Executive Summary
The year 2013 was the first year of a new five-year programme of cooperation between UNICEF and the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL). The Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) was signed only in May, slightly delaying initial implementation. The programme transitions UNICEF assistance away from post-war and tsunami recovery approaches to macro- and local-level support for systems strengthening and policy development, while maintaining a focus on access to and quality of services for the most vulnerable children and the engagement and participation of adolescents.

Notable policy achievements in 2013 to which UNICEF’s contribution can be clearly attributed include the consolidation of national coordination of multi-sectoral nutrition planning and the subsequent launch of a national action plan. Other examples include the initiation of the first-ever water-sector service delivery assessment to assess bottlenecks in quality and access, and the inclusion of the child-friendly approach (CFA) in the Education Sector Development Framework and Plan (ESDFP) for 2013-2017. UNICEF supported the creation of a Presidential Secretariat within the Office of the President to increase coordination, political engagement and support for the CFA, and to develop coherent standards and monitoring frameworks for the national roll out of the approach. Ten ministries are now working together to begin the national adoption of the CFA.

In addition to facilitating the development of the national nutrition action plan, UNICEF also piloted an approach to address nutrition issues in communities through multi-sector working partnerships between various local government authorities. In partnership with the Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF facilitated the development of country-specific standards for early childhood care and development (ECCD) addressing key developmental milestones in child health, which will be rolled out in 2014.

UNICEF also initiated discussions with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and a number of provincial departments on early childhood education (ECE), and is now part of a taskforce to develop the related policy. To promote social cohesion, UNICEF introduced school-based initiatives in the North and East that bring teachers and students from different language- and ethnicity-based schools together. The year also saw a joint evaluation of construction standards of child-friendly schools that was supported by Australian Aid and UNICEF.

In child protection, UNICEF proposed recommendations to address chronic delays in processing child abuse cases by courts, which will be considered in 2014. UNICEF also became a member of a national steering committee to prevent childhood injuries, a leading cause of death in the country. To address the continued problem of landmines/unexploded ordnances in the North, UNICEF worked with partners to raise awareness on mine risks in 275 schools and 324 villages. Systemic multi-agency approaches to individual child protection cases continued to receive UNICEF support.

Challenges in 2013 included the late signature of the CPAP and the Annual Work Plan, the continued bottlenecks related to Treasury fund transfers to local implementers, and the limited capacity of partners to supervise and monitor expenditures and implementation. As a result, UNICEF will need to review some systems to improve efficient and effective implementation of its activities in 2014.

Country Situation as Affecting Children & Women
Sri Lanka continues to pursue the development goals of the Ten-Year Development Plan, ‘Mahinda Chinthanaya,’ which aims to achieve an equitable and caring society in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 7.8 per cent in the third quarter of 2013, and the annual GDP growth rate averaged 6.5 per cent between 2003 and 2013. Government investments in infrastructure, road development in particular, have increased significantly in recent years to improve connectivity needed for rapid economic growth. In 2013, the unemployment rate was 4 per cent, and the per capita Gross National Product (GNP) was US$2,866, with literacy at 95.6 per cent and computer literacy at 25 per cent.
With continued commitment to, and investment in, meeting basic needs and improving social welfare, the country has achieved the majority of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the notable exception of undernutrition. The national average of most health, education, water, sanitation and other indicators are the best in the region. For instance, the national average for poverty head count ratio decreased from 15 per cent in 2006 to 6.5 per cent in 2013, indicating a significant achievement. Nevertheless, regional variation in poverty exists across and within districts, as is the case with a number of other indicators. Addressing disparities in access to and quality of services across geographic and population pockets requires additional and focused attention, both in terms of localised interventions and new resources, or re-direction of existing ones, and policy frameworks. Attention to these disparities will greatly enhance national averages and improve equity.

The first country-wide census in 30 years was completed in 2012, identifying a total population of 20,263,723. The census also found that the population is aging. Thirty per cent of the current population is under 18 years of age, with adolescents (10-18 years) accounting for 13 per cent, and adolescents and youth (10-24 years) making up 24 per cent of the total population. The mean age of the population is 32 years, the median age is 30 years, and 25 per cent of households are headed by females. The census also indicates that 8.6 per cent of the population aged five years or older suffer from a disability.

The country has high coverage in terms of the proportion of population with access to improved water sources and sanitation, with rates of 84 per cent and 86 per cent respectively. As per the school census in 2012, the proportion of schools with access to adequate drinking water and sanitation as per national norms is 85 per cent and 80 per cent respectively. However, apart from the need to increase coverage, available information does not systematically capture seasonality in water supply, which varies across regions. Emerging issues related to chronic kidney disease in certain agricultural areas also require additional interventions related to water quality.

The health indicators in Sri Lanka are among the best in South Asia and even beyond. The under-five mortality rate is 12 deaths per 1,000 live births, and the infant and newborn mortality rates are 11 and 6 deaths per 1,000 live births respectively (2012). The current level of maternal mortality is 31.4 per 100,000 live births (2010). The reduction in the magnitude of the indicators further necessitates addressing regional differences through targeted actions with additional resource allocations where needed.

One of the few lagging MDGs in the country is the prevalence of undernutrition among children under five. Since 2000, progress has been slow. The prevalence of underweight is 23 per cent, wasting 19 per cent, and stunting 13 per cent amongst children under five (2012). Although they have reduced over time, there are still marked nutritional status disparities by wealth quintile and geographic location. The recently launched Multi-Sector Nutrition Action Plan reflects the Government’s commitment to engage all stakeholders so that the root causes of undernutrition are addressed at the household, district, regional and national levels.

Primary school access, retention and completion are almost universal at 98 per cent. The quality of education requires further attention, and a nation-wide CFA is being rolled out in all primary schools. The Study of Out-of-School Children in Sri Lanka, launched in June 2013, indicates that an estimated 1.9 per cent of primary-school-age children and 3.3 per cent of lower-secondary-school-age children are out of school. The study also confirmed that older children are more likely than younger children to be out of school, and boys in lower-secondary school are more likely than girls to be at risk of dropping out. Lower-secondary children (especially girls) in the estate sector* were the most likely to be out of school compared to those in other areas.

The South Asian Report on the Child-friendliness of Governments indicates that overall, Sri Lanka has the highest score in the child-friendliness index. The 2014 Government Budget proposes an allocation of SLR300 million to child abuse prevention at the divisional level. It also proposes to set up more safe houses to benefit women and child victims and expand units within police stations to better deal with incidents of child abuse or violence against women. Reports of abuse and violence against women and children are progressively increasing and vary across districts. The Judicial Protection Bill seeks to provide for contemporary realities relating to child protection and repeals the antiquated Children and Young Persons Ordinance. It also provides a legal framework for multi-sectoral case management among the courts, the
police and the Probation Department. However, despite these developments, the child protection institutional framework remains fragmented.

The minimum age for employment has been increased in certain sectors, and the new education policy increases the age of compulsory education to 16 years. While child labour in Sri Lanka is not as prevalent as it is in neighbouring countries in South Asia, there are approximately 64,000 children (below 17 years of age) engaged in hazardous work in the country.

*Tamils who were brought from India under colonial administration to work in the plantations make up the estate population, which represents 5.5 per cent of the total population.

Key sources include the Annual Report (2012) and Economic and Social Statistics (2013), Central Bank of Sri Lanka; Census of Population and Housing (2012), Department of Census and Statistics; Annual School Census (2012), Ministry of Education; and National Nutrition and Micronutrient Survey (2012), Medical Research Institute.

Country Programme Analytical Overview

The Country Programme will need to undergo considerable analysis in 2014, as the socio-economic situation of Sri Lanka is changing quickly. Traditional donors are withdrawing from the country, multilateral organisations are allocating their grant money towards the national budget and the humanitarian space is dramatically decreasing. Having recently graduated to the status of a lower-middle-income country, the focus on post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction and sustained economic growth and investment requires UNICEF to accelerate its transition to a more upstream knowledge-based and policy-oriented approach. The 2014 Annual Management Plan (AMP) will reflect a roadmap to accelerate the needed changes. As exerting influence for improved policy becomes more important to the Office, so will addressing the bottlenecks created by somewhat fragmented use of knowledge, data and evaluation to generate constant improvement.

In the child protection sector, UNICEF focused on improving the quality of service delivery and upstream interventions through the professionalization and strengthening of the system to protect children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. To this end, UNICEF engaged in capacity building and policy development, and began systematic data collection and analysis in order to ensure programmes and services are inclusive and reach the most vulnerable children and their families.

UNICEF also continued to support the institutionalisation of the CFA, thereby reinforcing the increased national attention on strengthening capacity for rolling out the approach. UNICEF’s efforts to ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to ECE made meaningful progress, with the Government initiating policy, planning and awareness-building processes at all levels.

The launch of the Multi-sectoral Nutrition Action Plan in December 2013, supported by Government budget allocations for 2014 to implement the ministry action plans, is an important step in addressing nutrition indicators. Nutrition remains a worry for Government and development partners, with vital nutrition indicators lagging behind those in health and education. Sri Lanka is unlikely to meet its MDG nutrition targets in 2014 and UNICEF will offer to help with comprehensive budgeting of the nutrition plan and developing its monitoring and evaluation framework. In the health sector, advocacy efforts will continue to focus on strengthening the quality of services and addressing the issue of effective primary health coverage, as well as maintaining a low HIV prevalence rate in the country.

In the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector, the programme made a shift towards increased advocacy with its key counterpart, the Ministry of Water Supply and Drainage. This shift exemplifies the challenge of aligning with changing sector priorities.

