As Rwanda continues to make rapid progress towards its development goals, the UNICEF Rwanda programme remains well aligned with Government priorities and continues to make a significant contribution to national development.

Despite this success, Rwanda still faces some challenges in the areas of child survival and development. Chronic undernutrition (stunting), early childhood development, neonatal mortality, the quality of education and violence prevention, all require continued attention. The Government of Rwanda’s commitment in these areas remains strong. In 2016, with two years remaining of the current programme cycle, the Country Office undertook a midterm review (MTR) and a strategic visioning exercise. Adjustments were made to ensure that programmes and staffing are “fit for purpose” to respond to Rwanda’s development challenges.

The review process concluded that UNICEF Rwanda is on track to accomplish its planned results. Based on the situation analysis, national priorities and available budget, programme priorities were streamlined in five key areas: reduction of stunting, early childhood development, programming for adolescents, neonatal health and quality education and learning. These focus areas are well aligned with both regional and global UNICEF priorities.

The UNICEF Rwanda midterm review also confirmed that support to the Government of Rwanda is critical in three main areas: building strategic knowledge, policy development and human resource/capacity development, including at decentralized levels.

Early childhood development (ECD) continues to be a top priority, and in 2016 UNICEF helped to finalize the national early childhood development policy, which was approved by the Cabinet in May 2016, along with a five-year costed implementation plan. UNICEF also continued to support the expansion of ECD services and strengthening of Government ownership. During 2016, five additional districts took over management of their ECD centres. The midterm review process was used to create a specialized ECD section within UNICEF Rwanda to provide stronger technical and programming support.

In education, there continued to be a strong focus on access to pre-primary education through the design and construction of model facilities, teacher training and a costing study to advocate for increased budget allocations in this area. Curriculum reform continued to improve the quality of primary education and there was a strong focus on access to education for Burundian refugee children and children with disabilities.

Chronic malnutrition remains a serious concern for the Government of Rwanda. At a joint retreat in February 2016, the Government and other development partners agreed to support Government efforts on this issue. UNICEF Rwanda advocated for stronger Government coordination, which resulted in the establishment of a new nutrition coordination secretariat. In addition, the Country Office strengthened its nutrition unit and mobilized significant resources through partnerships with key donors and other UN agencies. UNICEF will continue to scale-up nutrition-specific interventions, such as micronutrient supplementation and growth monitoring, as well as other activities, such as providing clean water and
sanitation that can help to reduce stunting.

Although child mortality continues to decrease, neonatal mortality is decreasing at a slower pace, calling for a strong focus and innovative action. UNICEF Rwanda has sufficient human resources to address neonatal health, but additional technical support may be necessary. Additional funding will also be needed to address significant bottlenecks, such as the provision of essential equipment and training for health staff.

While universal access to education has been achieved, the quality of education remains a challenge. This requires additional focus and a strategic shift to address underlying obstacles in the learning process, which began in 2016 and will continue to be an area of focus for the coming years.

As part of UN Delivering as One, UNICEF Rwanda continued full participation in relevant UN Development Result Groups (DRGs), as well as implementation of joint programmes. UNICEF is active in two of these groups (human development and humanitarian emergencies) and supports seven out of 20 joint programmes: nutrition, health, HIV, social protection, violence prevention, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and a joint UN programme with the Imbuto Foundation.

In addition to coordination through the One UN framework, strong collaboration with many Government of Rwanda counterparts; civil society partners, including both international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs); the media; and other development partners led to achievements in advancing the rights of children in Rwanda. UNICEF Rwanda undertook its first formal partnership with a private sector company in 2016, providing technical support to a tea company’s efforts to expand child care and pre-primary education near the tea factory and plantations.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

Emergency preparedness and response is the two-pronged approach to UNICEF’s humanitarian work in Rwanda. Emergency response in 2016 focused on support to Burundian refugees and response to natural disasters.

**Support to Burundian refugees.** Following the influx of more than 80,000 Burundian refugees who have been arriving in Rwanda since April 2015, under the coordination of the Ministry for Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UNICEF Rwanda has continued to ensure access to social services for women and children in the following essential sectors:

**WASH:** In 2016, with resources from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the British Department for International Development (DFID), UNICEF Rwanda and the Global Humanitarian and Development Foundation were able to improve sanitation facilities for an additional 2,720 people. In partnership with Oxfam, a permanent water treatment plan is now operational in Mahama Camp, serving approximately 60,000 people from the camp and host community.

**Nutrition:** UNICEF Rwanda established a system to identify and manage cases of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in children under five. As a result, 307 children were admitted to therapeutic feeding programmes in Mahama Camp and in reception centres.

**Health:** UNICEF Rwanda continued to provide vaccines and consumables throughout 2016. A sustainable system was established, resulting in over 90 per cent immunization coverage with zero outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. Major diseases are under control, including malaria. In mid-October, there was a reduction in the number of malaria cases in children under five, from an average of 20 cases per week to three. This can be attributed to
both the distribution of mosquito nets and an awareness campaign on the proper way to hang nets, which increased the percentage of households correctly hanging mosquito nets from 53 per cent to 83 per cent.

**Education:** In partnership with UNHCR and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and with funding from DFID, UNICEF Rwanda ensured access to quality education for more than 19,400 Burundian children, successfully integrating refugee children into the local education system. UNICEF also provided education materials, including textbooks, and capacity support and development to school management.

**Early childhood development:** UNICEF Rwanda, in partnership with Care International and ADRA, provided training of caregivers, procured play and learning materials and constructed temporary and semi-permanent ECD facilities, benefiting over 5,400 young children.

**Child protection:** UNICEF Rwanda provided psychosocial support to over 8,000 children and their families related to the prevention of and response to violence, family separation, exploitation and abuse. Some 1,548 unaccompanied and separated children were provided with case management services. Given the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, UNICEF Rwanda has participated in joint contingency planning for the potential influx of refugees and Rwandan returnees. As a result, a contingency plan was developed and adopted. Moreover, UNICEF developed standby partnerships for WASH, education, early childhood development and child protection, and procured supplies for early response, which are currently in the process of pre-positioning.

The Regional Refugee and Response Plan for Burundian refugees was updated for 2017. This plan outlines an interagency multi-sectoral response reflecting the current situation and planning for the influx of additional refugees, and builds upon the 2016 Regional Refugee and Response Plan and the current work being done to support the Burundian refugees.

**Response to natural disasters.** Starting in early May 2016, Rwanda was affected by a series of landslides that resulted in the death of 50 people and injuries to 27 others. A total of 2,317 houses were totally damaged, rendering homeless approximately 13,500 people, including children. UNICEF responded to the natural disaster, in Gakenke District, with the provision of tents for temporary shelter, ready-to-use therapeutic food, and education materials. With funding from the Central Emergency Relief Funds, UNICEF Rwanda worked with partners to restore coverage and availability of safe and reliable water supplies to approximately 30,000 people affected by the landslide.

UNICEF Rwanda continued to ensure emergency readiness, through the Early Warning Early Action platform, which was updated in July 2016.

In September 2016, the Country Office revised and updated its business continuity plan (BCP) and conducted a simulation exercise to ensure that the Office can continue to perform essential operations in emergency situations.

**Emerging Areas of Importance**

Emerging areas of importance incorporated into the country programme during 2016 include support to refugee children and the acceleration of integrated early childhood development initiatives.

**Emergency response to the influx of refugees from Burundi.** The number of Burundian refugees in Rwanda continued to increase in 2016, reaching 81,834, 47 per cent of whom are children. Under the coordination of the MIDIMAR and UNHCR, UNICEF is the UN co-coordinator for the response in WASH, child protection, education, early childhood
development, health (with World Health Organization, WHO, and the UN Population Fund, UNFPA), and nutrition (with the World Food Programme). UNICEF’s response included the provision of WASH supplies and technical assistance, screening and management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM), promotion of appropriate infant and young child feeding practices and provision of polio and measles vaccines for children, as well as routine immunizations. In addition, unaccompanied and separated children were registered, their families were traced, and child-friendly spaces were established. Support for the prevention of and response to violence against children (VAC) was also provided and UNICEF supported access to early learning and basic education for refugee children.

In 2016 UNICEF focused on the development of longer-term, more permanent solutions to the needs of Burundian refugees, since they are expected to remain in Rwanda for the foreseeable future. This included construction of permanent ECD facilities, semi-permanent child-friendly spaces, construction of a permanent water treatment plant, construction of semi-permanent sanitation facilities, the establishment of links between health service providers in the camp and district health facilities, and strengthening the local education system to accommodate additional refugee children. Results of these efforts are detailed in the humanitarian assistance section.

**Integrated early childhood development (ECD).** One-third of young children in Rwanda are not reaching their full potential, which hampers human capital development. Children living in the poorest households are less likely to receive support for early learning at home and more likely to be exposed to multiple risk factors due to poor standards of housing. Children living in urban areas (37 per cent) are much more likely to attend an early childhood education programme than children living in rural areas (9 per cent).

The early childhood development (ECD) programme is designed to transform children’s lives in three key ways: changing the way family members interact, nurture and care for their children; provision of quality ECD and other basic social services for young children; and enforced implementation of child-sensitive policies.

At the policy level, UNICEF Rwanda supported the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) in the revision of the National Early Childhood Development Policy and the development of a costed five-year implementation plan, approved by the Cabinet in May 2016. The policy aims to accelerate the scale-up of integrated ECD services across multiple sectors. UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Ministry and is continuously building capacities of local stakeholders on planning, implementation, and monitoring. These efforts resulted in the inclusion of ECD activities into district plans and budgets. To ensure informed policy decisions, an ECD module was included in the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2014-15, published in 2016, providing data on six ECD indicators for the first time.

In partnership with Imbuto Foundation, and with support from the IKEA Foundation, H&M Foundation, UNICEF Ireland, nutrition, integrated ECD, WASH, and child protection services were provided in select communities. Thirteen ECD model centres in 12 (of 30) districts have been established, providing centre- and home-based ECD services. New child and social protection services were piloted for feasibility. By end-2016, the programme had directly benefitted:
- More than 5,000 girls and boys, through centre-based and home-based services
- At least 6,000 parents, through parenting education, home visits, social protection measures
- About 180,000 community members, comprehensive behaviour-change communication campaigns
- More than 70,000 children, who received micronutrient supplementation.

An external evaluation revealed significant progress in some areas, such as:
- A significant increase in the percentage of children attending early learning programmes, from 11 per cent to 39 per cent at intervention sites.
- The percentage of children who had diarrhoea in the two weeks prior to the survey.
A decrease in intervention sites from 28 per cent to 16 per cent, while there was little change in control sites.

Less progress was made in some other areas, such as the number of children experiencing inadequate care, children’s exposure to violent discipline practices and food insecurity. This indicates a need for additional programme focus in the future.

**Summary Notes and Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADRA</td>
<td>Adventist Development and Relief Agency</td>
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<td>BCP</td>
<td>Business continuity plan</td>
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<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</td>
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<td>CERF</td>
<td>United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<td>CHP</td>
<td>Community Health Programme</td>
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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Country management team</td>
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<td>CRVS</td>
<td>Civil Registration and Vital Statistics</td>
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<td>DCT</td>
<td>Direct cash transfer</td>
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<td>DFAM</td>
<td>Division of Financial and Administrative Management</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>British Department for International Development</td>
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<td>DHS</td>
<td>Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<td>DRG</td>
<td>Development Results Group</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early childhood development</td>
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<td>EIC</td>
<td>Living Standards Measurement Survey</td>
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<td>ePW</td>
<td>Expanded public works programme</td>
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<td>GAP</td>
<td>Gender action plan</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-based violence</td>
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<td>HACT</td>
<td>Harmonized approach to cash transfer</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, education, communication</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information, communication and technology</td>
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<td>LTA</td>
<td>Long-term agreement</td>
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<td>MINEDUC</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MIDIMAR</td>
<td>Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs</td>
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<td>MIGEPROF</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion</td>
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<td>MINISANTE</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>MINALOC</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of understanding</td>
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<td>MTR</td>
<td>Mid-term review</td>
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<td>NPCWD</td>
<td>National Partnership for Children with Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NISR</td>
<td>National Institute of Statistics</td>
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<td>ODA</td>
<td>Overseas development assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSP(s)</td>
<td>One-stop centre(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCA(s)</td>
<td>Programme cooperation agreements(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PME</td>
<td>Planning, monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>REB</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Board</td>
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Capacity Development

Capacity development is a core implementation strategy for UNICEF Rwanda.

The capacity of national institutions for meeting the rights of children was strengthened through:

• Provision of 64 trained social workers to facilitate implementation of child protection reform
• Financial support to the Government of Rwanda
• The newly developed ECD Policy and National Strategic Plan, Water and Sanitation Policy, and Guidance on Newborn Care.

Planning and monitoring in favour of children, especially the most disadvantaged, was strengthened through training of Government officials, incorporating DevInfo into the monitoring system, use of RapidSMS and development of the new management information system database (UBUDEHE), to improve targeting of social protection programmes.

One of the main 2016 investments for children in Rwanda was in knowledge-transfer, through teaching of on-the-job skills:

• A critical number of health service providers were trained on emergency obstetrics and newborn care. Approximately 2,000 new community health workers were trained on integrated case management of major childhood diseases. Over 13,000 community health workers received refresher training on RapidSMS.
• Since 2015, 94 per cent of preschool teachers and 60 per cent of all primary school teachers have been trained on the new competency-based curriculum.
• In partnership with the Government and academia, a training package on prevention and response to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect was rolled out nationwide. Almost 30,000 community-based child and family protection volunteers were taught to provide basic child protection services at the community level.

Communication for development (C4D) efforts combined mass media, to educate families; community theatre, to address locally identified issues; and partnership with religious leaders, for social mobilization. With partners, UNICEF Rwanda secured the commitment of Archbishops and Mufti to promote ECD and health, followed by capacity development of an interfaith platform that reached 38,620 people in target communities through inter-personal communication.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy
Evidence generation is a critical cross-sectoral function for UNICEF Rwanda. In order to influence policies and inform programme design, UNICEF focused on three main strategies: generation of evidence to fill priority knowledge gaps and influence policies; strengthening national capacities for evidence generation; and promoting partnerships.

The following results were achieved:

**Research:** The study on children with disabilities strengthened Government programming on inclusive education, including the development of an inclusive education teachers’ guide and training teachers on inclusive education.

**Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS)** were prioritized by the Government, and a comprehensive assessment of CRVS was implemented to fast-track and strengthen use of the system.

The ECD programme mid-line survey was implemented and the end-line survey was launched by the end of 2016 to inform future programming on integrated ECD.

**Support to national capacities and partnerships:** The 2014/15 DHS was published with financial and technical support from UNICEF Rwanda. Report findings supported finalization of the ECD policy as well as policies and strategies for water supply and sanitation services. The national statistical system continued dissemination of DHS data through DevInfo.

Additionally, data from the survey on living standards was published, and the Social Protection Thematic Report informed the redesign of the main national social protection programme. The SDG domestication process was also supported, and work is currently underway to develop a baseline for SDG Goal 1 indicators on multidimensional child poverty.

Partner capacities were built through technical assistance, including the: National Institute of Statistics (NISR), Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), Ministry of Local Government (MINLOC), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health (MINISANTE), University of Rwanda, and civil society organizations. Partnerships between the National Institute and sector ministries were promoted to strengthen administrative data collection and the Institute’s engagement in flagship research.

**Partnerships**

UNICEF Rwanda adopted two approaches from the 2012 Report on the implementation of the strategic framework for partnerships and collaborative relationships to enhance performance:

**One: Framing the contribution of partnerships to results**

a) **Programme implementation partnerships.** In the context of Delivering as One, UNICEF Rwanda supported implementation of the UN Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP), resulting in contributions to national development priorities.

