Viet Nam delivered impressive economic results in 2017. However, significant challenges remain, in particular persistent multidimensional child poverty and environmental degradation. Child inequality remains high, especially for ethnic minorities and children with disabilities. Natural disasters impacted many lives in 2017, including about one million children. Violence against children remains a significant issue and has caught the attention of the public, press and Government.

In a lower middle-income country, the new UNICEF Viet Nam Country Programme of Cooperation (CPD) focuses on key priorities where UNICEF is contributing to strengthening evidence-based policy-advocacy, demonstrating the effectiveness of holistic cross-sectoral approaches to influence Government investments for children, increasing public awareness and participation and forging new partnerships to reduce child vulnerabilities. The CPD incorporates Social Economic Development Plan (SEDP) priorities, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, and the un-finished MDG agenda. Priorities were aligned with the recent concluding observations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) committee and UNICEF's Strategic Plan. It also contributes to the One Strategic Plan between the Government and the UN system (2017-2021) that uses a delivering-as-one approach.

UNICEF Viet Nam's key programmatic response focuses on capacity building and supporting the Government to strengthen policy and institutional mechanisms to deliver long-term benefits for children. This responds to findings from UNICEF Viet Nam's equity-focused national situation analysis on children and on lessons from the Mid-Term Review. The year 2017 was effective for UNICEF Viet Nam, especially on humanitarian support, policy advocacy, and affirming support programmes and partnerships at national and subnational levels.

On humanitarian support, UNICEF Viet Nam utilized the Central Emergency Response Fund to respond to two emergency events: a severe slow-onset drought, also supported by a grant from the Government of Japan, carried out since 2016; and the aftermath of Typhoon Damrey. Both had significant impacts on children. UNICEF Viet Nam's drought response addressed acute nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) needs. UNICEF reached 536,427 beneficiaries, including 218,847 children. UNICEF and the Government of Viet Nam engaged in a robust evaluation following the emergency intervention. Viet Nam's approach to learning from this humanitarian response to promote child-centred disaster risk reduction was well received internationally.

UNICEF Viet Nam is developing a Country Cause Framework as a platform for Early Moments Matter, Violence Against Children and the World Children's Day, among others. As a result of sustained advocacy on child rights, 2017 saw notable government action: In partnership with the Government, UNICEF Viet Nam formulated and launched a Viet Nam Committee for Children, led by a Deputy Prime Minister, with a mandate to coordinate, monitor and promote child rights across the government. The committee is supported by a hotline to report on children's issues,
encouraging two-way communication between the public and Government. Official messaging from the Government frequently includes acknowledgement of government accountability for child protection, gender equality and inclusive development.

Evidence and knowledge generation in cooperation with partners is a key strategy for UNICEF Viet Nam. In 2017, UNICEF, in partnerships, finalized two situation analyses, namely the National Situation Analysis of Children in Viet Nam and the Situation Analysis of Children in Ho Chi Minh City. These reports enabled UNICEF to engage in evidence-based policy-advocacy for children in Viet Nam.

Major progress was made in 2017 on building a strong platform for institutionalizing and improving policies for integrated early childhood development (IECD). IECD policy was developed in partnership with international and local academics to ensure that social coherence and peace were integrated into the IECD programme. A cross-ministerial coordination and consultation platform was created with support from UNICEF to build consensus on the IECD agenda in Viet Nam.

UNICEF Viet Nam has a strong strategic focus on building partnerships with various stakeholders. Notable is the agreement between UNICEF Viet Nam and the Ho Chi Minh City government to establish the city as the first child-friendly city in the country. Based on the recently launched situation analysis, UNICEF and Ho Chi Minh City, in partnership with the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, are working together to support targeted, child-focused interventions in an urban context. The French Committee for UNICEF is supporting this work through exchange programmes with child-friendly cities in France. UNICEF recently launched a pilot factory programme which will benefit women workers, based on the global child rights and business principles.

UNICEF Viet Nam continues to be a key leader of One UN in Viet Nam, being the chair for the disaster risk reduction working group and the United Nations Operations Management Team; and the co-chair of two additional results groups (governance and justice, and inclusive social services) and of the United Nations Programme Management Team and the United Nations SDG Working Group.

**Humanitarian assistance**

In 2017, UNICEF Viet Nam offered humanitarian assistance in relation to two key events: an ongoing response to the severe, slow-onset drought emergency which began in 2016, and support in the aftermath of Typhoon Damrey, which hit central Viet Nam in 2017.

UNICEF provided emergency response services consisting of nutrition, water and sanitation support to children and women in 10 drought-affected provinces. UNICEF support reached a total of 536,429 beneficiaries, including 218,847 children.

Main programme results include:
- 78,000 households in 10 targeted provinces benefited from household water treatment packages.
- 44,695 students and 4,197 teachers in 131 schools in 6 provinces benefited from improved WASH facilities through provision of water filtration systems, water storage tanks, handwashing facilities, soap and water-quality testing.
- 10,120 children in 24 schools in 6 targeted provinces benefited from school-based disaster risk management teams.
• 83,569 women who are pregnant or lactating in 6 provinces benefited from micronutrient supplementation.
• 7,640 children under 5 and 62,279 children aged 6–23 months in 6 provinces benefited from emergency nutrition supplies.
• 62,279 children aged 6–23 months in 6 provinces received multiple micronutrient powder.

UNICEF recognizes that humanitarian responses should be connected to national development priorities to maximize the positive impact of emergency intervention. As part of a global organization with extensive experience in humanitarian assistance, UNICEF Viet Nam was able to draw on its technical expertise to build the capacity of key national implementing partners.

As Viet Nam is a middle-income country, the humanitarian response was primarily implemented by national partners. UNICEF’s key focus was strengthening institutional capacities and community resilience to address chronic vulnerabilities among children and women to drought and salt water intrusion.

Key examples of this focus include:

• UNICEF collaborated with the Central Committee on National Disaster Prevention and Control within the principles of the Sendai Framework to ensure a child-focused emergency response. By working through the Committee, partnerships with line ministries, provincial and local authorities and the Viet Nam Red Cross were enhanced. Internally, UNICEF coordinated with other United Nations agencies through the United Nations Disaster Risk Management Team.
• Partners were supported to manage fiduciary risks through intensive and rigorous application of HACT (harmonized approach to cash transfer) modalities including spot-checks, programme visits, more than 8 0 field monitoring visits and establishment of a Humanitarian Performance Monitoring database.
• Using the Central Emergency Response Fund and Government of Japan funds, UNICEF supported the establishment of a Central Nutrition Emergency Taskforce made up of 22 national and subnational agencies to formulate and roll out a National Guideline on Nutrition Actions in Emergency. The guideline was used as a training document on emergency nutrition for provincial health officers. As a result, the government nutrition sector was more proactive in the 2017 emergency season, conducting a Joint Initial Rapid Assessment on nutrition in collaboration with United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Significantly, the assessment led to the allocation of government resources, both human and financial, to nutrition interventions for the first time. By the end of 2017, approximately 150,000 children under the age of 5 had received vitamin A supplementation to improve their ability to resist illness and were medically screened to proactively detect cases of moderate and severe malnutrition.
• UNICEF and the Government of Viet Nam worked closely together to develop frameworks such as the Joint Ministry of Agriculture and Development–UNICEF Vision and Positioning Note on Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction, National Guidelines and a National Plan on Emergency Nutrition Preparedness and Response, National Nutrition Emergency Working Group, and National Strategy on Communication for Development. The Government of Viet Nam and partners have taken these frameworks forward since the end of the project, confirming the sustainability of results. UNICEF also supported an independent After-Action Review to synthesize overall learning from the first large-scale response to slow-onset natural disaster.

The work has also provided impetus to use the risk-informed programming approach to create within UNICEF a disaster risk reduction unit and pursue the lead of the Joint Result Group on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience within One UN in Viet Nam.
Responding to a Government of Viet Nam request for assistance to address severe damages as a result of Typhoon Damrey, UNICEF, together with One UN, submitted a request for funding support through the Central Emergency Response Fund. UNICEF received more than US$1.1 million for WASH responses. UNICEF also used its own funding for the nutritional screening in the most-affected areas. A training workshop for health workers took place in December. Procurement and distribution will occur in the first two months of 2018.

**Emerging areas of importance**

**Climate change and children.** Viet Nam is among world’s five most vulnerable countries due to climate change. A project on child-centred disaster risk reduction was developed, guided by the Government–UNICEF Vision and Positioning Note on Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction in Viet Nam. The project was strongly endorsed by the Government of Viet Nam due to its contribution to national priorities on sustainable development and risk-informed social economic development plans. UNICEF Viet Nam organized the Guidance for Risk-Informed Programming workshop for all staff, who will mainstream risk-informed programming across the Country Programme of Cooperation.

Working with children, UNICEF Viet Nam produced educational ‘Board Game for Climate Change and Hand Washing’ for primary and secondary school children. The game was featured in the Communication for Development Promising Practices document and is now being improved for scaling-up.

The After-Action Review of the emergency response provided evidence for the Government of Viet Nam to strengthen institutional mechanisms to implement the Sendai Framework. This included the establishment of a Directorate of Natural Disaster Prevention and Control with a mandate to formulate and implement strategies on natural disaster management.

In 2017, UNICEF Viet Nam was invited to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Emergency Preparedness Working Group Meeting, where UNICEF highlighted the key principles of the Sendai Framework and the SDGs in promoting child-centred disaster risk reduction in the country.

UNICEF is the chair of the United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction Result Group. Guided by the United Nations Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, the SDGs and the Sendai Framework, and the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, the group provides coherent support to national partners and strengthens partnerships for risk-informed development programming and disaster risk reduction.

**Urbanization and children.** Children impacted by rapid urbanization is a key priority of the Country Programme of Cooperation, with a focus on strengthening local capacity to establish, promote and lead the Child-Friendly City Initiative in Ho Chi Minh City. The city is home to 13 million people, is the country’s centre for economic activity and innovation, and hosts a thriving business community.

The Child-Friendly City Initiative programme document recognizes that children of the city’s millions of migrant workers (36 per cent of the total population) are likely to only attend charitable private and informal education, are left without parental guidance and in general have difficulties accessing basic services such as preschool and primary school, health, protection and social services. It will pilot UNICEF’s new global Child-Friendly City Initiative handbook.
which offers global best practice strategies to address child rights for children and adolescents impacted significantly by urbanization.

In 2017, UNICEF Viet Nam and Ho Chi Minh City authorities launched the city's first-ever situation analysis. This document provides evidence-based support for targeted, child-focused interventions in an urban context. Together with UNICEF's advocacy and technical support towards the development of the assistance programme, the situation analysis has significantly contributed to increased understanding of city authorities and implementing partners about negative impacts of migration and urbanization on children. Working with UNICEF global and regional offices, UNICEF started a data strategy project focusing on urban cities (Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City) to promote better utilization of data and evidence for programming and advocacy for children.

Accelerate integrated early childhood development (ECD). In 2017, UNICEF Viet Nam successfully played the leading role in facilitating two national IECD stakeholder workshops with development partners, international NGOs and United Nations agencies to map IECD interventions, leverage and maximize the utilization of national resources for IECD, including a research component on ECD social cohesion and peace-building.

In consultation with national partners, UNICEF drafted an IECD strategy on communication and public advocacy. The strategy draws on UNICEF’s global ECD campaign to support government partners to implement effective two-way dialogue between children, youth and community members and government service providers.

