

## Sri Lanka

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### Executive Summary

Sri Lanka met nearly all Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets, with notable exceptions in nutrition and gender equity. As a result, UNICEF Sri Lanka continues to work to reduce the prevalence of undernutrition as part of the unfinished business agenda, and to strengthen cross-cutting gender analysis. In 2015, national economic growth remained strong, though down from previous years, as the country underwent a protracted political transformation, which absorbed political and economic energy.

Following the 2014 Mid-Term Review, UNICEF Sri Lanka was also in transition in 2015, gradually moving from delivery-based strategies to defining how best to support the new Government with evidence and analysis to support the policy developments needed to ensure modern and equitable services for children. UNICEF Sri Lanka also began dialogue with the Government on a number of areas that were previously considered 'off limits': sexual and physical violence against children, education system reforms, the role of education and children in national reconciliation and adolescent participation.

Notable achievements included establishing momentum to align early and primary education strategies to national reconciliation thinking. This includes the introduction of positive, quality learning experiences on themes such as respect for diversity and social cohesion in preschools; activities rooted in the arts and sports; and a curricula review for Grade 2 with a peacebuilding focus. In late 2015, UNICEF established dialogue with the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation to draft a national road map for peacebuilding in education; this new partnership will serve as a convening forum for national and donor partners that are interested in children and reconciliation.

In Child Protection, UNICEF Sri Lanka launched two inter-related large-scale strategies with an integrated campaign around ending physical and sexual violence against children, and another on the prevention of child injury, including mine risk education, and adolescent suicide, a major concern for the country. Both initiatives brought new partnerships, the largest being with the Guides and Scouts, who have nearly 100,000 members in Sri Lanka.

In collaboration with the Regional Office, UNICEF Sri Lanka is facilitating South-South learning exchanges on maternal and neonatal health initiatives in the region. UNICEF Sri Lanka organized two initial exchanges and is liaising with the Ministry of Health, World Health Organization, World Bank and other health stakeholders to assess feasibility of Sri Lanka housing a South-South Maternal and Neonatal Child Health Learning Hub.

In addition, the year saw a consolidation and professionalization of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation functions in the office that is paying off in office-wide engagement in and application of results-based planning and programming, as well as a renewed emphasis on evidence-based work and monitoring.

Progress bottlenecks during 2015 included a protracted political transition that began in January

and continues to play itself out as a broad coalition Government seeks to consolidate and share political power with upward of 90 ministers, deputy ministers and state ministers in shifting political formations; address international community demands for accountability on human rights related to the 30-year civil war; and ward off bids to re-establish the power base of the former President. This led to limited political engagement on development issues and a significant slowdown of the civil service and senior technical staff in ministries and regional government until the general elections in August. This resulted in delays in Treasury fund transfers and subsequent outstanding direct cash transfers; lack of legislative changes for children; and stalled decision-making on several planned projects. Towards the end of 2015, many of these constraints were being overcome.

Additionally, as a result of two major elections in 2015, the Government changed twice, as did Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Secretaries and Divisional Heads and the number of ministries and their functions. Therefore, dedicating efforts to establish Government relationships afresh at least twice was a necessary undertaking during the year.

Changes led to setbacks and delays in how the Government addresses nutrition programming. Nonetheless, UNICEF-led multi-sectoral work continued in target provinces, and an international symposium on maternal and child nutrition was hosted by the Sri Lankan Government, with support from UNICEF, which generated evidence and knowledge. Towards the end of the year, UNICEF Sri Lanka's convening power and evidence-based advocacy secured Government commitment to re-establish strong inter-sectoral nutrition planning and monitoring nationally, provincially and locally.

In water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), changes to Government also led to a loss in momentum in outputs related to the National Sanitation Policy and water safety planning. However, UNICEF Sri Lanka worked closely with the Government and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to ensure that regional student-led/co-led WASH conferences took place and that planned expansion to WASH-in-schools work continued.

## Humanitarian Assistance

UNICEF Sri Lanka has several disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities built into programmes, such as water safety planning in catchment areas, and retains a small capacity to respond to drought and floods with additional coordination support and the procurement of needed essential items. In 2015, due to reduced funding and a transition towards more upstream programming, UNICEF Sri Lanka's humanitarian support involved limited material support and sector-based coordination during the onset and early recovery phase of natural disasters, such as floods and landslides. In addition, upon Government request, UNICEF Sri Lanka assisted in the resettlement of long-term internally displaced persons in former high-security zones, thereby contributing to ongoing peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts.

Unusually heavy rains across the country created massive temporary displacement in December 2014, continuing into 2015, with some 1.1 million people affected by flooding in the Northern, Eastern, North Central and Central provinces. More than 50 per cent of the annual rice and vegetable crop was destroyed and United Nations/non-governmental organization (NGO) rapid assessments indicated that more than 230,000 people were severely food insecure as a result. In addition, infrastructure, including schools and clinics, had been damaged.

Upon request by the Government, UNICEF provided local health authorities with limited quantities of water purification tablets to maintain drinking water safety among 2,500 flood-

affected families. UNICEF also activated 'light' coordination arrangements in WASH and Education at the onset of the emergency to identify critical issues and link together relevant stakeholders in addressing gaps in services. In the tea estate sector of the Central Province, heavy rains in 2015 caused flooding and a landslide that affected 50 families. As part of the overall Government response, UNICEF Sri Lanka played a coordination role in ensuring timely and effective responses, particularly in the areas of WASH and child protection. This included assisting the water sector to better utilize their resources towards water safety for the most vulnerable 2,500 families, and in the area of child protection, supporting the tracing and reunification of unaccompanied children with their families.

In the former conflict-affected areas of the North (Jaffna) and East (Trincomalee), UNICEF Sri Lanka committed to supporting the Government in the resettlement of long-term internally displaced persons to land being released from high security zones. In this regard, UNICEF Sri Lanka and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sri Lanka jointly mobilized resources from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and, since mid-June 2015, have been implementing a joint programme to provide shelters (UNHCR), WASH facilities (UNHCR and UNICEF), mobile health services (UNICEF) and mine risk education (UNICEF) for 2,525 targeted returnees. During the planning phase, the sector-based assessments and consultations by both agencies were participatory and engaged relevant local authorities in prioritising needs, designing interventions and initiating action plans. In addition, both agencies facilitated discussions around the needs of the internally displaced families involving both national- and provincial-level authorities, thereby strengthening coordination and communication between the different levels of government. This will reinforce the confidence of internally displaced people in the ability and willingness of the Government to address their needs and help them re-establish their lives in their places of origin.

Specifically, UNICEF Sri Lanka achieved the following key results by the end of the year:

- Construction of 15 household latrines, benefiting 60 returnees in Trincomalee. Another 271 household latrine constructions are ongoing in resettlement areas in the North (166 latrines) and East (105 latrines) out of the total target of 336 households. The targeted households were selected in coordination with UNHCR Sri Lanka.
- Rehabilitation of 20 common dug wells is ongoing (out of planned 40 dug wells) in resettlement areas in Jaffna, benefiting 400 families. In Trincomalee, 140 families (of the targeted 220 families) are gaining access to treated drinking water through the main grid, with UNICEF Sri Lanka supporting the household water supply connections.
- Mine risk education, designed for specific risk-taking population groups, including returnees, was provided for 350 resettled families out of the targeted 2,525 returnees.

During 2015, the Country Office emphasized emergency preparedness and a significant number of programme staff attended Regional or Country Office-based training sessions. Early Warning Early Action was revitalized and the Regional Office supported organizational lessons learned feedback from the Nepal earthquake for staff. UNICEF Sri Lanka secured funds from the Regional Office to boost emergency preparedness and at the end of 2015 contracted a consultant to review the national DRR/Emergency Preparedness and Response policy to ensure that children's issues are clearly embedded in government policies and standard operating procedures for response.

## Summary Notes and Acronyms

### Acronyms

CCCs – Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action  
CFA – Child-Friendly Approach  
CRC – Convention of the Rights of the Child  
CRPD – Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
CSO – civil society organization  
DCT – direct cash transfer  
DPCCS – Department of Probation and Child Care Services  
DRR – disaster risk reduction  
ECD – early childhood development  
ECE – early childhood education  
EPI – National Expanded Immunization Programme  
EU – European Union  
EWEA – Early Warning Early Action  
GIZ – German Development Cooperation  
GSSC – Global Shared Services Centre  
HRBA – Human Rights-Based Approach  
ICT – information and communication technology  
IMEP – Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan  
IYCF – infant and young child feeding  
KAP – Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices  
LTA – Long-Term Agreement  
MDG – Millennium Development Goal  
MHM – Menstrual Hygiene Management  
MoE – Ministry of Education  
MoH – Ministry of Health  
MoJ – Ministry of Justice  
MOSS – Minimum Operating Security Standards  
NCD – non-communicable disease  
NGO – non-governmental organization  
NIE – National Institute of Education  
NWS & DB – National Water Supply and Drainage Board  
SAARC – South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation  
SACOSAN – South Asian Conference on Sanitation  
SAIFRN – South Asia Infant Feeding Research Network  
SDDP – Support to District Development Programme  
SSAs - School Self-Assessments  
SUN – Scaling Up Nutrition  
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme  
UNDSS – United Nations Department of Safety and Security  
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund  
VCRMCs – Village Child Rights Monitoring Committees  
WASH – water, sanitation and hygiene  
WHO – World Health Organization

## Capacity Development

UNICEF Sri Lanka technically and financially supported individual/community capacity development to improve the nutritional status of children under 5 years of age. In this regard,

UNICEF Sri Lanka facilitated the training of 112 Medical Officers of Health and 1,051 Public Health Midwives in focused districts to enhance their skills in community mobilization/empowerment by promoting positive social norms and individual behaviours regarding child nutrition. This included strengthening the capacity of mothers'/community groups in supporting and sustaining community-led actions that improve the nutritional status of children under 5 years old. In addition, local government officials were trained on how to engage and support communities in collectively addressing the poor nutritional status of children.