For civil society partnerships, all Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) transitioned to the new guidance. Project activities and budgets are now clearly linked to results for children. Using the value-for-money tool provided by UNICEF’s Regional Office, UNICEF Rwanda leveraged contributions from partners, achieving an average of 17 per cent co-financing (over US$1.1 million) for direct programme activity costs.

b) **Mobilising partnerships.** UNICEF Rwanda expanded its approach to corporate engagement beyond fundraising. UNICEF and SORWATHE, a local tea company, signed a
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to expand access to early childhood development services and pre-primary education around the tea plantation from 400 children to 10,000.

c.) Knowledge and innovation partnerships. In an innovative partnership with Rwanda Broadcasting Agency, a children’s radio programme was developed to increase awareness and knowledge of child development among young children and their families. Through the nationwide network, the weekly show engaged families, stimulating children’s overall development. The programme was selected as a finalist for the international media award Japan Prize 2016.

Two: Investing strategically in multi-stakeholder partnerships

For the multi-sectoral agenda on stunting, UNICEF convened a monthly coordination meeting for partners from the Government, NGOs, academia, donors, and the private sector. These meetings evolved to become a forum for discussion and the promotion of inter-sectoral collaboration between nutrition and health, WASH, early childhood development, social protection and communication. This country-level forum also provided the framework for engagement in Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) and other global platforms.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

The year 2016 was a year of advocacy and high visibility for the UNICEF Country Office and the children of Rwanda. As part of UNICEF’s 70th anniversary, a series of activities was organized. One event included a photo workshop for children, resulting in a special 2017 calendar with photos taken by children on their hopes and aspirations. This was followed by a reception and screening of an inspirational documentary, “The Beginning of Life”, inviting all stakeholders to become change-makers for early childhood development.

Child participation remained high on the agenda with the celebration of the 11th National Children’s Summit in Parliament, where the UNICEF Rwanda Representative, ministers, policy-makers, development partners and child representatives from all districts committed to the advancement of child rights. This event was broadcast live on national television reaching over 5 million Rwandans.

To strengthen child rights reporting, development of a child rights module for journalists and students of journalism was initiated, with support from the Media High Council and the University of Rwanda. The final document will be validated in early 2017. Efforts on local media engagement led to increased coverage in local and regional media of programme priorities, namely malnutrition and early childhood development.

UNICEF’s social media channels saw exponential growth and engagement, reaching more than 100,000 followers on Facebook. Donor and external relations also increased through social media real-time engagement and cross-posting. The UNICEF Rwanda website was revamped in 2016 with new stories and updates, triggering an increase of over 20 per cent in traffic and engagement with the population (Source: Google Analytics).

Under the auspices of ‘Delivering as One UN’, UNICEF Rwanda as chair of the UN Communication Group comprised of all UN agencies, provided strategic guidance in improving the visibility of UN work and children’s issues in Rwanda.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

In 2016 UNICEF Rwanda hosted a midterm review of the multi-country programme to reduce malnutrition. Participants included the governments of Burundi, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Rwanda. The review was a great opportunity for countries in the region to
share important lessons learned and challenges, and commit to improved reporting.

UNICEF and the Government of Rwanda also hosted Malawi for a country learning exchange on child care reform. The delegation from Malawi included Government officials and NGO partners. This bilateral visit allowed participants to share practices, tools and lessons on the implementation of child care reform, while learning from progress made in Rwanda.

UNICEF Rwanda facilitated a study tour with UNICEF Burkina Faso for its Ministry of Health mission to Rwanda. Visiting officials learned from Rwanda's health system, and Rwanda shared its success in achieving its health goals.

UNICEF also supported the Government of Rwanda to learn from others internationally. In WASH, UNICEF’s support resulted in participation by a Rwandan delegation in the Sanitation and Water for All meeting in Addis Ababa and the 7th Rural Water Supply Network Forum held in Côte D’Ivoire. These forums fostered cross-learning between among all participants.

In child protection, UNICEF Rwanda supported the National Commission for Children to participate in an international conference on alternative care. The conference provided a bridge between research, policy and practice on alternative care, and an exchange between experts, Government representatives and young people with experience in alternative care.

UNICEF and the Government of Rwanda also collaborated with the Government of South Africa and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute to develop a multi-year national strategic plan for modernising systems for civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) in Rwanda. This resulted in enhancing the capacities of both governments, formulating strategies and fostering knowledge on CRVS.

**Identification and Promotion of Innovation**

Building on the 2015 pilot of ECD kits end-user monitoring, in 2016 UNICEF Rwanda supported the Rwanda Education Board (REB) and MINEDUC to use a web-based and tablet-based software to monitor the implementation of the new competency-based curriculum. Previously, data was being collected on paper. With the data now available online, UNICEF continues to support the Rwanda Education Board to communicate with schools using text messages and an online communication platform. This tablet-based real-time monitoring is being scaled-up for nationwide implementation. The scope of this project was expanded to new curriculum implementation under the Rwanda Education Board and MINEDUC.

In late 2015 UNICEF Rwanda initiated a child-sensitive social protection pilot in two districts. The pilot has two components: providing mobile crèche ECD services to public works beneficiaries, and providing new and more flexible types of public works projects to 240 households in two sites. To assess the current socio-economic situation of participating households, UNICEF conducted an evaluation exercise in collaboration with CARE International. For this data collection exercise, UNICEF developed an Android-based tool using tablets and Magpi software. The use of this technology enabled quicker data collection efforts and more regular quality assurance.

In collaboration with Rwanda’s Water and Sanitation Corporation and American Standards/Lixil Technology, UNICEF Rwanda completed the development and pilot-testing of “SaTo latrine pan”: a hygienic, easy-to-maintain, economical latrine pan. Product improvements are being finalized and implementing partners are being identified by

Another pilot-testing of innovative jerry cans was conducted in collaboration with UNICEF’s Supply Division, and feedback was submitted to them for further action. UNICEF Rwanda is looking forward to implementing and scaling-up the use of these jerry cans based on the review of the supply division.

**Support to Integration and Cross-sectoral Linkages**

UNICEF Rwanda takes an integrated approach to child development, structuring programmes to support children and families in a comprehensive manner. During the midterm review process, programme priorities were streamlined into five key areas: reduction of stunting, early childhood development, programming for adolescents, neonatal health, and quality education. Lessons learned on integrated programming can best be summarized by examples in stunting reduction and the ECD programme.

**Stunting reduction:** Chronic malnutrition has been a serious concern for the Government of Rwanda. To address this priority, UNICEF mobilized more than US$12 million to scale-up nutrition-specific interventions, such as micronutrient supplementation, growth monitoring, and management of severe acute malnutrition, as well as nutrition-sensitive interventions like ECD, WASH and social protection. Partners in these efforts included the Government of Rwanda, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), World Food Programme, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Important lessons have informed the development of the current proposal. These areas include phased programme implementation, systematic monitoring and evaluation, flexibility in the programme design and budget, and the need to strengthen the coordination and link between nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.

**Early childhood development:** ECD continues to be a priority for the Government. Partnerships with Government, civil society and donors have strengthened coordination of integrated, cross-sectoral interventions to scale up quality ECD services nationwide. Lesson learned will inform the design of the next programme phase. These include the need: to transform current model centres into “centres of excellence”, for low-cost models for scaling-up centre-based ECD, for better use of existing community structures to scale-up home-based ECD, incorporation of ECD into existing coordination mechanisms and expansion of partnerships to the private sector.

**Service Delivery**

In 2016 UNICEF Rwanda’s support included technical assistance and funding for services through its partners and procurement of products. Planning, monitoring and reporting systems helped identify, track and address barriers and bottlenecks impeding children’s access to quality services.

This approach resulted in 350,000 children aged 6-23 months reached with micronutrient powders; 1.7 million children under five reached with Vitamin A supplementation and deworming; 78,000 people, including 41,000 women and girls, reached with messages on safe hygiene practices through interpersonal communication; 3 million people received messages on handwashing with soap through bulk SMS; 150,000 adolescent boys and girls educated on HIV and sexual- and gender-based violence (GBV); 22,000 girls and boys tested for HIV and receiving results; provision of free legal assistance to women and children in each district; scale-up of the One Stop Centres against gender-based violence and child abuse that have provided free multi-disciplinary assistance to 6,000 women and children;
and safe reintroduction into family-based care of 2,388 children formerly living in institutions.

In response to the influx of Burundian refugees, UNICEF ensured that 80 per cent have access to quality education through the local system and that students and stakeholders were provided with necessary materials. Some 944 severely malnourished children under five have been treated since April 2015, and 6,629 children aged 6-59 months were provided Vitamin A and deworming tablets. A total of 29,252 children were vaccinated against measles (18,383) and polio (12,780) and, 4,603 children and 2,024 pregnant women were vaccinated against tetanus. Some 51,000 Burundian refugees (48 per cent of whom are children) are benefiting from WASH services, and community hygiene promoters are contributing to improved hygiene practices.

Approximately 14,000 Congolese refugees gained access to safe and reliable water supplies. In responding to landslides in the country, UNICEF Rwanda led the WASH sector needs assessment, and 22 damaged water supply systems were rehabilitated.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

As part of ‘One UN’ in Rwanda, UNICEF provided inputs for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) reporting process. ‘One UN’ inputs were prepared in support of the deliberations of the CEDAW Committee to the CEDAW report submitted by Rwanda in July 2015.

UNICEF Rwanda supported the National Children’s Summit, which gathered children from around the country to meet with national leaders, highlighting the importance of meaningful child participation as a key component of human rights. This year, the theme of the Summit was “Positive Parenting: Foundation of Culture.” UNICEF provided support to this event and accompanying activities in cooperation with the National Children’s Commission.

Advocacy and support for children with disabilities remained an important cross-cutting focus in 2016. Significant contributions were provided to improve the coordination capacity of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities for improved advocacy and programming for children with disabilities. Additionally, UNICEF Rwanda supported implementation of the assessment report on institutions for children and young adults with disabilities, as well as development of the national inclusive and special needs education curriculum with its accompanying teacher guide and training materials.

Regarding justice for children, child-friendly procedures were established to ensure adequate legal support for children in contact with the law. These procedures include fixing the minimum age for criminal liability at 14, establishment of the juvenile special chamber for hearings of minors, and pro-bono legal assistance for children, with detention as a last resort and no pre-trial detention for first offenders.

UNICEF supported the National Commission for Human Rights through a campaign to combat sexual violence against children launched at the end of 2016. A study on violence against children is being conducted to improve knowledge management and inform prevention of and response to these cases.

**Gender Equality**

UNICEF’s Regional Office facilitated a comprehensive gender review within UNICEF Rwanda to help the office address and mainstream gender issues in its programming. This review helped UNICEF Rwanda to select targets for the gender action plan (GAP) for reduction of child stunting and early childhood development. The review also helped UNICEF Rwanda mainstream outputs to track and report annually, and to refine the country
programme to align with the gender action plan. The review also generated recommendations that were incorporated into the 2016 midterm review and the annual management plan 2016/2017, including establishment of a post on gender and strengthening programming for adolescents. Subsequently, the d (PBR) committee recommended a dedicated gender expert at the NO-C level, reporting to the Deputy Representative.

The midterm review found that UNICEF Rwanda had done a commendable job in mainstreaming gender into national policies and strategies and has laid strong foundations for gender programming in other key result areas. These areas include ensuring equitable access to HIV/AIDS treatment, care and prevention and strengthening child protection services through prevention, response and management of gender-based violence at One Stop Centres. Additional efforts focused on changing gender stereotypes through ECD programming, such as including women in construction and encouraging fathers to assist with water collection and child care. WASH programmes mainstreamed gender components by including menstrual hygiene management in schools to increase access to WASH services for girls.

In 2016, key gender mainstreaming outputs were:

- Creation of a new gender output and a new NO-B post under the education section to focus on addressing barriers and bottlenecks that hinder boys’ and girls’ access to and completion of primary education.

- Launch of a knowledge, attitudes and practices study on gender and education, which will provide in-depth information on gender barriers facing girls and boys in accessing education.

- Establishment of gender-segregated latrines in 45 primary schools, increasing access to improved sanitation for 27,000 boys and 28,000 girls.

- Strengthening delivery of information on preventing HIV, sexual-violence and gender-based violence in 28 sectors: 440 community peer educators were trained, impacting 150,000 adolescents.

**Environmental Sustainability**

In 2016 UNICEF Rwanda supported several initiatives to promote environmental sustainability and build resilience to climate change, including:

**Integration of environment and climate change aspects into new sectoral policies.** For instance, the draft National Water Supply Policy and Strategy includes specific policy directions on environment and climate change. Similarly, the draft National Sanitation Policy and Strategy includes provisions related to effective management of liquid and solid waste.

**Promotion of rainwater harvesting facilities in learning centres.** A total of 20 learning centres, including 15 schools and five ECD centres, were provided with rainwater harvesting facilities.

**Integration of climate change-proofing in the design and construction of schools.** Climate-proofing measures for ECD centres, for example, included siting them away from hazard-prone areas, tree planting around the centres to reduce the effects of wind on the infrastructure, laying out green spaces at the centres, retaining walls, rainwater conduits and energy-efficient stoves.

**Contribution to improved food security** by strengthening nutrition-sensitive, sustainable
agricultural activities, including training of community members, provision of inputs such as tools and seeds, promotion of kitchen gardens and support for the supervision of farmer field learning schools.

**Provision of technical assistance to the Netherlands Development Organization**, SNV, for the second phase of the Renewable Energy Technology for Nutrition project, which introduced energy efficient cooking stoves and solar lamps to beneficiaries. Time and money previously spent on gathering firewood and procuring kerosene for lamps are now invested in procuring nutritious food and child care.

**As part of the Greening the Blue Initiative**, an environmental footprint assessment of UNICEF Rwanda was conducted. Implementation of measures to reduce the footprint is ongoing, and has so far resulted in initial reductions in the consumption of resources and waste production.

**Effective Leadership**

The composition of all office committees, which provide a forum for more detailed management and performance monitoring, was reviewed and updated in 2016 to improve efficiency and workload balance.

Annual work plans were prepared by sections to outline results in each programme area. To ensure full alignment with the UN programme in Rwanda, UNICEF participated in the UNDAP annual review and UNDAP Midterm Review in early 2016.

The midterm review confirmed that UNICEF Rwanda’s strategies and areas of expertise are leading to solid results, although some modifications were recommended. The 2016 programme budget review was used to formalize pending recommendations, review all job descriptions, complete the reclassification process and make additional adjustments in staffing structure.

UNICEF Rwanda undertook a risk self-assessment in May 2016. The primary risks identified related to funding, especially the distribution of resources among programmes. The Country Office enhanced measures in its resource mobilization strategy to mitigate this risk. The geopolitical context in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo was also identified as a risk. UNICEF, within the broader UN team, worked on contingency planning, including through simulation exercises, to implement mechanisms to respond effectively in the event of further refugees inflows.

UNICEF Rwanda reviewed and updated the business continuity plan and undertook an off-site simulation exercise to test the plan and develop additional recommendations.

In 2016 the Office developed standard operating procedures (SOPs) on governance and management, with clearly defined TORs and membership. Monthly country management team (CMT) meetings focused on programme and operations management and performance- monitoring in budget and grants management, direct cash transfer (DCT), the harmonized approach to cash transfer (HACT), supply and logistics, human resources, finance, administration and information and communication technology.

UNICEF Rwanda continued to ensure minimum preparedness measures, in line with the Early Warning / Early Action system, which was updated in July 2016.
Financial Resources Management

Monthly country management team (CMT) meetings focused on programme and operations management and performance monitoring on budget and grants management, DCT, HACT, supply and logistics and finance.

These indicators were tracked on a weekly basis. Bank and cash accounts were reconciled and uploaded in Vision within the deadlines and a closure timetable was determined by the Division of Financial and Administrative Management (DFAM). The Office met all deadlines for the closure of 2015 activities and at the time of this report is currently working on 2016 account closure activities.

