

Tajikistan

Executive Summary

In 2015, Tajikistan transitioned into the Low-Middle Income category. This move did not yet translate into positive effects on the vulnerability of its population, especially children, to economic shocks: 13.7 per cent of the able-bodied population are labour migrants, mainly to Russia, and remittances constitute 43 per cent of the GDP. According to the World Bank, the value of an average remittance fell by 21 per cent between May and September 2015. The share of households that reported having difficulties to pay for food rose. The situation, also due to the economic crisis in Russia, was exacerbated by the depreciation of the currency (Somoni) against the US dollar. This crisis was of particular concern in a country where 26 per cent of the children under-five years old are chronically malnourished, and 10 per cent are acutely malnourished.

Tajikistan suffered from a number of natural disasters in 2015, including a frost in March that significantly damaged agricultural crops in Sughd region; mudslides in July affecting communities in two regions; and an earthquake, 7.2 on the Richter scale, that shook villages and communities in Gorno Badakshan Autonomous Oblast. The natural disasters set back the livelihoods in communities that were already vulnerable.

In response to the threat of radicalization in Tajikistan, the country experienced a tightening of the operational environment for Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), including newly-passed regulations.

2015 was the final year of the current Programme of Cooperation (2010-2015) with the Government of Tajikistan. UNICEF Tajikistan and partners developed a new CP (2016-2020) based on the life-cycle approach to programming. It was approved by the Executive Board in September and the new UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was approved by the Government.

UNICEF Tajikistan advocacy yielded positive results for children in the following areas: a new Child Protection Law was adopted by the Parliament; Government partners agreed to adopt the life cycle approach to the design of the new Social Protection Strategy; The Mid-Term Development Plan of the new National Development Strategy (2016-2030) includes a chapter on child vulnerability; Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) Movement made strides towards adopting a multi-sectoral approach and agreeing on a common target of reducing stunting among children; e) the Government submitted the combined 3rd, 4th and 5th periodic reports to the Committee of the Rights of the Child. With the World Bank, the EU and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), UNICEF Tajikistan ensured that the potential impact of the economic crisis on children and the vulnerable populations was included on the agenda of the Government.

UNICEF Tajikistan succeeded in placing children and adolescents at the centre of policies, and also made progress towards ensuring that adolescents were involved in advocacy and that their voices are heard on important development debates. The active participation of 60 young people from 12 countries in the Global Water Conference in Tajikistan and their call to action to

world leaders to mobilize efforts to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene was one powerful example. A peace-building programme funded by the UK Government and the Peace Building Fund that engages diverse children and adolescents in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to promote peace and stability were harnessed to engage and work with boys and girls for social cohesion and resilience.

In addition to results around modelling new approaches and advocacy, UNICEF Tajikistan reached children and pregnant women directly through its support to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population in vitamin A, polio and deworming campaigns. The campaigns successfully reached over 97 per cent of targeted children in the nationwide micronutrient supplementation programme: 154,750 children in 33 of the country's 64 districts received micronutrient powders for sixty days every six months, and 123,600 pregnant women in 41 districts received iron and folic acid.

Results in education include progress on girls' education with an increase in the transition rate from compulsory to non-compulsory education in project schools by six percentage points. In Early Childhood Development (ECD), UNICEF Tajikistan supported the establishment of new centres, opening 207 centres (since 2010) out of the over 1,600 Early Childhood Education (ECE) centres operating in Tajikistan---reaching over 35,000 children (12.3 per cent of children ages three to six years old).

Progress on two fronts was slower than expected: the work on justice for children that required cross-sectoral engagement was stalled, due partly to staff turnover and lack of prioritization by key partners. Advocacy on public finance management for the health sector required more focused attention and concerted joint advocacy with development partners.

Humanitarian Assistance

In July 2015, Tajikistan suffered a number of mudslides in two regions that affected approximately 7,000 people and displaced 1,000 people, causing significant damage to infrastructure. The most affected areas were the Regions of Republican Subordination (RRS) and Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO). Many of the affected communities were already overstretched before the mudflows, and the disaster severely limited their coping mechanisms. With the Government and other humanitarian actors, UNICEF Tajikistan supported critical relief and response activities with a particular focus on education, child protection and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

Upon the onset of the emergency, a rapid needs assessment was conducted jointly by the inter-agency Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team (REACT) and Government to provide data on the number of affected families and individuals. Over 138 families (630 individuals including 159 children) were directly affected in Rasht district; in Shugnon district, the total number of directly affected families was 87 (626 people including 143 children).

The affected population received better access to water in Rasht District with water trucking by the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (CoES) and local government. UNICEF Tajikistan complemented this operation by distributing water purification tablets (chlorine aqua tabs) and 100-litre water containers for 630 people. UNICEF Tajikistan distributed 20- and 10-litre water containers in the second phase of the emergency response, in September, as the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan had covered these needs during the first phase. UNICEF Tajikistan distributed an additional 92 water collapsible tanks to 46 families (around 265 individuals).

In collaboration with Mercy Corps and with financial support from the Department for International Development (DFID), about 40 semi-permanent latrines for approximately 280 people were constructed; 300 people in the affected communities received basic sanitation and hygiene training; and 150 households and 1,050 people received antiseptic soaps.

In GBAO, UNICEF Tajikistan supported the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population (MoHSPP) to ensure distribution of WASH items and non-food items, including blankets, household emergency assistance packages, and emergency health kits, which reached and benefitted 859 affected people. UNICEF Tajikistan procured 10,000 sachets of oral rehydration salts and 50,000 zinc tablets to manage about 2,500 cases of diarrhoea.

UNICEF Tajikistan coordinated the education response and, with the Ministry of Education, MoES, local education authorities and FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, established Child-Friendly Spaces (CFSs) and Temporary Learning Classes (TLCs) in Shugnon district in GBAO and Rasht district in RRS. As a result, a CFS near Primary School 84 in Rasht district served 63 children aged 4-6 years (18 boys and 45 girls), and a CFS in Manem camp in Shugnon district covered 18 2-6 year olds (10 boys and 8 girls). In total, 81 displaced boys and girls in Rasht and Shugnon districts benefitted from safe and nurturing environments that promoted learning and wellbeing. In addition, TLCs were established near Primary School 24 in Shugnon district, where children attended two multi-grade classes. 163 displaced school age children (90 boys and 73 girls) were provided with basic school supplies. It is important to highlight that CFSs established during emergency will transition into permanent facilities to continue benefiting young children in the immediate area. This is a positive example of linking humanitarian assistance to development.

As a sector lead in WASH, UNICEF Tajikistan brought in expertise to the country to more effectively contribute to WASH response and early recovery efforts while also building the capacity of partners in this regard through training and step-by-step joint-planning efforts. This intervention that also helped boost the preparedness capacity of UNICEF Tajikistan and partners was financially supported by DFID.

Thanks to UNICEF Tajikistan and its trained civil society partners on the ground, 364 children (177 boys and 187 girls) received psychosocial support in Shugnon and Rasht districts. Moreover, 32 local government stakeholders and 12 staff of Mercy Corps in Rasht district attended a five-day training event on provision of psychosocial support in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. This training will help to expand the availability of psychosocial counselling services on the ground for future emergencies.

Finally, in December 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan also mobilized support to respond to the consequences of the 7.2 magnitude earthquake, which occurred in the eastern part of Tajikistan on 7 December 2015 and affected about 1,000 households. The results of the response to the earthquake will be reflected in the next annual report.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

BCP	Business Continuity Plan
C4D	Communication for Development
CFS	Child Friendly Spaces
CEE/CIS	Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

CMT	Country Management Team
CO	Country Office
CoES	Committee of Emergency Situation and Civil Defence
COJ	Council of Justice
CRC	Child Rights Commissions
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
CRC	Committee of the Rights of the Child
CRF	Common results framework
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CWD	Children with disabilities
DCT	Direct Cash Transfer
DFID	Department for International Development
DPO	Disabled People Organisations
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EWEA	Early Warning Early Action
EPI	Expanded programme on immunisation
EWS	Early Warning System
GBAO	Gorno Badakshan Autonomous Oblast
IMCI	Integrated management of childhood illness
ICT	Information and Communication Technology ()
IYCF	Infant and young child feeding
J4C	Justice for Children
MCH	Maternal and child health
MMR	Maternal mortality rate
MNCH	Maternal, newborn and child health
MoEDT	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MODA	Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis
MOHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population
MQSUN	Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Programmes Framework
NDS	Tajikistan National Development Strategy
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
MoH	Ministry of Health
PBF	Performance-based Financing,
PMPC	Psychological Medical Pedagogy Consultation
PBR	Programme and Budget Review
PTUSWI	Practical Training Unit for Social Work and Innovations
PWD	People with disabilities
RCSA	Risk Control Self-Assessment
RKLA	Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda
RMNCAH	Reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health
RRS	Regions of Republican Subordination
SAHU	Social Assistance at Home Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SUN	Scaling up Nutrition
TLC	Temporary Learning Classes
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

UNICEF Tajikistan's evidence-backed advocacy and partnerships with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MoEDT) and sectorial ministries mainstreamed child rights in national and local level development planning processes. UNICEF Tajikistan continued its active engagement in providing inputs to the National Development Forum in February 2015, the new NDS 2016-2030) for the Republic of Tajikistan, the related MTDS 2016-2020, National Social Protection Strategy and district development plans, using policy dialogue to play a key role in making national and local level policies child-sensitive.