UNICEF also explored new opportunities for wider outreach to some of the most marginalised communities. In 2013, the Office carried out a scoping of technical advances and innovations to identify new ways to use mobile technology and non-traditional partnerships for real-time quality service delivery and youth
participation. A selection of flagship initiatives and potential areas of innovation for UNICEF were selected for 2014 to enhance programme results.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

In 2013, UNICEF supported the construction or refurbishment of 16 Health Centres and a Medical Officer of Health in low coverage and resettled areas of the former conflict-affected North and East, thereby increasing access to health and nutrition services for a population of 60-70,000, particularly children and pregnant and lactating women. In addition, nearly 12,650 resettled persons gained access to improved water through the cleaning / rehabilitation / construction of 29 tube wells, 231 common/private dug wells, 550 household water connections and existing water schemes. In the same areas, 2,258 resettled persons gained access to improved sanitation through the construction or rehabilitation of 378 household latrines.

UNICEF also played a key role in the planning and design of the UN Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) in the resettled areas of the North and East, and is lead/co-lead in two of the six sectors it covers. The JNA, to be conducted in 2014, will assess residual humanitarian needs and inform agencies on priority actions, including disaster risk reduction (DRR), in former conflict-affected areas. A master survey of 150 surveys conducted by the Government, the UN and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on humanitarian issues was also completed under the JNA, and is helping shape ongoing initiatives in the humanitarian sector.

### Effective Advocacy

*Mostly met benchmarks*

In line with Sri Lanka’s changed post-conflict, middle-income country context, UNICEF repositioned its advocacy stance in 2013 to focus on key programme priorities, namely equity, nutrition and child-friendly education.

Regarding nutrition, an area that is key to the GoSL, UNICEF, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO), prepared for and launched the first-ever Multi-sectoral Action Plan on Nutrition in December. This three-year plan sets targets and milestones to reduce the prevalence of undernutrition, anaemia and stunting amongst key population groups, and to improve food security and provide access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene to at-risk households. The plan will be implemented through 17 ministries in close collaboration with civil society organisations and NGOs with the support of the UN, and is an important step in the long road to reducing stunting and wasting amongst children.

UNICEF also collaborated with the MoH to produce a report on early childhood development (ECD) standards. This report lays the foundation for strong ECD programming across all sectors in the country and provides guidance to parents and caregivers on proper care practices and key development benchmarks for children under the age of five. Another notable achievement – and the result of long-term advocacy on the part of UNICEF and a number of other partners – was the integration of HIV and syphilis testing into routine antenatal screening.

In the area of water and sanitation, UNICEF’s programmatic advocacy with key government authorities resulted in the initiation of the first independent sector delivery assessment. This will help identify bottlenecks and solutions in the provision of water and sanitation across the country to ensure improved access to and quality of services for vulnerable children and their families. To mark Global Handwashing Day, UNICEF helped initiate a first-time public private partnership that mobilised 95 education zones – nearly 25,000 students – to highlight the importance of hand washing with soap.

Regarding education, UNICEF used evidence from pilots to play a key convening role in helping bring together the country’s Presidential Secretariat with senior education policy makers from 11 ministries and provincial departments to scale up child-friendly education. Through the organisation of two major events, these key players were able to examine challenges in implementing quality pre-school and child-friendly education and
develop an action plan for 2014. UNICEF also succeeded in including child-friendly education into the country’s Education Sector Development Framework and Plan for 2013-2017. An evaluation is planned for 2014 to strengthen the roll out of the CFA.

To ensure that all these advocacy results were captured and disseminated through the Office’s varied communication channels, the Office strengthened its outreach on its website, YouTube channel, and Facebook and Twitter accounts.

### Capacity Development

**Mostly met benchmarks**

In 2013, UNICEF continued to place significant emphasis on strengthening the capacity of implementing partners in delivering on their commitments to children.

The Education Programme focused on strengthening capacity to implement the CFA at the school, community and provincial levels. Teacher capacity building focused on child-centred approaches and inclusive education techniques to improve teaching practices. UNICEF also supported interventions to strengthen the ability of education officers to monitor and provide technical support to teachers. In addition, school personnel and administrators were trained on developing cost-effective attendance promotion activities and learning aids. Training activities, workshops and street dramas were organised to improve parents’ awareness and mobilise communities in order to increase parental participation in the school development process. In the areas of ECE and social cohesion, capacity-building support included training master trainers, learning visits to observe good practices, and supporting pilots of pre-school models.

The Child Protection Programme partnered with the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute to advocate for the creation of a degree in social work at the university level and the development of specific training materials for social workers in service. As a result, the Ministry of Child Development and Women’s Affairs (MoCDWA) included in-service training on social work and child protection for government officers as one of their key activities in 2014. UNICEF will continue to advocate with the MoE to create a structured and institutionalised social work degree. In addition, UNICEF supported the strengthening of the national Vocational Training Authority systems through centre assessments and development, capacity building of 140 instructors, and the introduction of new courses (e.g. hospitality/tourism).

A series of training activities were organised to improve the quality of services in maternal and child health and nutrition in under-served areas. A total of 485 public health midwives, rural health assistants and preschool facilitators were trained on maternal and child health, and nutrition and communication skills. In addition, two training sessions were organised for 60 participants on the Integrated Nutrition Programme, as well as effective communication, multiple micronutrient deficiency prevention and control, anaemia prevention and complementary feeding.

UNICEF also supported the MoH to develop strategies to control anaemia by fortifying staple food items in the country, maintaining food safety, and developing a strategic framework to control non-communicable diseases and low birth weight. As a result of a joint collaboration between UNICEF, the MoH and colleges of gynaecologists, obstetricians and paediatricians, guidelines for management of hypertension and eclampsia (one of the main causes of maternal deaths) were also reviewed. Two hundred health professionals were trained on newborn life support and caring for sick newborns with special emphasis on premature babies and emergency obstetric care.

A multi-disciplinary expert committee was established with the objective of developing and publishing updated standards for WASH in schools under the School Health Promotion Programme. Management and operational-level staff from the water and education sector participated in three regional WASH forums, leading to knowledge sharing and replication of best regional practices.
Communication for Development

Partially met benchmarks

With the Country Office (CO) repositioning its programmatic work to provide macro-level support in a changing Sri Lankan context, where knowledge management and advocacy will have priority, new initiatives related to communication for development were scaled down. Instead, focus was placed on reproducing communication materials for ongoing activities related to child abuse, mine-risk education, family tracing, and nutrition and hygiene promotion.

In the area of nutrition promotion, Sri Lanka’s annual Nutrition Month was used to create awareness of the importance of maternal and child nutrition and to promote good practices, particularly around the “1,000 days approach.” In child protection, 180 child protection workers were trained in the use of communication materials to promote a violence-free society for children.

Service Delivery

Mostly met benchmarks

In 2013, UNICEF supported the Government to renovate 18 Social Care Centres and construct three new ones in Uva, Central, Northern and Eastern Provinces. A total of 49,000 beneficiaries (including 12,000 children) were referred to, and received support from, the Social Care Centres. The centres used inter-sectoral case conferencing, case management and family group conferencing as their methodology for finding solutions for children and their families. In 2013, 222 case conferences were held involving relevant child/social protection actors, thereby promoting coordinated service delivery for the most vulnerable communities.

UNICEF also continued to support the Ministry of Social Services to provide psychosocial support, including individual counselling and referral services, to 14,887 persons in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. To further facilitate more comprehensive care for those identified, 159 social service officers and newly recruited psychosocial workers were trained on psychosocial work, counselling skills and on the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

As part of UNICEF’s injury prevention programme, 49 people with disabilities and 102 victims of mines/explosive remnants of war received specialised services such as physical rehabilitation and income generation grants, while child victims were supported to go back to school.

In the health sector, motorbikes were distributed to health workers to promote more outreach services, thereby increasing access to health and nutrition services for families living in low-coverage areas. In addition, 16 health centres were constructed and equipped with essential commodities, which also helped improve accessibility and the quality of maternal and child health services.

The WASH in Schools Programme now comes under the newly created Ministry of Education Services. UNICEF played a pivotal role in working with this Ministry to mainstream child-friendly concepts into the programme, which led to the review of existing standards and norms and the drafting of new standards with inputs from multiple stakeholders. Another important development was the introduction of the concept of bottleneck analysis in service delivery in the WASH sector, which led to the first-ever country-wide Service Delivery Assessment, and the development of a related action plan for 2014. At the provincial level, UNICEF continued to support service delivery in the area of water and sanitation by strengthening the capacity of mandated government institutions and local government sectors.
Strategic Partnerships

Mostly met benchmarks

In 2013, UNICEF forged a critical partnership with the Presidential Secretariat, a unit in the Office of the President of Sri Lanka. The partnership was geared towards increasing political visibility and support for CFA interventions over a two-year period. Through the partnership, the GoSL and UNICEF provided technical and financial support for the development of strategies for institutionalising the CFA. The partnership succeeded in increasing awareness of, and strengthening commitment to, CFA institutionalisation among the President, the Minister of Education and provincial leaders in education. A key achievement of the partnership was increased multi-sector coordination, through which ten GoSL Ministries are working on a joint plan for institutionalisation of the CFA.

UNICEF also entered into new partnerships to address ECE, a new priority of the Country Programme. UNICEF adopted a multi-pronged approach in order to take advantage of the related activities taking place at various levels. At the national level, UNICEF partnered with the MoE to develop an ECE policy. At the provincial level, UNICEF partnered with entities responsible for ECE in conducting awareness building, researching pre-school activities, creating model preschools and developing provincial action plans. The experiences from these partnerships will serve to build a strong national strategic approach to ECE.

UNICEF is leading a group of key international NGOs in the child protection sector to ensure a more harmonised approach to working with the Government and to avoid overlap or duplication in systems strengthening. The first joint collaboration began with support to the Department of Probation and Child Care Services for the development of community-based child protection structures. In 2014, the focus will be on strengthening national policies, and a mapping of the child protection system will be conducted.