The Office of Internal Audit conducted an audit of UNICEF Rwanda in October with full support and participation from staff. The Country Office has responded to initial observations and expects the draft report in early 2017.

As of 31 December, 99.9 per cent of RR funds had been utilized. Emergency grants were utilized at 83 per cent, and grants expiring on 31 December were utilized at 100 per cent. The implementation rate for support budget also reached 100 per cent for utilization.

UNICEF Rwanda achieved 75 per cent completion of HACT micro-assessments, 100 per cent for spot-checks and 100 per cent for scheduled audits.

Fundraising and Donor Relations

Rwanda has made remarkable progress in recent years, enabling the country to take significant steps towards reducing its reliance on external aid. As a result, overseas development assistance (ODA), as a component of Government revenue, declined from around 50 per cent in 2008 to 21 per cent in 2016. This decline has been largely offset by domestic revenues. However, related budget gaps prevent the country from reaching its financing and development targets.

UNICEF has lost a few long-term donors, such as the One UN Fund and Korea’s International Cooperation Agency, and received a reduced amount of RR and Thematic Funds. The gap was addressed through proactive resource mobilization, by broadening and deepening relationships with current and traditional donors and engaging new and non-traditional donors.

In 2016 over US$33 million was mobilized to support common priorities. More than US$25 million was mobilized through continued partnership with the Kingdom of the Netherlands in support of reducing stunting. More than US$1 million was mobilized to scale up early childhood development services, in partnership with IKEA Foundation. US$ 2 million was mobilized from DFID and CERF to support emergency preparedness and response. US$1.66 million was received for child protection measures. Successful fundraising efforts resulted in increasing the country programme ceiling by US$15 million. Total utilization of OR funds in 2016 was US$20,313,254.47. Fundraising efforts will continue in 2017, with a focus on underfunded areas.

While the One UN fund no longer receives support, UNICEF Rwanda played a lead role in the new One UN resource mobilization task force.

Twenty-seven donor reports were submitted in 2016, all on time. Contribution management was closely reviewed by the country management team to ensure the effective and timely use of funds.
Evaluation and Research

UNICEF Rwanda manages its integrated monitoring and evaluation plan through an in-house research committee whose main responsibility is to provide technical input and oversight for planned research, studies, evaluations and publications. In 2016, two evaluations and two studies were completed. In compliance with global UNICEF evaluation guidelines, all supported evaluations produce the management response and the country management team reviews its implementation.

In 2016 UNICEF supported MINISANTE to undertake two external evaluations, one of the RapidSMS project and one of the community health programme (CHP).

One strategy employed to reduce maternal and child death was the use of the mHealth system RapidSMS. The RapidSMS project evaluation was commissioned to assess its progress and impact. Intended to improve the quality of care for pregnant mothers and children, this evaluation grounded its analysis in an appropriate theory of change. Overall, the evaluation found the programme relevant to national priorities and well used. The quantitative results, however, found that RapidSMS only contributed to some change in the use of certain health care services.

The evaluation of the community health programme was undertaken by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. The goal was to understand whether the programme had achieved its intended objectives, thus contributing to the objectives defined in the national health plan: improving the population’s health status by ensuring universal accessibility to quality health services. The evaluation concluded that: the community health programme was highly consistent with national policies and plans; the programme was successful in delivering a set of essential interventions; the costs of the programme are in line with evidence and benchmarks from other countries; and the programme relies on a solid and consistent theory of change and most activities are realized as intended. This evaluation supports the conclusion that the community health programme is contributing to enhanced health outcomes in Rwanda.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

Under the One UN framework, UNICEF Rwanda continued to realize efficiency gains and cost savings from the ‘One UN’ business operations strategy. A total savings of US$527,262 was made in the following areas:

Supply: ‘One UN’ procurement initiated and put in place new long-term agreements (LTAs) in transport, hotels, and stationery. Through existing LTAs, UNICEF saved US$37,183 in 2016. It is planned that by utilising the 22 UN LTAs for hotels, next year will yield an approximate savings of US$200,000.

ICT: The main cost-saving activity from the One UN ICT working group was the implementation of the common LTA for internet service provision by all UN agencies in Rwanda. This LTA was signed in late 2015. Implementation of this LTA resulted in a total saving of US$75,533 in 2016 for UNICEF alone (out of US$718,291 for all UN agencies). This dollar benefit also added to workplace efficiency, given that the office more than doubled its internet bandwidth, from 10MB to 23MB.

Finance: In additional to monthly income from the current account, UNICEF Rwanda maintained significant improvements on foreign exchange, begun in 2012. These improvements were assisted by DFAM, by procuring US dollars through international banks.
in the global market whenever rates with local banks in Rwanda were unfavourable. As of end-December 2016, the gain was more than US$414,546.

Supply Management

In 2016, UNICEF Rwanda invested 15 per cent of its funds in the procurement of goods and services.

The Office supported the Government of Rwanda, through MINISANTE, to plan and procure vaccine-related supplies, resulting in US$5.8 million of procured vaccines, syringes and cold chain equipment.

UNICEF Rwanda supported the MINISANTE supply planning process and participated in quarterly supply plan reviews, providing specific input on improving the national nutrition supply chain. This collaboration was highlighted as a success, resulting in a presentation at the 2016 World Nutrition Summit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCUREMENT SERVICES (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GAVI</td>
<td>4,195,193.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>1,644,174.67</td>
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<td>S/Total</td>
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<tr>
<th>Rwanda Country Office SUPPLY INPUT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>2,730,157.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>52,850.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>1,810,759.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/Total</td>
<td>4,593,767.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>10,433,136.29</td>
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<tr>
<th>LOCAL PROCUREMENT (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>477,352.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>52,850.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>1,810,759.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,340,962.37</td>
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Goods and services procured to support programme implementation totalled over US$0.59 million. Of this, US$2.7 million were programme goods, mostly nutrition, child protection and education supplies.

No procurement was undertaken on behalf of other country offices.

A supply plan worth US$2.7 million was instituted and implemented in 2016.

UNICEF Rwanda chairs the UN supply team, supporting UN agencies’ supply management, thereby reducing transaction costs. UNICEF Rwanda saved US$37,183.
For warehousing and distribution, UNICEF Rwanda has an agreement with the World Food Programme for 450 cubic meters of warehousing space, used for pre-positioning of supplies.

UNICEF Rwanda disbursed US$1,476,737 for construction through HACT: US$326,994 for construction of six ECD centres and US$1,149,743 for WASH activities.

**Security for Staff and Premises**

Overall, the security situation in Rwanda is good. Except for a few incidents of theft outside of the office, there are no serious security threats in the country. In 2016, the Office put systems in place to ensure that office and residential security recommendations were implemented, in close collaboration with the UN Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS).

The security assessment of UNICEF Rwanda’s premises was initiated by the Office and conducted by UNDSS, for safety and security of UNICEF staff and the premises. An action plan to address recommendations of the assessment was developed and the required budget submitted to the UNICEF Regional Office for possible allocation of funds. Installation of new security cameras in strategic locations within the office resulted in improvements of surveillance against theft.

The warden system was re-instated; all wardens received training and an emergency drill was organized in September.

A GPS system was installed in all UNICEF vehicles in 2016 to ensure security and safety of staff and the ability to track movements of the vehicles.

The Country Office conducted a business continuity plan simulation as part of the annual management plan. The security improvements and safety arrangements were noted in the internal audit as one of the positive arrangements in the office.

**Human Resources**

The 2016 midterm review confirmed that current strategies were leading to solid results; therefore, no major changes in staffing expertise or structure were proposed.

However, the review was used to formalize previous structural recommendations that were pending, make minor adjustments in the staffing structure and reclassify outdated job descriptions. In addition to the 77 staff posts, UNICEF Rwanda utilized flexible expertise through the engagement of 36 short- and long-term consultants, one UN volunteer, and one temporary appointment. The vacancy rate was kept below 4 per cent.

The UNICEF Rwanda performance management cycle reached 100 per cent completion at each phase. However, focus in 2017 will be on quality of performance discussions and coaching, through UNICEF corporate training, on managing performance and people for results.

The Global Staff Survey Action Plan continued to be implemented under the overall coordination of the Staff Association. Its implementation was monitored by the country management team. Areas for improvement were addressed through human resources clinics, career counselling, and learning and development, which achieved 76 per cent for individual learning plans and 90 per cent for group trainings. Regular consultative meetings were conducted between staff and management, 90 per cent of the agreed actions were achieved. UNICEF Rwanda also participated actively in the One UN Human Resources
Working Group, to harmonize human resources practices.

UNICEF Rwanda implemented the ten minimum standards through active participation in the One UN Cares committee, orientation sessions on HIV and hepatitis, World Aids Day and free access to anti-retroviral medicine through the UN clinic.

The Office also recorded an increased number of medical evacuations. All medical evacuees used commercial airline routes to leave the country, but a more urgent medical situation could create a major operational challenge.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

UNICEF Rwanda continued its efforts to leverage cloud-based office automation tools, initiated in 2015, by expanding the use of Team Site, OneDrive, and Skype for Business. Two specific actions were taken in 2016:

1. Revamping the UNICEF Rwanda team site to address users’ concerns regarding the organization and retrieval of documents, and access restriction for confidential documents.

2. Organization of several training sessions to increase staff efficiency and raise awareness about the use of cloud-based tools.

In 2016, the ICT unit developed and provided technical support for several mobile-based data collection tools. The two emerging projects were:

1. Monitoring of the implementation of the new curriculum and monitoring of general data, usually collected on paper, to support the Rwanda Education Board and MINEDUC.

2. Evaluation of the current socio-economic situation of households participating in the child-sensitive social protection pilot in two districts. This tool enabled UNICEF Rwanda and CARE International to speed up data collection efforts, in addition to conducting increased data quality assurance.

To liaise with key influencers and stakeholders, UNICEF Rwanda maintained an active presence and updated contents on social media through Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, as well as a digital presence through its web page (https://www.unicef.org/rwanda).

On Global Handwashing Day, UNICEF worked with Rwandan Mobile Network Operators to disseminate a sensitization message to all cell phone numbers registered in Rwanda.

The Office maintained and strengthened measures put in place last year to reduce its ICT footprint including the replacement of all remaining desktops with laptops, and the use of multifunction printer solutions that contributed to reduced energy consumption. The Office also implemented a GPS tracking system for vehicle monitoring, reducing fuel consumption.

Programme Components from RAM

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:
The Government of Rwanda is committed to reducing child mortality, stunting, and HIV transmission rates. The UNICEF-supported Child Survival and Development Programme has played a pivotal role in achieving these important goals by strengthening the enabling environment and enhancing service delivery and capacity building for improved quality of services.

A 2016 evaluation indicated that UNICEF-supported districts had better outcomes than non-supported districts regarding anaemia testing and high-risk detection during antenatal care, deliveries at health facilities, postnatal care visits, malnutrition screening and immunization services. Achievements in 2016 included the following.

**Health:** The RapidSMS system for tracking maternal and child health, initially supported by UNICEF in 10 districts, was used by the Government in all 30 districts. By September 2016, the RapidSMS system had tracked 583,823 pregnant women and 594,377 newborns accessing health care. With support from UNICEF Rwanda, the new guidelines for post-natal care for mothers and newborns was developed and approved.

**Nutrition:** UNICEF Rwanda continued its support for nutrition, with a special focus on reducing stunting in children younger than two. As a result, close to 350,000 children aged 6-23 months were reached with micronutrient powders in 19 districts, and more than 1.7 million children younger than five were reached with Vitamin A supplementation and deworming in all 30 districts.

**WASH:** UNICEF Rwanda continued to contribute to Government efforts to enhance WASH services. This resulted in reaching an estimated 78,000 people with messages on safe hygiene practices through interpersonal communication, as well as more than 3 million people reached with messages through bulk-SMS. More than 12,000 people obtained access to an improved water supply, and more than 11,000 people gained access to improved sanitation. UNICEF also supported the finalization of the draft National Policies and Strategies for Water Supply and Sanitation, which were subsequently approved by the Cabinet.

**HIV:** UNICEF Rwanda and its partners continued to build capacities of stakeholders. As a result, 150,000 boys and girls were educated on HIV and gender-based violence; 22,000 boys and girls were tested for HIV and over 6,000 boys were circumcised. UNICEF provided technical support for the end-term review of the 2011-2015 National Strategy for Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission (EMTCT) of HIV and the subsequent development of the operational plan for 2016-2018. This will guide Government efforts to improve the quality of EMTCT services.

**Emergency response:** UNICEF Rwanda, in collaboration with UNHCR and other partners, supported the provision of timely and effective emergency health, nutrition, and WASH services to more than 51,600 Burundian refugees. In 2016, with CERF funds, UNICEF was able to improve sanitation facilities for an additional 4,000 people in the Mahama Camp. A permanent water treatment plan is now operational in Mahama, serving 51,600 refugees. To treat severe acute malnutrition, 12,820 kilograms of ready to use therapeutic food was distributed at Mahama Camp and reception centres. In addition, more than 90 per cent of children and pregnant women were vaccinated against diseases such as cholera and yellow fever. Mosquito nets were distributed, along with awareness-raising campaigns on proper use of nets, resulting in a decrease in malaria cases from 20 per week to three, as of October.

These achievements were made possible through generous support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Government of the Netherlands, Korea International
Cooperation Agency, USAID and the Swedish Development Cooperation, IKEA Foundation, as well as through collaboration with a wide range of Government and civil society partners. Key sector challenges included limited financial resources, a shortage of skilled staff to provide health services, less-than-optimum multi-sectoral coordination at the district level and insufficient availability of medical equipment and supplies. Addressing these bottlenecks will remain at the centre of UNICEF support in the years to come.

OUTPUT 1 National and district capacity to coordinate and track/monitor implementation of pro-nutrition evidence-based interventions

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Policy, coordination and monitoring and evaluation: With UNICEF Rwanda’s financial and technical support, revision of national guidelines for management of acute malnutrition incorporating the latest evidence was initiated to improve service quality. UNICEF supported the establishment of the National Food and Nutrition Coordination Secretariat, including development of a multi-year workplan and drafting of 10 policy briefs based on the National Food and Nutrition Strategic Plan and Policy (NFNSP).

It is expected that the Secretariat will improve multi-sector coordination and fast-track implementation of the NFNSP. District-level multisectoral coordination and monitoring for nutrition was strengthened through continued on-the-job training on monitoring and evaluation, including the use of DevInfo as a tool to visualize progress against district plans to eliminate malnutrition, and support to develop six monthly nutrition bulletins reporting on the district nutrition situation. Six briefs were drafted to capture best practices in Rwanda, which will contribute to the global evidence base as well as local programming.

Nutrition-specific interventions: UNICEF Rwanda provided support for monthly growth-monitoring and promotion sessions with cooking demonstrations to train caregivers on good nutrition practices, including how to prepare a balanced diet. During these sessions, micronutrient powders for the reduction of anaemia were distributed to all children aged 6-23 months (close to 350,000) in 19 districts (all health facilities). Behaviour change communication activities, such as community theatre and events for school children, were continued as part of the 1,000 Days campaign, focusing on improving key nutrition practices during the critical first 1,000 days of a child’s life.

To improve the nutritional status of children aged 6-59 months, Vitamin A capsules and deworming tablets were provided to approximately 95 per cent of the target population, reaching around 1.7 million children. UNICEF Rwanda procured ready-to-use therapeutic food and therapeutic milk for treatment of severe acute malnutrition to address an acute shortage of supplies. UNICEF supported the introduction of screening for stunting at health facilities through the distribution of height/length boards and training of 864 health service providers, ensuring that data on stunting will soon be available through MoH information systems.

UNICEF will continue to strengthen community-based nutrition interventions, including counselling and improved referral systems from health facilities to community-based nutrition programmes to improve the nutrition status of children identified as stunted or experiencing acute malnutrition.