UNICEF Tajikistan also used the regular meetings of the Social Protection Working Group of the Development Coordination Council strategically to build momentum around the new National Social Protection Strategy. As a result, a chapter on the most vulnerable children has also been included in the mid-term strategic plan.

Considering the need for improved evidence on the situation of children, and in order to build an understanding of the nature of child poverty and children's deprivations in the country, UNICEF Tajikistan conducted a Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) with support from the Economic Policy Research Institute. The analysis used the most recent data of 2012 DHS to identify the type, level, and overlaps of child deprivations on dimensions including nutrition, health, child protection, water, sanitation, housing and information. The MODA results indicated that children aged 0-4 were more deprived in nutrition and housing dimensions. For children aged 5-10 and 11-17, housing and water were the dimensions of most deprivation. The most deprived group of children are girls aged 11-17 living in rural areas. The findings generated new discussions among stakeholders, as the MODA method was not previously used for evidence generation. All stakeholders confirmed the importance of the MODA analysis. Consultations with Government institutions are still on-going and promise to enhance evidence-based policy making processes in the near future.

Partnerships

The country joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in September 2013. In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan and USAID as SUN donor co-conveners in Tajikistan worked with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (the lead government body) and others such as WFP, FAO and the EU in drafting a food security and nutrition concept note, which was presented to high-level government officials as part of advocacy to place nutrition as a national development priority and as input to the drafting of the new NDS 2016-2030. UNICEF Tajikistan and USAID also mobilized the technical assistance from Maximising the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition Programmes Framework (MQSUN) with the support of DFID to develop a common results framework (CRF) and costed multi-sectoral plan of action for nutrition. In September, a high-level workshop following a programme gap analysis brought together key stakeholders from different sectors within Government, partners, civil society, private sector and academia to agree on a common goal – stunting - for development of CRF.

To better monitor the impact of the economic crisis on child nutrition and food security among the most vulnerable families, UNICEF Tajikistan engaged in a MoU with WFP in order to include child-specific questions in their regular Food Security Monitoring Systems Survey. This is a step towards improving nutrition surveillance.

Another important partnership is advocacy on the rights of CWD. Through the UN PRPD funding, UNICEF Tajikistan has joined forces with UNDP and WHO to mobilize support for the signature of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD), in better access to services such as the Community Rehabilitation centres and, better inclusion and integration of CWD in communities. The latter effort requires mobilization of civil society partners such as the Association of Parents with CWD.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

UNICEF Tajikistan enhanced external communication and public advocacy in 2015 to give voice to children and adolescent girls and boys as well as youth to express their views in compelling ways with policy makers and the general public. One of the highlights of the year in this respect was the Government of Tajikistan and UNICEF Tajikistan co-convened International Children's WASH Forum in partnership with the MoES that took place in Dushanbe in June. Some sixty adolescent girls and boys from 12 countries told an International High Level Conference on Water for Life in Tajikistan that the world's youth must be fully engaged in the effort to ensure access to safe and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for every child. This was a strong call to action that reached the highest level of world's leaders, including the UN Secretary General. UNICEF Tajikistan and other partners used a methodical approach to preparing this advocacy event. The forum was preceded by a workshop where adolescents learned to develop advocacy messages and to convey these messages through "OneMinutesJr" videos in order to contribute to the global discussions on the issue. An adolescent girl from Tajikistan gave the opening speech on behalf of the group at the Water Conference in the presence of the President of Tajikistan, the Secretary General of the United Nations and many world dignitaries. This and the final call for action were well received and commented on by the media, Government officials, development partners and donors.

This set a model for further engagement with adolescents and range of partners in the new CP. More examples of external communication are included in the report under the output 4.3.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

South-South Cooperation is an effective strategy in the Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) region and in line with efforts to accelerate results through the RKLAs. In 2015, six of such exchanges were organized to bring together relevant Tajikistan Government and Civil Society actors from Tajikistan with peers in other countries. UNICEF Tajikistan organized a knowledge and experience exchange on social protection through a study tour by Government representatives from Tajikistan and Kazakhstan to Armenia. The tour enabled participants to become conversant with the analysis of legal norms, governance structures and budgetary allocations for social protection programmes, especially as applied to Armenia. Information and knowledge obtained during the study tour equipped the Tajikistan delegation with new ideas to be reflected in the on-going social protection strategy development process.

Horizontal cooperation also built momentum around results for CWD. To this effect, a team from the MoES as well as members of the civil society took part in an exchange with peers in Georgia on inclusive education. One of the NGO member agencies of the Association of Parents of CWD was supported to attend an important global conference in Japan where participants were exposed to good practices in integrating adults and CWD into communities. Other exchanges covered issues such as ECD and peace-building (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan);

juvenile justice reform (with Georgia); HIV/AIDS counselling with young people (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan); alternative family care (with Russia) where participants learned about policies on alternative family care, strong gate keeping systems, support services to families and children, capacity building of the staff to work with families, thus preventing children from institutionalization; and paediatric AIDS (with Russia). UNICEF Tajikistan partners participated in many more regional conferences and workshops, enhancing regional exchange and cooperation.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

UNICEF Tajikistan introduced and contributed to three innovations in information-sharing modalities to improve results for children. The first was the introduction of the ICATT (an innovative software application to support the implementation of the WHO/UNICEF strategy on the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness/IMCI) e-learning module on infection control for health professionals. This programme was developed by the UNICEF Regional Office and adapted to Tajikistan to reduce the costliness of long training programmes and the amount of time health professionals are required to take leave to participate in trainings. This innovation is new to Tajikistan, and UNICEF worked with the MoHSPP to make completion a requirement in order for health professionals to update their licenses.

The second innovation was a mobile phone project in partnership with Mercy Corps. Mercy Corps is the lead agency, and UNICEF Tajikistan is contributing content to nationwide SMS messages to promote maternal and child health to women who are pregnant, lactating, or with small children. This project is still in its early stages, and UNICEF Tajikistan will make the first joint evaluation with Mercy Corps in 2016.

Finally, UNICEF Tajikistan collaborated with the World Bank to motivate health facilities to reach targets in maternal and child health through performance-based payments. Both quantitative and qualitative indicators are determined with health facilities, and if facilities exceed targets, they receive a bonus based on the quantity exceeded or the scoring of qualitative indicators. Both health workers and the facility receive a bonus. This programme is not new globally, however it is the first of its kind in Tajikistan. UNICEF Tajikistan is contributing technical assistance in data verification and provides bilateral technical support to the MoHSPP.

Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

UNICEF Tajikistan integrated a stronger cross-sectoral collaboration to achieve results for children. The new CP, having adopted a life-cycle clustering of results for children and a matrix management approach, made an important step in that direction. In the current and final year of the existing CP cycle, concerted efforts were made towards recognition of the rights of CWD across sectors and through cross-sectoral collaboration. For instance, through Inclusive Education, the school curriculum is being revised; in child protection, efforts are focused on family care for CWD and prevention of institutionalization; and in the area of health, systems are developed to enhance early detection and diagnosis of developmental delays and disability. Finally, in partnership with the Community-Based Rehabilitation Network, UNICEF Tajikistan is contributing to enhancing the quality of life of CWD and their families, meeting their basic needs, and ensuring their inclusion and participation.

Another important example of cross-sectoral linkage is through the engagement in the SUN movement as provided under the partnership section above.

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

In 2015, with UNICEF Tajikistan financial support and guidance, Tajikistan drafted its combined third, fourth and fifth periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was submitted in November to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF Tajikistan worked closely with the OHCHR and the Resident Coordinator Office and contributed extensively to the process of the Joint UNCT submission for the 2016 Universal Periodic Review Of Tajikistan. The report found that the Government has undertaken several positive steps following the first UPR cycle, including the adoption of legal-judicial reform for 2015-2017; the law on prevention of domestic violence in 2013; criminalization of torture in 2012; several decisions of the Supreme Court related to implementation of international human rights standards (in 2012 and 2013); the adoption of national action plans on implementation of recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms. However, the same period was marked by some legislative initiatives limiting fundamental freedoms and constraining access to some social media and websites. A recently passed law on regulating NGOs is expected to potentially further limit the operational space for NGOs and civil society organizations.

With regards to child rights, the Government adopted the Law on Child Protection in March 2015, in part as a result of UNICEF Tajikistan's advocacy efforts with the Parliament. The recent establishment of the Child Rights Protection Department in the Presidential Executive Office played a key role in the operationalization of the law.

The initial country reports on the two Optional Protocols to the CRC were not yet submitted. UNICEF Tajikistan and sister UN agencies advocated for the signature of the CRPD. The Third Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was not signed by Tajikistan yet.

Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan continued its efforts in the area of gender equality, especially with the promotion of Girls Education. UNICEF Tajikistan worked with MoES, the Committee of Youth Affairs and Initiative Youth of Tajikistan NGO to increase the percentage of girls transitioning from compulsory to non-compulsory education in 16 schools in three districts of Tajikistan. The transition rate for girls in project schools increased on average by six percentage points in one year (from the 2014-2015 academic year to the 2015-2016 academic year).

