Turkmenistan

Executive Summary

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Turkmenistan marked the first year of the 2016-2020 Country Programme by undertaking strategic engagement with the Government of Turkmenistan. In collaboration with other United Nations (UN) Agencies, UNICEF Turkmenistan supported the country’s adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Country Programme was endorsed projecting Turkmenistan as an upper-middle-income country that would assume a greater role in leveraging results and resources for children.

UNICEF Turkmenistan’s strategy was guided by the global initiative Demonstrating the UNICEF Contribution to Outcomes for Children with a focus on evidence-based advocacy, communication for development and policy advice on systems strengthening, contributing to the Regional Knowledge Leadership Areas (RKLA) 3, 4, 6 and 7.

The Programme looked at existing bottlenecks in quality and access to neonatal, maternal and child health care, early learning and inclusive education and realization of rights of young children with disabilities that have direct impact on a child’s rights to survival, development and protection of young children, and on monitoring their progress. Addressing recommendations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) Committees via technical assistance is another integral approach to UNICEF Turkmenistan’s programming.

With the technical and financial support of the UNICEF Country Office and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the fifth round of the Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) was completed using computer-assisted personal interviewing as a modern approach to data collection. The Key Findings Report (KFR) published in October contributed to the evidence base for equity analysis and decision-making, and serves as baseline data for monitoring progress on the SDGs.

On governance and strengthening early childhood development (ECD) policies and regulations, considerable progress was made with children under three years of age. To support the advancement of the realization of child rights, UNICEF supported the Government in the launch of the National Concept on Developmental Paediatrics and Early Intervention and the Action Plan for 2016-2020, and the new Law on Breastfeeding, reflecting recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

UNICEF Turkmenistan contributed heavily to developing a policy framework for ensuring child survival and well-being in country. A multi-sectoral approach was facilitated on child protection and early childhood development (ECD), engaging the health, education, social protection and finance sectors in developing the national plan of action for children, the ECD action framework and the social services concept focusing on strengthening existing services for the most vulnerable children and families.
UNICEF Turkmenistan and partners established a platform for further development of integrated ECD services with a focus on children with disabilities and their families, based on a strong inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach. UNICEF focused on building capacities and improving child and social protection systems. UNICEF and the Government publicly launched UNICEF’s Regional Social Monitor to inform work addressing the needs of the most vulnerable children.

To enable the health force to provide timely quality care, UNICEF Turkmenistan supported the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry (MoHMI) to update the pre- and in-service curricula of the State Medical University based on the training package for home visitors (Regional Office, 2015). The 23 teaching fellows of the Medical University and leading primary health care (PHC) professionals trained as trainers to enable them to facilitate capacity building of home visitors nationwide.

UNICEF provided substantial support to the Government in building capacity of core early intervention professionals by introducing the guide for monitoring child development tool that identifies developmental delays, monitors child development, and develops a regulatory base for provision of early intervention services nationwide. Advocacy resulted in the introduction of neonatal screenings in mother and child facilities.

Progress was noticeable in improving cross-sectoral collaboration among relevant partners for increased inclusion of children with disabilities. With UNICEF’s technical support, the Government adopted a policy on quality education based on international child-friendly principles with a set of preschool education tools and standards, including principles of inclusiveness, academic performance, compliance with child needs and gender equality rights.

UNICEF continued capacity building for medical professionals, teachers and social workers, while at the same time systematically collecting required data about the situation of children through a key (KAP) study among caregivers. Procurement services remained an integrated component of the Country Programme, with access assured to sustainable immunization and fortification programmes.

UNICEF Turkmenistan continued supporting the country in implementing commitments under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and the World Initiative on School Safety. This led to the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change into pre- and in-service training programmes, and the initiation of disaster risk reduction school safety assessments across preschools and schools nationwide. The conceptual framework on DRR was developed to ensure an inter-sectoral approach.

UNICEF Turkmenistan successfully promoted child rights issues and advocated key messages through a number of initiatives under UNICEF’s 70th anniversary umbrella.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

N/A

**Emerging Areas of Importance**

**Accelerate integrated early childhood development (ECD).** In 2016, the Government of Turkmenistan stood ready to collaborate with UNICEF to make sustainable and equitable progress for children in the spirit of the SDG agenda, strengthen accountability mechanisms, and increase public investments in the multi-sectoral national policy on early childhood development.
UNICEF Turkmenistan provided technical assistance for the development of the ECD Action Framework for 2017-2021, which builds on and incorporates ECD national policies in health, nutrition, education and social protection.

The ECD Action Framework strengthens Turkmenistan’s focus on cross-sectoral integration and on multi-disciplinary approaches to address vulnerabilities stemming from risks to survival and development of young children, while giving special attention to the quality of early childhood care and education. The Framework emphasises the strengthening of coordination mechanisms and referrals at the national and local levels to provide effective, efficient and quality services to young children and their families, as well as forums for sharing experiences/innovations, external advice, and oversight. All this is expected to lead to empowered and caring parents, enlightened professionals, data and monitoring systems that are more functional, as well as shifts in negative social norms.

Within the framework of the National Concept on Developmental Paediatrics and Early Interventions and Action Plan for 2016-2020, the Government endorsed the multidisciplinary approach to addressing developmental difficulties of children by introducing the International Guide for Monitoring Child Development tool. Turkmenistan established the inter-sectoral model on early intervention services to allow families and childcare practitioners to monitor children’s development from the start and enable children to reach their fullest potential. The Government made progress in implementing the inclusive ECD and preschool education services in the pilot ECD and parental centres, as well as implementing early intervention services based on multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborative approaches. UNICEF Turkmenistan documented new practices and continuously pursued policy dialogue and advocacy to ensure the required provisions for the new services. This resulted in the development of the revised national standards for early intervention services, which aim to build the normative framework, and ensure operationalization of, universal access to and quality of the emerging services as per the international standards.

Successful piloting of the pre-primary curriculum and parental empowerment programme resulted in quick approval and further demand from the Government to expedite mainstreaming of the new inclusive quality normative instruments across the pre-education system.

Despite a positive trend in decreasing infant and under-five mortality, the figures remain at 51 per 1,000 live births, which is high for an upper middle income country. UNICEF Turkmenistan continued to support the Government in implementing the agenda within A Child Survival: Promise Renewed, and Every Woman Every Child initiatives, as well as the Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health (2016-2030). UNICEF Turkmenistan supported the implementation of the National Strategy of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent’s Health and Action Plan for 2015-2019. To tackle causes of preventable deaths, UNICEF Turkmenistan supported the country in strengthening neonatal care through building capacity of neonatalogists and intensive care specialists. The introduction of perinatal audit practices and the development of infection prevention protocols were also supported.

The second decade. The country concluded the General Programme on Reforming the System of Juvenile Justice. UNICEF Turkmenistan assisted in the preparatory, endorsement and capacity building stages of implementation of the Programme. For the first time, UNICEF, particularly the Head of the Office, was invited to visit the only juvenile detention facility in the country, culminating the advocacy efforts for access to detention facilities for children under 18. UNICEF Turkmenistan is planning to commission an evaluation of the General Programme in 2017 to help the Government identify a future course of action.
UNICEF Turkmenistan supported MoHMI to update the standard protocols of treatment, including safe pregnancy and delivery, neonatal care, young child survival, feeding and development with early identification and intervention. A total of 115 frontline health workers were trained on new protocols in order to further train 23 professionals involved in home-visiting service provision.

Two ECD centres served as hubs to prepare early intervention specialists. Over 500 children received multi-disciplinary services. Sixty PHC workers improved their skills in early identification of developmental delays. UNICEF Turkmenistan helped to develop recommendations on PHC workforce training.

To address anaemia prevention, UNICEF continued assisting the Government in both the sustaining and monitoring of the nationally funded flour fortification programme. The National Public Health and Nutrition Centre enhanced its capacity to adopt a sustainable monitoring and surveillance tool to track the implementation and impact of the flour fortification
programme in selected sites.

A core cadre of 30 health, education and community workers were trained as master trainers in new disciplines, including special pedagogy, clinical psychology, early communication and physical and occupational therapy. This enabled trained multi-disciplinary teams to provide emerging early intervention services guided by the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health.

Committed to eliminating institutionalization of children under three years of age, government staff in infant homes learned about early interventions and family support principles that triggered a revision of the normative provision.

Efforts focused on enhancing capacities of statistical personnel on collecting, analysing and managing internationally comparable data through MICS and the Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE) database, enabling the Government to be prepared for SDG monitoring and reporting.

Parliamentarians and schoolchildren increased their capacity on child rights and participation. A consultative process aimed to build the understanding of both duty bearers and rights holders on participatory monitoring of the rights of the children. A baseline survey report on children’s awareness about child rights was also prepared.

**Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

Turkmenistan completed the fifth round of MICS and made the Key Findings Report and MICS 3 (2006) Final Report available to the public.

In 2016, a key event took place towards the nationalization of the global indicators to be used to track progress against the goals and targets of the SDGs. Among these indicators were some that have been developed by the MICS programme over the years. Recent UNICEF analysis on global SDG indicators showed that these data could is around 30 per cent of all indicators. MICS data will help fill existing gaps, validate data from other sources, look at the results of some government programmes and identify areas for intervention.