As part of the Youth Agenda of the UN Secretary-General, a pilot was launched to develop a strategic partnership with youth to bring voices of young people to the UN. An Advisory Panel to the UN Country Team was established that includes 10-12 Sri Lankan youth representatives from both genders, and various backgrounds, education levels, professional streams, geographical locations, ethnicities, religions and language groups, with a special focus on youth who are underserved due to socio-economic circumstances or disabilities. The Youth Advisory Panel will aim to strengthen the relationship and open dialogue between the UN and youth; offer youth an opportunity to engage in the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF); and provide youth with a strategic platform from which they may voice their opinions and viewpoints on development matters relevant to their lives and communities.

UNICEF also forged strong partnerships with the MoH and key health institutions, which resulted in the organisation of various technical conferences, the development of technical guidelines for the management of diseases, and the organisation of reviews and training sessions to develop the capacity of service providers. These interventions contributed to enhancing the quality of maternal, perinatal, newborn and child health services.

Knowledge Management

Partially met benchmarks

In 2013, the Sri Lanka CO decided to develop a long-term strategy for systematic knowledge management. While much of the year was spent in making small advances – creating a common library, introducing knowledge-sharing forums, updating knowledge platforms with new research and development, and identifying the building blocks and accountabilities for a future strategy – the real efforts of realigning the work of the CO to support knowledge management will begin in 2014.

The Office’s future knowledge management work will help internal and external audiences manage three broad types of knowledge:
knowledge of the situation of women and children;
knowledge of good practices; and
knowledge of the performance of UNICEF programmes.

In terms of supporting partners to strengthen their knowledge gaps, UNICEF completed four surveys and publications in 2013 that added value to the national knowledge bank on children and women. They included a national micronutrient survey (which helped push forward the launch of the first-ever multi-sectoral action plan on nutrition); a series of case studies on child marriage (which sparked debate on the issue); a qualitative study on perceptions of youth on participation (to help better align programme interventions related to youth engagement); and a study to assess the capacity of the Women and Children’s Desks in police stations in ten districts of the country to improve outcomes related to better services for child and women survivors of violence.

**Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation**

*Partially met benchmarks*

UNICEF conducted a Youth Perception Survey in four selected districts (Mannar, Batticaloa, Anuradhapura and Puttalam) amongst approximately 100 youth to better understand their perceptions of the social, economic and political situation in the country. The survey assessed the extent of their public participation and community engagement, and the many challenges, opportunities and aspirations they experience. The findings are being used to inform and improve the design of interventions for youth and further promote youth participation in programming.

**Gender Equality**

*Mostly met benchmarks*

The CO supports activities that take into account gender differences and their potential contribution to gender equality. The Office continues to design and implement programming that ensures equal opportunities for men/women/girls/boys.

In the education sector, equal participation of boys and girls is maintained when implementing student activities such as social cohesion and co-existence camps. As a key component of the CFA, schools completed their School Self Assessments and School Development Plans in a manner that promoted gender equity in participation and representation in decision-making fora. Every effort is also made to ensure that females in particular are engaged in professional development activities and stakeholder consultations in an environment where females are considerably under-represented in the professional work forces.

The recent Out-Of-School Children (OOSC) Study indicates that while gender does not appear to be a major factor leading to the lack of access to or dropout from education, gender appears to be a socio-cultural barrier in certain sub-ethnic groups (e.g. plantation Tamils and Moors/Malays). In pre-primary, gender is not a significant factor in non-attendance generally; however in the estate sector, girls are much less likely than boys to be attending an education programme. In primary and lower-secondary, there are no major gender differences among those out of school, but boys in lower-secondary are more likely than girls to be at risk of dropping out, primarily due to child labour.

In 2013, UNICEF continued to provide support to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to reduce gender-based violence and incorporate sensitisation to violence against women and children in its police training programmes. The training activities were part of a broader programme to expedite the processing of criminal justice cases of sexual abuse of children, mainly girls. The training targeted 345 officers working within the criminal justice system to improve their understanding of the Domestic Violence Act and their role in expediting the processing of cases. Further, UNICEF supported Police Training Colleges to provide gender
sensitisation training for 856 police officers, covering common forms of violence against children and women, gender stereotyping, case management related to child sexual abuse, and provisions of the Children and Young Persons Ordinance.

In the WASH sector, highlighting gender disparities due to the lack of sex-disaggregated data against national-level indicators was a key challenge. However, as a result of UNICEF’s continued advocacy, new segregated and child-friendly WASH designs were mainstreamed in the WASH in School Programme, and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) was identified as a Government priority. UNICEF’s regional and global experience on MHM also influenced decision-makers to address MHM through changes in hardware design and behaviour. UNICEF also supported the establishment of an expert committee that reviewed WASH in Schools guidelines and documented MHM as an intervention area for the first time.

Environmental Sustainability

*Partially met benchmarks*

The protection of the environment and the promotion of environmental sustainability has been an ongoing area of focus for the Sri Lanka CO, generally included under interventions related to DRR.

As part of the CFA, schools are required to include environmental sustainability and DRR in each school assessment and subsequent school development plan. As a result, school-level committees placed greater emphasis in their 2013 plans on waste management and tree planting. Some schools initiated activities such as school gardens in order to recycle waste water, and carried out mock drills, community awareness sessions, and first aid and immediate emergency response training.

In the WASH sector, UNICEF continued to engage with the Ministry of Disaster Management and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to incorporate DRR in WASH sector programming. UNICEF supported the documentation of Sri Lanka’s experiences in coordinating the WASH sector during emergencies, and facilitated the development of the WASH vulnerability assessment toolkit.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation

UNICEF supported the participation of experts from the MoH at the Global Newborn Health Conference held in South Africa. This first-ever global summit provided the opportunity to review progress and discuss priorities for newborn survival and health. It was followed by a consultative meeting in Kathmandu to develop a Regional Newborn Action Plan, which provided a valuable learning opportunity to share in-country experiences and technical updates on evidence-based newborn health interventions in the region. UNICEF also facilitated the participation of MoH officials to attend a Regional Prevention of Mother-To-Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV/AIDS workshop in Kathmandu, which enhanced the capacity of national officers to advocate and implement programmes targeting the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/congenital syphilis. In the WASH sector, a country delegation attended the fifth South Asia Conference on Sanitation, and Sri Lanka hosted the second International Conference on Community Water Services in line with the International Year of Water Cooperation.

UNICEF also facilitated South-South cooperation for two education initiatives. The first aimed to improve the National Joint Annual Review (JAR) process, which is used to assess the performance of a sector and bring together Government and donor partners in a shared reflective process. The JAR process in the education sector was reviewed in 2013. It was agreed that Sri Lanka could benefit from studying how other countries have approached these critical reviews. Nepal was identified as a model country and arrangements were made by UNICEF’s Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) for a Sri Lankan team to participate in the 2013 Nepalese JAR. A team of two officers from the MoE and two from UNICEF participated in the JAR and identified practices that could be adapted to the Sri Lankan context. It provided a valuable learning opportunity on collaborative planning and clear guidelines for partners on their active participation and the
organisation of joint field visits with donor partners. These lessons will be further incorporated in the next Sri Lankan JAR for the education sector in 2014.

The second initiative involved support from the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to facilitate a team of 12 officials from the MoE and three UNICEF staff to participate in a two-week learning tour in South Korea. The tour provided an opportunity for the Sri Lankan delegation to gain a common understanding of the overall education system in Korea and the steps taken by the Korean Government to ensure quality education. This initiative led to the formulation of key recommendations for Sri Lanka in a number of areas, including teacher education policy and practice, curriculum development, information and communications technology (ICT) and education, pre-school education and public-private partnership.

UNICEF also supported Government participation in the second High-Level Meeting on South-South Cooperation for Child Rights, where Sri Lanka made a presentation on ‘from the right to education to the right to decent work’, as well as a knowledge-sharing event between the Sri Lanka Evaluation Association and the National Planning Commission of Nepal.
**Narrative Analysis by Programme Component Results and Intermediate Results**

**Sri Lanka - 0780**

**PC 701 - Equitable quality social services for disparity reduction**

- **On-track**

**PCR 0780/A0/05/701 PCR 1 - Disparity reduction and equitable social services available and utilised so disparities and inequalities reduced**

**Progress:** The findings of the 2012/2013 micronutrient survey conducted by the MoH helped UNICEF identify the most vulnerable groups and further focus its interventions, such as support to the revival of the Government’s therapeutic feeding programmes in districts that have high levels of severe malnutrition. UNICEF further addressed undernutrition through continued support to the review and scaling up of the multi-sectoral approach that was piloted in Nuwara Eliya and Monaragala Districts, which had progressive outcomes. UNICEF also played a key role in enhancing the quality of health and nutrition interventions through capacity building of service providers and development of country-specific standards on ECCD and emergency obstetric care.

In the area of WASH, a key achievement was the completion of a WASH Service Delivery Assessment to help identify bottlenecks in service delivery across the country, the findings of which will feed into an implementation plan for 2014. UNICEF also continued to support increased access to improved water sources and sanitation facilities for students and teachers in schools and at the community level.

Through UNICEF’s support to deinstitutionalisation in partnership with the Department of Probation and Child Care, 2,329 children benefitted from interventions designed to prevent family separation, while 437 institutionalised children were reunified with their families in the four targeted provinces. UNICEF also continued strengthening judicial and protection services for children, while technically supporting the drafting of amendments to key child legislation. To contribute to youth development and empowerment, UNICEF continued to support vocational and life-skills training for vulnerable youth and increase engagements with young people as drivers of community and social cohesion.

The UNICEF-supported CFA was adopted by the Government as the guiding framework for improving primary education quality. In order to improve school completion and educational outcomes, 1,500 schools (16 per cent) were implementing CFA in 2013. UNICEF supported these schools through teacher development, student assessments, classroom management and development of teaching/learning materials. To strengthen national planning and policy frameworks, UNICEF supported the development of a national OOSC Action Plan and the drafting of a national ECE policy.