UNICEF Sri Lanka also invested resources in strengthening subnational collection, analysis and use of data on child injuries/violence. In 2015, a child injury database was developed at district-level using data from hospital authorities/other sources to promote evidence-based programming and monitoring. Once the national surveillance system (building on district-level systems) is in place, this will be adopted by the five targeted districts to ensure that data collection and management, as well as reporting, are streamlined across the country. UNICEF Sri Lanka also supported the Probation Department to develop a database to better track children in institutions and during reunification; which will be rolled out in 2016.

In the tea estate areas of the Central and Uva Provinces, UNICEF Sri Lanka supported community awareness programmes on the importance of quality early learning for children aged 3 to 5 years old in order to create demand for such services. To ensure quality preschool services, UNICEF Sri Lanka built the capacity of key education stakeholders, including preschool teachers, in 52 pilot preschools through the establishment of preschool management committees; training of teachers on participatory preschool planning; and distribution of preschool learning materials.

### **Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

UNICEF Sri Lanka provided financial and technical support to the Ministry of Health (MoH) to conduct four studies aimed at assessing the effectiveness of interventions and documenting best practices/lessons learned: i) documentation of mothers' support groups in the North and the East; ii) review of the multiple micronutrient programme in 12 pilot districts; iii) review of multi-sectoral nutrition activities in Nuwara Eliya and Monaragala Districts; and iv) documentation of the complementary feeding programme in Hambantota district. The findings inform policy/programmatic recommendations on the scale-up of such programmes in seven nutritionally vulnerable districts.

UNICEF Sri Lanka supported the MoH to conduct a bottleneck analysis of the newborn care programme to assess service gaps in reducing newborn mortality and morbidity; the findings are being shared with relevant stakeholders, including policymakers, health workers and academics. Based on the findings, the MoH will develop a Newborn Action Plan to improve the quality of such services.

The findings of the UNICEF-supported study on child marriage and statutory rape (2013) were used to advocate for legal reforms and has contributed to the drafting of a related legal reform proposal to the National Child Protection Authority. The proposal recommends discretion in the handling of cases of statutory rape – sex with an under-age minor girl below 16 years old – to avoid criminalization of 'consensual' sexual behaviour of young people who are at the threshold of the age of sexual consent.

With the Division of Communication in New York and a national steering committee, UNICEF Sri Lanka provided technical inputs for the first-ever national study on online behaviour of children;

the results of which will be officially launched on 'Safer Internet Day' to generate dialogue and action on online safety. Based on the study, an online safety campaign was conceptualized and is being finalized for launch in January 2016.

## Partnerships

In 2015, UNICEF Sri Lanka collaborated with the Government of Sri Lanka on a large-scale campaign to end abuse and violence against children. The on-going communications campaign targets parents, caregivers, children and youth and draws on the strength of a multi-sector partnership involving the MoH, MoH, Ministry of Mass Media and Ministry of Justice (MoJ), National Child Protection Authority, Police, College of Paediatricians and Judicial Medical Officers. Specifically on child injuries, strategic partnerships have been established at the national level with the MoH and relevant departments, Sri Lanka Medical Association, and the Department of Police. This has resulted in the development of a child injury surveillance system, which will be piloted in selected districts in early 2016. In addition, partnerships have been established at the national level with the MoH and MoE, National Child Protection Authority, Family Health Bureau, Sri Lanka Medical Association, and Department of Police to promote dialogue and partnership and raise community awareness on child safety during Child Safety Week.

UNICEF Sri Lanka continued to provide technical and financial support to the Presidential Secretariat and MoH for the delivery of well-designed and effective nutrition interventions under the framework of the Multi-Sectoral Action Plan for Nutrition, involving 17 relevant ministries. To ensure that commitments are aligned to global priorities, UNICEF Sri Lanka facilitated the participation of three policymakers in the global Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) meeting.

To better use data to demonstrate multiple child deprivations for informed programming and advocacy work, UNICEF Sri Lanka initiated a partnership with the Department of Census and Statistics to develop 'equity profiles' to describe inequalities between different subgroups across sectors. In addition, UNICEF Sri Lanka has continued its partnership with the Sri Lanka Evaluation Association in strengthening the national monitoring and evaluation capacity in public, business and non-governmental sectors.

## External Communication and Public Advocacy

In 2015, communication and public advocacy initiatives and events, captured in UNICEF Sri Lanka's Annual Advocacy Planner, have been streamlined and are more strategic in linking both global and national advocacy priorities. Key advocacy engagements with government, civil society, media and the general public were held in relation to child rights, maternal and child nutrition, violence against children, child safety and injury prevention, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools and ethical media reporting. Notably, these engagements generated extensive outreach and visibility for UNICEF across multiple platforms.

UNICEF Sri Lanka's overall media engagement also increased with special live television and radio talk shows and press articles, as well as timely responses to media queries on issues affecting children and their rights. UNICEF Sri Lanka's growing digital engagement was further boosted in the last quarter of 2015 through the revamping of the UNICEF website (which accumulated 72,278 views from January to December 2015, of which 75 per cent are repeat visitors) and creation of strategically targeted, timely and engaging posts and conversations on both local and global issues related to children.

Cumulative advocacy efforts have broadened UNICEF's presence across different platforms; at

the time of reporting, the UNICEF Facebook page had regained and surpassed its previous following through organic and unsponsored likes to 13,231 followers and continues to lead the United Nations family in the digital space. In addition, during the year, UNICEF Sri Lanka's YouTube channel views totalled 10,114, the Instagram account has a total of 1,784 fans and the Twitter page generated 744 new followers during the last half of the year alone. Live tweeting and video links to initiatives such as the visit of Goodwill Ambassador Sachin Tendulkar helped boost overall digital engagement; a special video received 420 views on YouTube and an interview with Sachin on sanitation and hygiene received 343 views.

### **South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

Sri Lanka has low levels of infant/child/maternal mortality due to extensive health-care coverage, an efficient midwife system and community-based access to secondary health care. Given that the health system in Sri Lanka is considered a good model in the region, UNICEF Sri Lanka promoted Sri Lanka as a 'mother and newborn health learning hub' using South-South collaboration for shared learning. In this regard, UNICEF Sri Lanka supported the MoH to host a health delegation from Afghanistan to share good practices on the maternal mortality prevention system. UNICEF Sri Lanka also facilitated the participation of 11 medical officers/professional experts in an exposure visit to India with a focus on newborn care and information systems. The findings are feeding into the refining of strategies to improve newborn care and the development of an electronic HMIS. Further, the Regional Office for South Asia facilitated the participation of 10 provincial- and district-level officials from the Eastern and Uva Provinces in a study visit to the Philippines on the Multi-sector Nutrition Policy and Practice to promote shared learning and innovative programming on issues of malnutrition.

In the WASH sector, UNICEF Sri Lanka facilitated Government participation in the South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) Inter-Country Working Group and supported the aligning of national commitments with regional priorities. Under the SACOSAN umbrella, Sri Lanka hosted, with UNICEF's support, the first South Asian Student Conference on WASH, including participation of adolescent schoolchildren. This served as a model for youth participation in WASH and promoted knowledge sharing, student networking, South-South cooperation and convergence of multiple sectors. Building on this, UNICEF Sri Lanka, in partnership with the MoE, hosted and facilitated the fourth WASH in Schools International Learning Exchange, bringing together delegates from 16 countries in South and East Asia, as well as the Pacific.

### **Identification and Promotion of Innovation**

UNICEF Sri Lanka partnered with the South Asia Infant Feeding Research Network (SAIFRN) to conduct research on the innovative use of mobile phones for improving infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices. The research, which is ongoing, assesses the extent to which mobile phones could be used to disseminate age-appropriate nutrition information. The research will help to design an intervention package on IYCF counselling using mobile phones, in addition to, face-to-face sessions in the routine health system.

In an effort to enhance the quality of early childhood education (ECE), as well as promote social cohesion among children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, UNICEF Sri Lanka in partnership with a national civil society organization explored the use of high quality and creative learning products for preschool children aged 3 to 5 years old. In this regard, UNICEF Sri Lanka created a platform to mobilize support from creative writers, artists, cartoonists, dramatists, musicians, etc., in the development of creative non-traditional learning materials that promote social cohesion, such as finger puppets, wooden crafted model villages, messaging

through kids' television shows, etc. Following a provincial-level launch, these products would be rolled out to selected preschools in the Eastern Province in 2016.

### Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

UNICEF Sri Lanka continued to focus on integrated programming for children and played a critical role in advocating with partners for cross-sectoral linkages. To prevent and respond to issues of violence, abuse and neglect of children, UNICEF Sri Lanka invested in strengthening the capacity of Village Child Rights Monitoring Committees (VCRMCs) in the Eastern, Northern and Uva Provinces. VCRMCs engage multiple duty bearers (youth development, child protection, medical and police officers, teachers, midwives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community members) and children to promote an integrated response to issues affecting children and their rights. VCRMCs support awareness raising on child protection issues, facilitate initiatives that promote child participation and development, and strengthen referral services between relevant Government authorities.

In the health sector, the UNICEF Country Office played a key advocacy and technical role in promoting a multi-sectoral approach to addressing nutrition issues in the country. In 2015, UNICEF Country Office is contributing to the scale-up of an effective data management and monitoring system in seven focus districts with the highest levels of child undernutrition, which (once rolled out in 2016) will generate data to support evidence-based policies and equity-focused programming across multiple sectors involved in addressing issues of undernutrition.

In WASH, to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to mainstreaming water safety and community participation in water resource management, UNICEF Sri Lanka provided financial and technical support to the Central Environmental Authority to conduct stakeholder consultations leading to the development of an agreed-upon accountability framework outlining their roles and responsibilities.

In addition, UNICEF Sri Lanka facilitated a functional mapping exercise of the various state stakeholders, from central, provincial and zonal levels, involved in early childhood development (ECD) in the Central and Eastern Provinces. The mapping helped identify overlaps in roles and responsibilities and fostered dialogue on the need for more coordinated and integrated programming.

