and children is a challenge due to poor follow-up mechanisms and inadequate capacity of health care workers to track women and provide them with sustained care. Uptake of HIV services among adolescents is also low due to inadequate information, lack of adolescent-friendly services, and inadequate supply. In 2015, UNICEF supported the GoR to address these challenges, and achieved the following:

- a. The capacity to deliver quality PMTCT and paediatric ART services was enhanced through the training of 230 health care workers from 44 (60 per cent) health facilities in Kigali City on the use of a more efficient finger prick method for HIV testing. Lessons learnt show that the method has reduced the time between testing and receiving results, and it is most ideal in maternity and voluntary testing and counselling settings. With support from other partners, the MoH scaled up the services to all facilities in four out of the five provinces in the country.
- b. To improve the quality of service delivery, UNICEF Rwanda undertook capacity building of health care workers in 16 district hospitals and 75 satellite health centres on skills to analyse data on performance indicators, for quality improvement of service delivery. UNICEF Rwanda also strengthened community-based care for HIV-positive women and children through the training of 292 peer educators from the Association of People Living with HIV. In addition, 54 PMTCT nurses from 33 facilities were trained on counselling skills and psychosocial support, benefitting 2,500 women and 80 families.

To improve access to adolescent-friendly HIV prevention services UNICEF Rwanda, in partnership with a local CSO, scaled up delivery of HIV prevention interventions in all sectors of one of the most marginalised districts in Rwanda. The capacity to deliver comprehensive information on HIV and GBV prevention was strengthened at both the facility and community levels in 22 sectors, through the revision of training materials to include information on HIV and GBV. In addition, 440 community-based adolescent peer educators were trained, with the result that 90,000 adolescents were reached with services. There is lack of trained staff and materials to provide surgical male circumcision for adolescent boys, however, 5,000 adolescent boys from the lowest health quintile were tested for HIV and provided with circumcisions. In Kigali City, parent forums were used to reach 5,000 vulnerable women with HIV- and GBV-prevention information, who are prepared to build the capacity of parents to engage adolescents on sexuality issues at the community level.

OUTPUT 5 Children and women have equitable access to WASH, nutrition and health in humanitarian situations as per CCC standards

Analytical Statement of Progress:

As a result of thorough emergency preparedness, the humanitarian response to the refugee influx from Burundi (late March 2015) was timely and effective. As of 21 December, the number of refugees had reached 71,820, of whom 45,476 were registered in Mahama refugee camp

and the remaining refugees were in urban areas. Humanitarian action was grounded in the provision of basic services to affected populations using existing social systems whenever possible, and providing direct service delivery in Mahama refugee camp. Under the overall coordination of MIDIMAR and UNHCR, UNICEF served as UN co-coordinator for the response in WASH, Health (with WHO and UNFPA), and Nutrition (with WFP).

UNICEF worked closely with relevant ministries, district hospitals and health centres, WASAC, PAJER and Oxfam, on a response that included setting-up systems in the areas of health, nutrition and WASH, with a special focus on the provision of WASH supplies and establishment of WASH facilities; screening and management of severe acute malnutrition; and provision of polio and measles vaccines for children (as well as routine immunisation).

With support from UNICEF to Mahama refugee camp, over 45,000 Burundian refugees benefitted from the provision of water and sanitation; more than 27,000 children and women were vaccinated (polio, measles and routine vaccinations); and more than 500 children under five with severe acute malnutrition were treated. This was achieved through the provision of essential commodities (e.g. vaccines, vitamin A, deworming tablets, safe water supply and construction of emergency sanitation facilities and training of health care providers. The effort also included training of CHWs on maternal and child health, key family care practices, case management of SAM and the establishment of system of community hygiene promoters.

To address the main health threats (e.g. malaria, diarrhoea), UNICEF provided insecticide treated nets. Tents and diarrhoeal kits were provided to establish an isolation centre in case of an outbreak of cholera, as part of the emergence preparedness and response plan.

To strengthen timely and quality nutrition services for the refugee population, UNICEF Rwanda deployed staff in the camp and reception centres to assist with management of SAM.

UNICEF Rwanda also supported the construction of a temporary water treatment plant in Mahama refugee camp (with more than 46,000 beneficiaries) as well as development of a strategy for long-term sustainable water supply options for the camp. Based on the strategy, which was agreed by sector partners, UNICEF Rwanda supported preparation of the design and tender documents for a permanent water treatment plant for Mahama refugee camp.

OUTCOME 2 Key learning outcomes including literacy, numeracy and employability skills for all children improved, with special attention to vulnerable children and school readiness.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Rwanda is one of the top-performing countries in sub-Saharan Africa in education, having achieved MDG2 (universal primary education) with a net enrolment rate of 97 per cent (MINEDUC, 2014), thanks to significant efforts over the last decade by the Rwandan Government, with supported from partners, to expand education access throughout the country. Progress towards MDG3, gender equality in education, had similarly encouraging results, with roughly equal numbers (1.2 million) of girls and boys enrolled in primary school. However, equitable access is still a key issue amongst some groups of vulnerable children; for example those with disabilities at the primary level, who represent less than 1 per cent of the total number of pupils enrolled (MINEDUC, 2014).

Moving forward in the climate of the new SDGs, these impressive gains in access to primary school must now be matched by similar increases in access to pre-primary (which stands at only 13 per cent - MINEDUC, 2014) and significant improvements in quality and efficiency throughout the system. Recognising this need and guided by national Economic Poverty

Reduction Strategy 2, MINEDUC, with substantial financial and technical support from UNICEF and other partners, embarked on an ambitious programme of curriculum reform over the past two years, culminating in 2015 in the transformation of the previous knowledge-based approach to a competency-based curriculum from pre-primary through to the end of upper secondary. This shift has the potential to better equip children with the skills and competencies they need to develop into adults capable of contributing to Rwanda's future labour market and realising its vision of becoming a knowledge-based middle-income country by 2020.

In terms of progress on key outcome indicators during 2015, measurement was hampered due to the fact that the 2015 education statistics have not yet been published. Steady progress was made during the year on the 'Learning Achievement in Rwandan Schools' assessment initiated in 2014, which measures numeracy and literacy skills in primary grades. For the first time ever, the assessment also collected data on child, teacher, parent and school characteristics, which will make it possible to link results to factors impacting children's learning. The final report will be released during the first half of 2016.

UNICEF's approach to supporting the national education system in Rwanda is a mixture of international and national technical assistance and financial support, with the education programme aligning closely with the education sector strategic plan. At the upstream level, as co-chair of the education sector working group (with the UK Department for International Development, DFID) and chair of the curriculum, materials and assessment and early childhood education working groups, UNICEF continued to play a critical role throughout 2015, supporting key priorities identified through research and bottleneck analyses on vulnerable children, quality education and learning and pre-school and school readiness.

In collaboration with the Regional Office, support was given for undertaking a study on the education of children with disabilities, which will inform the on-going development of the inclusive education policy. A review of Rwanda's progress in achieving the Education For All goals was carried out and resulted in recommendations to further address the challenges of out-of-school children and access to quality education for vulnerable groups. This was accompanied by a bottleneck analysis of pre-primary programmes, which identified a shortage of funding, a lack of infrastructure and learning materials, a dearth of qualified teachers and absence of standards for pre-primary services as key bottlenecks for scaling up pre-primary services. The analysis led to a study on the costs of pre-primary education, which resulted in a range of costed options that were presented to MINEDUC at the joint review of the education sector in November. This work is now feeding into national budget revisions for 2016-2017, and there is optimism that it will positively influence state allocations to the pre-school sub-sector. To complement these efforts UNICEF also designed and built five model preschools, with an additional two underway. These models are now being studied by MINEDUC, in conjunction with the costing study, to develop a plan and associated construction standards for cost-effectively scaling up pre-school construction nationwide with UNICEF support.