Turkmenistan continued providing data for TransMONEE to capture social and economic issues. Although not all indicators were provided, it is an important tool for governments, civil society organizations, international organizations and academia in considering their decisions, policies, programmes and agendas.

The child-rearing KAP survey helped provide information on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of parents on rearing children under six and primary factors influencing children’s health, education and development. The survey results helped in the formation of informed decisions for adequate programming of children’s early development.

The KAP study on children’s awareness of their rights was a participatory exercise, with young people evaluating their access and vision through multiple dimensions of their rights. This exercise enabled the gathering of information on children’s ability to participate in decision-making as well as their knowledge of their basic rights.

Within the implementation of the National Strategy on Mother, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health, UNICEF Turkmenistan advocacy efforts resulted in the adoption of the new Law on Promotion of Breastfeeding.

With support from UNICEF, the country endorsed the National Concept on Introduction of the Developmental Paediatrics and Early Intervention, and the Action Plan for 2016-2020.
Partnerships

UNICEF Turkmenistan endorsed the new Country Programme Resource Leveraging and Partnerships Strategy, which will be updated on a regular basis. New alliances were sought to enhance the impacts on the lives of young children and children with disabilities. Partnership with the Israeli Government through the Israeli Embassy in Turkmenistan was established to support the Child Survival: A Promise Renewed initiative. In addition, the capacity of neonatal specialists of second- and third-level hospitals was strengthened in neonatal care and newborn resuscitation.

Cooperation with the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) focused on building the capacity of core early childhood development professionals to provide adequate services to children, and strengthening the capacity of primary health care professionals to identify any delays in a timely fashion. The partnership with Ankara University through TIKA examined the establishment of developmental paediatrics education within the curriculum of the medical university.

Partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) sealed by a Memorandum of Understanding, provided a framework for cooperation in education. Within the next few years, UNESCO and UNICEF will provide joint support for implementation of SDG 4 with a specific focus on policy advice and strengthening the capacity of the Government in quality and inclusive early learning and preschool and primary education. Support will also be provided to improve education data collection and analysis based on the Education Management Information System.

UNICEF Turkmenistan established a new partnership with Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) Deutschland, which aimed to strengthen the capacity of education and health care professionals in introducing the standards of the disability-inclusive DRR to preschool institutions and rehabilitation centres.

In addition to maintaining constructive partnerships with central and local authorities, Parliament and other public agencies, special efforts were made to engage with academia, and non-governmental organizations, especially disability public organizations, and sensitize them on joint child outcomes at the systemic and practice levels.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

Advocacy with the Government and decision makers was carried out through bilateral meetings and targeted advocacy messaging. An introductory meeting of the UNICEF Representative with the President of Turkmenistan and ongoing interaction with high-level officials from relevant ministries accelerated advocacy, driving change for children, especially the most vulnerable, excluded and disadvantaged.

UNICEF’s 70th anniversary created a number of opportunities for UNICEF Turkmenistan to highlight children’s issues, including presenting the MICS KFR data, where Members of Parliament and representatives of child rights/human rights government and non-governmental organizations were sensitized on child rights monitoring. The launch of the Regional Social Monitor report boosted interest among national partners and decision makers.

The public at large was reached through increased media stories and articles. Interaction with young people and academia increased through public lectures and social media. Children between 10 and 14 years of age, including children with disabilities, gained knowledge and skills on child rights monitoring and reporting during summer sessions.
Students of two major universities shared their aspirations on what they want for every child through the global Tiny Stories initiative. Two public lectures on SDGs for Children were undertaken by the Representative for students of the International University of Humanities and Development and the Institute of International Relations.

MICS 2016 allowed for the gathering of important data on access to media. Results indicated that only 20.7 per cent of women aged 15-49 years of age read a newspaper, watched television or listened to the radio at least once a week. Use of computers among women is at 57.5 per cent, and use of internet is at 39.3 per cent. UNICEF Turkmenistan was an active member of the UN Communication group and helped to develop the UN communication strategy, organize joint initiatives, such as the Disability Day, AIDs Day, Human Rights Day and UN Day, and played a key role in publishing the UN advocacy publication.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

The year 2016 was highlighted by successful horizontal cooperation and knowledge exchange in early childhood intervention in the Central Asian and Caucasus sub-region.

The Government endorsed the multidisciplinary approach in addressing developmental difficulties of children by introducing a method to monitor and address children’s development needs within the framework of the National Concept on Developmental Paediatrics and Early Intervention for 2016-2020.

Specialists from Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan showed interest in learning from Turkmenistan’s experience in advancing early childhood development services. They visited the country to gain insights into the work of the ECD Resource Centre and learn about the national policy documents developed with UNICEF’s technical assistance and in the framework of partnership between TIKA and Ankara University. Colleagues from Kyrgyzstan gained knowledge on a multi-sectoral approach to early childhood intervention, and developed skills in early identification of developmental delays and management of developmental difficulties. Experience with ECD was also shared. Participants discussed further steps in training PHC and medical students in this new area. Learning from each other’s experience and brainstorming helped to sharpen priorities and approaches.

The next step of the South-to-South cooperation initiated by UNICEF Turkmenistan was the joint training programme for teams from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan on an introduction to developmental paediatrics and early intervention, run by Ankara University. UNICEF Turkmenistan in cooperation with UNICEF Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan organized a joint study visit to Ankara University. The University-based training enriched knowledge and enabled the representatives to exchange best practices and initiate potential cooperation in this field to support building early childhood intervention systems in their countries.

UNICEF Turkmenistan provided technical advice to UNICEF Uzbekistan for initial preparation of Round 6 of the MICS.

Identification Promotion of Innovation

The MICS 5 field data was collected using personal digital assistive devices (PDAs) for the first time in the Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) region. Collecting research data in the geographically dispersed environment requires considerable coordination to ensure completeness, accuracy and timely transmission of the data. It is also necessary to limit the burden on participants. Electronic systems allowed for the use of transparent decision algorithms and improved data entry and data integrity. These systems improved data transfer to the central office and strengthened
the tracking systems for monitoring study progress. PDAs worked very well for collecting defined data elements at the household level.

Within health systems support, UNICEF Turkmenistan performed pilot testing of the new mobile app for the vaccine arrival reports designed by UNICEF Supply Division to contribute towards efforts to ensure vaccine quality. The testing also took place at the consignee reception site with their collaboration. After the methodology has been tested and follow-up systems have been put in place by the Supply Division, implementation will expand to all countries receiving vaccines from UNICEF.

These activities in turn improved the capacities of the State Statistics Committee and MoHMI on contemporary means of data collection and analysis, provided them with a tool to collect accurate and high-quality data at the household level, and initiated the establishment of an e-system for immunization management at the country level.

Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

UNICEF assisted the Government in developing the Draft National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC), a comprehensive overarching plan that brings together Government’s obligations in the realisation of the rights of children in the country and calls for bringing multiple government agencies together. The National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (NIDHR) coordinated the development of the NPAC to fulfil its mandate to ensure promotion, protection and fulfilment of the rights of children. The NPAC looks at the broad areas where the country collectively works to ensure that children are safe, healthy, happy, educated and developed, can participate in matters affecting them, and have an adequate standard of living. The NPAC was finalised and was under consideration of the Government for approval at the end of 2016.

In 2016, continuous support towards an integrated ECD policy in the country led to the development of the national ECD Action Framework for 2017-2021. The Framework incorporates priorities of adopted policies, or those in the pipeline, on health, education and social protection, and strengthens the focus on cross-sectoral integration of ECD services to enhance their quality and inclusiveness.

Extensive capacity building of multi-disciplinary teams of experts nationwide made up of health, education and community workers enabled the teams to initiate provision of the early intervention services based on their new competencies in comprehensive child and family assessment, developmental paediatrics, pedagogy, psychology, physical and occupational therapy and early communication.

Training for selected professionals from the health and education sectors on home visiting strengthened their expertise on collaborative approaches to ensure the best support for families in the optimal development of their children at the community level. The development of universal ECD training modules was also initiated for both health and education pre-service and in-service programmes.

Service Delivery

Procurement services remained an integral component of the Country Programme, helping to strengthen national capacity in planning for supply needs, selection of supplies and equipment and their effective delivery and distribution. This year, UNICEF concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Economy to ensure sustainability of the premix supplies for flour fortification due to a change of the implementing partner.
The procurement services UNICEF provided to the Government in 2016 were worth US$11,741,523.81, and were coordinated by the office throughout the year.

However, there are uncertainties of inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) supply that go beyond the scope of UNICEF Turkmenistan. Due to significant ongoing constraints in supply at the global level, Turkmenistan faced a delay in IPV introduction until Q4 of 2017. In the context of IPV supply constraints, UNICEF jointly with WHO continued discussions with MoHMI on specific risk mitigation measures and revision of introduction plans.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

UNICEF continued to mainstream the human rights-based approach in its work in 2016 and, through its fulfilment of core roles, ensured consideration of the human rights perspective in supporting Turkmenistan. UNICEF provided technical assistance to update national systems to generate knowledge on the situation on the rights of children with disabilities through research and studies and a made valuable contribution to the development of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) report.