UNICEF with partners have designed an IECD project and have helped develop the first ever IECD policy for Viet Nam. In late 2017, UNICEF and the Ministry of Health launched an IECD project which incorporates the use of innovative mobile technology. This technology will enhance and fast-track IECD results and will track early nurturing of children between 0 and 8 years of age. Technical modules on pregnancy and nutrition and training manuals for national and local innovative mobile technology collaborators have been developed for implementation in 2018. Holistic parenting design is underway and the promotion of social emotional learning was launched.

At the subnational level, the three IECD projects for Dien Bien, Gia Lai, and Kon Tum provinces were approved by the Prime Minister in December.

Summary notes and acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFCT</td>
<td>child-friendly city initiative</td>
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<td>DOLISA</td>
<td>Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs</td>
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<td>eZHACT</td>
<td>UNICEF cash transfer platform</td>
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<td>HACT</td>
<td>harmonized approach to cash transfer</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communication technology</td>
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<td>IECD</td>
<td>integrated early childhood development</td>
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<td>MLISA</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs</td>
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<td>MPI</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning and Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-government organization</td>
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<td>PBR</td>
<td>Programme budget review</td>
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<td>ODA</td>
<td>official development assistance</td>
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<td>WASH</td>
<td>water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
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Joining its efforts towards inclusive development strategies, UNICEF Viet Nam supported the General Statistics Office to conduct the first National Survey on People with Disabilities. The survey had a sample size of 35,000 households out of 24 million households and included all state-owned social assistance institutions and schools which cater to children with disabilities. The survey provides data on barriers faced by children with disabilities and contributes to evidence-based interventions for children (and adults) with disabilities. The final report, to be launched in 2018, will provide evidence and policy recommendations for the implementation of the Law on People with Disability and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability (adopted by Viet Nam in 2015).

In addition, UNICEF provided support to the MLISA to train national and provincial government officials (from the MLISA and the Ministry of Health) and selected universities on the child functioning module. The training successfully built a common understanding of participants on the concepts and models of disability and deepened their knowledge on how to read and interpret data on disabilities (in adults and children) for policymaking and to implement social assistance programmes.

UNICEF supported an inter-governmental team, including a representative from a Ho Chi Minh City-based disability organization, to attend a workshop on child disability data hosted by UNICEF New York. Participants increased their knowledge on collection, analysis, interpretation and use of data on disability, especially child disability. The training resulted in strong commitment of ministries and the Ho Chi Minh City organization to apply those tools in surveys and research in Ho Chi Minh City and across Viet Nam. The effort will contribute to standardization of disability measurement that is accurate and comparable across different settings and populations.

Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

Evidence and knowledge generation in cooperation with partners is a key strategy for UNICEF Viet Nam. In 2017, UNICEF, in partnership with government organizations and NGOs, finalized two situation analyses, the National Situation Analysis of Children in Viet Nam and the Situation Analysis of Children in Ho Chi Minh City. The reports enable UNICEF to engage in evidence-based policy dialogue and advocacy for children in Viet Nam.

In November, UNICEF and the Ho Chi Minh City People’s Committee launched the Situation Analysis for Ho Chi Minh City, a complex and dynamic urban context. The analysis provided an important baseline to understand the situation of children in Ho Chi Minh City. The report shed light on a number of unfinished and emerging issues for children in the city. Issues included education for migrant children and children with disabilities, double burden of stunting and overweight for children, violence against children, as well as systematic participation of children in decision-making. Ho Chi Minh City’s leadership is committed to follow-up on findings and recommendations of this report. The situation analysis will be systematically updated to inform policy development and implementation.

The National Situation Analysis improved understanding of the current status of children’s rights in Viet Nam. It identified capacity deficits among duty bearers (including government partners and other institutions) and children that impede children’s right to survival, development, care and protection and participation, particularly those among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. The Country Programme of Cooperation 2017–2021 was based on the National
Situation Analysis.

In areas of IECD, after sustained advocacy, UNICEF and key national partners developed the first national IECD policy 2017–2025 to support systematic IECD interventions and outcomes in health, education, nutrition, etc., for children from 0 to 8 years of age. The document includes strong evidence and analysis on Viet Nam’s current status on IECD and a set of systematic indicators to monitor IECD performance in the country.

**Partnerships**

To support Ho Chi Minh City’s development as a Child-Friendly City based on global best practices, UNICEF Viet Nam and the French National Committee for UNICEF supported an exchange between Ho Chi Minh City and child-friendly cities in France to create a global network and to share Child-Friendly City initiative implementation experiences. Ho Chi Minh City participants found opportunities for future collaboration on the principle of inclusion, particularly for children with disabilities and other vulnerable children, and the potential adaptation of the French funding mechanism for IECD to support social assistance reforms in Viet Nam.

UNICEF Viet Nam enhanced partnerships with diverse stakeholders to deliver positive results for children. In 2017, UNICEF and the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry established a formal partnership to promote child rights and business principles in Viet Nam’s private sector. Besides offering UNICEF unique opportunities to influence and support private-sector contributions to benefit children, the partnership supports the role of the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry in ensuring private-sector contributions to the National Action Plan on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Private-sector input into the Ho Chi Minh City Child-Friendly City Initiative was facilitated through a joint Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry and UNICEF stakeholder consultation on ‘Child-Friendly Business for a Child-Friendly City’. A wide range of companies, business associations and stakeholders from the footwear and apparel industry, travel and tourism and the information, communication and technology sector participated. Participants were briefed on the Child-Friendly City initiative and discussed how the wider business community can implement the child rights and business principles to become child-friendly businesses.

UNICEF signed memorandum of understandings with 11 pilot factories, with the potential to reach out to 115,000, mainly women and migrant workers, to participate in the factory programme. The programme pilots interventions with demonstrated impacts on worker well-being, results for children and business benefit. An awareness-raising campaign to promote breastfeeding in the workplace was also developed in collaboration with iCare Benefit, a social enterprise with support from BMC Advertising (part of the Purpose Group).

**External communication and public advocacy**

UNICEF Viet Nam has adopted the global cause framework to support achievement of results for children in Viet Nam and work is underway to develop a country cause framework aligned with country programme objectives. The latter will comprise two global campaigns, namely, Early Moments Matter and End Violence, and two country-specific campaigns on children and climate change, and children in urban context. The main tool to deliver on the country cause framework remains digital and social media and through strategic planning and capacity reinforcement, UNICEF Viet Nam was able to make significant improvements in terms of audience and engagement on current channels.
Theories of change’ for all campaigns include specific outputs for communication for development, advocacy, partnership and resource mobilization. Advocacy within Early Moments Matter highlighted national and government-led efforts to promote integration of ECD actions. UNICEF Viet Nam also used the opportunity of the Father’s Day Campaign, the celebration of World Children’s Day and the launch of *State of the World’s Children* to carry out communication and public advocacy to meet country-specific objectives.

UNICEF Viet Nam also advocated to the public on the Core Commitments for Children in Emergency with first-hand information and stories from the field during the Typhoon Damrey event. This followed extensive visibility undertaken on the response to drought and salt water intrusion crisis funded by the Government of Japan. All materials were adapted for Japanese audiences and shared with relevant partners for dissemination in Japan. UNICEF Viet Nam also planned and implemented a national public awareness campaign on child road injury prevention to influence individual behaviours related to one of the leading causes of death among children in the country. The campaign reached 246,000 people with key messages about helmet wearing and reducing speed around specific zones.

**Identification and promotion of innovation**

UNICEF Viet Nam is committed to developing innovative partnerships for children. As such, UNICEF established a new partnership with the Saigon Innovation Hub under Ho Chi Minh City’s government. The Saigon Innovation Hub expressed a strong interest to learn and utilize good practice from the past UNICEF UPSHIFT programme. The partnership aims to inspire adolescent- and youth-led innovation and promote social entrepreneurship through twenty-first century skills development and practice for marginalized and vulnerable adolescents and young people, including those with disabilities.

UNICEF also hosted the Global Innovation Centre’s Annual Board Meeting in Ho Chi Minh City in 2017. The event with UPSHIFT teams from Viet Nam, supporters and key partners, including the Saigon Innovation Hub and UPSHIFT implementing partner Viet Youth Entrepreneurs in Ho Chi Minh City, enhanced UNICEF Viet Nam’s position as a trusted partner in social innovation/social entrepreneurship in Ho Chi Minh City. UPSHIFT Viet Nam’s strong focus on adolescents and young people with disabilities showed that equity is a strong component of UPSHIFT as a scalable innovation. UNICEF Viet Nam also contributed lessons learned to the global UPSHIFT workshop in November 2017, which aimed to develop UPSHIFT to scale up. The knowledge gained from the workshop will help deepen and scale UNICEF Viet Nam’s UPSHIFT approach under the 2017–2021 Child-Friendly City Initiative programme.

UNICEF worked with partners, initially in six provinces/cities including Da Nang, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, to promote U-Report to empower young people (via children’s councils) to speak out on issues that they care about, encourage citizen-led development and create positive change. U-Report Viet Nam. RapidPro, website and Facebook were established and activated.

A platform for deployment of innovative mobile technology was established. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF is obtaining a short code for deployment of RapidPro and developing the m-IECD training manuals which will be followed with cascade trainings for health-care staff at different levels and data collection on the ground in 2018.
UNICEF Viet Nam implemented the GAVI Vaccine Alliance transition plan in 2017. UNICEF Viet Nam and the Ministry of Health have developed a programme of cooperation which incorporates GAVI funding for the GAVI transition. The Government of Viet Nam's extended programme on immunization is currently being implemented.

• Based on the 2016 immunization coverage of measles and DTP-HepB-Hib, 152 hard-to-reach communes from 10 districts with coverage below the global standard of 80 per cent have been identified by the national extended programme on immunization. Outreach immunization sessions will be delivered by the national extended programme on immunization with operational funds supported by the local government, aiming at increasing the immunization coverage of those hard-to-reach communes to more than 90 per cent.
• 50 district and 304 commune health workers responsible for immunization have been trained on micro-planning and organization of immunization outreach sessions to deliver immunization to unreached children in the communes.
• 1260 village health workers from 152 communes have improved knowledge and skills in communication for immunization and are capable of supporting organization of immunization outreach sessions.
• With the support of UNICEF’s procurement service, the national extended programme on immunization successfully procured 2,783,200 doses of DTP-HepB-Hib vaccine with a total budget of US$2,226,560. With this, UNICEF Viet Nam has not only fulfilled its obligation to co-finance procurement of vaccines as committed with the Gavi Alliance but has also ensured pentavalent vaccine security in 2017.

In addition, UNICEF Viet Nam supported the development of a vaccine forecast for 2018, including the amount of DTP-HepB-Hib vaccine, as well as a deployment plan for procurement of cold chain equipment which is financed and co-financed by GAVI and the national extended programme on immunization.

Human rights-based approach to cooperation

UNICEF Viet Nam provided technical support to the MLISA to formulate State Party Reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNICEF facilitated an inclusive process with stakeholders including ministries, civil society organizations and international organizations to review the draft report. The report(s) identified gaps in the policy and legal framework hindering access to basic social and protection services for children with disabilities.

UNICEF engaged in broad and successful advocacy, notably the Law on Children, to ensure the delivery of children’s rights in Viet Nam. UNICEF worked with the Government to establish the Viet Nam National Committee for Children; and provided technical support to improve its capacity to deliver children’s rights mandate. Through UNICEF’s sustained advocacy, a National Assembly sub-committee on child rights was established for the assembly to fulfil its role in children’s rights implementation and law-making.

UNICEF provided support to develop two sub-laws that provide implementation guidance for the Law on Children. Following a human rights-based approach, UNICEF facilitated consultations with children. Their views informed the development of the sub-laws, especially for effective reporting mechanisms on child abuse and exploitation and creating platforms for children’s participation in decision-making processes.