Nutrition-sensitive interventions: UNICEF Rwanda supported the establishment of kitchen gardens, community saving-lending groups, and the distribution of small livestock to the most vulnerable households, to improve households’ resilience and access to nutritious
food. Review of these interventions will inform future scale-up.

**Nutrition in emergency:** To ensure that core commitments for children in emergencies were met, UNICEF Rwanda provided ready-to-use therapeutic food for the treatment of severely malnourished children affected by landslides. In response to the Burundian refugee influx, UNICEF provided supplies and training, resulting in treatment of 944 severely malnourished children under five since April 2015. Also, 6,629 children ages 6-59 months were screened for acute malnutrition and provided with Vitamin A and deworming tablets.

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

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Rwanda provides ongoing technical and financial support to the MINISANTE for strengthening policies, evidence generation, capacity building, implementation of critical health interventions, improving demand, and responding to emergencies. The support included the following:

**Strengthening policies:** Development of the Ministry's e-health policy and strategy will guide establishment of Rwanda's e-Health infrastructure. Community health worker (CHW) guidelines and training materials were reviewed and are being used for training new workers (binomes). New guidelines for post-natal care for mothers and newborns were developed and approved. UNICEF will continue to support and monitor the implementation of these guidelines, contributing to improving the rate of post-natal care from 19 per cent (RDHS 2014/15).

**Evidence-generation:** Comprehensive external evaluations of the community health programme and RapidSMS project were completed. These findings will guide future programming for the country’s strong community health programme and the innovative RapidSMS real-time monitoring system. Evidence indicated that UNICEF-supported districts had better outcomes than non-supported districts for anaemia testing and high-risk detection at antenatal care, deliveries at health facilities, postnatal care visits, malnutrition screening and immunization services.

UNICEF continued its support for strengthening the RapidSMS Initiative, which uses mobile technology to track the first 1,000 days of the maternal and child continuum of care. By end-September 2016, some 583,823 pregnant women and 594,377 newborns had been tracked using RapidSMS nationally. The temperature monitoring study contributed to improving the quality of vaccine storage.

**Capacity building:** Capacity building was carried out for integrated community case management of diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria in six districts, reaching 1,955 new community health workers to improve their skills. To improve the quality of maternal, newborn and child health care provided in health facilities, capacity of health providers was built, including: 287 on essential newborn care and intensive neonatal care, 199 on emergency obstetric and newborn care and 152 on integrated management of newborn and childhood illnesses.

**Implementation of critical health interventions and improving demand:** To sustain high immunization coverage and quality, supply chain operating procedures were developed, temperatures of cold rooms were mapped and solar direct drives refrigerators were installed. With support from UNICEF, Rwanda switched its polio vaccine from trivalent to bivalent. To improve access and quality of care for newborns in Rwanda, 121 health facilities were equipped with basic equipment and skills for new-born care. UNICEF supported the creation
and broadcasting of messages on key health family practices through the Itetero radio program with Rwanda Broadcasting Agency, with the objective of promoting healthy behaviours and increasing demand for services.

**Health in emergency:** To ensure that core commitments for children in emergencies were met, UNICEF provided health supplies to manage children affected by landslides in June 2016. In response to the Burundian refugee influx, UNICEF provided supplies and training, resulting in a total of 29,252 children being vaccinated against measles (18,383) and polio (12,780), routine immunizations for all children since April 2015, and vaccination of 4,603 children and 2,024 pregnant women against tetanus.

**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:**
UNICEF’s support to WASH services in 2016 included:

**Improved access to WASH:** Over 12,000 people (including around 6,200 women and girls) were provided access to improved water supply, while more than 11,000 people gained access to improved sanitation. In addition, an estimated 8,300 children (4,200 girls and 4,100 boys) gained access to improved sanitation through the provision of gender-segregated sanitation facilities at 15 schools. An estimated 78,000 people, (including 41,000 women and girls) were reached with messages on safe hygiene practices through interpersonal communication. More than 3 million people also received messages on the importance of handwashing with soap through bulk-SMS sent out on Global Handwashing Day.

**Strengthening the enabling environment:** Draft national policies and strategies for water supply and sanitation were finalized and subsequently approved by the Cabinet. Support was provided for development of the national action plan for enhancing the sustainability of rural water supply services in partnership with Japan’s International Cooperation Agency; development of terms of reference for a comprehensive sector management information system and for key sector advocacy initiatives, including participation of Rwanda delegation in the Sanitation and Water for All Meeting held in Addis Ababa in March 2016 and celebrations of World Water Day and Global Handwashing Day. Efforts to leverage resources from various donors, including the African Development Bank, are also ongoing.

**Capacity building:** To contribute to strengthening national capacity for sustained hygiene and sanitation promotion, over 1,200 community members and district staff were trained, including 149 master trainers, 493 community hygiene club members, 250 teachers, 100 masons, 100 tippy tap manufacturers and 150 district staff. The Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority was also supported to organize sensitization workshops for key decision-makers at the provincial level, contributing to enhanced understanding of their role in planning, managing and monitoring WASH service provision, as well as their increased commitment to strengthening management and monitoring of these services.

**Pilot-testing new WASH technologies:** In partnership with American Standards/Lixil Technology and Rwanda Water and Sanitation Corporation, pilot-testing of an innovative latrine pan (SaTo pan) was undertaken to help construct more hygienic and easily maintained latrines. This resulted in improvements to the product based on community feedback, and a subsequent plan to launch it in the local market in early 2017.

**WASH in emergency:** In response to the landslides during heavy rains, UNICEF Rwanda led the WASH sector needs assessment and subsequently helped mobilize resources for
rehabilitation of 22 damaged water supply systems. Rehabilitation of these systems is ongoing, in partnership with World Vision. In response to the Burundian refugee influx, critical WASH services were supported in partnership with UNHCR, Oxfam and the Global Humanitarian and Development Foundation, benefitting over 51,000 refugees (49 per cent women and girls). UNICEF’s support to Rwanda Water and Sanitation Corporation resulted in improved access to safe and reliable water supply for about 14,000 Congolese refugees living in Gihembe refugee camp.

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

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF continued to invest in scaling-up, modelling, and improving the quality of prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), paediatric HIV treatment, and adolescent-friendly HIV services. UNICEF Rwanda’s support to the Ministry of Health included:

PMTCT and paediatric HIV treatment: The 2016-2018 operational plan and review of HIV treatment guidelines were developed to allow people living with HIV to be tested and given antiretroviral therapy immediately. Implementation of a model for community-based care and follow-up of preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV clients in 32 health facilities in five districts, to improve follow-up through enhanced counselling on adherence, was also supported. The findings will inform further scale-up of psychosocial support for people living with HIV in the country.

The capacity to effectively monitor and continuously improve the quality of PMTCT services in all public health facilities in Kigali was strengthened by training 128 health care providers. Indicators for enhanced monitoring of PMTCT interventions were developed and integrated into existing monitoring tools, and will be produced for use in selected facilities in Kigali. Experiences and lessons learned will be used to strengthen the overall monitoring system for the programme. UNICEF’s support resulted in the development of service delivery models and tools for the test and treat all initiative, strategies to effectively and efficiently provide HIV testing to priority populations and the review of HIV testing strategies and protocol. Although these efforts resulted in a 1.76 per cent decline in mother-to-child transmission of HIV (National HIV Annual Report 2013–2014, Ministry of Health, Rwanda), low retention and linkage to care remains a challenge: 7.6 per cent of mother-infant pairs are lost to follow-up and only 74.3 per cent of HIV positive infants are linked to treatment.

Adolescent HIV prevention services: Following an assessment of the first phase of the ‘ALL IN’ initiative, UNICEF Rwanda supported the second phase of assessments and development of an operational plan for adolescent programming. Support was also provided to adapt WHO training manuals on early infant male circumcision, based on local experiences and lessons learned from ongoing modelling of service delivery in six health facilities. To improve access to services, UNICEF partnered with NGOs in two districts. Delivery of comprehensive information on HIV and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) was strengthened at the facility and community levels in 28 sectors. Through 440 trained community peer educators, 150,000 adolescent boys and girls were educated on HIV and sexual and gender-based violence. Health facilities were provided with supplies for HIV testing and male circumcision. Around 22,000 girls and boys were tested for HIV and received results, and over 6,000 boys from poor households were circumcised.

In 2017, approximately 90 per cent of adolescents will be engaged through discussions on HIV themes via radio; 5,000 are targeted for HIV testing and 710 boys for circumcision. Achieving these results should have a significant impact on reducing new HIV infections in
targeted geographic areas. Prevention of HIV and access to HIV treatment services among adolescents continues to be a challenge and will remain a priority for 2017.

**OUTCOME 2** Improved and equitable participation in and completion of quality, inclusive education

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Although Rwanda achieved significant success in achieving universal primary education with a net enrolment rate of 97.6 per cent (MINEDUC, 2016), these gains at the primary level need to be matched with improvements in quality throughout the system. Results from 2014 (published in 2016) indicate that there are significant issues for learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy for most students in Rwanda.

Equitable access to basic education for vulnerable children is an issue; only 70 per cent of children with disabilities are enrolled in primary schools (2012 census data, MINEDUC 2016). Data indicate significant dropout and repetition rates, resulting in a significant proportion of out-of-school children, especially at the upper primary and secondary levels. According to MINEDUC data for 2015, there are still more than 175,000 dropouts annually in primary schools alone.

Access to pre-primary education has been steadily increasing over the past few years, but also remains low, with only a 17.9 per cent net enrolment rate (MINEDUC, 2016).

Rwanda’s education system boasts the highest participation rates in East Africa, as well as gender parity in net and gross enrolment at the pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels. In fact, girls’ enrolment surpasses boys’ enrolment at all levels. Despite these achievements, gender dynamics continue to play an important but complex role in the enabling environment for girls’ and boys’ learning; national data shows that both girls and boys face gender-related barriers to learning.

**UNICEF Response / Key Achievements:** Rwanda’s national education programme aligns closely with UNICEF’s Education Sector Strategic Plan. As co-chair of the Education Sector Working Group (with DFID) and chair of the Curriculum, Materials, and Assessment and Early Childhood Education Working Groups, UNICEF continued to play a critical role in 2016.

UNICEF supports the Government in four strategic areas:

1. **Increasing access to basic education, especially for vulnerable children:**

   The UNICEF Rwanda education programme addresses access issues for the most marginalized children in the country, including refugee children, children affected by humanitarian situations, out-of-school children, children at risk of dropping out, and children with disabilities. Support has been given to ensure that the necessary teaching and learning materials are available. Moreover, UNICEF promoted inclusive education and working at the policy level for system reform and strengthening, while modelling at the school level.

   Overall, in 2016 more than 20,000 vulnerable children were reached through UNICEF support. UNICEF is also working to increase the evidence base, which resulted in the finalized study on Disability in Education and the beginning of a study on Drop-Out and Repetition.

2. **Improving the quality of education:** Given the need to improve the quality of education, UNICEF Rwanda continued its financial and technical support to MINEDUC to support curriculum reform. The curriculum was revised from being knowledge-based to competency-based as of January 2016. With significant effort, more than 27,000 teachers and education
stakeholders were trained. Ongoing monitoring of the training resulted in a shift from the cascade model to a school-level training model for increased support and effectiveness. UNICEF also provided technical and financial support to the second and third Learning Achievement in Rwanda School Assessment (2014 and 2016).

3. Increasing access to pre-primary education: The sub-sector faces significant bottlenecks, resulting in limited access to pre-primary education. UNICEF Rwanda has worked over the course of the country programme to address these bottlenecks. Significant efforts were made to strengthen the capacities of teachers, resulting in more than 90 per cent of all pre-primary teachers trained, and continued support to teachers at the classroom level. UNICEF is expanding access to pre-primary education through the design and construction of model pre-primary facilities. This design was adopted by the Government and partners, but progress remains slow. UNICEF provided technical support to the Government to advocate for increased budget allocations.

4. Addressing gender barriers in education: As per the 2016 Mid-Term Review, a new output was created to address gender disparities in education. To lay the groundwork for programming and to strengthen the evidence base, UNICEF Rwanda, the Ministry of Education, and Plan International are undertaking a youth-led and youth-informed study of gender in education.

While considerable quantitative data are available in Rwanda to measure progress in the education system, there is little qualitative information available to monitor progress made by programmes and interventions. To address that challenge, UNICEF is engaging with MINEDUC and the Rwanda Education Board to improve monitoring of the education sector. In 2015, UNICEF implemented innovative, tablet-based real-time monitoring in pre-primary education. In 2016, this work was scaled-up, with UNICEF’s technical and financial support. All sector education officers and inspectors are now equipped with the capacity to undertake real-time, tablet-based monitoring of various aspects of the education system, including implementation of the competency-based curriculum, gender issues and the use of teaching and learning materials.

These achievements were made possible through collaboration with multiple partners, including: ADRA, DFID, International Education Exchange, Handicap International, Plan International, and Voluntary Service Overseas UNICEF has received donor support from USAID and IKEA, as well as UNICEF national committees in Belgium, Finland, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

OUTPUT 1 Children especially those vulnerable have expanded access to basic education

Analytical Statement of Progress:
One of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2013/14-2017/18 priorities is to increase equitable access to education for students with special educational needs. However, these children represent less than one per cent of the student population.

Since 2015, UNICEF Rwanda, Handicap International and partners have been supporting MINEDUC and the Rwanda Education Board (REB) to advance inclusive education as a cross-cutting issue in the national competence-based curriculum. In 2016, with UNICEF support, an inclusive education teachers’ guide and accompanying training programme were developed and validated. The guide provided the basis for the UNICEF-supported training of more than 41 REB staff, 500 education officers and 2,500 teachers, resulting in increased understanding of how inclusive education is implemented at school-level.
In August 2016, UNICEF worked with the Rwanda Education Board and Handicap International to commence the process of developing model inclusive schools. A comprehensive pre-service inclusive education programme is being developed by the University of Rwanda-College of Education, with support of UNICEF, REB and Handicap International, for all Teacher Training Colleges, enabling them to equip potential primary teachers with skills in inclusive pedagogical methods.

UNICEF continues to ensure access to education for all children, especially those requiring humanitarian assistance. In June 2016 UNICEF successfully arranged long-term support for Congolese refugee students during the handover to UNHCR and NGOs. UNICEF has also been assisting the Government in the integration of refugee children into permanent state schools near the camps.

As of August 2016, UNICEF Rwanda had supported the integration of more than 15,000 Burundian refugee students into Rwanda’s national education system. This work included the distribution of more than 18,000 student kits, 6,000 textbooks and 46,000 supplementary education materials. Moreover, UNICEF supported the training of more than 330 refugee and local teachers on pedagogy to support quality education. UNICEF continues to work with partners to ensure that Burundian refugee students have the necessary education materials and that teachers have capacity and requisite support to ensure access to quality education.

Early childhood development (ECD) services were provided for more than 5,400 Burundian refugee children aged 3-6 years at temporary ECD centres, with 90 ECD caregivers and 107 mother-leaders trained on ECD and play-based early learning and through provision of 30 ECD kits.

**OUTPUT 2 Quality and relevance of education improved**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

To improve the quality and relevance of education, UNICEF Rwanda continued to support the development and roll out of the country’s new competency-based curriculum for the pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels. The Government of Rwanda rolled out the new curriculum in January 2016. The competency-based approach will equip graduates with the relevant skills and attitudes to compete in Rwanda’s labour market and to meet its social demands, UNICEF also supported the development of national learning and assessment standards for both primary and secondary grades 3 and 6. Throughout 2016 UNICEF continued to support this work through teacher training and development of support materials.

To support implementation of the teacher development and management policy, UNICEF continued to develop the teacher management and information system (TMIS), a national teacher database that will help enhance the management of the teaching workforce. With teacher training to implement the new curriculum currently in progress, TMIS will support the Rwanda Education Board in the collection and management of teacher data, subsequently informing MINEDUC of plans for teacher development and deployment.