### Service Delivery

In keeping with the equity approach and the rapidly changing country context, UNICEF Sri Lanka has a more focused programme and has concentrated on shifting its emphasis and limited resources towards upstream programming and identifying innovative approaches for its work. However, the European Union (EU)-funded Support to District Development Programme (SDDP) remains an important component of UNICEF's Country Programme, with a significant focus on service delivery. Under the SDDP, an EU-led Results-Oriented Mission was conducted in 2015 to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of services in the areas of health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection. UNICEF Sri Lanka is currently reviewing the results and recommendations and incorporating them in its work planning for 2016–2017.

In 2015, as part of its annual quality assurance plan, the Country Office conducted regular programme monitoring through meetings with implementing partners and visits to project sites to assess progress made (including financial utilization) against planned targets. Through such monitoring UNICEF Country Office generated evidence on the quality, timeliness and effective

reach of services; assessed constraints; and identified risks in implementation and the use of resources. This has served to refine implementation strategies, document good practices and lessons learned and adopt risk mitigating actions.

### Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

UNICEF Sri Lanka's Country Programme employs a conceptual framework that is normatively based on international human rights standards/principles and operationally directed towards promoting and protecting human rights. To strengthen the integration of such principles into results planning, UNICEF Sri Lanka worked with the Regional Office to reinforce the capacities of staff on the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) during the regional results-based management training hosted in Sri Lanka, as well as during the Country Office's multi-year work planning exercise.

UNICEF Sri Lanka is working with the Government of Sri Lanka to fulfil its commitment in promoting and protecting human rights. An important component in this endeavour is meeting Sri Lanka's treaty body reporting obligations, in particular, on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In discussion with the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office and Office for High Commission for Human Rights, UNICEF Sri Lanka is supporting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in strengthening the quality of the draft CRC report before final submission to the treaty body. In this regard, UNICEF Sri Lanka is contributing funding for a research organisation that will facilitate consultations on the review of outstanding treaty reports, including on United Nations CRC reporting and other treaty instruments that include the rights of women and children.

Given the constraints mentioned in the executive summary of this report, a number of legislative changes that would harmonize with the CRC did not happen, however, with the re-establishment of the Children's Caucus in Parliament and renewed Government commitments it is anticipated that 2016 will be a promising year.

### Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is central to the work of UNICEF Sri Lanka and its focus on equity. Even though gender parity has been achieved in most social indicators for children (health and education in particular), disparities emerge later during the adolescent stage and into adulthood. UNICEF Sri Lanka continued to work with all partners on the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and application of a stronger gender lens in data and bottleneck analysis. UNICEF Sri Lanka remains an active member of the United Nations Gender Themed Group and the Forum against Gender Based-Violence.

A key gender-focused programme initiative is related to menstrual hygiene management (MHM) in schools. Based on an UNICEF-supported national study on Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices (KAP) and Behaviour in WASH, including MHM in schools, (published in 2015), the Government is improving WASH facilities in schools taking into consideration the interests, needs and priorities of both girls and boys, specifically related to MHM. In 2015, a Menstrual Hygiene Management Kit, developed in collaboration with the Provincial/Zonal Department of Education and experts from NGOs, was field-tested with boys and girls, and male and female teachers in targeted schools in the North, with the objective of scaling up to both provincial and national levels. The trained zonal resource team on MHM provided an opportunity for parents (both mothers and fathers), teachers and students to discuss and improve MHM in schools with the aim of increasing attendance of girls. In 2016, as the use of the kit is scaled up, evidence will be

generated to measure the impact on school attendance of adolescent girls.

The recruitment of a United Nations Volunteer on Gender and Adolescents in 2015 is helping the Country Office in strengthening its focus in this area of work and mainstreaming gender in programme interventions across all sectors.

## Environmental Sustainability

Sri Lanka is vulnerable to climate change with evident environmental degradation, intensified natural disasters and unpredictable variations in seasonal rain and drought patterns. This has meant that the protection of the environment and promotion of environmental sustainability is increasingly becoming a key area of focus, including disaster risk reduction (DRR). Environmental sustainability is addressed mainly through water and sanitation initiatives, as well as disaster and risk reduction advocacy through schools. The Country Office has integrated emergency preparedness activities in its work planning and defined its commitments and responsibilities in the Early Warning Early Action plan.

UNICEF Sri Lanka used its convening power, with the Ministry of Water Supply and the Central Environmental Authority, to bring together environmental and water supply stakeholders to ensure comprehensive water safety planning and mitigate risks to the safety of drinking water from pollution and other threats. This led to the development of an accountability framework of all relevant stakeholders. In addition, the WASH Needs and Vulnerability Assessment toolkit developed with support from UNICEF Sri Lanka, is being used with the purpose of helping standardize WASH assessments among various stakeholders during key disasters. The toolkit provides concise information on disaster risks and WASH specific vulnerabilities, including the mechanism to assess, prepare, mitigate and respond to disasters.

Environmental concerns and related awareness raising has been a priority area in the planning processes of School Self-Assessments (SSAs) and School Development Planning, including the integration of DRR. Collective action taken by communities in UNICEF Sri Lanka targeted schools, in line with school development plans, to promote environmental sustainability and improve the school environment included: maintaining school premises using natural resources; reviewing garbage disposal systems to ensure clean premises; piloting compost-making; growing vegetable/flower gardens; and using locally available materials for school repairs.

In 2015, the Sri Lanka Country Office moved office premises and embarked on 'greening' initiatives at the new location. The primary focus has been to ensure the use of environmentally sustainable products for office maintenance, including energy-saving bulbs, air-conditioners, recycled paper and eco-friendly cleaning products. Going forward, the Country Office is developing a costed plan to move the office to solar power.

## Effective Leadership

After the 2014 Country Programme Mid-Term Review, UNICEF Sri Lanka underwent a considerable right-sizing exercise using mitigation measures to retain the maximum number of staff. In 2015, the Colombo Office also moved to a smaller, centrally located and more cost-effective premises, bringing UNICEF closer to other United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and government partners.

Twelve CMT meetings were held in 2015. Usually relevant zone office staff participate through video conference, however, to strengthen the 'one office, three locations' concept, one CMT meeting was held in Killinochchi (North) and CMT members visited Batticaloa (East).

In 2015, there were three reviews of the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan by the CMT. The CMT monitored the integration of Results-Based Management in the Country Office's planning, implementation and reporting.

The CMT also monitored mandatory Emergency Preparedness and Ethics training for staff, with 100 per cent completion. Further, the CMT approved an office-wide Enterprise Risk Management exercise and adopted its outcomes. Bottlenecks associated with Treasury delays in transmitting UNICEF funds to Implementing Partners is a significant risk to programme implementation and created a significant value of outstanding direct cash transfers (DCTs) for the office. In 2015, mitigation measures were taken to reduce such risks and find alternative modalities for transfers, while the Country Office explores improved transfer processes in 2016.

The CMT also approved an office work plan to address the results of the 2014 Global Staff Survey. The outcomes are reported to and monitored by the Country Office Joint Consultative Committee and CMT, as well as discussed with all staff.

While there are no audit recommendations open, the office had a Verification and a Results Oriented Monitoring mission by the EU to assess programme and operations. All 21 findings have been addressed at country level.

## Financial Resources Management

The Sri Lanka Country Office continues to monitor DCTs over nine months; by year-end, 1.4 per cent of DCTs were over nine months due to delays in fund transfers within the government system and structural changes in implementing partners' post-elections. The mitigation measures undertaken included high-level meetings with the Department of External Resources and consultations with other United Nations agencies on different fund transfer modalities for government partners. The Country Office continues to follow up on these issues to further reduce outstanding DCTs over nine months towards the organizational target of 1 per cent. HACT is fully operational and 30 Financial Spot Checks and 47 Programme Monitoring visits have been completed.

SLCO smoothly transitioned to the Global Shares Services Centre (GSSC) in November 2015 using the effective platform of the Business Support Centres and push & track. In this regard, the Country Office revised business processes, documented roles and responsibilities and trained focal points. It also supported the GSSC by releasing two staff members on mission to New York headquarters and Budapest.

The office successfully relocated to its new premises in April 2015 with minimum interruption to operations. The relocation resulted in significant operational savings in terms of rent, maintenance and other administrative costs.

General Ledger account reconciliations were carried out monthly and bank reconciliations were completed on time to ensure no long-outstanding unreconciled amounts. Year-end closure is on track. The Country Office also supported the Maldives Country Office in Gender Ledger account reconciliations, and provided on-the-job training.

The Country Office had adequate levels of funding/cash for programme activities and operating expenses, and secured the most competitive rates from the market. The Finance team guided staff on Financial Guidelines and Operating Policies and Procedures, resulting in the processing

of payments, liquidations and DCTs in line with agreed Service-Level Agreements. At year-end, the Country Office achieved an overall utilization rate of 92 per cent.

## Fund-Raising and Donor Relations

The Country Office continued to maintain close relationships with donors locally preparing progress updates, organizing briefing meetings and facilitating field missions to visit UNICEF-assisted programmes. This, with dedicated fund-raising efforts, has resulted in the mobilization of 85 per cent of the planned funding for 2015, with the majority of the funding being earmarked for specific downstream service delivery in one large multi-agency EU project, which was significantly affected by currency devaluations.

Fund-raising efforts led to several renewed donor relationships, including with the EU, Governments of Korea and Australia and National Committees for UNICEF, including Germany and the United Kingdom, which generated additional resources for the Country Office. UNICEF Sri Lanka also benefited from joint-United Nations funding from the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office and UNICEF global/regional thematic funding for all sectors.

As of December 2015, the office has raised approximately 75 per cent of the total budget required until 2017, leaving a funding gap of US\$14.195 million. With the Country Office moving towards more upstream policy and advocacy engagements, resulting from the Country Programme Mid-Term Review conducted in 2014, the fund-raising strategy is under review and will be strategically positioned to mobilize resources for related interventions planned for 2016-2017.

The Country Office internal control mechanism to monitor the timeliness and quality of donor reports has resulted in all donor reports meeting UNICEF reporting standards. In addition, in line with the recommendations of the Regional Office based on donor reporting quality assurance exercise, the office has further strengthened its quality assurance system on donor reporting, which will be institutionalized in 2016.