UNICEF Tajikistan promoted girls' rights and gender equality with advocacy and external communication. Girls were put forefront on advocacy, such as an adolescent girl selected by her peers to speak at the Global Water Forum, and by giving voice to girls' stories and perspectives, for example:

- Amina attends preschool for the first time in the flood affected region in Rasht, Tajikistan
- A story from the SDG exercise "The World's Largest Lesson", as part of celebrating UN@70 in Tajikistan– "Qualified teachers and books are our rights" – where girls' perspectives and views are highlighted systematically and purposefully.
- UNICEF Tajikistan with USAID assisted the Government in drafting an article featuring women's empowerment and scaling-up nutrition in Tajikistan, part of the Tajikistan's contribution to "Scaling up Nutrition in Practice: Women in Action for Scaling up Nutrition." It highlighted the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index as well as active roles played by women in the UNICEF -supported community-based universal salt iodisation project.

UNICEF Tajikistan joined forces with UN WOMEN to provide constructive comments to the draft

National Development Strategy (2016-2030) and to bring to the fore girls and women's rights, establish gender-specific targets and ensure participation of women and girls.

UNICEF Tajikistan recognized the need for systematic collection of disaggregated data for monitoring and reporting. UNICEF Tajikistan plans to conduct a gender assessment in 2016. This exercise, originally planned in 2015, was postponed due to the emergencies.

Environmental Sustainability

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan conducted an Environmental Footprint Assessment. This assessment revealed that UNICEF Tajikistan's footprint can be improved by reduction in air travel and in vehicle transportation. Concrete ideas were presented to the Country Management Team (CMT) in October 2015 including: turning lights off when leaving the office even temporarily; using a shuttle instead of several cars for meetings and travels within and outside the city; using a car instead of a plane for remote travels when allowed by UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS); using video conference to participate in out of country meetings instead of air travel when possible. These options will be further discussed at the staff retreat in 2016.

As part of the new Country Programme Document (CPD), UNICEF Tajikistan conducted an environmental assessment and will take the results into consideration in the implementation phase.

Effective Leadership

Established office governance systems functioned well. In-house committees functioned effectively and efficiently. The CMT met six times. Key issues included: Adoption of the Annual Management Plan and Office priorities; the new CP, Office Structure for 2016-2020, CPMP and PBR; Audit; Revision of TOA and Committees; Ethics training; Follow up to the Global Staff Survey. Management indicators, implementation of the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP), plans and opportunities for fundraising and staff association issues were addressed at each meeting.

The CRC met to review and recommend 17 cases for the Representative's approval. Seven Programme Coordination Meetings were held to review and update of Early Warning Early Action (EWEA), UNDAF, Country Programme Document (CPD) and Programme and Budget Review (PBR), HACT Assurance Plan, Emergency Response and new CPD process. The Local Training Committee met twice to review and endorse the Office Training Plan and individual staff training requests for the Representative's approval. The JCC met four times. Major issues included: staff retreat; utilization of staff welfare funds; results of staff salary survey of 2014 and related actions and follow-ups; office relocation; and the talent Mapping Initiative. The Project Cooperation Agreement Review Committee reviewed four cases for Representative approval. Other committees met as and when required.

As part of risk mitigation measures, staff's VISION roles were reviewed and TOA was updated three times to ensure proper segregation of duties.

The following work processes were reviewed internally and briefing to all staff was organized: travel, supply and procurement, VISION roles, supporting documents, internal controls, segregation of duties and HACT spot checks.

To ensure MOSS compliance, a relocation process for the UN Common Premises was initiated with the UNCT. Potential premises were identified, and seismic assessment is being conducted. It is expected that the process will be completed and a request for office premises relocation in the second quarter of 2016, to be submitted to Division of Financial and Administrative Management for review.

Financial Resources Management

The quality of supporting documents is constantly monitored; all payments and Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) liquidations are processed within 5 working days; payment runs are normally done twice a week, and the payroll is processed timely. Bank reconciliation was processed on time with the few reconciling items, which were reviewed, followed up and cleared timely.

The outstanding DCT balances are followed up on a weekly basis. The un-liquidated DCT balance above six months was 0.96 per cent and above nine months - 4.64 per cent at 31st of December 2015. (This is a DCT is with a Ministry and expected to be liquidated in 2016. UNICEF Tajikistan undertook a series of actions, including high-level meetings with the Ministry, to mitigate this).

Simplified micro-assessments of six Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) were carried out jointly by programme and operations sections and one spot check of one CSO was conducted as part of on-going HACT audit assurance activities. 2015 Micro Assessment and Assurance Plan was updated as per the new HACT guidance.

In April 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan initiated self-audit and peer review / assessment exercises to review office work processes and practices and ensure compliance with the policy and procedures. The latter was conducted with the participation of the Operations Manager from Azerbaijan.

UNICEF Tajikistan was audited by an internal audit in October 2015, draft audit observation report was shared with the country CO, and the office provided the response to it, pending auditor's second draft report.

In December 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan initiated a new tender process for provision of banking service. The case is expected to be completed in early 2016.

Good utilization rates were achieved in 2015. Utilization of Institutional Budget GC non-grant, Other Resources (OR) and ORE expiring funds at end 2015 reached 100 per cent.

Fund-raising and Donor Relations

UNICEF Tajikistan was particularly successful in raising flexible funding in 2015. A total of US\$ 5.16 million in OR was raised in grants from United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, Conflict, Security and Stability Fund, The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, United Nations Programme on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, USAID/GAVI, UNAIDS, World Bank, Global Thematic Fund, the Russian Federation, and UK NatCom Starwood. This was also a result of the new Resource Mobilization strategy to leverage partnerships and funds for results for children. The increase in the diversity of donors demonstrates the capacity of UNICEF Tajikistan to meet the new OR ceiling set in 2014. In addition, OR funding allocated for 2015 was successfully utilized by sections.

The Health and Nutrition section was particularly well-funded in 2015, and cumulatively over the CP exceeded the OR ceiling by 38 per cent. This reflects the favourable environment for resource mobilization in this particular sector, specifically to support procurement of vaccines and other supply for the Government. This procurement was at the request of donors, demonstrating UNICEF Tajikistan's comparative advantage in procurement.

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan received support from the RO in mobilizing emergency-funds to respond to the recurring emergencies in the country.

In 2015 there was no significant programmatic funding gap, with Policy and Planning being the only underfunded section/outcome. This may indicate a need to dialogue with donors to allocate slightly higher percentages within grants for this important set of results.

UNICEF Tajikistan gave priority to the timely submission of quality donor reports. A total of 15 donor reports were submitted, all ahead of the deadline or on time (one internal deadline missed by one week).

Evaluation

In 2015 UNICEF Tajikistan started application of the global Plan for Research, Impact Monitoring and Evaluation platform (PRIME, an electronic version of IMEP). This online platform is designed to plan studies and evaluations to assess the progress of the CP, inform programming, and to advocate on children's issues. Progress with implementation of the PRIME activities was reviewed regularly at Programme Coordination and CMT meetings.

UNICEF Tajikistan commissioned an evaluation of UNICEF Tajikistan's work in priority districts implemented during the current programme cycle 2010 – 2015. An Evaluation Management Team composed of UNICEF Tajikistan Team and partner Ministry of Economic Development and Trade was established to provide oversight to the evaluation process. The international consultant recruited to conduct the evaluation completed field work in mid-November 2015. During this period, the consultant held meetings with national stakeholders (local authorities, representatives of ministries, etc.), spearheaded focus group discussions with children and parents as well as discussions with professionals to collect vital impressions on the relevance, accessibility and quality of provided services through UNICEF Tajikistan assistance. A number of critical recommendations were provided through the initial report that is currently being reviewed by the country team. Once the report is finalized in January 2016, the country team will prepare the management response for further follow-up with implementation of recommendations.

The respective teams prepared two management response for evaluations conducted in late 2014, one on Youth-Friendly Health Services and one on Juvenile Justice Alternatives Project. Planned actions are being implemented gradually and monitored.

A number of other studies, such as the baseline study for ECD TV animation project and the Learning Outcomes Assessment Tool for Preschool Sector in the context of ECE centres, were completed by UNICEF Tajikistan to enhance National ECE practices.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan implemented all possible measures to reduce operational costs. The following cost control measures were implemented:

- Purchasing non-refundable rather than full-fare air tickets: resulted in cost savings estimated at US\$ 53,000 in 2015;
- Establishment of 21 long-term agreements (LTAs) for essential programme supplies and services (including 4 common UN LTAs) led to increase of efficiency of office operations and reduction of transactional cost;
- Opting for economy-class air tickets, whenever possible, rather than business-class, when travelling to meetings/events outside of the country when the travel time exceeds nine hours. The only exception is made to appointment, change of duty station and separation travel;
- Better travel planning and coordination, early booking, scrutinizing travel options and keeping travel days to the minimum for all travels;
- Opting for cheaper venues for meetings and other events, using, whenever possible, the office's conference room, meeting halls in VEFA centre, and conference facilities of government counterparts;
- Saving on utility bills, particularly by switching off the lights , air-conditioners, computers, printers and UPS-s when leaving the office;
- Change of satellite phone communications service provider saved the office approximately US\$ 800 in 2015;
- Using Skype for Business and VOIP (voice over IP) for international calls rather than public telephone lines;
- Better currency conversion rate negotiated from Tajiksodirot Bank led to approximate financial gain of US\$ 10,500 in 2015;
- Outsourcing office cleaning services resulted in financial savings of US\$ 6,515.