- **On-track**

**IR 0780/A0/05/701/001 1.1 S & D - Nutrition care and services are accessed by at least 90 per cent of families with children and pregnant and lactating mothers in low coverage areas to reduce undernutrition**

**Progress:** On 6 December, the GoSL launched the first-ever multi-sectoral action plan to reduce maternal and child malnutrition. UNICEF provided technical guidance and support to the development of the action plan and related monitoring plan, and also supported the review of the pilot phase of the multi-sectoral approach to addressing undernutrition. Based on the progressive outcomes against critical nutrition indicators during the two-year pilot in Nuwara Eliya and Monaragala, preliminary steps, including the formation of District Nutrition Coordinating Committees, were taken to replicate this approach in an additional four districts. However, delays in launching the action plan constrained efforts to scale up in the targeted districts. In order to share experiences of using the multi-sectoral approach with other countries, as well as gain new learning, Sri Lanka participated in Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) meetings, including high-level nutrition meetings, with UNICEF as a key facilitator at the country level.

To further strengthen the quality of nutrition interventions, UNICEF supported capacity-building programmes for service providers on maternal and child nutrition, including infant and young child feeding practices, the integrated nutrition package and community empowerment approaches. UNICEF further improved access to nutrition services through the establishment of 145 additional Community Support Groups, which altogether engaged more than 700 mothers in maternal and child nutrition. They in turn empowered other women in their villages. Community leaders were also reached through training and advocacy programmes to promote good health and nutrition practices. Difficulty obtaining Government authorisation for the functioning of Community Support Groups in the former conflict-affected Northern Province presented a key challenge.

To improve access to adequate health and nutrition services in low coverage/resettled areas for children and pregnant and lactating women in particular, 16 Gramodhaya Health Centres and Medical Officer of Health Offices in the North and East were under construction or refurbishment in 2013. Once functioning, these facilities will benefit a population of 60-70,000.

- **On-track**

**IR 0780/A0/05/701/002 1.2 S & D - Improved quality health care services have reduced infant mortality, and improved ECCD, in at least 80 per cent of low-coverage areas**

**Progress:** To identify the underlying causes of newborn deaths and address gaps in services, UNICEF supported district-level perinatal and maternal death audits technically and financially. Of the 66 institutions providing specialised services, 55 of them completed perinatal death audits. The recommendations from the audits were reviewed during district-level conferences to enable policy makers
and administrators to address gaps and ensure quality care for newborns and mothers. However, translating the recommendations from such audits into action is a challenge, primarily due to gaps in human and material resources and disparities in the availability of skilled resources.

To further enhance the quality of maternal and child health interventions, UNICEF provided technical assistance in the development of standards on ECCD and emergency obstetric care. The ECCD standards were launched nationally, and related guides for field staff and parents are being developed. To complement these efforts, UNICEF also supported the training of 175 community leaders and mothers on ECCD, and 100 service providers from Mullaitivu and Vavuniya on essential newborn care and emergency obstetric care.

Through continued UNICEF advocacy, PMTCT of HIV/AIDS, including antenatal screening for HIV, was integrated into routine maternal and child health services. Guidelines on the antenatal package were disseminated to health officials in all 25 districts, and 100 medical officers were trained on basic concepts of PMTCT and antenatal screening. In 2014, country-wide screening will be phased in.

To respond to an outbreak of measles in March 2013, an island-wide measles campaign was organised to vaccinate all children aged 6 to 12 months. UNICEF played a key role in procuring the required vaccines, developing advocacy materials and engaging the media.

On-track

**IR 0780/A0/05/701/003 WASH – Strengthened capacity for safe water and improved sanitation to ensure that at least 80 per cent of the communities in low coverage and lagging areas have equitable access to and use safe water and improved sanitation facilities**

**Progress:** In 2013, Sri Lanka hosted the Second International Conference on Community Water Services in line with the International Year of Water Cooperation. The Government, with support from UNICEF, also completed its first WASH Service Delivery Assessment to help identify bottlenecks in service delivery across the country. The findings are currently being shared with stakeholders. A key challenge in the sector is the lack of sex-disaggregated data against national indicators, which does not allow for identification of any gender disparities that may exist.

UNICEF continued to partner with the School Nutrition and Health Services Branch, under the newly created Ministry of Education Services, to implement the WASH in Schools Programme. As a sign of their commitment, the Branch recruited dedicated surge staff to support the programme and engaged technical staff to ensure child-friendly designs of WASH infrastructure. However, the programme faced delays due to the creation of the new ministry and separation of duties from the Ministry of Education.

Through this programme, nearly 74,000 students (38,480 boys/35,520 girls) and 3,905 teachers (1,327 males/2,578 females) in 185 schools in underserved/resettlement areas of the Northern, North Central, Eastern, Central and Uva Provinces benefited from access to gender-segregated and child- and disabled-friendly water and sanitation facilities. Parents and teachers led this initiative through the School Development Societies, while students played a key role through the School Health Clubs. In situations where conventional water supply solutions did not work, rainwater harvesting tanks were installed, benefitting nearly 1,500 students and 38 teachers from four schools in the North.

In the conflict-affected areas of the North and East, nearly 12,650 resettled persons gained access to improved water sources, while another 2,258 persons gained access to improved sanitation. UNICEF also supported the provision of safe water and sanitation in 18 health centres, benefitting nearly 45,000 people.

On-track

**IR 0780/A0/05/701/004 1.4 EDU - Improve learning outcomes, enrolment and completion of grade 9 in low-performing districts to reduce inequalities and improve learning outcomes**

**Progress:** UNICEF’s advocacy contributed to increased commitment by the GoSL to institutionalising the CFA in schools, and ensured high-level political visibility for CFA. CFA is being incorporated into national and provincial structures through strengthening of monitoring systems and integrating CFA principles into teacher training. Implementation of the CFA in 1,500 schools is ongoing.

A key challenge in former conflict-affected areas is inadequate school space, which forces children to study in temporary learning spaces five years after the end of the conflict. To enhance the school environment and create more conducive spaces for learning, UNICEF supported the renovation of 22 schools and rehabilitation of 28 schools, accommodating 7,511 students.

Studies indicate that students in former conflict-affected areas lag behind academically by up to three grade levels, putting them at risk of dropping out. To strengthen mechanisms that support retention and reintegration, UNICEF assisted 80 per cent of the 1,500 targeted CFA schools to establish school attendance committees, while 81 per cent were supported to complete school development plans. Implementing these committees and plans involves participatory processes that contribute to improved governance and sustainability of interventions.

In 2013, the MoE, with UNICEF’s support, identified 17,643 OOSC (10,121 boys/7,522 girls) and reintegrated 2,191 of them (12 per cent) into formal education. To further efforts for children who never enrolled, dropped out or were at risk of dropping out, UNICEF supported the GoSL to develop a national OOSC Action Plan, which will begin implementation in 2014.

While over 96 per cent of children entering grade one had ECCE experience, no national standards exist. In order to improve ECE quality, UNICEF supported the MoE in developing a national ECE policy focused on improving school readiness and developmental outcomes, which will be finalised in 2014.
To strengthen relationships among different ethnic and religious groups, UNICEF facilitated interventions that provided opportunities for 4,930 students, 891 teachers and 1,220 parents from diverse backgrounds to learn about and bond with each other. These shared learning experiences help to build the trust needed for deeper future engagements.

**UNICEF** continued its partnership with the Department of Probation and Child Care to prevent institutionalisation of children and promote family-based care. In 2013, UNICEF’s ongoing support to capacity building of child protection officers on case management, as well as financial support to the Department, contributed to 2,329 children benefiting from interventions designed to prevent family separation. Another 437 institutionalised children (227 girls/210 boys) were reunified with their families in the four targeted provinces. As a result, there was a 2.4 per cent reduction in the number of institutionalised children in these areas. UNICEF also collaborated with the Department to establish a national information monitoring system on children in residential care, which will enable more effective monitoring of the situation.

Despite these efforts, many families in the North and East still place their children in institutions for various reasons, including poverty, insecurity, violence, education, migration of mothers and parental separation. To address issues of family vulnerability, UNICEF supported the provision of livelihood grants for 572 families (with approximately 2,100 children) to enable them to better care for, protect and educate their children.

Efforts are also being undertaken to professionalise social and protection work in Sri Lanka. In partnership with the Government, 164 child/social protection officers were trained on a core curriculum, including social work principles, case management, counselling and psychosocial interventions. Pre- and post-training surveys indicated a 29 per cent increase in knowledge and skills, raising the level of knowledge on core thematic areas to 82 per cent.

UNICEF further collaborated with the MoCDWA on an awareness campaign to prevent child abuse. To date, the campaign has targeted 300 child protection actors as a means of supporting the integration of key awareness messages in their routine follow up of reported cases. The campaign reached 3,000 children through messaging on protecting themselves and reporting of violence to the relevant authorities.

Effective mine risk education contributed to a 57 per cent decrease in mine incidents, a 62 per cent decrease in casualty rates and a 19 per cent increase in reporting on explosive devices by community members compared with 2012.

**PC 702 - Young people, Protection, Empowerment and Participation**

**On-track**

**PCR 0780/AO/05/702 PCR 2 - Children and Youth.** Improved quality social services are available and utilized to promote participation, empowerment and protection of children and youth.

**Progress:** In 2013, significant steps were taken to strengthen judicial and protection services for children through collaborative efforts between the MoJ, the Attorney General’s (AG) Department, police and UNICEF. Efforts included legal reforms related to child protection, expediting the processing of reported child abuse cases in the criminal justice system, capacity building, and developing child-friendly court procedures.