In the framework of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), follow-up recommendations, the emerging multi-disciplinary early intervention services aim to support families and their children, particularly those with disabilities. Importantly, the multi-disciplinary team approach is based on the child and family assessment and case management principle that are solely guided by the principles of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).

The current process of institutionalization of the ICF as a practical tool in the new services also strengthens ICF as an effective policy instrument to support the shift from the currently practised medical model of disability in the country to the bio-psycho-social model of disability, which is in line with the CRPD Concluding Observations.

The Government has shown considerable commitment to work on the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child with technical assistance from UNICEF. A few important areas include the finalization of the draft NPAC, preparation of the nationalized tool on assessing the policies and programmes on best interests of the child and child/youth participation. Members of Parliament and representatives from the Ministry of Education, NIDHR and public organizations participated in a four-day learning seminar that equipped them with knowledge and skills in training and consulting children on monitoring their rights, taking in account their age and specific needs. The training of trainers was followed by a nine-day workshop for children, including children with disabilities. Children learned about the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its main principles, as well as about the processes of monitoring their own rights. The workshop enabled children from all parts of the country to master participatory skills to express view and opinions about decisions that affect their lives.

UNICEF Turkmenistan also continued its advocacy for the ratification of the Third Optional Protocol to Convention on the Rights of the Child, on communication procedures, which is being considered by Parliament.

**Gender Equality**

While Turkmenistan made progress in enforcing gender equality principles in policy documents, it is still constrained in some areas, such as data collection, women’s empowerment across public life, and prevention and elimination of violence against women. UNICEF supported implementation of the MICS-5, which ensured nationally representative
and gender-disaggregated data on children and women.

To ensure gender-responsive legislation, UNICEF Turkmenistan supported the development of the first national standard on the provision of early intervention services. Support was also provided for a KAP study on child rearing, which helped to identify unmet needs, including the need to support fathers’ involvement in parenting, as the study revealed that only 11 per cent of them are.

UNICEF continued its support for immunization and vaccine procurement. A new vaccine was introduced by MoHMI for the prevention of cervical cancer among women, and the Government began vaccinating all nine-year old girls and boys with the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine.

In 2016, Turkmenistan endorsed a new Law on Breastfeeding Support, which incorporates key Committee on the Rights of the Child recommendations, with ensured rights of children and their mothers for breastfeeding, special breastfeeding time in the workplace and allowances for families with young children.

UNICEF also supported the development of gender-responsive legislation with a package of gender-sensitive education normative documents on quality learning based on child-friendly standards. The pre-primary curriculum and parental empowerment programmes were approved and aligned with best international standards and practices, thereby aiming to ensure effective gender-sensitive knowledge and skills development of caregivers and parents.

UNICEF Turkmenistan advocated for empowerment of girls to grow, learn and thrive through communication products, such as press releases and social media campaigns to address the Day of the Girl Child and 16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women and Girls. Another highlight was a friendly football match between Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan devoted to the power of girls that took place in Kyrgyzstan in partnership with UNICEF.

UNICEF took an active part in the UN Human Rights, Youth and Gender thematic group, and development and implementation of a three-year Joint UN Partnership Plan on Gender, with participation of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women.

**Environmental Sustainability**

With the Sendai framework, UNICEF Turkmenistan supported the country in mainstreaming climate change adaptation as an effective strategy for disaster risk reduction (DRR).

Activities related to capacity and preparedness of the country’s educational system on DRR and climate change were incorporated into pre- and in-service training programmes of the pedagogical workforce at the State Pedagogical Institute and the National Institute of Education.

Methodological guidance on a nationwide DRR monitoring system for educational institutions was developed and is ready for operationalization in order to assess the readiness of educational institutions for DRR and the efficiency of the integration of DRR components in the educational process. It also allows for the assessment of abilities and skills of the students on DRR and safety culture.

Following Turkmenistan’s participation in the Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR in New Delhi, UNICEF Turkmenistan provided expertise for the development of the national intersectoral strategy on DRR. Funding was received from the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) to provide an international consultant to develop a
national child-centred DRR strategy for effective implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR to be implemented in 2017.

UNICEF’s strong and continuous support for mainstreaming DRR and climate change adaptation in education resulted in the approval of education policy documents based on child-friendly principles. These incorporate a comprehensive set of standards, indicators and school-based assessments to ensure a safe, protective and resilient environment across preschool, primary and secondary education.

The Greening of UNICEF Initiative includes saving energy to encourage “green behaviour” of all staff through reducing quantity of printers, implementing a green policy by two-sided printing, and reducing printing materials and paper recycling. In these areas expenditures were down from US$942 to US$371 per year. UNICEF Turkmenistan participates in UN common services. Following these, a report was submitted on gas emissions, calculating office utilities expenses and travel costs, with the aim of making reductions where possible. For 2016, UNICEF Turkmenistan spent the following: for electricity, US$234; for fuel, US$895; for travel, US$32,000; for water, US$26; and for waste management, US$185.

**Effective Leadership**

UNICEF Turkmenistan focused its efforts on achieving a high level of efficiency in programme management and implementation as the new Country Programme was initiated, including improving governance of critical UNICEF processes.

The country management team (CMT) met periodically to discuss management issues related to office strategic directions, programme/management priorities, funding, donor reporting, major programme planning, work processes, human resources (HR) issues, training/learning and office/staff security measures. The introduction of Programme Coordination and Senior Management meetings was initiated to oversee governance functions.

UNICEF Turkmenistan maintained an updated list of established office committees, and tables of authority and reference. Corporate priorities and their actual fulfilment including Global Staff Survey 2014 results were periodically revisited during CMT meetings. All oversight committees including programme cooperative agreements, country management team, central review body, contract review committee, humanitarian requirement document, the joint consultative committee, and the property service board functioned on a regular basis and served as instruments for internal control.

UNICEF Turkmenistan made substantial steps towards the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) implementation. Meetings were conducted with all implementing partners to explain the need for HACT. Currently, HACT is implemented through a direct payment modality, and direct cash transfers to the Government remain a challenge. UNICEF Turkmenistan initiated assurance activities based on spot checks and programmatic visits. UNICEF also identified partners with less than US$100,000 and more than US$100,000 of yearly cash transfers, and assessed those partners using a simplified financial management assessment checklist. The Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) form was introduced to partners, however, not all partners were able to receive funds directly to their organization’s accounts, and some were therefore not able to use the form.

The business continuity plan was updated regularly to address any changes in the country environment, as well as in staff personal information or other changes.
Financial Resources Management

Office institutional budget estimates were based on actual office needs and previous years’ expenditures. Following IBCS data collection and programme budget review (PBR) submission, UNICEF Turkmenistan estimated the planned annual budget and requested corresponding funds. UNICEF participated in UN Common Services and contributed its share, US$60,000 in 2016, which is charged to programme funds.

Actual expenditures on SB are monitored by the Operations Manager, reviewed by the Representative and presented to CMT. Programme budgets (regular resources [RR]/other resources [OR]) are periodically managed and reported to the PCM and CMT by the Deputy Representative and VISION Focal Point, with oversight by the Representative.

The CMT closely monitored financial resources management including direct payments, RR, OR and institutional budget implementation. Budget control was a standing agenda item at CMT/PCM meetings. UNICEF Turkmenistan also ensured timely bank reconciliations, accounting and liquidation. Following transition to the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) in April 2016, UNICEF Turkmenistan centralized finance and HR activities, leaving the manual part of finance execution and local recruitment as an office function. Corresponding local focal points and releasers for finance were identified and trained.

In line with the effectiveness and efficiency policy, staff used only economy class for all air travel. In line with the greening policy, UNICEF Turkmenistan avoided printing where possible and used e-versions of documents. Energy-saving measures in place, including optimal use of office equipment, reducing the quantity of printers and printing materials and recycling paper, resulted in a spending reduction from US$ 942 in 2015 to US$ 371 in 2016.

UNICEF Turkmenistan maintained an updated bank signatory panel, and newly recruited staff were included into it within a week of their arrival. Local staff in the National Officer (NO) category were included into the panel based on their extended experience with UNICEF and knowledge of accountability and segregation of duties. The Operations Manager updated the composition of the signatory panel in a timely manner and made changes as appropriate.

Fundraising and Donor Relations

The UNICEF Turkmenistan Resource Mobilization and Partnership Strategy for 2016-2020 outlined results, strategies and targets for UNICEF Turkmenistan fund-raising, resource leveraging and partnerships in support of the implementation of the Country Programme for 2016-2020 to advance the rights of all children in the country, especially those most disadvantaged and excluded, so that their right to survive and thrive is realised. The Strategy was developed using existing PFP and PPD guidelines.

The participation of the Representative and Communication Officer in the Regional Resource Mobilization workshop enabled UNICEF Turkmenistan to gain insights into the area of fund-raising and resource leveraging with the government, public and private sectors.

The Head of the Office used advocacy messages to leverage resources from the Government. New contacts were established with some of the National Committees, such as Czech and Korean Committees, to leverage resources for unfunded areas. Donor reporting for the Disaster Preparedness ECHO funds was submitted regularly.