UNICEF supported a consultative process with civil society organizations and stakeholders to
revise a circular on measurement and identification of persons with disabilities. The circular now contains simplified disability-screening processes using a functioning-based approach versus a medical approach to measure disability levels. This Circular is an important document determining access to Government social and protection programmes by adults and children with disabilities.

Furthermore, UNICEF Viet Nam leveraged at high level to advocate for raising the age of the child to under 18, including with the Prime Minister at the 40th anniversary of Viet Nam’s entry into the United Nations, and meetings between the Representative and high-level partners such as the State Vice President, the National Assembly Vice Chairwoman, and various ministers. UNICEF had a lead role in the issuance of the Resident Coordinators’ statement on sexual abuse of children in Vung Tau, leveraging hereby the OneUN setting for the sake of children.

**Gender equality**

The past year, 2017, marked significant achievements for UNICEF Viet Nam’s agenda for gender equality in education, including:

- UNICEF and other United Nations agencies supported the Ministry of Education and Training to issue the Decree on Safe, Healthy, Friendly and Non-Violent Educational Environment. The decree outlined requirements for inclusive quality education and a gender-responsive education system. Notably, the Decree highlighted government accountability to ensure equity and gender responsiveness in education.
- UNICEF also supported updated studies on out-of-school children, early childhood education, and inclusive education for children with disabilities, which included gender-disaggregated data. The studies were used to raise awareness among education managers on gender gaps in education. UNICEF will use these studies for evidence-based advocacy for gender-responsive budgeting in education.

Following multi-stakeholder conferences on child marriage, UNICEF and other United Nations agencies completed a discussion paper. The paper, which identified the prevalence and drivers of child marriage, and the girls most at risk, is an important evidence-based tool for advocacy against child marriage. It will support UNICEF to develop a joint United Nations programme on the issue.

UNICEF has actively engaged in the One UN Gender Working Group to map gender activities for 2017–2021. Advocacy strategies for Labour Code revision and flexibility for all workers have been identified. Differentiated messaging for workers in different labour categories has provided a positive and practical approach for advocacy. UNICEF conducted awareness-raising among women to support the harmonization of the retirement age across sectors to help address the vulnerability of women in the informal sector.

Supporting the Child-Friendly City Initiative, UNICEF hosted a Ho Chi Minh City delegation to Ha Noi to study the global Child-Friendly City Initiative and to support the city’s partners to make Ho Chi Minh City the first child-friendly city in Viet Nam. UNICEF conducted further advocacy on the safe city initiative for girls and women at a workshop with the MLISA and UN Women.

UNICEF introduced the factory programme with 11 factories which employ 115,000 workers, 80 per cent of whom are women. UNICEF collaborated with national partners to address gender issues in maternity protection, workplace breastfeeding, non-discrimination and family friendly workplaces which offer work/life balance and shared responsibility for childcare.
Environmental sustainability

As chair of the United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience Joint Result Group, UNICEF Viet Nam facilitated exchange of data collection and analysis among United Nations agencies, fostering synergies around disaster risks under the Sendai Framework. Following the 2016 Child-Centred Vulnerability Mapping, Viet Nam’s risk assessments were updated through a Guidance on Risk-Informed Programming workshop, with in-depth causality analysis on systemic issues.

UNICEF actively engaged with children as stakeholders and decision makers in its emergency response to the drought and salt water intrusion crisis. UNICEF facilitated the establishment of school-based disaster risk management teams which allowed children to participate in risk assessments, action planning and the implementation of child-sensitive risk-reduction. Innovative communication tools designed to encourage creative, participatory and self-learning approaches were used to engage children in this process which is beyond emergency response, including: (1) Children in Gia Lai Province were trained as hygiene promoters who guided their families and other children to wash their hands with soap; and (2) children in Gia Lai and Soc Trang provinces participated in field testing of board games on climate change and hygiene promotion. Children also participated in the After-Action Review to share their views and feedback on the emergency response project.

UNICEF also supported the Government to share its achievements in resilient development with a child focus, within Viet Nam and globally. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs delivered a keynote speech at the 34th Human Rights Council Panel on Climate Change sharing Viet Nam’s long-term strategy on disaster risk reduction child-centred programming. UNICEF supported the first National Conference on Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction, which drew out lessons learned from the recent emergency drought response. Viet Nam’s approach to learning from emergency response to strengthen its policy/institutional mechanisms to promote child-centred disaster risk reduction has received significant interest from international audience.

At the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Asia Partnership Forum 2017, Viet Nam’s delegation delivered a statement on the implementation progress of the Sendai Framework in Viet Nam against its international commitments and in line with the new partnership between the Government of Viet Nam and UNICEF on child-centred disaster risk reduction.

Effective leadership

The country management team met eight times to review the office management and programme priorities to improve performance. Key indicators were reviewed to monitor programme implementation and remove bottlenecks. The joint consultative committee met twice in 2017 to ensure an enabled work environment. The office organized a staff retreat to build team coherence and spirit.

UNICEF Viet Nam conducted weekly section head meetings and bi-monthly Programme Coordination Meetings to plan programme priorities, with minutes shared with staff. The office updated the table of authority and delegation of authority memos.

UNICEF Viet Nam engaged with the United Nations Country Team, UN House management board and the Management Team to support United Nations reform initiatives. UNICEF chaired
the Operations Management Team and led the development of the joint Business Operations Strategy. The Business Operations Strategy 2018 workplan was developed. United Nations agencies are expected to save $1.7 million during 2018–2021.

UNICEF Viet Nam continued to update risk mitigation strategies in 2017 as per the overall office country risk profile and reviewed the progress of mitigation actions planned. The office Business Continuity Plan was reviewed, updated and tested. The office has successfully prepared and submitted the quadrennial budget (2018–2021), which was approved by both regional and global programme budget reviews.

UNICEF consolidated its programmatic and operational leadership with the One UN team in Viet Nam through contributions to the United Nations Country Team retreat, sharpening Joint Result Groups leadership and co-leadership. UNICEF led one Joint Result Group and co-led two Joint Result Groups, and the Programme Management Team. UNICEF co-led the One UN Communication team and played an assertive role in the Human Right Working Group, contributing to raising alarm bells about emerging adverse trends affecting human, political and civil society rights. UNICEF was the most sought-after United Nations organization to assume the Resident Coordinator/DO ad-interim position. The UNICEF Viet Nam Representative assumed these roles for 72 days throughout 2017.

**Financial resources management**

In 2017, government approval of the One Strategic Plan, Project Investment Plans and Annual Workplans was delayed. Consequently, a major proportion of cash transfers was released in the fourth quarter (71 per cent of total cash transfers), which triggered an additional 13 minimum requirement programme visits and 9 financial spot-checks. By 31 December 2017, 100 per cent of minimum required programme visits (26) and 73 per cent of financial spot-checks (11 out of 15) were completed. Total cash transfers to the Government were 23 per cent of the programme budget. Outstanding direct cash transfer between six and nine months is less than 1 per cent. There are no outstanding direct cash transfers older than nine months.

Standard operating procedures for direct invoice, programme office invoice and direct cash transfer were updated to align with UNICEF policies and procedures. Internal financial procedures for cash transfers to implementing partners and for low-value purchases were simplified to reduce paperwork and to delegate authority to budget owners. These changes created efficiency gains in resource use.

Segregation of duties violations were reviewed. Medium and high risks were mitigated or remediated. The table of authority describing the responsibilities and limits of staff for various functional roles has been updated and shared with staff to ensure that internal financial controls are in place.

Three staff members were eZHACT (UNICEF cash transfer platform) advocates and trained in the UNICEF Regional Office. They then trained others to successfully launch eZHACT.

Local currency replenishments followed UNICEF Headquarters’ policy. Cooperation with the local bank ensured the most competitive rate for foreign exchange transactions. Cash balances were maintained at two weeks of expenditure and liquidity always met the benchmark threshold of 25 per cent. Monthly bank reconciliation of office bank accounts was conducted on time, reconciling items were timely cleared and there are no outstanding items more than one month.
Fundraising and donor relations

UNICEF Viet Nam mobilized US$6.1 million in other resources in 2017 in the context of dwindling overseas grant development assistance intermediated through the United Nations in Viet Nam. The level of resources mobilized represents approximately 60 per cent of the other resources ceiling approved by the Executive Board.

In response to the effects of Typhoon Damrey, UNICEF Viet Nam also mobilized US$1.1 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund to cover life-saving interventions in WASH. Strategic partnership with the European Union was also finalized to cover interventions related to juvenile justice. Partnerships with National Committees have remained instrumental for UNICEF Viet Nam to mobilize adequate resources for children. The Korean Committee for UNICEF and the Finnish National Committee are the office’s top contributors. Additional key National Committees include Denmark, the United States and the United Kingdom.

UNICEF Viet Nam hosted eight National Committee donor visits and two Goodwill Ambassador visits to strengthen links with key constituencies. Discussion is ongoing with the Governments of France, Japan and the Republic of Korea to develop joint projects. UNICEF Viet Nam has also played a strategic role in developing a United Nations-wide resources mobilization strategy aligned with the Joint Results Groups.

UNICEF Viet Nam continued its advocacy for government endorsement to start local private-sector fundraising. A national stakeholder consultation was held, and key current and former leaders supported UNICEF’s position. Key bottlenecks were also identified during follow-up meetings with line ministries. A high-level meeting with the Vice President of Viet Nam, who is the chair of the largest state child charity has also allowed UNICEF to explore temporary measures to initiate private-sector fundraising activities. The proposed model is currently being reviewed by key concerned ministries.

Evaluation and research

UNICEF Viet Nam began preparations for three summative evaluations to be undertaken in 2021, the end of the Country Programme of Cooperation cycle. For example, the IECD baseline survey and scoping paper are being prepared, with plans to be ready during 2018. UNICEF Viet Nam is finalizing two evaluations from the last Country Programme of Cooperation cycle: the Socio-Economic Development Project evaluation and the WASH programme evaluation. Final reports will be ready by the end of the first quarter of 2018.

UNICEF Viet Nam reviewed the 2015/2016 Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, with lessons learned presented at the Programme Coordination Meeting. Preparations for the 2017/2018 plan have begun and the guidance has been shared with the Programme Team.

There is a clear process for conducting evaluation. The planning, monitoring and evaluation section works with other sections to ensure quality of terms of reference and final reports. Consultants are recruited on a broad, competitive basis. The programme coordination meeting forum is used to disseminate evaluation findings and to receive feedback. Evaluation findings are disseminated through various channels, including workshops with key stakeholders, the press and social media. UNICEF Viet Nam staff ensures strong government ownership on evaluation, thus findings feedback directly into related policies. UNICEF Viet Nam considered evaluation as a prime source of learning and generation of contextualized programme knowledge.
UNICEF Viet Nam and the United Nations Result-Based Working Group have supported the Viet Nam monitoring and evaluation network, including in the organization of the Asia and the Pacific Evaluation Association Conference in Hanoi.

An example of how data and evidence from review/evaluations have influenced policies and ways of working: the Action Review of Emergency Response’s findings were shared at the Final Review Conference (of emergency response) in May 2017, at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation’s 11th Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum meeting in September 2017, and at the recent Ninh Thuan work planning meeting in October 2017.

**Efficiency gains and cost savings**

The major cost savings realized in management and operations are linked to the use of Common Services in the Green One UN House. Since UNICEF moved to Green One UN House in June 2015, the office has saved US$20,000 per month in rent and reduced overhead costs. Savings have also been achieved using common services such as protocol, travel, banking, reception, information and communication technology (ICT) services and outsourced services such as security and cleaning. Also, 10 per cent of the office electricity consumption is generated by onsite solar panels. UNICEF also benefited from the additional income generated by the Green One UN House amount of US$24,000.