Supply Management

The supply component of the CP in 2015 amounted to US\$ 2,046,903.

UNICEF Tajikistan 2015	Value in US\$
Programme supplies	1,590,189
Operational supplies	67,616
Services	389,098

UNICEF Tajikistan facilitated procurement services between the UNICEF Supply Division, Government, UNDP, UNFPA, and other international agencies.

The following categories of common UN procurement of services and supplies were implemented in 2015:

- vehicle maintenance and provision of spare parts, led by UNICEF
- provision of printing services, led by UNICEF
- supply of fuel, led by UNDP
- travel services, led by UNDP

UN Common Premise reallocation process was initiated in 2015, to be finalized in second quarter 2016.

Non-expendable property physical count was carried out once in September and programme supplies physical count was carried out once in December 2015, with no reconciling items.

Thorough exercise on prequalification of potential vendors for the most commonly used categories of programme supplies and services was conducted. 22 suppliers were assessed and 11 were prequalified as part of this exercise.

21 LTAs were issued in 2015 for the provision of emergency supplies, translation services, event management and organizing catering services.

The CO used two warehouses for storing of emergency supplies: Republican Medicine Procurement Centre (RMPC) warehouse for perishable items and Committee on Emergency Situations (COES) warehouse for non-perishable supplies. The total value of supplies received US\$ 86,952 in the warehouses and issued from the warehouses is US\$ 274,799. The current value of inventory is US\$ 114,033.

Security for Staff and Premises

UNICEF Tajikistan received support from UNDSS on safety and security:

- Zone warden and Safety & Security in the Field trainings organized by UNDSS in September and October;
- An earthquake and fire safety drill exercise was conducted for UN staff located in VEFA premises in October and a warden drill exercise for all UN staff was done 21 November,
- A radio check carried out weekly for SMT members, Security Focal Points and Wardens;
- Security briefings conducted for all visitors (staff and consultants) within five working days upon arrival,
- Regular security updates, including daily updates on road conditions received from UNDSS.

Measures were taken to enhance the CO's MOSS compliance, such as:

- Replaced obsolete fire extinguishers with new ones
- Installed Earthquake Alarm device
- Visual Earthquake Resistance Assessment of VEFA building was conducted.

The Business Continuity Plan (BCP) was updated at the end of the year. Tajikistan's EWEA on-line system was regularly updated throughout the year. The threat levels in Tajikistan did not change. Key actions and preparedness activities were discussed during the programme and management review meetings and will continue to be included in the rolling work plans.

Risk Control Self-Assessment (RCSA) in-house exercise was carried out in February 2015. A working group consisting of management, programme and operations colleagues reviewed and updated major institutional, programme and operations risks of Tajikistan Office. A full-fledged RCSA exercise with UNICEF Kazakhstan support is expected to take place in first quarter 2016.

In July 2015, an Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) workshop for all staff was conducted by Regional Chief of Emergency, who also assisted to review the emergency preparedness and response progress and develop recommendations for strengthening the mainstreaming of EPR and DRR in the new CPD.

Human Resources

UNICEF Tajikistan continued to uphold transparency in staff recruitment. All vacancies were given wide dissemination through UNTJ website, newspapers and global broadcast. Twelve recruitment cases were completed; four recruitment cases are on-going. This year more staff had an opportunity to be CBI trained to contribute during the recruitment process. For professional recruitments, Subject Matter Experts from RO were involved in the recruitment whenever required.

UNICEF Tajikistan successfully continues to use Performance Appraisal System to have an open dialogue on competency demonstration, output and developmental plan achievements throughout the year. 100 per cent of staff completed 2014 PASs and first and second phases of 2015 Performance Appraisal System (PASs) on time. Supervisors and supervisees met to discuss performance progress through the reporting period. All staff are encouraged to have thorough mid-year PAS discussion to timely address the performance needs and issues.

The Training Plan was finalized in March 2015 based on staff development plan outputs. The newly introduced UNICEF Tajikistan training database AGORA was used by staff to identify different learning opportunities. PPP, CBI, Ethics, ERP refreshment trainings were identified as some of UNICEF Tajikistan's priorities. Most of the training activities were completed. UNICEF Tajikistan supported several development opportunities for staff (6 staff went on stretch assignments) and provided support to other UNICEF Tajikistan offices (10 staff from the offices come on stretch assignments).

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

UNICEF Tajikistan completed all Information and Communication Technology (ICT) planned tasks, including software/hardware upgrades and updates, such as introduction of MS Windows Server 2012 as the new Operating System standard for servers and Windows 8 as the new OS standard user workstations, deployment of new solutions.

To go in line with modern technologies and to easily run latest business related software applications, new set of IT equipment with higher performance was purchased. This should increase staff's work efficiency. All obsolete equipment was submitted for property survey board (PSB) for disposal.

In January 2015, to improve office connectivity, main and backup internet lines were upgraded. Yet, the cost of VSAT connectivity remained at the same level due to lower subscription rates in the new LTA between UNICEF Tajikistan and EMC.

CO local area network was upgraded to separate UNICEF Tajikistan and non-UNICEF devices into different networks, thus improve network security and utilization of internet traffic.

To improve efficiency of CO network traffic utilization and improve performance of business critical applications, in September 2015 Application Performance Management was introduced.

Remote connectivity tools such as Citrix, VPN and mobile internet modems were actively used throughout the year to improve staff mobility in delivering programme results.

Starting from 2015, all satellite phone subscriptions were transferred from AIRBUS Group to IEC Telecom, which has a global LTA with UNICEF Tajikistan. This change of satellite communications service provider led to saving of US\$ 800 in 2015.

The country CO maintains its website and social media platforms like Facebook (with 1,600 followers), Twitter (with 77 followers), as well YouTube and Flickr pages. In addition to these digital platforms, as a part of the global programme, a mobile application with Facts for Life key messages was adapted into local languages (Tajik and Russian) which is planned to launch starting from the next year.

Programme Components from Results Assessment Module

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 By the end of 2015, in all reproductive health centres and maternity houses of 18 districts, pregnant women of at risk profile receive VCT and if HIV positive, receive ARV in accordance with PMTCT protocol; and HIV positive children have access to ARV prevention, treatment and social services.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

According to the Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, child mortality in Tajikistan fell from 108 per 1000 live births in 1990 to 45 per 1000 live births in 2015. Though a remarkable achievement, this falls short of the MDG4 final year target of 36 per 1000 live births. Similarly, the maternal mortality rate fell by 70 per cent from 107 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 32 per 100,000 live births in 2015 (Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group 2015) against a 75 per cent reduction target. Both child and maternal mortality targets are retained in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Tajikistan's commitment to further accelerating maternal, neonatal and child mortality reduction was reconfirmed at the December 2015 Joint Annual Review of National Health Strategy.

The 2012 infant death causal analysis supported by UNICEF Tajikistan revealed that most of the 10 leading causes of infant deaths are ultimately preventable, and many causes of neonatal mortality relate to poor coverage of quality continuum of care for reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH). Shortages of drugs, equipment, and basic facilities such as water, sanitation, and electricity supply were also observed. These were highlighted again at the joint review of the National Child and Adolescent Health Strategy 2010-2015. As 2015 marked the end of the Strategy, UNICEF Tajikistan and WHO supported the MoHSP to facilitate a participatory review process of achievements and constraints in strategy implementation over the past five years, and to define future priorities. This was followed by drafting a comprehensive RMNCAH action plan for 2016-2020, with the active engagement of all stakeholders and in line with the 'A Promised Renewed' initiative (2012) and the 'Every New-born Action Plan' (2014). Once finalized in 2016, the plan will be costed.

According to the joint UNICEF Tajikistan-World Bank Nutrition Situation Analysis for Tajikistan (2012), the estimated number of deaths potentially attributable to under nutrition was calculated at 7,676 annually, making up 35 per cent of child mortality. The same study estimated that under nutrition costs Tajikistan US\$41 million annually because of loss in workforce and lost productivity due to increased mortality and reduced cognitive and physical development. Over a third of the economic losses could be prevented by nationwide implementation of cost-effective, evidence-based interventions, such as promotion of good infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices, micronutrient supplementation, universal salt iodisation, and management of severe and acute malnutrition. UNICEF Tajikistan support in 2015 was intended to improve the quality of coverage of these identified priority interventions. Through the mobilization of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder commitments, Scaling up Nutrition (SUN), a Movement uniting stakeholders in a collective effort to improve nutrition, is instrumental in sustaining such efforts.

Once a common results framework and multi-sectoral plan of action are finalised within the SUN framework, priority interventions will be incorporated into sector strategies. As an important breakthrough, all stakeholders in Tajikistan agreed to overarching goal of reducing stunting, in alignment with the World Health Assembly target.

The 2015 review of the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT) programme confirmed an increase in coverage of voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) for PMTCT from 35 per cent in 2010 to 93 per cent in 2014 nationally. A total of 89 per cent of pregnancies were covered with antiretroviral (ARV) for PMTCT; the main reason for non-coverage was late HIV diagnosis. A total of 92.5 per cent of children of mothers living with HIV were formula-fed, while the majority of breastfeeding mothers were not on ART and most infants had either never received prophylaxis or their mothers had rejected it. Knowledge and awareness about the benefits of PMTCT programming among the general population remains critically low. Analysis of the HIV positive pregnant women's profile data (which require further analysis) also suggests a potential shift in the epidemic in Tajikistan from "concentration" among IDUs to more "general" sexual transmission. This has significant implications for future PMTCT policy and programming.