The Government co-financing of joint workplans that started in the previous programme cycle continued for 2016-2017, with US$ 1,970,000 planned for a two-year Government
direct contribution to joint programme interventions. By the end of 2016, only three of seven workplans were signed.

UNICEF Turkmenistan received $US 240,000 in thematic funds to establish an equitable and affordable package of essential health, education and social services available to all mothers, newborns, children and adolescents, focused on families with children with disabilities. It included thematic funds for early learning/inclusive education, which were made available to build the capacity of partners in this area.

The European Commission’s ECHO Funds amounting to US$ 157,000 for 2016-2017 will end in September 2017. More fund-raising will need to be done to ensure sustainability of the DRR programme.

UNICEF Turkmenistan will continue its efforts to secure more predictable funding for its current programme cycle.

**Evaluation and Research**

Within its first year of the programme cycle, UNICEF Turkmenistan adopted a multi-year plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation, and focused resources on critical studies and evaluations that would contribute to programme learning. No programme evaluation was planned or executed during the reporting period. Three major studies and surveys were undertaken, with a 100 per cent completion rate.

Research supported by UNICEF in prior years was used to formulate statutory programme documents, including the UNICEF-Government of Turkmenistan Country Programme of Cooperation (2016-2020) and the UN Partnership Framework for Development (2016-2020).

Within the framework of the CEE/CIS Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda, UNICEF Turkmenistan also participated in Technical Advisory Groups for Regional RKLA 3 and 7 with an acknowledged contribution to critical systems changes. Lessons learned from the MICS process and results obtained were incorporated into the objectives and strategies of the new Country Programme.

UNICEF Turkmenistan also noted the remaining challenges and areas of potential focus. As an integral part of the Country Programme, the costed evaluation plan identified two major evaluations during 2016-2020 to be supported by UNICEF core resources. In addition, as part of the discussions and overview of the results achieved within the framework of the National Programme on Reform of the Juvenile Justice System, government partners suggested an evaluation be undertaken in 2017. It will aim to inform policy and plans in this important area and lead to the design of a successive plan if needed.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

In 2016, UNICEF Turkmenistan continued to execute a policy of cost saving by implementing an effectiveness and efficiency strategy. The strategy includes economic flights for all air trips, optimal use of office equipment and vehicles, optimization of drivers’ work by establishing fixed hours for correspondence delivery, saving energy to encourage ‘green behaviour’ of all staff, reducing the quantity of printers, implementing two-sided printing, reducing printing materials and paper recycling. Compared to previous years, costs were reduced from US$942 to US$371 per year. UNICEF Turkmenistan participates in UN Common Services.

UNICEF continued using a joint procurement option, which is more cost effective, making use of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) procurement unit as needed.
Following the Secretary General’s initiative on a green policy, UNICEF Turkmenistan submitted a report on gas emissions, calculating office utilities expenses and travel costs, with the aim of making reductions where possible. For 2016, UNICEF Turkmenistan spent the following: for electricity, US$234; for fuel, US$895; for travel, US$32,000; for water, US$26; and for waste management, US$185.

In late 2016, the Government of Turkmenistan granted a new building for the UN, including UNICEF, which is making every effort to follow the green policy and contribute to the global concept of greening the office.

### Supply Management

In recent years, UNICEF Turkmenistan reduced its programme supply component mainly due to a change in the programming focus towards policy advice, advocacy and capacity development. Procurement services were facilitated for the MoHMI and the National Bread Association. This cooperation included the procurement of vaccines, cold chain equipment, syringes and premix for the flour fortification.

The total procurement value of strategic support provided to the government via Procurement Services totalled US$11,741,523.81 in 2016. Of this, US$11,210,523.81 (including vaccines with newly introduced human papillomavirus [HPV] vaccine, cold chain and safety injection supplies) were supplied to the MoHMI, and US$531,000 (flour fortification premix) was delivered to the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Economy. The timely vaccine arrival reports submissions continued to be at 100 per cent of all vaccine shipments.

There is no in-kind assistance and no warehouse in the country. Government partners directly received the supplies procured. The Government was fully responsible for stockpiling of programme supplies in the government warehouse facilities and further distributing them to end users in five regions.

The supply-related services by the Supply Division were provided in a timely manner, and mainly related to the procurement of vaccines, cold chain equipment, syringes and premix for flour fortification. UNICEF closely worked with the Supply Division for the timely processing and delivery of supplies and equipment.

Local procurement of supplies was executed when needed and included mainly administrative supplies, consumables and spare parts for computer maintenance. Local procurement of services was primarily translation, catering and local consultancies. The total value of supplies and services procured locally in 2016 was US$82,533.

International procurement of programme supplies/equipment was primarily related to information technology (IT). The services, procured internationally, were for consultancies for technical assistance that amounted to US$324,333.51. The table below provides details on supplies and procurement in 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual international consultancy services</td>
<td>US$138,704.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual local consultancy services</td>
<td>US$43,396.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional consultancy services</td>
<td>US$215,500.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional local services</td>
<td>US$23,636.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual local services</td>
<td>US$20,721.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local supplies</td>
<td>US$4,802.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International supplies</td>
<td>US$4,399.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Security for Staff and Premises

UNICEF Turkmenistan takes all appropriate measures to manage and enhance the safety and security of its staff and premises.

All UNICEF staff members are equipped with handheld VHF stations and trained on their use. Mandatory monthly radio checks for all staff were conducted by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). The UNICEF VHF channel was used for regular radio checks. The vehicles are equipped with the appropriate means of communications including satellite phones. There are BGAN and satellite phones that could be used as a back-up means of communications by the staff.

UNICEF Turkmenistan ensured that all staff members had valid certificates in basic and advance security in the field.

UNICEF shares the premises with nine other UN agencies, and correspondingly participated in UN Security training, drills and safety-related activities. The warden system is in place, and the UN security team held regular warden meetings and consolidated action points four times during the year.

UNICEF Turkmenistan procured an emergency trauma bag. Both security and emergency focal points passed the emergency trauma bag training provided by UNICEF Headquarters (HQ) specialists.

The UN Country Team (UNCT) and the Security Management Team arranged specific training for the security guards, and safety and security awareness training/briefings/drills for staff members to enhance the security and safety culture within the UN Team in Turkmenistan. The United Nations in Turkmenistan had no critical security issues. The security budget of US$720 covered all safety and security-related activities and measures. The issue of UN staff security was taken into serious consideration during the renovation of a new UN building, which was provided by the Government of Turkmenistan.

Human Resources

Both the Representative and the health & nutrition specialist joined the office in August/September. The Deputy Representative retired in September 2016, and negotiations were underway with her replacement at the end of 2016.

Based on the organizational structure for 2016-2020, UNICEF Turkmenistan identified opportunities to combine functions and redistribute tasks. The post of Information and communication technology (ICT)/procurement assistant combines the role of ICT and office supply/asset management functions.

Upon receipt of other resources emergency (ORE) funds, further to a PBR decision in 2015, the full-time OR post of emergency (DRR) officer, national officer A (NOA) was filled in late 2016. Previously, a temporary appointment DRR officer had carried out this role until June 2016. The initial funding gap for the ORE-funded post was filled by the extension of an existing temporary appointment DRR officer contract funded from RR. Later, the funding was changed to the ORE staff member budget via clearance by the HQ budget section.

The new performance appraisal system ACHIEVE was introduced to the staff.

UNICEF Turkmenistan continued to revisit the action plan in response to the results of the global staff survey. Areas for further improvement – supervisor interaction, efficiency and effectiveness and work/life balance – were continuously addressed. Based on staff feedback, it was decided to focus on communication skills through a staff retreat, online courses and one-on-one interaction and feedback. Supervisor-supervisee interaction
improved with the introduction of the online performance appraisal system. Staff members and management ensured adherence to work/life balance principles and its implementation was underway in 2016.

UNICEF Turkmenistan contributed to the development and implementation of the UN Cares plan endorsed by the UNCT. A survey on stigma and discrimination conducted among UN employees identified focus areas for successful observance of ten minimum standards. UN staff were briefed on post-exposure preventive (PEP) kit availability, eligibility and access, and received regular updates on HIV-related issues through a session arranged for a UN staff meeting.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

Turkmenistan is the only country in the region with VSAT as a primary and secondary internet connection. The only landline internet service provider (ISP) in the country is the national telecommunications company, Turkmentelecom, which UNICEF tried to contract, but had to withdraw due to issues with the service provided VSAT connectivity provided by EMC Inc enabled the office to operate in compliance with corporate standards, providing UNICEF Turkmenistan with basic services, such as Office 365, Outlook, Lync. However, services such as OneDrive and SharePoint could not be fully utilized.

In 2016, UNICEF Turkmenistan together with national partners joined a pilot project led by the Supply Division on digitalizing and automating vaccine arrival reports. Some weak points were identified and noted by developers, and piloting is still ongoing. In addition, UNICEF Turkmenistan actively participated in various Global Pilot Projects, such as the Get To Green – Skype for Business component.