UNICEF invested substantial time in Green One UN House governance and operations forums, as the co-location and common services set-up constituted a major stake for operational affordability and programme coherence, very much in the spirit of the Business Operations Strategy initiative promoted within the framework of the new United Nations Development System reform.

**Supply management**

During 2017, the supply unit supported programme components in the procurement of both goods and services used for programme activities and provided logistics services. UNICEF’s supply unit also coordinated with other United Nations agencies for common procurement and conducted local procurement for operational purposes. UNICEF Viet Nam also plays a liaison role between the global UNICEF supply division and the Government to support them with customs clearance processes and receiving of UNICEF programme supplies that are delivered directly to implementing partners (the Country Office has no in-country warehouse).

**Table 1: Total procurement volume (offshore and local)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of procurement</th>
<th>Procurement volume (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>130,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>617,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement services (vaccines and devices)</td>
<td>4,324,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,072,066</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above data are for completed procurement volume as of 31 December 2017, including 36 contracts/purchase orders with a value of US$747,155 and vaccine/vaccine devices procured by Procurement Services with a value of US$4,324,912 for the country in 2017. Beside the processing for contracts/purchase orders, the supply component has supported other components to process 64 low-value purchases with value of more than US$40,600. The Country Office has also completed the procurement for a long-term agreement for the translation/interpretation services to be used for repetitive requests for this service, expected to be effective in January 2018.

Table 2: Local achieved procurement volume (contracts/purchase orders for sections/programmes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Procurement value (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication for development</td>
<td>127,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td>53,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>23,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sectorial</td>
<td>152,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSD/PME</td>
<td>89,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
<td>126,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>7,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRDT</td>
<td>9,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPS</td>
<td>3,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPG</td>
<td>147,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>747,155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data as of 31 December 2017)

As there are various types of supplies needed (regular and operational supplies, programme supplies, institutional services and procurement services) for the Country Office, the supply component also includes in its functions the role of monitoring, reporting, advising supply activities and other tasks for supply management purposes.

Security for staff and premises

UNICEF is part of UN House, known Green One UN House. Security services are centrally managed by the Common Services Unit. UNICEF Viet Nam worked closely with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security and UN House to manage the safety and security of
staff. UNICEF participated in the senior management team meeting and contributed both finances and staff for the improvement of security and safety services for the premises. In collaboration with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, the warden system was updated, and UNICEF staff members were nominated to be wardens. The communication tree was updated and tested during the business continuity test. The UNICEF Chief of Operations was nominated as Country Security Focal Point and has closely worked with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, the Common Services Unit and other United Nations agencies on staff and premises security.

### Human resources

UNICEF Viet Nam’s recruitment activities in 2017 increased 300 per cent compared with 2016. To support an organization-wide business continuity strategy, the Office completed the recruitment of qualified candidates to fill the GS-6 Backfill talent pool. The Office gender ratio is 68 per cent female and 32 per cent male staff. Following the successful recruitment of an external male for a GS temporary appointment, the portion of male general service staff members will increase from 15 per cent to 19 per cent. In 2017, the Office put in place an assertive gender strategy to achieve gender parity for both national and international positions.

By 28 February 2017, the Office reached 92 per cent compliance in completing 2016 performance evaluations and 100 per cent compliance in finalizing 2017 performance planning. Management is committed to an honest, fair and transparent performance management process. Continuing the human resources reform effort, an office-wide performance management workshop and three human resources clinics were conducted to support performance cultural change in the office. An Annual Performance Review Meeting was implemented before the conclusion of 2017 Performance Cycle.

The 2017 staff survey shows significant improvement in all dimensions in comparison to the 2014 staff survey. The Office is committed to sustain the areas with great approval and address issues identified in the survey. A comprehensive Office Improvement Plan was developed based on the outcome of the staff retreat and in response to the Staff Survey.

To support staff members’ career development and capacity building, the Office has undertaken a rostered learning and development activity schedule including 24 Office-wide, group and individual learning activities, and 12 international stretch assignments and internal redeployments in 2017.

In collaboration with other United Nations agencies, the Office is committed to UN Cares and has implemented the 10 minimum standards on HIV in the workplace.

### Effective use of information and communication technology

The Office successfully implemented the UNICEF standard cloud-based office tools including Office 365, Outlook, Skype for Business, OneDrive and SharePoint. All staff were briefed on the new versions of corporate applications. As part of the Windows 10 upgrade, the Office replaced 27 laptops and completed 80 per cent of Windows 10 rollout.

To improve efficiency and effectiveness, especially for communication between the country office in Ha Noi and the sub-office in Ho Chi Minh City, the Office has upgraded the ICT infrastructure of the UNICEF Public Partnership Office in Ho Chi Minh City. This will give the office the opportunity to prioritize virtual meetings and further reduce travel costs. The office ICT
team closely worked with the child survival and development programme team to provide technical support in the development and implementation of m-IECD.

The Office continues to streamline its ICT services by fully participating in and integrating One UN ICT services and systems. UNICEF is the leading agency for One UN ICT and in 2017, the joint the Green One UN House Business Continuity Plan and disaster risk reduction plan were developed and put in place.

UNICEF Viet Nam also hosted an Asia-wide regional ICT meeting in 2017 at Green One UN House premises in recognition of the suitable premise and pioneering One UN ICT functionalities.

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**Programme components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** The identity, direction and well-being of UNICEF and staff are managed efficiently and effectively to enable the achievement of results for children in the country.

**Analytical statement of progress**
The country management team met eight times and reviewed the office management and programme priorities to improve programme and management performance. Management and programme indicators were reviewed to monitor programme implementation and remove the bottlenecks. To ensure effective management, the joint consultative committee met twice during the year to enhance a participatory and enabling work environment. In addition, the office organized a staff retreat to further enhance and build team coherence and spirit. Weekly section head meetings and bi-monthly programme coordination meetings were also conducted to review and plan programme priorities. The minutes of these meetings were accessible to all staff. The office has reviewed and updated the table of authority and delegation of authority memos have been updated, signed and documented. UNICEF Viet Nam engaged with the United Nations Country Team, Green One UN House management board and the operations management team (OMT) to stay on course in terms of United Nations reform initiatives. UNICEF chaired the OMT and led the development of a joint Business Operations Strategy, which was endorsed by the United Nations Country Team. The Business Operations Strategy 2018 annual workplan was developed. It is expected that United Nations agencies will save US$1.7 million during the next four years (2018–2021).

The Country Office continued to update risk mitigation strategies in 2017 as per the overall office country risk profile and reviewed the progress of mitigation actions planned. The Office business continuity plan was reviewed, updated and tested. The Office has successfully prepared and submitted the quadrennial budget (2018–2021), which was approved by both regional and global programme budget reviews (PBR).

**OUTPUT 1** The identity, direction and well-being of UNICEF and staff are managed efficiently and effectively to enable the achievement of results for children in the country.
**Analytical statement of progress**

The quadrennial budget was prepared and submitted to PBR on time and as per the deadline. In collaboration with other United Nations agencies, the Business Operations Strategy of 2018–2021 was developed and approved by the United Nations. The 2017 AMP was developed and the office key management priorities and results were reviewed in December. In addition, the office risk profile was reviewed, and planned mitigation actions were updated. UNICEF participated in and contributed to the development of the Green One UN House Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and, as a result, the UNICEF business continuity plan was revised and a simplified version of the plan was tested.

**OUTPUT 2 Financial resources and stewardship**

**Analytical statement of progress**

Direct cash transfers were closely monitored. Due to a government delay in the approval and finalization of OSP, Proposals of Investment Policy and project documents, which are the prerequisites for the Government to sign annual workplans, the office mainly used reimbursement modality of cash disbursements. The total cash transfers to the Government, including reimbursement, were 18 per cent of the total programme budget. Outstanding direct cash transfer between six and nine months is less than 1 per cent and there are no outstanding direct cash transfers ageing more than nine months. Due to the delay in signatures for the annual workplans, a major part of direct cash transfer was released in the fourth quarter, triggering an additional minimum requirement of programme visits and financial spot-checks.

The standard operating procedures for direct invoice, PO invoice and direct cash transfer were updated to align with updated UNICEF policies and procedures. Internal financial procedures for cash transfers to implementing partners and procedures for low-value purchases were simplified to reduce paperwork (direct cash transfer) and to delegate authority to budget owners (low-value purchases).

Segregation of duties (SOD) violations were reviewed, and medium and high risks were mitigated or remediated. The table of authority describing the responsibilities and limits of staff for various functional roles was updated and shared with all staff to ensure that elements of internal financial controls are put in place.

The Office nominated three staff members to be eZHACT advocates. These staff members were trained in the UNICEF Regional Office by a team from UNICEF Headquarters. The training of trainers trained the other staff from programme and operations, and eZHACT was successfully launched on 29 October 2017.

Local currency replenishments followed UNICEF New York Headquarters’ policy and cooperation with the office House Bank (Standard Chartered Bank Viet Nam) ensured the most competitive rate for FX transactions. Cash balances were maintained at two weeks of expenditure and liquidity was always ensured to meet the benchmark threshold of 25 per cent.

Monthly bank reconciliation of office bank accounts were completed on time, reconciling items were timely cleared and there are no outstanding items more than one month.
OUTPUT 3 Human resources management

Analytical statement of progress
The Viet Nam office’s recruitment activities in 2017 increased 300 per cent in comparison to 2016. To support an organization-wide business continuity strategy, the office completed the recruitment of qualified candidates to fill the GS-6 Backfill talent pool. The gender ratio of the office is 68 per cent female and 32 per cent male staff. With the success of the recruitment effort to hire an external male for a GS Temporary Appointment, the portion of male GS staff members will increase from 15 per cent to 19 per cent. In 2017, the office put in place a gender strategy to achieve gender parity for both national and international positions.

As of 28 February 2017, the Office reached 92 per cent compliance in completing the 2016 performance evaluation and 100 per cent compliance in finalizing the 2017 performance planning. In continuing the human resources reform effort, an office-wide Performance Management workshop and three human resources clinics were conducted to allow the performance cultural change to take root in the office. The management is committed to an honest, fair and transparent performance management process and an Annual Performance Review Meeting will be implemented before the conclusion of the 2017 Performance Cycle.

The results of the 2017 Staff Survey showed significant improvement in all dimensions in comparison to 2014. The office is committed to continue the effort to sustain the areas with great approval and address issues identified in the survey. A comprehensive Office Improvement Plan was developed based on the outcome of the staff retreat and further enhanced to incorporate actions items to respond to the survey results.

In supporting staff members’ career development and capacity building, the office has a robust learning and development activities including 24 office-wide, group and individual learning activities, and 12 international stretch assignments and internal redeployments in 2017. In collaboration with other United Nations agencies under the One UN principle, the office is committed to UN Cares and has implemented the 10 minimum standards on HIV in the workplace.

OUTCOME 2 The country programme is efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards to achieve results for children.