Due to a rigorous budget monitoring system, the Country Office utilized almost 100 per cent of the grants that expired in 2015, with an overall implementation rate (Regular Resources and Other Resources) of more than 94 per cent.

## Evaluation

The Country Office's annual Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) was prepared at the beginning of the year and reviewed on a quarterly basis to assess progress made in the implementation of studies, research and evaluations planned for 2015. At the end of 2015, the IMEP implementation rate stood at 34 per cent, with another 42 per cent in progress, which is still far below expectation. This disappointing result is, in part, attributable to over-ambitious planning at the beginning of the year and will be noted as a lesson learned during the drafting of future IMEPs. In addition, the Country Office is planning to transition to a rolling IMEP to allow for greater flexibility in the planning and realization of knowledge-generation outputs.

In 2015, UNICEF Sri Lanka conducted two evaluations: the final evaluation of EU-funded project 'Widening Horizons and Creating Opportunities for Sustainable Livelihoods in North and East Sri Lanka' and the evaluation of the 'Child-Friendly Approach (CFA) in Sri Lankan primary schools', which is a joint initiative between the Government of Sri Lanka and UNICEF Sri Lanka.

With regard to these evaluations, UNICEF Sri Lanka abided by the established regional quality

assurance mechanisms for evaluation throughout the process to comply with UNICEF’s Evaluation Policy. This ensured competitive selection; provision of complete and comprehensive information to the evaluation team; and facilitation of adequate participation by stakeholders, including beneficiaries.

The findings from these evaluations are expected to inform current and future programmes, such as the ongoing EU-funded project ‘Providing Equitable Access to Enhanced Social Services in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka’ and guide the MoE on the strategies, interventions and resources required for the scale-up of CFA in primary schools at the national level, as well as the mainstreaming of CFA at the secondary school level.

### Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

UNICEF Sri Lanka Country Office’s relocation to its new premises in 2015, resulted in significant operational savings in terms of rent, maintenance and other administrative costs; for example, US\$4,000 per month savings in energy and US\$5,600 per month savings in rent were recorded.

The Country Office used the opportunity of moving to new office premises to embark on ‘greening’ initiatives and more conducive work environment. This includes procurement and use of Light-Emitting Diode /energy-saving bulbs and energy saving/inverter air conditioners and insulation/repair of premises, which contributed to a significant decrease in energy costs. Moreover, the office is currently working on a project to introduce solar panels, as well as undertaking repairs in zone offices to increase energy savings. In 2015, the office also encouraged and increased travel by train to field locations, thus contributing to a reduction in travel costs and fuel. These combined initiatives contribute to global United Nations/UNICEF efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions to the extent possible.

With the aim of improving the quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of the United Nations’ support to programme delivery, the United Nations Country Team and Operational Management Team initiated the process of developing a Business Operating Strategy. It is envisaged that implementation of the strategy will enhance the harmonization and simplification of United Nations business operations at the country level, and therefore lead to greater cost efficiency and effectiveness of operations activities, particularly in the fields of procurement, information, communication and technology, human resources, logistics, administration and finance.

Transition to the GSSC was identified as a high-risk area by the Country Office due to uncertainties of its scope and operation. This raises concerns on the efficiency and effectiveness of the processing of payments by the GSSC.

### Supply Management

In 2015, the Country Office procurement details are as follows:

<b>UNICEF Sri Lanka 2015</b>	<b>Value in US\$</b>
Local procurement	835,852
Offshore procurement	95,388
Procurement for Maldives Country Office	27,343
Procurement services	550,167
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,508,750</b>

The annual supply plan was periodically reviewed and adjusted throughout the year to reflect additional needs and update the procurement status. The advisory body on local procurement, the Contracts Review Committee, met 13 times to process 23 procurement-related cases. The Supply Section also continued to support procurement for UNICEF Maldives. Further, UNICEF Sri Lanka supported the Regional Office in hosting a number of regional meetings/workshops during the year. UNICEF Sri Lanka does not maintain a warehouse for pre-positioning emergency supplies and relies on Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) to ensure a rapid response to emergencies.

The Country Office played an active role in the inter-agency Joint Procurement Committee; to date, the United Nations benefits from seven common LTAs and obtained the best value-for-money in major procurement operations.

As part of procurement services, UNICEF Sri Lanka continued to provide in-country support for the procurement of vaccines through Gavi on behalf of the MoH, as well as the procurement of nutritional supplies (multiple micro nutrients and BP100).

The Supply Section used the new Supply Chain Dashboard report to monitor the status of supplies, identify outstanding orders and follow up with vendors. In November, a supply staff member attended a training on the effective use of such dashboard and VISION reports.

Given the nature of the country programme, it is expected that procurement activities in 2016 will be mainly service-oriented rather than procurement of goods. In view of the complexity of service contracts, the office will take additional measures to build in-house capacity for effective handling and better management of service contracts.

## Security for Staff and Premises

UNICEF Sri Lanka's new head office premises was assessed by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and is fully Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS)-compliant. The Office has selected trained staff in first aid and first aid items available in the office and UNICEF vehicles. The Office is also disabled-friendly, with a handicap ramp, a disabled-friendly bathroom and availability of a wheelchair. The Office has also taken MOSS-required safety measures, including essential fire safety equipment and procedures, an automatic gas suppression system (protecting the network servers) and closed-circuit cameras on all perimeter walls. The warden system, both for fires within the building and for out-of-office emergencies, is functional, and a training for wardens and an evacuation drill was conducted by UNDSS in 2015. Based on an UNDSS assessment, additional security measures were implemented in the two zone offices to ensure MOSS compliance.

In 2015, selected UNICEF drivers from Colombo and zone offices were trained on safe driving by the UNDSS. In addition, in December, a more comprehensive 10-day Training of Trainers programme for drivers was conducted. Staff travelling to areas that required security clearance had to obtain such clearance prior to receiving their travel authorization and were required to travel in a MOSS-compliant vehicle. Additionally, staff movements during a mission were tracked, reported and checked, via cell phone, until the end of the mission.

In 2015, the security profile in the country remains stable with less restrictions and freedom of movement in all parts of the country. Despite this, there remain certain areas of threat and risk which were included in the recently updated MOSS and Minimum Operating Residential Security Standards endorsed by the Security Management Team. Due to steady improvements

in the security situation the proposed security capacity will be monitored and appropriately adjusted in 2016.

## Human Resources

The Human Resources unit focused on implementing the 2014 Programme Budget Review recommendations and aligning Human Resources management to the country programme requirements. In this regard, the Country Office abolished 44 positions and established 26 posts, while ensuring the mitigation of organizational risks and negative impacts on staff morale and productivity; transfer of knowledge; effective transition; and talent retention. The office continued to face challenges in attracting qualified female candidates for national professional posts requiring specialized technical knowledge and expertise. The gender ratio for National Professional staff is presently 38 per cent female and 62 per cent male.

In 2015, eight (out of nine planned) staff learning/development initiatives were conducted on: Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers; Competency-Based Interviews; Professionalism and Conflict Management; Basic/Advanced Security in the Field; Ethics and Integrity; Sexual Harassment; and UN Cares. Staff were encouraged to take advantage of the Agora Learning and Development Portal and follow UNICEF e-learning courses on professional development. Further, the Sri Lanka Country Office supported staff missions to other country offices to expand their technical expertise and experience.

Performance management was further strengthened using a three-phased participatory approach, emphasizing regular and honest performance discussions with positive and constructive feedback. The Country Office had a 100 per cent compliance rate for 2014 year-end and 2015 mid-year reviews in line with global deadlines.

Staff well-being remained a priority for 2015, including the promotion of work-life balance and flexible work arrangements. The Country Office prioritized compliance with the minimum standards on HIV/AIDS in the workplace. During the change management process, counselling services were available for staff through a counsellor contracted on a retainer basis. Senior Management have taken an active role, together with Staff Association and Human Resources, to ensure the Global Staff Survey action plan to address identified key issues is monitored, and actions implemented as stipulated.

## Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The Country Office Information and Communication Technology (ICT) unit facilitated programme delivery by providing reliable and secure ICT infrastructure and innovative business solutions. The ICT unit assisted training/conferencing activities through Lync and Video conferencing, contributing to savings in time and staff travel costs.

To improve efficiency and effectiveness of office asset management, the Country Office developed a barcode-based inventory management application, which automates and expedites physical verification and reconciliation, saving staff time and resources. The Business Intelligence tool provided management with required graphical and tabular programme monitoring reports.

Applications developed by the Country Office ICT unit – push & track (a request management application for Business Support Centres) and travel2field (an application to manage local travel) – were adopted as South Asia regional applications. Currently, more than 1,000 UNICEF staff members in seven countries are using these applications. The Country Office continuously

improved and upgraded these applications and provided troubleshooting and maintenance support to the countries using the applications.

With the transition to the GSSC, the Country Office ICT unit was instrumental in simplifying and streamlining the business workflows. Both push & track and travel2field applications were adapted to facilitate GSSC transaction processing. The ICT unit also introduced several innovative tools, such as TextIt, Country Programme Document Information Management System to Country Office programme sections.

In April, to facilitate a smooth relocation of the Colombo Office to its new premises, new ICT infrastructure, compliant with global standards, were provided and all systems and services were successfully relocated with minimum downtime and no disruption to ongoing work.

Security and emergency communication systems were strengthened in November by procuring new satellite communication equipment and VHF radios. The ICT footprint in the Field Offices was reduced by centralizing ICT services and functions and outsourcing help-desk services. This reduced the number of ICT field visits and overall cost of ICT operations.

## Programme Components from Results Assessment Module

### ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

**OUTCOME 1:** By the end of 2017, UNICEF contributed to a reduction of stunting by 20 per cent, wasting by 20 per cent, anaemia by 20 per cent and no increase of overweight through evidenced-based policies and equity-focused programming, resulting in improved access to quality nutrition services to children and women in UNICEF-assisted districts.

#### **Analytical statement of progress:**

UNICEF continued to provide technical and financial support to the Presidential Secretariat and MoH for the delivery of well-designed and effective nutrition interventions under the overall framework of the Multi-Sectoral Action Plan for Nutrition, which is the planning framework of key interventions to reduce maternal and child malnutrition in the country. UNICEF also played a key role in generating data and evidence, as well as documenting pilots and other innovative approaches (such as the home fortification programme for children aged 6–24 months old, complementary feeding programme and mothers'/community support groups) for potential replication and scale-up, as well as to feed into future policy and programme design.

