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Design and layout by Indra Nadchatram, UNICEF Malaysia Communications.
“This evaluation was critical to provide background and primary research, as we headed into 2015, a year that would be predominated by discussions around a new CPD and the CPAP development process,” said Wivina Belmonte, UNICEF Representative in Malaysia and Special Representative to Brunei. “The process of evaluation research itself was especially valuable with our partners, in particular those with whom we work at sub national level where equity issues are most pronounced and need attention to provide for the wellbeing of the most marginalized children in Malaysia.”
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<td>Attorney General Chamber</td>
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MoHA  Ministry of Home Affairs
MoHLG  Ministry of Housing and Local Government
MORES  Monitoring Results for Equity System
MTBBE  Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education
MTR  Mid Term Review
MWFCD  Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development
NECIC  National Early Childhood Intervention Council
NGO  Non-Governmental Organisation
NRD  National Registration Department
OECD-DAC  Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
PCR  Programme Component Results
PLC  Private Listed Companies
PME  Programme Monitoring and Evaluation
RCA  Reality Check Approach
RCI  Royal Commission of Inquiry
SCREAM  Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media
SDC  Swiss Development Cooperation
SHRS  Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SIDA  Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SitAn  Situational Analysis
SMART  Specific Measurable Achievable and Time Bound
SME  Small and Medium Enterprises
SPU  State Planning Unit (Sarawak)
SSM  Companies Commission of Malaysia
ToR  Terms of Reference
ToT  Training of Trainers
UMS  University Malaysia Sabah
UNCT  United Nations Country Team
UNDAF  United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
UNEG  United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA  United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF  United Nations Children's Fund
UPEN  Sabah State Economic Planning Unit
WHO  World Health Organisation
All photographs and captions used in this report are by children and young people in Malaysia, sourced from the Picture My Rights Teen Photo Contest and the World We Want Photography Workshop in 2014, organised for the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The R.AGE under The Star Media Group supported both programmes.
The equity approach is not only right in principle. It is right in practice. This means, in practice, doing a better job of mapping the areas of greatest need – looking beyond averages and disaggregating the data so as to better target the hardest to reach. It means developing better monitoring and evaluation of results, to see what is working and where further resources should be focused.

Anthony Lake, UNICEF Executive Director
Tokyo, 3 June 2011
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Mom Knows Best”
by Muhammad Arif Fitri bin Azizan, (17), Selangor
CRC@25 — Picture My Rights, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Muhammad Arif Fitri
This evaluation of the Equity Focus of the Malaysia Country Programme, commissioned by UNICEF, was conducted by an external evaluator consultant between November 2014 and March 2015.

Objectives of the Evaluation

- Assess to what extent the equity focus has been integrated into the current country programme design and implementation and contributed to achieve results for children;
- Identify the challenges faced, bottlenecks and barriers in applying an equity focus and to address the specific needs and rights of the most marginalised and vulnerable children in Malaysia; and to assess the extent to which such bottlenecks and barriers have constrained achievement of equity-focused results;
- Assess the extent to which key partners (government agencies, NGOs and civil society, academic and research institutions, private/corporate sector and others) have contributed to pro-equity interventions and have the capacity to partner with UNICEF in achieving sustainable results for children; and,
- Make recommendations on how the equity focus can be more effectively used and applied in policy and programme development; recommendations on how to ensure staff capacity, resources and partnerships for effective pro-equity interventions are also expected (to feed into the process of the development of the next country programme).

Evaluation Criteria

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability

Intended Audience

This Evaluation is intended to benefit UNICEF and its partners, specifically (according to the Terms of Reference) the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development; as well as their relevant departments. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other civil society organisations, universities and research institutions may also be users.

Equity as seen by UNICEF

Globally, UNICEF views equity as having many dimensions and many levels, including legislation, policy and within sectors (education, social policy, child protection, health).

Equity is based on the principle of universality guaranteeing the fundamental rights of every child, regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, income, physical attributes, geographical location or other status.

At its September 2013 session, the UNICEF Executive Board approved the Global Strategic Plan (2014-2017) in “Realising the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged”, calling for renewed emphasis on advancing the rights of every child. The Global Strategic Plan 2014-2017 is based on applying an equity-focus that includes special attention to children from vulnerable groups, through investment and programmes in health, education, child protection and social cohesion.

UNICEF declared 2014 as the Year of Innovation for Equity – to focus the world’s attention on ways to identify and demonstrate innovative ways to improve the well-being of children worldwide.
Equity as seen by UNICEF Malaysia

UNICEF Malaysia has positioned itself as perhaps the most important international organisation working for children’s well-being in Malaysia.

In 2013, it revised its country programme result structure after the Mid-Term Review (MTR); and in 2014, started implementing the new direction with more focus on equity than in the previous years.

UNICEF Malaysia strives for equity in two ways:

i) contributing to overall systems changes; and,

ii) targeting areas that have a direct impact on vulnerable and marginalised children.

At the same time, the programme results structure emphasises that all programme component results will directly address the needs of indigenous, migrant, undocumented and other marginalised and at-risk children; and promote greater equity, reaching the most vulnerable and ensuring an equitable approach to development for the country.

It has been found that while contributing to efforts of systems changes in e.g. juvenile justice which has including the introduction of diversion among other concepts (something new in Malaysia) do not explicitly address equity issues. The evaluation has appreciated that the reason for this lies in the fact that some of the work areas are newly introduced to UNICEF Malaysia and therefore requires an overview of the sector and the socio-economic complexities.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation used qualitative methods to gather primary and secondary data and information, including qualitative and quantitative information.

The methods included a comprehensive documentation review that continued throughout the evaluation process. Three visits were made to Malaysia (15 – 19 December 2014; 16 January – 1 February 2015; and 22 February – 29 February 2015) spent on data collection through in-depth interviews, discussions, meetings, e-mail correspondence with UNICEF staff and its stakeholders. The evaluator held meetings with staff in three ministries/departments, and a number of CSOs in Peninsula Malaysia and Sabah.

As part of the evaluation, the consultant visited the UNICEF-supported Alternative Learning Centre in Kampung Numbak, Kota Kinabalu. The visit included individual and group interactions with children of different age groups (6-14 years) observations. Focus Group Discussions were held with UNICEF staff and NGOs (Child Rights Coalition). In Sabah, the evaluator carried out Focus Groups Discussions with the Federal Special Task Force (Sabah/Labuan), and teachers in the Kampung Numbak Alternative Learning Centre in Kota Kinabalu.

In Sabah interviews and discussions were also held with the Sabah State Economic Planning Unit, the Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning, University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and Jaringan Orang Asal Malaysia (JOAS). A brief set of evaluation questions were sent via e-mail to the State Planning Unit (SPU), Sarawak.

Interviews through skype were made with the Director of the Sabah State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN), the Senior Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF Headquarters in New York (former Regional Evaluation Advisor-
The evaluation included processing and analysing data and information and writing the reports (inception, draft and final report). A half-day Validation Workshop was held in Kuala Lumpur on 28 February 2015, in which preliminary findings were presented and discussed, and feedback was provided; most of which have been addressed in this report. Processing of information and data, analysis and report writing have also been part of the methodology and evaluation process.

“Living Below the Poverty Line — A daily struggle to put food in the mouths of the poor” by Christopher Ang Yew Shuen (15), Penang
CRC@25 — Picture My Rights, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Christopher Ang
Conclusions

Equity in the Country Programme Design:
Following the MTR in 2013, UNICEF sharpened its focus and addressed equity in terms of excluded and marginalised children in two out of the first three outcomes; and in several of the outputs designed to contribute to these outcomes. Equity is also addressed in the last cross-sectoral outcome, but is not visible in outcome 3 (Private sector contributions and CSR).

Relevance:
All the broad work areas are relevant (education, child protection and social policy). Equity is most prominently addressed within education (alternative learning for undocumented children) and child protection (children with disabilities). UNICEF’s advocacy on equity related issues vis-à-vis the Government is relevant and may become even more so if UNICEF approaches more government agencies. The cooperation with Civil Society is also relevant. Equity work with the NGOs would be more relevant if UNICEF is able to bridge the gap between NGOs in Kuala Lumpur (the CRCM) and NGOs in Sabah and Sarawak. Relevance would also increase if UNICEF is able to facilitate dialogue between CSOs/NGOs and government partners.

Effectiveness:
UNICEF has, on the whole, been consistent and fairly effective in advocating for equity and influencing national dialogue with the Government and in implementing activities that relate to equity for children. As for influencing policies regarding equity for children, there are for instance some positive signs of policy level influence in relation to 11th MP and revision of the Child Act - resulting from UNICEF’s technical inputs and generally good working relationship with the GoM. Its advocacy for Alternative Education Policy has not yet been fruitful though.

UNICEF has greatly facilitated bringing together NGOs on a platform to advocate for children’s rights in dialogue with UNICEF - exemplified in initiating the Child Rights Coalition Malaysia (CRCM) and the support to the Status Report on Child Rights in Malaysia - an NGO initiative and helped build capacity among the NGOs involved. Cooperation is also being established with NGOs in Sabah and Sarawak. The collaboration with NGOs has not yet led to a sustainable, children focused “NGO sector”, or focusing on equity issues as such. However, UNICEF has realised that it needs to develop closer partnerships with CSOs, the private sector, think-tanks, research institutions in order to create more sustainable and equitable results for children.

Regarding effectiveness in focusing on equity in sectoral areas (education, social policy, child protection) it was concluded that good work has been done to initiate two Alternative Learning Centres for undocumented children in Sabah (Kampung Numbak, Kota Kinabalu launched in 2011, and Kg. Bahagia Alternative Learning Centre in Sandakan, launched in 2013). More support is required in relation to curricula and the physical environment (Kampung Numbak), among other improvements.

Regarding the generation of evidence for the most disadvantaged children, gaps in the Ministry of Health’s Monitoring and Evaluation system need to be addressed. Policy briefs on multi-dimensional child poverty and has contributed to the national dialogue and the UNDP Malaysian Human Development Report 2013.

In the area of child protection, UNICEF has addressed equity in the advocacy on “children with disabilities”, and “birth registration for marginalised group”. The work on child justice/juvenile justice mentioned above, do not explicitly address equity.

The cooperation with Corporates in the private sector to advocate for Corporate Social Responsibility has not yet taken off in terms of equity focus. Fundraising among companies (outcome 3) is intended to start up in the coming programme period. Fundraising (targeting individuals) has been very successful, but as
mentioned in this report, it does not seem to be geared towards addressing equity issues per se. Regarding the use of media (including social media) to convey equity messages, it is concluded that the work on children with disabilities (as well as abuse, neglect and exploitation of children) has successfully utilised social media (particularly Facebook) in reaching out to the public, among other means – however, this work was not focused on equity, perhaps apart from children with disabilities.

**Efficiency:**

*Some of the research outputs took a long time before they could be published and disseminated due to the Government approval process that has affected efficiency.* Thus UNICEF need to strengthen its collaboration with research institutes and civil society, to commission quality studies with results that may be disseminated to civil society and the public faster.

**Sustainability:**

The likelihood of sustainability has been seen in the ability of UNICEF to get some of its messages across to the Government and being internalised and becoming part of policies, as this evaluation has pointed at. The platform created for the CRCM may still be weak but is likely to grow stronger with time and more capacity building efforts from the part of UNICEF. The learning centres in Sabah are taken over by the government and are likely to continue but need more quality support from UNICEF. The ChildInfo database management programme is a very important step for the Government and is likely to be quite a long process which will need motivation, capacity building and (likely) refresher training to be sustained. Managing data will also require more openness within the government to share information.

**Other UN agencies´ perspectives of UNICEF´s work on equity:**

UNICEF’s work is generally respected by the UN agencies consulted in Malaysia (UNCT, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO).

**Equity in UNICEF’s monitoring and evaluation:**

The Monitoring Results for Equity System (MORES) as part of UNICEF’s re-focus on equity should be very useful in UNICEF Malaysia work. However, UNICEF should perhaps not focus too much on bottlenecks and problems in its analysis – this is a lesson that the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has learnt from the Logical Framework Analysis tool and a reason that it is promoting Appreciative Enquiry.

**Some cross-cutting issues:**

The evaluation has not been able to identify any documented strategy explaining to “an outsider” as to how it ensures children’s (girls and boys) participation, voice and even representation in its overall programme, in particular those who are undocumented and marginalised. There is also lack of gender analysis in UNICEF’s documentation and no specific strategy on how to work with gender (girls and boys) – thus this should be attended to. Further, as more information and data is being generated about marginalised and undocumented children in the country (e.g. Sabah and Sarawak) there are opportunities for new entry points for UNICEF to be more engaged and advocate on issues that are relevant in view of equity and child rights/child well-being.

**Bottlenecks and challenges:**

The Government’s data-sets on children which are not easily accessible and not shared within or among stakeholder organisations, or up-dated regularly, or take long time to be released to the public and civil society – are bottlenecks and a challenge for UNICEF in its work on equity for children. Prevailing attitudes regarding what is good or not good for children is also a challenge and a bottleneck toward progress.
Recommendations

1. UNICEF should, in the new programme, clearly address equity (or in other terms) in all major outcomes and outputs including the private sector work (CSR) with corporates and contributions from the private sector, as well as in child justice/juvenile justice - perhaps more also in communications where it seems not to have been prominent (except for work on children with disabilities).

2. To increase the relevance of its cooperation with the Government (in view of comments from the MWFCD), UNICEF should: undertake a participatory Stakeholder Analysis with Government and CSOs to clearly determine which government agencies (including local government) it needs to collaborate with in respect of undocumented and other marginalised children.

3. To increase the relevance of its cooperation with CSOs, UNICEF should “reinstall” its earlier intention to bridge the gap between NGOs in Kuala Lumpur (the CRCM) and NGOs in Eastern Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak in particular); attempt to facilitate a dialogue between CSOs/NGOs and the Government partners e.g. through a working group set up by EPU; and draw up a plan for capacity-building/skills based on a participatory Needs Assessment (including the Coalition, NGOs in Sabah and Sarawak and representatives from think tanks/ research institutions) during the coming programme period – with the objective of contributing to a sustainable, children focused NGO sector.

4. UNICEF should continue to be involved in discussions about curricula development in the 11-12 alternative learning centres that currently are administered by the Federal Special Task Force (FSTF) in Sabah.

5. UNICEF should continue its policy advocacy related to an Alternative Education Policy including advocacy for children’s rights to quality education (CRCM - Art. 28).

6. UNICEF should look into the possible introduction/promotion of alternative learning methods/materials such Life Skills training and the creative participatory teaching method named “Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media” (SCREAM).²

7. UNICEF should develop a Strategy to be part of its new programme, explaining how it ensures children’s (girls and boys) participation, voice and even representation in its overall programme, in particular those who are undocumented and marginalised.

8. UNICEF should also develop a gender analysis and a strategy on how to work with gender among marginalised groups (girls and boys) to be part of the new programme, and CPAP.

9. UNICEF should explore how its media work (including social media) can be used to more clearly bring equity issues to discussion with the public.

10. As more information and data is being generated and officially disseminated about disparities and marginalised and undocumented children in the country, more opportunities for UNICEF should present themselves, and UNICEF should consider to be even more engaged in cooperation with UNFPA and CSOs on rights-based issues involving female-genital mutilation (FGM); early marriage, early sexual relationships (for girls often leading to early pregnancy, childbirth, child upbringing and discontinuation of education), and/or sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
11. UNICEF’s research points to child labour existing in Sabah. In its continued and future dialogue with the Corporate sector, UNICEF should consider initiating cooperation with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on policy advocacy with a view to start protecting undocumented children (especially) from harmful work, in reference both to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC Art. 32) and the ILO Conventions No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (Malaysia has ratified both conventions).

12. In pursuit of more qualitative information about the living conditions of undocumented and marginalised children, UNICEF could consider looking into the Reality Check Approach (RCA), as a study method used in many countries to gather qualitative information through participatory methods. It is currently used in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Indonesia (with support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, formerly AusAid) and earlier supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in Bangladesh and other Asian and African countries.