Analytical statement of progress
The 2017 Annual Management Review (AMR shows that UNICEF Viet Nam met all of its programme and management objectives and indicators set out in the 2017 Annual Management Plan (AMP). Good progress on programme indicators included:

- Support to the development of two sub-law documents for the implementation and social protection of the Child Law;
- Development of the IECD policy with intensive consultation with government partners;
- Establishment of the IECD cross-sectoral, multi-governmental coordination mechanism;
- Establishment of a high-powered inter-sectoral committee on child rights led by a Deputy Prime Minister with detailed tasks of the committee and clearly defined roles and responsibilities of member agencies; and
- An inter-sectoral coordination mechanism for child rights implementation is established as a critical strategic contribution to the Child-Friendly City Initiative in Ho Chi Minh City.
Key indicators on programme management were achieved, including:

- Quadrennial budget (2018–2021) developed and submitted;
- By the end of 2017, a business operations strategy framework was developed; and
- By the end of 2017, qualified implementing partners for the implementation of a new Country Programme of Cooperation are financially assessed, and associated risks are managed.

Key partnerships were established: for example, a new cooperation framework for the period of 2017–2021 between Ho Chi Minh City and UNICEF Viet Nam was developed; and a formal partnership with the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry with UNICEF was approved for promoting Child Rights and Business.

UNICEF Viet Nam is also among the leaders of One UN in Viet Nam, including through active leadership and participation in many United Nations governance structures: for example, being the co-chair of the United Nations programme management team, and of the UN SDG working group; the chair of the Disaster Risk Reduction Results Group and the chair of the United Nations Operations Management Team.

Key results that help children, women and people include: UNICEF assistance was crucial in improving immunization coverage and capacity on immunization of national and subnational stakeholders in Viet Nam. These included:

- 2,260 village health workers from 152 poor communes have improved skills and knowledge on immunization;
- UNICEF support to increase the DTP-HepB-Hib immunization coverage of hard-to-reach groups to more than 90 per cent; and
- 50 districts in Viet Nam were trained on micro planning and immunization outreach;

UNICEF provided critical support via emergency response to help Viet Nam address natural disasters in 2017, including:

- 78,000 households in 10 targeted provinces (Ben Tre, Binh Thuan, Ca Mau, Dak Lak, Gia Lai, Hau Giang, Kon Tum, Ninh Thuan, Soc Trang and Tra Vinh) benefited from household water treatment packages.
- 44,695 students and 4,197 teachers in 131 schools in 6 provinces (Ben Tre, Binh Thuan, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, Ninh Thuan and Soc Trang) benefited from improved WASH facilities through provision of water filtration systems, water storage tanks, handwashing facilities, soap and water-quality testing.
- 10,120 children in 24 schools in 6 targeted provinces benefited from school-based Disaster Risk Management Teams.
- 83,569 pregnant and lactating women in 6 provinces (Ca Mau, Gia Lai, Hau Giang, Kon Tum, Ninh Thuan and Tra Vinh) benefited from micronutrient supplementation.
- 7,640 children under5 and 62,279 children aged 6–23 months in 6 provinces benefited from emergency nutrition supplies.
- 62,279 children aged 6–23 months in 6 provinces received multiple micronutrient powder.
OUTPUT 1 Planning, monitoring and evaluation

Analytical statement of progress
Despite heavy and time-consuming procedures on official development assistance (ODA) project development required by the 2016 Government Decree on ODA management and utilization, 12 out of a total 16 projects were approved by the Government of Viet Nam for implementing the Country Programme 2017–2021. Key priorities of the Country Office’s 2017 Management Plan were achieved. The Quadrennial Budget (2018–2021) was developed and submitted. The office reviewed the expenditures of 2016 as baseline and followed the budget instruction guidance and capitalized opportunities in common services (Green One UN House) and Business Operations Strategy to develop the quadrennial budget. By the end of 2017, qualified implementing partners for implementation of new Country Programme of Cooperation were financially assessed and associated risks were managed.

Two sub-laws guiding the implementation of the Law on Children (the Decree to guide implementation of the Law, and the Decree on development of a safe and child-friendly learning environment) containing UNICEF’s key recommendations were issued. This enables implementation of a comprehensive national child protection system and a child-friendly and non-violent education environment. It will create concrete measures to ensure children’s participation in decisions that affect them. The office achieved this priority through the provision of technical assistance and expert advice to the Government’s drafting teams; and policy advocacy at technical and senior levels with the MLISA and the Ministry of Education and Training. Generation of evidence was key to come up with recommendations: they key studies include the multi-country study on the Drivers of Violence against Children, Drivers of Child Labour Study, Child Protection Costing Study, etc. Communication activities also contributed to the results via, for example, the Viet Nam Action Month for Children (June), as well as forging partnerships with NGOs and civil society organizations to advocate for passage of these decrees.

The Prime Minister’s decision on the establishment of a high-powered inter-sectoral committee on child rights (Viet Nam Children Committee, chaired by a Deputy Prime Minister) was issued with detailed tasks of the committee and clearly defined roles and responsibilities of member agencies. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Labour and the Invalids and Social Affairs based on lessons learned from existing coordinating mechanisms in Viet Nam and international best practices on child rights coordination.

Integrated early childhood development supported by UNICEF was received as a priority of national development by the national partners. As a result, a high-level multi-sectoral consultation on IECD was established and a draft policy on IECD is ready for the Government’s approval in early 2018. UNICEF also supported the innovative Child-Friendly City strategy and Action Plan 2017–2030, reflecting the global Child-Friendly City Framework for Action endorsed by Ho Chi Minh City People’s Committee. A roadmap for private-sector partnership fundraising for UNICEF Viet Nam was approved by the country management team.

OUTPUT 2 Planning, monitoring and evaluation

Analytical statement of progress
As UNICEF Viet Nam started the first year of the 2017–2021 Country Programme, a number of time-consuming procedures and processes required by the 2016 Government Decree 16 on ODA management and utilization has created some delays in the approval and implementation
of UNICEF-supported projects with the Government’s implementing partners. Despite the challenges, 12 projects with national partners as part of the 2018 annual workplan and an indicators system for each were approved for implementation.

Guidance and tools for planning and monitoring were developed and issued in adherence to the requirements of both the Government and UNICEF and disseminated in a timely manner for application. The office reviewed the 2015/16 Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for learning. A new guidance and a template for the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan 2017/18 were issued. Three evaluation-related activities are taking place: the Evaluation of the Socio-Economic Development Plan project, the WASH programme evaluation, and the baseline assessment for IECD.

Planning, monitoring & evaluation staff also represents UNICEF in key United Nations Coordination Groups: for example, the chief of PM&E co-chairs the United Nations SDG Working Group; PM&E staff are members of the Disaster Risk Reduction Result Group and the Data for Development Group. Quality assurance provided by the PM&E unit on project development and workplans has ensured the alignment between the results structures of the Country Programme of Cooperation and individual projects, as well as enhanced the link between UNICEF-supported projects and the United Nations One Strategic Plan’s results framework.

Planning, monitoring & evaluation also leads several data-related works and studies including the disability survey/analysis working with the General Statistics Office, the National Situation Analysis, the Children SDG Indicator Booklet and the Integration of WASH Indicators into the National Living Standard Household Survey. The first three documents are being finalized and will be launched in early 2018.

**OUTPUT 4 Operational support for delivery of Public Partnership Office programme results**

**Analytical statement of progress**

Renewal of the lease agreement was successfully negotiated with Sun Wah management for the period 2017–2019, in favour of business continuity and cost-effectiveness. The Programme Partnerships Office thus remained at its location in the city centre, in close proximity to the Mayor’s Office and city administration, thus allowing UNICEF to approach key city-level government partners as well as sister United Nations agencies and private-sector partners present in the city.

UNICEF’s corporate visibility in connection with the new global brand strategy ‘For Every Child’ was promoted and implemented successfully in the office in January 2017 with technical assistance from the UNICEF Viet Nam Country Office communications team. Office connectivity was maintained in support of virtual team communication by investment in ICT equipment and contracting an information technology help desk. Regular challenges in video conference quality and help desk services were addressed and the system is being monitored closely on an ongoing basis.

Though the office location is in a corporate building with sufficient building security and surveillance in the public areas, the office security was further improved with a keyless lock system and physical lock, commonly used by other tenants in the building. In line with Sun Wah
management and United Nations Department of Safety and Security recommendations, office security will be addressed before the end of the year by installing closed circuit television at the front desk entrance.

The operational knowledge and skills of staff were strengthened via buddy mentoring, regular updates and training carried out by the programme assistant. To further strengthen the capacity of the Public Partnership Office operations, the programme assistant participated in a regional workshop on contracting services and thus gained UNICEF’s fundamental procurement knowledge and skills to further apply in HCMO’s operations and support the programme partnerships team.

**OUTCOME 3** By 2021, there is an inclusive and protective legal and policy environment and improved state accountability for the realization of children’s rights.

**Analytical statement of progress**
In the first year of the Country Programme, strategic results were achieved under Outcome 1 to strengthen the normative framework on child rights and accelerate the achievement of global goals, namely the SDGs. UNICEF provided technical support to the Prime Minister’s decision on the establishment of a high-level Inter-Ministerial Committee for Children with a mandate to coordinate cross-sectoral implementation of children’s rights in line with international standards. State Party Reports were completed on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities through a consultative process in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders. Meanwhile, detailed guidance on implementation of the Child Law was developed, with UNICEF facilitating consultations with children in selected provinces.

Multi-sectoral and stakeholder partnerships were leveraged in a number of areas to achieve optimal results for children under the SDGs. On early childhood development, the national ECD Scheme and first-ever National Early Childhood Development Programme for children from 0 to 8 years old were developed and finalized, and a national IECD policy was drafted involving the MLISA and line ministries. On violence against children, the Study on Drivers of Violence Against Children was completed, leading to strengthening systems to protect children in schools, communities and homes, including through a Decree on Safe, Friendly and Non-Violent Schools addressing all aspects of inclusive quality education, and participation of children in a community football programme and life skills training. UNICEF, with other United Nations agencies and international NGOs, supported the Government to hold a national Conference on Preventing and Ending Child and Early Marriage, offering a platform to exchange experience and discuss lessons learned on key factors and barriers that impeded effective interventions.

UNICEF Viet Nam strategically leveraged new partnerships to consolidate the emerging orientation of the Government of Viet Nam and UNICEF under Outcome 1. In disaster risk reduction, the Joint Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development – UNICEF Vision and Positioning Note on Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction was developed, aligned to the Sendai Framework and Viet Nam’s Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016–2020, and guiding the formalization of partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture and Development and UNICEF on child-centred disaster risk reduction and risk-informed planning. Partnership with the Ministry of Finance was formalized with a goal to prioritize child rights in state budget allocation and spending for the socio-economic development plans and sectoral plans. Ho Chi Minh City and UNICEF formalized a new partnership on the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative with a
view to develop enabling urban policies and plans on children and adolescents, and unleash their potential as young citizens who participate and influence decisions affecting them.

With technical support from UNICEF, National Action Plans on SDGs were developed for specific goals, such as Goal 4. Major policies were developed to improve policy response to address unfinished agendas affecting vulnerable children, including the Action Plan on Education for Children with Disabilities, National Early Childhood Care and Education Development Plan 2016–2025, National Plan of Action for Nutrition for 2017–2020 and the Prime Minister’s commitment to launch the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, National Action Plan on triple elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and syphilis, the Decree on Diversion of Juveniles in Conflict with the Law, the and Decree on Safe, Friendly and Non-Violent Schools.

A number of key studies and research were undertaken to provide concrete evidence to inform such policy development and advocacy for improving investment in equitable and sustainable socio-economic development, including a Situation Analysis of Children in Ho Chi Minh City, multi-sectoral Child-Focused Budget Analysis, After-Action Review of the emergency response to drought and salt water intrusion crisis, update of Out-of-School Children Study, costing on SDG Goal 6, study on targeting approaches and mechanisms of child-focused social assistance schemes in Viet Nam, study on social care, and study on the consolidation of child-focused social assistance programmes.