UNICEF was instrumental in the curriculum overhaul mentioned above; for example coordinating other UN agencies and partners to ensure the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues into the new curriculum, such as inclusive education, gender, health and HIV/AIDs and supporting the REB to produce, distribute and implement the new curriculum through teacher training and the development of new teaching/learning materials and competency-based assessment strategies.

At the decentralised and community levels, in 2015 UNICEF worked with government education and administrative structures together with NGOs to support capacity building and service

delivery interventions in development and emergency contexts, including support for quality pre-primary and basic education for all refugee children in four of the six refugee camps in Rwanda through a school-based teacher mentoring program. Support was also given to REB to launch an innovative pilot enabling 70 sector education officers to monitor play-based learning in 140 pre-primary schools.

The progress and achievements in education in 2015 were made possible through collaboration with multiple partners, including DFID, International Education Exchange, CARE, the Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA), COSTA, Forum for African Women Educationalists and Voluntary Service Overseas, as well as donor support from USAID, IKEA and UNICEF National Committees in Belgium, Finland, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and U.S.

OUTPUT 1 Quality and relevance of education improved

Analytical Statement of Progress:

To improve the quality and relevance of education at the national and decentralised levels UNICEF continued to support the development of content and roll-out of the new competency-based curriculum for pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. The new curriculum will equip graduates with the relevant skills and attitudes required for Rwanda's future labour market and social demands. To put it into practice, UNICEF assisted in the design and implementation of teacher training programmes; during 2015 over 4,000 people were trained, including national subject trainers, district master trainers, school subject leaders and REB staff. To complement this work, UNICEF also supported the development of national learning and assessment standards in line with the new curriculum for pre-primary and for both primary and secondary grades 3 and 6. The first draft of the standards was completed and is being reviewed.

In terms of data management, UNICEF worked with REB to develop the teacher management and information system (TMIS), a national teacher database that will enhance management of the teaching workforce. With the massive teacher training plans underway to implement the new curriculum, the TMIS will assist the REB to collect and manage teacher data, which will subsequently inform MINEDUC plans for teacher development and deployment.

In schools, the school-based teacher training programme, conducted through a partnership with International Education Exchange (IEE), deployed mentors on a full-time basis to targeted schools to work with teachers to improve their English language proficiency and teaching skills. These mentors supported approximated 1,500 teachers in 48 schools and, as a result, over 70,000 children are now being taught by teachers with enhanced pedagogical skills and language knowledge levels. IEE also implemented the "whole school development programme" (WSD) in 13 child-friendly schools (CFS). The programme focuses on school leadership and management, teaching and learning, community involvement and how these elements support effective and inclusive usage of teaching and learning materials to support learning. WSD will be rolled out in the 48 schools of intervention in which UNICEF is collaborating with IEE.

UNICEF continued to support the "Rwanda Reads" initiative, which seeks to promote reading, by supporting the May General Assembly, supporting teachers to improve storage and management of books and reading materials, and promoting the use of books and readers in the classroom. UNICEF and IEE distributed over 10,000 readers in English and Kinyarwanda to support reading practices in WSD CFS.

OUTPUT 2 Critical bottlenecks are addressed to expand access to quality pre-primary and early learning programmes

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In line with global and regional priorities on early learning, UNICEF is modelling pre-primary and early learning programmes with the overall objective of informing the future scale-up of these initiatives to contribute toward national development targets in this area. The approach began with a bottleneck analysis.

To enhance future advocacy efforts and encourage improvements in fund allocation a costing study was conducted in partnership with MINEDUC to determine the costs of pre-primary education, thus determining how much would be required to implement a quality school-based pre-primary programme. The study provided a range of costed options to MINEDUC and will help facilitate dialogue and create constructive pressure for continued expansion of investment in pre-primary services, especially in the most vulnerable districts.

To complement these upstream efforts UNICEF has been constructing model pre-primary facilities (consisting of three classrooms each, WASH facilities and hand-washing stations and fences) as well as providing age-appropriate furniture, play-based learning materials and outdoor equipment. During 2015 two additional sites were completed, bringing the total number built to date up to seven. These seven facilities now have the capacity to enrol more than 800 pre-school children in time for the 2016 school year. The model is being reviewed by MINEDUC as part of a comprehensive plan to scale up pre-school access nationwide.

Much work also was devoted to ensuring that efforts on access are matched by improvements in quality. UNICEF provided technical assistance for the development and finalisation of the play-based pre-primary curriculum, launched in April, and of the associated teachers' guide and the development of learning and assessment standards. Through a partnership with Voluntary Service Overseas and the University of Rwanda-College of Education, the pre-service training system for pre-school teachers in all 13 teacher training colleges was strengthened, and quality teaching and learning materials were developed in support of the implementation of an early childhood education pre-service curriculum aligned to the new competency-based pre-primary curriculum.

Support was also given to REB to launch an innovative pilot enabling 70 sector education officers to monitor play-based learning in 140 pre-primary schools by using real-time data collection tools, simultaneously supporting teachers in the classroom to improve teaching practices and create child-friendly environments. The results of this monitoring work will be analysed in early 2016 and fed back into the pre-school teacher training initiatives.

OUTCOME 3 Children in all settings are protected from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect within an evidence- informed child protection system

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Since the beginning of the current Country Programme, key achievements in the child protection sector illustrate UNICEF's continuous support to the GoR towards building a solid protection system that is able to protect children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, and to prevent major protection risks both in regular and humanitarian settings. Based on UNICEF's comparative advantage, the Country Office focused its support on strengthening an evidence-based policy and legislative framework, supporting critical coordination mechanisms, as well as human and institutional capacity to implement the system reform. In line with Rwanda's

integrated child rights policy, the two flagship areas of support and entry points for building stronger systems are: (i) prevention and response to violence against children, especially girls; and (ii) child care reform, with a focus on sustainable reintegration of children from institutional care into families.

Over the past year notable progress was made toward the implementation of significant policies and legal dispositions pertaining to the most vulnerable children, such as the “Justice for Children Policy”, which promotes participatory decision-making in legal matters through the involvement of children, families, victims and communities. Key coordination mechanisms for the management of the child protection system were also reinforced. The child protection working group established in 2014 continued to serve as the national platform for the coordination of child protection interventions; while a “national partnership for children with disabilities” was established in March 2015 to effectively coordinate key actions dedicated to children with disabilities.

In partnership with other UN agencies, UNICEF continued its support to initiatives against violence, such as the national scale-up of the Isange One-Stop Centres (OSCs), which during the reporting period provided free assistance to more than 5,000 victims of GBV and child abuse. To date 21 OSCs are functioning, and nine more will be operational by 2016.

Ensuring the availability and utilisation of de-centralised multi-sectoral child protection services remained a critical objective for UNICEF and its partners in 2015. Important achievements included: UNICEF support to the child care reform process, which contributed to 870 children formerly living in orphanages being safely reintegrated into family-based care; and response to the refugee influx from Burundi through the provision of quality child protection services to more than 7,000 children, with partners such as MIDIMAR, UNHCR and NGOs.

Human and financial resource capacity presented a challenge at both the national and subnational levels. To address these challenges, increased efforts were made to prioritise strategic human investments for the child protection sector. Notably, in 2015 UNICEF supported the deployment across districts and capacity building of the final cadre of 68 social workers and psychologists who represent the first-ever Government-led qualified social welfare workforce in the country. UNICEF also joined the Minister of Gender and Family Promotion and the National Commission for Children in establishing a new cadre of 6,600 community-based volunteer para-professionals dedicated to child protection called *Inshuti Z' Umuryango* or “Friends of the Family”, tasked with providing child and family protection services at the village level.

Finally, to reinforce institutional capacity for policy formulation and planning for the child protection system UNICEF, in partnership with the MoH and the U.S. Centres for Disease Control (CDC) conducted a comprehensive survey that assessed for the first time the national prevalence of violence against children and youth aged 13-to-24 years. The results of the survey will inform major policy and programming interventions to prevent and respond to violence against children, including children with disabilities.