13. UNICEF should overcome some of its “fear” (or reluctance) to engage in field projects. It is here proposed that, in discussion with the Government and CSOs, field projects in Sabah could be continued (the alternative learning centres) or new project-oriented initiatives could be started through using MORES and results based planning (clear time-bound entry and exits for support) seeking commitments for take over and follow-up. These are the reasons for UNICEF to consider (which together could inform UNICEF’s further dialogue with the Government and CSOs):

- It could increase UNICEF’s first-hand knowledge and direct contact with children (girls and boys) in their own environment, living in poverty and/or are marginalised because they are refugees, stateless/undocumented, live with disability, belong to indigenous groups or live in remote geographical areas;
- It would serve as a source of reality check and learning for the national/local governments (or civil society) which would be conducive to taking responsibility and ownership;
- It would further facilitate and give more insight into local governance issues as well as political, economic, environmental, social and cultural realities, and expand UNICEF’s network and knowledge about the circumstances in which civil societies operate;
- It would enable a closer contact with local private service providers and private sector companies that can play roles in CSR, e.g. actively work against child labour and child abuse and exploitation; and
- It would give credit to UNICEF in the eyes of the public e.g. in the sense that UNICEF is doing something which is visible to the public in helping children directly – which also would help to raise more money in total through being able to show tangible work and subsequent results³.
“Invisible — Where Is My Dignity?”
by Muhammad Arif Fitri bin Azizan, (17), Selangor
CRC@25 — Picture My Rights, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Muhammad Arif Fitri
This is the final report on the Evaluation of the equity focus of Malaysia’s Country Programme. The evaluation assignment was commissioned by UNICEF Malaysia and conducted by Lotta Nycander, an external evaluator (consultant) between November 2014 and March 2015.

PURPOSE, OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, USERS AND CRITERIA

1.1 Purpose

This report is on the first evaluation of the current UNICEF country programme for the period 2011–2015. The overall purpose is to generate substantial knowledge and evidence on equity in the Malaysian context to guide UNICEF Malaysia’s forthcoming Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2020, as well as to inform national development policies and strategic planning processes.

Findings and recommendations will be applied to the programme thrust and management as well as work plans in the new country programme in order to strengthen the equity-focused approach.

1.2 Specific objectives

- Assess to what extent the equity focus has been integrated into the current country programme design and implementation, and has contributed to achieving results for children;
- Identify the challenges, bottlenecks and barriers faced in applying an equity focus and to address the specific needs and rights of the most marginalised and vulnerable children in Malaysia; and to assess the extent to which such bottlenecks and barriers have constrained the achievement of equity-focused results.
- Assess the extent to which key partners (government agencies, NGOs and civil society, academic and research institutions, private/corporate sector and others) have contributed to pro-equity interventions and have the capacity to partner with UNICEF in achieving sustainable results for children.
- Make recommendations on how the equity focus can be more effectively used and applied in policy and programme development; recommendations on how to ensure staff capacity, resources and partnerships for effective pro-equity interventions are also expected (to feed into the process of the development of the next country programme).

In discussions with UNICEF Malaysia it has transpired that this is perhaps the first time that UNICEF is undertaking a comprehensive evaluation of the equity focus in a country programme (while in earlier reviews of a country programme, equity has only been brought up/assessed as one aspect among others).

The overall purpose of this Report is to generate substantial knowledge and evidence on equity in the Malaysian context to guide UNICEF Malaysia’s forthcoming Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2020, as well as to inform national development policies and strategic planning processes.
1.3 Scope
The scope of the evaluation is to assess the validity of the design, as well as to analyse key sectoral/cross-sectoral strategies put in place and activities carried out to achieve results for children in the current Country Programme (from 2011 to date). It has included consultations and interviews with all key stakeholders to UNICEF in Peninsular Malaysia; focus group discussions (FGDs), observations and discussions with Government and Civil Society Organisation (SCO) partners in Sabah; as well as consultations via Skype and correspondence with stakeholders in Sarawak.

The scope included assessing how UNICEF has been able to use new information and experiences/practices as well as institutional frameworks during the course of the implementation – to adapt the approaches and more effectively tackle equity deficits for children in cooperation with the Government and other stakeholders. This includes (but is not limited to) strategies, programming approaches and if, or how, any indicators of achievement/ performance have been designed, used and understood, in relation to its work. Have the changes to the results framework (following the recommendations in the 2013 Mid Term Review) made any difference, or are expected to make any difference to the work or expected results on equity as such? Have there been any unintended benefits?

The objective of this evaluation is to assess the Country Programme as a whole; however, each of the components making up UNICEF’s programme will be assessed with a focus on how equity has been approached. Thus, the evaluator has gathered information about UNICEF’s activities within its core programme areas of education, child protection (including social welfare, disability, children and justice and civil society capacity-building) and social policy (including child poverty, social protection and public finance for children).

1.4 Users
UNICEF is the primary user of this evaluation. The Terms of Reference (ToR) foresee that the following agencies also will be users: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development and the respective departments, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other civil society organisations, universities and research institutions.

It is expected that the evaluation will serve as a first input towards a discussion on how best to achieve a socio-inclusive approach to policy development and strengthened programme implementation for children. Given that this is perhaps the first-ever comprehensive evaluation of an equity focus in a UNICEF Country Programme, it is expected that other country offices, regional offices and Headquarter divisions may also benefit from the findings and results. The evaluation is timely and it is also expected that the highlighting of equity may contribute to UNICEF’s work globally and in encouraging country programme staff to pause, take a step back and assess how effectively they have been able to integrate and mainstream equity concerns.

1.5 Evaluation criteria
Four evaluation criteria, namely the OECD/DAC criteria relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, have been applied in the evaluation of UNICEF’s work and approach to equity.
2 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

“Education is My Path to Success”
by Rohama Saleem (16), Kuala Lumpur
CRC@25 — The World We Want, 2014
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2.1 Framework

At the onset, the evaluator translated the objectives of the evaluation into relevant and specific evaluation key questions, posed to relevant UNICEF staff (including former staff members) and main stakeholders (Government agencies, UN agencies, NGOs/SCOs, private sector consultants). The evaluation questions have informed the development of the methodology. Key concerns in relation to the questions were: “Is UNICEF doing things in the right way to ensure that equity is a focus in the programme?” and “Are there better ways of achieving results?”

The evaluation used qualitative methods to gather primary and secondary data and information, including qualitative and quantitative information. The majority of the documentation used was received from UNICEF, such as the steering documents for the country programme (country programme document, results frameworks, annual work plans, annual reports, report on the midterm review, technical reports, as well as UNICEF’s key evaluation guidelines - see Annex. III. Documents consulted). The rationale was to use documentation that: a) gave an overview of the programme, both in its structure and contents; and b) related to the core theme of equity. Documents were also made available by other agencies and through web searches.

Even though equity was in focus, it was found that it was necessary to have an overview of the overall programme, as much as possible, in order to determine how equity had been approached and what had been achieved, as well as what were the bottlenecks. Thus the evaluation identified the overall achievements in the key areas of the programme, and the key results generated during 2011-2014. The socio-political and/or other challenges that UNICEF has faced have been taken into account.

Each of UNICEF’s three main thematic areas, i.e. Education, Child Protection (including social welfare, disability, children and justice) and Social Policy (including child poverty, social protection and public finance for children), were explored to determine how equity had been approached and integrated.

The evaluation has revolved around the following questions, among others:

- How has UNICEF Malaysia applied an equity focus in its overall programmatic approach/strategy and in the implementation period 2011-2014? How has this approach helped UNICEF to better address the needs and rights of children? Have any innovative ways been applied to push the agenda and to inform national development policies and strategic planning processes?

- How has UNICEF Malaysia specifically approached equity in its cooperation with the Government, CSOs and academia, as well as other stakeholders (both up-stream and down-stream activities)?

- How, through programming, have results been planned and implemented in overcoming bottlenecks and barriers to address equity issues in Malaysia? What lessons can be learnt from the implementation of current equity-focused programme results? How can the lessons be further strengthened and sustained, and how can weaknesses be addressed?

- Furthermore, considering that Malaysia is striving to become a high-income economy, how can UNICEF Malaysia, in its future programme, ensure that its approach toward equity constitutes an integral part of, and is firmly anchored in, its new country programme (2016 - 2020)?
2.1.1 Participation of UNICEF’s stake-holders in the equity evaluation process

Those who participated (apart from UNICEF staff) in the interviews and discussions, and provided documents/data were from the Government, UN agencies, universities, civil society and freelance consultants from the private sector:

GOVERNMENT

- **Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister’s Department**
  The evaluation had meetings with the Director and Principal Assistant Director of the International Cooperation Section, the Deputy Director of the Social Services Section, the Principal Assistant Director of the Human Capital Development Section and the Principal Assistant Director of the Distribution Section. EPU is the main government counterpart for UNICEF in Malaysia. EPU strives towards improving the quality of life of all Malaysians and promotes balanced and sustainable development through effective development planning.

- **Ministry of Education (MOE)**
  MOE strives to develop a world-class education system in Malaysia. UNICEF works with this Ministry to contribute to reducing educational disparities among children from indigenous, rural and remote communities, to promote safe schools and to initiate Early Learning and Development Standards.

- **Ministry of Health (MOH)**
  UNICEF has worked with MOH since 1954 in child and maternal health and nutrition. UNICEF supports the MOH in its response to HIV and AIDS, and health programmes for marginalised and vulnerable children, women and youth.

- **Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD)**
  MWFCD strives to achieve gender equality and family development. UNICEF’s work with this Ministry is aimed at contributing to the government’s efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its recommendations, as well as to assess the protective environment for children. The Ministry reports on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as the CRC and the National Plan of Action for Children.

- **Sabah State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN)**
- **Federal Special Task Force (Sabah/Labuan)**
- **University Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Kota Kinabalu, Sabah (Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning)**
UN AGENCIES
- United Nations Country Team (UNCT)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- World Health Organisation (WHO)

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS /NGOS
- Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS), Sabah

The following NGOs are members of the Child Rights Coalition Malaysia, which (among others) serves as a platform for dialogue and action between UNICEF and its partner organisations in Malaysia:
- Protect and Save the Children and member of Child Rights Coalition Malaysia (CRCM)
- Protect and Save the Children (also: Secretariat for CRCM)
- Steering Committee Childline Malaysia (also CRCM member & Hon. President, Association of Registered Childcare Providers Malaysia)
- Malaysian Child Resource Institute (Montessori World Educational Institute Asia) & member of CRCM
- Malaysian Child Resource Institute & member of CRCM
- Malaysian Care & member of CRCM
- Dayak Bidayuh National Association (DBNA)
- National Early Childhood Intervention Council (NECIC)

Apart from UNICEF’s programme and administration staff members, and a consultant commissioned by UNICEF and residing in Sabah, the evaluator also interviewed the former UNICEF Malaysia Representative and the former M&E Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (through Skype)12.

The main rationale for consulting the above-mentioned stakeholders was based on UNICEF’s advice at the onset, namely to consult those organisations/agencies and stakeholders with whom UNICEF has the most cooperation (key stakeholders).
2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Steps and methods applied

This section is intended to give a clear picture of what the various steps were and which evaluation methods were applied:

- Comprehensive documentation review: The evaluator gathered information about UNICEF and the overall context in which it is operating in Malaysia through a comprehensive documentation review that continued throughout the evaluation process (as relevant documents were gathered throughout and some received/identified even at the end of the process). Two consecutive result framework matrices during this period (2011 and 2013) were scrutinised and discussed with staff. Evidence of effectiveness in reaching goals/outcomes and outputs was sought through a variety of reports and other documents;

- Visits to Malaysia (15-19 December 2014; 16 January-1 February 2015; and 22-29 February 2015): All three visits were spent on data collection, interviews, discussions and meetings with UNICEF and stakeholders;

- A mix of in-depth face-to-face interviews and discussions were held with UNICEF core programme staff and some administrative staff. The interviews lasted for about one hour, sometimes less due to the fact that the interviewees had other work commitments (in which case the evaluator set up more additional time to talk). Meetings, and an FGD, were also held with UNICEF programme staff. Interviews, consultations and e-mail correspondence were carried out with other UN agencies;

- Meetings were held with staff in ministries/departments in Peninsular Malaysia and included Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development;

- An FGD was held with NGOs who have formed the CRCM. E-mail correspondence was also used to obtain more information about the work of civil society organisations in cooperation with UNICEF;

- In-depth interviews/consultations were also held with Hans Olsen, Consultant (former Representative UNICEF Malaysia); Roumiana Gantcheva, Specialist (former PME UNICEF Malaysia); and Ada Ocampo, Senior Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF HQNY (former Regional Evaluation Advisor-EAPRO);

- It was foreseen that the evaluation would include field visits to both states of Sabah and Sarawak. During the evaluator’s first visit to Malaysia, UNICEF explained that Sabah was more relevant as not many activities had taken off in Sarawak and therefore only Sabah should be visited. In Sabah, the evaluator spent three days in Kota Kinabalu, and held meetings with a resident UNICEF consultant, the Secretary General of the NGO Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS), the Dean of the Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS);

- In-depth interviews and an FGD was held with the Federal Special Task Force (FSTF), as well as with teachers in the Kampung Numbak learning centre in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah;

- The UNICEF-supported Alternative Learning Centre Kampung Numbak in Kota Kinabalu was visited and the evaluator had an FGD with the teachers in the centre, joined by members of the FSTF (Sabah/Labuan). The visit included both individual and group interactions with the children of different age groups. Observation was used as a method;
The evaluator also interviewed the Principal Assistant Director of the Sabah State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN) through Skype;

The third visit to Malaysia was used to conduct some more interviews including with the MWFCD and Sarawak Planning Unit (SPU), to gather more information and data, and to present the preliminary findings of the evaluation in a Validation Workshop. A discussion was held in connection with the presentation and notes were taken of the responses from the attendants to be taken into account in this report;

A brief set of evaluation questions was sent via e-mail to interviewees who could not be met face-to-face;

The data and information collected was processed and analysed, and the reports were written; and

A half-day Validation Workshop was held in Kuala Lumpur on 28 February 2015, in which preliminary findings were presented and discussed. At the workshop, feedback was provided, most of which have been addressed in the draft report.

The ToR instructed that an evaluation reference group (ERG) was to be formed, to act as a sounding board, provide comments on the evaluation draft report and actively participate in the Validation workshop. The reference group consisted of Dr. Goh Chee Leong, Dean of Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, HELP University; James George, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP, and Pn. Rokiah Haron, Deputy Director, Social Services Section, Economic Planning Unit, PM’s Department; Pashmina Naz Ali, Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF Malaysia and Victor Karunan, Senior Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF Malaysia.

These are the various deliverables during the course of the work:

- Inception Report submitted on 23 December 2014 (which followed the first briefing visit to Malaysia) and a final Inception Report submitted on 20 January 2014, incorporating written comments from UNICEF. The main purpose of this report was to account for the methodology to be applied in the evaluation and the work schedule to follow during the remainder of the evaluation process;
- The first draft of the evaluation report incorporating written comments was submitted on 16 February 2015.
- Presentation of the preliminary findings (in Powerpoint format) of the evaluation in the Validation Workshop in Kuala Lumpur on 26 February 2015;
- Findings and recommendations were sent to UNICEF on 2 March 2015;
- The final draft of the evaluation report was submitted on 16 March 2015, taking into account the written comments received; and
- This final report was submitted to UNICEF on 17 April 2015, taking into account the comments received on the final draft.
2.2.2 Approach

With the analytical framework in place, the approach of the evaluation was based on the collection of data from multiple sources (documentation, interviews, comparative analysis) to establish evidentiary trends. Thus, if most of the respondents expressed the same position and this was confirmed through reports and/or surveys and supported by an analysis of the documentation, then the evaluator was able to make a fair conclusion. The process was as participatory as was possible in all its aspects to enable and encourage all key informants to provide and share information, data and views, as well as to take part in discussions. Triangulation/cross-checking of information has been applied in the analysis as much as possible to increase the credibility and validity of the results, as well as to minimise any bias.

The methods employed were deemed appropriate for the evaluation to acquire answers to specific questions, as well as in analysing gender and human rights issues, in particular child rights issues identified in the evaluation scope. Attention was paid to adequate measures to ensure data quality, including evidence supporting the reliability and validity of data collection tools. The evaluator has paid attention to ethical issues and protected the confidentiality of the interviewees, particularly the interviewed children in Sabah and the beneficiary community visited there.

2.3 Limitations to the Evaluation

Like most research-oriented studies, this evaluation study has been heavily dependent on the availability of people, organisations and documents. These are challenges and limitations that have affected the outcome:

- No contact was made with HUMANA, the NGO that is providing education to thousands of children in the palm oil plantations in Sabah with support from UNICEF (among many other agencies). UNICEF strongly advised against making this contact, for reasons related to accountability issues currently being looked into by NYHQ. The Executive Director of this organisation was not present in Malaysia at the time of data collection.
- All UNICEF programme staff members were heavily involved (and extremely busy) in developing its next country programme during the same time as the evaluation process.
- Some key informants were available only a day or two before the presentation of the findings at the Validation Workshop (MWFC and Sarawak SPU) and some documentation was made available only at the end (examples are the evaluation report on HUMANA and information about a Public Funds workshop).
It was foreseen that the evaluation would include field visits to both states of Sabah and Sarawak. During the first visit to Malaysia, UNICEF explained that Sabah was more relevant as not many activities had taken off in Sarawak, and therefore, only Sabah should be visited.