The school-based teacher training programme, conducted with the International Education Exchange (IEE), deployed full-time mentors to help teachers in targeted schools improve their teaching skills. Mentors continue to model best practices and teacher development in 45 schools, benefitting 1,638 teachers. The mentor programme created supportive teaching and learning environments for 77,651 children (39,836 girls and 37,815 boys) and supported 542 school general assembly committee members with learner support strategies, which were spread to 42,720 parents. As a result, MINEDUC and UNICEF developed a school-
based mentorship programme and implemented the system nationwide.

UNICEF continued to support MINEDUC initiatives to promote reading in schools through the multi-partner ‘Rwanda Reads’ initiative. Throughout 2016 UNICEF provided financial and technical support to the initiative, particularly with the Rwanda Reads General Assembly, which will bring together government and civil society to share best practices for promotion of reading in Rwanda.

OUTPUT 3 Critical bottlenecks are addressed to expand access to quality pre-primary and early learning programmes

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Rwanda’s education plan for 2013-2018 commits to expanding access to three years of early learning for three-to-six year olds, with the national goal of increasing access to 30 per cent of children by 2017 - 2018. However, enrolment rates in pre-primary education remain a challenge, with only a 14.2 per cent percent net enrolment rate for 2015/2016.

In 2016 UNICEF Rwanda updated the sector-wide bottleneck analysis it had led in 2014. There has been improvement in the policy framework, with strong Government commitment to scaling up access to quality pre-primary education. Moreover, MINEDUC is committed to absorbing one pre-primary teacher per government school onto the official payroll. However, access, quality and socio-cultural norms remain consistent challenges to ensuring that all children are afforded the opportunity for early learning.

UNICEF Rwanda is modelling pre-primary and early learning programmes to inform future scale-up of these initiatives, to help contribute towards national development targets. A costing study was conducted in partnership with MINEDUC to determine the costs of pre-primary education. The study provided a range of costed options to MINEDUC, and will facilitate continued expansion of investment in pre-primary services, especially in the most vulnerable districts.

UNICEF is constructing model pre-primary facilities consisting of three classrooms, WASH facilities, handwashing stations and fences. The facilities include age-appropriate furniture, play-based learning materials and outdoor equipment. Seven centres have been constructed and efforts are underway to construct an additional four. This model is being reviewed by MINEDUC as part of a comprehensive plan to scale-up pre-school access nationwide.

UNICEF continued to provide technical and financial assistance for the development of the play-based, competency-based pre-primary curriculum. UNICEF supported roll-out of the curriculum through the training of 2,203 pre-primary educators, and the curriculum was implemented beginning in January 2016. The associated teachers’ guide and development of learning assessment standards are in progress. In partnership with Voluntary Service Overseas and the University of Rwanda-College of Education, UNICEF is strengthening pre-service training for pre-school teachers at all 16 teacher training colleges. In addition, quality teaching and learning materials are being developed in support of an early childhood education pre-service curriculum.

OUTPUT 4 Critical bottlenecks are addressed to ensure gender equity at pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels of education

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The 2016 midterm review highlighted the need for more focused programming on gender. Based on the issues pertaining to gender in education, the focus on gender at the global and
regional levels of UNICEF and the Gender Review, which called for a more concentrated approach to gender programming, it was proposed to have an additional output in the results structure on gender in education.

This work will systematically address the disparities between girls and boys in obtaining access to quality education, with a focus on improving learning outcomes. Disparities are highlighted in the 2015 and 2016 EMIS reports on achievement, access and transition at various levels of education for both boys and girls. National examination results at the primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels indicate that boys consistently performed better than girls in national examinations during 2008-2014 (MINEDUC, 2016). Conversely, boys are more likely to repeat and more likely to drop out of primary school (MINEDUC 2015). These issues will be further elucidated by the Drop-Out Study, for which preliminary findings are expected by January 2017.

During the first half of 2016 UNICEF worked with MINEDUC, the Rwanda Education Board and other key partners in the Girls’ Education Working Group to produce an initial report and bottleneck analysis on the gender barriers facing boys and girls in education. Based on those analyses and discussions, UNICEF developed a concept note to describe the new programme, as well as additional supporting documentation to facilitate fundraising and the selection of implementing partners.

In the second half of 2016 the education programme established a foundation for the new programme, which will aim to improve learning achievement and school retention for boys and girls in upper primary school.

To advance the first objective, UNICEF contracted a research firm to support MINEDUC to undertake a comprehensive, nationally representative study on dropout and repetition in Rwanda. In October 2016, the methodology and research tools were finalised and approved by the necessary national bodies. Data collection is planned for December 2016, with preliminary findings expected by the end of the year.

In line with the second objective, UNICEF agreed to support MINEDUC to undertake a study on knowledge, attitudes, and practices around gender and education that will inform the development of the national communications campaign. The study is underway, in partnership with PLAN International, and preliminary findings were expected in December 2016. Based on these findings, UNICEF will support MINEDUC to develop and implement a national communications strategy around gender and education. In early 2017, UNICEF aims to identify partners to help achieve programme objectives through an open selection process.

**OUTCOME 3** Girls and boys, especially the most vulnerable are protected from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect within an evidence informed child protection system

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The child protection programme is tailored to support multi-sectoral Government and partner interventions to address challenges faced by children of Rwanda, including violence, abuse, neglect and low birth registration. The programme responds to data showing that 33 per cent of girls and 29 per cent of boys have been victims of physical or sexual violence, while 22 per cent of women and 15 per cent of adolescent girls have been victims of sexual violence. Also, children account for 65 per cent of all gender-based violence and abuse cases registered at the One-Stop Centres in Kigali.

Only 56 per cent of children are registered at birth, and 97 per cent do not have a birth certificate. In Rwanda, birth registration is not a precondition for accessing social services.
But with the transition from paper-based registration to electronic, a drastic improvement is expected in birth registration rates.

Through Rwanda’s Child Care Reform more than 2,000 children were reintegrated from orphanages to family-based care. About 1,100 children remain in orphanages; their situation is being assessed by a dedicated social workforce to ensure their safe and sustainable reintegration into families.

Key achievements in child protection illustrate UNICEF’s support to the Government of Rwanda in building a solid system that prevents and protects children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. UNICEF focused its support on strengthening an evidence-based legal framework, supporting coordination mechanisms, and human and institutional capacity building to implement the reform.

Notable progress included: developing a simplified Justice for Children Policy Guide for wide dissemination; the Guide promotes involving children, families, victims and communities in legal decision-making. Key coordination mechanisms for managing the child protection system were reinforced through the Child Protection Working Group, the national platform for the coordination of child protection interventions. The National Partnership for Children with Disabilities (NPCWD) has become a regular platform for coordinating key actions dedicated to children with disabilities. In 2016, recommendations were agreed and prioritized for implementation by the NPCWD to improve basic care provision and promote family-based care for children with disabilities.

Aligned with Rwanda’s Integrated Child Rights Policy, the three flagship areas of support and entry points for building stronger systems are: (i) prevention and response to violence against children, especially girls, (ii) the National Child Care Reform, with a focus on the sustainable reintegration of children from institutional care into families, and (iii) modernization of CRVS systems, including birth registration.

One of the major constraints faced is the provision of services to GBV and VAC victims at decentralized levels. Together with other UN agencies, UNICEF continued its support to the national scale-up of the Isange One Stop Centres (OSCs), which provided free assistance to 6,649 victims, including 4,543 cases of sexual violence and 2,106 of domestic violence. There are 30 OSCs functioning; one in each district.

To address challenges in human and financial resource capacity for the child protection system, increased efforts were made to prioritize strategic human investments for the child protection sector. UNICEF continued to support deployment and capacity building of 68 professional social welfare workers, as well as 29,674 community-based para-social workers, known as Inshuti Z’ Umuryango (IZU) or “Friends of the Family” in all 30 districts. Following country-wide training, all IZU are equipped with the skills and knowledge to provide child and family protection services at the village level.

UNICEF is committed to reinforcing institutional capacities for policy formulation and planning for the evidence-informed child protection system. With the Ministry of Health and U.S.-based Centers for Disease Control, UNICEF conducted a comprehensive Violence against Children and Youth Survey, the nation’s first assessment of the national prevalence of violence against children aged 13 to 24. Once the findings are validated, it will inform major policy and programming interventions to prevent and respond to violence against all children.

With the NISR and other partners, UNICEF completed a comprehensive assessment of the CRVS system in Rwanda. The final report outlines that a multi-faceted approach is needed among health, justice and local governance sectors to ensure that Rwanda has
interoperable and comprehensive CRVS systems. Currently, a five-year strategic plan is being developed to ensure that all data on vital events, including birth registration, is captured and utilized.

Ensuring the availability and utilization of child protection services remains a critical objective for UNICEF and its partners. Important achievements include:
- Approval of a new family law, offering protection for children on birth registration and parental foster care, among other issues
- Response to the influx of Burundian refugees. Together with MIDIMAR, UNHCR and other NGOs, UNICEF provided child protection services to more than 8,000 refugee children
- Support for the Child Care Reform process; 1,166 children living in orphanages have been safely reintegrated into family-based care.

Progress and achievements in protecting children’s rights were accomplished through collaboration with multiple partners, including the NCC, ministries of justice, health, gender and family protection and local affairs, NISR, UN sister agencies, and NGOs such as Plan International, Hope and Homes for Children and Global Communities. UNICEF also received generous financial support from donors such as USAID’s Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, DFID, the Ikea Foundation and Zonta International. These 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 model at the village level.

**OUTPUT 1** Legal framework and coordination of the Child Protection System strengthened at national and sub-national levels

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF has worked closely with the Government to ensure that legislation on child protection complies with international standards promoting the best interests of children. At the decentralized level, 28 of 30 districts have a coordinated strategy for preventing and responding to violence against children. The education policy is available, and there are limited mechanisms to identify, prevent and respond to violence in and around schools.

In support of legal and policy reform in child protection, major national achievements include the adoption and enforcement of the Justice for Children Policy, the Legal Aid Policy and the law on organization, jurisdiction, competence, and functioning of Mediation Committees, all drafted with UNICEF technical assistance.

Implementation of the Justice for Children Policy will promote participatory decision-making for reconciliation, restitution and responsibility through the involvement of children, families, victims and communities in both civil and criminal matters. During this reporting period, tools for implementation were developed, including a Justice for Children Guide and a reader-friendly version of the child protection legal framework, all drafted by UNICEF in collaboration with the ministry of justice and the NCC.

The Law on Mediation Committees represents an important milestone towards implementation of the Justice for Children Policy. It allows community-based mediators (*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 17,948 recently elected mediators who will implement the new Justice for Children Policy at decentralized levels.

Assisting the Government to establish effective coordination mechanisms in Child Protection, UNICEF supported 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 have been established as national platforms for the coordination of child protection interventions, addressing coordination challenges in this important cross-cutting area of national development.

UNICEF also provided technical support for operationalisation of the NPCWD. Quarterly meetings were organized with partners to outline key priorities for improved coordination, service delivery, knowledge management, advocacy and communication to address social norms that hinder access to services for children with disabilities. A two-year joint action plan was developed and endorsed to cover implementation of activities from 2016–2018.

Prevention and response mechanisms related to the education policy/sector plan specify limited prevention and response mechanisms to address violence in and around schools. UNICEF plans to support the development of guidance to support the reporting and prevention of violence in and around schools in 2017.

OUTPUT 2 Child protection services available to the most disadvantaged children

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In support of quality protection services for vulnerable children and women, key results were achieved in the following areas: (i) birth registration, (ii) violence against women and children, (iii) child care reform and (iv) humanitarian interventions.

With the NISR and other partners, UNICEF completed a comprehensive assessment of the CRVS system in Rwanda. A five-year strategic plan that will guide CRVS system reform is being developed based on the findings of the assessment and will be finalized by February 2017. The Government has advanced from paper to electronic notification of children at all administrative sectors in all 30 districts.

Together with other UN agencies, UNICEF contributed to the scale up of the One Stop Centres programme. UNICEF provided technical and financial support for the finalization of the OSCs’ SOPs and the training of about 140 OSC staff, including 86 police officers, on the multi-disciplinary investigative and intervention team model, which is applied in all the OSCs to ensure standard, high-quality responses to GBV and VAC cases. Thirty OSCs are currently operational across the country, providing free assistance to 6,649 victims, including 4,543 cases of sexual violence and 2,106 of domestic violence. With support from ESARO, an integrated case management assessment tool was developed, and plans are underway to use the tool in the OSCs to have a stronger integrated approach to child protection cases across the different sectors.

As part of the National Child Care Reform process, UNICEF supported the safe reintegration of 1,166 children formerly living in orphanages into family-based care under the Tubarerere mu Muryango (Let’s Raise Children in Families) programme. UNICEF ensured that social workers followed due process during the reintegration process aligned to the UN Alternative Care guidelines. This was carried out through training and supervisory support to frontline workers pre- and post-placement of children in families.

UNICEF continued to provide psychosocial support to over 8,000 refugee children and their families to prevent and respond to violence, family separation, exploitation and abuse in emergencies. Collaborating with Plan International, increased focus was placed on community-based child protection mechanisms to ensure community ownership of child protection. Five out of eight child-friendly spaces were upgraded to provide a safer environment for children to help them cope with adverse environments, reaching 5,584 children every week. Some 112 para-social workers received refresher trainings on child
protection, including sexual and gender-based violence, and operate to support 712 unaccompanied and 830 separated children. Regarding child protection case management, 145 cases have been referred to caseworkers; 59 are closed and 86 are being followed up. Seventy-seven child-led committees were established by the community to ensure a functional community-based child protection system in Mahama Camp, which hosts Burundian refugees. Standard operating procedures and guidelines on alternative care were adapted and used to identify foster families, contributing to family reunification for 10 children.

OUTPUT 3 Skilled professional and para-professional social workers are operational in 30 districts

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF continued to focus on improving the prevention and response capacity of Rwanda’s child protection system through a qualified professional and para-professional workforce. Through continued support of the NCC, UNICEF continued to lead the child care and protection system reform through: (i) Roll out of a capacity building training for community-based child and family protection workers (IZU) and the professional social workforce, and (ii) roll-out of a national campaign on the ‘Let’s Raise Children in Families’ programme. In partnership with Tulane University and the NCC, UNICEF Rwanda completed the development of the national child protection training package for IZU and provided pre-service training to 29,674 community-based child and family protection workers across the 30 districts. The training equipped ‘Friends of the Family’ with knowledge and skills to be fully operational in delivering child and family protection services at the village level. The main part of the work for IZU includes conducting household visits and equipping parents with positive parenting skills as a mechanism to prevent and respond to neglect, abandonment and violence against children across the 30 districts.

Furthermore, through the same collaboration with academia, UNICEF also developed a training curriculum for district professional social workers and psychologists. The curricula provide a guiding framework for child care and protection system reform. All 68 professionals participated in UNICEF-supported pre-service and in-service capacity development programmes, which provided the skill sets required to deliver services for children effectively and efficiently.

To increase public awareness of the ‘Let’s Raise Children in Families’ (TMM) programme, UNICEF worked closely with the NCC to design, develop and implement a national TMM campaign. This campaign served as a platform to call on parents, children, communities, caregivers and local authorities to promote a safe family environment for all children. After a successful launch ceremony providing information on TMM messages and creating public awareness at the national level, campaign activities during this reporting period have focused on community mobilization and sensitization on TMM messages, such as placement of key messages on community radio stations and production and dissemination of information, education and communication (IEC) materials at the village level, as well as community dialogue using existing community forums.