In 2015, to support evidence-based policies and equity-focused programming, UNICEF contributed to the scale up of an effective data management and monitoring system in seven targeted districts, including real-time monitoring in three of these districts, with the highest levels of child undernutrition. This system is building on the successful interventions of the existing monitoring system piloted in two districts with UNICEF support. However, limited progress was made in this regard due to changes in the Government and administration during the year. Despite these bottlenecks, UNICEF contributed to maintaining government momentum and commitment to data management and monitoring, as well as provided technical inputs into the design of the systems software and supply inputs for real-time monitoring. UNICEF also assisted the strengthening of coordination mechanisms at provincial, district and divisional levels for the future roll out of the monitoring system, including a forum to review and analyse data collected/trends as a means of informing programming.

To further improve IYCF practices at community and household levels, UNICEF continued to

promote innovative approaches that empowered targeted nutritionally vulnerable households, such as mothers' support/community groups that engage mothers in community level activities related to maternal and child nutrition. In addition, UNICEF addressed nutrition supply gaps in the country by funding the procurement of 2,000 cartons of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (BP 100) by the Family Health Bureau to treat 50 per cent of severely malnourished children in the country.

At the policy level, based on a review of all micronutrient programmes in Sri Lanka, UNICEF has contributed technical inputs to the Institute of Health Policy for the preparation of a policy brief to reduce underweight, stunting and wasting within the first 1,000 days of a child's life. Nutrition data collected in 2015 by the Family Health Bureau, indicates positive trends in the reduction of malnutrition prevalence rates in the targeted districts, which is contributing to the reducing prevalence of stunting, wasting and anaemia within the country, especially among the most vulnerable (those that live in poverty in rural/geographically remote/post-conflict/plantation areas). Progress against the percentage of overweight children under 5 years will be reported in 2016 based on data collected during the next survey.

**OUTPUT 1:** National Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan is rolled out, with a monitoring and evaluation framework generating evidence and critical knowledge for informed programming.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

Under the Multi-Sectoral Action Plan for Nutrition, UNICEF had previously supported the piloting of a monitoring system in two districts, namely Monaragala and Nuwara Eliya. In 2015, based on documentation of the pilot and a successful evaluation of this system, UNICEF is supporting the scale-up of this monitoring system in an additional seven districts with the highest levels of child undernutrition (Anuradhapura, Badulla, Kandy, Kilinochchi, Matale Mullaitivu and Polonnaruwa). This system, once functioning, will monitor the status of nutritionally vulnerable households in each Grama Niladhari division (village level) – identified by the Public Health Midwife using existing routine data and based on specific targeting criteria – as well as serves as a tool to strengthen current interventions and inform future policies and service delivery.

In 2015, UNICEF focussed its advocacy efforts with the Presidential Secretariat and the MoH on maintaining the Government's commitment to the roll-out of the monitoring system as planned. UNICEF provided technical inputs for the development of the surveillance software and in three of the targeted districts – Matale, Nuwara Eliya and Polonnaruwa, UNICEF is facilitating the piloting of real-time monitoring. For this purpose, UNICEF procured 40 laptops and 607 smartphones for the MoH, as well as supported software development for real-time data monitoring and analysis at divisional level. To date, the Public Health Midwives have been trained to use the laptops and phones in collecting and maintaining data and have completed household-level data collection in five districts. The software will be institutionalized in 2016, enabling improved, real-time child nutrition assessments, including periodic risk factor reviews. The information gathered will be used to update mothers/guardians on growth progress and nutrition risks through text messages. Non-health sector stakeholders will also have access to required information through text messages, periodic updates, electronic messaging and the Cloud platform.

Orientation meetings were held for Chief Secretaries, Provincial/District Health Authorities and District Secretaries on the monitoring system and coordination mechanism in all targeted districts. The meetings primarily focused on: project design/implementation; establishment of provincial coordination mechanisms; development of monitoring frameworks at district level; and linkages with other stakeholders and vulnerable families in the roll-out of the monitoring system.

Agreement was reached that data collected through the monitoring system would be reviewed quarterly at provincial and districts levels.

**OUTPUT 2:** Knowledge, capacity and standards on child nutrition, breastfeeding, appropriate feeding practices, early childhood development/stimulation is strengthened.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF supported the MoH in the review of all micronutrient programmes in Sri Lanka, which led to the development of a (draft) national micronutrient strategy. The review also assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the current multiple micronutrients supplementation programme and provided policy and programmatic recommendations to guide policy makers on program improvements. UNICEF also partnered with SAIFRN to conduct research on the use of mobile phones in improving IYCF practices. The research, which is ongoing, is assessing the extent to which mobile phones could be used to disseminate age-appropriate nutrition messages. Additionally, the research will help in the design of an intervention package on IYCF counselling using mobile phones. UNICEF further partnered with SAIFRN, as well as the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to conduct an International Conference on Maternal and Child Nutrition to share new knowledge and good practices.

UNICEF further supported knowledge sharing initiatives, including:

- i. participation of one medical officer in a costing of newborn care workshop held in Kathmandu. As a follow-up to this, three policymakers attended the global SUN meeting; recommended actions are under review.
- ii. participation of one medical officer and the Epidemiology Unit, in a vaccine logistics management workshop in Copenhagen. Resulting from this, a series of related training sessions is planned for logistics managers at national and district levels in 2016.

To address issues of child undernutrition, UNICEF partnered with NGOs to facilitate training of Medical Officers of Health (112) and Public Health Midwives (1,051) in targeted districts. The training enhanced their knowledge and skills in mobilizing community members around actions that improve the nutritional status of children under 5 years of age, while also strengthening the capacity of community groups to sustain such actions. To date, 1,478 mothers'/community groups are undertaking collective action to improve and monitor the nutritional status. UNICEF also supported weekly radio programmes by nutrition experts over a seven-month period to educate the public on key problematic areas related to nutrition. At the school level, UNICEF partnered with other United Nations agencies to promote healthy eating practices, reaching around 15,000 adolescents. In the area of Early Childhood Care and Development, UNICEF supported the training of child development officers and preschool teachers (total of 203), and elderly women (658) in 60 tea estates in the plantation sector on innovative nutrition interventions.

**OUTCOME 2:** By the end of 2017, the national public health system delivers equitable and quality services on newborn survival, modelling good practices and contributing to knowledge generation and wider learning.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

Despite considerable progress over the past few decades, Sri Lanka's maternal and child health services still present critical weaknesses. Results from national Maternal Mortality Reviews and Perinatal Death Reviews in 2015 indicate that more than 50 per cent of maternal deaths are preventable. Despite 99 per cent of women delivering in the hospital, post-partum haemorrhage

is still the leading cause of maternal mortality, while 70 per cent of infant deaths are during the neonatal period. These data raise questions on the quality and equity of care at the facility level.

UNICEF worked with the MoH to initiate a bottleneck analysis on newborn care to help policymakers and other stakeholders in defining strategies and developing an action plan for quality improvements of newborn care services. The action plan is at a draft stage and will be finalized and disseminated early 2016.

Sri Lanka's national immunization programme is frequently quoted as one of the strongest performers, not only in the Region, but also in the world. The national Expanded Immunization Programme (EPI) has an excellent record, with extremely low incidence of EPI diseases and high coverage (98–100 per cent) of EPI vaccines. While maintaining this high coverage, the potency of vaccines and quality of logistics management should be maintained. In this regard, UNICEF provided technical support in the assessment of vaccine management of the EPI in Sri Lanka; the findings of which are helping the Epidemiology Unit of the MoH to take further steps to improve the quality of the existing immunization programme.

To improve access to adequate maternal and child health care, in particular for children and pregnant and lactating women, four Gramodaya Health Centres – providing antenatal and immunization services – were constructed, two have been refurbished and another six constructions are ongoing in low coverage/resettled areas of the North and East, with financial support from UNICEF. In addition, equipment was provided to targeted health institutions to facilitate the delivery of quality and equitable maternal and child health services. Once functioning, these facilities will improve quality and access to maternal and child health services for a population of 80,000 to 90,000.

**OUTPUT 1:** Knowledge is developed and disseminated on Maternal and Newborn Child Health for learning exchanges and partnerships on neonatal mortality reduction in South Asia.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

Sri Lanka has low levels of infant, child and maternal mortality due to a relatively high status of health care. Given that the health system in Sri Lanka is considered to be a good model in the region, UNICEF continued to promote Sri Lanka as a mother and newborn health learning hub using South-South collaboration as a means for shared learning. However, progress on establishing a hub that generates and shares knowledge and learning in the region was limited due to delays in identifying and recruiting a regional health specialist that could lead this initiative.

To contribute to shared learning and partnerships in the area of newborn child health, UNICEF facilitated the participation of nine Medical Officers and two experts from professional organizations in an exposure visit to India with a focus on newborn care. The findings and lessons learned are feeding into the refining of strategies related to quality improvements of newborn care, which aim to reduce newborn mortality. Further, the documentation of best practices on maternal and newborn care is in progress; once finalized this document will be used to disseminate best practices among countries in the region through South-South collaboration.

**OUTPUT 2:** National and sub-national capacity is strengthened in monitoring, reporting and verification of neonatal deaths for informed decision and quality health-care services to children and women in disadvantaged areas.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In order to achieve an overall reduction in neonatal, infant and maternal morbidity and mortality in Sri Lanka, UNICEF provided financial and technical assistance to the MoH to improve the quality of maternal and newborn care, as well as better understand the causes of neonatal, infant and maternal deaths.