No visit was undertaken to Sandakan in Sabah where UNICEF is supporting an alternative learning centre mainly because of time constraints and upon advice from UNICEF. A visit to Sandakan would have provided more insight into UNICEF’s efforts to provide undocumented children with education.

It is clear that the evaluation would have had more appreciation of the situation of children in Sabah and UNICEF’s support for marginalised and undocumented children in Sabah if discussions could have been held with the management staff of HUMANA, and if a visit could have been made to any of the plantations where it has set up schools. The evaluator has tried to compensate for this lack by watching videos, reading documents, discussing with the programme staff and searching for information on the web. Regarding information about Sarawak, the evaluator was informed that a Skype conversation would be held with a representative of the Sarawak Planning Unit (SPU) but as this did not materialise, the evaluator instead used e-mail correspondence to acquire some information about its contacts and planned activities with UNICEF.
THE CONTEXT

“Will You Play With Me?”
by Loh Rachel (17), Kuala Lumpur
CRC@25 — Picture My Rights, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Loh Rachel
3.1 Relevant Policies

Malaysia has a multi-ethnic and multi-religious population, consisting of 67.7 per cent Bumiputera, 24.1 per cent Chinese, 7.2 per cent Indians and 1 per cent ‘others’. The concepts of race and ethnicity in the country are controversial and closely related to the concept of inclusive growth, comprising equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth, and of social spending across income groups and people living in poverty, regardless of which “group” they belong to.

Inclusive growth also entails opportunities for economic participation and safeguarding people who are socio-economically vulnerable. Efforts to minimise social exclusion and increase social cohesion are also part of inclusive growth.

In 1995, Malaysia acceded to the CRC and in 2012, it acceded to two Optional Protocols to the CRC, the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. It expressed reservations to several of the CRC Articles, some of which have been withdrawn over time. In 2007, the Committee on the Rights of the Child Report (concluding observations and recommendations) welcomed the Government’s efforts in safeguarding children’s rights and recommended the withdrawal of all remaining reservations including the articles about equal access to education at all levels for all children, improving the birth registration system, and a systematic assessment of budgetary allocations for children. At present there are five reservations pending.

The signing of the CRC led to the Child Act (2001), which served to consolidate the Juvenile Courts Act 1947, the Women and Young Girls Protection Act 1973, and the Child Protection Act 1991. It was enacted partially in order to fulfil Malaysia’s obligations under the CRC. Significant progress was made to establish legal frameworks for child protection services.

Malaysia has also acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Malaysia aims to become a fully developed economy based on a foundation of national unity and social cohesion, social justice and political stability, with a commitment to quality of life including social and cultural values. It seeks to develop self-sustaining national capacities so that all children can enjoy their rights for survival, development, protection and participation. It has greatly progressed in safeguarding the well-being and rights of children during the last decades.

National data on maternal and child survival, and on health demonstrates impressive improvement from the 1970s. The under-five and infant mortality rates were reduced to 8.5 and 6.8 per 1,000 live births, respectively, in 2010, which halved the rates of 1990, for instance, and can be compared with those of developed/industrialised countries. The proportion of children living in poverty has declined significantly and the country is likely to reach the MDG targets by 2015.
Malaysia is currently at a crossroads and at a crucial stage in its development. The 11th Malaysia Development Plan (MDP) 2016-2020 is going to be launched by the PM in May 2015. The concept of inclusivity aims to minimise disparities to obtain a more equitable distribution of national wealth between all members of society, including children. Consultations are ongoing within the Government, the opposition and civil society on the state of the economy and social development in the context of national unity.

3.2 How does UNICEF perceive equity?

Globally, UNICEF views equity as having many dimensions and many levels, including legislation, policy, and within sectors (education, social policy, child protection, health). Addressing equity is not new on the agenda.

UNICEF sees equity as being based on the principle of universality guaranteeing the fundamental rights of every child, regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, income, physical attributes, geographical location or other status.

Its Executive Board approved the Global Strategic Plan (2014-2017) – “Realising the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged” – at its September 2013 session. This calls for renewed emphasis on advancing the rights of every child, and is based on applying an equity focus that includes special attention to children from vulnerable groups, through investment and programmes in health, education, child protection and social cohesion.

UNICEF declared 2014 as the Year of Innovation for Equity – to focus the world’s attention on ways to identify and demonstrate innovative ways to improve the well-being of children worldwide. It is reminding the world that 25 years ago, a promise was made to the world’s children to uphold the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of all children below 18 years, i.e. protecting and promoting their rights to survive and thrive, to learn and grow, to make their voices heard and to reach their full potential. Although much has been achieved during the time that has since lapsed – e.g. reduction in infant mortality, better primary healthcare and increased school enrolment particularly for girls – many children in the world do not benefit from development and are deprived of their rights. In fact, 2014 has been a devastating year for millions of children as stated by Anthony Lake, UNICEF Executive Director, expressing concern that many crises no longer capture the world’s attention.

To further the results for children, the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MORES) approach was developed in 2011 as part of UNICEF’s re-focus on equity. The purpose was to ensure that UNICEF’s support is as effective as possible in reducing disparities and in contributing to realising children’s rights, especially those of the most disadvantaged. MORES builds on the existing human rights-based approach to programming, and is intended to assist UNICEF and its stakeholders to sharpen the focus on the most critical bottlenecks and barriers that impede children, especially the most disadvantaged ones, from benefiting from basic social services, interventions, and care practices.
4 FINDINGS

“Mah Meri Children—Smiling Despite Hardships”
by Loh Rachel (17), Kuala Lumpur
CRC@25 — The World We Want, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Loh Rachel
4.1 UNICEF Malaysia Country Programme

UNICEF Malaysia (hereafter referred to as simply UNICEF) strives for equity in two ways: i) contributing to overall modernisation and systems changes; and ii) targeting areas that directly impact marginalised children.

Its programme in Malaysia includes upstream policy advocacy and programmatic work on cross-sectoral issues. It supports the Government and engages with the civil society, as well as the private sector. During the period 2008-2010, UNICEF advocated for policy change and enhancement of the social, legal and protective provisions for children in Malaysia. It supported the Government of Malaysia’s (GoM) efforts to enhance policy and quality service provisions in the health, education and social sectors to better reach children, including underserved groups of children. Through monitoring, analysis and research, UNICEF has further increased the knowledge base on children in the country.

In developing its current Programme in Malaysia (2010-2015), UNICEF had learned from its previous engagement in the country to supplement upstream activities (such as the emphasis on certain areas of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan) with providing assistance to partner organisations in the country to address gaps in service provision for marginalised children through more inclusive policies. Another lesson learnt was that a systematic approach needs to be applied with greater focus on strategic areas where UNICEF has a comparative advantage (highest value-added contribution). During this period, UNICEF also prioritised programming in Sabah and Sarawak in East Malaysia, particularly in education.

UNICEF is currently developing a new Country Programme in Malaysia for 2016-2020, in which the CRC agenda will constitute a platform on which all strategies and outcomes will be built. It is therefore strategic to examine, through an independent evaluation, how the issue of equity has been understood to date and what actions have been taken – and what paths to pursue in the future programme to more strongly advocate for inclusiveness and protection of all children in the country.

During the period under review, the office has generated important child-focused data. In 2014, data generation has been particularly important in view of the preparation of the Malaysian Government’s 11th Development Plan 2016-2020. UNICEF Malaysia’s Annual Report (2014) states that, in 2014, UNICEF has continued to use the equity focus to address the needs and rights of marginalised and vulnerable children in the programming areas of education, child protection and justice for children. This chapter thus has attempted to determine to what extent equity has indeed been addressed, and what achievements have been made in the current programme period.

In order to create more sustainable results for children and to firmly anchor the subsequent Country Programme around the CRC, UNICEF has realised it needs to develop closer partnerships with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the private sector, research institutions and other organisations.

During the period under review, the office has generated important child-focused data.

In 2014, data generation has been particularly important in view of the preparation of the Malaysian Government’s 11th Development Plan 2016-2020.
4.2 Design of the results structure

The evaluation first looked into the framework of UNICEF’s programme in Malaysia for the period under review, before looking into the effectiveness of the implementation. These questions were raised: How has the overall UNICEF equity focus been reflected in the design of its steering documents, particularly the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework and its (rolling) Action Plan 2011-2015?

It was found that under the sub-heading of Disparity Reduction, Equity and Gender, it is mentioned that all programme component results will directly address the needs of indigenous, migrant, undocumented and other marginalised and at-risk children, and promote greater equity, reaching the most vulnerable and ensuring an equitable approach to development for the country.

The first Country Programme Results Structure during this period had 10 result areas, named Programme Component Results (PCRs) and a great number of Intermediate Results (IRs), namely 22.

In November 2013 UNICEF undertook a comprehensive Mid-Term Review (MTR) together with the Government, with the purpose of reviewing progress towards the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) results, taking stock of any changes to the programming context, as well as reviewing the performance of the Country Office in implementing programme strategies.

The purpose of the exercise was also to draw conclusions that could form the basis to plan the direction and activities for the remaining period (i.e. up end to 2015), and to inform the subsequent planning cycle. EAPRO was responsible for overseeing this whole process including ensuring quality assurance.

The MTR found that the components and the results had been “articulated” unevenly and some of the intended results were no longer valid, or had become superfluous.

The MTR therefore proposed to reduce the number of result areas, thus the current results structure in the Country Programme Document (CPD) has 3 Outcomes (previously termed PCRs) and 10 Outputs (previously termed IRs).

In addition, it has one cross/sectoral Outcome supported by two Outputs, which remains until the new programme comes into effect in 2016. One of the outputs is concerned with equity, i.e. equity should permeate (be mainstreamed) into all other results in the programme.

The revision of the results structure was aimed mainly at sharpening the focus on a few key result areas, i.e. to enable UNICEF to contribute towards developing Government and NGO capacity to more effectively address equity issues.

4.2.1 Design reflected in annual (rolling) workplan

To assess how the Programme’s results structure is reflected in plans for implementation, the evaluation has also looked at the annual (rolling) Work Plan matrix and found that equity has been addressed in terms of excluded and marginalised children in two out of the first three outcomes and in a number of outputs designed to contribute to these outcomes, as well as in the last cross-sectoral outcome, but is not visible in Outcome No. 3.

The following shows the logic of the plan up to output level, i.e. not including activity level:
### Outcome 1:
**By 2015, robust evidence is generated and used by the Government to plan, allocate and utilise resources effectively ensuring that all children benefit equitably and develop their full potential.**
- **Output 1.1:** By 2015, evidence is generated and used to inform national dialogue for better allocation of resources to the most disadvantaged children.
- **Output 1.2:** By 2015, high-quality information with focus on the most marginalised children generated, consolidated, disseminated and utilised to inform better-focused national policies and programmes.

### Outcome 2:
**By 2015, national partners have strengthened capacity to ensure implementation of the rights of all children especially the most marginalised, to survival and health care; good-quality education and development; identity; and protection from violence, abuse and neglect.**
- **Output 2.1:** By 2015, context-appropriate policies and strategies for accelerating and scaling up school enrolment, and sustaining school attendance, for excluded and marginalised children are developed, based on evidence and through a consultative process.\(^{29}\)
- **Output 2.2:** By 2015, the child welfare system demonstrates practice that is responsive to the care, safety and protection of children at risk of, or suffering maltreatment.
- **Output 2.3:** By 2015, all stakeholders demonstrate increased understanding of the best practices on birth registration.
- **Output 2.4:** By 2015, justice sector professionals demonstrate strengthened capacity to respond appropriately to children in conflict with the law and child victims/witnesses.
- **Output 2.5:** By 2015, stakeholders have increased their understanding of the rights of children with disabilities, towards better policy and legislation implementation.
- **Output 2.6:** By 2015, the child rights NGO sector has strengthened and sustained capacity to advocate for children’s rights.

### Outcome 3:
**By 2015, the private sector has increased its support for improving child well-being through financial contributions as well as corporate social responsibility initiatives focused on children.**
- **Output 3.1:** Targeted Fundraising Strategy implemented for efficient financial contributions from private sector for improved child-wellbeing.
- **Output 3.2:** Children’s rights and Business Principles are better understood by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Private Listed Companies (PLCs) and Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

### Outcome (Cross-sectoral):
**To be obtained through an output on communication, and an output on Programme Monitoring and Evaluation (the latter which has included MORES and this Equity evaluation).**
4.3 Relevance

The evaluation has looked at relevance from the point of view of UNICEF’s strategy and approach in advocating for inclusive and equitable policies and practices, as well as the chosen sectoral themes and sub-themes to address equity.

UNICEF’s cooperation with the Government of Malaysia has sought to inform policy reform relating to children through increased government strategic national partnerships and providing technical expertise aligned to the current 10th Malaysia Plan. It was found that UNICEF’s advocacy regarding equity vis-à-vis the Government is relevant, with the realisation that there are limitations and complexities that hamper its influence and that rapid results should not be expected in a country with so many multi-cultural/ethnic and multi-religious dimensions. The EPU and the line ministries have stated that they appreciate UNICEF’s work and pointed out that it is particularly relevant in Malaysia’s aspirations to reach its long-held objective articulated in Vision 2020 of becoming a fully developed high-income nation – and in this last stretch, more improvements still need to be made.

The representatives of MWFCD, with whom the evaluator had an in-depth discussion, strongly emphasised that UNICEF should extend its cooperation to more ministries such as the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (MMRD) and the Ministry of Housing, the Attorney-General’s Chambers, as well as the local authorities. In their view, this is very important as the lives of marginalised children, being UNICEF’s targeted group, are affected by many government agencies. They opined that even though EPU is the main government counterpart, UNICEF should approach other ministries and other government agencies directly – more than it does at present. It was also learnt that UNICEF had been informed about MWFCD’s wishes several times. The UNICEF Representative, however, stated that UNICEF is in regular contact with other ministries and government agencies, with the exception of MMRD.

UNICEF’s work with civil society organisations has also been relevant and includes organisations in and around Kuala Lumpur, Sabah and Sarawak. It was found that it would be even more relevant if it encouraged greater participation from partner organisations in the discourse about equity issues; by bringing together CSOs in Sabah and Sarawak in dialogue with the Child Rights Coalition (mainly based in Kuala Lumpur) to share experiences and learning, e.g. about the situation in East Malaysia – as this is the geographical area that UNICEF should concentrate much of its advocacy work on and is likely to continue some project-related activities.

According to UNICEF, this was the initial strategy when the CRCM was set up in 2011, but did not progress for various reasons – distance being one of them. However, this should still be a goal as the contacts and knowledge-sharing between the CRC based in the capital and the NGOs in East Malaysia is very important, and ways and means to connect them need to be found. Its approach would also be more relevant if it did more to facilitate direct dialogues between CSOs and the Government partners, while involving CSOs more in giving their ideas about developing UNICEF’s new country programme.

The cooperation with corporates to advocate for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has not yet taken off in terms of equity focus. The work vis-à-vis fundraising targeting individuals has been very successful, but as mentioned, it is not geared towards addressing equity issues per se. With regard to fundraising among companies, this is intended to start up in the coming programme period.
4.4 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is an evaluation criteria that is used to assess to what extent the objectives have been reached.

This section looks at the level of effectiveness in advocating for children and in implementing other activities (including sectoral) as planned in the CDP and work plan – with particular focus on equity issues and undocumented children. It first looks at policy level results, followed by equity as addressed in the key sectoral themes (education, social policy and child protection), followed by an account of the main research/study outputs and reports, followed by effectiveness in the cooperation with, and support to, CSOs, the private sector, cooperation with selected UN agencies, and the use of media in addressing equity and M&E. It was found that 2014 was the year that UNICEF started implementing the new results framework following the MTR in 2013, which pointed to the need for more direct engagement on equity.
4.4.1 Results in policy advocacy

In relation to policy, these are some examples where UNICEF has been quite effective in influencing policies with regard to equity for children – as a result of its activities and cooperation with Government and other stakeholders:

- EPU has informed the evaluation in a meeting that multi-dimensional child poverty as a new concept for the country through UNICEF’s work will be included in the 11th Malaysia Development Plan, which is under preparation;

- EPU has recently conveyed the positive message to UNICEF that the Government of Malaysia must take action to enable undocumented children’s enrolment in school and that they have rights that need to be met – and that if this issue is left unattended there may be serious consequences;

- The Government is in the process of revising the Child Act. The review/revision is currently being undertaken in the legal department of MWFCD for final review, while the legal guidelines to accompany the new Act are also being prepared. MWFCD has informed UNICEF that “diversion” – an element in the criminal justice system that directs children away from judicial proceedings and towards the community – will be part of the revised Act and conveyed the message that it very much appreciates UNICEF’s technical assistance on this. The Act will also have a provision banning “whipping” as a form of punishment in the judicial system;

- It was also conveyed to UNICEF that the results of its pilot activities in the areas of comprehensive child protection will be reflected in the revised Act; and

- MWFCD will hold a stakeholders’ consultation at the end of March 2015 where the revised Child Act will be presented and feedback will be sought. UNICEF will be invited to this Consultation.