Finally, insufficient allocation of public finance and inefficiencies in public expenditure in the health sector were the most fundamental bottlenecks to advancing child survival and development in the country. In 2015 UNICEF Tajikistan with support from the RO, conducted a country assessment on equity-focused budgeting for maternal, new-born and child health (MNCH) and nutrition. Based on the assessment and its recommendations, which were discussed with key stakeholders and experts at a regional workshop, UNICEF Tajikistan developed a road map to strengthen equity-focused and evidence-based planning, budgeting and public financial management to ensure that essential child survival and development interventions are made under the new CP.

UNICEF Tajikistan activities under Outcome 1 were aligned with the CEE/CIS Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda Results 5 (the right to be born HIV-free), 6 (a child's right to health and the global call to action "A Promised Renewed", 7 (comprehensive well-being), and 10 (a second chance for adolescents).

OUTPUT 1 By the end of 2015, the Ministry of Health provides all children under-5, including new-born infants in priority districts with quality child survival interventions in accordance with international standards.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan and GIZ in partnership with an American NGO LDS Charities supported MoHSP to train over 150 health professionals on essential new-born care. Since 2011, such activities have resulted in enhanced knowledge and skills among over 1,240 professionals on topics including neonatal resuscitation, postnatal bleeding management, and implementation of new neonatal care protocols. Meanwhile, in 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan procure essential neonatal care/resuscitation equipment for maternities nationwide.

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan supported the MoHSP to re-assess cold chain capacity in anticipation of introduction of inactivated polio vaccine (IPV). Only 27 per cent of refrigerators were found to meet WHO standards and 35 per cent were more than 10 years old, while 66 per cent of healthcare facilities were equipped with the recommended thermometers and just 2 per cent with fridge tags. The findings feed into the national immunization programme 2016-2020

which is currently being drafted.

UNICEF Tajikistan support also resulted in development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for effective vaccine management; enhanced knowledge among 175 family doctors on the rotavirus vaccine introduced in January 2015; enhanced practical knowledge of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) among 63 family doctors from Sughd oblast; and finalisation of EPI communication and crisis communication strategies.

In addition, the MoHSP organized supplementary polio immunization in mid-2015 (the tenth round since 2010), reaching about 1.2 million children under five years of age (98.8 per cent coverage). UNICEF Tajikistan, WHO and other partners supported campaign monitoring.

UNICEF Tajikistan supported the MoHSP to introduce a maternal and child health handbook to educate mothers, fathers, and families on care practices and record maternal and child health status in the thousand critical days from conception through the first two years of life. Since late 2014, 15,000 copies were printed for phased rollout in remote districts of Rasht valley. Training of health professionals is ongoing. UNICEF Tajikistan also helped enhance the capacity of 125 primary healthcare (PHC) workers from five vulnerable districts on integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI).

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan engaged a technical expert to propose a system for early detection and intervention service delivery for children with developmental delays, defining the scopes of work of various service providers, including Psychological Medical Pedagogy Consultations (PMPCs). As a result, SOPs for PMPCs were finalized, and a concept and road map for institutionalizing early detection and intervention services in the public health system were drafted for consultations with stakeholders.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2015, the Ministry of Health provides all children under-5 in priority districts with priority child nutrition and selected ECD interventions in accordance with international standards.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Since 2013, 875 health workers have increased knowledge of micronutrients, home fortification, and IYCF counselling. Health facilities have also been equipped with IYCF communication materials, including 15,000 copies of an IYCF counselling package developed, printed and distributed nationwide to facilitate nutrition counselling and health education.

With UNICEF Tajikistan in-kind contribution of Vitamin A, the MoHSP successfully conducted its semi-annual Vitamin A supplementation campaign in June and December 2015, reaching over 99 per cent of children aged under five years nationwide. All campaigns during 2011-2015 had more than 95 per cent coverage. With assistance from USAID and the Russian Federation, UNICEF Tajikistan also supported the Government to implement its micronutrient supplementation programme, and 154,750 children in 33 of the country's 64 districts received micronutrient powders (Sprinkles) for sixty days every six months in 2015. Around 123,600 pregnant women in 41 districts also received iron and folic acid tablets as part of their antenatal care at primary healthcare level. The programme has gradually expanded from its initial coverage of 67,000 children aged 6-23 months and 45,000 pregnant women in 12 districts of Khatlon in 2013.

With support from USAID and GAIN, and in collaboration with the Government and NGOs, UNICEF Tajikistan facilitated implementation of the Rapid Test Kits Strategy for universal salt

iodisation through community interventions throughout the country in 2015. In an assessment conducted in May 2015, 77 per cent of respondents reported awareness of iodized salt and 74 per cent said they use it (up from 58 per cent in the 2013 baseline). Meanwhile, more than 99 per cent of salt was purchased in small packages, most of which are labelled (significantly more than the 47 per cent in 2013).

UNICEF Tajikistan is supporting MoHSP to expand severe acute malnutrition treatment services from four therapeutic centres to all 64 district hospitals. For this, in 2015 UNICEF Tajikistan procured therapeutic food for 3,900 children. Joint technical assistance with WHO and WFP resulted in the MoHSP's approval of an Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) protocol that includes community management of acute malnutrition. Subsequently, IMAM training was provided in Dushanbe, Kulob and Shartuz for a total of 88 medical doctors. UNICEF Tajikistan also procured supplies to facilitate pilot IMAM implementation in these areas.

UNICEF Tajikistan and WHO also supported the MoHSP to conduct a deworming campaign. A total of 1,533,655 children aged 5-14 years (97.7 per cent of the age group) received deworming tablets and appropriate hygiene promotion messages.

OUTPUT 3 By the end of 2015, pregnant women, at risk children and youth receive HIV counselling and testing, and if positive, a full package of ART and associated services, according to national protocols.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Tajikistan-assisted training in 30 districts resulted in improved knowledge of PMTCT among 360 ANC providers. Training focused on quality of counselling, partner involvement in HIV testing, criteria for second testing of HIV among pregnant women, timely initiation of ARV, and infant feeding in the context of HIV infection.

The 2015 PMTCT review acknowledged high nationwide VCT coverage, but significant disparities between regions. It also found that the nationally-approved testing algorithm caused delays obtaining HIV status, which sometimes led to delayed initiation of ARV prophylaxis. This, along with diagnosis of HIV only in labour and delivery, can cause pregnant women living with HIV to miss out on ARVs for PMTCT.

The early infant diagnosis (EID) programme management plan drafted by the MoHSP with UNICEF Tajikistan support in 2014 was updated with referral procedures and distribution of responsibilities between maternity houses and AIDS centres for blood sample collection and transportation to the reference laboratory. Training workshops equipped more than 100 AIDS and MCH specialists with knowledge and skills to manage EID.

In April 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan assisted MoHSP to monitor HIV testing for children. This led to improved reporting of HIV cases among children.

Multi-disciplinary mobile teams supported by UNICEF Tajikistan, MoHSP and Guli Surkh NGO successfully reached 509 additional children living with HIV to initiate ART in 2015. By the end of April, 92 per cent of children living with HIV were covered. Tuberculosis cases were detected in about 15 per cent of children living with HIV, leading to early treatment.

More than 100 copies of guidelines on psychosocial support for children living with HIV and their caregivers were distributed in 2015. Nevertheless, high turnover of trained staff at the Republican AIDS Centre means there are further capacity building needs. In September,

UNICEF Tajikistan Regional Office organised training to improve psychosocial care for adolescents living with HIV in Central Asia: two NGO psychologists from Tajikistan participated. UNICEF Tajikistan then renewed its partnership with MoHSP and Guli Surkh to replicate its multi-disciplinary model with a new focus on services for adolescent girls and boys living with HIV.

An upsurge of reported HIV with unknown mode of transmission among children is likely to stem from medical interventions. UNICEF Tajikistan supported the MoHSP to adapt the regional distance learning module on infection control in health facilities for Tajikistan's context. The module will also be incorporated into the curriculum of the professional development institute attended by healthcare professionals every four years.

OUTCOME 2 By the end of 2015, children will have increased access to the preschool and basic education system, with particular focus on providing opportunities for out-of-school children, and the quality of education will be improved through a strengthened policy environment

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan, as chair of the Local Education Group, supported the MoES to conduct the second Joint Sector Review, with a particular focus on Assessment of Learning. The Performance Review of the Medium Term Education Action Plan for 2015-2017 ensued that looked at achievements, challenges and ways forward. The Joint Sector Review Report provided an updated analysis of the sector, utilising recent Education Management Information System (EMIS) data and other sources to yield a comprehensive overview of the education sector in Tajikistan.

Since 2007, the number of children accessing formal early learning opportunities increased steadily by around 5 per cent. In 2015, 12.3 per cent of boys and girls 3-6 years are benefiting from early learning opportunities. The early learning model developed by UNICEF Tajikistan and partners officially been recognised since 2013 by the Government under the Law on Preschool Education and accompanying bylaws. However according to the Joint Review, there is a critical shortage of early learning facilities, especially for centres in rural areas and serving poor families, across the country (571 kindergartens and 1,619 early childhood education centre).