To improve infant mortality rates, UNICEF focused on enhancing care during the extremely vulnerable neonatal period. In 2015, this included assistance for the: i) training of 50 public health staff from all districts as master trainers on essential newborn care involved in further training public health officers at district and divisional levels and ii) conduct of perinatal death reviews to identify the underlying causes of newborn deaths and address gaps in services. The perinatal death reviews, covering the period from 28 weeks of gestation to 28 days of life, are critical in ascertaining the causes of neonatal deaths in order to address the related causes and improve the quality of newborn care. UNICEF supported the conduct of such reviews in 10 hospitals in Anuradhapura, Badulla, Nuwara Eliya and Polonnaruwa districts (out of a total of 65 hospitals conducting such reviews) to identify the underlying causes of newborn deaths and address gaps in services. The key findings of the reviews have been shared with relevant stakeholders to put into place mechanisms that will address the causes of preventable newborn deaths.

In addition, UNICEF supported the conduct of a bottleneck analysis of newborn care services (report is being finalized) and, related to this, preparation of a newborn action plan to address identified bottlenecks. Another key area of support is the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV programme, including antenatal screening for HIV, which has been integrated into routine maternal and child health services on a phase-by-phase basis. UNICEF provided logistical support to scale up the programme in all 25 districts, reaching a coverage of 45 per cent of all pregnant mothers.

**OUTCOME 3:** By the end of 2017, UNICEF contributed to WASH sector performance, ensuring effective coverage of safe drinking water, improved knowledge, sanitation services and practices in most disadvantaged areas, as well as helping to promote a healthy environment.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, in line with national priorities, UNICEF continued to focus on water safety, together with other key development partners such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Japan International Cooperation Agency, through the generation and sharing of relevant knowledge/data and stakeholder networking to mainstream water safety and community participation in water resource management. These initiatives and ongoing collaborative partnerships with the Central Environmental Authority and the International Union for Conservation of Nature have contributed to the inclusion of water catchment areas and river basins in the water safety plan of the National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWS & DB), as well as the commitment of key stakeholders from other sectors to water supply safety. In addition, UNICEF technically supported the World Health Organization (WHO) and NWS & DB in expanding Water Safety Plans beyond conventional water supply to also cover community-based water supply that caters nearly 11 per cent of Sri Lanka's water supply. Based on this, UNICEF is supporting a pilot implementation of a Water Safety Plan in a semi-urban area, engaging community members in institutionalizing community-managed water supply mechanisms.

UNICEF also assisted relevant authorities in following-up on Sri Lanka's commitments made at SACOSAN and Sanitation and Water for All global platforms with a focus on equity, and

participating in relevant events under both platforms at regional as well as global levels. Under the Sanitation and Water platform, UNICEF facilitated linkages between the Government and the global forum, while in relation to SACOSAN, the Government of Sri Lanka took the lead with guidance from UNICEF in aligning national commitments to regional ones.

Under the WASH in Schools programme, though UNICEF is phasing out from school-level WASH infrastructure, significant technical support was provided to advance national priorities, as well as continued advocacy, in order to raise the profile of WASH in schools, identify gaps in services and increase funding allocations. In this regard, UNICEF's facilitation of the first South Asian Student Conference on WASH immensely contributed to highlighting WASH in Schools as a major sub-sector among new policymakers as well as the general public, particularly adolescent students. Furthermore, UNICEF's partnership with the MoE to host the fourth WASH in Schools International Learning Exchange contributed to South-to-South shared learning, knowledge and expertise between 16 countries.

The release of the final high security zones for resettlement in the North and East marked a significant step forward towards peacebuilding and reconciliation. The Government requested assistance from the United Nations to provide essential services for the returnees, such as shelter, water, sanitation, health and mine risk education. In the area of water and sanitation, UNICEF is collaborating with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and key NGOs to ensure improved access to safe water for 240 families and adequate sanitation facilities for 286 families in Jaffna and Trincomalee Districts.

**OUTPUT 1:** National multi-stakeholder mechanisms are functional and strengthened, mainstreaming water safety and community participation in water resource management and enforcing national sanitation policy.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF continued to strengthen national stakeholder mechanisms on mainstreaming water safety and community participation in water resource management (water catchments and river basins). In this regard, UNICEF facilitated collaboration between 54 stakeholders from various sectors (including water, environment, health, local government, irrigation, coastal conservation, private) on water safety and community participation in water resource management. This led to the development of a draft action plan and accountability framework towards a formal multi-stakeholder platform.

In the area of water safety, UNICEF contributed to a perception study conducted by the Central Environmental Authority to understand how various stakeholders perceive their role in water safety of catchment areas so as to inform advocacy work and the design of strategies and systems that involve multiple stakeholders. UNICEF also provided technical inputs into the development of a multi-sector, multi-stakeholder strategy and action plan, for the medium to long term, for the management and conservation of the Kelani River Basin. This document will feed into an accountability framework to ensure the socio-economic and environmental sustainability of the Kelani River Basin through the actions of multiple stakeholders, as well as be used to inform future scale-up and replication.

To enhance the capacity of the NWS & DB in applying Water Safety Plans in conventional water supply, 81 professionals of the NWS & DB received a hands-on training. UNICEF also technically supported improvements of the online NWS & DB database, which maintains data against critical WASH indicators, as well as orientation of 150 officers from all regional support centres and head office on the use of new database features.

To further support the initiative by WHO and NWS & DB to expand Water Safety Plans to cover community-managed water schemes, UNICEF worked with 300 community leaders on community-based water management in three districts – Kandy, Kegalle and Pollonaruwa (continued intervention from 2014). These community leaders are improving the financial, administrative and routine management aspects of water supply.

**OUTPUT 2:** National institutional standards and norms are operationalized and strengthened, and positive behaviour norms are promoted under WASH in Schools.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

Planned interventions in WASH in schools related to behaviour change and sustainability were postponed due to capacity limitations of the State Ministry of Education. However, building on initiatives in 2014, the first KAP and Behaviour study on WASH in Schools covering 10,000 students in all nine provinces was documented, which will serve as a key tool in planning future interventions.

With UNICEF's financial and technical support, Sri Lanka hosted the first South Asian Student Conference on WASH with participation of adolescent schoolchildren; 400 from Sri Lanka and 16 from other South Asian countries, out of which 210 were girls. This served as a model for youth participation in WASH under the SACOSAN umbrella. Knowledge promotion, student networking, South-South cooperation and convergence of education, water and health sectors were cross-cutting achievements. Students led their own discussions in four thematic areas: drinking water, sanitation, hygiene promotion and WASH in Schools. They demonstrated great spirit and enthusiasm in conducting and documenting the sessions themselves and in sharing their inputs into each thematic area.

The conference also provided a space for students to have interactive sessions that focused on the WASH context in their own country. Student interactions during the conference and field visits is contributing towards a network among regional countries, as well as different provinces of Sri Lanka. The interaction of students from different provinces and backgrounds towards a common objective contributed to narrowing communication gaps and promoting greater social cohesion. Both the Government of Sri Lanka, as well as UNICEF, engaged with regional government bodies and other UNICEF country offices, including UNICEF's Regional Office, in facilitating this student conference, setting an example for South-South cooperation. Since the event was a joint effort between UNICEF, ministries mandated for water supply, education and health, and government and non-government actors, it resulted in greater stakeholder convergence and collaboration.

Building on this momentum, UNICEF, in partnership with the MoE, hosted and facilitated the 4<sup>th</sup> WASH in Schools International Learning Exchange with participation of 150 delegates from 16 countries in South and East Asia, as well as the Pacific. Sri Lanka introduced adolescent participation into this forum for the first time, serving as a model for future learning exchanges. During the learning exchange, future key priorities were identified including: at-scale WASH in Schools programming; Menstrual Hygiene Management; and WASH in Education Management Information System, towards which UNICEF will contribute.

**OUTPUT 3:** By the end of 2016, WASH community infrastructure is strengthened, ensuring improved access to and quality of services to children, families and communities, especially in disadvantaged areas,

**Analytical statement of progress:**

Through the EU-funded programme conducted in seven conflict-affected/border districts, UNICEF will provide improved access for more than 7,200 families to water supply and 1,000 families to sanitation facilities. In 2015, the following results were achieved:

In the North, approximately 1,000 persons got access to improved water through the construction of two common dug wells, six tube wells and an extension of a pipe network, while in the East, approximately 2,600 persons from 667 households got access to improved water through an extension of a pipe network. This improved access to water supply reduced the time spent by mothers in fetching water thus making them more available for their children as well as income generation activities. In the sanitation sector, in the North, 280 persons got access to improved sanitation through the construction of 70 latrines, while in East, 100 people benefited through the construction of 25 latrines. Improved access contributed to mitigating privacy and gender-related vulnerabilities, as well as injuries due to snake bites/mines. Improvements in water and sanitation have contributed to a decrease in the risk of water-borne diseases and nutrition deficiencies of the most vulnerable community groups, such as female-headed households, pregnant and lactating mothers, disabled persons, etc.

At school level, enhanced facilities has led to improved practices such as hand washing with soap and MHM. To generate evidence for improvements in school WASH, 295 schools in the North completed baseline assessments. A toolkit for MHM was also developed and field tested to ensure that young girls get the best care during menstruation. Furthermore, to promote community-based hygiene promotion, 360 mobilizers and 300 community members in the North gained capacity on applying the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation model.

UNICEF is also responding to the needs of returnees resettling in the recently released high security zones in the North and East. To ensure access to improved water and sanitation for approximately 750 returnees, UNICEF, in collaboration with UNHCR and key NGOs, constructed 15 household latrines, benefiting 60 returnees in Trincomalee. Another 271 latrine constructions are ongoing in resettlement areas in the North (166 latrines) and East (105 latrines). In addition, the rehabilitation of 20 dug wells is ongoing in resettlement areas in Jaffna, while in Trincomalee, 140 households are gaining access to treated drinking water through the main grid, with UNICEF supporting the household water supply connections.

**OUTCOME 4:** By the end of 2017, there is improved effective coverage to quality pre-primary and primary education for girls and boys, particularly for the most disadvantaged.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF's key education priority areas include: i) strengthening ECD; ii) supporting equitable and inclusive teaching and learning in classrooms; and iii) promoting peace and reconciliation through the education system.