UNICEF strongly emphasises the importance of building and maintaining trust, and applying subtle ways of building a working relationship with the Government, in particular with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister’s Department, the ministries and the State Government (UPEN Sabah and SPU Sarawak) through both formal and more informal contacts. Contact is frequently made, while open and frank exchanges and dialogues seem to be common. This generally good working relationship is expected to be conducive in UNICEF’s continued advocacy for an Alternative Learning Policy allowing undocumented and marginalised children to go to school and exercise their rights.

The subject and sub-subject themes that form the framework of UNICEF’s work in Malaysia are education, child protection (including social welfare, disability, children and justice) and social policy (including child poverty, social protection and public finance for children).

This section looks at UNICEF’s efforts (during the period under review) to advocate, generate and disseminate high-quality data, and undertake other activities related to improvements in providing equitable access to education for all children in the country, as well as in strengthening the child protection and social systems.
4.4.2 How was equity approached in the field of education?

It is recognised worldwide that children who are without documentation, including birth certificates, are among the most marginalised.

UNICEF emphasises that education is one of the most fundamental aspects of a child’s development. A fair and inclusive system making quality education accessible to all children is one of the most powerful ways of making society more equitable.

Additionally, from the macroeconomics point, investing in human capital is essential in Malaysia’s aspirations to become a fully developed high-income country.

UNICEF’s approach to equity in education involves removing barriers, within and outside education systems, to provide educational and learning opportunities for all, with particular attention to marginalised and undocumented children.

According to UNICEF’s annual report 2014, the Ministry of Education (MOE) states that it allows these children to be enrolled in public schools — as long as they have documentation to prove their identity — however, such cases are rare.

Malaysia is experiencing a high and increasing rate of ethnic stratification at the primary school level. The National School (Sekolah Kebangsaan, SK) was meant to be the government school of choice for all ethnic groups but this is not materialising. The national-type (Chinese) and national-type (Tamil) schools are open to all ethnic groups and races. Interestingly, during the past few years, the trend has been that Malay and Indian parents are also becoming inclined to send their children to Chinese schools. The common belief is that Chinese schools offer better education. Furthermore, there is also the opportunity to pick up Mandarin as a third language.

Malaysian schools are spread across the performance spectrum, with a high degree of variance between and within states such as in Kelantan, Penang, Sabah, and Sarawak. The gap is wide between the best-performing students/schools and those who do not perform well — Sabah and Sarawak being among the latter. The actual number of children who do not have access to government schools is not known but it is estimated that around 100,000 children cannot participate in the formal education system such as children in very remote areas, who are without proper documentation and residing in plantations as well as children from refugee families — the majority of whom reside in Sabah and Sarawak.

National exams have also shown that there are great variations among states in the country; thus even though progress has been made to provide education and address inequalities, there are still a number of equity-related issues to be concerned about when it comes to all children’s access to quality education.

Over 53 per cent of Malaysia’s 3.3 million indigenous people live in Sabah, as well as 38 per cent of the 2.3 million non-Malaysian citizens. In 2009, MOE carried out a study and found that 43,973 undocumented children in Malaysia between the ages of 7 and 17 years were out of school.

Special programmes have been set up by NGOs for undocumented, stateless and children of indigenous groups, as well as support for students who come from families living in poverty. Tangible achievements have been made in this respect but key challenges remain as inequities persist among the different ethnic groups.
regions, age groups and ethnic groups. Alternative Learning Centres were established especially for children of IMM13 (refugee) cardholders, children living in plantations and children with ID cards provided by UNHCR.

Unofficially, the Government is willing to provide access to basic education for refugee and undocumented children, and has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with counterparts in the Philippines and Indonesia in support of alternative learning centres for children from these two countries who live in Sabah, East Malaysia.

It has been found that when the Government asked for assistance from UNICEF to look into the situation of children in Sabah in 2011, this became an important turning point and (among other initiatives in Sabah) led to MOE’s collaboration with UNICEF and the Federal Task Force in Sabah (FSTF) in setting up basic education learning centres for children from refugee families, and children who are undocumented – most of who are of Filipino origin.

UNICEF is supporting two Alternative Learning Centres, one in Kampung Numbak, Kota Kinabalu (officially opened on 26 March 2011) and the other being the Kampung Bahagia Learning Centre in Sandakan, which is housed in a newly-constructed school building. These projects were launched together with the MOE and the FSTF (Sabah/Labuan).

In the evaluator’s visit to the Kampung Numbak centre, it was found that good work has been done to initiate and support children’s attendance in Alternative Learning Programmes in Sabah but that there seems to be a lack of proper teaching materials as what was found were old and faded textbooks donated when the Centre was first established. The teachers are volunteers with very little training and abysmal salaries (this year the salaries are being raised from RM300/month to RM600/month) albeit with a lot of enthusiasm and willingness to continue their work. The subjects taught are Bahasa Melayu, English, Islamic studies and History. The environment surrounding the Kampung Numbak centre is clearly unhealthy for children and needs a thorough clean-up.

The evaluation noted that some government officials have expressed in interviews that UNICEF ought to be more present “on the ground” in Sabah and Sarawak – as the information that would be generated would help them in drawing up appropriate polices and gaining access to more information. In this context, it is noted that, for the first time, UNICEF has a consultant based in Sabah, who is housed in the JOAS NGO in Kota Kinabalu. The tasks include supporting local NGOs, e.g. in their work in mapping migrant and indigenous children who have difficulties, or no possibilities, in accessing identity papers and education.

In discussions with UNICEF programme staff, they have expressed caution with regard to investing time and resources on implementing projects on the ground, mainly for the valid reason that technical assistance projects funded by external resources often lack sustainability and ownership by national stakeholders. Nevertheless, it would be positive if UNICEF could initiate/provide funding or in other ways contribute to project-activities for undocumented children on the ground in Sabah, with clear entry and exit strategies and only if commitment can be sought from the Government and/or civil society from the onset (see recommendations, Chapter 6).

It has been found that UNICEF’s work related to Sarawak is in a preparatory stage. It had initially planned to provide technical support on the sampling size and design of a household survey together with a National Health Survey, aiming at building evidence in the area of maternal and child health in Sarawak (and Sabah) for health financing.
This activity did not materialise – instead UNICEF wants to explore how it could apply a Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS), including sampling methods. It was found that the Sarawak State Planning Unit (SPU) was not involved in the initial discussions for any such survey but would very much like to be involved if any study would take off.

UNICEF and SPU have held meetings regarding the situation of children with a focus on the marginalised children in Sarawak in relation to a *Child Profile at State level for Sarawak* – a statistical/data booklet now under preparation/finalisation (somewhat delayed) – to identify the gaps in the areas on children’s rights in the State. With the upcoming 11th Malaysia Plan, the document should provide good input to line ministries/agencies or even NGOs to plan and seek funding for suitable intervention programmes/projects/activities.

Discussions have also taken place with the SPU to undertake a *Situational Analysis of Children in Sarawak* in 2015 (similar to the Sabah SitAn). UNICEF expects this work to begin “later this year or early next year”.

UNICEF has cooperated with, and supported, NGOs on alternative learning to promote *Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE)* among indigenous children at pre-school level. This has involved documentation of folklore, practices and traditions among Lun Bawang, Bidayuh and Punan communities. The books are currently being edited by JOAS. In addition, UNICEF has been supporting the Dayak Bidayuh National Association (DBNA) to produce a Bidayuh-English Dictionary as a resource for the Bidayuh language curricula at the pre-school level. In 2013, it also provided funds in support of field research on dialects that has been completed. (Three out of five dialect booklets have been printed and submitted to UNICEF, while others are being sent to the Sarawak state history library).
4.4.3 How was equity approached in the field of social policy?

Regarding the generation of evidence for the most disadvantaged children, work is ongoing in identifying bottlenecks and barriers in terms of maternal and child health service delivery. UNICEF has, in this respect, emphasised that in order to utilise a costing tool, gaps in the M&E system of the Ministry of Health (MOH) should be addressed.

It was found that the cooperation with EPU resulted in three policy briefs (to be published and disseminated) on well-being and poverty, health and education – also reflected in the recent publication of the UNDP Malaysian Human Development Report 2013, launched at the end of 2014.

The policy briefs add data and information to the national dialogue on multi-dimensional poverty as well as provide input to the Eleventh Malaysia Plan.

It has been noted that UNICEF had expected more involvement from MOH and MOE in creating buy-in from these briefs and more high-level engagement from the key decision makers of these ministries.

In the planning and development of the 11th Malaysia Plan 2016-2020, EPU invited UNICEF to be a member of the Inter-Agency Planning Group (IAPG) on Enhancing Inclusivity Thrust chaired by the Deputy Director General, as well as a member of the Technical Working Groups on Community Development and Inclusive Growth chaired by the Directors of the relevant sections of EPU. UNICEF staff has actively worked to prepare a briefing paper consolidating inputs by the working groups. It was found that UNICEF has worked in close partnership with EPU on social policy, among other areas, and has been able to provide important technical inputs as contributions to EPU and to other stakeholders in the ongoing preparations of the 11th MP, based on analysis and indicators.

UNICEF has sent clear messages to EPU that child rights-focused social policy dialogue needs to be taken on board as part of Malaysia’s planning for its development priorities. This means that the Government as well as civil society organisations need to (regularly) develop knowledge and learning among its staff.

The areas for learning are the best and good practices that other comparable countries have undertaken to address children and social policy. Evidence on relevant indicators for health, education, protection and economics need to be generated, and should be used internally to produce tools for the government, the civil society as well as any other stakeholders. This requires that the Government partners with international, regional and national think tanks that can help collect and generate analysis on children and take in influences from other countries, as well as adopt any good practices used by other nations/institutions.

One of the two overall pillars in the design of the current CDP is the reduction of child poverty – here, the work of UNICEF should support the Government’s efforts to enhance policy and quality services for all children (the other pillar is about improved data, capacities and resources).

The target is children and women “in the bottom 40 per cent” of households and other children who do not access quality healthcare, education, welfare and social protection. In a meeting with the EPU, attended by the evaluator and UNICEF’s M&E team, it was confirmed that EPU will use UNICEF’s work on the concept, analysis and data on “child poverty” in the finalisation of the 11th Malaysia Plan.

UNICEF is in the process of setting up a functional database on social protection to assess what is available in the country in terms of ideas, trends and actual schemes which
could qualify as part of the social protection floor, as well as social security benefitting children and their families.

It was learnt that the cost of living is rising in Malaysia and the Government (EPU) regards social protection schemes as something the country wants to implement more of, which should be realistic as the country is now an “upper level mid-income country”.

Regarding budgeting for, and financing, child welfare in the country, UNICEF has collaborated well with the Ministry of Finance (MOF) and has participated in two regional UNICEF conferences in 2012 and 2013, respectively, where the country’s experience and knowledge about Outcome-Based Budgeting (OBB) was presented. As follow-up, UNICEF and MOF have agreed to work closely in advocating for child-focused budgeting and budget analysis of sectoral ministries to assess gaps that need to be addressed.

4.4.4 How was equity approached in the field of child protection?

UNICEF, together with its stakeholders, gathers data and strives to contribute to equitable approaches in order for the country’s child protection systems to be further strengthened.

The umbrella term “child protection” for UNICEF also covers social welfare mechanisms (at department and district levels), the justice system, birth registration and disability – the two latter areas being newly introduced as working areas.

A number of initiatives have been undertaken to build the capacity of UNICEF’s partners, including government agencies, social workers, NGOs and civil society organisations, as well as young people in the areas of child rights advocacy, child development theories and their application to child protection practices.

An important issue that UNICEF has been engaged in is birth registration and the obstacles in attaining birth registration for marginalised groups, and has, in this respect, supported the Government’s participation in the Ministerial-level Asia Pacific Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics.

Children without birth certificates are among the most vulnerable in the world and especially so if their parents are also stateless/non-citizens.

There may be many reason and factors behind non-registration of newborn children e.g. lack of awareness, distance, costs for travel and fines/costs due to late registration, illiteracy, language difficulties, fear of arrest when registering (if they are undocumented migrants), difficulty in obtaining all the necessary documentation, as well as bureaucracy and challenges in policy implementation.

UNICEF has shown that Sabah is home to over 53 per cent of Malaysia’s 3.3 million indigenous people and 38 per cent of the 2.3 million non-Malaysian citizens. These children can use health services, but have to pay higher fees compared to Malaysian citizens in clinics and hospitals and do generally not have access to government schools.

The National Registration Department (NRD) has attempted to raise awareness of birth registration among people living in remote
areas, for instance by cooperating with CSOs and encouraging people to access services from mobile registration units. The MTR 2013 referred to this as a great challenge and stated that it is not known how many children who are born in Malaysia are unregistered – including refugee families (perhaps 2nd or 3rd generation “refugees”), migrant workers, abandoned children, children of single mothers (unmarried) or for other reasons do not possess birth certificates.

There are some instances whereby one parent (Malaysian) is a Muslim married to a non-Muslim (Malaysian) – they may or may not have been legally married in Malaysia as the non-Muslim parent would have had to convert to Islam to be married. In this case, the couple may have chosen not to register the child, as they would not want the child to be listed as Muslim in the birth certificate.

**UNICEF is also engaged in the issue of children with disabilities.** Here UNICEF’s aim is to ensure that children with disabilities are well integrated in society and are given the same opportunities for education, for instance, as other children.

Malaysia has shown its commitment to children with disabilities by ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010. While many government agencies and NGOs provide basic services to children with disabilities, coordination and implementation of standardised policies, strategies and protocols need to be improved.

UNICEF works with MWFC and other relevant ministries and civil society organisations to help improve the situation of children and adolescents who are isolated and marginalised due to their physical, learning or mental disability, in and out of school.

It was found that in 2014, a UNICEF-commissioned study resulted in a report titled *Children with Disabilities in Malaysia, Mapping the Policies, Programmes, Interventions and Stakeholders.*

UNICEF also supported the Malaysian Partnership for Children with Disabilities (MPCD) on 26-27 August 2014, in which 65 participants from government ministries and departments, civil society and individual activists – as well as children with disabilities – attended. UNICEF then set up a Facebook group in 2014 to facilitate communication among the members, which apparently is going well and provides a forum for many different views from the public.

Another important step taken was a Conference that was organised by the National Early Childhood Intervention Council (NECIC), and financially supported by UNICEF including the social media components of the conference. In this conference, 800 copies of the above-mentioned report were distributed to participants.

These are the other activities carried out as part of the work theme “child protection”:

- UNICEF’s proposal to incorporate child justice training “modules” into the training of Magistrates and Sessions Court Judges was endorsed by the Judiciary, the Chief Registrar of the Federal Court (Training of Trainers will take place in 2015).

- A report on the study *Juvenile justice system in Malaysia* was launched in March 2014 by the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development. This was followed by a panel discussion on the theme “Realising Vision 2020: Protecting Children Today”. However, the anticipation that a high-level inter-agency working group would be formed to develop a national juvenile justice reform strategy and plan of action did not materialise.
UNICEF has brought up the issue of “diversion” – in relation to the juvenile justice system – which has gained interest, particularly as it reduces the number of children being detained and reoffending rates. This theme has proved to be an issue where advocacy work on children and justice can continue with the Government and the progress has been positive, with a roadmap for introducing diversion in Malaysia having been proposed. The concept of diversion will be included in GoM’s ongoing revision of the Child Act.

A report on a study on Child protection system in Malaysia was simultaneously launched with the report on Juvenile justice system in March 2014. This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the child protection system and points out areas that need to be strengthened in order to achieve a coordinated and systemic response to the protection of children.

It was found that children with disabilities along with birth registration for marginalised groups are the areas in which UNICEF addresses equity directly within the broader field of child protection (assuming that advocating for inclusion of children with disabilities in society is part of “equitable activities” – as these children often are excluded in society at large, and enjoy fewer opportunities than other children).