While the primary schools in Tajikistan are reaching near universal coverage, the gross enrolment ratio in secondary education drops sharply, meaning that only 69.6 per cent of all children in grades 10 to 11 are in school. Once enrolment is no longer mandatory by grade 10 (i.e. by age 15), coverage rates drop dramatically even though general secondary education is free. The gap in gender disparity between lowest (primary) and highest (upper secondary) tiers has remarkably gone down, but the difference across the tiers in the 2014-15 academic year remains: while primary enrolment is 48.3 for girls, it is only 45.6 per cent in upper secondary education (grades 10 to 11) reflecting larger dropouts rates for girls later in their academic years. According to 2015 data, only 73 per cent of girls transition from compulsory to non-compulsory education. In addition, CWD, children in conflict with the law, children working and living on the street, and children in rural areas face specific challenges in accessing the education system. Children from more disadvantaged groups who are able to continue their education often miss classes, leading to low achievement and eventually dropping out before completing basic education.

Finally, the quality of education is negatively affected by learning environments that are not child-friendly. Particular challenges include non-interactive teaching, a shortage of trained

teachers, limited teaching and learning materials, and non-accessible infrastructure.

In this context, equitable access to quality education is UNICEF Tajikistan's overarching concern. It seeks to promote access to quality education for all, with a special focus on the most marginalised students. It aims to work both at project and policy level, with lessons learned from each informing the other to further develop the national education system. In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan's work with the Ministry and development partners yielded positive results for example new models and interventions such as the early warning system to mitigate school drop-outs was tested in more schools including in communities close to border areas such as Isfara and Bobojon Gafurov. The pilot accelerated learning programme (ALP) for out-of-school children, including Afghan refugee children, was officially launched. Partners, both development and national, were mobilised to promote early learning and childhood development and around inclusive education efforts. More champions for girls' education were identified across targeted communities to promote better rates of transition from compulsory to non-compulsory education among girls. A deeper partnership with the Tajik State Pedagogical University led to improved pedagogical skills of faculty and pre-service teachers.

UNICEF Tajikistan ensured that disability is mainstreamed in all aspects of its programme in an inclusive education approach. At present, UNICEF Tajikistan is supporting MoES to strengthen the inclusive education system by establishing resource centres for teachers, developing teaching and learning materials for inclusive education resource centres, and supporting an approach that ensures all students are afforded quality education.

A variety of bottlenecks impact progress. These include, but are not limited to, the overall budget availability for the sector; limited access to quality services; and social and cultural practices and beliefs. The narrative statements under each output detail achievements that UNICEF Tajikistan and the Government have made in 2015 towards addressing these bottlenecks.

Activities under this outcome are directly in line with the CEECIS Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda, results areas 3 and 4: children's right to early learning, and inclusive quality education and contribute to result area 9: children's right to protection from risks of disasters – reducing vulnerabilities.

OUTPUT 1 By the end of 2015, the education system ensures increased access to an affordable and quality pre-school education system in twelve priority districts

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In Tajikistan, according to 2015 MoES administrative data, early childhood education opportunities reached 12.3 per cent of children aged 3-6, an increase of 5.4 per cent since 2007.

To work towards increasing access to ECE, under the regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda (RKLA), results areas 3 and 4, UNICEF Tajikistan, the Aga Khan Foundation and the MoES have developed a low-cost, half-day ECE model. In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan supported the establishment of 19 ECE centres in Sughd Region with the UK government funds, and four ECE centres in Rasht Valley with the UN Trust Fund for Human Security adding up to 207 centres in total. These centres were established in the most rural and disadvantaged areas of the country, including conflict-sensitive areas, and they target minority ethnic communities. They were successfully replicated by local education officials and other partners: a total of 1,619 ECE centres in Tajikistan now provide preschool education access for more than 35,255 children (45

per cent girls). In addition, growing commitment to expanding ECE amongst Government and development partners is also reflected in Tajikistan's Global Partnership for Education Round 4 (GPE-4), which emphasizes ECE. GPE-4 project implemented by the MoES with UNICEF Tajikistan technical support, contributed to strengthening the capacity of 450 centres with provision of relevant and age-appropriate teaching-learning materials, furniture and toys, provision of ECE teacher training to 900 ECE facilitators, aiming to improve teaching quality and learning outcomes.

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan supported MoES to review its Early Education Development Standards for compliance with the Law on Preschool Education. This Government subsequently revised its State Standards and Regulation on Preschool Education. In addition to this important achievement, UNICEF Tajikistan and partners' assistance helped to; develop and implement an assessment tool to measure learning outcomes; implement a Per-Capita Financing mechanism for preschool sector; develop teaching and learning materials and provide teacher training for more than 70 ECE facilitators; and elaborate an inclusive education module intended to include girls and boys with disabilities in ECE. The curriculum was translated into three languages of minority ethnic groups. In addition, more than 40 school directors and accountants received financial management training to better manage the provision of fee-based services. Despite progress, early childhood education remains inaccessible for more than 88 per cent of children in Tajikistan. To address this, UNICEF Tajikistan continued its national communication campaign with Open Society Institute and MoES to promote ECD. Thus in 2015, 25 child-focused animation television programmes were jointly developed with the plan to start broadcast in the national TV channel in 2016. The Programme is expected to reach more than 70 per cent of all preschool aged children.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2015, the number of children (including CWD, children from disadvantaged social backgrounds, girls, children of ethnic minority, and children with multiple disadvantages) have increased access to education

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Tajikistan and UNESCO Institute for Statistics research published in 2013 found that most out of school children (OOSC), were girls, CWD, children of migrant parents, children working and living on the streets, orphans, and children in conflict with the law. An OOSC Working Group established within MoES with UNICEF Tajikistan support developed indicators on issues including dropout and absenteeism, which MoES adopted in the first quarter of 2015 to use from academic year 2015-16.

To promote accessible and quality education for all, under the Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda (RKLA), results areas 3 and 4, the MoES Curriculum board endorsed an Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) developed by UNICEF Tajikistan and the Working Group to enable students to complete their basic education and transition back into mainstream education or into the workforce. In a pilot of the project that began in September 2015, 71 children (28 boys and 43 girls) including 28 refugees from Afghanistan, who were out-of-school or two or more years behind their peers, are attending and learning in catch-up classes in Dushanbe and Vahdat.

UNICEF Tajikistan continued working with MoES; the Committee of Youth Affairs, Sports and Tourism; and Initiative Youth of Tajikistan NGO to increase the percentage of girls transitioning from compulsory to non-compulsory education in 16 schools in three districts of Tajikistan, through peer education. In the first year of project implementation 66 per cent of girls in Grade 9 who pledged to continue their education after compulsory school, actually transitioned to and

continued their studies in Grade 10. The transition rate in project schools increased on average by six percentage points in one year.

To address bottlenecks to child participation at school, UNICEF Tajikistan developed an Early Warning System (EWS) to identify children at risk of dropping out and implement dropout prevention interventions. UNICEF Tajikistan, in partnership with Economics and Education NGO, expanded the EWS to 50 project schools in four districts of Tajikistan. This project was financially supported by the UK Government's Conflict, Security and Stabilisation Fund, UK Natcom-Starwood fund and the UN Trust Fund for Human Security. The EWS was complemented with an online real-time monitoring system to track attendance and other records in five Dushanbe schools. As a result of the EWS, school officials and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) in 55 schools have proactively identified 2,983 at-risk children (1,829 boys and 1,154 girls) and were working to identify the main causes of truancy, poor academic performance, difficult behaviour and other risk factors and to address those barriers and bottlenecks through developing individual child response plans. In the first year of project implementation, of 1,515 at-risk children only 35 (21 boys and 14 girls) dropped out of school.

OUTPUT 3 By the end of 2015, the educational framework is improved to ensure better quality basic education in up to 12 priority districts

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Tajikistan, under the framework of the RKLA 3 and 4, partnered with the Tajik State Pedagogical University to develop, train, and offer courses in student-centred approach for pre-service teachers. In September 2015, the University introduced a course on pedagogical mastery, developed by UNICEF Tajikistan in 2014. As a result, 60 faculty members are conducting classes using active teaching and learning to support future schoolteachers to acquire innovative teaching techniques and skills. In addition, 560 part-time students are now enrolled in and studying in a course on Pedagogical Mastery, developed and integrated into the pre-service curriculum with UNICEF Tajikistan technical and financial assistance.

According to 2015 data, there are 983 multi-grade classrooms in the country. Until 2014, no specific training was provided to teachers and education officials working in or with these classrooms to address their specific needs. In addition, there were no teaching and learning materials to support the learning environment in these complex classrooms. Since 2014, UNICEF Tajikistan worked with the Academy of Education to develop a teacher training manual and pedagogical support materials. In August 2015, the first cohort of teacher training for multi-grade settings was conducted in Rasht valley. This benefitted 63 teachers (56 male and seven female).

UNICEF Tajikistan has been working to incorporate an Inclusive Education model: an action plan is now under review. A working group established by UNICEF Tajikistan developed a format for Individual Education Plans to support inclusive education. In addition, UNICEF Tajikistan established seven resource centres in major cities to provide teachers with access to resources to teach children with varying needs. At the resource centres, 60 teachers have received advanced training on working with CWD. In addition, UNICEF Tajikistan carried out a series of awareness campaigns regarding the right of all children, including CWD, to access quality education. In particular, 20 mainstream schools and communities, which were rehabilitated and made physically accessible for CWD under the Global Partnership for Education 4 project, benefitted from awareness raising events.