To ensure a smooth transition from ECE to formal schooling, UNICEF supported the MoE in developing a school-readiness assessment toolkit (developed in 2014) for children entering Grade 1, which has now been finalized after pre- and post-testing with children who actually entered into Grade 1 in January 2015. The toolkit, which includes 16 activities along with a teacher instruction guide, will be officially launched in 2016 and eventually merged with the existing child identification programme. To ensure more coordinated ECD services, UNICEF facilitated a functional mapping exercise of state stakeholders, from central, provincial and zonal levels working on ECD, in the Central and Eastern Provinces. This exercise, the first of its kind, was appreciated by the Children's Secretariat as a means of identifying existing overlaps in

roles and responsibilities and enabling dialogue on how stakeholders need to work more effectively together. Based on this, the Children's Secretariat is considering adapting this model and rolling it out to all other provinces.

During the year, UNICEF, jointly with the MoE, undertook an evaluation of CFA, which adopted a participatory approach involving stakeholders at decentralized levels and incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research. The CFA evaluation is assessing changes in schools following CFA-related interventions by UNICEF as well as other partners, as well as teaching practices (using a sample of 323 lessons) in CFA and non-CFA schools. The assessment of teaching practices will provide the first rigorous evidence on the extent to which child-centred teaching is practiced in Sri Lankan classrooms. The evaluation results are informing strategic revisions in UNICEF's education programming over the next two years (2016–2017) and will be used in advocating with the MoE and other partners to include reforms to teacher development systems within the new national Education sector plan starting in 2018.

UNICEF also supported the MOE in expanding multilevel teaching pedagogy to all nine provinces through the conduct of Training of Trainers programmes for all provincial resource teams, with plans to pilot multilevel pedagogy in selected schools in the Northern and Eastern provinces under UNICEF's 2016–2017 work plan. UNICEF has also supported the MOE in training selected teachers from all nine provinces on inclusive education based on the toolkit developed with support from UNICEF. These efforts are helping to improve learning outcomes for children, as well as more equitable and inclusive teaching and learning.

In 2015, UNICEF advocated for and provided technical inputs in defining, together with the MoE and the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), a strategy for promoting peace and reconciliation through Education. In this regard, the following key initiatives will be undertaken during UNICEF's country programme (2015–2017): (a) a review of the existing National Policy and Comprehensive Framework of Actions on Education for Peace and Social Cohesion (2008); (b) the introduction of social cohesion into the existing curriculum; (c) the piloting of innovative co-curricular programmes aimed at promoting social cohesion within and across schools; (d) the elimination of corporal punishment in schools; and (e) psychosocial support to students affected by the former conflict, as well as difficult home environment conditions. The policy on 'Social Cohesion in Education' (2008) is comprehensive in that it covers, among others, second national language learning, teacher development, co-curricular programmes and programmes to promote the school as a location of peace. The multi-dimensionality requires a Ministry-wide approach and action plan backed by strong leadership from the top. The planned review represents a unique opportunity to ensure such a Ministry-wide approach is put in place. For the process to be effective, it is thus important to lead the review process through a senior-level committee covering all relevant parts of the MoE as well as stakeholders working on the National Action Plan for Social Integration to ensure that the two initiatives are well coordinated. UNICEF is currently reviewing a draft concept note prepared by the MoE detailing the purpose and policy amendment process, together with an action plan.

Additionally, through continued advocacy UNICEF was successful in advocating with the National Institute of Education (NIE) to strengthen the integration of peace education and social cohesion in primary curricula, particularly in Grade 2. UNICEF's financial support, as well as technical inputs through an international specialist, has created an opportunity for continued curricula-related work with the NIE. Currently, the Grade 2 curricular content is being revised to better integrate peace education and social cohesion and provincial resource teams will be trained to support the roll-out in 2016.

**OUTPUT 1:** By the end of 2017, systems are strengthened to deliver quality education that improves learning outcomes and promotes social cohesion and inclusion for girls and boys.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

UNICEF supported the MoE in developing competencies and standards for teachers to enhance their professional development and benchmark professional and personal conduct, which have now been finalised (pending approval) and will be rolled-out in 2016. UNICEF also technically supported the development of guidelines in Uva province to implement School Self-Assessments (SSAs), including the identification of out-of-school children and children with learning difficulties. UNICEF further worked with provincial authorities in Uva and Central Provinces to develop materials for literacy promotion programmes in primary grades, with a specific focus on children with learning difficulties. In the Eastern Province, UNICEF supported refresher trainings for principals and teachers from 360 targeted schools on catchment area mapping, SSAs and developing school-level plans. In the North, the planning process at school level was supported by the establishment of zonal resource teams that have been involved in training school communities on participatory planning in approximately 600 schools.

To promote inclusive education, UNICEF assisted in the establishment of an Eastern provincial resource team to provide basic training on the Inclusive Education Tool Kit. To date, 497 teachers have been successively trained on the Kit. UNICEF also provided technical inputs for the training manual on building Math and Language skills of primary teachers developed by the Provincial Department of Education, Eastern Province. The manual is currently being used in six zones to train 300 primary teachers. UNICEF continued to support the Accelerated Learning and Basic Learning Courses in targeted schools in the Eastern province which have helped 600 poorly performing children (those that scored less than 40 per cent in first-term assessments) to increase their performance in the second term assessment. In the North, UNICEF supported the establishment of peer study centres, where children learn from their peers in a flexible learning environment as opposed to a classroom setting.

In the area of Social Cohesion, UNICEF's joint advocacy with GIZ to revise the National Policy has resulted in the MoE taking key steps in this regard. While limited progress was made in 2015 this will be a key priority for the MoE and UNICEF in 2016. At the school level, UNICEF supported co-curricular activities among diverse ethnic/religious groups of children from 350 schools in the Eastern Province. In the North, UNICEF partnered with a local civil society organisation to create greater dialogue on social cohesion at the community level through divisional level forums.

**OUTPUT 2:** By the end of 2017, the capacity of key education stakeholders at national and provincial levels in UNICEF geographical priority areas are enhanced to deliver and assure quality preschool education for girls and boys aged 3–5 years old

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF focused its efforts on enhancing the quality of ECE for boys and girls aged 3 to 5 years old in targeted provinces. In this regard, UNICEF is currently supporting the review of the primary guide book, 'Play but not Play', used by preschool teachers over the past decade, to identify its relevance to the current context and provide recommendations for improvements. In the East, UNICEF supported a baseline study to determine the current status of preschools, which will help assess progress made and provide direction for future programming. In addition, UNICEF supported the development of a preschool teacher resource package, including guidelines for preschool teachers on age-appropriate teaching and learning, which has been distributed to 54 preschool teachers. In the North, UNICEF supported the ECD Unit in the

maintenance of an existing database, as well as conduct of qualitative research from a selected sample of preschools to establish a baseline. According to the Northern Provincial Preschool Bureau, 1,830 preschools out of an estimated 2,000 have been registered, of which 40 preschools are either non-functional or closed. In addition, UNICEF supported the Central Province ECD unit to develop a quality standard document for preschools and related monitoring tools that focus on three key aspects: namely, the infrastructure, quality of teaching and child development. The quality standard document has been issued through a gazette notification within the province and the tools have been validated by the Provincial council.

To facilitate the mainstreaming of CFA, 29 preschools had conducted SSAs with the participation of relevant stakeholders and community members in the Central Province. Further, more than 1,000 community members were reached through community awareness programmes on the 'Importance of Early Learning' in 52 tea estate divisions in Central and Uva Provinces. To complement this initiative, 156 preschool teachers were trained on the preparation of no-cost and low-cost teaching/learning materials; the related modules and materials were shared with Provincial ECE authorities for scale up. UNICEF also created a platform to mobilize support from creative writers, artists, cartoonists, dramatists, musicians, etc., in the development of teaching/learning products that promote social cohesion among children from different ethnic/religious backgrounds. In the East, UNICEF partnered with a civil society organization to develop guidelines for preschool teachers that enhances joyful learning, and is advocating with ECE authorities to institutionalize these guidelines at national and provincial levels.

**OUTPUT 3:** By the end of 2016, children in pre-primary and primary education have greater access to quality school infrastructure and child-friendly learning environments.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

To improve access for children in pre-primary and primary education to quality school infrastructure and child-friendly learning environments, UNICEF has supported renovations in targeted schools in the Uva, Eastern and Northern Provinces. The identification and prioritization of school needs was done through a participatory and consultative SSAs, including participation of community members and children.

In the Uva province, 51 classrooms in 17 schools have been renovated, under the technical supervision of School Development Societies and with support from relevant zonal education officials, and handed over to the school management for regular classroom activities. Approximately 1,200 students benefited from this intervention. Additionally, six ECD centres have been renovated benefiting more than 90 preschool children. UNICEF has also partnered with a national civil society organization in the renovation of 22 preschool buildings, benefiting more than 330 children.

In the North, renovation activities identified in 40 schools are still ongoing; to date, 15 classrooms have been newly constructed and 38 classrooms have been renovated. In the East, 85 schools, including 14 preschools, have been identified for small-scale renovations through needs assessments conducted in early 2015. Renovation activities to improve school infrastructure, such as classroom partitioning and extension, repair of classroom furniture and establishment of semi/permanent temporary learning spaces, are nearing completion in 19 schools, while the remaining are ongoing.

**OUTCOME 5:** By the end of 2017, an enabling environment is strengthened to protect boys and girls from abuse, violence and injuries in Sri Lanka.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF continued to foster an enabling environment that protects children from violence, abuse and injuries. There has been visible results for children in the areas of i) supporting institutionalized children to reunite with their families, or prevent children at-risk separating from their families; ii) building strategic national and local partnerships to raise awareness and increase knowledge on issues of violence against children; and iii) providing technical assistance on reforming the justice system for children.

UNICEF's technical support to the Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) in Northern and Eastern Provinces has directly contributed to the reunification of 337 institutionalized children with their families. UNICEF further collaborated with the DPCCS on family tracing and reunifying missing persons, particularly children. From the commencement of the programme in 2010 to the end of October 2015, 806 tracing applications were received, 66 children have been reunified, 39 children are in the process of being reunified and 96 children have had their families traced. Given that the causes of institutionalisation and other child protection issues are multi-faceted in nature, UNICEF advocated with the Eastern Provincial Government to develop a Provincial Child Development Plan. The Plan, which involves a more comprehensive, multi-sectoral coordinated response for child protection issues, has been formally adopted and funding allocated for 2016.