OUTPUT 4 Child protection interventions are informed by evidence to address negative practices and related social norms

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Rwanda’s Integrated Child Rights Policy calls for increased evidence on child protection, to inform policy and programme development. To close the knowledge gap and produce reliable data on child protection, UNICEF has supported the ministries of Health and Family and Gender Promotion, the NCC, the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD),
the Kigali City Council (KCC), the NISR and the National Identity Agency (NIDA) to build an evidence base for the child protection system in four major thematic areas. The availability of OSCs in all 30 districts contributed to the increased number of districts with mechanisms in place to collect data, from 21 in 2015 to 28 this year. From the beginning of the country programme, seven out of 10 research studies addressing child protection have been conducted. Among the achievements registered are:

• In partnership with MINISANTE and the Centers for Disease Control, UNICEF conducted a comprehensive Violence against Children and Youth Survey across the country, which assessed the national prevalence of VAC for children aged 13-to-24. The data was collected and analysed, and is to be validated by the Government by mid-2017. The final results will form a basis for major policy and programming interventions to prevent and respond to VAC, including against children with disabilities.

• UNICEF, ILO, and civil society organizations collaborated with the KCC to address the issue of child domestic workers in the capital. A multi-stakeholder action plan to prevent and respond to domestic child labour in urban areas was developed and is being operationalized by the Ministry of Labour in partnership with NGOs such as World Vision, CLADHO, and REACH (Reconciliation Evangelism and Christian Healing).

• In partnership with the Ministry of Local Affairs (MINALOC), NCPD and NCC, UNICEF provided support for conducting an institutional care assessment for children with disabilities. The assessment highlighted that approximately 4,459 children with disabilities are living in institutional care facilities that lack adequate standards, and children are generally not provided with adequate care. UNICEF will support NCPD and NCC to develop national institutional care standards for application in all institutions, and will continue to strengthen community-based interventions to prevent unnecessary institutionalization of children with disabilities.

OUTCOME 4 Vulnerable families with children have reduced exposure to livelihood risk, inequalities and poverty

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Rwanda has made exemplary progress in achieving the MDGs, with unfinished work linked to specific MDG indicators. The poverty rate remains high at 39.1 per cent, with extreme poverty at 16.3 per cent (Living Standards Measurement Survey, EICV4). The Rwanda Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy identified social protection as a key strategy to support the reduction of extreme poverty. Rwanda made progress towards achieving its 2018 target (set in 2013) of reaching 1 million individuals through social protection programmes, with coverage increasing from 496,000 in 2012 to 745,795 in June 2016.

The number of benefitting households also increased, from 6 per cent in 2014 to 8 per cent in 2016 (4.66 of whom were female-headed households). The most recent Ubudehe categorization in 2015 indicated a somewhat different situation. More than 376,192 households were categorized as Ubudehe 1, and therefore eligible for social assistance. The core social protection programmes are currently reaching only 50 per cent of eligible households (only 172,709 households were covered by Rwanda’s Vision 2020 Umurenge Programmes VUP in 2015/16).

Rwanda’s investment in the social sector has gradually increased since the beginning of the decade. Recent assessments, however, indicate a drop in the budgets allocated to social sectors. Social protection remained the only social sector where a slight increase in budget was identified (from 3.3 per cent in 2012/13 to 4.3 per cent in 2015/16). The budget for the
health sector increased to 12.3 per cent in FY 2012/13, the closest to the national and regional target of 15 per cent. The revised allocations for health in 2015/16, however, declined to 11.3 per cent of the national budget. In education, the budget share was at 16.2 per cent in 2012/13 and dropped to 12.3 per cent in 2015/16.

The increases in investments were a result of a steady annual increase in GDP of 7 per cent and increased national revenue, as the country implemented its taxation policy more aggressively, as well as the relatively high level of ODA. The gradual decrease in ODA, particularly in health and education, as well as recent indications of decreasing fiscal space, is a cause for concern and calls for consistent monitoring and advocacy for increases in both domestic and donor resources.

To support Government efforts to reach its targets for eradicating extreme poverty and reducing the poverty rate to less than 20 per cent by 2020, UNICEF Rwanda focused on building the country’s capacity to implement child-sensitive social protection measures that contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the whole sector, while establishing links between social protection and basic services for the youngest children. Key priority areas include health, nutrition and ECD, to address multiple dimensions of child poverty. The availability of evidence to support poverty alleviation measures was addressed through research to inform programmes and policies, as well as by building the social protection system’s capacity to collect and monitor data on social protection beneficiaries. Given the importance of adequate financing for the development of core and complementary programmes addressing poverty reduction, UNICEF focused on analysis and advocacy for increased investment in child services in Rwanda. Building on this approach, UNICEF made the following contributions in 2016:

Building on studies commissioned by UNICEF and the Government of Rwanda to explore child-sensitive social protection options, UNICEF, MINALOC and CARE International piloted two projects: child-sensitive expanded public works and mobile crèche child care for families participating in public works. The pilot project, including more than 300 of the poorest households in two districts, indicated positive impacts of both the mobile crèche and the expanded public works programme on the nutritional outcomes of young children, and increased the capacities of households to diversify their income. Households’ overall well-being was also improved through access to health insurance and savings programmes. The expanded public works programmes were included in the Government’s ‘Graduation from Extreme Poverty’ package, rolled out in 30 pilot sectors in 30 districts, aiming for an overall national roll-out in 2018/19.

Technical assistance was provided to the MINALOC/LODA VUP Programme document review, resulting in the inclusion of child-sensitive and nutrition-sensitive measures. Assistance was provided for the training on the new VUP programme design. UNICEF further contributed to expanding the social protection system through continued support of the Ubudehe MIS, which is currently operational and providing baselines for targeting of social protection and other programmes.

UNICEF continued to place high emphasis on strategic operational research, including support for the domestication of the SDGs through collaboration with NISR. In support of SDG 1, by end-2016, UNICEF and NISR agreed to launch the multidimensional child poverty study (MODA) and link it with the multidimensional poverty analysis of the general population. In addition, UNICEF contributed to the launch of the new EICV Survey in 2016. Reports resulting from the DHS 2014-15 and the ECIV 4 were published. Two studies were commissioned on Public Financing for Children in Rwanda at the central and decentralized levels. These studies provided a critical evidence base for UNICEF engagement with Government partners for increased and more efficient spending in priority sectors for children.
Significant steps were taken towards linking the social protection, ECD, and nutrition sectors within policy discourse. The revised social protection sector programme documents create opportunities for targeting overlaps and improved integration and coordination of services at the community level.

Initiatives of other UN agencies, such as emerging social protection programming by FAO, were supported, and dialogue with the World Bank with regards to linking nutrition, ECD and social protection is ongoing.

**OUTPUT 1** Capacity of national/ decentralized institutions to deliver targeted equitable and holistic child-sensitive social protection services strengthened

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Rwanda continued to address bottlenecks in the social protection system identified through the UNICEF-supported gender audit of 2013, research, and analysis of the sector. Bottlenecks were analysed in the areas of supply (coverage), demand (geographic and social barriers), enabling environment (links between core social protection programmes and complementary basic services, inadequate fiscal space, monitoring and lack of coordination at decentralized level), and quality (limited capacity). To address bottlenecks linked to the effectiveness and efficiency of the social protection system and to build capacities to develop, implement and finance an integrated system, several programmes were prioritized, with the following results.

Two selected child-sensitive social protection measures were piloted, mobile crèches and expanded public works, implemented close to the homes of the workers, allowing for improved child care. The Government intends to scale up the child-sensitive expanded public works (ePW) model in all districts of Rwanda in the next two years. The ePW pilot indicated positive impacts on the nutritional outcomes of young children and increased capacity of households to diversify income. The pilot also impacted the overall well-being of the households – improved access to health insurance, land, and savings – and geographic and social barriers to accessing these resources were removed. The ePW approach provides more flexibility in identifying the labour-intensive work for a large number of beneficiaries and increased coverage of households with children. Through its inclusion in the Government-designed graduation from extreme poverty package, the ePW approach increases access of the poorest households with children to agriculture, nutrition, child care and financial services.

The child-sensitive SP options were costed and included in the draft financing strategy, containing costing and financing options, developed by MINALOC in 2016. The ePW programme was included in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Government budget.

The new VUP Programme Document and implementation guidelines were developed with inputs by UNICEF, with a focus on the integration of services, including child and nutrition-sensitive measures, as well as access to financial services, particularly at the decentralized level. The community mobilization and sensitization component of the VUP programme document is intended to improve the flow of information and coordination at the community level.

The Ubudehe MIS was developed in early 2016 as the main tool to enable monitoring, coordination, and targeting overlap among social protection programmes. The Ubudehe MIS is linked to the VUP programme and EMIS, and will be linked to the integrated SP MIS once finalized to strengthen the overall M&E for social protection.

Capacities of more than 100 social protection staff and district officials to deliver the new VUP programme were built through training, including newly appointed staff and the recently elected district leadership.
OUTCOME 2 Evidence and research, particularly on child-poverty and disparities, inform national and sub-national policy formulation and implementation

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF has built on results achieved since 2013 to further the use of evidence and fill priority knowledge gaps. Data gathered through the KAP survey on the early nurturing of children and the ECD baseline sub-national study have largely informed the development of ECD policy and programming. The strengthened DHS (2014-2015) and EICV (2013-2014) national surveys resulted in improved information on social protection and improved knowledge on ECD. Data also informed the development of WASH policies and the revised VUP programme document, to better support programme delivery.

In 2016 the focus was on generating evidence to support national policy design, reporting on the MDGs and strengthening UNICEF programming. The most significant knowledge gaps for understanding the impact of integrated ECD programming on children, child protection and other cross-sectoral areas such as nutrition, adolescence, and children with disabilities.

Regarding SDG domestication, UNICEF provided technical inputs for assessing the feasibility of priority indicators. It supported NISR with national SDG awareness efforts and is currently providing support to develop a baseline for SDG Goal 1 indicators on multidimensional child poverty. This work will continue in 2017. The 2014/15 DHS final report was launched. UNICEF Rwanda contributed financial and technical support, particularly on chapters related to ECD, nutrition, violence, health and HIV. EICV4) thematic reports were also launched, and support provided for the preparations of the EICV5 as the central poverty and social protection data source in Rwanda. Data collection is currently underway.

As follow-up to the ECD baseline evaluation of 2014, the end-line evaluation was launched in all 10 districts included in the baseline. Preliminary results were expected in early December 2016. The end-line evaluation will guide UNICEF programming in ECD as well as on national programmes and policies.

The Nutrition, Gender and Markets survey report was launched and will further inform nutrition programming in Rwanda. Data analysis for a UNICEF-supported Violence against Children and Youth Survey was initiated mid-2016, and is currently underway. Preliminary results are expected in early 2017 to guide child protection-related policies and programmes in Rwanda.

UNICEF provided financial and technical support to various line ministries through key research and evaluation of major national programmes. Results will be released by the end of 2016 and in early 2017. Evaluations of the Rapid SMS and Community Health Programme are expected to influence the future implementation of these national programmes, and the Drop-out and Repetition Study commissioned by MINEDUC will fill in significant knowledge gaps linked to causality of low education achievement and high drop-out rates.

The capacities of key partners were built through technical training, including the NISR, MINEDUC, MIALOC, MINISANTE and the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the University of Rwanda and civil society organisations.

Key alliances were also strengthened with NISR and the University of Rwanda. Partnerships between NISR and sector ministries were supported to strengthen administrative data collection and NISR engagement in flagship research.
OUTPUT 3 Child sensitive, budget and monitoring system is in place and operationalized

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Budget allocations for social sectors have been increasing since the beginning of the decade, but faced constraints in fiscal years 2014/15 and 2015/16. There have been reductions in spending in the health, education, and WASH sectors. The only sector that remained stable and had a slight increase was social protection. The current level of investment was enabled by the increase in domestic revenues, which also enabled the Government to fill gaps caused by development assistance. The decrease in ODA was offset by increased borrowing, and the country continues to struggle with a budget deficit. These emerging trends require continuous monitoring of budget allocations in the social sector.

To address the above situation, UNICEF supported the Public Expenditure Review of the Child Protection sectors to inform the advocacy by the NCC/MIGEPROF with the Ministry of Finance. This resulted in improved financial reporting indicators included in the 2016 Budget Framework Paper. The costing analysis of pre-primary education was completed and has informed MINEDUC advocacy for increased investment in the ECD sector. The costing of public expenditures and programme expansion requirements were mainstreamed in the ECD policy and its implementation plan, and in the development of the child-sensitive social protection options. District-level budgets were monitored for inclusion of budget allocations in ECD and nutrition. Advocacy for improved budgeting was mainstreamed into UNICEF sector programme plans.

In 2016 UNICEF Rwanda made considerable progress toward strengthening child-focused budgeting through the finalization of two studies. The studies, “Public Financing for Children in Rwanda: A Baseline Study” and “Public Financing for Children in Rwanda: A District Baseline Study”, were commissioned by UNICEF to provide a comprehensive overview of investments in children and the budgeting process. Reported recommendations will support UNICEF’s work with Government partners in the planning and allocation of financial resources in the best interests of children. Both studies are expected to provide an advocacy basis for UNICEF sections to engage with their Government partners for increased and more efficient spending for child priority sectors. A key element of both studies is a spatial equity analysis, which observes how district budgets vary per capita and how this relates to poverty levels, needs and progress for children.

Given that one of the main bottlenecks identified was district capacity to develop needs-based budgets for children, as well as a lack of publically available data on budget execution at the district level, UNICEF has been exploring the possibility of partnering with sector ministries and districts to develop budgets and plans for specific sectors, such as ECD. This work is in the early stages of development and will be the focus in 2017, using the findings and recommendations of the baseline study. The process will build on resources and capacities within cross-sectoral programmes focusing on nutrition, ECD, WASH, education and social protection.

UNICEF continues to advocate and leverage partnerships with stakeholders in public finance management for children and MINALOC and UNICEF continue to partner with Save the Children for investments for children.

OUTCOME 5 Young children and families, especially the most deprived, are utilizing quality ECD services

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Data from the Rwanda DHS 2014/15 reveal that only 62 per cent of young children are developmentally on track. An ECD baseline study of young children in poor rural areas, conducted by UNICEF in 2014, highlights even more developmental gaps in problem-solving, communication, personal-social skills, as well as gross-motor and fine-motor development. Only 13 per cent of young children have the opportunity to attend organized care or early learning facilities (DHS 2014/15). Low access is mainly due to the “supply” gap: limited provision of services due to a lack of physical infrastructure and a shortage of qualified caregivers. Threats to early childhood development are greatest among children living in the poorest households, where they are less likely to receive support for early learning at home and more likely to be exposed to multiple risk factors due to poor standards of housing. Children living in urban areas (37 per cent) are much more likely to attend an early childhood education programme than children living in rural areas (9 per cent). About 45 per cent of children living in the richest households attend an early childhood education programme, compared to only 3 per cent of children in the poorest households. Rural children (37 per cent) are more often left home alone than urban children (23 per cent). Therefore, the target groups consist of children and caregivers living in poverty or in rural areas. Children in such communities suffer from multiple interconnected deprivations cutting across education, health, nutrition and protection indicators and compounding the developmental delays of young children, who thereafter need sustained support during their growth.

