Evaluation of the Project

“International consultancy on evaluation of the supported by the Government of Norway programme on developing a sustained and operational ombudsman’s child protection mechanism that prevents and responds to child abuse, exploitation and family separation in line with international standards”

RFP/KAZA/2013/009

Final Evaluation Report (vol.1)

July 2014

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The contents of this evaluation report is the sole responsibility of the contractor and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of UNICEF or Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
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<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Convention Against Torture</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women</td>
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<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<td>CLC</td>
<td>Children’s Legal Centre</td>
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<td>CoM</td>
<td>Commission on Minors</td>
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<td>CPAP</td>
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<td>Evaluation Question</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
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<td>Interim Evaluation Report</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>OPCAT</td>
<td>Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture</td>
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<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
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<td>UN</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document represents the Final Evaluation Report of the Project “Strengthening the Ombudsman’s Child Protection System in Kazakhstan”. Following the Executive Summary¹, the first chapter provides an overview of the context and describes the main features of the Project. The second chapter is devoted to the presentation of the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation. It also details the used methodology and describes the evaluation design. The third chapter of the report presents the findings of the evaluation team and analysis based on specific evaluation questions. It provides an assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Project as well as an analysis of the way the project addressed the human rights, equity and gender issues. The final chapter of the report presents the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation as well as a number of lessons learnt.

Project Description

The Development Goal of the Project “Strengthening the Ombudsman’s Child Protection System in Kazakhstan” is “a sustained and operational child protection mechanism that prevents and responds to child abuse, exploitation and family separation in line with international standards”. The Project planned to achieve two main results (outcomes):

1) Child rights violations monitoring and complaints from regions are effectively addressed by the Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office
2) Developed practical models of integrated child protection mechanism at local level are ready for national replication

Project activities included revision of the Ombudsman Office’s child rights referral and complains mechanism; capacity building program for Ombudsman’s office staff; carrying out a study on violence against children in schools; identification of gaps in legislation; modelling of integrated child protection services in two Oblasts; design, testing and evaluation of a model of prevention of institutionalization of children aged 0-3 in two pilot communities; testing out an identification, referral and response system on abuse and maltreatment of children; capacity building programs/social work curriculum; study tours on effective child protection systems and violence prevention mechanism; national conferences on progress and future directions; a national public awareness campaign to prevent institutionalisation of children; establishment of peer support groups through youth NGOs and inclusive Youth Health Centres; monitoring and evaluation and documenting best practices.

The target groups of the Project are composed of the National Human Rights Centre (Ombudsman office), ministries of health, education, labour and social protection, and internal affairs responsible for coordination and implementation of new approaches in child protection and for modernising the policy and regulatory frameworks; inter-agency working groups at the level of city and oblast akimats which tested and implement integrated child protection services, including child abandonment prevention; 700 professionals working on child protection in central and local agencies; school/institution management and staff engaged in the piloting of violence prevention model; 10 local NGOs and 6 peer support groups which benefitted from knowledge and skills to deliver child protection services; NGOs and media, reporting on child rights violations. The final beneficiaries included children and parents benefiting from child prevention abandonment and violence prevention services in the pilot regions; 7,000 children currently placed in institutional care, including children with disabilities, by enhancing the system of child protection in the targeted regions; 2,000 children likely to be placed in

¹ At the request of UNICEF, more detail has been included in the Executive Summary to allow decision-makers a better overview and understanding of issues and recommendations when reading it.

institutional care each year; 10,000 children identified as being “at risk” of abandonment, self-harm, trafficking and child prostitution; the general public in need of awareness raising on child issues.

The Project under evaluation has a budget of NOK 4,793,128 (USD 880,442), of which the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided NOK 3,588,158 (USD 659,103), while UNICEF contributed with complementary funds amounting to NOK 1,204,970 (USD 221,339). The implementation of the project is planned to last for 36 months, from June 2011 to June 2014.

Context of the Project

Kazakhstan is an upper-middle-income country with per capita GDP of nearly USD 13 thousand in 2013. Strong domestic demand, coupled with increased oil output and recovered crop production, boosted economic growth, bringing the country close to reaching a high income status. However, economic growth has not been converted into sustainable social gains for the most vulnerable groups of population. In total, 45% of all children below the age of 18 live below the poverty line (compared to the average of 33% for the total population). The overall situation in the health care sector has improved and Kazakhstan is on track for achieving the Millennium Development Goals health targets.

The number of children without parental care living in public residential care institutions has significantly decreased over the last five years, but there are still 9,653 institutionalised children, of whom 1,302 are children under the age of three. The leading causes of abandonment of children under the age of three include: shortage of financial resources; lack of appropriate housing; lack of required documents for access to benefits and social infrastructure; early pregnancy; negligence of parental duties; lack of basic parenting skills.

Progress has been achieved over the last three years in the prevention of child abandonment with the introduction of social workers in the primary health care in 2011 and reorientation of the role of infant homes towards prevention and family support. Still, there are insufficiently developed medico-social services in perinatology to support the mothers at risk of leaving the child, disfunctionalities of the gatekeeping system and insufficient subsistence means (housing, income) for many vulnerable women. Due to the lack of a strong child protection system, every day a number of children are exposed to violence, exploitation and abuse. Violence and exploitation of children remain acute in schools, institutions and in the community.