Within the framework of the One UN Strategic Plan 2017–2021, and the framework of Outcome 1 of the Government of Viet Nam–UNICEF Country Programme, UNICEF chaired the Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience Joint Result Group, leading the formulation of a joint vision and workplan and in the process of developing an outline of a joint programme.

**OUTPUT 1** Improved national capacity to legislate, monitor and oversee child rights-related laws, policies and programmes.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Intensive consultations on the new cooperation framework between the MLISA and UNICEF under the Government of Viet Nam–UNICEF Country Programme 2017–2021 were conducted between UNICEF Viet Nam and respective counterparts. This intensive consultation allowed for strong ownership and commitment of participating partners to achieve the set targets. Meanwhile, the cooperation framework with the National Assembly was submitted to Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) after extensive review and discussion with various National Assembly committees. The proposed cooperation reflects the new strategic direction of the Country Programme of Cooperation under the Programme Component on ‘Accountability and System Building for Child Rights and Protection’, which responds to the fragmented enabling environment and limited accountability of state actors by seeking to influence the national legal and policy agenda, and strengthen government systems for the realization of children’s rights.

The project will focus on improving child rights coordination and collaboration among National Assembly agencies; strengthening knowledge and understanding of elected bodies on international child rights standards and national child rights legislations; advocacy for incorporation of international child rights standards into relevant national legislations; and developing and facilitating institutionalization of tools for overseeing the implementation of child-related laws and policies. Unfortunately, the complex procedures and steps introduced through the new Decree 16 on ODA management delayed the finalization and approval of projects.
under the Government of Viet Nam–UNICEF Country Programme 2017–2021, including the projects with the Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Finance, hindering the implementation.

Initial results achieved during the reporting period include:

- UNICEF facilitated an inclusive process towards development and approval of the Prime Minister’s decision on the establishment of a high-level Inter-Ministerial Committee for Children with a mandate to coordinate cross-sectoral implementation of children’s rights in line with international standards.
- With respect to development of detailed guidance on implementation of the Child Law, UNICEF facilitated consultations with children in selected provinces. The final decrees that were approved in May and June captured their views and recommendations, especially in terms of establishment of effective reporting mechanisms on child abuse and exploitation as well as feasible platforms for children’s participation in various decision-making processes.
- Substantive capacity-building support was provided to the MLISA to formulate State Party Reports on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities through a consultative process in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders. While the Convention on the Rights of the Child report is being finalized, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities report was submitted to the Government Office for endorsement and addressed many key concerns facing children with disabilities, such as limited access to basic social and protection services due to gaps in policy and legal frameworks.

UNICEF provided significant technical assistance to the MLISA to amend Circular 37 that guides the local authorities and service providers to assess and identify people with disabilities. The amendment was made towards further simplification of the screening and approval process and tools, as well as applying the functioning-based approach rather than the medical approach in measuring the level of disability. The Circular is considered as an important framework to improve access to the Government’s social and protection programmes among people and children with disabilities

**OUTPUT 2** Strengthened national capacity to prioritize child rights in socio-economic development planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation.

**Analytical statement of progress**

Within the framework of the new Country Programme, UNICEF embarked on the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative with a view to develop enabling urban policies and plans for children and adolescents, and unleash their potential as young citizens who participate and influence decisions affecting them. In supporting Ho Chi Minh City to start up the initiative, UNICEF facilitated a North-South exchange between the city and other Child-Friendly Cities of France with a goal to learn from international best practices in initiating and implementing the Child-Friendly City Initiative and connect to the global network of child-friendly cities.

As a flagship study informing the Child-Friendly City Initiative, the Situation Analysis of Children for Ho Chi Minh City shed light on the existing and emerging agenda for child rights in complex urban settings. These consist of education for migrant children and children with disabilities, breastfeeding practices and double burden of childhood malnutrition, including stunting and obesity among children, violence against children, as well as systematic participation of children in decision-making.
Also, to kick-start a new partnership with the Institute of Finance under the Ministry of Finance, the Child-Focused Budget Analysis was commissioned to elucidate weak implementation of the legal framework on public financing as well as overlapping functions that lead to considerable bottlenecks and inefficiencies in budgeting for key sectors including education, maternal and child health, and social protection. As a result, the new partnership with the Ministry of Finance was formalized through the development of a project on Public Finance for Children under the 2017–2021 Country Programme between UNICEF and the Government of Viet Nam, with a goal to prioritize child rights in state budget allocation and spending for the socio-economic development plans and sectoral plans.

The Citizen Report Card was commissioned to assess social assistance through a cash transfer programme for education in the province of Ninh Thuan, a rural province with a high proportion of ethnic minorities and vulnerability to climate change. The report highlighted some key issues in the cash transfer programme for promoting education of children from poor and disadvantaged families, including serious delays in payment, cumbersome procedures for application dossiers, limited awareness raising of the programme and its purpose, as well as monitoring and oversight.

The complex procedures and steps introduced through the new Decree 16 on ODA management (issued on 9 December 2016) delayed the finalization and approval of projects under the Government–UNICEF Country Programme 2017–2021, including the projects with Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Finance, hindering the implementation. However, UNICEF undertook intensive consultations, negotiations and follow-ups with the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Ministry of Finance regarding the new cooperation framework under the Government–UNICEF Country Programme 2017–2021. As a result, the cooperation framework on strengthening national capacity to prioritize child rights in socio-economic development planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation have reached the final step and some initial activities have been planned and kicked off.

**OUTPUT 3**

Strengthened national capacity to develop and manage inclusive, equitable and quality policies, programmes and budgets for the pre-primary to secondary education school system.

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF contributed to the system strengthening at central and provincial levels addressing barriers to education of disadvantaged children and adolescents. With UNICEF’s technical support, the Ministry of Education and Training’s Action Plan to implement SDG4 was approved. This demonstrates not only strong institutional commitment to equity in education but effective monitoring of the system’s performance in school readiness and quality inclusive education at primary and lower secondary levels.


The Ministry of Education and Training trained 110 officials to increase capacity for administration of the South-East Asia Primary Learning Metrics in Viet Nam, including the Field Trial, in which UNICEF is coordinating the joint support from the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, SEAMEO-Secretariat and ACER.
The Ministry of Education and Training issued guidance to activate the operationalization of the portal with computerized information system for disaster management prior to, during and after emergencies and to improve the standards of situation monitoring and response. Following the Ministry of Education and Training’s participation with UNICEF and partners in the Joint Assessment exercises to monitor the impact of Damrey Typhoon, actions were recommended to ensure continuity of education and minimize school disruption.

Evidence from assessments on education for children with disabilities were utilized in policy advocacy and further informed the Ministry of Education and Training’s Action Plan on Inclusive Education as part of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Viet Nam distinguished itself among the 10 Associations of Southeast Asian Nations countries participating in the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights workshop supported by UNICEF, for its policies and best practices in implementing inclusive education for children with disabilities. Knowledge on disability was shared through an international symposium on autism with 300 participants, and two scientific workshops on speech and communication therapies in inclusive education and education for the deaf in Viet Nam.

UNICEF’s strategic support was determinant in elevating the policy focus on ECD with the National Early Childhood Care and Education Development Plan 2016–2025, the organization of the international conference on early childhood education and school readiness co-chaired by the Ministry of Education and Training with UNICEF and the World Bank in June 2017, and the consultative workshop on ECD Scheme with the MLISA. More than 150 national early childhood education managers, curriculum experts and university lecturers and teachers were trained on social emotional learning at national and subnational levels. Solid knowledge building on early childhood education was demonstrated with the International Workshop conducted by Viet Nam Institute of Educational Sciences along with Waikato University-New Zealand on expanding early childhood education through community-based initiatives besides increasing teacher’s skills in pre-learning with a conference on the Montessori approach for early learning.

UNICEF provided technical support to finalize the Decree on Safe, Healthy, Friendly and Non-Violent Educational Environment, addressing all aspects of inclusive quality education, as part of enforcing the Child Law, effective from 1 June 2017. The decree in force since September 2017 highlights Government’s accountability in ensuring equity in education and stipulates the need for greater responsibility of dutybearers to provide inclusive learning for all children.

Despite prolonged delay due of complex implementation of new government ODA management, UNICEF negotiated successfully with the Ministry of Education and Training to implement key priority activities of the 2017–2018 Multi Year Workplan

**OUTPUT 4** Strengthened national capacity of the health, nutrition and WASH sectors to develop and manage inclusive, equitable and quality policies, programmes and budgets for IECD-linked child survival and development.

**Analytical statement of progress**
With UNICEF’s support, the MLISA and line ministries were able to accelerate the development of and finalized the first-ever National Early Childhood Development Programme for children from 0 to 8 years old.
The Government’s commitment to reduce stunting has been strengthened through the Ministry of Health’s effort to finalize the National Plan of Action for Nutrition in the period of 2017–2020 and the Prime Minister’s commitment to launch the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement. Furthermore, because of UNICEF’s persistent advocacy efforts, the stunting indicator has set one of the specific objectives of the Communist Party’s Resolution, setting a strong legal ground for the Government’s investment in stunting reduction. The Ministry of Health also made a strong recommendation on the inclusion of severe acute malnutrition prevention and treatment in health insurance schemes and successfully integrated the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in the quality assessment criteria for hospitals. This made Viet Nam the first country to standardize breastfeeding criteria into the hospital accreditation system and this experience was used as reference for development of global Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative guidelines.

A roadmap and a detail outline for development of the national action plan towards triple elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and syphilis were developed. With UNICEF’s procurement service, the Ministry of Health successfully procured 2,783,200 doses of DTP-Hep-Hib vaccine and the country not only fulfilled its obligation to co-finance but also ensured the pentavalent vaccine security in 2017. A vaccine forecast and a deployment plan for procurement of cold chain equipment in 2018 was developed. Early essential newborn care in normal delivery was implemented in 100 per cent and 80 per cent of provincial and district hospitals, respectively, and a national guideline on early essential newborn care in Caesarean sections (C-section) was approved and disseminated by the Ministry of Health. As of December 2017, 26 provincial trainers on early essential newborn are for C-sections from 7 provinces in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam were trained and capable of handling C-sections in their provinces.

A high-level delegation of Viet Nam attended the 5th Global High Level Meeting of the Sanitation and Water for All Partnership and with its ongoing and globally well-recognized efforts to improve sanitation, hygiene and water supply, Viet Nam is nominated as a member of the Standing Committee of Sanitation and Water for All, representing the East Asia and Pacific region well for the upcoming three years and demonstrating exemplary leadership at the global level.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Development and counterparts in the WASH sector had increased awareness and understanding of measurements of SDG indicators. A costing tool exercise was done with three ministries responsible for WASH (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Development and Ministry of Culture to estimate financing needs for Viet Nam to achieve SDG6 targets by 2030, which will also serve as the basis for Viet Nam investment and call for international support, technically and financially. A technical review of 32 provincial open defecation free plans was completed, and the review results not only helped those provinces improve quality of their own but also informed national open defecation free planning. The sanitation working group was operationalized through organization of three quarterly meetings in 2017, and the stress was also on how to measure the safely managed indicators and the country plan to implement and achieve SDG6.

**OUTPUT 5** Strengthened capacity of key state actors to develop the legal and policy framework for establishing an operational child protection system and the social work profession.