To address the issue and ensure that the necessary conditions for optimal child development are put in place, UNICEF endorsed a comprehensive set of interventions. The approach is based on evidence that several preconditions are required to maximize children’s developmental potential: (i) effective and responsive care of the young child by the family and community; (ii) utilization of quality ECD and other basic social services for young children and (iii) implementation of child-sensitive policies. As of end 2016, the following milestones had been achieved:

At the policy level, UNICEF supported MIGEPROF in the revision of the National ECD Policy and development of a costed, five-year Implementation plan. By May 2016, the revised ECD policy and plan had been approved by Cabinet. The policy aims to accelerate the scale-up of integrated ECD services across multiple sectors: including education, nutrition, health, water & sanitation, social protection and child protection. To enforce effective policy implementation, UNICEF provided MIGEPROF with an ECD officer to provide technical assistance for 24 months (since November 2015). UNICEF is also supporting the implementation of the policy at decentralized levels, through capacity development of local stakeholders on planning, implementation, and monitoring, and through advocacy with district authorities to include ECD in their plans and budgets. To overcome existing data gap, the ECD module was included in the DHS (2014-15) published in 2016, providing data on six key ECD indicators for the first time. In addition, UNICEF is conducting a comprehensive study, following the cohort of children and families at UNICEF intervention sites and assessing the impact of integrated package of interventions (ECD, nutrition, WASH, social and child protection) on the lives of young children and their families. The findings from the baseline study (completed in 2015) informed the policy change, while findings from the end-line study (ongoing) are informing the second phase of the programme.

To scale up ECD services, UNICEF established 13 ECD model centres in 13 of 30 districts in Rwanda. In the last couple of years, it is estimated that the programme reached the following number of direct beneficiaries: (i) more than 5,000 young children, through centre-based and home-based services; (ii) around 6,000 parents, through parenting education and home visits; (iii) about 180,000 community members, through comprehensive behaviour-change communication campaigns; (iv) more than 70,000 children, from micronutrient supplementation. Six districts have taken over the management and funding of ECD centres as part of the sustainability framework agreed between UNICEF, Imbuto Foundation and the
Rwandan Government. With UNICEF financial and technical support, the National ECD Minimum Operational Standards for improved ECD service delivery were developed and validated. These standards set benchmarks for all ECD service providers for creating enabling, stimulating and protective environments for children. The standards acknowledge different models, including centre-based and home-based ECD services. The Government and other partners, including the private sector, are using the model to further scale up ECD services.

To support emergency response for the influx of refugees from Burundi, one permanent ECD centre in Mahama Camp was completed and handed over to UNHCR and ADRA for further management.

Among the key challenges in 2016 was the lack of a budgetary allocation for MIGEPROF to support the implementation of ECD activities outlined in the approved implementation plan. The pre-primary ECD sector budget approved for 2016/17 (under the Ministry of Education) also remains minimal (just over US$4.8 million), about 2 per cent of this year’s total education budget. UNICEF will therefore intensify advocacy for increased Government investment in ECD.

Key Partners & Donors: To achieve ECD results, UNICEF works closely with MIGEPROF and district authorities. UNICEF’s primary implementing partners are Imbuto Foundation for ECD service delivery and ADRA for construction. In 2016, the ECD programme was funded by IKEA Foundation, the H&M Conscious Foundation, and the Irish National Committee.

OUTPUT 1 Improved ECD policy environment and coordination mechanisms that support optimal development of children

Analytical Statement of Progress:
One of the main bottlenecks identified towards the achievement of holistic child development is the relative lack of knowledge, skills and appropriate practices among parents and primary caregivers for the delivery of effective and responsive care. According to a 2014 baseline study, only 12.2 per cent of parents promoted early learning and school readiness at home. Parents also lacked knowledge of appropriate child health, nutrition, and hygiene.

Thus, UNICEF’s key strategies are to build the capacities of parents and promote social behaviour-change communication for families and communities. UNICEF has made education, parenting support and behaviour change communication key pillars of its ECD flagship programme.

In 2015 UNICEF had developed an ‘Essential Package of Early Child Development and Family Services’, promoting positive parenting, care practices and improved child-caregiver interaction. The essential package has been implemented in 10 districts. By the end of 2016, 6,339 individual parents and primary caregivers had been reached with weekly parenting education, with a target of 10,000 families to be reached by 2018. In 2016, there was a shift in programme strategy. In addition to centre-based parenting education sessions, parents were also reached through home visitation and home-based ECD groups.

UNICEF participated in the review of the national caregivers’ guide developed in 2009 by the Government of Rwanda. The technical review provided an opportunity to integrate nutrition, child health, protection, hygiene and sanitation into a guide focused predominantly on early stimulation and care. The guide is being used by many partners in Rwanda who are implementing ECD programmes.

Through continuous mobilization of communities and families, nearly 173,000 people were reached with behaviour-change communication strategies on the importance of ECD,
exceeding the target of 100,000 families. This was implemented through direct outreach to families via faith-based organizations (reaching 118,000), a specially designed radio programme called “Itetero” (reaching 20,000), and local community theatre called “Urunana” (reaching 34,850).

An ECD end-line survey scheduled to be completed in Q1 of 2017 will provide updated data on behavioural change indicators following on community mobilization, advocacy and awareness raising activities undertaken so far. A non-representative ‘mini-mid-line survey’ conducted in May 2016 indicated that 57.3 per cent of parents had taught their children something new in the past week (compared to 38.4 per cent at baseline); and 40.1 per cent of parents looked at picture books with their children (compared to 22.6 per cent at baseline).

To raise awareness on the ECD policy, several communication materials were produced: an ECD booklet, Itetero, a documentary, TV and radio spots and panel discussions. It is crucial that a broad sector of Rwanda’s population understands the importance of ECD. Through use of the media, MIGEPROF received many requests for more information on how to initiate ECD services in the community.

The ECD advocacy and communication strategy is currently under development. Ultimately, the strategy will serve as one of the many tools for achieving behavioural change at the family level, promoting responsive child care and parenting practices.

**OUTPUT 2** Increased availability of quality ECD services to children (0-6 years) and their families in targeted districts

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

A 2014 ECD bottleneck analysis revealed that the limited availability of infrastructure and early learning materials, as well as the lack of integrated service provision, were major barriers preventing achievement of ECD outcomes. UNICEF Rwanda’s key strategies for increasing the availability of ECD services included creating spaces for children through construction, capacity development for caregivers, provision of a range of integrated services and the supply of play and learning materials. The model centres are meant to serve as centres of excellence in the provision of quality integrated ECD services.

To model integrated community-based ECD services, 12 ECD centres have been built and two are under construction. UNICEF plans to complete 16 centres by 2018. In addition, 83 ECD caregivers, centre managers, and home visitors were trained, and their performance was improved with guidance from district ECD supervisors. This exceeded the target of 80 caregivers planned for in 2014 (Note: The revised target for 2018 is 400).

All operational centres are providing integrated services, including health, nutrition, early learning, parenting education, basic WASH and kitchen gardening as a component of nutrition. Additional services are being introduced, such as child protection, social protection and comprehensive WASH services. When the approved ECD Minimum Operational Standards are fully disseminated by the close of 2017, centres can be assessed against the standards, thereby providing data on the number of centres that operate in compliance with minimum standards.

At least 1,440 children are participating in centre-based early learning activities. Social mobilization has yielded a strong demand for ECD services, demonstrated by the large number of children enrolling per centre, which is already exceeding the planned numbers. Services continue to expand through the establishment of home-based ECD groups, where a total of 3,246 children have been reached and 1,361 children benefited from home
visitation. Revised total enrolments will be established at the end of the ECD end-line study currently being conducted.

Advocacy with the Government for the development of early learning and development standards (ELDS) began in 2016. With newly approved funding for this activity under the EKN grant, UNICEF will commence the process of developing the standards in 2017. This exercise takes an average of 2.5 years.

ECD centre architecture is accessible to children with physical disabilities, and caregivers are trained on the inclusion of children with physical and cognitive disabilities. Further capacity building and support in this area is planned. The percentage of young children with disabilities and from poorest families participating in organized ECD services will be calculated as part of the end-line survey.

OUTPUT 3  Families are aware of quality ECD services, and provide responsive care to young children (0-6 years), in targeted districts

Analytical Statement of Progress:
A major bottleneck was the fact that the 2011 ECD policy was fragmented and not supported by a costed implementation plan or an M&E framework to assess or measure its effectiveness. Further, lack of effective ECD coordination mechanisms at the national and district levels led to siloed approaches to ECD service delivery by stakeholders, constituting a missed opportunity for articulating joint objectives and plans, and leveraging resources for ECD services among partners. UNICEF’s key strategies for addressing these gaps were advocacy, technical and financial support to MIGEPROF aimed at improving the policy environment and support coordination mechanisms for improved service delivery.

With UNICEF’s financial and technical support, the ECD policy was revised to accelerate scale-up of ECD services, promote integration and foster coordination among various sectors. In May 2016, Rwanda’s Cabinet approved the ECD Policy. UNICEF also provided technical expertise and financial support for development of a five-year costed implementation plan, which was completed in Q1 of 2016 and approved by Cabinet along with the ECD Policy. Policy implementation has started. MIGEPROF, as the coordinating ministry, has formed a national technical working group to review the progress in implementation of the ECD policy. The working group’s first task will be to provide input for developing the ECD M&E framework and national mapping of ECD services. The first joint ECD and protection national coordination meeting took place on 14 December, following approval of the ECD policy. Key issues articulated during this meeting included the need for stronger resource leveraging for ECD services, ECD mapping and information sharing, joint planning and monitoring and stronger community ownership of ECD programmes for sustainability. UNICEF was nominated as the secretariat to host national ECD technical working group functions for one year.

The handover of six of 12 ECD centres to district authorities denotes progressive inclusion of ECD services into district plans. There are still challenges with insufficient budgetary allocation for ECD at the district level. As a result, some districts still need support in leveraging resources for ECD activities.

UNICEF is engaged in strategic partnerships, including with MIGEPROF and other key line ministries. UNICEF and the Government of Rwanda signed a joint ECD work plan (July 2016-June 2017), and UNICEF signed two PCAs with its implementing partners, Imbuto Foundation and ADRA. Through the Rwanda Education NGO Coordination Platform (RENCP), UNICEF also works closely with a range of NGOs who work in ECD. A mapping exercise of ECD service providers is planned for 2017, which will help identify additional partners.
To systematically monitor and evaluate implementation of the ECD Policy, UNICEF is supporting MIGEPROF to develop a multi-sectoral ECD monitoring and evaluation framework. In 2016 advertisement for an expert institution for this task was concluded and shortlisting is underway. In addition, an M&E specialist/advisory post will be supported by UNICEF, to be based at MIGEPROF, to support M&E and policy-related functions.

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:
In 2016, the Government began domesticating the SDGs. In November, a sectoral discussion was commenced under the leadership of the Ministry of Economics and Finance (MINECOFIN) and NISR. The domestication process will lead to a second gap analysis next year. In addition, the Rwanda data revolution policy was drafted, the Rwanda RBM Policy was legalized, and Rwanda’s first Monitoring and Evaluation Society was launched in November.

The MTR process began in March with technical consultations between UNICEF and partners. On March 24, technical consultations culminated in the MTR validation meeting. To ensure that the country programme is aligned with UNICEF’s gender policy, a programmatic gender review was conducted during the MTR. The external consultative process was followed by the Strategic Moment of Reflection held in June. A risk management workshop was organized to identify significant factors that could delay or impede implementation of the country programme. Using UNICEF’s RBM guidance, changes were made to the country programme results structure.

UNICEF’s planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) team supported NISR in statistical literacy capacity building, especially targeting young students and children. For the second time since 2015, NISR took full leadership in organising the “Reading Data with Children” event, with discussions focused on the SDGs. The event successfully facilitated child rights discussions by using statistics, and brought children’s issues to the forefront of Rwanda’s monitoring efforts. In addition, the NISR organized an InfoGraphics competition under the theme “the health and economic status of adolescents”, in accordance with a UNICEF Rwanda programme priority.

The PME and ICT teams continued to facilitate national monitoring efforts. The tablet-based real-time monitoring, initially tested for the use of ECD kits with REB, has been scaled up for nationwide implementation within the new curriculum, under MINEDUC. RBM capacity-building support has created momentum for 18 districts to plan and monitor district plans through the DevInfo district databases. NISR introduced an innovative real-time monitoring feedback loop to normalize the use of the vital statistics and civil registration system.

Taking direction from the integrated communications strategy, several activities were implemented covering key components of C4D, external communications, advocacy and partnership. Launch events such as Let’s Raise Children in Families child protection campaign generated high visibility on key issues concerning children in Rwanda.

Radio is still the leading medium of communication in Rwanda; 79 per cent of men and 62 per cent of women listen on a weekly basis. The children’s radio programme Itetero marked its first anniversary in October 2016, gaining increasing listenership on national radio, and gaining nearly universal reach. The weekly programme (with two weekly re-broadcasts) established an operational methodology that brings quality information and stimulation to young children and their families with key messages ranging on ECD, health, nutrition,
hygiene, and protection. By the end of December 2016, Itetero had reached almost 14 months of broadcast time, with plans for TV production in 2017.

The focus of C4D efforts to reduce child stunting has moved from the awareness phase to the action phase, with mass sensitization and community mobilization in target districts. Since 2014, implementation has expanded rapidly, from 18 districts to 27. Recent data from Rwanda’s DHS shows a reduction in stunting, which can be attributed to the 1,000 Days National BCC campaign. However, more behaviour- change communication is necessary to emphasize the role of fathers in child care and supporting mothers.

A range of communication materials and activities have been developed and produced for nutrition, social protection, child protection and ECD in support of the multi-sectoral effort to implement an integrated ECD programme. UNICEF Rwanda’s communication, advocacy and partnerships section contributed to ECD promotion by reaching 172,850 people in the last 12 months through community theatre, religious networks and radio. These activities will continue in 2017.

Preliminary results from the end-line evaluation indicate that the number of children who received a balanced diet during the previous day increased from 9.6 per cent to 59 per cent at ECD intervention sites – a key message promoted extensively through community and social mobilization.

Following the influx of more than 80,000 Burundian refugees since April 2015, UNICEF supported all major programme areas, including WASH, child protection, education, early childhood development, health and nutrition. The response resulted in the following achievements:

- 5,500 children under one year were reached with routine immunisations
- Over 300 children under five years suffering from SAM were admitted to therapeutic feeding programmes
- 5,400 children benefitted from the provision of ECD services, through centre and home-based approaches
- 1,548 of the most vulnerable children, including unaccompanied and separated children, were provided with case management services
- 19,442 school-aged children, including adolescents, accessed quality education, including through temporary structures
- Over 51,600 people were reached with safe hygiene messages and promotional activities.

UNICEF Rwanda also responded to one natural disaster – a landslide – in May 2016. UNICEF worked with partners to restore coverage and availability of safe and reliable water supplies to an estimated 30,000 landslide-affected people and host communities in Gakenke District.

C4D in emergencies was also intensified, focusing on social mobilization and educational entertainment, and reaching over 40,000 Burundian refugees in Mahama Camp. The end-line survey conducted by a C4D partner showed that 83 per cent of respondents knew the correct method of handing a mosquito net, compared to 52 per cent during the baseline. Concerted efforts by UNICEF and other agencies have resulted in improving the lives of refugee children and their families.

**OUTPUT 1** Policy makers, media, donors and civil society organizations engaged to promote children’s and women rights

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF extended its partnership to higher learning institutions to integrate the child rights module into the learning curricula of journalism, media and communication studies. This
integration will ensure sustainable capacity building of journalists to advocate for children’s rights. The content is being developed in close partnership with UNICEF, the Media High Council, and University of Rwanda’s School of Journalism and Communication. Graduating journalists will be equipped with knowledge and skills to ethically report on children issues, and it is expected that the knowledge will reach other journalists who did not go through that module, through Media High Council training programmes and trained graduates.

For the first time, UNICEF Rwanda formalized partnerships with the private sector (SORWATHE and Airtel) to leverage more resources and investment in children’s services. These partnerships also aim to leverage non-financial resources, such as advocacy, and take significant steps towards addressing children’s rights issues. The Office recently signed an MoU with SORWATHE tea company and is in the process of signing a letter of agreement, along the lines of the regional MoU, with Airtel. UNICEF will provide technical support to SORWATHE to improve existing pre-primary school services that served more than 400 children in the 2016 school year. The partnership will also extend support for initiating ECD activities, including home based care, for children of factory and tea plantation workers. With Airtel, the partnership will explore synergistic areas of collaboration involving adolescents and youth and innovation.