UNICEF’s continued advocacy for justice for children led to recommendations by the MoJ on how to address delays in the processing of child abuse cases in court. Building on this effort, UNICEF supported the capacity building of officers involved in the justice system on standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to the timely processing of child abuse cases in eight judicial zones. UNICEF also continued to technically support the drafting of amendments to the Children and Young Person’s Ordinance and Orphanage Ordinance in alignment with international standards.

UNICEF’s partnership with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development (MoYASD) contributed to youth development and empowerment through quality vocational training and related systems strengthening, thereby ensuring more equitable access to services. Through the development of life skills and other marketable skills, and internships/job-placements, youth have greater self-confidence and are in a better position to find employment in a limited job market that has become increasingly competitive. UNICEF is engaging with partner youth service providers to strengthen their monitoring systems so that they can measure the longer-term impact of vocational training over time.

**On-track**

**IR 0780/AO/05/702/001 2.1 Strengthen justice for children**

**Progress:** UNICEF, in partnership with the MoJ, the AG’s Department and police, promoted justice for children through legal reforms, expediting the processing of reported child abuse cases in the criminal justice system, and also supported capacity building and the development of child-friendly court procedures.
The police and the AG’s Department expanded the implementation of SOPs related to the timely processing of child abuse cases from six Judicial Zones in 2012 to eight Zones in 2013. UNICEF supported the training of 345 officers involved in the justice system on the SOPs, as well as on the handling of cases in a gender- and child-sensitive manner. As of December 2013, of 1,789 reported cases, 820 (45 per cent) had investigation files that were complete with police investigation and judicial medical reports. Of these 820 cases, 427 (52 per cent) were concluded, leading to either prosecution or discharge of the suspect. UNICEF also provided support to the Children’s Unit of the AG’s Department to partially clear the backlog of cases. As of December 2013, of the 3,855 files processed, the Unit was able to clear 1,115 cases. The main challenge was the delay in receiving medico-legal reports. To expedite the conclusion of reported cases, the AG’s Department requires additional human and material resources, including systems for following up with judicial-medical and police officers on investigations and reporting.

In the area of sexual- and gender-based violence, UNICEF supported the training of 856 police officers in targeted districts on the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act and timely and sensitive investigation and handling of reported cases of violence against children and women.

UNICEF continued to technically support the drafting of amendments to the Children and Young Person’s Ordinance to, inter alia, increase the protection of children from 16 years to 18 years. The drafting of amendments to the Orphanage Ordinance was also initiated through a consultative process in alignment with international standards on alternative care.

On-track

IR 0780/A0/05/702/002 2.2 CP - By 2017 young people, especially in vulnerable areas, are empowered and have access to quality youth-friendly services for information and skills to protect themselves against violence, abuse, exploitation and injuries and to actively participate in society.

Progress: UNICEF partnered with the MoYASD and the National Youth Services Council to promote the development and empowerment of youth and adolescents through increasing access to quality vocational training, enhancing life skills, and empowering youth to be informed decision-makers and active participants in the development of their communities.

Through UNICEF’s support, 560 vulnerable youth from the plantation sector and 1,300 youth living in former conflict-affected areas received vocational training, thereby increasing their chances of gaining suitable employment in a highly competitive and limited job market. To enhance the quality of vocational training, UNICEF supported the MoYASD in strengthening the capacity of 200 vocational training instructors on the delivery of courses and centre management.

In the area of youth empowerment and participation, UNICEF supported the Government in the provision of life-skills training programmes for a) 4,000 members of youth organisations who serve as role models for their peers; b) 600 children living in children’s homes to facilitate their reintegration back into the community; and c) 9,000 youth across universities, youth organisations and schools with a focus on citizenship, community engagement and social cohesion. These training programmes enhanced important life skills related to decision-making, problem analysis and team building for the targeted youth. In addition, through youth mentoring and leadership, peer engagement and exchange programmes, youth gained critical awareness on how they should position themselves as drivers of community and social cohesion.

A qualitative study was conducted in four selected districts in the North and East on youth perceptions of the social, economic and political situation; the extent of their public participation and community engagement; and their many challenges, opportunities and aspirations. The study recommends, inter alia, that support be provided for: i) empowerment through information and engagement; ii) active engagement of young people in influencing public policy; and iii) maximising volunteerism. These recommendations will be built into UNICEF’s programming in 2014.

PC 703 - Policies and advocacy for a caring society and equitable development

On-track

PCR 0780/A0/05/703 PCR 3 -. By 2017 strengthening provincial, central and local capacity for evidence-based policy, planning, and programme implementation

Progress: The progression of Sri Lanka to middle-income status has meant that greater priority can be placed on addressing the remaining disparities in line with the country’s Ten Year Development Plan for a caring and equitable society by 2016. The Government-UNICEF Programme of Cooperation of 2013-2017 was designed to assist the Government in reaching this target.

In 2013, technical and financial assistance was provided to collect and analyse data on disparities in relation to education, health, nutrition, WASH and child protection services amongst specific population groups and between/within districts of Monaragala, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Vavuniya and Kilinochchi. This initiative supported more evidence-based programme planning, development and implementation, as can be seen in key interventions, including the scaling-up of the multi-sectoral approach to reducing undernutrition and rollout of the CFA to all primary schools in the country.

With Sri Lanka’s transition to an upstream, lower-middle-income country, UNICEF’s communication priorities shifted towards more strategic, advocacy-led goals to ensure that the relevance, effectiveness and strategic value of UNICEF as a development partner is known and understood by key stakeholders in the coming years. To this end, the CO developed and implemented a communication and advocacy action plan for 2013. UNICEF also developed a package of communication and resource mobilisation materials (which will be disseminated to key donors in 2014) and supported wide-ranging visibility in both traditional and social media, with a concurrent increase in media coverage. UNICEF also continued to support the production of behaviour change communication materials on child
incorporated DRR into their school development plans.

Dedicated DRR curricula and teachers were introduced in all schools, while schools were also better equipped to respond to emergencies. Of the targeted 1,327 schools, 78 per cent incorporated DRR into their school development plans.

To support efforts to de-institutionalise children, UNICEF assisted the Department of Probation to conduct a national survey on children in orphanages/residential homes to update their status, further assess the reasons for institutionalisation and recommend actions for improving home standards and reintegrating children.

In the education sector, information from the OOSC Study conducted with the MoE was used to further mobilise parental/community participation through school-level development committees and implementation of the CFA to address the issue of school dropouts. Although gender does not appear to be a major factor overall, it is noteworthy that gender appears to be a socio-cultural barrier in certain ethnic groups (e.g., Plantation Tamils).

A study on child marriages (affecting girls) was undertaken to understand the interface between statutory rape and early marriage and the scope of the problem of early marriage, as well as its causes, trends and impact. The study recommends increased awareness of the negative consequences of early marriage; age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education and services; amendments to child protection laws and guidelines; and support services for victims of early marriage and statutory rape.

In the WASH sector, a service delivery assessment was conducted in all 25 districts by the Ministry of Water Supply and Drainage to help identify bottlenecks in service delivery and develop an implementation plan to commence in 2014.

In 2014 national budget, additional resources of SLR300 million were allocated to reducing child abuse and violence against women. This includes engaging with field-level officers in prevention efforts, establishing additional safe houses for victims and expanding units within police stations to handle such cases. In this regard, the MoCDWA and UNICEF played a critical advocacy role. Similarly, advocacy by the MoH and UNICEF with the Presidential Secretariat on the high rates of undernutrition led to the implementation of the Multi-Sectoral Action Plan, as well as an increased allocation of SLR7 billion towards addressing issues of malnutrition across all sectors. In the education sector, UNICEF continued to support the rollout of the CFA by the MoE, which will be further facilitated by a resource allocation of SLR1.25 billion for general education in 2014.

Even with such investments, pockets of population groups and specific geographic areas require additional attention. Although investments and allocations are provided in the national budget, the translation of the budget to quality services for the most vulnerable children can only be done through the identification of areas that are lagging behind and require new resources, or the redirection of existing ones. For instance, through UNICEF’s support for the analysis of routine data on children under five and pregnant/lactating mothers in targeted provinces, Medical Officer of Health areas are being ranked based on performance and service delivery. Through such analysis, lagging areas are being identified for additional resource allocations by the National Nutrition Council. The remaining challenge for the Government, together with UNICEF and other partners, is to continuously distinguish and isolate such needs for further investments and improvements.
change and environmental degradation on water & sanitation services and education services

**Progress:** Awareness on DRR among education officers, principals, teachers, students and community members increased in 2013, and schools are better equipped to respond to emergencies. Fully 78 per cent of the 1,327 targeted schools incorporated DRR into their school development plans. Capacity-building and awareness-raising activities were completed in most of the targeted schools and took the form of training of master trainers, emergency drills and demonstration activities on issues such as water recycling and tree planting. National-level interventions are still in their preparatory phases and will be given additional focus in 2014.

In addition, a strategic and collaborative partnership was established on DRR between the Ministry of Water Supply and Drainage, Norwegian Church Aid’s Regional Emergency Coordination Advisor (RECA) initiative and UNICEF. This led to consensus on the need to i) develop a Learning Paper Sri Lanka’s mainstreaming of emergency WASH coordination; and ii) develop WASH vulnerability/needs assessment toolkits that could be integrated in Sri Lanka’s comprehensive disaster management plan.

In 2013, UNICEF played a key role in the planning and design of the UN JNA and is lead/co-lead in two of the sectors it covers. The JNA, to be conducted in 2014, will assess residual humanitarian needs and inform agencies on priority actions, including DRR, in former conflict-affected areas. A master survey of 150 surveys conducted by the Government, the UN and NGOs in the humanitarian sector was also completed as part of the JNA, and the analysis is helping shape ongoing initiatives in this sector.