The work on child justice/juvenile justice mentioned above, do not specifically address equity as yet. UNICEF informed the evaluator that these other areas are in an early exploratory phase.
4.4.5 Key research outputs related to equity

In 2012, UNICEF systematically collected and analysed child-related data and information in the country – in close collaboration with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister’s office, Ministry of Finance and Department of Statistics. The data collated by UNICEF was already in the public domain, as it were; however, data was generated and kept in different Government ministries and departments, not consolidated or easily accessible. This work was published as a user-friendly statistical booklet in November 2013, entitled Implementation of children’s rights with equity: Profile of Children in Malaysia. This is a compilation of poverty-related statistics and trends over time showing the situation of children (using statistics) in the areas of education, health, economic standard of living, care and protection, and provides a baseline to monitor the progress towards national and international goals and targets aimed at promoting the well-being of all children.

It shows that the country has made significant progress in the implementation of children’s rights. However, the figures do not reflect the true situation at sub-national levels. The discrepancies within and between states remain, with Sabah having the highest rate of poverty.

Children remain disproportionally affected by poverty and the risk that children living in rural areas will live in poverty is 2.5 times higher than for children living in urban areas. The proportion of poor children varied between 31 per cent in Sabah in East Malaysia and 2 per cent in Selangor (2007). Ethnic groups are affected in different ways, e.g. Bumiputera and “Others” saw the highest income increase in the last 20 years but their income is the lowest. Between 1989 and 1997, the percentage of children living in poverty decreased but disparities increased very much among children from minorities and “Others”.

It was found that incomes of the richest 20 per cent of households were over 6 times higher than incomes from the poorest 40 per cent (the “bottom 40 per cent”). It also shows that the gender gap in child abuse remained high over time, with more girls being subjected to abuse than boys. There was also an overall increase in child abuse, possibly due to the fact that more cases have been reported (however the report does not show any major geographical differences).

UNICEF initiated the study entitled Situation analysis of children in the state of Sabah 2014 (SitAn) in which it was shown that child deprivation occurs in the state of Sabah, East Malaysia, at a disproportionately higher rate than in other parts of the country. This study was undertaken in collaboration with the Sabah State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN) and the publication is pending official release. The preliminary findings of this study show that while Sabah has been making progress, there are children who are still left behind, and whose rights are not being met. They include children who suffer from violence, abuse and neglect, children who have to work to survive, as well as children who are forced into child marriage, among them undocumented children and indigenous children.

It also found that national policies are not inclusive of all the population groups found in Sabah and that centralised budget allocation does not ensure equitable distribution, based on the needs of states. The study mentions, however, that existing data is insufficient and at times inaccurate; thus, further improvements in the reporting, data consolidation and analysis to inform policy and decision-makers, for instance in the areas of education and health, need to be made. The report stresses that only through a genuine partnership with the Government at
national and state level, civil society including NGOs, and development partners, can it be ensured that improvements are made in the implementation of all rights for all children in Sabah.

In an interview with a representative of UPEN it was found that UPEN regards the Sabah SitAn as a very good initiative by UNICEF, and that UPEN is pleased with the recommendations made in the document. The representative also stated that the RCI (Royal Commission of Inquiry) has a committee that, as part of its tasks, is looking into the recommendations of this study. The study will be tabled in the Cabinet, after which it will be launched – the time has not yet been confirmed but it will possibly be in the first quarter of 2015.

UNICEF was also involved in the Study and Review of the Socio-Economic Status of Orang Asli in Peninsular Malaysia. The study was commissioned as part of an EPU-UNDP-UNICEF initiative to assess the socio-economic situation among the Orang Asli, evaluate interventions and give recommendations for improvement. The main output of this study is the Framework for a National Development Plan for Orang Asli, also produced with the UNDP and EPU in 2014. This includes (among other issues) a critical analysis of the Government’s earlier plans for the Orang Asli, and points to the lack of a common vision on Orang Asli development, such as lack of a coordinated approach; insufficient targeting and customisation of programmes; variable quality and delivery of services; lack of ownership amongst Orang Asli; non-holistic development efforts; programmes that may not be suited to the various target groups’ needs, capabilities and situations; fragmented development based on immediate needs and available budgets and, indifference to the programmes and infrastructure made available.

Regarding early marriages, it was found that among the Orang Asli, marriage rates amongst women at the age of 15 to 19 years old (at a time when children should be attending secondary school) are 22 per cent, which is 7 times higher than national rates (3 per cent). For those aged 20 to 24 years, the marriage rates among the Orang Asli are double (52 per cent) the national rates (24 per cent).
4.4.6 Increasing CSOs’ skills to play a more critical role in national dialogue

UNICEF’s policy is to collaborate with CSOs, community-based organisations, academic institutions, as well as professional and business associations, to deliver results for children. UNICEF has been engaged with CSOs in Kuala Lumpur and in East Malaysia for a long time, even before 2010/2011. Part of its cooperation with, and support to, CSOs is to ensure that they have the capacity and the skills to play a critical role in national dialogue and policy consultation, both with the Government and the private sector.

It was found that UNICEF has helped bring NGOs together on a platform in dialogue with UNICEF – exemplified in the CRCM that UNICEF initiated. It has also funded the Status Report on Child Rights in Malaysia, an initiative of these NGOs, and established cooperation with some NGOs in Sabah and Sarawak.

UNICEF has also contributed to building capacity among the children-focused NGOs on issues of equity and inclusive development, mainly through bilateral discussions but also by ensuring NGO participation in workshops and conferences. These initiatives have been highly appreciated by these organisations.

UNICEF organised a strategy development workshop for the CRCM members in early 2014, which had 9 participants. Unfortunately, shortly after, there were changes to the Secretariat of the Coalition, and without a full time coordinator, the CRCM has not been very active and has been described as “a bit weak”. Thus the collaboration has not yet led to a sustainable, children-focused “NGO sector” as such. The NGOs in the coalition are all based in Kuala Lumpur and cannot represent organisations based in Sabah and Sarawak, or be expected to be a voice for the target groups in East Malaysia – the area which should increasingly be the focus for UNICEF in the coming years.

The evaluation appreciates that it takes time to build up the Civil Society Coalition on a specific theme to provide balance in the discourse with Government players. This needs time to mature, and therefore, requires more support and capacity building from UNICEF in the coming work period.

4.4.7 Engaging the private sector in caring for children’s rights and addressing equity

It was found that under Outcome 3 (“Private sector has increased its support for improving child well-being through financial contributions as well as corporate social responsibility initiatives focused on children”), equity is not addressed/announced, at least not explicitly.

UNICEF has been engaged with representatives of private companies in discussions attempting to involve this sector to help meet the challenges that still remain in supporting marginalised children and their rights in the country.

In 2012 a meeting was organised with representatives of more than fifty companies to discuss “Children’s Rights and Business Principles”.

Its partnership with Sime Darby (a Malaysian-based multi-national company) has been focused on developing corporate champions in children’s rights and business, as well as a child protection policy, which has placed it ahead of many businesses in Malaysia. In September 2013, this company was selected as one of the companies to participate in the UNICEF Global Workshop on Child Rights and Business held in New York to discuss the “launch” of CSR tools that UNICEF has developed.

UNICEF has also attempted to engage private sector companies to become active partners to meet marginalised children’s needs in the plantation economy, i.e. in Sabah and Sarawak; however, the progress has been slow.
In the most recent programme results structure following the MTR in 2013, UNICEF has reconfirmed its intention to engage with the general public and corporate sector, particularly with the Companies Commission of Malaysia (SSM). It intends to continue to advocate for child-friendly practices in workplaces, to support marginalised groups of children and to promote CSR.

4.4.8 Coordinating with other like-minded UN agencies

In Malaysia there is no United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) between the Government and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) that describes the collective actions and strategies of the United Nations to contribute to the achievement of national development.

It was found that UNICEF’s work is generally well respected by the UN representatives that were consulted in the evaluation (UNCT, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO). UNDP appears to be the organisation that UNICEF has had the closest cooperation with, e.g. in the joint programme on poverty reduction programmes for the Orang Asli community (UNICEF’s work is also supported through UNDP’s work on multi-sectoral policies on inclusive growth).

4.4.9 Using media and addressing the public

The evaluation found that equity is not prominent as a cross-cutting issue or mainstreamed in this activity area – at least not explicitly – except for the work on disabilities.

However, the work is important and has been successful in using social media, e.g. Facebook to reach out to the public on children with disabilities, as well as abuse, neglect and exploitation of children.

The approach is also to invite independent experts to various events, use printed media, engage in discussions with journalists, and selectively support actions and campaigns organised by some of the like-minded CSOs working on child-related issues.

4.4.10 Monitoring and Evaluation in relation to equity

Regarding the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system of the Malaysia Country Office (MC), it was found that the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MORES), which was developed in 2011 as part of UNICEF’s re-focus on equity, is being introduced in UNICEF Malaysia’s work. It is used to detect the most critical bottlenecks and barriers that hinder children, especially the most disadvantaged ones, from benefiting from basic social services and other care.

This work will focus on access to, and quality of, education for marginalised and vulnerable children in Sabah, using the Out-of-School Children Regional Initiative with its framework and indicators. This should assist the M&E function of UNICEF Malaysia in the future programme and also strengthen its role vis-à-vis the key counterparts.

Part of UNICEF’s cooperation with, and support to, CSOs is to ensure that they have the capacity and the skills to play a critical role in national dialogue and policy consultation, both with the Government and the private sector.
4.5 Efficiency

As far as this evaluation has been able to determine, the programme has used its resources in a sufficiently economical manner (an audit has not been undertaken in connection with this evaluation). However, some of the research outputs take a long time before they can be disseminated due to the Government approval process, which affects efficiency. Examples are the Juvenile Justice System report and the Child Protection report that took about two years before they could be disseminated, as they had to be signed by the Government.

Regarding outputs specifically related to equity – the Situational Analysis in Sabah was submitted to the Government for approval several months before this evaluation was carried out but has not yet been endorsed for release.

4.6 Sustainability

The evaluation has attempted to assess whether the benefits of UNICEF’s policy advocacy vis-à-vis the Government and other stakeholders can be said to be sustainable. Will the messages, new knowledge imparted and/or skills and capacity developed, systems introduced and results of project implementation (in particular with regard to equity) be sustainable?

It was found that UNICEF has consistently participated in dialogues about the need to monitor and address some of the significant socio-economic disparities existing in the country, which is an issue that the Government and some of the other stakeholders are very well aware of.

Officials at EPU and the line ministries stated to the evaluation that they appreciate UNICEF’s aim of helping Malaysia strive towards reaching global standards. It was found that the policy messages accompanying the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and UNICEF’s insistence on rights for all children, are likely to be internalised both among the Government and civil society in the long term – as the problems regarding disparities that need to be solved are not going to go away.

In the short term, gains have already been made through the trusting working relationship that UNICEF and EPU, in particular, have created and maintained, as well as through UNICEF’s work with civil society – a relationship that will very likely be further strengthened in UNICEF’s new country programme. As mentioned in this report UNICEF has participated in very recent and positive discussions with EPU (in February 2015), in which EPU stated it is very interested to work with UNICEF to find solutions and provide the undocumented children in Sabah with education.

Regarding the potential sustainability of systems, UNICEF has recently introduced and initiated/funded the DevInfo (ChildInfo) database management programme, which will enable the Government to track MDG/SDG progress while handling child-related data and information in an improved and more efficient way. Once this programme is installed, up and running, and officials are sufficiently trained on its use, it should become an institutionalised data collection system through which child data is disaggregated according to state, gender, age and other socio-economic indicators.

During a visit to Sabah, the Federal Special Task Force (FSTF) assured the evaluator that the salary of the teachers in the Kampung Numbak school will be paid by the Government once the current agreement with UNICEF ends in 2015 and that the FSTF is committed – and has the resources – to continue carrying out monitoring visits after the end of UNICEF’s support. Thus, there is a likelihood of
sustainability in what has been initiated by UNICEF.

Thanks to large donations from the Malaysian public, UNICEF has adequate funding to meet the needs of its programmes/activities in the country while being able to contribute to global UNICEF programmes. The allocation and use of the funds should be accounted for as transparently as possible vis-à-vis the GoM and the public.

4.7 Challenges and bottlenecks

The evaluation has attempted to identify some of the challenges and bottlenecks/barriers that are hindering UNICEF from effectively applying and implementing an equity focus in its programme in Malaysia. Firstly, it is well appreciated that there are a number of economic, socio-political and socio-cultural complexities, and thereby sensitivities, that influence the effectiveness of policy advocacy for children.

For UNICEF, gathering and analysing information and data about the situation of children in the country is paramount. Facts, figures and knowledge constitute a platform for its dialogue with the Government (especially EPU) and in its suggestions for initiatives for e.g. policy change. In its data collection work UNICEF has been privileged to gain access to the Government’s survey data on children as this evaluation has shown. It was found that the data about children is spread among ministries and other agencies, and is not centrally maintained/updated by any Government agency. This is a clear bottleneck for organisations or individuals operating in the social field where updated data is crucial for analysis and comparison.

Another related bottleneck is the fact that UNICEF’s technical survey/study results and reports need to obtain Government approval before they can be officially released to CSOs and NGOs, a process that takes a long time – thus, some of the data may be obsolete when it is officially published. This is not conducive when attempting to operate a programme transparently and effectively.

It is therefore very important that UNICEF continues to work with civil society and think tanks, and play its role in contributing to increased capacity and skills among these organisations – in parallel with the studies undertaken with/for the Government. This evaluation found that UNICEF has increasingly turned to think tanks and research institutions to gain their views and reach a balance in the intake of information about matters of equity related to children.

4.8 Cross-cutting issues

4.8.1 Children’s representation and voice

This evaluation appreciates that UNICEF Malaysia makes efforts to ensure authentic participation of children in its programme and involves children in various events such as conferences, campaigns and media. During Universal Children’s Day in November each year, UNICEF, together with several of the child-focused NGOs in Malaysia, celebrate every child’s right to participation in society.

However, capturing marginalised children’s voices about their real problems and views, as well as their strengths and capacities, especially in East Malaysia, may require more in-depth and qualitative explorative initiatives with children in their own day-to-day environment.

The evaluation has not been able to identify any documented strategy explaining how it ensures children’s participation, voice and even representation in its overall programme, in particular those who are undocumented and marginalised.
4.8.2 Gender issues and concerns

UNICEF is a member of the UN Gender Theme Group. Regarding gender issues, it was found that gender equality and the importance of collecting gender disaggregated data is mentioned in the current UNICEF key documents. However, the evaluation has not been able to find any explanatory text or gender analysis in the programme documents regarding the concept of gender as such, including how “child poverty” affects girls and boys differently, and how other socio-cultural factors influence girls and boys differently in many aspects of a child’s life – as well as what gender strategy UNICEF is applying to contribute to the well-being and upholding of the rights of girls and boys, respectively.

For instance, how do the following social “phenomena” impact on the lives of girls and boys (differently) and especially among the most vulnerable and marginalised girls and boys? How do the children themselves perceive the following issues: gender-based violence (GBV); female-genital mutilation (FGM); child marriages; early sexual relationships (for girls often leading to early pregnancy); childbirth; “motherhood in childhood”; child upbringing (and discontinuation of education); corporal punishment, such as caning children in schools and at home; living in poverty and having to work instead of going to school, i.e. child labour including the worst forms of child labour?

Regarding sexual and reproductive health for young people, one of UNICEF’s outputs includes reproductive health services for young people (IR No. 10.3, MTR). Some activities have been found in this area e.g. the rapid assessment entitled Young People’s Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (YKAP), which was to be used to build knowledge to advocate for strengthening the collaboration among government and NGOs on providing services for most-at-risk adolescents and young people. The study revealed the challenges regarding access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) facilities and medical services for children under 18 years old.

Regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), however, it has been argued that both UNICEF and UNFPA advocate for SRHR but this evaluation has not been able to find any evidence for this. A scrutiny of UNFPA’s Country Programme Action Plan 2013-2017 reveals that it does not take on the rights issue per se (the R in SRHR) as it is mainly addressing family planning for women and adolescents, sexual and reproductive health, GBV, HIV/AIDS, as well as improved quality and access to services in these areas – admittedly, very important areas. Nevertheless, it seems that none of the UN organisations in Malaysia is actively involved in the associated child rights issues in this field, which are relevant and concern both girls and boys.