To prevent child institutionalization, UNICEF continued to engage with the national Government and Provincial Departments of Social Services in implementing family support programmes. These programmes aimed to enhance the capacities of vulnerable families to care for, protect and educate their children, resulting in approximately 320 vulnerable children receiving education assistance, medical treatment and/or psychosocial support. UNICEF also partnered with the NGO ZOA to facilitate cash grants for 200 vulnerable families for the purpose of income generation. At the community level, UNICEF strengthened VCRMCs in the Eastern, Northern and Uva Provinces reaching more than 5,000 children and their families through awareness raising on child protection issues; child participation initiatives; and referral services. Some 92 community-based structures were established at district level to educate community members on injury safe behaviour, including mine risk education, reaching 84,455 community members (21,417 men, 18,613 women, 25,812 boys and 18,613 girls) in the North and East.

UNICEF established strategic partnerships and coordination mechanisms at the national level with the MoH and relevant departments, namely the Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) Unit, Family Health Bureau, Sri Lanka Medical Association, and the Department of Police, to address child injuries, both intentional and unintentional. Building on these partnerships, UNICEF has focused its efforts on two key areas: prevention of injuries through education and monitoring of child-related injuries and causes. During the year, UNICEF has been technically supporting the MoH to develop a child injury surveillance system. Once operational, the system will provide a database of child injuries with data/information feeding into systematic reports required for related policy and programme design and implementation. To raise awareness on how to prevent injuries, particularly among young children, UNICEF partnered with the Sri Lanka Medical Association to print around 3,000 posters in all three languages that have been distributed to pregnant women and mothers of young children through Public Health Midwives across the country. Given the fact that public health midwives have important outreach and influence, this activity has great potential to increase awareness. UNICEF's support in this area resulted in the NCD Unit mainstreaming child injury prevention education into the training curriculum of Public Health Midwives, which will ensure long term sustainability of such education through the health system.

To strengthen judicial services for children, UNICEF collaborated with the MoJ, Attorney General's Department and Police Department to establish child-friendly courts that adhere to international standards and norms in the administration of justice for juveniles. UNICEF-led advocacy resulted in the identification of five courts in Ampara, Anuradhapura, Mannar, Monaragala and Puttalam Districts (one court per district) which will be transformed into child-friendly courts to ensure the dignity of children in contact/conflict with the law and avoid re-victimization during the legal process. UNICEF will specifically support the provision of required equipment and refurbishment of the court buildings in 2016.

**OUTPUT 1:** Child protection policies, legislation and Standard Operating Procedures are reviewed, amended and/or developed based on knowledge; and capacity to protect children is strengthened.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF continued to play a key technical and advocacy role in reviewing and amending the national legislation on justice for children. One key piece of national legislation is related to the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (Penal Code). UNICEF has led discussions with the MoJ and Attorney General's Department to review this legislation, which resulted in a critical recommendation to increase the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 8 to 12 years of age. The change in Government after the presidential elections in January 2015 provided UNICEF with an opportunity for renewed advocacy on the submission of amendments to the Children and Young Persons Ordinance to the Cabinet of Ministers. At the time of reporting, the Cabinet is in the process of considering these amendments for approval. UNICEF also provided technical inputs through the Gender-Based Violence Forum, involving United Nations agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations, to initiate evidence-based advocacy with the government for an increase in the scope of the rape law to cover the rape of boys, which is grossly underreported in the country.

In the area of capacity development, UNICEF partnered with the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute and National Institute of Social Development on the roll-out of the child protection diploma; from January to December 2015, 92 Child and Social Protection Officers (selected nationally) have enrolled in the diploma programme. In 2015, UNICEF partnered with the National Institute of Social Development to review (ongoing) and further update the curriculum. Based on discussions with the Department of Probation and Child Care Services to further enhance the capacity of the social sector, it was agreed that an advanced course in the form of a post-graduate diploma is required. In this regard, UNICEF is currently working with a selected university to develop a course that would lead to a post-graduate diploma.

**OUTPUT 2:** Policy arrangements covering education and child protection to prevent injuries and to end violence against girls and boys in Sri Lanka are operationalized.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In order to monitor, report and prevent child-related injuries, UNICEF has supported the establishment of district-level Child Injury Prevention Steering Committees in five targeted districts, namely Ampara, Batticaloa, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya, in the North and East Provinces. These committees, involving relevant government and non-government stakeholders under the lead of District Secretariat, have been active in ensuring coordinated efforts to prevent and respond to child injuries, including both intentional and non-intentional injuries. As of November 2015, around 112 cases have been brought to the attention of the committees; 67 of these cases were assisted through the provision of medical support (prosthetic and assistive

devices), transport support and other types of assistance, and the remaining cases were referred to appropriate services. In Batticaloa, the committee organized a campaign together with the Police Department on road safety and usage of helmets reaching around 2,000 motorcyclists. UNICEF provided technical inputs to relevant stakeholders on the development of an injury database at district level, using data from hospital authorities and other available sources, to promote evidence-based programming and monitoring. Once the national surveillance system functional, the targeted districts will adopt this system, ensuring that data collection and management, and reporting are streamlined across the country.

In addition, Child Safety Week was celebrated at the national level during October 2015, including a media and outreach campaign, nationwide training for public health midwives and a Child Injury Prevention Walk with the participation of all key ministries, reaching approximately 10,000 people. The initiative helped to create higher-level involvement and commitment from the health sector and police on child injury prevention.

**OUTPUT 3:** Approaches to combat violence and harmful behaviour in communities, schools and homes are integrated into awareness campaigns, ECD, the Child-Friendly Schools Approach and curriculum activities and methods, and campaigns are modelled in targeted areas, and monitored, documented and promoted in policy advocacy.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF collaborated with the Government of Sri Lanka on a large-scale programme to end child abuse and violence against children. The integrated communications programme targeted parents, caregivers, children and youth and draws on the strength of a multi-sector partnership involving the MoH, MoE, Ministry of Mass Media and MoJ, National Child Protection Authority, Police, College of Paediatricians and Judicial Medical Officers. As part of this programme, standard operating procedures (involving hospitals and police) for the prevention of and response to child victims are being reviewed/developed. Innovative partnerships have also been established with the Guides/Scouts to expand reach to young boys and girls for awareness raising on the types of violence/abuse and where to report such incidents. To complement this national initiative, a school-level programme is being launched in the Northern Province to eradicate corporal punishment in schools with UNICEF playing a key role in developing positive discipline guidelines for use in both schools and the home; the guidelines will be finalized and rolled out in 2016.

UNICEF has also worked with adolescent boys and girls and youth, aged 10–24 years old, in preventing abuse and violence. In this regard, UNICEF partnered with the National Youth Services Council and the District Sports Federation on a Sports for Development programme in seven targeted districts in the North, East, North Western, North Central and Uva Provinces. At the initial stage, the programme engaged representatives from youth/sports clubs at divisional level to review how the clubs were functioning; in terms of membership, inclusion of marginalised youth, distribution of responsibilities among male and female members, availability of sex-disaggregated data and types of club activities. Currently, a sports for development curriculum is being prepared to enhance the life skills of selected vulnerable youth and promote social cohesion among youth from different ethnic/religious communities through sports-related activities. In this regard, UNICEF supported the training of 250 Youth Service Officers, Cultural Officers and Sports Officers to enhance their skills in engaging with youth, particularly around actions related to the prevention of and protection from violence.

UNICEF also specifically addressed the issue of child injuries caused by mines/unexploded ordnance through mine risk education in high-risk resettlement communities in partnership with

national NGOs and the Government's Humanitarian De-Mining Unit. In 2015, five incidents related to mines/explosive remnants of war and eight casualties were reported, which is very low considering the high level of threat in resettlement areas.

**OUTCOME 6:** By the end of 2017, the social protection system, knowledge and policies are strengthened to provide well-targeted, adequate and effective assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable families and children.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

A Situational Analysis (SitAn) on the situation of children in Sri Lanka commenced in November 2015 and will be completed by May 2016. The SitAn will identify barriers and bottlenecks affecting children's rights and welfare in Sri Lanka.

**OUTPUT 1:** By the end of 2015, comprehensive knowledge and partnership on the situation of children in the country is built, making it possible to identify clear priorities to guide development of the next UNICEF Country Programme in Sri Lanka.

**Analytical statement of progress:**

The UNICEF Sri Lanka office has initiated the process of developing a SitAn. An international consultant was recruited in November 2015 and has started working on the analysis of situation of children and women in Sri Lanka, visits to field locations, discussions with local sectoral civil servants and focus group discussions with children took place in the north and east of the country. The consultant has collected and reviewed a number of available publications on children and women, and currently he is preparing the conceptual and analytical framework for the SitAn.

The SitAn take into consideration the socio-economic, demographic, political, cultural factors and policies and legislation which provide for or deny children's rights and welfare. Special attention paid to the poorest children as well as to deprivations and discriminations due to the age, gender, disability, children who are not living with biological parents, religion, geographical residence and other inequities. The SitAn report will consist of a summary situation analysis/overview and a series of policy briefs on selected topics, which will cover areas of concern to UNICEF and the Government of Sri Lanka that as yet have not been fully explored. The policy briefs will also serve as forward-looking policy menus.

**Document Centre**

**Evaluation and Research**

Title	Sequence number	Type of report
Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices Behaviour Study on School WASH Programme	2015/004	Study
Evaluation of Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation Programme	2015/002	Study
Improving the Practices of Complementary Feeding: Experience from a community based programme in Hambantota district	2015/001	Study
National Nutrition and Micronutrient Survey: Part II – Iron, zinc and calcium deficiency among children aged 6–59 months	2015/003	Study

## Other Publications

Title
Sustaining WASH in Schools
Perception Study on Water Safety
Hand Book for WASH in Schools
KAP-B Study on WASH in Schools
We Are Healthy

## Lessons Learned

Document type/category	Title
Lesson Learned	Progressive Participation of Adolescents in WASH Decision-Making