**On-track**

**IR 0780/A0/05/703/004 Strategic Communication/Visibility**

**Progress:** In line with the post-conflict, middle-income country context, UNICEF’s communication priorities shifted towards more strategic, advocacy-led goals to ensure that the relevance, effectiveness and strategic value of UNICEF as a development partner is known and understood by key stakeholders in the coming years. To this end, the CO developed and implemented a communication and advocacy action plan for 2013. The Office also developed a package of communication and resource mobilisation materials, which will be disseminated to key donors in 2014, and supported wide-ranging visibility in traditional and social media.

A systematic media monitoring system was put in place in 2013 to monitor coverage related to children’s issues in the press. The system records and disseminates to staff key articles of interest to UNICEF, while also keeping track of UNICEF coverage in the media. Due to efforts positioning key children’s issues in both traditional and social media, UNICEF Sri Lanka featured in 97 mainstream media articles in 2013. As of the time of writing, UNICEF Sri Lanka’s Facebook page had 5,258 likes, with 248,785 people viewing its content, the Twitter handle had recorded 822 followers and the YouTube channel had had 26,501 views. During the year, the UNICEF Sri Lanka website got more than 1,000,000 hits.

To promote knowledge management, the Communication and Partnerships Section set up an office system for document sharing; facilitated knowledge sharing sessions for all staff; and introduced knowledge briefs on key developments related to UNICEF’s areas of work in the first half of the year, which will be resumed in 2014. In the area of communication for development, the section provided technical support on behaviour change communication in relation to prevention of violence against children, mine risk education, family tracing and child nutrition and hygiene promotion.

To mobilise resources, the section developed an Office-wide resource mobilisation strategy, assessed the feasibility of private sector fundraising in the country, initiated partnerships with leading companies to build the UNICEF brand (Dialog, Country Music Foundation and others) and supported a number of external visits to the CO, including that of a Princess of Japan.

**PC 704 - Cross Sectoral**

**On-track**

**PCR 0780/A0/05/800 PCR Support**

**Progress:** The Business Support Centre (BSC) established in the CO in 2012 for centralised processing of transactions in VISION (UNICEF’s operating system) is an in-house innovation in line with the global initiative for improved efficiency and effectiveness through Shared Services, a concept that promotes efficiencies through global centres with centralised transaction processing. Through the BSC, VISION transactions are centralised at the national level with a pool of highly skilled support staff providing professional and specialised support to Programme Sections, thereby allowing faster response times and efficient acquisition of products and services needed for programme delivery. An example of its effectiveness is the reduced payment processing time from five to three days.

A system called Push and Track was developed internally, primarily to transport documents electronically from requestors with no VISION access to the BSC for processing, thereby enabling easy tracking and monitoring of requests. The BSC agreed to Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the Programme Sections on service delivery and monitoring performance. This system bridged the gap between VISION and non-VISION users by improving visibility on transaction processes in the system. This is a significant milestone achievement for the CO and is key to the success of Shared Services.

Based on an evaluation of Push and Track by the Effectiveness and Efficiency Working Group for Business Transaction Continuity in UNICEF Headquarters, this system was recommended to the Global Management Team (GMT) for adaptation at the global level.

The CO entered into an SLA with the Maldives CO in Julv 2013. enabling the BSC to undertake the processing of VISION transactions for
the Maldives CO. Based on the benefits and cost efficiencies of this arrangement during the trial period of three months, the Maldives CO requested the Sri Lanka CO to undertake additional transactions in VISION.

During the year, teams from the Pakistan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan COs and ROSA visited the Sri Lanka CO to gain a better understanding of the BSC model and learn best practices that can be adopted and implemented in their countries for efficiency gains.

### IR 0780/A0/05/800/001 Governance and Systems

**Progress:** The Sri Lanka CO continues to closely monitor the direct cash transfers (DCT) over nine months through a focused and proactive approach. As of end December 2013, the Office had an outstanding DCT over nine months of 5.3 per cent. The delay of fund transfers through the Central Treasury to Government implementing partners was a key reason for outstanding DCTs over nine months. Collective discussions with other UN agencies and the Ministry of Finance and Planning were held to address these delays. In addition, the CO’s continued efforts on monitoring and follow up are expected to bring the Office closer to the organisational Key Performance Indicator Target of 1 per cent by the first quarter of 2014. The strategies highlighted below were implemented to achieve this target.

The Harmonised Cash Transfer (HACT) Protocol was endorsed by the Country Management Team (CMT) in August 2013, based on which it was agreed that Government implementing partners receiving cash advances in excess of US$100,000 will automatically have a Risk Rating of ‘Significant’ and related Quality Assurance Plans will be put in place. In 2013, risk mitigating measures and financial spot check plans were also put in place, which ensured more effective programme and financial monitoring. As 2013 was the first year of implementation of the HACT Protocol, some constraints were encountered in conducting planned assurance activities, particularly due to delays in Treasury transfers resulting in delays in programme implementation. The planned scheduled audits of Government implementing partners that have received US$500,000 or more will be carried out in the first quarter of 2014.

An electronic system for HACT is being developed to centralise documentation, programme and financial planning and monitoring, reporting, micro-assessments, and all assurance activities in a single database. This system is expected to streamline the existing processes and ensure a systematic approach to fund transfers in terms of monitoring, reporting and risk management.

In addition to Push and Track, the Office operationalised another six automated systems for monitoring local travel (Travel2Field), Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCAs)/Small-Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs), fuel consumption, vehicle maintenance, telephone recovery and visa/United Nations Laissez Passer (UNLP) renewals.

### IR 0780/A0/05/800/002 Financial Resources and Stewardship

**Progress:** The strong focus on internal controls and cost efficiencies was reinforced by the internal systems developed to improve efficiency and effectiveness in operations, thereby generating significant cost savings. As noted above, this included systems for monitoring PCAs/SSFAs, fuel consumption, vehicle maintenance and telephone recovery. Further savings were achieved in utilities, such as electricity and water, through Office cost-reduction strategies.

With close monitoring of budget implementation, the Office successfully achieved an overall financial utilisation rate of 99 per cent (including both actuals and commitments), with 100 per cent utilisation of Regular Resources, 97 per cent utilisation of all grants that expired in 2013 and 97 per cent utilisation of all emergency grants that expired in 2013. Mid-year financial closures were completed on time, and the CO carried out all month-end reconciliations in-line with scheduled deadlines with no long outstanding unreconciled items. Year-end closure was undertaken in line with scheduled deadlines.

As part of the implementation of the audit recommendations, the Office engaged in a roles and responsibilities mapping exercise. The exercise aimed to consolidate the roles and responsibility framework of the CO and Zone Offices in the 2013 AMP. In addition, a list of minimum supporting documents required to effect payments was introduced to further strengthen financial controls within the Office.

### IR 0780/A0/05/800/003 Human Capacity

**Progress:** Overall progress of the results under the Human Resource component was on track in 2013. While the majority of vacant posts were duly filled, 11 remain vacant primarily due to funding constraints. Those vacant for more than six months will be abolished in 2014. The Office almost achieved gender parity in relation to staff with females making up 46 per cent of staff. The Office also ensured 100 per cent compliance with the global deadline for mid-year performance review assessments, reflecting the commitment of both supervisors and supervisees to reviewing planned outputs and related accountabilities in ensuring efficient and effective service delivery.

The 2013 Learning and Training Plan focused on developing the required competencies and skills to match programme priorities. During the year, four country-level group training and learning events were implemented on the performance appraisal system for supervisors; VISION performance management; gender equality and UN coherence; and orientation/induction sessions on ethics and staff entitlements. Staff were also encouraged to enrol in e-courses to further develop their skills and technical expertise in response to programme demands.
Staff well-being continued to be a priority in 2013. Joint Consultative Committee meetings were held upon the request of the Staff Association when the need to discuss specific issues arose, while other issues were taken up at the monthly staff meetings. These practices enabled the Office to address staff issues in a timely and effective manner. HIV/AIDS awareness training was conducted for Colombo staff through the UN Cares initiative, and the work-life balance policy was supported through flexible work arrangements. The excellent relationship between management and the Staff Association continued to provide a conducive platform to positively respond to staff welfare and morale issues.
Effective Governance Structure

The programme cycle started in 2013, with significant investment made to ensure that its objectives and priorities were understood by all. However the changing operating environment required that some adjustments be made. ROSA provided high-level support to initial Office-wide discussions about a shift to more policy-, knowledge- and advocacy-based work. With regard to UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children, staff turnover meant the Office lost some of its capacity, and ensuring Office-wide emergency response capacity was flagged as a priority for early 2014.

Oversight structures worked well in the Office, and as a follow up to the 2012 audit recommendations, additional structures to address results based management and improved oversight of quality of publications were into place. Also in response to the audit, the Office clarified the responsibilities and accountabilities of Zone Offices in the Office’s 2013 AMP, as well as their objectives, priorities, risks, key performance indicators and internal governance mechanisms. A monitoring framework for the Office was also designed and, with some adjustment, will be implemented from 2014.

An end of 2013 review of Push and Track, used for transactions in the Office, indicated that it is ready for roll out in other countries in the region. With additional emphasis on the 'track' part of the process, it should be possible in early 2014 to make it as efficient. The Operations Team provided extensive training for staff from other COs on Push and Track, and during 2013, the Sri Lanka CO progressively took on processing of transactions for the Maldives CO.

The CMT met regularly, with participation of field staff, to systematically review key indicators, as well as address substantive initiatives in communications, programmes and rationalisation of support functions during the year. The Office also reinstated its programme meetings to strengthen the focus on results, based on UNICEF’s new strategic plan structure, as well as to strengthen soft skills, share expertise and discuss cross-sectoral issues.

In late 2013, the Office confronted a number of unanticipated funding crises that were beyond its control. Fortunately strong skills in allocating funding meant that the most significant impacts were mitigated in the short term, and the Office will have time to do a more substantive risk analysis in 2014. This analysis will require the CO to find ways through a consultation process to address risks in 2014 – including cutting funding to vital nutrition activities for 45,000 malnourished young boys and girls – and prepare to look at the longer-term challenges posed by the funding crises, i.e. ‘shape’ the Sri Lanka CO for the coming years.