In 2013, UNICEF funded a study to determine the extent of child-marriages across all states in the country. It explored the prevalence of child marriages/early marriages in the country for a period of three years. The report shows that Sarawak had the highest total number (552) of approved applications (to contract marriage with at least one party being under the minimum age for marriage) in all of the three years. Sabah also had a disproportionately high number of applications, and approved applications, for underage Muslim marriages. In the national census of 2000, Sabah was found to have the highest number of married girls under the age of 15 years.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), also known as female genital cutting and female circumcision, is the removal of some or all of the external female genitalia rooted in socio-cultural practices. It is common among Muslims in Malaysia and is reportedly being increasingly
performed by trained medical professionals in private clinics, instead of by traditional private clinics, instead of by traditional practitioners known as Ma Bidans. According to the recent reclassification of FGM by the WHO, the kind of FGM performed among Malaysian Muslims is considered as Type IV FGM. A report on a study carried out in four states (Kedah, Kelantan, Selangor and Johor) with 1,086 women respondents showed that 93.6 per cent were “circumcised”, 1.2 per cent were not circumcised while 5.2 per cent did not know whether they had been circumcised or not.

The majority of the procedures on female circumcision were performed between the newborn and pre-school age. Malaysia has agreed to follow the action plans of both the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994, and the Beijing Platform 1995 regarding the elimination of FGM. In the 61st WHO meeting in Geneva, the report states that the Malaysian delegates fully agreed to the resolution regarding the elimination of FGM.

However, according to this report, there is no documentation of FGM prevalence in Malaysia – thus it seems unknown what the situation is in Sabah and Sarawak, as well as among marginalised and undocumented children. Neither UNICEF, UNFPA, nor WHO Malaysia mentions FGM in their programme documents and do not seem to be engaged in this issue (at least not openly). While it is fully appreciated that this subject is sensitive, it is clearly a gender and a rights issue involving girls, and therefore should not be ignored by national and international rights-based organisations in Malaysia.

To conclude, with the SitAN in Sabah soon to be officially released (and a similar study to be undertaken in Sarawak this year), there seem to be new opportunities and entry points for UNICEF to work on policy advocacy, as well as to collate, analyse and disseminate information (and develop knowledge) on the situation of children with the aim of assessing the implementation of their rights, which includes strengthening national capacity.
5 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

“Alone”
by Christopher Ang Yew Shuen (15), Penang
CRC@25 — The World We Want, 2014
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The following are the conclusions drawn from the findings of the evaluation in Chapter 4.

1 **The role of UNICEF in Malaysia:**
   UNICEF has positioned itself as perhaps the most important international organisation working for children’s well-being in Malaysia.

2 **Equity in the design of the Results Structure and plans of operations (work plans):**
   Following the MTR in 2013, UNICEF has sharpened its focus in a more strategic way and addressed equity in terms of excluded and marginalised children in two out of the first three outcomes and in several of the outputs designed to contribute to these outcomes. Equity is also addressed in the last cross-sectoral outcome, but is not visible in Outcome No. 3 (Private sector contributions and CSR).

3 **Relevance:**
   All the broad work areas are relevant (education, child protection and social policy). Equity is most prominently addressed within education (alternative learning for undocumented children) and child protection (children with disabilities);
   UNICEF’s advocacy on equity-related issues vis-à-vis the Government is relevant and may become even more so if more government agencies are approached by UNICEF;
   The cooperation with Civil Society is relevant – and here equity work with the NGOs would be even more relevant if UNICEF was able to bridge the gap between NGOs in Kuala Lumpur (the CRCM) and NGOs in East Malaysia. Relevance would also increase further if more could be done to facilitate dialogue between CSOs/NGOs and the Government partners.

4 **Effectiveness in advocating for equity and influencing national policies:**
   UNICEF has, on the whole, been consistent and fairly effective in its policy level work in dialogue with the Government and in implementing activities that relate to equity for children. As for influencing policies regarding equity for children, there are some positive signs of policy level influence in relation to the 11tMP and the revision of the Child Act, resulting from UNICEF’s technical inputs and generally good working relationship with the GoM. However, its advocacy for Alternative Education Policy has not yet been fruitful.

5 **Effectiveness in collaborating on equity with the Civil Society stakeholders:**
   UNICEF has greatly facilitated bringing together NGOs on a platform to advocate for children’s rights in dialogue with UNICEF – exemplified in its initiation of the Child Rights Coalition (CRCM) and its support for the Status Report on Child Rights in Malaysia (the latter an NGO initiative) – as part of process to contribute to building capacity among the NGOs involved. Cooperation has also been established with NGOs in Sabah and Sarawak. However, this has not yet led to a sustainable, children-focused “NGO sector”, or any focus on equity issues as such. UNICEF has realised that it needs to renew its efforts to develop closer partnerships with CSOs, the private sector, think tanks and research institutions in order to create more sustainable and equitable results for children.
Effectiveness in focusing on equity in sectoral areas (education, social policy, child protection):

a) Education: Good work has been done to initiate two Alternative Learning Centres for undocumented children in Sabah (Kampung Numbak, Kota Kinabalu launched in 2011, and Kg. Bahagia Alternative Learning Centre in Sandakan, launched in 2013). More support is required in relation to the curricula and the physical environment (particularly in Kampung Numbak), among other improvements;

b) Regarding equity in social policy, work is ongoing to identify bottlenecks and barriers in maternal and child health service delivery. Regarding the generation of evidence for the most disadvantaged children, gaps in the MOH’s M&E system need to be addressed. Policy briefs on multi-dimensional child poverty have contributed to the national dialogue and the UNDP Malaysian Human Development Report 2013;

c) Child Protection: In this area, UNICEF has addressed equity in the advocacy on “children with disabilities”, and “birth registration for marginalised groups”. The work on child justice/juvenile justice mentioned above do not explicitly address equity.

In fundraising and the private sector, equity is not addressed, at least not explicitly (under Outcome 3).

Efficiency:

Some of the research outputs have taken a long time before they could be published and disseminated due to the Government approval process that has affected efficiency. Thus UNICEF needs to strengthen its collaboration with research institutes and civil society, to commission quality studies with results that may be more rapidly disseminated to civil society and the public.

Sustainability:

The likelihood of sustainability is apparent in UNICEF’s ability to get some of its messages across to the Government to be internalised and adopted as part of policies. The platform created for the CRCM may still be weak but is likely to grow stronger with time and more capacity-building efforts on the part of UNICEF. The learning centres in Sabah have been taken over by the government and are likely to continue but need more quality support from UNICEF. The ChildInfo database management programme is a very important step for the Government and is likely to be quite a long process which will need motivation, capacity-building and, likely, refresher training in order to be sustained. Managing data will also require more openness within the government to share information.

Children’s representation and voice:

The evaluation has not been able to identify any documented strategy explaining to “an outsider” how it ensures children’s (both girls and boys) participation, voice and even representation in its overall programme, in particular children who are undocumented and marginalised.
CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

11 Gender and equity:
There is a lack of gender analysis in UNICEF’s documentation and no specific strategy on how to work with gender (both girls and boys) – thus this should be attended to. Further, as more information and data is being generated about marginalised and undocumented children in the country (e.g. in Sabah and Sarawak), there are opportunities for new entry points for UNICEF to be more engaged in, and advocate on, issues that are relevant in view of equity and child rights/child well-being.

12 The Government’s data-sets on children, which are not easily accessible and not shared within or among stakeholder organisations, not updated regularly, or take a long time to be released to the public and civil society, have proven to be bottlenecks and present a challenge for UNICEF in its work on equity for children. Prevailing attitudes regarding what is good or not good for children are also a challenge and a barrier toward progress.

13 Other UN agencies’ perspectives of UNICEF’s work on equity:
UNICEF’s work is generally respected by the UN agencies consulted in Malaysia (UNCT, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO).

14 Using social media to convey equity messages:
The work on children with disabilities (as well as abuse, neglect and exploitation of children) has successfully utilised social media (e.g. Facebook) in reaching out to the public, among other means.

15 Equity in UNICEF’s monitoring and evaluation:
The Monitoring Results for Equity System (MORES), as part of UNICEF’s re-focus on equity, should be very useful in UNICEF Malaysia’s work. However, UNICEF should perhaps not focus too much on bottlenecks and problems in its analysis – this is a lesson that the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has learnt from the Logical Framework Analysis tool and the reason that it is promoting Appreciative Enquiry.

16 The cooperation with corporates to advocate for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has not yet taken off in terms of equity focus. Fundraising among companies is intended to start up in the coming programme period. The work on fundraising (targeting individuals) has been very successful but, as mentioned, it is not explicitly geared to address equity issues per se.
Statistics that clearly show inequities are indeed very sensitive in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country such as Malaysia (as in many other countries)\textsuperscript{64}.

Before 2012, UNICEF did not have access to collated/consolidated data on children, i.e. data that clearly made visible the existing inequitable access to education and health services\textsuperscript{65}. UNICEF then embarked upon a systematic data collection and analysis of child-related data and information, which was eventually published in November 2013, entitled \textit{Implementation of children's rights with equity: Profile of Children in Malaysia}. What is significant here is that this data already was public, i.e. approved and analysed by the Government but had not been collated and analysed as UNICEF had done.

The approach was not to request for information through written communications, but to engage in an active search and face-to-face discussions and follow-up with government officials at EPU, as well as with the national statistical office, the concerned ministries (e.g. the MOE) and other partners working with children’s issues.

Despite the fact that this data had previously been approved by the ministries/departments and thus already was in the public domain, it took UNICEF about one year to get approval to finally publish the data in a consolidated manner jointly with EPU. EPU was instrumental in this process, insisting that the socio-economic disparities that the data showed had to come out in the open and be addressed.

The ministries/departments eventually endorsed its publication but only after several rounds of talks, presentations, checking and re-checking regarding the methodology and sources of the graphs that UNICEF presented. The lesson is that it is well worth the process (albeit a lengthy one) of seeking the authorities’ approval as well as their participation, as these statistics have pointed at realities that need urgent attention by all stakeholders\textsuperscript{66}. Acquiring consolidated datasets should be made easier once new systems on database information are installed in the government, which UNICEF is now supporting – hopefully this will also lead to attitudinal change within the Government and other stakeholders to share more information, be more transparent and coordinate activities.

UNICEF has indicated that another lesson learnt is that it is vital to explore partnerships with international, regional and national “think tanks” that can help produce in-country analysis on children and adopt good practices that come from developed nations’ experiences of public policy development.

Regarding the lessons learnt on how to go about equity evaluations, the idea initially was to draw out the equity-related components of the programme, as it were, and assess/evaluate how this concept was understood and dealt with. However, this proved to be impossible, as it was necessary to have an appreciation of the entire programme and identify both mainstreamed “equity-related” elements, as well as specific activities and outputs geared to address equity.
“Born to Be Carefree, Happy and Worry-Free”
by Loh Ju Lene (16)
CRC@25 — Picture My Rights, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Loh Ju Lene
The following are the recommendations of the equity evaluation, emanating from the findings (Chapter 4) and conclusions, as well as lessons learnt (Section 5.1). It should be noted that not all conclusions have warranted a corresponding recommendation, thus the recommendations are fewer than the conclusions.

1. **New Country Programme**
   UNICEF should, in the new programme, clearly address equity in all major outcomes and outputs including the private sector work (CSR) with corporates and contributions from the private sector, as well as in child justice/ juvenile justice. More effort should also be made in communications where equity does not seem to have been prominent (except for work on children with disabilities).

2. **Cooperation with Government**
   To increase the relevance of its cooperation with the Government (in view of comments from the MWFCD), UNICEF should undertake a participatory Stakeholder Analysis with the Government and CSOs to clearly determine which government agencies, including local governments, it needs to collaborate with in relation to undocumented and other marginalised children.

3. **Cooperation with CSOs**
   To increase the relevance of its cooperation with CSOs, UNICEF should: “reinstall” its earlier intention to bridge the gap between NGOs in Kuala Lumpur (the CRCM) and NGOs in East Malaysia, in particular Sabah and Sarawak; attempt to facilitate a dialogue between CSOs/ NGOs and the Government partners e.g. through a working group set up by EPU; and Draw up a plan for capacity-building/skills based on a participatory Needs Assessment (including the Coalition, NGOs in Sabah and Sarawak and representatives from think tanks/research institutions) during the coming programme period — with the objective of contributing to a sustainable, children-focused NGO sector.

4. **Curricula Development**
   UNICEF should continue to be involved in discussions about curricula development in the 11-12 alternative learning centres that are currently administered by the Federal Special Task Force (FSTF) in Sabah.

5. **Policy Advocacy**
   UNICEF should continue its policy advocacy related to an Alternative Education Policy including advocacy for children’s rights to quality education (CRC Article 28).

6. **Life Skills Training**
   UNICEF should look into the possible introduction/promotion of alternative learning methods/materials such Life Skills training and the creative participatory teaching method named “Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media” (SCREAM)17.
7 Child Participation
UNICEF should develop a Strategy, as part of its new programme, explaining how it ensures children’s (both girls and boys) participation, voice and even representation in its overall programme, in particular those who are undocumented and marginalised.

8 Gender
UNICEF should also develop a Gender Analysis and a Gender Strategy showing how it intends to address gender issues among marginalised groups (both girls and boys) to be part of the new programme.

9 Media and Digital Advocacy
UNICEF should explore how its media work (including social media) can be used to more clearly bring equity issues to a discussion with the public.

10 Rights-Based Issues
As more information and data about disparities among marginalised and undocumented children in the country is being generated and officially disseminated, more opportunities for UNICEF should present themselves. UNICEF should consider becoming more engaged in cooperation with UNFPA and CSOs on rights-based issues involving female-genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); early marriage, early sexual relationships (for girls often leading to early pregnancy, childbirth, child upbringing and discontinuation of education), and/or sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

11 Child Labour
UNICEF’s research has pointed to the existence of child labour in Sabah. In its continued and future dialogue with the corporate sector, UNICEF should consider initiating cooperation with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on policy advocacy with a view to start protecting undocumented children (especially) from harmful work, in reference both to the UN CRC (Article 32) as well as the ILO Conventions No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Malaysia has ratified both these conventions.

12 Reality Check Approach
In pursuit of more qualitative information about the living conditions of undocumented and marginalised children, UNICEF could consider looking into the Reality Check Approach (RCA), which is a study method used in some countries to gather qualitative information through participatory and social-anthropological methods. It is currently applied in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Indonesia (with support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, formerly AusAid) and was earlier supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in Bangladesh as well as other Asian and African countries.
RECOMMENDATIONS

13 Field Projects

UNICEF should overcome some of its fear/reluctance to engage in field projects. It is here proposed that UNICEF should, in discussion with the Government and CSOs, continue field projects in Sabah (i.e. the alternative learning centres) or initiate new project-oriented activities through using MORES and results-based planning. Clear time-bound entry and exits should be defined and followed, as such support and broad commitments for take-over and follow-up need to be in place. The following are some points to consider (which together could inform UNICEF’s further dialogue with the Government and CSOs):

- It would increase UNICEF’s first-hand knowledge and direct contact with children (both girls and boys) in their own environment, those who are living in poverty and/or are marginalised because they are refugees, stateless/undocumented, live with disabilities, belong to indigenous groups or live in remote geographical areas;

- It would serve as a reality check and a source of learning for the national/local governments (or civil society) which would be conducive to taking responsibility and ownership;

- It would further facilitate and provide more insight into local governance issues as well as political, economic, environmental, social and cultural realities, and expand UNICEFs network and knowledge about the circumstances in which civil society operates;

- It would enable closer contact with local private service providers and private sector companies that can play roles in CSR, e.g. actively work against child labour, and child abuse and exploitation; and

- It would give credit to UNICEF in the eyes of the public, e.g. in the sense that UNICEF is doing something to help children directly, in a way that is visible to the public – which would also help to raise more money in total by being able to show tangible work and subsequent results.68
“An Eye On The Community”
by Muhammad Arif Fitri bin Azizan (17), Selangor
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ANNEX I:

TERMS OF REFERENCE

“Children Have a Right To Be Happy”
by Wan Ahmad Khairul Asmū’i Bin Abdullah (17), Selangor
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© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Wan Ahmad Khairul
1. Title of Assignment:
Evaluation of the equity focus of Malaysia country programme.

2. Background and Justification:
Malaysia is one of Asia’s most culturally diverse nations, with its multilingual population including Malays, Chinese, Indians and more than 200 indigenous ethnic groups. In 2010, the population was estimated at 28.25 million, including an estimated 3 million indigenous people and 2 million non-Malaysian citizens. There are an estimated 11 million children under 18, with 3.2 million under the age of five. Malaysia has made great strides in eradicating poverty and has built a solid legal, policy and institutional framework for developing and implementing social policies for children.

The long term 30-year vision that guides Malaysia’s development efforts is formulated in the Vision 2020 document. It envisages a fully developed economy with national unity and social cohesion, social justice and political stability adhering to high standards of quality of life including social and cultural values. However, to move ahead in achieving the national mission of Vision 2020, the highest development priorities that remain are greater equity and reduction of disparities, particularly in the social realms. This includes the need to improve the situation of poor, indigenous, migrant and other marginalised children, women and young people. There is also a need to mobilise the social agenda and enhance the quality of living for all, with a special focus on promoting a protective environment and positive societal values for all children in Malaysia.