In collaboration with the National Commission for Children, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Local Government, UNICEF supported a thematic review of the integrated child rights policy, with a focus on child protection budget allocations made by the GoR and its partners. The review is expected to facilitate planning and returns on national expenditure for child protection and advance the “Financing for Children” agenda as part of Rwanda’s efforts to implement the SDGs. starting in 2016.

Progress and achievements in protecting children's rights during the reporting period were made possible through collaboration with multiple partners, including the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion; National Commission for Children; ministries of Justice, Health, and Local Affairs; NISR; One UN sister agencies, and NGOs such as Plan International Rwanda, Hope and Homes for Children, Global Communities; as well as the generous support of donors such as USAID Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, DFID, Embassy of Japan, the Ikea Foundation, and Zonta International. These successful partnerships were particularly illustrated by the implementation of the *Tubarerere Mu Muryango* ("Let's raise Children in families!") programme and the community-based para-social workers model at village level (*Inshuti Z'Umuryango*).

OUTPUT 1 Legal framework, coordination and management of Child Protection System strengthened at all levels

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In support of legal and policy reform in child protection, major national achievements included the adoption and enforcement of the justice for children policy, legal aid policy and the law on organisation, jurisdiction, competence and functioning of mediation committees, all drafted with UNICEF technical assistance.

Implementation of the justice for children policy will facilitate the promotion of participatory decision-making for reconciliation, restitution and responsibility through involvement of the child, family members, victims and communities in both civil and criminal matters.

The law on mediation committees represents an important milestone toward implementation of the justice for children policy. It allows community-based mediators (or *Abunzi*) to extend their jurisdiction to the settlement of offenses committed against children. Over the last six months, UNICEF and partners have supported the Government to develop training materials, including a module on child protection, for the recently elected 17,948 mediators who will implement the new justice for children policy at decentralised levels.

Additionally, a revised Family Law, which is soon to be adopted, will provide a legal platform to improve access to universal birth registration within a modern, web-based national civil registration and vital statistics system that aims to reach the 21 per cent of children who remained unregistered as of the 2012 Census.

In supporting the GoR to establish effective coordination mechanisms in the child protection sector, UNICEF continued to support the national child protection working group (CPWG), an overall coordination forum comprised of key child protection stakeholders. Under the umbrella of the CPWG, thematic coordination mechanisms were established as national platforms for the coordination of child protection interventions, addressing coordination challenges in this important cross-cutting area of national development.

The Violence against Children Network, co-led by the NCC and UNICEF, supported major advocacy initiatives this year, such as evidence-based national campaigns to prevent teenage pregnancy, human trafficking and abuse against child domestic workers.

To ensure full and equitable inclusion of children with disabilities into social systems, in March 2015 UNICEF supported the GoR to establish a national partnership on children with disabilities. In December 2015, all participating partners endorsed a jointly developed action plan to be implemented in 2016, focusing on: enforcement of laws, policies and standards;

Inclusive programming and service delivery; research and knowledge management; and advocacy and communication.

OUTPUT 2 Multi sectoral child protection services available and utilised at national and decentralised levels

Analytical Statement of Progress:

To support the provision of timely and quality protection services to vulnerable children and women in Rwanda, key results were achieved in the areas of: (i) access to justice; (ii) violence against women and children; (iii) child care reform; and (iv) humanitarian interventions.

- i. UNICEF continued its collaboration with the Ministry of Justice to ensure children's access to a child-friendly justice system through 17,948 newly elected and trained community mediators (Abunzi).
- ii. In collaboration with other UN agencies, UNICEF contributed to the scale-up of the OSC programme; 21 OSC are currently operational and 30 will be operational by December 2016.
- iii. During the reporting period, OSCs provided holistic services to more than 5,000 victims of GBV and child abuse.
- iv. Within the child care reform process, UNICEF contributed to the safe reintegration into family-based care of 870 children formerly living in orphanages. This was achieved through close collaboration with the NCC and NGOs within the "Let's raise children in families!" programme. In September 2015, UNICEF supported the NCC to conduct a comprehensive review of the programme, which highlighted the importance of building a strong evidence base, harmonising programme indicators and tools and ensuring strong partner alignment.
- v. Informed by a UNICEF-led risk analysis and cross-border preparedness activities conducted in late 2014, UNICEF, UNHCR and NGO partners, provided immediate direct assistance to more than 7,000 children and women refugees since the onset of the Burundian crisis in April 2015. Child-friendly spaces were established, referral systems set up, and community-based protection mechanisms reinforced. In July 2015, UNICEF also contributed to the elaboration of a multi-sectoral joint action plan to deliver inclusive humanitarian services to Burundian refugees with disabilities. In two camps where refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo are living, UNICEF continued its support for preventing and responding to violence against children and women. Some 5,812 children (70 per cent girls) received care and psycho-social assistance, and 190 volunteers and staff were trained on child protection in emergencies.

The development of important guidelines and standard operating procedures over the past year – such as those for OSCs – illustrates the significant efforts made by the Government and its partners to address the issue of standardised delivery of child protection services, which until this year still represented a constraint in the provision of quality services across the country.

OUTPUT 3 Dedicated social welfare workforce for Child Protection System operational and sustained

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Improving the response capacity of the child protection system through a qualified professional and para-professional workforce both at national and sub-national levels remains a critical objective in Rwanda. UNICEF continued to support the NCC's capacity to lead the child care

and protection system reform through: (i) targeted technical assistance, (ii) a national capacity-building plan for social welfare workers and (iii) the recruitment of a team of qualified volunteers to support reform implementation.

- i. Further to the “Let’s raise children in families!” programme review held in September 2015, UNICEF supported the NCC and its partners to adopt common case management forms, procedures and M&E tools for greater efficiency.
- ii. Ten professional social workers and 11 psychologists were recruited in 2015 to complete Rwanda’s first social welfare cadre, which is composed of 68 qualified staff. The newly recruited professionals participated in a UNICEF-supported pre-service capacity development programme before being deployed in various districts across the country.
- iii. To further strengthen the human resource component of the child protection system at the decentralised levels, UNICEF and partners supported the NCC to establish an innovative system of community-based para-professional volunteers called “Friends of the Family”, who are tasked with providing child and family protection services at the village level and making referrals to the professional social welfare workforce at district levels. In May/June 2015, a public participatory process was undertaken, led by decentralised government actors, where 6,600 volunteers were identified in seven districts through standardised selection procedures. By March 2016, all 30 districts will have completed the identification process and have Friends of the Family in place. In preparation for the phased approach to capacity building of volunteers and supervisors nationwide, 30 professional social welfare officers participated in a training of trainers’ session on volunteer management and supervision. Friends of the Family volunteers will address a wide range of social services for children, including: contributing to ECD through appropriate referrals to service providers; direct provision of support to parents in positive parenting; and strengthening referrals related to child violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

In line with the objective of integrating child protection standards into allied sectors, UNICEF has supported the justice sector to develop training materials for community mediators on the provisions of the recently adopted justice for children policy, to be rolled out through a training of trainers in early 2016.

OUTPUT 4 Evidence on Child Protection generated and used to strengthen Child Protection System, improve programming, and address social norms

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In conformity with Rwanda’s integrated child rights policy that calls for increased evidence in child protection to effectively inform policy and programme development, and in order to build capacity to close the knowledge gap and produce reliable data on child protection, UNICEF supported the MOH, Ministry of Justice (MINIJUST), Ministry of Gender and Family Protection (MIGEPROF), NCC and the City Council of Kigali to build an evidence base for the child protection system in three thematic areas.

Firstly, in partnership with the MOH and the CDC conducted a comprehensive survey on violence against children and youth, which assesses for the first time the national prevalence of violence against children aged 13-to-24 years old. Results expected in 2016 will inform major policy and programming interventions to prevent and respond to violence against children, including for children with disabilities.