Strategic Risk Management

A structured approach was used to rationalise the roles and responsibilities of programme and operations staff during the first quarter of 2013. Risks were systematically identified, analysed and managed and included in the Business Continuity Plan (BCP). Systems were in place to assess the effectiveness of controls to mitigate risks across the Office. These included onsite monitoring of programme activities to track progress and field visits to review implementation and identify any corrective actions. Quality Assurance was measured through spot checks on DCTs to ensure that partners used funds for the intended purposes.

As part of the annual work planning process, the Office continued to update the Emergency Preparedness Plan and the BCP and maintained a minimum level of readiness. Simulation exercises were undertaken to ensure preparedness in case of fire and communication and network failures. Additionally, a remote server system, external data back up and emergency communication devices were in place.

With staff turnover, some of the Sri Lanka CO emergency preparedness skills were lost, and a full review of the Early Warning Early Action Plan in 2014 will help the Office address gaps and develop a strategy to ensure Office-wide emergency preparedness skills are once again strong at all levels. This will be reflected in capacity building activities and subsequently in the BCP and Annual Work Plan annexes. However, despite the need to strengthen capacity, it is important to note that the Office could respond to an emergency at any
time.

As noted previously, a series of mitigating activities were put in place to address funding challenges, and in 2014 a mechanism will be put into place to address the longer-term response to organisational and external operating environment changes.

**Evaluation**

In 2013, a joint Australian Aid-UNICEF evaluation was conducted on the construction component of the Australian Aid-funded, UNICEF-implemented programme to support the education sector in the former conflict-affected areas of the Northern Province (June 2011 to June 2013). The evaluation oversight function was the responsibility of an Evaluation Management Committee, and was made up of both Australian Aid and UNICEF officers and headed by the UNICEF Representative to ensure objectivity and impartiality. The evaluation focused on the construction/rehabilitation of 23 schools that are now operational and have more than 10,500 enrolled students and 470 teachers. The programme scored well for relevance and gender equality, but less so for efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. The recommendations of the evaluation regarding construction were addressed in the targeted schools. While UNICEF is phasing out of construction in 2014, the recommendations will be taken into consideration in remaining construction-related projects.

To further strengthen the country’s capacity in undertaking evaluations and to internalise a culture of evaluation, the Office supported the Sri Lanka Evaluation Association to conduct professional development workshops on evaluation methodologies with international evaluators. Workshops were conducted on topics including theory of change; designing and managing evaluations; integrated results-based management and approaches to public sector management, among others. UNICEF also supported the Fourth International Conference on Evaluation – ‘Evaluation for Change’ – in partnership with the Sri Lanka Evaluation Association and the Department of Project Management and Monitoring under the Ministry of Finance and Planning. The Conference provided the space for local evaluators to present evaluations conducted in the country. The broad themes for presentations included: evaluation for evidence-based decision-making; evaluation for equity; integrating evaluation into planning, budgeting and policy-making processes in the public sector; evaluation for change: an enabling environment; international cooperation in evaluation and networking; evaluation for public interest; and evaluation for e-society. A session on why national evaluation policies matter in South Asia with the participation of selected parliamentarians also emphasised the need and existing political commitment to institutionalise evaluation in the country and the rest of South Asia.

The Office updated its Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) twice during the year to ensure that activities undertaken by the Office are monitored for planned results and that studies and surveys conducted fill gaps in available data, as well as identify emerging issues pertaining to children and women in the country. With the transition of the country to middle-income status, there is a continued need to strengthen routine data and information collection systems.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

The CO ICT services played a key supportive role by providing innovative business solutions and reliable and secure ICT infrastructure to ensure more efficient and effective programme implementation.

In 2013, utilising internal resources, ICT developed a Push and Track request management and monitoring application for the CO’s BSC. This application was implemented in June 2013 and greatly improved the tracking and monitoring of requests submitted to the BSC and transaction processing times, while also reducing the use of a paper-based system. A survey conducted amongst Push and Track users indicated that 98 per cent agreed that the application helped them in their daily work, 84 per cent agreed that it enabled faster transaction processing times and 91 per cent agreed that it facilitated tracking of requests. This application was also introduced to the Maldives CO in July 2013, which enabled the Sri Lanka BSC to support transaction services in the Maldives. Based on an evaluation of Push and Track by the global Effectiveness and Efficiency Working Group for Business Transaction Continuity, a recommendation was made to the GMT
that this application should be adapted for global use.

In addition, the CO developed a portal of applications, replacing paper-based manual systems, in order to streamline in-house processes, reduce processing times, improve monitoring and control mechanisms, and ensure better document management. Efforts included a Travel2field application, which manages local travel and greatly reduced the time taken to process Travel Authorisations. Other tools were developed for telephone usage personal recovery, SSFA/PCA management, vehicle fuel management, visa/UNLP renewals and vehicle maintenance.

Staff members were trained on all new applications and tools, with training also extended to the Maldives and Nepal COs and ROSA. In addition, the Sri Lanka CO supported missions from the Maldives, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan COs and ROSA to present the Sri Lanka BSC modality, as well as support the interested COs in understanding and implementing the newly developed software applications and tools.

ICT support was also critical in managing UNICEF's operating system (VISION) at the country level, including user support, trouble shooting and training of staff. Further support on hardware, software, network and telecommunication systems, including remote working arrangements when required, enabled staff to work more efficiently and effectively. The CO BCP and ICT Disaster Recovery Plan were also tested successfully.

At the field level, the Office was able to smoothly transition from two Field Offices in the North, namely Vavuniya and Jaffna, to one in Kilinochchi. ICT service providers and UNICEF headquarters Information Technology Support Services coordinated successfully to ensure that all ICT services were functioning less than 24 hours after the shift, thereby minimising any disruption to services in these areas.

**Fund-raising and Donor Relations**

During the latter part of 2013, UNICEF had to reposition its resource mobilisation strategy in light of a rapidly changing donor landscape that saw all major in-country donors reviewing their development assistance priorities to focus away from recovery assistance towards new areas, including trade and investment. The revised strategy now focuses on sustained engagement with a smaller set of current donors, while forging new partnerships with emerging allies for children.

The shift means that it is unlikely that the CO will be able to raise the USD$56.23 million it envisioned for the 2013-2017 Country Programme. As of December 2013, the CO had raised 38 per cent of the total budget required until 2017, leaving a funding gap of US$34.87 million.

In terms of contribution management, the Office maintained its fund monitoring system, including the recording of incoming and utilised funds. Through this system, the Office ensured 97 per cent utilisation of all funds that expired during the year, avoided any unnecessary extension of incoming funds and sent all donor reports on time (to a standard attested to as excellent by ROSA).

**Management of Financial and Other Assets**

The BSC established in the CO in 2012 for centralised processing of transactions in VISION is an in-house innovation in line with the global initiative for improved efficiency and effectiveness through Shared Services, a concept that promotes efficiencies through global centres with centralised transaction processing. Through the BSC, VISION transactions are centralised at the national level with a pool of highly skilled support staff providing professional and specialised support to Programme Sections, allowing faster response times and efficient acquisition of products and services needed for programme delivery. The BSC agreed to SLAs with the Programme Sections on service delivery and monitoring performance. This system bridged the gap between VISION and non-VISION users by improving visibility on transaction processes in the system. This is a significant milestone achievement for the CO and is key to the success of Shared Services.

HACT has been implemented in Sri Lanka since 2008. To further strengthen the HACT process, the HACT
Protocol was endorsed by the CMT and came into effect in July 2013. This centralised document captures the essence of HACT, including partner capacity assessments, risk mitigation measures and assurance activities. An electronic system for HACT is being developed to centralise documentation, programme and financial planning and monitoring, reporting, micro-assessments and all assurance activities in a single database. The system will streamline the existing processes and ensure a systematic approach to fund transfers in terms of monitoring, reporting and risk management.

New simplified checklists for SSFAs/PCAs were adopted, and simplified reporting formats for programmatic monitoring and spot checks were developed in order to further streamline the HACT process. The Office also established and launched a new PCA Committee, under the chair of the Deputy Representative, to ensure comprehensive programmatic and financial reviews of all PCAs with implementing partners in adherence with UNICEF’s rules and regulations. In order to manage and mitigate risks, Programme Sections are required to develop plans for assurance activities that cover programme monitoring and financial spot checks. Quarterly programme progress reports are submitted by the Programme Officers to the Quality Assurance Officer, and planned financial spot checks and micro-assessments are outsourced to an audit firm under the close monitoring of the Quality Assurance Officer.

The CO continued to closely monitor outstanding DCTs over nine months through a focused and proactive approach, resulting in a reduced rate of 5.3 per cent by the end of the year. These outstanding DCTs were primarily due to delays in transferring funds to implementing partners via the Central Treasury system. Collective discussions with the selected UN Agencies and Ministry of Finance and Planning were held to address these delays and ensure timely fund transfers and implementation of activities. In addition, concerted efforts were made to achieve the target of one per cent through weekly monitoring of DCTs by senior management and timely follow up on outstanding DCTs between six to nine months.

The strong focus on internal controls and cost efficiencies was reinforced by the internal systems developed to improve efficiency and effectiveness in operations, thereby generating significant cost savings. This includes systems for monitoring PCAs/SSFAs, fuel consumption, vehicle maintenance and telephone recovery.

In addition, key cost-saving initiatives implemented by the Office in 2013 resulted in savings in electricity costs of 17 per cent per month (approx. US$1,100) and water consumption of 23 per cent. Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) were established or renewed with the most cost-effective service providers for Office overheads and maintenance.