The Government of Malaysia-UNICEF country programme contributes directly to the Government’s national priorities, sectoral policies and plans – especially in relation to the 11th Malaysia Development Plan, which is currently being drafted.

The country programme supports the Government of Malaysia’s “Vision 2020”, which articulates the goal of becoming a fully developed high-income economy, inclusive and caring society that protects the rights of all children by 2020. Towards this objective, it seeks to create self-sustaining national capacities so that all children in Malaysia will be better able to enjoy their rights for survival, development, protection and participation. It recognises the critical importance of national ownership and provides continuity in UNICEF’s support to the Government of Malaysia in its pursuit of the five key thrusts of the National Mission, with a focus on: Thrust 6: Improving Well-being, Thrust 5: Enhancing Inclusivity and Thrust 3: Harnessing Talent.

The current Country Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Malaysia and UNICEF 2011-2015 therefore underlines the equity focus to achieve results for children in the country. The programme focuses on policy advocacy, capacity development and system-strengthening in the areas of social policy, child protection and education – with special attention to the needs and rights of the most marginalised and vulnerable children.

3. Purpose and Objectives of the Assignment:

3.1. Overall Purpose:
The evaluation’s main purpose is to generate substantial knowledge and evidence on equity in the Malaysian context to guide UNICEF Malaysia’s forthcoming Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2020, as well as to inform national development policies and strategic planning processes. Findings and recommendations will be applied to the programme thrust and management as well as workplans in the new country programme in order to strengthen the equity-focused approach.
Users of the evaluation will be: UNICEF, Government of Malaysia ministries, departments and agencies, NGO and civil society partners, universities and research institutions, and others.

Being the first-ever comprehensive evaluation of the equity focus in a UNICEF country programme, other country offices, regional offices and Headquarter divisions will also benefit from the findings and results.

3.2. Specific Objectives:

a) To assess to what extent the equity focus has been integrated into country programme design, as well as implementation and contributed to achieving results for children;

b) To identify the challenges, bottlenecks and barriers faced in applying an equity focus and to address the specific needs and rights of the most marginalised and vulnerable children in Malaysia; and to assess the extent to which such bottlenecks and barriers have constrained the achievement of equity-focused results;

c) To assess the extent to which key partners (government agencies, NGOs and civil society, academic and research institutions, private/corporate sector and others) have contributed to pro-equity interventions and have the capacity to partner with UNICEF in achieving sustainable results for children;

d) To make recommendations on how the equity focus can be more effectively used and applied in policy and programme development; recommendations on how to ensure staff capacity, resources and partnerships for effective pro-equity interventions are also expected (to feed into the process of developing the next country programme 2016-2020)

3.3. Scope:

The unit of analysis will be the Country Programme 2011 to 2014. The scope of the evaluation will include a comprehensive review of country programme implementation during this period and the key sectoral/cross-sectoral strategies used to achieve results for children. This will be undertaken through consultations and focus group discussions with staff, key partners and others in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

4. Some Key Evaluation Questions:

4.1. Relevance:

- How has UNICEF’s equity focus been understood and translated in the country programme design and its implementation in UNICEF Malaysia? What are some of the specific characteristics and elements of such an approach in a middle-income country context?

- How relevant is UNICEF’s equity approach/strategy vis-à-vis Government national development policy and other social agendas (of civil society, etc.) in reaching the most marginalised and vulnerable children in Malaysia?

4.2. Effectiveness

- To what extent, and in what specific areas of policy advocacy and programming, has the equity focus contributed to make a difference in achieving results for children?

- What are the key challenges and bottlenecks/barriers that enable or inhibit UNICEF from effectively applying and implementing an equity focus in its programme in Malaysia?
4.3. Efficiency

- Are the resources (funds, expertise, and time) allocated appropriate to support the equity focus and to achieve expected results?

- How has UNICEF used the equity focus in aligning the country programme to national development priorities and made use of UNICEF’s comparative advantage?

4.4. Sustainability

- To what extent has the equity focus been institutionalised in systems, policies, mechanisms and strategies among government, NGO/civil society, and other partners and stakeholders?

- To what extent are the changes resulting from the equity focus sustainable? What are the contributing factors that will create durable change?

Cross-cutting issues

- To what extent have strategies underlying UNICEF’s interventions, i.e. human rights, gender, equity, partnerships, advocacy, south-south cooperation, etc., favoured or constrained the effective implementation of the equity focus?

5. Methodology:

In consultation with the contract supervisor, relevant UNICEF staff, and based on the initial desk review, the selected consultant will develop a plan for the methodological approach to this assignment, including data collection instruments. Qualitative methods of data collection and analysis should be favoured, including individual (key informant) interviews and focus group discussions with Government counterparts, NGO and civil society actors at national and sub-national level, and UNICEF staff, among others.

More detailed methodology for the assignment should be proposed in the Expression of Interest (EOI) form, addressing the evaluation questions outlined above.

6. Evaluation Phases and Deliverables:

- Phase 1 (Inception) – desk review of key documents and interviews with UNICEF management and staff, leading to the delivery of an inception report detailing, among other things, the methodology and work plan of the assignment.

- Phase 2 (Data collection & consultations) – field visits, consultations with key partners, analysis and draft report preparation.

- Phase 3 (Report) – sharing of draft findings with UNICEF and stakeholders in a validation workshop, and subsequent finalisation of the evaluation report.

7. Management Arrangements:

The PME specialist designated by the Representative of UNICEF Malaysia will act as the evaluation manager supported by the regional evaluation advisor. They will have the responsibility of overseeing the evaluation as well as ensuring it adheres to UNICEF standards and is of good quality.

An evaluation reference group (ERG) made up of representatives of key stakeholders will be established. The reference group will act as a sounding board to the evaluation. The ERG will input the inception report and the draft report.

The consultants should adhere to UNICEF’s Evaluation Policy; to UNEG’s ethical guidelines for UN evaluations; and to UNICEF Reporting Standards.
ANNEX II:
PERSONS INTERVIEWED / CONSULTED

“Children Should Not Feel Judged and Unwelcomed”
by James Duncan Tupling (15), Kuala Lumpur
CRC@25 — Picture My Rights, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/James Tupling
## ANNEX II: PERSONS INTERVIEWED/CONSULTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wivina Belmonte</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ada Ocampo</td>
<td>Senior Evaluation Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF HQ New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pashmina Naz Ali</td>
<td>Planning Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terence Too Yang-Yau</td>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Officer</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuko Kusamichi</td>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Selvarani Albert</td>
<td>Programme Assistant</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Shakirah Begum Mu-</td>
<td>Senior HR Assistant</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruzita Ahmad</td>
<td>Programme Assistant</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marly Lim Swee Cheng</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Beighton</td>
<td>Chief, Private Sector Fundraising &amp;</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nur Anuar Abdul Muthalib</td>
<td>Education Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Karunan</td>
<td>Senior Social Policy Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Fachrani Faisal</td>
<td>Social Policy Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenny Kakama</td>
<td>Senior Child Protection Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selvi Supramaniam</td>
<td>Child Protection Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indra Nadchatram</td>
<td>Communications Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iriani Hariati Zulkifli</td>
<td>CSR Officer</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun Jabar</td>
<td>Research Officer</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenifer Lasimbang</td>
<td>Programme &amp; Partnership Consultant</td>
<td>UNICEF Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lina Sofiani</td>
<td>Emergency &amp; Field Support Specialist</td>
<td>UNICEF, Jakarta,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Dewees</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>(Independent)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Evaluation of the Equity Focus of the Malaysia Country Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roumiana Gantcheva</td>
<td>M&amp;E UNICEF, Jordan</td>
<td>Former UNICEF M&amp;E Specialist, Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hans Olsen</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>Former UNICEF Malaysia Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN Agencies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Juanita Joseph</td>
<td>United Nations Coordination Specialist</td>
<td>UNCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James George Chacko</td>
<td>Asst. Resident Representative (Programme)</td>
<td>UNDP, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Choong</td>
<td>Economist, Socio-Economic Development Cluster</td>
<td>UNDP, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weng Wai</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akbar bin Samon</td>
<td>Director, International Cooperation Section, Prime Minister’s Department</td>
<td>Economic Planning Unit (EPU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renuka Devi Logarajan</td>
<td>Principal Assistant Director, International Cooperation Section, Prime Minister’s Department</td>
<td>Economic Planning Unit (EPU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokiah Haron</td>
<td>Deputy Director, Social Services Section, Prime Minister’s Department</td>
<td>Economic Planning Unit (EPU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norlida Bt. Ab Wahab</td>
<td>Principal Assistant Director, Human Capital Development Section, Prime Minister’s Department</td>
<td>Economic Planning Unit (EPU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adlina Merican Bt.</td>
<td>Principal Assistant Director, Distribution Section, Prime Minister’s Department</td>
<td>Economic Planning Unit (EPU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zainuddin Merican</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To’ Puan Dr. Hjh.</td>
<td>Director, Family Health Development Division</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safurah Hj. Jaafar</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Majdah Mohamed</td>
<td>Sr. Principal Assistant Director, Maternal Health sector</td>
<td>Ministry of Health (MOH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Anis Iryani Safire</td>
<td>Asst. Director, Maternal Health sector</td>
<td>Ministry of Health (MOH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Siti Awa Abdul</td>
<td>Principal Asst. Director</td>
<td>Ministry of Health (MOH)</td>
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## ANNEX II: PERSONS INTERVIEWED/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Azian Tengku Syed Abd. Abdullah</td>
<td>Deputy Director</td>
<td>Ministry of Education (MOE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noor Hayati</td>
<td>Asst Director Educational Planning Research (EPRD),</td>
<td>Ministry of Education (MOE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakhriyyah</td>
<td>Asst Director Educational Planning Research (EPRD)</td>
<td>Ministry of Education (MOE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adeena Deepa</td>
<td>Asst Director Educational Planning Research (EPRD)</td>
<td>Ministry of Education (MOE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norhayati Mokhtar</td>
<td>Asst Director Curriculum Development,</td>
<td>Ministry of Education (MOE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umi Fadhilah Hamzah</td>
<td>Assistant Secretary Policy Division</td>
<td>Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad Ishamudin Bin Ismail</td>
<td>Assistant Secretary Policy Division</td>
<td>Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Datu Hj. Ismawi Bin Hj. Ismuni</td>
<td>Director State Planning Unit Chief Minister’s Department</td>
<td>State Planning Unit (SPU), Sarawak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Cleophas Joseph</td>
<td>Principal Assistant Director State Planning Unit Chief Minister’s Department</td>
<td>State Planning Unit (SPU), Sarawak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwendolen Vu</td>
<td>Principal Asst. Director</td>
<td>Sabah State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malai Fazlan Aswad b. Malai Mustapha</td>
<td>Chief Administration</td>
<td>Federal Special Task Force (FSRF) (Sabah/Labuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Federal Special Task Force (Sabah/Labuan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community and Children</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Education Centre in Kampung Numbak, Kota Kinabalu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (girls and boys, aged 6-14)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Education Centre in Kampung Numbak, Kota Kinabalu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## EVALUATION OF THE EQUITY FOCUS OF THE MALAYSIA COUNTRY PROGRAMME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vincent Pang</td>
<td>Dean/Professor Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning,</td>
<td>University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) KK Sabah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Goh Chee Leong</td>
<td>Dean/Adviser Faculty of Behavioural Sciences,</td>
<td>HELP University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NGOS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Nagasayee Malathy</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Protect and Save the Children (Also: Secretariat for CRCM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vijaya Basker</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator</td>
<td>Protect and Save the Children and member Child Rights Coalition Malaysia (CRCM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Datin PH Wong</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
<td>Steering Committee Childline Malaysia (Also member CRCM &amp; Hon. President, Association of Registered Childcare Providers Malaysia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Liew</td>
<td>Managing Director</td>
<td>Malaysian Child Resource Institute (Montessori World Educational Institute Asia) &amp; member CRCM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liew Sau Pheng</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>Malaysian Child Resource Institute &amp; member CRCM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lim Suan See</td>
<td>Coordinator services people with special needs</td>
<td>Malaysian Care &amp; member CRCM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Giun</td>
<td>Secretary General</td>
<td>Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS), Sabah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josak Siam</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Dayak Bidayuh National Association (DBNA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dato’ Dr Amar-Singh</td>
<td>Sr. Consultant Community Paediatrician, (Co-chair, NECIC)</td>
<td>NECIC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX II: PERSONS INTERVIEWED/

Participants in Evaluation Validation Workshop, 26 February 2015

- Wivina Belmonte, Representative, UNICEF
- Dr. Victor Karunan, Senior Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF
- Pashmina Naz Ali, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF
- Phenny Kakama, Senior Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF
- Selvi Supramaniam, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF
- Maya Faisal, Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF
- Terence Too, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, UNICEF
- Jun Jabar, Research Officer, UNICEF
- Anne Selvarani Albert, Programme Assistant, UNICEF
- Ruzita Ahmad, Programme Assistant, UNICEF
- Indra Nadchatram, Communications Specialist, UNICEF
- Dr. Goh Chee Leong, Dean of Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, HELP University, Advisor
- James George, Asst. Resident Representative, UNDP, Advisor
- Pn. Rokiah Haron, Deputy Director, Social Services Section, Economic Planning Unit, PM’s Dept, Advisor
ANNEX III:
DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

“HIV-Positive Children Have A Right to Learn Too!”
by Siti Nur Balqis Bt Abdullah (16), Kuala Lumpur
CRG@25 — Picture My Rights, 2014
© UNICEF Malaysia/2014/Siti Nur Balquis
ANNEX III: DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

- Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011-2015, Government of Malaysia
- Vision 2020, Government of Malaysia
- Mid-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP), UNICEF
- Briefing Note: Accelerating Results for the Most Disadvantaged Children: Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES)
- Good and bad examples of RAM, and RAM reports on outcomes
- How to design and manage Equity-focused evaluations, by Michael Bamberger and Marco Segone, UNICEF
- Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS) January 2013, UNICEF
- UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports Standards, July 2010
- UNICEF’s Evaluation Policy (5 December 2007)
- Standards for Evaluation in the UN System April 2005, UNEG
- The DAC Guidelines Strategies for Sustainable Development: Guidance for Development Co-operation
- Quality Assurance Checklist: Assessing IRs Performance Reports
- Standards for Evaluation in the UN System April 2005, UNEG
- Global Strategic Plan UNICEF
- Malaysia Human Development Report 2013, Redesigning an Inclusive Future, UNDP
- Malaysia National Education for all Review Report, End of Decade Review
- Consolidated Results Report: Malaysia Programme of Coordination 2008-2010
EVALUATION OF THE EQUITY FOCUS OF THE MALAYSIA COUNTRY PROGRAMME

- 2011-2012 Rolling Work Plan, GoM and UNICEF
- 2013 Work Plan (18 March 2013)
- 2014-2015 Rolling Work Plan – this has 3 outcomes (outcome 1 has 2 outputs, outcome 2 has 6 outputs, and outcome 3 has 2 outputs, and outcome “cross-sectoral” has 2 outputs).
- Malaysia Education Blueprint (Preliminary report) 2013-2025, September 2012, UNICEF.
- National Brief: Going the last mile on maternal and child health goals in Malaysia, July 2013, UNICEF and Ministry of Health.
- Children in Sabah Situation Analysis, State Economic Planning Unit Sabah UNICEF Malaysia 2014 (SitAn)
- Reaching the Unreached: An Evaluation of the Alternative Education Programme for Refugee, Undocumented and Stateless Children in Kampung Numbak, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah
- Report from 2012 Child Protection Conference (which included NGOs).
- Profile of children in Malaysia, Implementation of children’s rights with equity, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); Economic Planning Unit (EPU) Prime Minister’s Department, 2013
ANNEX III: DOCUMENTS CONSULTED


- The Assessment of Incidences of Child Marriages in Malaysia and preliminary study of their causes and consequences. Final report, by Noraida Endut, Intan Hashimah Mohd Hashim, Women’s Development Research Centre (KANITA), Universiti Sains Malaysia (funded by UNICEF).

- Female circumcision is becoming more popular in Malaysia, article on February 20, 2015, by Marta Kasztelan, see <https://www.vice.com/read/female-circumcision-is-becoming-more-popular-in-malaysia>.

- 5th NECIC Report, Passion has no Parameters, National Early Childhood Intervention Council, Notes and/or correspondence from the office.


- MTR Concept Note.

- Video entitled “Child Focused CSR, a head start for children, families and businesses”, UNICEF.