As a measure to reduce IT footprints, UNICEF Turkmenistan applied all recommendations on reducing the quantity of printers, migrated to a virtual server’s platform and maintained ongoing efforts to obtain the best results.

On a programmatic side, UNICEF Turkmenistan supported the Governments to introduce e-technologies. MoHMI with UNICEF’s support adopted the electronic training module on infection prevention. This year a new practice of Skype consultations was established for preparations, mentoring and supportive supervision for specialists in early intervention and neonatology.

**Programme Components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** Special Purpose Outcome

**Analytical Statement of Progress:** The Turkmenistan Security Risk Profile was reviewed and measures were identified to strengthen security, resilience and preparedness of the UN and partners. Follow-up actions aimed to ensure the quality of communication networks, improve security of the UN House and preparedness of the UN staff, strengthen national and local capacity in DRR (through the education sector) and mobilise resources, which in the context of Turkmenistan implies mainly mobilization of public financial resources. These activities are either completed or in progress.

**OUTPUT 1** Premises and Security
Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF takes all appropriate steps to manage and enhance the safety and security of staff and premises. All UNICEF staff members were equipped with handheld VHF stations. Monthly radio checks were mandatory for all staff and were conducted by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security. The UNICEF VHF channel is used for regular radio checks.

The vehicles are equipped with the appropriate means of communications including satellite phones. There are BGAN and satellite phones that could be used as a back-up means of communications by the office staff.

UNICEF closely monitors that all staff have Basic and Advanced Security in the Field certificates. UNICEF shares the premises with the other UN agencies and correspondingly participates in UN security training, drills and safety-related activities. A warden system is in place and regular warden meetings and consolidation point activities were held by the UN security team.

UNICEF Turkmenistan procured an emergency trauma bag. Both security and emergency focal points passed the emergency trauma bag training provided by HQ specialists.

The UNCT and the Security Management Team arranged specific training of the security guards, and safety and security awareness trainings/briefings/drills for staff members to enhance the security and safety culture within the UNCT in Turkmenistan.

UNICEF Turkmenistan has no critical security issues. The security budget covers all safety and security-related activities and measures.

The issue of UN staff security was taken into serious consideration during the renovation of a new UN building, which was provided by the Government of Turkmenistan.

OUTCOME 2 Office Management & Operations

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The CMT met every quarter to discuss management issues related to office strategic directions, programme/management priorities, funding, donor reporting, major programme planning, work processes, HR issues, training/learning, office/staff security and other management issues. The results of management meetings, such as programme coordination, senior management and operations meetings, were included on the regular agenda. The CMT also adopted performance standards for programme and operations staff.

The agenda of regular meetings always included criteria to assess the quality of office performance and donor reports. The appraisals of staff performance records were conducted and documented on an annual basis. UNICEF Turkmenistan maintained an updated list of established office committees and tables of authority and reference. Corporate priorities and their fulfilment including the Global Staff Survey 2014 results were often revisited and considered during CMT meetings. All oversight committees including PCA, CMT, CRB, the Contract Review Committee, HRD, the Joint Consultative Committee and the Property Service Board functioned on a regular basis and served as instruments for internal control.

UNICEF Turkmenistan made substantial steps towards HACT implementation in the country. Meetings were conducted with all implementing partners to explain the need for HACT. Currently, HACT is implemented through a direct payment modality, and direct cash transfers to the Government remain a challenge. UNICEF Turkmenistan initiated assurance activities based on spot checks and programmatic visits. UNICEF also identified partners
with less than US$ 100,000 and more than US$ 100,000 of yearly cash transfers, and assessed those partners using a simplified financial management assessment checklist. The FACE form was introduced to partners, however, not all partners were able to receive funds directly to their organization’s accounts, and some were therefore not able to use the form.

The business continuity plan was updated regularly to address any changes in the country environment, as well as in staff personal information or other changes.

**OUTPUT 1  Governance and Systems**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The agenda of regular meetings always included criteria to assess the quality of office performance and donor reports. The appraisals of staff performance records were conducted and documented on an annual basis. UNICEF Turkmenistan maintained an updated list of established office committees as well as tables of authority and reference. Corporate priorities and their fulfilment were considered during CMT meetings. All oversight committees including PCA, CMT, CRB, Contract Review Committee, HRD, the Joint Consultative Committee and the Property Service Board functioned on a regular basis and serve as instrument for internal control.

In 2016 UNICEF made substantial steps towards HACT implementation in the country. Meetings were conducted with all implementing partners, explaining the need for HACT. It was decided to initiate assurance activities based on spot checks and programmatic visits. UNICEF also identified partners with less than $US 100,000 and more than US$ 100,000 yearly cash transfers, and conducted assessments of those partners using a simplified financial management assessment checklist. The FACE form was introduced to partners, however, not all partners were able to receive funds directly to their organization’s accounts, and some were therefore not able to use the form.

The business continuity plan was updated regularly to address any changes in the country environment as well as in staff personal information or other changes.

The office statutory committees functioned effectively and their membership was reviewed and updated by CMT. In-house refreshers and briefings were organised for all staff on major office work processes, including those related to travel, the Table of Authority, segregation of duties and financial controls, VISION roles, HACT spot checks, programme cooperation agreements and integrated monitoring and evaluation plans. The Table of Authority and VISION mapping roles were reviewed and updated. Staff VISION roles were examined to confirm accuracy and appropriateness and revised following segregation of duties rules and staff and post changes.

**OUTPUT 2  Financial Resources and Stewardship**

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Office institutional budget estimates were based on actual office needs and previous years’ expenditures. Following the IBCS data collection and PBR submission, UNICEF Turkmenistan estimated the planned expenses and requested corresponding funds. In case of unplanned expenditures, the office filed a request for additional funding from the Regional Contingency Fund.

Actual expenditures were monitored by the Operations Manager and reviewed by the Representative and Operations Manager and presented to CMT. Implementation of institutional budget funds of the organization were executed in accordance with the
organization’s needs to cover corresponding activities. All post-related expenditures were clearly incorporated into UBCS date and were in line with PBR decisions.

The CMT closely monitored financial resource management including direct cash transfers and RR, OR and institutional budget implementation. Budget control was on the agenda of all CMT meetings, as was the timely preparation of bank reconciliation, accounting and liquidation. Following the transition to the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) in April 2016, UNICEF Turkmenistan transferred some finance activities, leaving in the office the manual part of finance execution. The corresponding local focal points as well as the releasers for finance were identified and trained on the procedures.

UNICEF Turkmenistan continued to execute its effectiveness and efficiency policy, which was adopted in 2013. Staff used only economy class for all air travel. In line with the policy of office greening, printing is avoided where possible, and electronic versions of documents are used. Energy-saving measures are also in place and executed correspondingly.

UNICEF Turkmenistan maintained an updated bank signatory panel, and newly recruited staff were included within a week of their arrival. Local staff in the NO category were included into the panel based on their extended experience with UNICEF, and knowledge of accountability and segregation of duties. The Operations Manager updated the composition of the signatory panel in a timely manner and made changes as appropriate.

OUTPUT 3 Human Capacity

Analytical Statement of Progress: Following the reassignments of the Representative (P5) and Health & Nutrition Specialist (P3) to new duty stations, the new Representative and H&N Specialist arrived in Ashgabat in August 2016. After separation on retirement of the Deputy Representative (P4) in September 2016, the recruitment process of the latter was ongoing at the end of 2016.

Based on the new office structure for 2016-2020, opportunities were identified to combine functions and redistribute tasks with the objective of enhancing the capacity of current staff strengths and complementing specific competencies. The post of ICT/Procurement Assistant combines the role of ICT and office supply/asset management functions. In addition, due to the limited number of operations staff, the incumbent is also back-up Finance/HR Assistant.

Upon receipt of ORE funds further to the PBR decision in May 2015 for the new Country Programme 2016-2020, the FT OR post of Emergency (DRR) Officer (NOA) was hired in October 2016 to raise awareness and knowledge of best DRR practices and assist in implementing these practices in education. Previously, this role had been undertaken by TA DRR staff until June 2016. The initial funding gap for the ORE-funded post was filled by the extension of an existing TA DRR contract funded from RR. Later, the funding was changed to the ORE SM budget via clearance by the HQ budget section.

The new performance appraisal system Achieve was introduced to the staff. The ongoing feedback and coaching processes and linkage to AGORA online courses were highlighted, with an emphasis on how the system could help identify competencies that would greatly help staff enhance their knowledge/capacity through available learning opportunities and help them meet performance expectations.

UNICEF Turkmenistan continued to implement the action plan rolled out last year in response to the results of the Global Staff Survey. That Survey identified staff security, shared goals and job satisfaction/motivation as the Turkmenistan office's strengths. Areas for further improvement were supervisor interaction, efficiency and effectiveness and
work/life balance. In almost all dimensions, the office performed in the top 25 per cent of country offices in the CEE/CIS region. The Global Staff Survey and Regional Staff Survey Action plan was revisited in 2016, and based on staff feedback, it was decided to focus on strengthening communication skills through the staff retreat planned for early 2017, online courses and one-on-one interaction and feedback. Supervisor-supervisee interaction improved with the introduction of the online performance appraisal system. Staff members and management ensured adherence to work/life balance principles.