UNICEF Tajikistan, as the Education Sector/Cluster lead, coordinated and responded to

mudflows affecting 7,000 and displacing 1,000 people in two regions of Tajikistan in July 2015. As a result, 81 preschool age children (28 boys and 53 girls) attended two Child-Friendly Spaces (CSFs) and 10 school-age children (5 boys and 5 girls) attended Temporary Learning Class (TLC). In addition, 163 displaced school age children (90 boys and 73 girls) were provided with basic school supplies. It is important to highlight that CSFs established during emergency will be transitioned to permanent facility to continue benefiting young children in the immediate area. UNICEF Tajikistan will also be responding to the consequences of 7.2 magnitude earthquake, which occurred in the eastern part of Tajikistan on 7 December 2015. The results of the response to earthquake will be reflected in the next reporting. Key preparedness and response interventions included disaster risk reduction and building back better approach, which contribute to RKLA results area 9.

OUTCOME 3 By the end of 2015, there is an increase in the proportion of vulnerable children who benefit from alternative community-based social services, family substitute care and alternatives to incarceration.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The proportion of vulnerable children who benefitted from alternative community-based social services and family substitutes has slightly fallen (the number of children in formal alternative care decreased from 1,686 in 2014 to 1,539 in 2015). However, positive steps were taken to reduce reliance on institutions. With the adoption of the Law on Child Protection in March (not operational yet), the creation of the Department of Child Rights Protection in the Presidential Executive Office in July, and the decision to revise the Baby Homes Regulation to gradually transform these institutions to provide family support services, the prospects for further advancing alternative family care look good. There is a need to continue raising awareness of the negative effects of institutionalization, especially for children under the age of three and CWD, and to influence a shift in mind-set among a population that largely believes that entrusting the care of a child to the State is a guarantee of a better education and brighter future for that child. The slight decrease in the number of children placed in residential care (from 10,947 in 2013 to 10,201 in 2014) can be seen as indicative of a possible shift.

CWD were more likely to be excluded from mainstream society and placed in institutions or simply hidden away. However, the emergence of a critical mass of caregivers organized under the umbrellas of the Coalition of Associations of Parents of CWD, the Disabled People Organisations (DPOs), and local NGOs which are working to influence political decisions in favour of the rights of persons with disabilities (PWD) is another positive development. The Government has shown commitment to advancing these rights, including by entering into contractual arrangements with some DPOs for the provision of services to PWD and CWD. However, ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is still under review. UNICEF Tajikistan needs to continue to support empowerment of these local organisations to assert the rights of PWD and CWD while continuing its engagement with Government to mainstream disability across all social sectors.

With UNICEF Tajikistan financial support and guidance, Tajikistan drafted its combined third, fourth and fifth periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was submitted in November to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. This process highlighted, once again, the importance of establishing an effective mechanism to monitor follow-up and implementation of the concluding observations in the next round. The initial reports on the two Optional Protocols to the CRC that were due in 2004 could not be submitted in 2015, but these should be finalised by September 2016.

In the area of Justice for Children (J4C), the substantial capacity building of professionals from law enforcement agencies and the judiciary that was supported by UNICEF Tajikistan since 2010 was continued, albeit to a more limited extent, by the Ministry of Interior (Mol), the General Prosecutor's Office (GPO) and the Council of Justice (COJ), using their own resources. The training institutes of the COJ, the GPO and the Mol are all open to mainstreaming J4C in their curricula and have requested further support from UNICEF Tajikistan for both pre- and in-service training of their respective professionals. The State Programme on Legal and Judicial Reform 2015-2017, which provides for a feasibility assessment of the option to establish juvenile courts and appoint specialised judges, is an opportunity for UNICEF Tajikistan to continue its advocacy for the creation of a child-friendly justice system.

Achievements made in previous years in J4C were, however, put under threat by a number of challenges, including some loss in institutional memory caused by high staff turnover, limited government budget allocations, weak information management systems and inadequate coordination.

In the absence of regular and accurate data, the utilisation of alternatives to imprisonment for children in conflict with the law remains difficult to measure. According to official statistics, the number of children detained (120 boys and two girls in 2013) is relatively low compared to the total number of reported juvenile offences (725 in 2013). However, the absence of data on the outcome of criminal cases in which children are the defendants makes it difficult to assert with certainty that deprivation of liberty is used as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time. The UNICEF Tajikistan-supported diversion programme through the Centres for Additional Education (CAEs) (under MoES) could not be rolled out across the country because of a lack of political commitment. Failure to include CAEs in legislative wording as an authorised diversionary measure contributed to some extent to the limited caseload of CAEs (108 children in six districts). It is unclear whether rehabilitation of juvenile offenders through the CAEs would be pursued in the absence of UNICEF Tajikistan financial support.

The Inter-Agency Working Group on Juvenile Justice only met once in June and no decision was taken to review the ongoing National Plan of Action on Juvenile Justice System Reform 2010-2015 and to start developing a follow-up Plan on J4C for the next five years. There is a need to regain momentum through stronger advocacy and engagement with senior officials, including the National Commission on Child Rights under the Deputy Prime Minister.

UNICEF Tajikistan's work under this outcome contributes to RKLA results 1 (Children's right to a supportive and caring family environment) and 2 (Children's right to access to justice).

OUTPUT 1 By the end of 2015, improved policies, practices and services to effectively prevent and respond to unnecessary institutionalization of children (especially children under three and CWD)

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The Government adopted the Law on Child Protection in March 2015, in part because of UNICEF Tajikistan's advocacy efforts with Parliament. The recent establishment of the Child Rights Protection Department in the Presidential Executive Office should play a key role in the operationalisation of the law.

UNICEF Tajikistan supported the establishment of the Social Assistance at Home Unit (SAHU) in Rasht district where Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) and outreach services are

provided to 44 vulnerable children, including 14 CWD (six girls / eight boys) and 30 at risk of being institutionalised (11 girls/19 boys). The seven newly appointed SAHU staff members, trained on the basics of social work, are now qualified to work with vulnerable children, in particular with CWD and children without family care. The staff of the day-care centre in Rasht received training on rehabilitation of CWD. In total, 45 children and adolescents aged 4-14 (18 girls/27 boys) received rehabilitation services at the day-care centre.

In collaboration with the CBR Network, UNICEF Tajikistan and Mission East NGO developed an integrated training module on CBR and trained 116 staff of the MOHSPP, local CSOs and Practical Training Unit for Social Work and Innovations (PTUSWI) staff.

To expand the alternative family care options available in Tajikistan, UNICEF Tajikistan, HealthProm, the local NGO Sarchashma and the MOHSPP, began to pilot foster care in two locations (Sughd region and Dushanbe). The legal basis for the foster care pilot is the new Law on Child Protection, which provides for this alternative family care option. In January 2015, some 30 Government professionals, CSO staff members, and foster carers were trained on foster care, monitoring, and parental skills. There are currently four children (three boys / one girl) from Khujand Baby Home and four (one boy / three girls) from Dushanbe Baby Home 2 placed in foster care. The piloting phase is being documented to build a case for rolling out foster care around the country beyond 2016.

In response to the mudflows in GBAO and Rasht district, 364 children (177 boys/187 girls) received psychosocial support. In November 2015, 11 Mercy Corps staff members and 32 local government stakeholders in Rasht district attended a five-day training event on psychosocial support in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. This is part of a strategy to provide PSS counselling in vulnerable communities during future emergencies.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2015, children in contact with the law are treated more in compliance with international norms and standards on justice for children

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan provided technical support to the judiciary, law enforcement agencies and service providers to ensure that adolescent boys and girls who come into contact with the law are treated in a child-friendly manner and have their rights respected.

This support enabled 42 newly appointed judges and 60 Council of Justice trainee-judges to increase their capacity for J4C, child-friendly procedures, and child psychology. In addition, 20 prosecutors became more knowledgeable about Juvenile Justice, using a training module developed by master trainers in 2014 with UNICEF Tajikistan support. Two hundred police cadets were exposed to Child Rights and Prevention of Delinquency among Youth using a course designed and introduced to the Police Academy with UNICEF Tajikistan assistance. The training was fully funded by Government which is an indication of some sustainability for this type of efforts in future.

UNICEF Tajikistan also advocated for child-friendly judicial procedures and funded the establishment of seven child-friendly courtrooms in several regions of Tajikistan. However, effective use of these facilities was constrained by the absence of a signed protocol for joint use by judges, police investigators and prosecutors.

In addition, 108 children in conflict with the law (89 boys , 19 girls) were diverted from the criminal justice system and received rehabilitation through CAEs in six districts in Sughd and Khatlon regions. Advocacy with MoES to adopt the revised CAE Regulation was unsuccessful, thus undermining the sustainability of diversion and rehabilitation through these structures.

In partnership with the local NGO Legal Initiative, three regional platforms were organised for coordination and dialogue between concerned stakeholders to review J4C implementation in the country. The feedback from 100 participants will feed into the 2016-2020 National Plan of Action on J4C.