Secondly, UNICEF, the ILO and civil society organisations collaborated with the Kigali City

Council to address the situation of child domestic workers in the capital. The first phase included a rapid assessment on child domestic labour in three districts in the Province of Kigali which was completed in October 2015. The assessment highlighted that 80 per cent of child domestic workers are girls and that many left school in the last year of primary, mostly due to the effects of poverty. The second phase, which will be completed in February 2016, will include a multi-stakeholder action plan to prevent and respond to child domestic labour in urban areas.

Finally, in partnership with MIGEPROF, the NCC, and the ministries of Finance and Local Government, UNICEF supported a thematic review of the integrated child rights policy (ICRP), with a focus on child protection planning and budget allocations made by Government and partners. Preliminary results show an increase in the overall budget allocated for child protection-related interventions over the last three financial years. The review also highlighted opportunities for increasing the fiscal space for child protection, considering the relatively limited percentage of total budget allocated to the sector both at national and district levels. The detailed results of the assessment are expected to provide guidance to key ministries to advocate for increased allocations for child protection, prioritise specific interventions and develop budget guidelines for child protection as outlined in the ICRP. The findings of the assessment also constitute a significant step toward costing the child protection system in Rwanda, planned for 2016. Lastly, the results pave the way for advancing the “financing for children” agenda as part as Rwanda’s efforts to implement the SDGs starting next year.

OUTCOME 4 Vulnerable families with children have reduced exposure to livelihood risk, inequalities and poverty through improved social policies, budgetary frameworks and social protection systems

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF’s focus in the area of social inclusion remained on supporting critical interventions to generate evidence and influence the development of inclusive, equitable social policies and programmes complemented by increased budget allocations. Strengthening of the child-sensitiveness of the social protection system remained the priority, in line with Rwanda’s poverty reduction strategy for 2013-2018, which focuses on combining economic development and social protection strategies to reduce poverty. The programme was implemented in a country context marked by consistent successes in improving socio-economic indicators, yet facing continuous challenges in ensuring access to quality services by all segments of the population. The country’s investment in social sectors is increasing annually following the steady increase in GDP (7 per cent on average) and an increase in national revenues (with more aggressive implementation of taxation policy in the past few years). Despite improved levels of domestic revenues, Rwanda remains dependent on official development assistance.

Rwanda is one of the countries that achieved almost all MDGs. Although significant efforts were made to reduce poverty, the poverty rate is still at 39.1 per cent and extreme poverty at 16.3 per cent (EICV-4). The coverage of social protection programmes is still inadequate (8.3 per cent of population), although the country is progressing well in meeting its 2018 target of about 1 million individuals benefiting from such programmes.

UNICEF continued its integration of social policies and programmes for children in 2015. As a result of extensive research, analysis and support to national surveys, several policies were drafted and validated in 2015; for example, in ECD and WASH. The emerging focus on costing of basic social services resulted in several policy products and decisions being influenced, particularly around ECD, education and social protection. The research and analysis undertaken confirms the need to strengthen synergies and referrals between sectors. The programme has

actively pursued and established innovative linkages between social protection, nutrition and ECD through modelling of child-sensitive social protection (CSSP), linking public works with child care services and nutrition-specific interventions for the poorest households in two localities.

Through UNICEF advocacy and a fruitful collaboration with the NISR, important steps were taken towards ensuring availability of national data on child poverty and child vulnerabilities by inclusion of ECD, social protection and child labour modules into the DHS-5 and the EICV-4 surveys. A number of studies were supported by the programme, focusing on ECD, child protection and nutrition. In addition, two costing studies on pre-primary education and an ECD policy implementation plan, as well as the public expenditure review of child protection were implemented and have laid the groundwork for advancing the financing for children agenda in 2016.

UNICEF's engagement around strengthening the CSSP system focused on bottlenecks linked to enabling environment, supply and demand. In cooperation with the Government and development partners, UNICEF has created a policy environment to support expansion and effectiveness of social protection transfers while ensuring they are child-sensitive. The resulting costed "Child-sensitive Social Protection Implementation Plan for 2016/2017" is to be spearheaded by the GoR under the World Bank development policy operations for social protection. To support the planned scaling-up by the GoR, UNICEF, in cooperation with CARE International and MINALOC, launched an initiative to model expanded public works (PW) promoting new types of PW jobs that are more conducive to child care, and linking PWs to child care initiatives (e.g. mobile crèche).

A significant bottleneck linked to availability of social protection services was addressed through the design and costing of the options for the development of the social protection management information system (SP MIS). Upon approval of the design, the funding for the actual development of the SP MIS was leveraged from a DFID technical facility established in 2015.

The social protection sector is currently undergoing changes in a number of policy and programme areas aimed at strengthening its efficiency and effectiveness. UNICEF Rwanda provided unique contributions to the sector by targeting its activities at main identified bottlenecks (including efficiency and effectiveness) through the design of the CSSP approach, and continued its close collaboration with GoR and development partners to promote the children's agenda. In 2015, UNICEF provided significant contributions to social protection system-building through well-targeted and low-cost interventions. Thus UNICEF was able to provide strategic inputs to leverage funding from DFID (for development of the SP MIS) and the World Bank (the social protection development policy operations loan for 2016/2017 amounting to US\$95 million. The child-sensitive social protection implementation plan and modelling exercises were instrumental in Government's decisions about the redesign of the core social protection programme: Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP).

The research capacity of the Rwanda Country Office, guided by its research strategy, provides solid ground for continued support for cross-sectoral research addressing the multiple vulnerabilities of children. With critical national data available, opportunities are opening up for a stronger focus on measurement of child poverty and linking public finance analysis with the analysis of social indicators for children.

Challenges remain in relation to identified bottlenecks, such as coordination of cross-sectoral programmes supporting social protection, policy revision and improving accessibility and quality

of services. These will be addressed through continued focus on the CSSP roll-out, training and support to the SP MIS.

OUTPUT 1 Capacity of national/ decentralised institutions to target/ deliver equitable/ holistic child-sensitive social protection services strengthened

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Within the reporting period, UNICEF completed a number of planned initiatives aimed at strengthening the capacity of the SP system at central and decentralised levels to deliver SP services to households with children, including:

- Support to design and costing of the options for the development of the SP MIS to consolidate monitoring of data across social protection programmes. The costed design option approved by the Government used an integrated approach to link the databases of the core social protection programme and complementary programmes in later phases of development. Once the design option was approved, funding from DFID was leveraged for development of the MIS by mid-2016.
- UNICEF supported the redesign of the technical features of the national Ubudehe database, which contains select socio-economic indicators of all households in Rwanda and categorises them into four groups (using established criteria of socio-economic well-being) to inform the implementation of the core and complementary social protection programmes. The database will serve as the foundational source of information for the new SP MIS.
- Capacity development of social protection professionals to disseminate information and manage the financial services component of the flagship VUP programme included training of 140 social protection and district personnel. The new guidelines were developed to strengthen the delivery of financial services through a system of savings and credit cooperatives. Financial services support income-generation activities of the poorest and link social protection and economic development as two tiers of the poverty-reduction strategy in the country.
- Further analysis and research on CSSP resulted in the development of a CSSP implementation plan, and the design of an innovative approach to creation of new types of jobs within PW, combined with child care options, was undertaken during the reporting period. The implementation plan will be spearheaded by the Government in 2016/2017 and included in a pilot currently under way on the graduation from extreme poverty package. To support roll-out of the CSSP, UNICEF launched the project to pilot two options under child-sensitive social protection; namely: expansion in the scope of public works and organising mobile crèches. The pilot closely links social protection and nutrition and is implemented in two sectors/districts, covering about 400 households eligible for public works.
- Completion of the SP MIS design options and the CSSP implementation plan/roadmap responded to World Bank requirements, and the GoR received US\$95 million in general support to the social protection sector.
- UNICEF continued to co-chair the M&E Social Protection Sector sub-Committee, which was instrumental in providing technical support to the development of SP MIS and the Ubudehe database, and has developed a draft M&E framework to support the national social protection strategy.
- UNICEF led the development of the One UN Joint Programme on Innovation in Social Protection, which consolidates the activities of six UN agencies supporting core and complementary social protection programmes. The joint programme was validated by all stakeholders in November 2015.