In 2016, UNICEF contributed to the development and implementation of the UN Cares plan endorsed by the UNCT. A survey conducted on stigma and discrimination among UN employees identified focus areas for successful observance of the ten minimum standards. UN staff were briefed on PEP kit availability, eligibility and access, and received regular updates on HIV-related issues through a session arranged for a UN staff meeting.

OUTCOME 3 Programme Effectiveness Outcome

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Research supported by UNICEF in prior years was used to formulate statutory programme documents, including the UNICEF-Government of Turkmenistan Country Programme of Cooperation (2016-2020) and the UN Partnership Framework for Development (2016-2020). Within the framework of the CEE/CIS Regional Knowledge and Leadership Agenda, UNICEF Turkmenistan also participated in Technical Advisory Groups for RKLA 3 and 7 with acknowledged contributions to critical systems changes.

OUTPUT 1 Programme Coordination

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The goal of the Country Programme of Cooperation is to support the Government to accelerate the universal realization of child rights through aligning its legal framework, policies and practices for children with international standards and best practices. In keeping with the principles of the CRC and the CRPD, the rights of young children and children with disabilities to survive, develop, and be protected and participate is central. To achieve this, the programme contributed to helping government sectors work in a more coordinated manner and share responsibility for common results.

Programme coordination encompasses four strategic components, which are interconnected: (a) young child survival and well-being, (b) quality and inclusive early learning, (c) reducing social inequities and (d) partnerships for child rights. The four components of the Country Programme are therefore interconnected and have a special focus on young children and children with disabilities. UNICEF Turkmenistan's strategy was guided by the global initiative Demonstrating the UNICEF Contribution to Outcomes for Children, with a focus on evidence-based advocacy, communication for development and policy advice on system strengthening, striving to achieve results in RKLAs 3, 4, 6 and 7.

Programme coordination and partnership strengthened accountability mechanisms, raised awareness about child rights and improved data collection and analysis, leading to better national planning and budgeting. The Government continued to increase its investments in programmes benefiting children, and this programme of cooperation assisted in identifying the most urgent priorities in reducing equity gaps for children.
OUTPUT 2 External Relations

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Partnership with the Israeli Government through the Israeli Embassy in Turkmenistan was established to support the Child Survival: A Promise Renewed initiative.

Cooperation with TIKA focused on building the capacity of core ECD professionals to provide adequate services to children and strengthening the capacity of PHC professionals to identify delays in a timely manner. The partnership with Ankara University through TIKA examined the possibility of establishing developmental paediatrics education within the curriculum of the medical university. Partnership with UNESCO, sealed by a Memorandum of Understanding, provided a framework for cooperation in the area of education.

UNICEF Turkmenistan established a new partnership with the Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) Deutschland, aimed at strengthening the capacity of education and health care professionals in introducing the standards of disability-inclusive DRR to preschool institutions and rehabilitation centres.

In addition to maintaining constructive partnerships with central and local authorities, Parliament and other public agencies, special efforts were made to engage with academia, non-governmental organizations, especially disability public organizations, and sensitize them on the need for joint child outcomes at the systemic and practice levels. UNICEF’s 70th anniversary created a number of opportunities to highlight children’s issues. MICS KFR data were presented to Members of Parliament and representatives of child rights/human rights government and non-governmental organizations in order to sensitize them on child rights monitoring.

Students of two major universities shared their aspirations on what they want for every child through the global Tiny Stories initiative. Two public lectures on SDGs for Children were presented by the Representative for students of the International University of Humanities and Development and Institute of International Relations.

UNICEF Turkmenistan was an active member of the UN Communication group and helped to develop the UN communication strategy, organizing joint initiatives, such as the Disability Day, AIDS Day, Human Rights Day and UN Day, and playing a key role in publishing the UN advocacy publication.

UNICEF Turkmenistan in cooperation with UNICEF Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan organized a joint study visit to Ankara University. The University-based training enriched knowledge, and enabled Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Turkey to exchange best practices and initiate potential cooperation in this field to support building early childhood intervention systems in their countries.

OUTPUT 3 Operational support for delivery of programme results

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Cross-sectoral programme support was provided by funding various contracts and agreements for office equipment usage, internet connection and common services budget share. UN staff day and UN day were the main events for UNICEF Turkmenistan, and were conducted in close cooperation with national partners and Government colleagues.

UNICEF Turkmenistan supported integration and cross-sectoral linkages as an explicit implementation strategy under the ECD Action Framework. This Framework supports integrated programming for children at different stages of the life cycle until eight years of
age, with inter-sectoral issues addressed. This strategy contributed to and informed evidence generation, policy dialogue and knowledge management specific to cross-sectoral dimensions. The model will be shared widely, as many UNICEF partner governments and non-governmental organizations strive to increase synergies and coordination across sectors and silos.

**OUTCOME 4** Programme Outcome: Young Child Survival and Well-being

By end-2020, all children, including children with developmental difficulties, have access to quality health services to ensure child survival, health and better developmental outcomes.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Turkmenistan reduced under-five mortality from 102 in 1990 to 59 in 2015 for boys and from 79 to 44 for girls. This is an average reduction from 91 to 51 per 1,000 live births over 15 years, or 2.3 per year. In the same period, infant mortality reduced from 30 to 23 per 1,000 livebirths. The exclusive breastfeeding rate increased from 11 per cent in 2006 to 58.9 per cent in 2016 (MICS) with UNICEF’s continuous support to the Government. This was mainly achieved through increased access to health services and better perinatal and postnatal care of young children. Neonatal mortality accounts for 44 per cent of all under-five deaths.

Health services for children are widely available and accessible in Turkmenistan, yet with gaps remaining in quality and continuum of care. More efforts are required to reduce infant and child mortality among households in the poorest rural areas. The KAP Survey on Childcare Practices (2016) demonstrated a strong need to address parental capacity, including breastfeeding, infant and young child feeding practices and handwashing as priorities.

UNICEF Turkmenistan advised the Government to adopt evidence-based and inclusive intervention packages that address the quality of antenatal, perinatal and neonatal care, ensure postnatal follow-up, and improve parents’ skills to care for their young children.

To address child death from preventable causes, UNICEF supported the MoHMI in the development of standard operating procedures on the prevention of infection in maternities, hospital and PHC facilities, and will continue to work on their adoption.

With UNICEF advocacy efforts, the Government adopted policies aligned with international standards to enable the well-being of the children with disabilities, with a focus on survival and development. One of the results was the endorsement of the Conceptual Framework for Implementation of Development Paediatrics and Early Interventions. The standards on development paediatrics and early interventions ensure that health workers will have to apply them in daily service provision.

Following CRC recommendations, the new Law on Promotion and Support to Breastfeeding is aligned with the International Code on Monitoring of Breast Milk Substitutes. UNICEF also helped to develop the law enforcement mechanisms to further implement the Law.

The critical issue for increased access to quality and inclusive services for young children and families is capacity of the health professionals. In this regard, UNICEF supported the training of 60 health professionals of the National ECD Centres on the timely identification of developmental delays and adequate intervention. As well, a team of 22 obstetricians and neonatologist improved their knowledge and skills in newborn care and neonatal resuscitation.

A core group of home-visiting nurses, paediatricians and general practitioners were trained to identify vulnerable individuals and families. At the new ECD Department of the Mother and
Child Health (MCH) Research-Clinical Centre, 513 children received timely early intervention services provided by a multi-professional team.

UNICEF Turkmenistan and the International Step by Step Association assisted in the development of pre- and in-service curricula for home visitors and helped to establish a group of trainers for nationwide learning.

The main constraint is the lack of institutional capacity of MoHMI in budgeting for children, which required strong technical assistance from UNICEF. Following the findings and recommendations of the report on Strengthening Equity Focused Budgeting for Mother, Newborn and Child Health in Central Asia (OPM, 2015) and the follow-up workshop for national counterparts and UNICEF, UNICEF Turkmenistan established links between expected outputs of interventions and their relevance to children.

**OUTPUT 1** Ensuring enabling environment: National policies, legislation, strategies and plans with budgets adopted in line with international standards for modelling innovative approaches and scaling up of evidence-based high-impact health interventions in MCH, nutrition and ECD.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Pneumonia, asphyxia, pre-term birth and sepsis continue to be among the main causes of infant mortality. To support the Government’s efforts in the reduction of neonatal and infant mortality, UNICEF assisted in the revival of the baby-friendly hospital initiative (BFHI), quality improvement of antenatal, perinatal and neonatal care, strengthening of the national legislative framework on infection control and prevention, and capacity building of neonatologists.

UNICEF Turkmenistan’s continuing advocacy and technical support resulted in the revision and adoption of the Law on Promotion and Support to Breastfeeding, which is now fully aligned with the CRC recommendations and the International Code on Monitoring of Breast Milk Substitutes. UNICEF provided technical assistance in establishing the law enforcement mechanisms for implementation of the Law. This resulted in development of the Decree of the Ministry of Health with BFHI standards and protocols, including an Action Plan on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) for 2017-2021. The plan promotes and supports breastfeeding and reinforcement of the BFHI, safe and age-appropriate complementary feeding, IYCF in emergencies and of children exposed to HIV/AIDS.