Thanks to UNICEF Tajikistan advocacy and collaboration with UNDP, eight lawyers (three male / five female) from the Legal Aid Centres and Hotline were trained on the specific rights and needs of children in contact with the law. Another successful advocacy effort resulted in introduction of the J4C concept into the draft National Development Strategy for 2016-2030.

With funding from the UK Government, UNICEF Tajikistan collaborated with the local NGO ASTI to implement interventions for child and youth empowerment, peace building and cross-border cooperation in the Ferghana Valley. The intervention reached 480 young people aged 15-24 (242 male / 238 female). Twenty young people (8 male/12 female) participated in Training of Trainers, and 460 (234 male/226 female) gained knowledge and life-skills on healthy lifestyles and tolerance.

OUTCOME 4 By the end of 2015, Government allocates proportionately more resources to critical social protection sectors (preschool education, neonatal care, family based care and protection) based on evidence and general public support.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Tajikistan's partnerships for child rights mainstreaming gained momentum during the reporting period. Six pilot districts finalized their district development planning processes with support from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MoEDT), and local socio-economic programming now has a greater focus on children (boys and girls). In these six districts, child rights mainstreaming processes have promoted equity and evidence-based programming to support equal opportunities for children from minority groups, from rural areas, and from poor families, as well as those with disabilities and those in contact with the law. Other districts will replicate this child rights emphasis in upcoming years.

In addition, UNICEF Tajikistan mainstreamed child rights in national level policy-making processes through two core entry points. Firstly, active participation and active advocacy in national consultations in national development planning processes (2016-2030). Secondly a new national social protection strategy was designed. These strategies are in the process of finalisation. However, UNICEF Tajikistan has confirmation that needs of boys and girls as well as women were taken into account in both of these important processes and will be reflected in the mentioned plans and strategies. For instance a life-cycle approach was adopted to the design of the social protection strategy and a chapter on vulnerable children was incorporated in the Mid-Term Strategic Plan (2016-2020). Participation of women in the socio-economic sphere as well gender equality issues were mentioned in the draft National Development Strategy (2016-2030).

Improved budget allocation for and implementation of maternal, new-born and child health (MNCH) services was another theme of partnerships in 2015, particularly with the MOHSPP and

the Ministry of Finance. With Regional Office support, UNICEF Tajikistan organized national-level analysis and consultations around the Central Asian regional initiative supported. As a result, a joint action plan was prepared for the country, laying the ground for new partnerships on health financing for children with a focus on the most vulnerable. Activities proposed for joint implementation in the near future include defining and costing an MNCH service package, immunization financing and local level budgeting.

The local budgeting process was a slower process and despite the fact that mechanisms were tested on participatory decision-making and dialogue between youth and local government on district budgeting in three of the priority districts, local authorities have a long way to go before implementing child-focused budgeting as part of the district development plans. According to an evaluation of the district approach, given the centralised governance system, the scope for influencing change at district level, especially in the area of child rights mainstreaming in budgeting at district level was restricted. In the new CP, UNICEF Tajikistan will take into account lessons learned and will continue to build capacity at the district level while ensuring advocacy at the national level.

UNICEF Tajikistan worked with the Agency of Statistics in keeping TojikInfo and Transmonee up to date with most available recent data on boys and girls. While a new system on collection and reporting of data on children without parental care was adopted by Government.

UNICEF Tajikistan activities under the Outcome 4 are aligned with RKLA 8 "A child's right to social protection" and contribute to achievement of regional indicators on social protection.

OUTPUT 1 By the end of 2015, disaggregated data on the wellbeing of children is available in a timely manner and used to inform policy and its implementation

Analytical Statement of Progress:

During the second half of 2015, UNICEF Tajikistan supported the Agency of Statistics under the President of Tajikistan (AS) to enhance national child rights data management processes. In this context, the AS organized and delivered capacity development workshops for key stakeholders, including secretaries of district Child Rights Commissions (CRCs). During the workshop, participants learned improved methods for data collection, application of registry books, as well as recording and reporting practices on children without parental care. The renewed registry books will help CRC secretaries to conduct quality reporting of annual data on children without parental care at district level, disaggregating by age groups, disability status and gender. A Government Decree passed in November 2015 obliges all CRC secretaries to maintain these two registry books from 2016. This initiative will be useful for future updates to the regional Transmonee database that will include quality data on children without parental care.

In addition, AS specialists who updated the TojikInfo database with cross-sectoral child rights indicators (CRIs) gather annual data from relevant national administrative systems. These included health and education information systems, and the routine reporting facilities of other government structures. The TojikInfo platform established with UNICEF Tajikistan support is the only national platform that aggregates trend data on key CRIs in one place. The database, which contains data on more than 60 cross-thematic CRIs disaggregated by various characteristics (such as geographical divisions, gender, age, and year), is available publicly via www.devinfo.tj for use by practitioners and for evidence-based decision-making. AS specialists conducted a short orientation session on TojikInfo for counterparts from the MoEDT in order to

raise awareness about the platform and demonstrate a range of reporting features, including presentation of CRI trends by year and location in tables, graphs and maps.

UNICEF Tajikistan also provided technical assistance, instructions and guidance to the AS to update the CEE/CIS Transmonee database with 2014 figures. The Transmonee Country Analytical Report will be delivered by the end of December 2015.

UNICEF Tajikistan continues to provide technical assistance to the MoEDT to develop a Child Rights Index. During the last quarter of 2015, the MoEDT team started gathering data from line ministries and other national structures to come up with district-level child rights rankings. All districts of the country will be compared based on a standard set of indicators.

OUTPUT 2 By the end of 2015, public policy and budgeting supports child-friendly social sector development.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Mainstreaming child rights in local development planning processes was a key element of UNICEF Tajikistan's partnership with the MoEDT. With technical support from UNICEF Tajikistan, six pilot districts (Isfara, Rasht, Kulob, Shughnon, Istaravshan and Rumi districts) local authorities have designed development plans during the programme cycle, thus covering all four regions of the country. Focus on the rights of girls and boys was enhanced in the plans' situation analyses and in their sectorial sections. A list of basic indicators on child rights was included in the development plans' results matrices to enable MoEDT to monitor the situation of children during regular reviews of the socio-economic situation. A document reflecting child rights mainstreaming experience in the pilot districts is being prepared by MoEDT, and is expected to serve as an entry point for replication of child rights mainstreaming in other districts.

UNICEF Tajikistan contributed to the design of a new comprehensive strategy on social protection through facilitating the provision of high-level technical expertise. Concerted advocacy, situation analysis and policy dialogue led to Government recognition of the need to design integrated social protection programmes. In 2015, Government stakeholders and partners agreed to adopt a life cycle approach as the core framework for the new strategy. This highlights priorities and social protection measures for different groups, including children throughout the various stages of their life cycle and women. The Government also recognized the importance of cross-sectoral inputs to this important strategic document and established a new inter-ministerial working group led by the President's Office. This constitutes an important breakthrough in the process. A draft version of the comprehensive social protection strategy will be shared with civil society and development partners for further inputs early in 2016.

In 2015, with other development partners, UNICEF Tajikistan continued its active engagement in providing inputs to the National Development Strategy (2016-2030) and the related Mid-Term Strategic Plan (2016-2020) advocating for child rights, human rights, gender equality and adolescent and youth participation, in addition to integrating a sharper focus on equity. Thanks to this advocacy, a chapter on the most vulnerable children was included in the mid-term strategic plan.

OUTPUT 3 Strong Partnership for Children's rights is developed with mass media, national and local government, civil society and other development partners

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF Tajikistan's communication and public advocacy aimed to put children's issues on stakeholders' agendas and ensure that children's voices are heard. One of the highlights of 2015 was the effective engagement of adolescents in advocacy at the High-Level International Conference "Water For Life" held in Tajikistan. In partnership with the Government and a local youth-led NGO, around 30 boys and 30 girls from 12 countries were mobilized as part of the Children's WASH Forum. Numerous knowledge sharing and advocacy products, including One Minute Junior Videos on access to water and sanitation, were produced by adolescents and presented to the media and the world leaders present at the conference. Thus, they engaged conference participants in discussions both online and off line. As a result, over 700 conference delegates demonstrated their commitment to promoting WASH for children by supporting a statement made by the children.

In partnership with the MoES, UNICEF Tajikistan participated in the World's Largest Lesson initiative to promote better understanding of the SDGs. The Ministry visits to schools both at central and district levels provided a platform for adolescent girls and boys to discuss an equity approach and to propose solutions to issues affecting children, particularly the quality of education. Continued use of media, youth engagement and digital communication resulted in a wide public discourse on key children issues, particularly during emergency that occurred in the summer. These efforts included dissemination of 10 news releases, 15 photo essays and 3 feature stories highlighting programme activities.

The C4D in Emergencies Package was disseminated to 6,600 people affected by summer emergency. The materials informed communities about key messages on protecting children and providing essential services during the emergency.

Media advocacy led to introduction of a Child Rights Syllabus for journalism schools at tertiary level across the country. On finalizing the pilot phase of the syllabus, the stakeholders agreed that it is important to educate journalists to promote a child-friendly media. The official launch of the course provided a platform to over 160 students to discuss the global campaign #FightUnfair and to address existing gaps around children's rights. Thanks to this course, the graduates of the journalism schools will have an opportunity to learn both theoretically and practically how to portray children and issues related to them in the media, following ethical principles of reporting.