OUTPUT 2 Accountability mechanisms for vulnerable/at-risk populations to claim their rights strengthened

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Achievement of results under this output was constrained by a lack of human and financial resources; therefore the planned results were only partially met. Activity implementation was dependent on regular resources, which were prioritised for activities aimed at strengthening the social protection system. A planned client satisfaction survey was not undertaken due to these constraints. However, the results achieved during the reporting period included the provision of support to Plate Form, a network of NGOs promoting and monitoring child rights in the country. The support focused on strengthening their internal capacity to develop, implement and manage child rights monitoring and advocacy activities.

To meet the targets under this output, client satisfaction with basic social services was monitored, analysed and made part of new initiatives such as the piloting of CSSP. Through support to EICV4, data on satisfaction of the Rwanda population with education and health services were obtained and analysed. The data showed an increase of 5 per cent in satisfaction with both health and education services in comparison to the EICV3. In addition, the EICV4 data provided a degree of insight into levels of satisfaction and effectiveness of social protection programmes.

Information on the population's satisfaction with child protection services was obtained through support to a public expenditure review of child protection services. The qualitative research undertaken through the study indicated a relatively high level of understanding of child protection services and appreciation of services available at the community level. In addition, the M&E tool, a household profiling tool, was incorporated into the Child-sensitive Social Protection and Nutrition pilot implemented under the broader EDC&F programme, to obtain results on the views of the poorest households on the delivery and availability of basic social services.

OUTPUT 3 Evidence and research on child-poverty and disparities inform national and sub-national policy formulation and implementation

Analytical Statement of Progress:

During 2015 UNICEF further strengthened child-focused evidence-generation and analyses to inform national child-sensitive policy formulation, programming and implementation. Fruitful collaboration with the NISR continued on a number of research initiatives. In addition, UNICEF further strengthened its internal research agenda and procedures, through its internal research committee.

Six flagship studies were completed and launched with UNICEF support:

- A baseline evaluation to inform UNICEF's Integrated ECD&F Programme was completed at the end of 2014. A detailed technical report was finalised in May 2015 and a summary report published in December 2015. The data is already being utilised to inform ongoing ECD&F programming. Further analysis of the evaluation is planned to understand the determinants of effective ECD development in Rwanda.
- The data collection for a "Nutrition, Markets and Gender" study, a multi-sectoral study led by the Ministry of Agriculture with technical and financial support from UNICEF, was completed at the end of 2014 and the analysis initiated in early 2015. The final report was published in December 2015.

- DHS data collection was completed in April 2015. Key indicators were presented by the Government and published in July 2015. UNICEF is especially keen to see the national-level data analysis of the ECD module, which will be available in March 2016 when the full DHS report will be published.
- Data collection for the EICV was completed in late 2014. The main indicators report was published in August 2015 and an EICV Social Protection report was published in November 2015. UNICEF provided technical input for the analysis of social protection-relevant EICV data, as well as data on child labour. In addition, UNICEF financially supported the development of the thematic report dedicated to social protection, which is already being utilised in the Social Protection sector for programming and policy purposes.
- Following up on the analytical and research work in 2014, further was undertaken to develop the costed implementation plan for rolling out government-approved child-sensitive social protection options.
- A survey on violence against children and youth was initiated in 2015, under the leadership of the MoH/Rwanda Biomedical Centre, with technical and financial support from UNICEF. Data collection training was conducted in October/November 2015 and data collection completed in December 2015. The survey report is expected in 2016, as is the launch of the qualitative study on violence against children with disabilities.

UNICEF's contribution to the research agenda in the country was unique in its focus on cross-sectoral research on children, informing programme and policy design. In implementing research, UNICEF continued its convening role and collaborated with a number of UN agencies and development partners, as well as national research and Government institutions in the process of data generation and dissemination. Implementation of activities was constrained, to a degree, by the lengthy consultation and approval processes required before research results are released within the country.

OUTPUT 4 Child sensitive policy, budget and monitoring system is in place and operationalised at decentralised level

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In 2015 UNICEF further strengthened its child-focused budgeting through the launch of two flagship studies: identification of public expenditures on child protection and costing of pre-primary education services. Both studies aimed to inform policy dialogue with the Government on financing strategies to meet national child-focused targets. The pre-school costing study, commissioned by MINEDUC, indicated that school fees, primarily used to pay for pre-school teacher's salaries, present the most significant barrier to increasing access. The study was presented at the joint review of the education sector ahead of the 2016/2017 budget planning process. It is expected to influence the ministry's plans for expansion of pre-primary services in the country, resulting in increased allocations for the sub-sector. The public expenditure on child protection study was completed in December 2015 and its findings, including recommendations for the NCC on how to strengthen budgeting for child protection at central and decentralised levels, will be further explored with the Commission.

UNICEF continued its collaboration with Save the Children in the area of public finance for children (PF4C) through a MoU signed in 2014. UNICEF supported their advocacy, based on their investment studies and briefing papers in the areas of education, and social protection. A budget brief to cover the 2014/2015 fiscal year was developed as well.

The concept note for the health sector strategic plan mid-term review was reviewed and enriched in order to influence the review of health financing policy and strategy for increasing public investment in child health.

A terms of reference for the “Baseline Study on Public Finance for Children” was developed at the end of 2015 to support UNICEF’s advocacy work in the area of PF4C in 2016. UNICEF continues to advocate and leverage partnerships with key stakeholders, including MINALOC, in particular, within the governance and decentralisation sector. The forward-looking joint sector review of this sector was supported, and priorities for the fiscal year 2015/16 were identified. UNICEF, due to its mandate, was uniquely positioned to support the Government in undertaking the costing and budget analysis in selected sectors, such as pre-primary education, ECD, child protection and social protection. The studies finalised by late 2015 were expected to influence sector budget decisions for the fiscal year 2016/2017.

The results achieved in the reporting period create a basis for continued partnership with the Government and development partners to promote the financing of the children’s agenda. Implementation of activities was somewhat constrained by the lack of human resources in the social policy section to manage the activities.

OUTCOME 5 Early childhood development outcomes improved, especially of the most deprived young children

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Research shows that investing in early interventions timed to take advantage of crucial phases of brain development can improve the lives of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their communities, helping to break cycles of poverty by creating healthy, educated and productive citizens. UNICEF believes that a focus on ECD and the family will not only give young children the best possible start in life, but is also the best investment that Rwanda can make to achieve its national goals, which are well-aligned with global goals (MDGs/SDGs). These goals include poverty reduction; reducing infant, child and maternal mortality; eliminating malnutrition, particularly stunting; and improving access to and participation in quality education.

Rwanda has close to 2.2 million children, of whom approximately 52 per cent are potential beneficiaries of ECD services. However, these services have not yet reached scale. A 2014 ECD baseline survey confirmed that in rural areas access to organised early learning opportunities is extremely low (6.4 per cent); moreover, in many cases home environments are not conducive to optimal child development.