To strengthen infection prevention and control mechanisms at maternities, child hospitals and PHC facilities, and improve long-term child survival, a full set of 78 standard operating procedures (SOPs) on prevention of infection was developed as one of the major causes of the child morality. UNICEF will ensure that the SOPs are further aligned with international guidelines in enhancement of the child survival in the long term.

The national policies on the implementation of development paediatrics and early intervention were endorsed. These are critical for increased access to quality and inclusive services for young children and families. To support the implementation, training for the staff of new ECD Centres were conducted to ensure timely identification of developmental delays and adequate intervention, and to strengthen knowledge and skills.

To ensure sustainability of capacity-building interventions, UNICEF Turkmenistan assisted in the development of a training programme for home visitors for pre- and in-service curricula and established a group of trainers for nationwide learning. The training programme was based on a training package for home-visiting personnel developed by the Regional Office in partnership with the International Step by Step Association.
The revision and/or introduction of new protocols and standards of treatment in neonatal care continue to be central for UNICEF Turkmenistan and the Government.

Constraints: PFM: Following the findings and recommendations of the report on Strengthening Equity Focused Budgeting for Mother, Newborn and Child Health in Central Asia (OPM, 2015) and the follow-up workshop for national counterparts and UNICEF, there is a need to address gaps in PFM to establish a link between the expected outputs of the interventions and their relevance to children. The main constraint in this area is MoHMI’s institutional capacity in budgeting for children, which requires technical assistance from UNICEF.

OUTPUT 2 System strengthening to deliver essential quality health services for mothers and young children: Availability of and access to essential quality evidence-based interventions, skilled human resources and delivery systems for mothers’ and children’s health care ensured through innovative demonstration models and scale up plans

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Children from vulnerable families, those in rural areas, those who experience social issues and developmentally challenged children are most at risk of not receiving of essential care services. UNICEF provides technical assistance to MoHMI on improving an equitable and affordable cost-effective package of essential services for mothers, newborns, children and adolescents.

To support the Government’s efforts in reducing neonatal and infant mortality, UNICEF assisted MoHMI in the revival of BFHI, quality improvement of antenatal, perinatal and neonatal care, strengthening the regulations on infection control and prevention, and capacity building of neonatologists.

To address neonatal mortality, UNICEF assisted MoHMI in updating protocols and standards of treatment focusing on neonatal care and screening, introduction of developmental paediatrics approaches and early identification and intervention services. Assistance was also provided on nutrition issues such as breastfeeding and complementary feeding.

MoHMI updated sixteen standard protocols of treatment, including safe pregnancy and delivery, neonatal care, young child survival, and feeding and development, in line with international standards with joint support from UNICEF/UN Population Fund (UNFPA)/WHO. This included technical assistance and capacity building. A team of 115 frontline health workers were trained on the new protocols.

UNICEF supported the establishment of a core group of health professionals (neonatologists, intensive care doctors and nurses) from all three levels of care maternities, by providing updated training in newborn care and resuscitation based on the clinical protocols. The trained group of national professionals were prepared to facilitate capacity-building activities to improve quality of neonatal care of maternities.

To improve quality of care and strengthen infection prevention and control mechanisms at maternities, child hospitals and PHC facilities, a set of 78 standard operating procedures (SOPs) on prevention of infection was developed. UNICEF supported MoHMI in aligning the SOPs with the international guidelines.

To address anaemia prevention, UNICEF assisted the Government in sustaining and strengthening the monitoring of the nationally funded flour fortification programme. With UNICEF’s support, the National Public Health and Nutrition Centre enhanced its capacity in
new approaches for sustainable monitoring and surveillance of the flour fortification programme. As a result, the initial framework for a feasible cost-effective approach to track the quality, population coverage and impact of flour fortification in selected sites was developed and ready for testing.

Year-long intensive training for a core team of ECD professionals in early identification of developmental difficulties and early interventions helped to establish two hubs: the ECD Department under the Scientific-clinical MCH Centre, and MCH University Hospital under the State Medical University.

In the course of the capacity-development activities, a Guide for Monitoring Child Development was introduced as a standard instrument of early identification at the PHC level in ECD demonstration areas. An in-service training programme for PHC workers on early identification of delays is also under development. The new hubs are instrumental as they have the capacity to serve as national resource sites for countrywide knowledge dissemination among frontline health workers.

OUTPUT 3 Parental and community empowerment to ensure the best start in life for every girl and boy: Caregivers know the range and benefit of services available for antenatal, childbirth and young child survival, are empowered to provide stimulating and responsive care for their children, and have access to and use preventive and curative care

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF support aimed to address root causes of child mortality, which are (i) limited access to the continuum of quality maternal newborn and child health care and (ii) lack of knowledge and skills of parents on good child-rearing practices.

The KAP Survey of parents and caregivers on child rearing completed in 2016 served as a basis for planning of joint actions aimed at building the capacity of national systems by increasing knowledge and skills of parents in taking care of young age children. The identified parenting knowledge gaps on children’s healthy development and factors influencing their well-being were used for parental and community engagement via the home-visiting services and preschool education, including parenting centres. All of this had an effect on children’s early learning and education achievements.

The survey established that health workers are trusted and the most preferred source of information by parents, and can be effectively used as channels for counselling parents on child rearing with a focus on nutrition, breastfeeding, complementary infant feeding, child development milestones, and positive practices to achieve better development outcomes for children.

To improve counselling of home-visiting medical workers in ECD, the pre- and in-service curricula of State Medical University was revised with UNICEF’s support based on a training package for home-visiting personnel (Regional Office, 2015) and ready to use by Ministries of Health and Education. The 23 teaching fellows of Medical University and leading PHC professionals were trained as trainers to continue capacity building of home visitors nationwide.

The survey data and conclusions provide a benchmark for the end-line survey planned for 2019.

Turkmenistan’s internet is not widely used. Thus, the home visitors are the most trusted channel for conveying parenting information, and should be heavily involved in community education.
OUTCOME 5 Quality and Inclusive Early Learning: By end-2020, young children aged three to eight, including the most disadvantaged, benefit from preschool and primary education

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The Government makes consistent efforts to enhance access of five-year-old boys and girls to quality pre-primary school readiness programmes. The following results were achieved:

(1) The Government approved a set of preschool education tools and standards for introducing a mandatory pre-primary preparation programme. The Certification Standards for Quality Learning Environment was endorsed by Government, and includes child-friendly standards, principles of inclusiveness, academic performance, compliance with child needs and gender equality rights. The package also includes DRR standards and indicators for building and ensuring safe physical environments in education settings. The school-based disaster risk management methodology was adopted for further nationwide operationalization in 2017.

(2) The multi-disciplinary teams from five provinces and Ashgabat city were trained on the provision of early intervention services for children with developmental delays. This approach involved staff from different professions (often early childhood educators, social/family support workers and health professionals) working together to deliver services and provide resources in the most effective way for the family. The developed national standards for early interventions services were guided by ICF principles to enable national professionals from different disciplines to work together to provide better services for children with disabilities.

(3) The draft ECD Action Framework focused on cross-sectoral integration and multidisciplinary approaches to address vulnerabilities stemming from risks to survival and development of young children, while also giving special attention to the quality of early childhood care and education. Children and families in rural and remote areas were given a priority to ensure equity of access.

OUTPUT 1 By end 2017, school readiness standards including child-friendly measurement tools, pre-primary curriculum, and pre-service/in-service programmes for preschool, primary and secondary school specialists are updated in line with international quality and inclusive education standards

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Progress: The pre-primary curriculum, which prioritizes child-centred approaches and is aligned with best international practices, was piloted at ECD facilities in Lebap province. The successful outcomes of the piloting contributed to expediting the Government’s approval of the curriculum, parental empowerment and sports and play documents. This lay down a foundation for the systemic strengthening of preschool education. The curriculum is based on the state preschool education standards, uses play as a tool for learning and incorporates child-friendly readiness instruments to monitor school readiness over time. Originally planned for 2017, the Ministry of Education with UNICEF’s support, decided to proceed earlier with nationwide implementation of these quality instruments. This decision reflects the adherence of the Government to introduce a one-year (minimum 600 hours) mandatory quality pre-primary programme as a foundation for further lifelong learning and well-being.

The above three instruments were validated at the nationwide training for administrators, inspectors, caregivers and teachers of the pre- and in-service education programmes to
ensure sustainable integration into the preschool system. The scaling-up plan for 2017 will include alignment of other relevant training for pre- and in-service programmes, including those at the State Pedagogic Institute, pedagogical colleges and regional methodological associations. This will be supplemented with the development of professional standards and competencies for preschool professionals for optimal development and pre-primary preparation for all children.

**Constraint:** Implementation is affected by the relatively weak capacity of the education system across all levels in planning and implementing the reform initiatives, coupled with centralized governance.

**OUTPUT 2** By end 2018, a normative and operational framework for new forms of preschool early learning and development services is developed and tried out in two selected locations.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

**Progress:** The six multi-disciplinary teams were trained on provision of early intervention services to children with developmental delays. A team consists of the staff from different professions – early childhood educators, health professionals, social workers and community workers – working together to deliver services and provide resources as per family needs.