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF supported the Government to strengthen the legal framework on child protection. In 2017, the highlighted achievement was the approval of Decree 56 by the Prime Minister to
guide the implementation of the Child Law 2016. The decree defines the responsibilities of the Government, organizations, parents and individuals and concrete procedures and steps to respond to the needs of children who are affected by violence in school, at home or in the community. UNICEF supported the MLISA through the provision of technical experts to develop three analytical reports on social policies for children, an alternative care system and costing analysis of child protection services, which were used to inform the development of the decree. UNICEF helped organize technical meetings to gather views of representatives of children, line ministries, international NGOs and civil society organizations for the drafting and finalization of the decree.

UNICEF supported the MLISA to develop guidelines and technical manuals on case management and alternative care to provide clearer procedures and processes for concerned sectors and agencies for better responding to the needs of children on protection and alternative care. In collaboration with Save the Children, UNICEF supported the MLISA in design interventions for prevention and response to violence in the home, which will be piloted in UNICEF’s and Save the Children’s supported provinces.

UNICEF participated with and supported the MLISA, the International Labour Organization, the Embassy of the United States and other relevant stakeholders to commemorate the United Nations’ World Day Against Child Labour focusing on the correlation between disasters and child labour in Viet Nam. This was a great opportunity for advocacy and awareness-raising at high level on the importance of addressing all child protection concerns, including child labour at times of crisis and disasters that exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and disparities among the most marginalized communities with children among the most vulnerable. UNICEF also advocated for a child protection system approach, in addition to education and awareness-raising.

UNICEF supported the MLISA to carry out a Study on Mental Health and Psychosocial Well-Being of Children and Young People in Viet Nam. The study analyses the manifestations of mental issues affecting children and young people, the risk and protective factors. It also describes the current mental health service delivery system and provides recommendations on how to improve mental health and psychosocial well-being of children and young people in Viet Nam. The report is currently being finalized for dissemination in January 2018.

UNICEF continued to generate momentum, commitment, awareness and capacity among the key stakeholders in taking actions to combat online child abuse and exploitation. UNICEF and the MLISA co-hosted the launch of State of the World’s Children that dedicated 2017 to children in a digital world. UNICEF promoted a clear message that protecting children online did not mean exerting more control over the Internet. UNICEF called on the Government to work hand in hand with the private sector to keep up with the pace of change and protect children from the new risks and harms they were exposed to, especially for the most disadvantaged ones.

**OUTPUT 6** Enhanced national capacity to improve access to justice and protection of children in contact with the law.

**Analytical statement of progress**

The approval process of UNICEF Viet Nam 2017–2021 Country Programme suffered significant delays due to the Government’s newly required procedures for ODA management as well as the Government’s late approval of the One UN Strategic Plan (2017–2021), which is the overarching framework document for the United Nations–Government partnership. This resulted
in the ongoing delay of finalization of the 2017–2018 workplans with implementing partners, subsequent project implementation and the expenditure rates. UNICEF is working closely with the Government to expedite the approval of the necessary documentation to enable full implementation of its 2017–2021 Country Programme.

UNICEF’s pilot diversion programme for juveniles in conflict with the law continued in Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Thap Province. In Ho Chi Minh City, approximately 120 children at risk and in conflict with the law gained increased confidence, self-esteem and knowledge about protection from violence through participating in the community football programme, with regular football and life skills sessions. In March 2017, with the support of Manchester United Football Club, UNICEF co-organized the Ho Chi Minh City Fun Football Festival, bringing together children from the community football programme alongside children from other football teams across the city in a child-friendly atmosphere to play football and learn life skills through football. The Football Festival serves as the advocacy for the City to scale up the football programme for vulnerable children across the entire city. In addition, 50 vulnerable children, including alleged offenders and at-risk children, completed a four-month hairdressing training course. Those children were equipped with professional hairdressing and basic life skills and engaged in recreational, volunteer and social activities for strengthened resilience to cope with difficulties in life. In Dong Thap Province, 57 children in conflict with the law and at risk were referred to appropriate support services, including counselling, vocational training, life-skills training and legal aid, to address the underlying risk factors contributing to offending behaviours.

Lessons learned from this model have influenced the development of a government decree on diversion of juveniles in conflict with the law. The draft decree stipulates inter-sectoral mechanism and case management method for community-based rehabilitation of juvenile alleged offenders through individualized support/interventions to address underlying risk factors contributing to offending behaviours. UNICEF supported the inter-agency drafting team to conduct a mapping exercise of child justice capacity at the local level, and field visits to Dong Thap and Ho Chi Minh City to learn about the model, as well as provided technical advice to the development of the decree. With the enactment of the decree, the model will be institutionalized for nation-wide application for promotion of diversion and alternatives to detention in line with international standards. The draft sub-law is due to submit to the Government by mid-December for approval.

**OUTPUT 7** Strengthened national capacity in child-centred disaster risk reduction and risk-informed planning.

**Analytical statement of progress**
The impact of the 2015–2016 El Niño left parts of Viet Nam suffering its most severe drought in more than 60 years. UNICEF led the largest emergency response since Viet Nam’s reunification in 1975, addressing acute needs in nutrition and WASH with scale, reaching 500,000 people, including 218,847 children. The impact of the emergency response was maximized through **disaster risk reduction component** under this output has facilitated the humanitarian-development nexus.

The following results were achieved in 2017:

- Strengthened institutional capacities and community resilience to address chronic vulnerabilities among children and women – an approach highly valued by the Government
of Viet Nam, partners and beneficiaries in responding to the slow onset of the drought and salt water intrusion crisis in its lower-middle-income country context.

- The After-Action Review of the emergency response generated key recommendations to improve central, sub-national and community-level capacity in emergency response and disaster risk reduction.
- The final review of emergency response combined with the Celebration of the National Day for National Day of Natural Disaster Prevention and Control was a key milestone not only to end the emergency response programme but marked a strategic shift in focus towards strengthening disaster risk reduction and preparedness. As a result, the development of the 2017–2021 Programme of Cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture and Development and UNICEF on child-centred disaster risk reduction was approved. This progress will help strengthen partnership with the Central Committee on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism including concerned agencies designated to emergency preparedness, response and disaster risk reduction.
- A new cooperation project on child-centred disaster risk reduction was developed within the Government of Viet Nam–UNICEF Country Programme 2017–2021. Under the 2017–2018 workplan with the Ministry of Agriculture and Development, key interventions were initiated, including the Capacity Gap Assessment of the Central Committee on National Disaster Prevention and Control and Viet Nam Disaster Management Authority, Child Vulnerability Mapping and Analysis, and Communication for Development Strategy.
- At the subnational level, the Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction project with Ninh Thuan Province and 2017–2018 workplan were approved. Subsequently, the number of cross-sectoral interventions involving the nutrition, education and child protection sectors will be initiated in December 2017, and lessons learned will be documented to inform national-level scale-up.
- Within the United Nations system, UNICEF was designated as the chair of the Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience Joint Result Group that leverages UNICEF’s position to coordinate initiatives supported by the United Nations under the Sendai Framework.

This emergency response has triggered further government reforms in this sector with a shift towards strengthening disaster risk reduction and increased focus on children by establishing a dedicated body in the Ministry of Agriculture and Development in charge of disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and response, the Viet Nam Disaster Management Authority. The authority also serves as the secretariat of the Central Committee on National Disaster Prevention and Control with a stronger mandate to coordinated response and disaster risk reduction and the risk-informed Social Economic Development Plan and sectoral plan.

**OUTCOME 4** By 2021, social protection measures are more equitable and inclusive and there is a functioning child protection system, staffed by qualified service providers.

**Analytical statement of progress**

With regard to social protection, UNICEF continued to support Viet Nam in refining reform directions for social assistance policies within the Master Plan for Social Assistance Reform and Development for 2017–2025 with vision to 2030. Specifically, three key studies on social care, targeting approaches and mechanisms and policy consolidation of social assistance
programmes for children, were completed to inform policy dialogues on operationalization of the Master Plan’s broad directions, in particular gradual moving towards universal social assistance packages for children. Moreover, UNICEF published the Discussion Paper on Universal Child Benefit Package, presenting the most cost-effective investment for Viet Nam to achieve sustained socio-economic development and social inclusion. Within the emerging need for refining multidimensional child poverty measurements, UNICEF completed a review on the current methodology and harmonization with the National Multidimensional Poverty for SDG monitoring and informing the Mid-Term Review of the National Targeted Programmes for Sustainable Poverty Reduction. In addition, UNICEF actively contributed to a new direction of inter-agency cooperation under the United Nations Joint Result Group on Inclusive Growth and Social Protection to refine social protection reforms through development of a United Nations Cooperation Framework on Social Protection/Social Assistance in Viet Nam with a focus on a joint comprehensive and gender-responsive training curriculum for social protection.

With regard to child protection, UNICEF has made substantial contributions to strengthening the national child protection system by: i) improving the legal and regulatory framework on child protection; ii) increasing evidence on violence against children and child marriage; and iii) supporting the establishment of concrete procedures and measures for community-based diversion rehabilitation of juveniles in conflict with the law. UNICEF provided technical support for the development of the decree, which was endorsed by the Government in May 2017 to guide the implementation of the new Child Law. The decree clearly defines the responsibilities, accountability and intersectoral cooperation among concerned government agencies and organizations in preventing and responding to violence against children in the home, school and community. UNICEF supported the development of a ministerial decision to guide the provision of care and protection services for children in special circumstances. UNICEF supported the MLISA to finalize the study report on Drivers of Violence against Children to be used for evidenced-based policy and programming on child protection. UNICEF cooperated with the United Nations Population Fund to conduct the literature review on child marriage in Viet Nam to increase knowledge on this issue.

In relation to justice for children, UNICEF provided technical support for the development of a decree to guide the implementation of the revised Penal Code on diversion of juveniles in conflict with the law. The draft decree stipulates inter-sectoral mechanisms and case management steps for community-based rehabilitation of juvenile alleged offenders who are diverted away from the criminal justice system, through individualized support/interventions to address underlying risk factors contributing to offending behaviours. At the subnational level, UNICEF continued to support the pilot model on community-based support for juveniles in conflict with the law in Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Thap Province, which provided support to more than 200 children in conflict with the law and at-risk children, including counselling, vocational training, life skills training and legal aid. Da Nang Social Work Service Centre continued its work to provide support to about 700 children in special circumstances.

**OUTPUT 1** Strengthened national capacity to develop, budget and operationalize social protection measures that respond to multidimensional child poverty and vulnerabilities.

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF continued to support the Government of Viet Nam in refining the direction of reform of social assistance policies within the Master Plan for Social Assistance Reform and Development for 2017–2025 that was approved in April 2017.
Three key studies on i) social care, ii) targeting approaches and mechanisms and iii) policy consolidation of child-focused social assistance programmes were commissioned to support the direction of child-focused policy reform, in particular to inform policy dialogues on reform options on gradual transition to universal social assistance packages for children and on operationalization of the broad directions outlined in the Master Plan for Social Assistance Reform and Development for 2017—2025.

UNICEF published the Discussion Paper on Universal Child Benefit Package: Investment Case for Viet Nam that demonstrated the most cost-effective investment for Viet Nam to address demographic and socio-economic challenges and achieve sustained socio-economic development and social inclusion, and distributed as input to the National Conference on Integrated Early Childhood Development in August 2017.

Within the emerging need to refine multidimensional child poverty measurements in applying the SDG framework in Viet Nam, UNICEF completed the study on review and revision of the current multidimensional child poverty methodology and harmonization with the National Multidimensional Poverty for SDG monitoring. The results of the study were also shared at 6th Conference of the International Society for Child Indicators in June 2017 in Canada. A synthesis report of this study is now being developed to inform the Mid-Term Review of the National Targeted Programmes for Sustainable Poverty Reduction, where integration of multidimensional child poverty approaches to national poverty measurements are envisaged.