An analysis of ECD policy and practice in Rwanda conducted by UNICEF in 2013/2014 identified key bottlenecks to scaling-up ECD services in the areas of enabling environment, supply, demand and quality. Findings included: a shortage of funding, particularly at the decentralised level; weak coordination mechanisms across different government sectors, governance levels and linkages with other social services; limited availability of infrastructure and early learning materials; lack of qualified teachers and poor retention; and a lack of quality assurance mechanisms based on minimum standards, an early learning curriculum and systematic planning, monitoring and evaluation at all levels. In 2015, UNICEF made important advances toward addressing these gaps:

Creating a conducive policy environment for ECD service provision and practice: The revision and validation of the ECD policy and strategic implementation plan, including a costing for national implementation of the policy over five years, was undertaken in 2015. The new policy

aims to accelerate scale-up of ECD services and to foster coordination with the education, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, and social and child protection sectors to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to ECD. The strategic implementation plan comprises five key strategic areas for investment, programmes, services and activities: (1) parenting education and support; (2) school readiness and transitions; (3) child protection and family promotion; (4) health, nutrition and WASH; and (5) co-ordination, governance, resourcing, monitoring and evaluation. Consensus was reached with MIGEPROF on the development of minimum operational standards and a national M&E framework (planned for early 2016).

Increased access to quality integrated ECD&F services: In support of GoR efforts to expand access of young children to quality care and early learning, in partnership with the Imbuto Foundation and ADRA, UNICEF built three ECD & Family centres in 2015, bringing the total to 13 total since 2013. The centres serve 3,086 children and 3,060 parents with young children through parenting and home visit activities. The quality of ECD&F service delivery is continuously improving, while end-user monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are being strengthened. The ECD&F centres serve as models for local authorities, to be further replicated to all communities.

Improved child development outcomes: While no quantitative data is available on the overall percent of children whose developmental readiness has improved, a case study conducted in 2015 on the ECD&F model in Kayonza district revealed interesting preliminary data on the changes observed at the level of the child and their families. Children from the ECD&F centre show more advanced cognitive ability than other children of the same age bracket. Children from the model ECD centre show better confidence in engaging with other children and adults and show leadership potential. Child development trends in the ECD&F project sites, as well as progress in terms of access, quality and efficiency will be tracked against the 2014 baseline data. A follow-up survey is scheduled for 2016 to assess the outcomes on individual children who participated in ECD&F services compared to other children.

Enhanced integration in practice: 2015 saw a major shift towards integration and capacity development in quality child care and development through ECD caregivers, parents and community health worker capacity enhancement programmes, delivered through partnerships with The Aga-Khan University, Imbuto Foundation, MoH and MIGEPROF. The results of integration and capacity development were observed at the central and community levels, where quality cross-sectoral services were being delivered through ECD&F centres.

Some overall challenges encountered included delays in the ECD policy revision and development of its associated implementation plan due to protracted consultations with multiple sectors and the request for a two-level costing exercise of the policy implementation plan; as well as some delays in construction, which resulted in delayed implementation of ECD and Family services in several locations.

The progress and achievements in ECD in 2015 were made possible under the leadership of MIGEPROF, and together with NGOs such as Imbuto Foundation, ADRA, Southern Hemisphere and Aga Khan University; and with generous support from the IKEA Foundation, H&M Foundations and the Irish National Committee.

OUTPUT 1 Effective and responsive care provided to the young child by the primary caregiver, family and community

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The quality and consistency of care that children receive is largely dependent on the depth and breadth of knowledge and skills of those entrusted to provide for them, be it early learning/stimulation, nutritional, psychosocial support, protection, sanitation and many other tangible and non-tangible needs on the continuum of care.

Children's care and stimulation needs are best provided for in the family setting, but sometimes families, as primary caregivers, and communities lack appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver consistent, effective and responsive care to their young children and thus may require capacity development in certain skills and knowledge. UNICEF Rwanda made parenting education and support one of the key pillars of its ECD&F flagship programme.

UNICEF, in partnership with the Aga Khan University and Imbuto Foundation, completed in 2015 the development of an 'essential package of early child development and family services', and began implementation of the package in 10 districts. The model was developed in a phased approach, and through testing and refinement, it was customised to ensure relevance to the local context, promoting positive parenting, care practices and improved child-caregiver interaction. An integrated monitoring and evaluation strategy accompanies the package to inform continuous program quality improvements in order to achieve impact at scale.

More than 1,500 families (3,060 individual parents/primary caregivers) in nine districts were reached with weekly parenting education and/or home visits, enhancing the caregivers' knowledge, skills and practice on holistic child care and stimulation. According to home visitation monitoring records, family hygiene and nutrition practices are continuously improving. A formal assessment will validate these observations at the close of 2016.

To create stimulating home environments, the home visitation programme is being complemented with an innovative mobile library (bicycle-based) that distributes and rotates reading and play materials for the children.

Through continuous social mobilisation of communities and families, and recruitment and training of parent leaders, the foundations were laid for rolling out home-based ECD programmes in 10 districts, serving 1,693 children to date. This cost-effective model is easily accessible to the most vulnerable and poor families, and is significantly expanding access of young children to early learning. In 2016, expansion of these services to all remaining, ECD&F centres is planned.

In addition, more than 25,000 families were reached with behaviour change communication for increased awareness on the importance of ECD through direct outreach, using specially designed radio programmes and community theatre locally known as *itetero* and *urunana* respectively (implemented by UNICEF's communication, advocacy and partnerships section). The content of the messages was developed jointly through a content advisory group, in collaboration with CSO and ministry partners.

OUTPUT 2 Improved and equitable use of ECD & F services by young children and families

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Modelling of community-based ECD& Family integrated services was underway through the construction and resourcing of ECD&F centres. To date 13 ECD&F centres have been built, of which nine are resourced, commissioned and operational. Three more new sites identified for construction of ECD&F model centres will be finalised by the third quarter of 2016 as part of efforts to increase access to ECD services, particularly in economically disadvantaged areas. A

total of 73 ECD caregivers, centre managers and home visitors were trained, and their performance was enhanced through supportive supervision by 10 newly recruited district ECD supervisors. This was achieved jointly with Imbuto Foundation and Aga Khan University, through the development of an essential package of ECD services (adapted from the UNICEF/WHO “Care for Child Development” manual), in combination with training, mentoring and supervision of ECD caregivers, centre managers, home visitors and newly recruited district supervisors.

At least 1,393 children were participating in centre-based early learning activities in the nine operational ECD&F centres. Social mobilisation yielded strong demand for ECD&F services, as evidenced by the large number of children enrolling per centre, which exceeded the planned numbers. All operational centres were providing integrated services (health, nutrition, early learning, parenting education, kitchen gardening, basic WASH), and additional complementary services are progressively being introduced in collaboration with other programme sections (e.g. child protection, social protection, comprehensive WASH services). The structural layout of ECD&F centres adopted universal architectural designs that provide easy access to children with physical disabilities, and caregivers were trained on the basic principles of inclusion of children with different physical and cognitive abilities. Further hands-on capacity building and support in this area is planned for the coming year.

UNICEF, jointly with MIGEPROF and the Imbuto Foundation, advocated for and liaised with district authorities, thereby increasing ownership and involvement of local authorities in the planning, running and maintenance of the ECD&F centres (four districts included ECD&F in their plans and budgets). The development and implementation of a communication and advocacy strategy, ECD&F programme sustainability plans with districts (through MoUs), and training of districts on child-centred planning and budgeting – as well as the development of minimum operational quality standards for ECD&F services – form the core of programme activities planned for 2016 to improve the uptake of ECD&F services by young children and their families.

OUTPUT 3 ECD policy revised, costed and implemented at all governance levels

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The ECD policy of 2011 was systematically reviewed and updated, in collaboration with MIGEPROF, Aga Khan University and CSOs, and in consultation with all relevant line ministries and Government agencies (MIGEPROF, NCC, MINEDUC, MOH, MINALOC, among others) in order to ensure a visionary, holistic and integrated – yet practical and feasible – approach to maximising the developmental potential of every child in Rwanda in the years to come. With strategic guidance and technical support from UNICEF over the past year, Rwanda’s ECD policy and strategic plan was revised to accelerate the scale-up of ECD services and to foster coordination with other relevant sectors (education, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, and social and child protection).