Training for the teams was conducted on in-depth assessment of the child and family needs through instruments guided by ICF. This was supplemented by capacity building of professionals in core disciplines necessary for the provision of the early intervention services, including psychology, physical and occupational therapy, early communication and pedagogy. A core group of trainers was established with developed training modules and relevant pre- and in-service training programmes in the above disciplines.

Capacity building on introducing the principles of early interventions in residential care for children under three years of age nationwide led to important structural changes in these institutions, namely the readiness of the Government to transform infant homes into community early childhood education and care centres. This important change triggered further revision of the roles and responsibilities of the infant homes in the emerging support services at the local level.

In parallel, intensive capacity building for introduction of new early intervention services was strengthened with the development of national standards and provisions to guide the universal quality of these services in line with international standards. The relevant regulatory guidelines and provisions were adapted for further application across the network of rehabilitation centres for children with disabilities. This aims to initiate the transformation of the centres into community-based child and family support service providers.

The above aims to address the following **constraints:**

- Lack of initial core up-to-date understanding and knowledge of child development within the selected health and education professionals and across health and education sectors in general;
- Lack of interaction and coordination between health and education sectors based on outdated provisions, guidelines and referrals; and
- Budgetary constraints that do not allow for the necessary revisions of the roles and responsibilities and provisions, and the introduction of new disciplines and professions.

To mitigate these constraints UNICEF Turkmenistan and the Government developed the ECD Action Framework to address vulnerabilities stemming from risks to survival and development of young children, while also paying special attention to the quality of early
childhood care and education. Critically, it also enhanced community-based support to children and families in difficult life situations.

OUTPUT 3 By end-2020, the Government has national policy on inclusive education

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Progress: The Ministry of Education approved the package of normative documents on quality learning, which contains a comprehensive set of standards, indicators and school-based assessments to guide inclusion of children with disabilities in child-centred and participatory learning environments. Currently, the working group of the Ministry of Education plans capacity building to equip school teachers to deliver inclusive education and update the training curricula for teachers through the introduction of flexible teaching and learning methods adapted to different needs and learning styles.

Constraints: There are no data on children with disabilities, including those attending mainstream schools. The capacity of the education system is relatively weak across all levels in planning and implementing the reform initiatives, and governance in the education system is centralized.

OUTPUT 4 By end-2020, the Government has capacity to assess preschools/schools for safety.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The Government has the capacity to assess preschools/schools for safety.

Progress: The Government developed and endorsed the School-Based Disaster Risk Management (SBDRM) methodology, with UNICEF’s assistance, in line with the best international practices. The capacity of the staff of 15 schools in each province and 25 schools in Ashgabat city would be strengthened with the support of UNICEF to ensure the planned implementation of the SBDRM methodology.

The activities related to raising capacity and preparedness of the national educational system in relation to DRR and climate change were incorporated into pre- and in-service training programmes of the pedagogical workforce at the State Pedagogical Institute and the National Institute of Education.

Methodological guidance on the nationwide DRR monitoring system for educational institutions was developed and is ready for operationalization in order to assess the readiness of educational institutions for DRR and the efficiency of the DRR component in the educational process. It also allows for the assessing of abilities and skills of students on DRR and safety.

Capacity building of the staff from identified schools on DRR with a focus on the needs of children with disabilities was planned and guided by the locally adjusted training module based on good international practices.

Following Turkmenistan’s participation in the Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR in New Delhi, UNICEF Turkmenistan provided expertise for the development of the national inter-sectoral strategy on DRR. Funding was received from the UK’s Department for International Development to provide an international consultant in the development of the national child-centred DRR strategy for effective implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR. Implementation is planned for 2017.
UNICEF Turkmenistan established a new partnership with the Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) Deutschland, which aimed to strengthen the capacity of education and health care professionals in introducing the standards of disability-inclusive DRR to preschool institutions and rehabilitation centres. The caregivers and children of the Ashgabat preschool will participate in training and receive child-friendly educational materials that aim to equip young children with the knowledge and skills necessary before, during and after disaster.

**Constraints:** Absence of a coordination mechanism between the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Defence for DRR at the national level.

To address the above constraint, UNICEF Turkmenistan initiated policy dialogue on the development of a national platform on DRR aimed at ensuring a strong coordinating mechanism between stakeholders (ministries and agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector). The coordinating mechanism will establish a common base for discussion between the stakeholders involved in DRR processes; facilitate and introduce joint decision-making processes; increase awareness, feedback and information exchange; and strengthen cooperation at the local, regional, national and international levels.

**OUTCOME 6 Reducing Social Inequities:** By end-2020, the social protection system is ready to provide inclusive quality community-based support services

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The Government approved a set of nationalised SDG indicators. After considerable negotiations, the biannual work plans between the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Parliament, SSC and NIDHR were signed by all partners and forwarded to UNICEF.

The Ministries had to agree on a cost-sharing agreement, which delayed the progress. With the technical support of UNICEF, the Government is in the process of aligning its social protection policies and legislation to comply with the CRC, through adopting the National Plan of Action on Employment of the Persons with Disability and amendments to existing legislation on social protection. This is done in close collaboration with and with technical guidance from UNICEF Turkmenistan. For example, the age of children with disability must be harmonized for welfare purposes. Significant work lies ahead on introducing a variety of social services, such as services for families with children at risk of abandonment, and policies compliant with international standards.

The fifth round of MICS was initiated in 2015 and was nearing finalisation at the end of 2016. A MICS KFR was finalised and made publicly available. It showed progress towards indicators on nutrition and HIV/AIDS awareness, and provided vital data on children in Turkmenistan for policymakers and the research community. The final Report is being finalised and cleared by the Government and will be posted early in 2017.

Thus, UNICEF provided support to child-related data collection and enriched the evidence base for new policies targeting the well-being of children. A number of studies on childcare practices were conducted. Additional analysis is also being carried out internally to determine gaps/capacities where UNICEF could complement the Government to make child-related data available for reporting on the SDGs and monitoring the progress of joint UNICEF and Government programme implementation.

The country is steadily fulfilling the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, such as harmonizing the age of children throughout its legislation, definitions of disability and access to juvenile facilities, among others. The Government of Turkmenistan
prepared a draft of the NPAC with support from UNICEF, together with representatives of the concerned ministries in a participatory manner. The Government adopted a law on the Ombudsman, and is considering the prospects of establishing a child rights monitoring mechanisms within the Ombudsman’s office.

**OUTPUT 1** Enhanced policy and monitoring for child rights realization
By end of 2020, state institutions have strengthened participatory systems to implement and monitor laws, national programmes and strategies including human rights

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
In line with the CRC Concluding Observations of 2015, the Government of Turkmenistan formally invited the UNICEF Representative and other diplomats to visit the Juvenile Colony in Mary. The Juvenile Colony is the only facility for boys. The visit allowed visitors to obtain real time data on the number and situation of children in custody.

Studies on childcare practices and a large-scale household survey-MICS were conducted. Significant efforts were made to raise awareness among partners and gear up toward SDG reporting by UNICEF in collaboration with other UN agencies, thus encouraging greater availability of data on children in Turkmenistan to national policymakers as well as international stakeholders and the research community.

The Government of Turkmenistan adopted a new law on the Ombudsman and negotiated with UNICEF and other multilateral organizations for technical assistance in establishing this office, possibly including a separate department responsible for the monitoring of the implementation of the rights of the children. In addition and at the request of the Parliament of Turkmenistan, UNICEF provided information on global and regional best practices pertaining to the establishment of a functional Ombudsman system and continued to advocate for the advancement of child-related legislation.

With UNICEF support, the capacity of the Government and Parliament was strengthened on monitoring of the rights of the children with participation of children and government representatives primarily on key issues related to children’s lives such as education, child participation and social inclusion of children with disabilities. A baseline data report on children’s awareness and perceptions about child rights was produced.

UNICEF in partnership with NIDHR gathered representatives of the concerned government institutions to discuss and finalise the draft NPAC. The NPAC is expected to be endorsed by early 2017.

**OUTPUT 2** System strengthening to deliver support to vulnerable children in communities:
By end of 2020, an operational framework for the delivery of integrated social support services for vulnerable children is tried out and ready for use throughout the country

**Analytical Statement of Progress:** The Government adopted the National Plan of Action on Employment of the Persons with Disability. This presented another opportunity to advocate for enhanced and equitable social services for children through inclusion of such key actions as establishment of social service curriculum and social work. Meetings were convened with multilateral partners such as the European Union (EU), which resulted in coordinating assistance on social work curriculum development planned for 2017.

The Government hosted a public review of UNICEF’s Regional Social Monitor Report with participation of relevant stakeholders to better understand how to assist the most vulnerable children. A concept of Social Protection was drafted with technical support from UNICEF and
the participation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and other ministries. This concept was discussed with stakeholders. The focus is on ways of introducing and strengthening existing social/child protection services for the most vulnerable children and families at the community level. It is anticipated that some of these services will be modelled in 2017 with technical support from UNICEF Turkmenistan.

### Document Centre

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