Within the Government of Viet Nam–UNICEF Country Programme, the cooperation framework between the MLISA and UNICEF for 2017–2021 was developed through consultation with the Social Protection Department and National Poverty Reduction Office, as well as with the Committee for Ethnic Minority. As a result, the final Proposals of Investment Policy reflected two key results related to evidence generation and evidence-based advocacy on child poverty and vulnerabilities with particular focus on ethnic minority children, and development of child sensitive social assistance policies, legislative frameworks and implementation guidelines. A draft workplan is being finalized.

As with the other programme cooperation frameworks, the complex procedures introduced through the new decree on ODA management hindered the finalization and approval process as well as implementation.

UNICEF actively contributed to a new direction of inter-agency cooperation under the United Nations Joint Result Group on Inclusive Growth and Social Protection to refine reform of social protection systems. For example, UNICEF contributed to the joint development of a comprehensive and gender-responsive training curriculum for social protection and a joint United Nations Cooperation Framework on Social Protection/Social Assistance Training in Viet Nam. In addition, UNICEF contributed to increased knowledge and information sharing among the United Nations Joint Result Group on Inclusive Growth and Social Protection members through, e.g., an intensive discussion on targeting mechanisms and approaches of child-focused social assistance programmes in Viet Nam at a brown bag lunch, which intensify the United Nations common approach to social assistance reforms.

OUTCOME 5 By 2021, in selected areas of three provinces, all children and their families, especially the most vulnerable, utilize inclusive and quality IECD services.
**Analytical statement of progress**

With UNICEF Viet Nam’s high-quality technical support, the MLISA, Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Finance and other government associations were able to accelerate the development of the first-ever national Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) programme for children from 0 to 8 years old in the country via the development and submission of the national IECD Scheme for the period 2017–2025. The scheme demonstrated strong institutional commitment to ensure the realization of child rights to basic social services, substantiated by systematic indicators to monitor system performance. As of December 2017, a final draft of the national IECD Scheme reflecting UNICEF Global IECD principles was finalized.

A high-level multi-sectoral consultation on IECD was conducted to achieve prioritization of IECD as an important national development priority, strong commitment from government, stakeholder affirmation and awareness of the population in presenting IECD as the best option for the early nurturing of children.

The Ministry of Education and Training-led Decree on the child-friendly, safe and healthy, non-violent school environment was disseminated at subnational level. A high-level consultation meeting was held on innovative mobile technology with the Vice Minister of Health, obtaining commitment to implement innovative mobile technology. Strong strategic and participatory partnerships were started with relevant IECD stakeholders – e.g., the World Bank, the Queens University, the University of Public Health Hanoi and the National Academy of Education Management.

The strategy on communication and public advocacy in IECD Programme was drafted on the basis of the global ECD campaign in consultation with national stakeholders and will be locally adapted to ensure its cultural and language appropriateness.

The Proposals of Investment Policy Project Documents and the 2017–2018 annual workplan with the Ministry of Health were approved and the Proposals of Investment Policy, Project Documents and annual workplans with the MLISA, EDU and provinces of Dien Bien, Gia Lai and Kon Tum were finalized and will be approved for implementation in early 2018.

The Viet Nam Country Office also provided high-quality technical assistance to the Government to introduce safely managed elements of SDG6 in WASH. This includes: developing common understandings among all line ministries and sector partners on SDGs on WASH and disaster risk reduction/climate change adaptation, introducing Joint Monitoring Programme monitoring support to establish indicators in national surveys, defining key additional interventions to achieve SDG6 using the WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool, costing WASH for SDG6, and in rolling out the scaling-up open defecation free plan at national and provincial levels. UNICEF Viet Nam designed WASH in Schools as a component to scale up as an integral part of IECD for higher impact through schoolchildren. With UNICEF's advocacy, Viet Nam is now a Steering Committee member in the global Sanitation and Water for All partnership that would help the country to play a key role in the ASEAN region to promote sustainable WASH.

**OUTPUT 1** Enhanced local capacity to develop and operationalize IECD centred, equitable and inclusive high-impact child survival and development packages in focus provinces.
Analytical statement of progress
As UNICEF Viet Nam began its first year of the 2017–2021 Country Programme, a number of time-consuming procedures and processes required by the 2016 Government Decree 16 on ODA management created substantial delays in the approval and implementation of UNICEF-supported projects with government implementing partners.

Despite all these challenges, UNICEF Viet Nam provided substantive technical assistance to subnational counterparts in Dien Bien, Gia Lai and Kon Tum provinces to develop the IECD Concept Notes, Proposal for Investment Policy, Multi-Year Workplans for 2017–2018, and quarterly workplans in parallel with Project Documents. As of December 2017, three IECD Proposals of Investment Policy with Dien Bien, Gia Lai and Kon Tum provinces were finalized and approved by the Government.

Given health activities as a part of the IECD programme, a detail training action plan to build up capacity of health-care staff in maternal, newborn and child health was developed and implemented in Dien Bien, Lao Cai, Gia Lai and Kon Tum provinces. As a result, 183 district and commune health staff were trained on early essential newborn care and kangaroo mother care, and 98 village midwives received refresher training on midwifery skills and early essential newborn care for normal delivery. Community-based communication interventions were conducted by commune and village health workers, reaching 31,494 pregnant women, new mothers and family members living in very remote villages of these four provinces. With UNICEF support, in 2017, some 30,450 newborns received early essential newborn care services and 778 premature and low birthweight babies received kangaroo mother care services at health facilities.

Regarding WASH activities, ceramic filter production continued with international technical support. The filters can reduce 99.99 per cent of microorganisms. The producer passed through all quality tests, receiving authorized quality certifications in both filter effectiveness and food security. At present, there are 8,000 filters in storage and available in the market at a price of 400,000 Vietnamese dong, which can help the poor have access to affordable and safe drinking water. They are also available for emergency settings. After this success, the Ministry of Agriculture and Development decided to expand the production to another northern province in 2018.

With participation from provincial DOET, DOH and PCERWASS, a three-year plan for Dien Bien School WASH was made available and is ready for implementation when the Dien Bien and UNICEF provincial 2017–2018 workplan is signed. WASH activities in schools and communities in An Giang Province were implemented since December 2017 with focus on hygiene and sanitation promotion and sustaining the school WASH facilities of 40 schools.

In October 2017, together with One UN and in response to a government request to support the Damrey-affected people of Viet Nam, UNICEF developed the Central Emergency Response Fund proposal. By November, UNICEF received more than US$1.1 million for WASH responses. All administrative procedures were performed quickly and the first important event of planning a workshop occurred on 22 December. It is expected that all procurement activities will occur in January and distribution in February 2018.

OUTPUT 2 Strengthened capacity of education service providers in focus provinces to deliver quality early learning and school readiness programmes for children under 4 years old.
Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF provided technical guidance and support to partners to promote early learning and development at the provincial level. For the first time ever, the education sector and all related government agencies in UNICEF-focused provinces such as Dien Bien, Gia Lai and Kon Tum have been working together to develop a comprehensive investment proposal on IECD which is based on the proposed Country Programme of Cooperation strategic intent and programmatic delivery in provinces. The stakeholders have developed a shared understanding of critical issues for children under 4 years old to be addressed in an integrated manner for effective and coherent investment in young children such as the multi-sectoral coordination for IECD project interventions and geographical convergence. In each of the provinces, stakeholders demonstrated strong commitment to the new coordination modality and mechanism which was set up to ensure effective inter-sectoral collaboration for implementation and monitoring of holistic IECD interventions by social service providers.

In addition, local authorities in Ho Chi Minh City increased attention to ensure childcare and development services for young children aged 6–36 months old, particularly in industrial zones. Childcare for migrant children in industrial zones was improved following training of caregivers, a key initiative inspired by findings of a UNICEF-supported survey in Ho Chi Minh City, which led to the adoption of relevant action for childcare support for working parents in industrial zones and adoption of a decision to support half of the overtime allowance for preschool teachers in selected districts in processing zones, while the other half is shared between enterprises and children’s families. The findings were also shared and well received at the International Conference on ECD. The social emotional learning component of the ECD interventions was rolled out in Gia Lai with the active participation of 90 core national curriculum developers, provincial education managers and commune preschool teachers and improved their capacity on social emotional learning for preschool children. Their updated knowledge on social emotional learning constitutes a great asset in the coming review of the national preschool curriculum. Furthermore, research on peace-building and social cohesion and ECD led by the Queens University of Belfast integrated the social emotional learning component implemented at subnational level as part of the research implementation together with five other countries (H&M-funded project).

Furthermore, due the Ministry of Education and Training’s strong capacity building for education managers, Dien Bien DOET has not only succeeded in expanding its enrolment of children under 3 years old in early childcare and pre-learning settings and also supporting nutrition activities, but it has equally advanced its agenda on inclusive education for children with disabilities in the province, with successful advocacy with the Provincial People’s Committee, which agreed to provide the location and building for the establishment of the Inclusive Education Resource Centre.

As UNICEF started the first year of the 2017–2021 country programme, several time-consuming procedures and processes required by the 2016 Government Decree on ODA management has created significant delays in the approval and implementation of UNICEF-supported projects. UNICEF advocated for the Ministry of Education and Training’s approval to implement key priority activities prior to the official signature of the 2017–2018 MYWP.

OUTPUT 3 Enhanced local capacity in focus provinces to develop and operationalize local child protection systems and services, including positive parenting and non-violent discipline.
Analytical statement of progress
As UNICEF Viet Nam began its first year of the 2017–2021 Country Programme, a number of new procedures and processes for ODA management are required according to government regulations, leading to substantial delays in the approval and subsequent implementation of UNICEF-supported projects with government implementing partners. At the same time, there were significant delays in the Government’s approval of the One UN Strategic Plan (2017–2021), as the overarching framework document for the United Nations–Government partnership, adding to the already significant delays arising from the newly introduced procedures for ODA management. The One UN Strategic Plan was approved in mid-July 2017. All of these factors led to ongoing delay of approval of UNICEF-supported projects with government implementing partners and thus significantly delayed the finalization of the 2017–2018 workplans, subsequent project implementation and expenditure rates. UNICEF is working closely with the Government to expedite the approval of the necessary documentations to enable full implementation of its 2017–2021 Country Programme.

UNICEF’s continued its support to DOLISA and local partners in Gia Lai, Kon Tum and Dien Bien to help maintain the functioning of the local child protection system in 41 communes (15 in Gia Lai, 17 in Kon Tum and 9 in Dien Bien). During the reporting period, through this local child protection system, 48,185 and 155 children in the project communes of Dien Bien, Kon Tum and Gia Lai, respectively, were placed under case management. In addition, 60 children in Dien Bien were provided necessary social services according to their needs, such as legal aid, social assistance and rehabilitation; and 30 children with disabilities in Kon Tum enjoyed respite daycare services. Moreover, 940 other children and 1,546 parents in Dien Bien, 2,500 children in Kon Tum and 2,300 children in Gia Lai had better awareness and knowledge on prevention of child protection concerns including abuse, violence, exploitation and trafficking.

UNICEF also supported the local partners in the above three provinces in the organization of consultation workshops to prepare for mainstreaming child protection interventions into the ECD in upcoming years.

Document centre

Evaluation and research

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Other publications

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<td>The apparel and footwear sector and children in Viet Nam</td>
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Lessons learned

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<td>Reference Documents</td>
<td>Support to ensure the implementation of children’s rights through integrating children’s rights into Socio-Economic Development Plans and effective utilization of UNICEF’s support in the country programme 2017–21</td>
<td>Vietnam_ProDoc_2017-2021_SEDPchildrights.docx</td>
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