Extensive consultations informed the planned coordination and implementation mechanisms as part of the policy review and implementation plan development processes. A team of experts with support from UNICEF through Aga Khan University completed a two-stage costing exercise that determined costs for selected policy priorities and key aspects of the implementation plan at the national level over the next five years.

In 2015 three coordination and advocacy workshops were supported by UNICEF and organised with national stakeholders and district authorities, creating a common vision and reaffirming

commitment to ECD at all levels. In June 2015, a high-level ECD advocacy meeting was held under the umbrella of the Day of the African Child to profile ECD achievements since 2012 and renew the inter-sectoral commitment to ECD as a national priority for Rwanda. This was followed by the first ever ECD sector joint work planning in August 2015, since the formal appointment of MIGEPROF as a lead ministry for ECD in the country.

The inclusion of ECD&F into district and sector plans and budgets is pending, awaiting the final approval of the costed implementation plan; hence this activity has not yet commenced at national scale. However, advocacy with district authorities where ECD&F centres are based was successful, resulting in increased district ownership of the initiative as demonstrated by four leading districts that included ECD&F in their plans and budgets. Key activities planned for 2016 include dissemination of the revised ECD policy, development of an integrated M&E framework and defining terms of reference for all coordination bodies constituted in the revised ECD policy.

OUTCOME 6 Well-coordinated and result-based planning, M&E, Communication, Advocacy and Partnership are in place to enhance the Rwanda Country Programme effectiveness and efficiency

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The year 2015 marked a historic transition from the MDGs to SDGs. Rwanda has made significant achievements in the areas of human development, achieving all the goals stated in the MDGs. The *Economist* cited Rwanda as the world's fastest developing country, "According to the HDI 2015, Rwanda has made the most progress, which is all the more impressive given that its level of development fell during the genocide of 1994 (*Economist*, December 14). In addition, the newly released DHS and EICV disaggregated data show that the country has successfully narrowed equity gaps in a number of social indicators.

A bottleneck analysis jointly performed by NISR and UNICEF's planning, monitoring and evaluation section identified demand-side bottlenecks including: 1) limited utilisation by Government officials both at central and district levels of social indicators that fall outside of the *Imihigo* process; 2) limited capacity on the part of district statisticians in data use and analysis and low awareness of NISR-generated household survey data; and 3) the national DevInfo database is not well known at either the national or sub-national levels.

Based on this analysis, PME and NISR jointly developed ideas for interventions and an annual work-plan with a strong mix of programmatic and policy-oriented support. The intervention strategy focused on capacity building of line ministries and district offices in data analysis, data dissemination and visualisation, also cultivating the country's non-traditional data audience (e.g. civil society, academics and children), and promotion of the national DevInfo database. For all those interventions, MoRES served as a foundational concept for PME's technical support, and different visualisation techniques were also used.

In 2015 PME continued to play a pivotal role in strengthening UNICEF Rwanda's results-based management (RBM) approach, supporting annual work planning, programme reviews and financial and performance monitoring. In addition, PME provided cross-sectoral support for developing a MoRES analytical package, rolling situation analysis, programme cooperation agreement (PCA) logframes, and supporting two programme evaluations. PME took part in various capacity-building sessions for UNICEF staff, Government and other development partners with a focus on RBM, rapid assessment in emergencies, end-user monitoring and Technology for Development.

UNICEF Rwanda's risk management structure was developed in line with the latest HACT guidelines and CSO procedures, with a focus on assurance activities and PCA process management. A humanitarian performance monitoring database was established to capture quarterly PCA progress reporting. The database served to increase partners' timely report submission from 27 per cent to 71 per cent.

Cognizant that an innovative approach is needed to meet ambitious national monitoring requirements, the PME section positioned itself as an in-house innovation hub. In close collaboration with the ICT and programme sections, PME has tested real-time monitoring experiments for wider application.

Guided by the integrated communications strategy developed by the CAP section and approved by the CMT, a number of activities were implemented in 2015 covering key components of communication for development (C4D), communications and advocacy. Launch events such as the national partnership for children with disabilities and accelerating efforts on ECD, held during the Day of the African Child, generated visibility and advocacy for key issues concerning children in Rwanda.

Radio is still the lead medium of communication in Rwanda, with a reach of close to 90 per cent. UNICEF, according to the One UN Perception survey, was the second most well-known agency by the general population and ranked even higher among media practitioners in Rwanda. Strategic media relations and communications efforts have played a key role in both UNICEF's development and emergency response.

C4D efforts contributed to the reduction of stunting through the 1,000 Days campaign, where the focus was on intensive community outreach and social mobilisation. Focused activities at the community level show that the messages were retained well among the beneficiaries.

A national capacity-building workshop for M&E officers from all districts was organised to strengthen monitoring of C4D interventions at the district and community level, resulting in the development of C4D based M&E plans in at least 15 districts. The WASH in Schools campaign was implemented successfully' a hygiene awareness campaign reached all 2,400 public schools in the country, leading to increased knowledge and practice of children on hand-washing with soap.

OUTPUT 1 Policy makers, media, donors and civil society organisations engaged to promote children's and women rights

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In partnership with the Media High Council, a network of journalists on ethical reporting for children established in 2014 were invited for a review meeting to discuss the progress in reporting on children's issues, which provided further inputs for a second phase of engagement through the council. The Network of Journalists for Children's Issues promoted UNICEF Rwanda's flagship priorities through the development of media materials that were highlighted in national and regional media such as allafrica.com, igihe.com, focus.rw, newtimes.com and the Rwanda Broadcasting Agency.

High-profile advocacy events and commemorative days such as the launch of the National Partnership for Children with Disabilities, national launch of the competency based curriculum, Global Handwashing Day and the Day of the African Child with the theme "Accelerating our collective efforts for Early Childhood Development" generated increased awareness and

visibility on priorities among key stakeholders and the general population.

Effective documentation through online media – including the Country Office website and social media (Facebook, twitter and YouTube) – not only increased awareness, but also supported the development of effective relationships with donors and partners on programme priorities. Donor missions included successful visits by UNICEF Ireland and Norway to Rwanda, which resulted in a commitment of US\$250,000 for ECD&F interventions.

UNICEF, as the co-chair of the UN Communications Group, led successful advocacy and promotion of child rights within the implementation of the One UN Communication Strategy.

Since the influx of Burundian refugees in April 2015, communication has included documentation (human interest stories, local media coverage, photos and videos) for sharing online, with media, the UNICEF Regional Office, National Committees and UNICEF's Division of Communication. This has highlighted the situation of refugees in the camp and reception centres and progress in the response, to complement fundraising efforts.

With the recruitment of a dedicated staff member for Fund Raising and Donor Relations in January 2015, new partnerships were established with global philanthropic organisations, the IKEA Foundation and Elma Foundation, which has resulted in funding of US\$5.3 million for various programmes in education and ECD. Successful fundraising was undertaken to support the Burundi emergency response, resulting in over US\$1 million in support from CERF and DFID. While achieving progress, some constraints were experienced under this output, in the form of limited partner capacity in implementation and HACT processes, which resulted in several delays in activity implementation.

OUTPUT 2 Communication for Development (C4D) priorities addressed to foster behaviour and social change

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In line with Country Office C4D priorities, national and district level governments were supported through capacity building and activities implemented by faith based organisations (FBOs) and community-based organisations to address social norms and cultural beliefs and practices. A national capacity-building workshop for M&E officers from all districts, organised in early 2015, strengthened the monitoring of C4D interventions at the district and community level.

In support of the elimination of stunting through the 1,000 Days campaign, social mobilisation activities reached remote areas in partnership with the central Government and districts through community outreach activities conducted in an additional nine districts in 2015. Development of materials for the child protection communication campaign on VAC and deinstitutionalisation was initiated in 2015 and is being finalised for a planned launch in February 2016.