High-profile advocacy events and commemorative days such as the Day of the African Child and Global Handwashing Day generated increased awareness and visibility on UNICEF Rwanda’s flagship priorities. The 11th National Children’s Summit brought together more than 600 children representing all districts on meaningful child participation and advocacy on their rights. In 2017, children’s forums in the districts have been established to advocate for key issues of concern, with a target of reaching at least five districts.

UNICEF, as Chair of the UN Communications Group, successfully advocated for and promoted child rights in the implementation of the One UN Communication Strategy.

Effective documentation through online media, including the country office website and social media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube), increased awareness and supported effective relationship development with donors and partners on programme priorities. As of November 2016, UNICEF Rwanda’s Facebook page had over 85,000 fans and its website receives 7,500 page views every month.

In 2016, the Office successfully hosted six external donor missions, including two important missions of high-net-worth individuals from the United States and the IKEA Foundation. This enhanced the visibility of UNICEF programmes and increased opportunities for fundraising in under-funded areas.

While achieving progress, some constraints were experienced under this output, in the form of limited partner capacity in implementation which resulted in several delays in activity implementation.

OUTPUT 2 Behaviour and social change of the target communities on key priorities increased through Communication for Development

Analytical Statement of Progress:
In line with C4D priorities, the Government was supported primarily on: The First 1000 Days campaign to eliminate stunting, promotion of ECD and the TMM campaign (for de-institutionalization).

To support the elimination of stunting through the 1,000 Days campaign, social mobilization activities reached remote areas in 24 districts. These activities were executed in partnership
with the Rwanda Health Communication Centre, faith-based organizations and other NGOs to address social norms, cultural beliefs and practices affecting early childhood health. The focus of C4D efforts to reduce child stunting has moved from the awareness phase to the action phase, with mass sensitization and community mobilization in the target districts. Recent data from DHS show a reduction in stunting, yet more behaviour-change communication is necessary to emphasize the role of fathers in child care and supporting mothers. A campaign assessment is currently under development.

Implementation of ECD C4D activities continued through community theatre groups in two districts, where 34,850 people were reached. Engagement with a network of faith-based organizations to promote mass education through religious services, social mobilization and community reached 118,000 people. Weekly broadcasts by Rwanda Broadcasting Agency of Itetero gained popularity, with key messages on ECD, health, nutrition, WASH and protection topics. On a weekly basis, more than 300 people send short messages to the toll-free number to provide their feedback on the programme. Combined with community outreach programmes by the Radio Rwanda team, it is estimated that Itetero is reaching more than 1 million listeners every week. This has been effectively complemented by the production of IEC materials for all programmes. Preliminary results of the end-line evaluation indicate that the number of caregivers who believe physical punishment is necessary for raising a child decreased from 37 per cent to 31 per cent at ECD intervention sites – a major proxy indicator for this output.

To support the Government in implementing child care reform and reducing the number of children in institutions, UNICEF’s communications section worked closely with the child protection section to launch the “Tubarerere mu Muryango (Let’s Raise Children in Families)” campaign. The launch was successfully attended by many journalists and opened jointly by UNICEF and the Minister of Gender and Family Promotion. Ongoing activities include briefings with journalists, placement of key messages in radio and TV and production of IEC materials. Community outreach took place throughout 2016.

As part of the response to Burundian refugees, IEC materials were developed in consultation with health-sector partners and MINISANTE. A 30-page publication in Kirundi (language of Burundi) covers key messages (health, hygiene and child protection). In addition, posters were designed and distributed when typhoid fever was detected in the camp. The publication and posters were distributed in the refugee camp through social mobilization activities taking place from October 2015 until March 2016. The 360 locally recruited community mobilizers delivered health and hygiene promotion messages, and 100 peer-educators delivered HIV prevention messages in Mahama Camp.

HACT capacity building was conducted with UNICEF’s new Government partner, Rwanda Broadcasting Agency.

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

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Earlier in the current country programme cycle, UNICEF’s planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) unit and NISR conducted a bottleneck analysis and identified coordination and demand bottlenecks: Government officials seldom use social indicators that fall outside of the Imihigo, district statisticians have various challenges in data use and analysis, the Rwanda DevInfo database is not well known. To address these bottlenecks, PME supported NISR to build capacity in statistical literacy among government officials, students and children.
UNICEF continued to support NISR’s training for conducting data analysis in all 30 districts. The “School DevInfo” initiative successfully raised university lecturers’ awareness on the availability of the country’s socio-economic indicators for educating and supervising students’ research. In addition, 70 university students were trained to use DevInfo. Working with the nutrition section, PME continued to strengthen district monitoring capacity for data tracking, analysis and dissemination. Some 173 officials were trained to plan and monitor nutrition interventions; 24 district officials from two DPEM committees (Rusizi and Gasabo) were trained in RBM and applied the knowledge to revise their DPEM in October. As of December 2016, 22 districts had been reached by a DevInfo user training, and 18 were tracking nutrition interventions through the district DevInfo database. High turnover among trained district statisticians, weak coordination for producing high-quality data and the absence of a systematic data collection plan at the district level remain challenges. Some 179 officials were trained to plan and monitor nutrition interventions; 24 district officials from two DPEM committees (Rusizi and Gasabo) were trained in RBM and applied the knowledge to revise their DPEM in October. As of December 2016, 22 districts had been reached by a DevInfo user training, and 18 were tracking nutrition interventions through the district DevInfo database. High turnover among trained district statisticians, weak coordination for producing high-quality data and the absence of a systematic data collection plan at the district level remain challenges. Selected indicators from the 2012 Population and Housing Census, EICV4, and DHS5 data were uploaded into the Rwanda DevInfo database. A coaching session for 72 university students was conducted to strengthen their skills in data visualization prior to the InfoGraphics competition.

UNICEF continued to support NISR’s statistical literacy-building, especially targeting children and youth. The second ‘Reading Data with Children’ event yielded children’s unique policy recommendations. Lessons learned from the event were documented and a video was produced for wider circulation. In order to reach more children, NISR, REB and UNICEF designed a teacher’s discussion guide for reading data with children. A teacher’s guide will be printed and disseminated in 2017.

UNICEF-led discussions on the establishment of a Statistics and Monitoring & Evaluation Society is bearing fruit. Through collaboration between the Belgian Embassy and National Capacity Building Secretariat (NCBS), NISR, MIFOTRA, the Ministry of Economics and Finance and UNICEF, Rwanda’s first M&E Society was launched in November. The launch was attended by more than 100 development practitioners; participants exchanged views, approaches and frameworks for operationalising this new society.

PME further strengthened UNICEF’s risk management efforts. Implementation of HACT guidelines has been progressing well; 14 financial spot-checks were completed and eight are ongoing. Seventeen partners were audited. In addition, the new HACT Assurance Plan 2016-2017 was produced and the CMT has provided a quarterly review and updates. Some 179 programmatic assurance visits had been completed as of end-October 2016. Lack of systematic follow-up of micro-assessments remains a challenge, and weak compliance on HACT programmatic field visits must be tightened next year.

**OUTPUT 4** Strengthened disaster preparedness and humanitarian response framework in Rwanda

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Rwanda is in the Great Lakes region, which is prone to natural disasters and civil war/political tensions in neighbouring countries. Over the last decade, the frequency, intensity and severity of natural hazards and disasters has significantly increased.

The Rwandan Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR) is the overall coordinator of emergency preparedness and response in the country. UNICEF is the UN co-coordinator for emergency response in WASH, child protection, ECD, 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, when required.
UNICEF Rwanda undertook diverse preparedness measure in 2016: Critical stand-by programme cooperation agreements were developed Essential emergency supplies were pre-positioned (to accommodate emergency needs of 10,000 people for three months). Capacity development and training in emergency preparedness; planning and response for interagency, Government and NGO staff continues Additional HR (staff/consultants) were hired to provide technical assistance in emergency planning and response (child protection, nutrition). C4D strategies and materials were developed around hygiene, acute malnutrition, disease prevention and other areas. Strong coordination mechanisms employed in refugee response ensured well-planned division and harmonization of tasks, which was strengthened through joint situation assessments, planning, monitoring and reporting.

Because of thorough emergency preparedness, the humanitarian response in 2016 was timely: When landslides hit Rwanda in April and May 2016, leaving over 150 casualties and over 30,000 people without shelter, UNICEF Rwanda mobilized its contingency stock of emergency supplies. UNICEF provided tents, education materials, ECD kits and ready-to-use therapeutic food for the treatment of severely malnourished children. The rehabilitation of 23 damaged water supply systems (to benefit 30,000 people in Gakenke) is ongoing; UNICEF continued to provide support to refugees within Rwanda. The main results achieved in 2016 were:

About 51,600 Burundian refugees continue to benefit from improved WASH services
Over 5,500 children under one year were reached with routine immunization
Over 300 children under five years suffering from severe acute malnutrition were admitted to therapeutic feeding programmes
5,400 children benefitted from the provision of ECD services through centre and home-based approaches
1,500 of the most vulnerable children, including unaccompanied and separated children, were provided with case management services
19,400 school-aged children, including adolescents, accessed quality education through the provision of education materials

The end-line evaluation for the C4D response for Burundian refugees showed an increase of households correctly hanging their mosquito net, from 52 per cent to 83 per cent, as a result of intensive social mobilization.

The main disaster risk reduction (DRR) related activities carried out during 2016 were: integration of DRR into sectoral policies and Integration of DRR into WASH interventions/ Response to humanitarian risks (political instability, natural disasters/storms) is constrained by: funding gaps, capacity constraints at the national and sub-national levels, delays in procurement of critical supplies due to under-developed local markets and Rwanda’s status as a landlocked country. The funding gap was partially addressed through grants received recently ($250,000 for emergency preparedness; $306,000 for emergency response).

OUTCOME 7 Effective and efficient programme management and operations support to programme delivery

Analytical Statement of Progress:

OUTPUT 1 Effective and efficient governance and systems

Analytical Statement of Progress:
OUTPUT 2 Effective and efficient management and Stewardship of Financial Resources

Analytical Statement of Progress:

OUTPUT 3 Effective and efficient management of Human Capacity

Analytical Statement of Progress:

OUTCOME 8 Programme Management and Operations: Identity, direction, and well-being of UNICEF programme and UNICEF staff maintained and promoted

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In 2016 UNICEF Rwanda developed SOPs on governance and management, with clear TORs and membership. Monthly CMT meetings focused on programme and operations management and performance monitoring in the areas of budget and grants management, DCT, HACT, supply and logistics, HR, finance, administration and ICT. In 2016, the Office continued its efforts to increase staff competencies in programmatic and operational areas through full implementation of the Office Training and Development Plan endorsed by the CMT. The Regional Office conducted several peer reviews in programmes and operations, which greatly supported the Rwanda Office to identify and address risk areas. The office’s RCSA library was developed and updated by the CMT following training by the Regional Office. The newly established Risk Management and Audit Task Force led the processes of effective and timely closure of peer review recommendations and preparation for the internal audit. The Office successfully transitioned to GSSC in mid-July 2016 because of thorough preparations, staff training and communication.

The 2016 MTR resulted in the PBR submission to the Regional Office with the aim of formalising previous structural recommendations, minor changes in staffing and re-classification of all positions, which was subsequently approved by the PBR committee. The Office’s BCP was updated and a BCP simulation was conducted in Sept. 2016 with a positive outcome. The Office worked closely with the local UNDSS to ensure that UNICEF premises are MOSS compliant. Results of the 2015 Global Staff Survey were analysed and the Office identified ways to improve staff morale, in coordination with Staff Association, the report and action plan were shared with all staff.

OUTPUT 1 Governance and Systems

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The operations section reported to the CMT on its performance indicators monthly. It conducted trainings on HACT and the Table of Authority to ensure adherence to UNICEF rules, regulations and SOPs. As part of the Risk Management and Audit committee, Operations took actions and addressed the areas identified by the Regional Office in several peer reviews, and facilitated preparations for the internal audit. In 2016 UNICEF Rwanda revised and updated its Risk Control Self-Assessment Library. The Table of Authority was updated, authorized by the Representative, and training on roles and responsibilities and segregation of duties were provided to all staff.

The business continuity plan was updated and a simulation was conducted in Sept. 2016, with a positive outcome.
**OUTPUT 2 Management & Stewardship of Financial Res**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Operations continued working to improve efficiency and effectiveness in its activities in transactions related to budget monitoring, payment and other obligatory processing, preparation for the transition to full implementation and roll-out of the GSSC, transport and travel management. In Supply and Administration, all mid-year and year-end schedules were fully completed within the deadlines and the results of the full physical and inventory counts shared with DFAM. The Finance team reported on a regular basis to the CMT on the number of days taken to process HACT transactions. HACT transactions have been analysed to ensure quality and compliance with UNICEF HACT policy and procedures.

The contract review committee threshold was increased to US$50,000, in line with procurement policy; between January and end-October 2016 the committee held 14 meetings to review the proposals, amounting to a total of US$1,661,421.

**OUTPUT 3 Management of Human Capacity**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The 2016 MTR confirmed that the current strategies were leading to solid results, therefore no major changes in staffing expertise and structure were proposed. However, the review was used to formalize previous structural recommendations that were pending, make minor adjustments in the staffing structure, and reclassify the majority of job descriptions that were outdated. In addition to the 77 staff posts, UNICEF Rwanda utilized flexible expertise through engagement of 36 short- and long-term consultants, one UN volunteer and one temporary appointment. The vacancy rate was kept at a minimum of below 4 per cent.

The UNICEF Rwanda performance management cycle reached 100 per cent completion at each phase. However, focus in 2017 will be on quality of performance discussions and coaching, through UNICEF corporate training, on managing performance and people for results.

The global staff survey action plan continued to be implemented under the overall coordination of the Staff Association; implementation was monitored by the CMT. Some areas needing improvement were addressed through HR clinics, career counselling and learning and development, which achieved 76 per cent of the individual learning plans and 63 per cent of group training. Regular joint staff-management consultative meetings were conducted and 90 per cent of the agreed actions achieved. UNICEF Rwanda also actively participated in the One UN Human Resources Working Group, to leverage harmonized HR practices for the benefit of its staff.

UNICEF Rwanda implemented the 10 minimum standards through active participation in the One UN Cares committee, orientation sessions on HIV and Hepatitis, World Aids Day and free access to ARVs through the UN clinic. The Office however, recorded an increased frequency of complex medical evacuation travel, which was of concern.

**OUTPUT 4 Operations Support**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

**OUTCOME 9 Supply and Cash Resources (BMA)**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Strategic management of the supply and logistics function was achieved through close collaboration with Programmes and effective implementation of procurement and distribution plans. Full utilization of institutional budget occurred as a result of timely monitoring and closure of commitments.

**OUTPUT 1** Governance and Systems effectively support the direction of country operations and programme implementation

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

**OUTPUT 2** Management and Stewardship: Strengthened Stewardship and Oversight of financial resources and control

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

**OUTPUT 3** Management and Stewardship: Strengthened Stewardship and Oversight of financial resources and control (BMA)

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

**OUTPUT 4** Human resources have the capacities, skills, morale and motivation to support country operations

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

**OUTPUT 5** Operations Support

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Operations continued working to improving efficiency and effectiveness in its activities in relation to several transactions related to the institutional budget, monitoring, payment and other obligatory processing. In supply, all mid-year and year-end schedules were completed within the deadlines, and the results of the full physical and inventory counts were shared with DFAM. The contracts threshold was increased to $50,000 in line with the procurement policy; during the period between January to end October 2016, the contract review committee held 14 meetings to review the proposals, totalling US$1,661,421.

**OUTPUT 6** Human resources have the capacities, skills, morale and motivation to support country operations

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

**Document Center**

**Evaluation and research**

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Lessons learned

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