With close monitoring of budget implementation, the Office successfully achieved an overall utilisation rate of 99 per cent, with 100 per cent utilisation of Regular Resources, 97 per cent utilisation of all grants that expired in 2013 and 97 per cent utilisation of all emergency grants that expired in 2013. Mid-year financial closures were completed on time, and the CO carried out all month-end reconciliations in line with scheduled deadlines with no long outstanding unreconciled items. Year-end closure took place in line with scheduled deadlines.

The Finance Division was consistently able to ensure the appropriate levels of funding and availability of cash for both programmatic activities and operating expenses, whilst securing the most competitive rates from the market.

## Supply Management

In 2013, the total value of procurement for the UNICEF Sri Lanka Country Programme was US$2.5 million, involving the processing of almost 400 transactions for programme supplies, service contracts and assets/consumables through local and offshore procurement, and direct ordering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CO Sri Lanka 2013</th>
<th>Value of all supply inputs (goods &amp; services) as of 31 Dec 2013 (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme Supplies</td>
<td>1,017,186.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational Supplies</td>
<td>341,682.34</td>
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</table>
In terms of Procurement Services, the CO assisted the MoH in procuring 2.7 million worth of supplies and equipment, which mainly included combination vaccines, syringes and needles, and cold rooms.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CO Sri Lanka 2013</th>
<th>Value of locally managed procurement as of 31 Dec 2013 (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme Supplies</td>
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<td>Services</td>
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The CO’s consolidated 2013 Procurement Plan developed during the first quarter of the year enabled the Office to aggregate the needs for essential commodities required to support programme implementation. The construction component of the supply plan amounting to US$3.7 million was forwarded to UNICEF Supply Division in Denmark for Local Procurement Authorisation (LPA).

UNICEF Sri Lanka's Supply Unit continued to focus on the procurement of standardised essential supplies and services needed by all programmes. The establishment of 62 local LTAs made it possible to acquire and deliver required supplies and services without delay, which also helped reduce the time and effort needed to process orders. Some of the LTAs established for administrative supplies and services were made available to the UNICEF Field Offices for direct ordering purposes.

Initial discussions with Programme Sections and updated information on standardised supplies, equipment and LTAs, through the Push and Track automated system, allowed for the timely sharing of specifications and costs and ensured a quick turnaround on sales orders. This helped strengthen programme-supply integration and enabled a more efficient execution of business process transactions.

Sri Lanka's move to middle-income country status brought in more trade and investment, resulting in the availability of a wider range of goods and services. Major commodities procured locally during the reporting period included medical equipment, school furniture, and playground equipment and information technology supplies.

A direct delivery strategy was developed and implemented for all programme supplies, eliminating the need for temporary storage of supplies in the UNICEF warehouse. Suppliers and partners were actively engaged in the delivery and receipt of supplies ordered by UNICEF. As a result, the CO continued to maintain limited stocks of emergency supplies. The value of the inventory of emergency programme supplies as of 31 December 2013 was US$24,537. The value of emergency programme supplies issued from the local warehouse as of 31 December 2013 was US$18 and the total value of supplies managed in the CO-controlled warehouse throughout the year was US$24,556.

The quality checks on procured supplies were regularly carried out by two leading inspection companies, which considerably improved the quality and timeliness of supply inputs. A sales order monitoring tool was also developed to track supplier performance and improve efficiency.

UNICEF continued to lead the Inter-Agency Joint Procurement Committee and played a key role in promoting common procurement initiatives at the country level. In 2013, UNICEF established two inter-agency LTAs for Travel Management Services, which resulted in substantial cost savings in air travel and ticketing services.
The advisory body on local procurement, the Contracts Review Committee, continued to play a key role in reviewing all major contract award recommendations so as to ensure that the interests of UNICEF were protected and that due process was followed. During the year, the Committee was involved in 60 procurement-related cases.

In the area of capacity building, two staff members in the Supply and Logistics Unit attended procurement training on service contracting organised by the UNICEF Supply Division in India in August 2013, which benefitted the supply function in the CO. Efforts were also made to strengthen the capacity of partners through knowledge sharing on warehouse management and customs clearance of goods.

Human Resources

During the first half of the year, the CO focused on completing the remaining recruitment of staff under the new Programme Cycle 2013-2017. Six vacant posts were also filled, including four national officers (three fixed-term positions and one temporary assistant position) and two general service category staff (both temporary assistant positions). The Office faced challenges in attracting highly competent and experienced female candidates for national professional posts requiring specialised technical knowledge and expertise. The gender ratio for National Professional Staff is currently 40 per cent females and 60 per cent males. In order to improve the gender balance, professional posts were re-advertised to attract female candidates, which did cause some delays in filling critical posts. Another 11 posts remained vacant due to funding constraints.

The 2013 Learning and Training Plan focused on developing the required competencies and skills to match programme priorities. Four country-level group training and learning events were implemented on the performance appraisal system for supervisors; VISION performance management; gender equality and UN coherence; and orientation/induction sessions on ethics and staff entitlements. Due to funding constraints, the Office could not support a large number of individual learning requests; however staff were encouraged to follow UNICEF e-learning courses. The Office also supported opportunities for staff to expand their experiences through staff exchange initiatives.

Staff well-being continued to be a priority for 2013. HIV/AIDS awareness training was conducted for Colombo staff through the UN Cares initiative, and the work-life balance policy was supported through flexible work arrangements. The annual staff retreat, organised by the Staff Association, was held in August 2013. A Service Award Ceremony was held for a staff member who retired from UNICEF after serving the organisation for over 20 years. The Staff Association also presented service plaques to seven staff members who separated from UNICEF. The excellent relationship between management and Staff Association continued to provide a conducive platform to positively respond to staff welfare and morale issues.

Building on the global staff survey, the Sri Lanka CO developed an action plan addressing the need for sharing knowledge, experiences and career development opportunities. The implementation of the plan was on track in 2013 and progress was reviewed by the CMT, the Staff Association and the Human Resources Development and Training Committee.

With respect to performance management, all staff completed their performance reviews for 2012 by February 2013 and set their key objectives for 2013 by April. A training programme on managing performance for results with a focus on the three-phase participatory performance management approach was conducted for supervisors and supervisees. The training covered areas around regular and honest performance discussions and positive and constructive feedback methods. These initiatives enabled staff to develop clearer objectives and SMART performance indicators for 2013.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

The efficiency planning carried out in 2012 was consolidated in 2013. The BSC and Push and Track systems became fully operational in 2013 within a rationalised operations budget for the Office. These initiatives realised the envisaged efficiency gains primarily in terms of accelerated response times, enhanced quality
outputs and increased specialisation in VISION.

In addition, the Office increasingly took on almost all of the Maldives CO operations processing, generating efficiencies and savings for that Office. The Sri Lanka Office is now in the position to take on additional operations processing work for other COs that may require support in order to be more efficient.

The Office continues to look at ways to be cost effective and efficient and save on overheads, and increasingly applies innovative approaches to transportation, to keep daily subsistence allowance costs low. In 2014, there will be an objective to save a further US$100,000 on costs, including on transportation and other services.

Towards the end of 2013 a process was undertaken to rationalise programme support functions in the Office, with a view to optimising the use of existing staff members’ time, eliminating duplication of efforts and lack of clarity for various responsibilities, and filling gaps. This effort built on an early 2013 mapping of roles and responsibilities across the Colombo and Field Offices.

### Changes in AMP & CPMP

The 2014 AMP will include a plan for the transition process for the Sri Lanka CO. Some of changes envisaged in the 2013 AMP were put on hold while the Office prepared to review its funding situation and programmatic priorities in 2015 in time for the Mid-Term Review of the Country Programme. ROSA will be asked to provide key support to this process as the CO examines how to prioritise and best use its financial and human resources to serve the policy and service needs of boys and girls.

The nature of the assistance provided by UNICEF to the GoSL will continue shifting from service delivery and project implementation to technical assistance. As the last recovery and rehabilitation activities are coming to an end in conflict-affected districts, donors are reducing their support to NGOs and United Nations Agencies. Many donors and development partners are downsizing their presence in the field and preparing to leave the country.

In this context, UNICEF will review its staffing structure in line with the new functions and programmatic needs, to be prepared to support the Government in its transition to a middle-income country. Taking into account the challenging and unpredictable funding environment, the transition will review the core programmatic, operational and support functions in the Office.

In addition, the AMP will reflect work that was done in the CO to realign multi-year Annual Work Plans with new strategic priorities and new planning language of outputs and outcomes. Though not a new Country Programme, the Office opted to initiate the change immediately.

The year 2013 saw a number of staff with strong emergency skills move to other Offices, therefore the 2014 AMP will need to examine how to maintain comprehensive DRR and emergency response skills for the Office.

### Summary Notes and Acronyms

AG – Attorney General  
AMP – Annual Management Plan  
BCP – Business Continuity Plan  
BSC – Business Support Centre  
CFA – Child-Friendly Approach  
CMT – Country Management Team  
CO – Country Office  
CPAP – Country Programme Action Plan  
DCT – Direct Cash Transfer  
DRR – Disaster Risk Reduction
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sequence Number</th>
<th>Type of Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Nutrition and Micronutrient Survey</td>
<td>2013/001</td>
<td>Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out-of-School Children in Sri Lanka: Country Study</td>
<td>2013/002</td>
<td>Study</td>
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### Other Publications

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<tr>
<td>1 Poster for breastfeeding</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Emerging concerns and cases studies on child marriage in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Guidance Manual on the Child Friendly Approach (CFA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Inclusive Education Tool Kit</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Key Stage 1 Teacher Training Module</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Out-of-School Children in Sri Lanka: Country Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Child Friendly Approach (CFA) Brochures, CFA Leaflets and CFA Posters</td>
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### Lessons Learned

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>1 Shining the spotlight on undernutrition in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Lesson Learned</td>
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