Implementation of ECD & Family C4D activities proceeded at full speed through several channels, including: the engagement of a network of FBOs for social mobilisation and community outreach; weekly broadcasting of the first ECD radio programme in Rwanda "Itetero", delivering ECD content and improving cognitive skills for young children on a national scale; and the first performance by a community theatre group in Gicumbi and Gakenke districts successfully delivering messages to 5,000 people at each event on Universal Children's Day and initiating dialogue on the community's role in social inclusion.

For prevention of HIV and GBV, a final draft of the communication plan was developed to target adolescents on HIV prevention and treatment. The draft was shared with the internal HIV/AIDS and Adolescents technical team members for endorsement. An NGO partner was engaged to conduct peer education and awareness for HIV prevention, aiming to reach at least 150,000 adolescents. Activities include training, provision of communication and sporting materials, community education and information on male circumcision and HIV testing and counselling.

A professional advertising agency was contracted to meet the needs of various programme areas to produce quality information, education and communications (IEC) materials and undertake awareness activities.

In response to the influx of Burundian refugees and at the request of the Health Coordination Group, IEC materials were developed in consultation with health-sector partners and the MOH. A 30-page publication in Kirundi (language of the refugee population) covers key messages (health, hygiene, and child protection) for outbreak prevention. The publication and posters were distributed in the refugee camp through social mobilisation activities that started in December 2015 and will continue through February 2016. The 360 locally-recruited community mobilisers will deliver health and hygiene promotion messages, and 75 peer-educators will deliver HIV prevention messages in Mahama camp, which houses over 45,000 refugees.

Among the constraints experienced under this output was limited partner capacity in implementation and HACT processes, resulting in several delays in activity implementation.

OUTPUT 3 UNICEF, Government and partners have capacity to conduct results based & human rights based planning, monitoring and evaluation

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF supported the NISR to conduct DevInfo and data analysis trainings. Some 108 trainees were drawn from central ministries, district offices, government parastatals/ institutions and university lecturers. The “School DevInfo” initiative successfully raised university lecturers’ awareness about the availability of the country’s socio-economic indicators and built an entry point to nurture home-grown knowledge networks to bridge academics and practitioners. To kick-start the process, a public lecture on RBM and research was organised by UNICEF for students at Mt. Kenya University. In collaboration with the nutrition section, PME continued strengthening district monitoring capacity by using DevInfo technology for data tracking, analysis and dissemination. As of December, 22 districts were trained for DevInfo, 18 districts were tracking nutrition interventions through DevInfo Monitoring and 18 DevInfo district databases had been established. Selected indicators from the 2012 Population and Housing Census, EICV4 and DHS5 data were uploaded into the Rwanda National DevInfo database and were disseminated during district trainings for equity analysis. A number of DevInfo promotion kits were produced and disseminated at NISR’s official events. Internally, PME advocated for stronger situation monitoring through the “rolling situation analysis” with the SPR section, and presented equity analysis through different channels such as the DI Dashboard, country statistical profile and child-friendly DHS/EICV data reading package.

To cultivate non-traditional data users and facilitate citizen’s participation in monitoring, NISR and UNICEF organised an event dedicated to African Statistics Day in November. The 50 children invited to participate in the event were gender-balanced and included children with disabilities. The overall purpose was to make statistics fun for children and to engage them in discussions related to child rights, MDG achievements and SDGs. The process and lessons learned from this event were documented and a video and 2016 Calendar were produced for

wider circulation. At this occasion, UNICEF also supported NISR's infographics competition organised among university students.

Internally, innovative tablet-based data collection was tested with field monitoring, HACT micro-assessment and end-user monitoring for nutrition, WASH and ECD.

With dedicated support from the Regional Office HACT coordinator, PME strengthened UNICEF's risk management. In early 2015 the performance monitoring database was established and 16 implementing partners, five UN and 14 UNICEF staff were trained in procedures to facilitate quarterly logframe reporting. Implementation of the new HACT guidelines has achieved almost full compliance except for financial spot-checks, which was delayed due to some technical issues with the Global LTA. UNICEF Rwanda, however, successfully led the negotiation process with a third party spot-checker and saved \$2,450 per spot-check. During the reporting period, a HACT Assurance Plan 2015-2016 was produced, and 50 UNICEF staff members, 20 central Government officials, 46 civil society partners, 48 district partners and 11 UN agencies were trained in HACT procedures. With Delivering as One, UNICEF opened all the risk management training for other agencies' participation, but a more systematic and sustainable capacity building strategy must be established through the UN HACT Working Group in 2016.

OUTPUT 4 Strengthened disaster preparedness and humanitarian response framework in Rwanda

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Rwanda invested in emergency preparedness, including pre-positioning of supplies, training of partners and arranging contingency partnership agreements, based on evidence that operational preparedness gains are strongly inter-dependent in realising maximum cost and time savings. Functional coordination mechanisms for emergency preparedness and response are in place. UNICEF is the UN co-coordinator for emergency response in WASH, child protection, early childhood development, education, health (with WHO and UNFPA) and nutrition (with WFP). Humanitarian action in Rwanda is grounded in the provision of basic services to affected populations using existing systems, whenever possible, and providing direct service delivery in refugee camps, where required. The development in 2014 of a national contingency plan for mass population influx of refugees resulted in an effective emergency response in 2015. UNICEF Rwanda supported another training and simulation exercise on refugee influx, helping to identify gaps and strengthen emergency preparedness. A National Preparedness and Response Plan for *El Niño* was developed with UNICEF's contribution, to strengthen resilience and pro-actively contain the effects of the expected weather events, which is in line with the newly launched SDGs.

In April 2015, Burundian refugees started crossing into Rwanda and the contingency plan on mass population influx was activated by the Government and UN partners. By the end of the year, more than 72,000 Burundians had entered the country, of whom 46,000 are hosted in Mahama refugee camp (48 per cent children). In partnership with NGOs (Care, World Vision, Plan, PAJER) and donors (DFID), UNICEF provided critical services for women and children.

Since the onset of the emergency more than 28,000 children and women have been vaccinated; 46,000 refugees benefitted from water and sanitation provision; more than 400 severely malnourished children under five were successfully treated; more than 6,000 children benefitted from regular recreational and psychosocial support activities delivered through child-friendly spaces; nearly 1,000 unaccompanied children were reached with tracing and alternative care by para-social workers; and more than 100 individual child protection cases were

effectively managed. By December 2015, a total of 4,086 young children were attending early childhood development programmes, and 11,152 pupils were enrolled in education orientation classes in Mahama camp.

UNICEF, in partnership with the Government of Japan and implementing partners (Care, ADRA, Plan), continued in 2015 to support the Government of Rwanda in providing education, early childhood development and child protection services to more than 30,000 refugees (20,000 children) from the Democratic Republic of Congo living in three refugee camps across the country.

Strong coordination mechanisms employed in the refugee response ensured well-planned division and harmonisation of tasks, which was strengthened through joint situation assessments, planning, monitoring and reporting. UNICEF enhanced cross-sectoral emergency coordination by recruiting specialised emergency coordinators both at Country Office level and sector-specific field coordinators based in the camp.

The capacity of more than 1,330 people was built among emergency coordination staff and implementing partners in refugee camps, community health workers, teachers and ECD facilitators, child protection workers, social mobilisers and volunteers who supported service delivery to children and women in the camps

Document Centre

Evaluation and Research

Title	Sequence Number	Type of Report
A Synthesis of the Rwanda Nutrition, Markets and Gender Analysis	2015/004	Research
Early Childhood Development and Family Services: Baseline Evaluation in 20 Sites in Rwanda	2015/004	Evaluation
Early Childhood Development in Rwanda: Case Study	2015/003	Research
Child-sensitive Social Protection in Rwanda: An Options Paper	2015/002	Study

Lessons Learned

Document Type/Category	Title
Innovation	Child Sensitive Social Protection – Innovative Public Works Programmes