- Video on UNICEF’s support to primary schools for undocumented/vulnerable children in Sabah.

- Newspaper articles (i.e. The Star).
ANNEX IV:
EVALUATION INSTRUMENT RELATED TO THE EVALUATION CRITERIA
Evaluation questions

The below-mentioned key questions have informed the development of the methodology and are examples of questions posed to the UNICEF staff (including former staff members) and to the relevant stakeholders, i.e. Government agencies, other UN agencies and international organisations, as well as SCOs and (if relevant) external consultants.

Key questions that were kept in mind were: “Is UNICEF doing things the right way to ensure that equity is a focus in the programme?”; and “Are there better ways of achieving results?”. The following is an account of how data collection methods, as well as data sources and indicators have supported the evaluation questions:

Relevance

- How relevant has UNICEF’s approach/strategy on equity been vis-à-vis Government national development policy in reaching the most marginalised and vulnerable children in Malaysia?
- How relevant is UNICEF’s equity approach in Malaysia considering that it is a higher middle-income country? What are some of the specific characteristics?
- How relevant is UNICEF’s equity approach/strategy vis-à-vis academia/research institutions and CSOs and/or think tanks or child networks and their socio-economic agendas (in reaching the most marginalised and vulnerable children)?

Effectiveness

Validity of design:

- How has UNICEF’s equity focus been understood and translated in the design of the Country Programme (steering document), the Results and Resource Framework, and the Action Plan 2011-2015, respectively?
- What are the specific results expected in terms of increased equity in the programme? In which result areas are equity issues considered (spelled out) the most? The least or not at all? Do indicators of achievements relate to increased equity?
- How has the country programme design been altered after the original approved version and what were the altered components? Have changes had any effect on planned results relating to equity concerns? What were the changes based on?
- How has the overall equity focus of UNICEF Malaysia been reflected in its M&E system (mainly monitoring), steering documents (project document and budget), work plans, and annual reports?

Effectiveness of the programme:

Overall question:

- To what degree was the programme’s objectives achieved related to: a) reduction of child poverty; b) reform of child welfare and juvenile justice; and c) reducing disparities?
Specific questions:

- To what degree were the programme’s objectives achieved related to:
  - Gathering and disseminating high-quality disaggregated data on children including key child protection indicators?
  - Generating financial support from the private sector for the well-being of children?
  - Promoting corporate social responsibility policies, i.e. putting children first in the workplace, marketplace and the community?
  - Developing capacity of Civil Society Organisations to: a) advocate for enhanced policies for children; and b) address gaps in service provision for marginalised children?
  - Reducing child poverty, as well as ensuring and enhancing social safety net programmes for poor children and families?
  - Strengthening the child welfare system’s ability to prevent, detect and address violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, including the protection of children living with HIV and AIDS?
  - Reforming the juvenile justice system?

- How well has the programme managed the data on excluded and marginalised children, and how is that being monitored (“the bottom 40 per cent”, as the government puts it).

- Which are the specific contributing factors to the results (if applicable)?
- Which are the contributing factors to non-achievement (if applicable)?
- What are two to three key challenges for UNICEF to effectively promote (have buy-in by the GoM) an equity focus in the implementation of its country programme?
- Has the revision of the results framework after MTR 2013 already had an effect on policy issues vis-à-vis the Government?
- How has UNICEF used the equity focus in aligning the country programme to national development priorities and made use of UNICEF’s comparative advantage?

Efficiency

- Have the allocated resources (e.g. funds, expertise) been appropriate (i.e. adequate) to support an equity focus and to achieve the desired results?
- What is the level (i.e. percentage) of “budget delivery” (including annually/in total)?
- Could alternative approaches have been applied to better achieve results in the area of equity?

Sustainability

- To what extent has the equity focus been institutionalised in systems, policies, mechanisms and strategies within Government agencies, civil society organisations, and other partners and stakeholders?
- If changes relating to equity have taken place within Government and/or CSOs as a result of UNICEF’s actions, to what extent are these changes sustainable, or likely to be sustainable? What are the factors/ circumstances that would contribute to more durable changes?
Specific gender concerns

- **To what extent has the programme:**
  - Supported and promoted gender equality with the objective of achieving equal opportunities for boys and girls?
  - Given attention to gender analysis and collection of disaggregated data for gender mainstreaming?
  - Addressed issues related to GBV; child marriages; disparities of poverty levels among girls and boys; incidence and infections of HIV and AIDS; child abuse affecting girls and boys, respectively; disability; child labour/trafficking; access to quality healthcare among girls and boys; education; welfare and protection services – are there any important differences in access to these services?

Gender and equity concerns

- **To what extent has the programme:**
  - Addressed the needs of indigenous, migrant, undocumented and other marginalised and at-risk children (in design and implementation)?
  - Promoted greater equity, reaching the most vulnerable and ensuring an equitable approach to development for the country (in design and implementation)?
  - To what extent has the programme’s underlying strategies (e.g. regarding human rights, gender, equity, partnerships, advocacy, south-south cooperation) favoured or constrained the effective implementation of the equity focus?

Additional questions for UNICEF programme staff in FGD on 29th January

As part of information-gathering in the *Evaluation of the equity focus of Malaysia’s Country Programme*, some more questions/issues were sent by e-mail to staff and were used in a two-hour FGD with the programme staff on 29 January 2014.

1. UNICEF’s “downstream activities” (e.g. the pilot projects in Sabah and support to civil society organisations there):

   **Should UNICEF continue or discontinue initiating/supporting field projects?**

   a) Which areas are weighed the most in the work of projects “on the ground”: Giving direct benefits to children in the local areas; raising awareness among public and stakeholders; influencing policy and decision-makers; opportunities to acquire more specific data; networking with local organisations (building more knowledge for UNICEF); giving UNICEF credibility? Other?

   b) Regarding “downstream” activities, are there other initiatives apart from those already going on that you think UNICEF should start with the Government or other stakeholders (civil society)? Which are they?

2. Which direction (subject-wise) should UNICEF go in now?

   a) Out of UNICEF’s core programming areas, which specific topics need more attention in the upcoming strategy period?

3. Working/cooperating with the GoM and other organisations, including other international organisations/UN

   UNICEF staff has developed working approaches in their relationship with stakeholder organisations in Malaysia:

   a) Is there any need to make any changes, and if so, what would these be?

   b) In your view, how do you think that your counterpart/stakeholder organisations perceive or appreciate the concept of equity (cross-cutting issue for UNICEF)?

   Government agencies; International agencies/UN; Civil Society Organisations/NGOs, Private sector (including companies and independent consultants working for UNICEF).
Evaluation criteria, sources of information & data and methods to be used

Table 1. shows what sources and methods were used to gather information for each evaluation criteria:

Table 1.
Sources & methods of data collection used for the respective evaluation criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key evaluation criteria</th>
<th>Sources of information &amp; data</th>
<th>Method to be used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Relevance</td>
<td>UNICEF Country Programme Document &amp; Results frameworks, National policy documents (Vision 2020), discussions with UNICEF staff, UNICEF policies &amp; conventions</td>
<td>Document review, scoping, in-depth interviews, FGDs (beneficiaries, experts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Effectiveness</td>
<td>UNICEF EVAL guidelines, Annual reports, Progress reports, Technical reports, information from “field” (including beneficiaries), against programme documents &amp; work plans</td>
<td>Document review, in-depth interviews with related GoM, DPs and other stakeholders; Collection of (mainly) qualitative information/data from all three areas including information from Sabah visit.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>3 Efficiency</td>
<td>Budget rate, delivery statements, work plans &amp; (progress) reports.</td>
<td>Scrutiny of relevant documents, discussions with UNICEF (including mgt &amp; admin/finance staff).</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Sustainability</td>
<td>All major stakeholder organisations and individuals with specific knowledge of UNICEF’s work and equity &amp; key cross-cutting issues.</td>
<td>Discussions, in-depth interviews, FGDs, e-mail correspondence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Equity and gender</td>
<td>All available sources will be used including stakeholders’ accounts, UNICEF steering documents &amp; reports/statistics &amp; gender guidelines. Although equity &amp; gender are cross-cutting issues, specific planning components, interventions, monitoring &amp; results will be nevertheless be sought.</td>
<td>Document review including CP design/Logframe, progress reports, annual budgets &amp; financial statements (allocations of resources), discussions with UNICEF staff and stakeholders (especially DPs), and in the field.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENDNOTES

1. Source: UNICEF Malaysia’s Mid Term Review (MTR).
2. This has been widely and successfully used in many countries by ILO in its technical cooperation (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour - IPEC). Through this Scream Module, young people will become aware of the dangers and vulnerabilities that they and their peers face, be informed about how best to respond to them and become aware about children’s rights. The focus is on child labour but the modules are generic and can be adapted to any geographical or cultural context and to any formal or non-formal setting. <www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/Scream/lang--en/index.htm>.
3. Source: This point was raised by the Chief of Private Sector Fundraising & Partnership, UNICEF, Malaysia.
4. The understanding is that the above-mentioned statements are, as they are phrased, in fact not objectives as they are not end-result statements – but rather, more like activities.
5. Herein “UNICEF” only will be used, unless UNICEF offices of other countries are being referred to.
6. Cambodia has started to prepare for the same and other CPs are expected to follow (Evaluation Adviser, UNICEF New York).
7. See Annex I. ToR.
8. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - Development Assistance Committee (DAC).
10. See Inception Report where these questions were included and agreed upon. Also, see the more detailed evaluation questions in Annex IV. Evaluation Instrument.
13. see Annex II. Persons interviewed/consulted.
14. See list of participants in the Validation Workshop (in Annex II. Persons interviewed/consulted).
15. The terms are often used interchangeably, although “ethnicity” is more common which could be due do negative connotations linked to the term “race”. Source: The Colour of Inequality, Dr. Muhammed Abdul Khalid, 2014, p. 2 (who also is one of the authors of the recently published Malaysia Human Development Report 201). The evaluator agrees with the author of this book, who argues that both race and ethnicity are “artificial approximations of group commonality and identity that can be utilised without implying homogeneity”. The evaluator is also well aware of the complexities of these terms, but they will in this report be used in the same way as they are used by UNICEF, Malaysia.
17. In ratifying the CRC in 1995, it is noted that Malaysia has expressed reservations to 12 articles of the convention. Subsequently in 1998, it withdrew reservations to four articles, but maintained the other eight reservations, including on the principles of non-discrimination, the prohibition of corporal punishment, as well as the abolition of torture or cruel or degrading treatment. In 2010, three further reservations to the CRC were removed (1, 13 and 15).
18. Other relevant policies in Malaysia are the Child Act 2001 and the National Policy (and Action Plan) for Children. In 2012 an accession was made to the Optional Protocols to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, thus strengthening the legal protection system in the country.


20. Terms of Reference.


23. 9.7 million of the population is below 18 (2008 figures).


25. Source: Discussion with UNICEF Malaysia Representative.


27. Source: Internal UNICEF Power Point presentation.


29. It is noted that this output is to be reached through 8 major activity-areas/interventions, originally, in which one that concerned support to HUMANA was discontinued – for reasons mentioned in this report – while one has been completed, namely the technical support in connection with Education for All (EFA) Country Review.

30. Interview with Operation Manager staff member, UNICEF Malaysia.

31. Source: Interview with UNICEF Malaysia staff member (also referred to in the Evaluation Inception Report).


34. Source: UNICEF staff member.

35. Malaysia Education Blueprint (Preliminary report) 2013-2025, September 2012

36. UNICEF annual report 2014, based on local sources and estimates provided by UNHCR, the Federal Special Task Force (Sabah/Labuan) and Humana Child Aid Society.

37. Source: Discussion with UNICEF Malaysia Representative.

38. Examples are increased access to pre-school education, secondary education and more opportunities to pursue post-secondary and tertiary education (Malaysia National Education for All review report, End of Decade Review. Year?).


40. This has been inspired by the Education for All (EFA) movement – the global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. At the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000), 164 governments pledged to achieve EFA and identified six goals to be met by 2015. http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/.

41. <www.unicef.org/malaysia/media_news13-giving_every_child_access_to_basic_education.html>
ENDNOTES

42. Source: UNICEF programme staff member.

43. The Indigenous Peoples Network of Malaysia (Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia - JOAS) is the umbrella network for 21 community-based non-governmental organisations that have indigenous peoples’ issues as the focus. As the focal point for indigenous rights and advocacy in Malaysia, JOAS claims it provides the indigenous communities with representation not just nationally but regionally and internationally as well (see: <http://www.forestpeoples.org/partners/jaringan-orang-asal-semalaysia-joas-indigenous-peoples-network-malaysia>). Please visit JOAS website for further information: <http://orangasal.blogspot.fr/>.

44. Source: Telephone conversation with Director, DBNA. See also <http://dbna.org.my/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/dsc07420-e1400470243420.jpg>.

45. Source: This was part of the messages from UNICEF’s to the members of the Technical Working Groups formed by EPU in preparation for the 11th Malaysia Plan, 2014.

46. The ILO definition is here used: “Social protection floors are nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees that should ensure, as a minimum that, over the life cycle, all in need have access to essential health care and to basic income security which together secure effective access to goods and services defined as necessary”. <http://www.ilo.org/secsoc/areas-of-work/policy-development-and-applied-research/social-protection-floor/lang--en/index.htm>.


48. Protection Practice, Tertiary Child Protection Services and Social Work Competency Framework, by Dr. Pauline Meemeduma, Social Work Consultant from Perth, Australia was engaged to develop the modules and manuals, and to conduct the Training of Trainers (TOT).

49. UNICEF Malaysia Annual report 2012.

50. Source: UNICEF staff member.


52. Source: Written comments on the first draft report, from UNICEF Malaysia staff member.

53. The report from the conference is entitled Passion has no Parameters, National Early Childhood Intervention Council, 5th NECIC Report, which among others, used social media (Twitter) to chat/discuss childhood disability.

54. Orang Asli is an umbrella name used in Malaysia for the indigenous people of Peninsular Malaysia. It means "original people", "natural people" or "aboriginal people" in Malay.

55. A few upcoming activities in the field of education also relate to equity, but are not completed, namely an Assessment of Education of children in Plantations, an Out-of-school study tracking students/children who are “missing” or who have dropped out. Of interest is also a regional study on the relations between ethnicity, education and social cohesion, including work on multi lingual and mother tongue based education has been carried out. A draft report for Malaysia has so far been delivered (the evaluator has not had access to any of these studies or their preparations).
56. The information is provided by MCO management staff.

57.


59. The Assessment of Incidences of Child Marriages in Malaysia and preliminary study of their causes and consequences. Final report, by Noraida Endut, Intan Hashimah Mohd Hashim, Women’s Development Research Centre (KANITA), Universiti Sains Malaysia (funded by UNICEF).

60. In Malaysia, the practice includes anything from a needle prick to the clitoral hood, to taking a needle or scissors and slitting off the top of the clitoris. Source: Female circumcision is becoming more popular in Malaysia, February 20, 2015, article by Marta Kasztelan, see https://www.vice.com/read/female-circumcision-is-becoming-more-popular-in-malaysia).

61. Ibid.

62. The Status of Female Circumcision in Malaysia, January 2011, by Dr. Maznah Dahlui MD, MPH, PhD Assoc. Professor Dept. Social and Preventive Medicine Faculty of Medicine, University Malaya.


64. One example is the disparities in Malay and Chinese children’s mortality rates.

65. Interview with the former UNICEF Malaysia M&E Specialist.

66. Ibid.

67. This has been widely and successfully used in many countries by ILO has in its technical cooperation (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour - IPEC). Through this SCREAM Module, young people will be informed about how best to respond to them and become aware about children’s rights. The focus is on child labour but the modules are generic and can be adapted to any geographical or cultural context and to any formal or non-formal setting. <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Campaignandadvocacy/Scream/lang--en/index.htm>.

68. Source: This point was raised by the Chief of Private Sector Fundraising & Partnership, UNICEF office, Malaysia.

69. Persatuan Pengasuh Berdafter Malaysia (PPBM).

70. According to the documentation, these are CSO that have in various ways been connected to the UNICEF programme: SUHAKAM; Mercy Malaysia; Malaysian Child Resource Institute (MCRI); PS The Children; Child Helpline; Voices of Children; Nur Salaam, Yayasan Salaam Children’s Chow Kit Centre; WINGS Melaka; Malaysian Care; Malaysian AIDS Council, Borneo Child Aid Society, Malaysian Association of Social Workers.

71. Persatuan Pengasuh Berdafter Malaysia (PPBM).

72.
The fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does — in programmes, in advocacy and in operations. The equity strategy, emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, translates this commitment to children’s rights into action. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias or favouritism.