The general CRC principles have been embedded in several laws of Kazakhstan. A number of important strategies, plans and programmes have been also adopted with the same purpose of contributing to the strengthening of child protection system in the country. The country however lacks since 2011 a comprehensive strategic document on child protection to guide the reform process. In its Concluding Observations (2007), the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concerns that the mandate of the Committee for the Protection of Children’s Rights in Kazakhstan, which should cover the full range of children’s rights, might be limited as a consequence of its establishment under the Ministry of Education and Science. At the moment, the institutional responsibilities are divided among a large number of central and local authorities. There are 27,000 social workers in health, education and social welfare, but the quality and integration of services and linkages to other sectors to sustain family reunification and better outcomes for the most excluded children are not yet fully accomplished.

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4 UNICEF, “Child Well-Being in Kazakhstan”, prepared by Roelen, K., Gassmann, F., Maastricht University, July 2012
Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The purpose of this summative evaluation is multi-fold: to inform the Ombudsman and the Government of Kazakhstan, UNICEF and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the key directions for more efficient monitoring of child rights violations and for the continuation of reforms in the area child protection to address child abuse, exploitation and family separation; to inform Government’s decisions on the scaling up of models piloted by the Project for child abandonment prevention and violence prevention; to provide a critical view and recommendations on the possible transformed engagement of UNICEF in part of exercising its Core Roles related to Project areas in the future, given that the Kazakhstan is expected to reach the high income country status by 2020.

The specific objectives of the evaluation were to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Project, the extent of applying a Human Rights Based Approach, equity and gender equality principles, the barriers and bottlenecks faced during implementation with a view to extract good practices and lessons learned as well as to providing recommendations for strengthening the reforms in the area of prevention and addressing child abuse, exploitation and family separation, informing programme directions and defining further funding needs.

The evaluation covers the implementation period June 2011 – March 2014 (33 out of 36 months) and all three targeted regions: Astana, Karaganda and East Kazakhstan, following the way the Project has been conceptualized in the Description of Action (DoA), various preparatory documents developed prior to the start of the project and later in the Theory of Change (ToC). The evaluation has been carried out during by a team of experts from Promeso Consulting (Romania), selected following competitive tender.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation has been carried out in three consecutive phases: Inception/Desk Phase, Field Phase and Synthesis Phase.

In the Inception/Desk Phase, the team reviewed the project documentation and the national policy papers, legislation, strategies and action plans in education, health, social welfare and child protection. The desk phase also included extensive review of independent studies and researches as well as reporting to international bodies and against human rights conventions ratified by Kazakhstan. Several data collection and evaluation tools have been developed (evaluation matrix, interview guides, sample, rating system). The methodology has been also adjusted to accommodate the main elements of the reconstructed ToC and its determinant analysis.

The Field Phase has been devoted to the collection of data from key stakeholders at national, regional and local levels. The semi-structured interviews with UNICEF country office, donor and representatives of national project partners took place in Astana in the period 3-7 March 2014. Site visits to the pilot regions, cities and to a representative sample of schools and residential care institutions piloting the violence prevention model were carried out during the following two weeks. Apart from in-depth semi-structured interviews with akimat representatives, schools principals, academia and beneficiary mothers, focus groups and discussion groups with professionals, members of inter-agency commissions, teachers, children, parents NGOs and media were also organised to capture the perspective of as many stakeholders as possible in their quality of duty-bearers or rights-holders. In total, over 15o people were consulted for the purpose of this evaluation.
In the Synthesis phase, the team has applied the standard evaluation criteria analysis (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) in combination with Human Rights-Based Approach and Results-Based Management in order to assess the achievement of planned results, draw informed conclusions, identify good practices and lessons learnt as well as to provide meaningful and practical recommendations.

**Main Findings and Conclusions**

The Project is *highly relevant* for Kazakhstan’s child protection reforms and national policies for improving the well-being of children and realisation of children’s rights as it addressed the top priorities of the reform. The Project is in line with country’s strategies on education, health and social welfare, while its primary objectives are tied to the implementation of the Law on Specialised Social Services and recently adopted Law on National Preventive Mechanism. It is highly relevant for Kazakhstan’s international commitments deriving from the ratification of the CRC and CEDAW and aligned with UNICEF and donor’s priorities. The Project addressed the most pressing needs of children at risk of family separation, abuse and neglect and their families, identified in the domestic and international reports and planning documents. The capacity building directed towards professionals, service providers and oversight bodies had a high relevance for the advancement of child protection reforms and progressive realisation of children’s rights in the country. The Project remained relevant over its entire lifetime, as documented by various studies, reports and assessments. The main factors which facilitated the relevance of the Project were evidence-based design; engagement of UNICEF Project team in policy and legal framework development, which enabled the Project to keep abreast and adjust to emerging national priorities; and multi-pronged approach which was appropriate in view of the underlying ToC and its key assumptions. Relevance might have been even higher in case the design of the Project also engaged in a more thorough way the residential institutions targeted by the violence prevention model.

The Project was *effective* in achieving most of its planned results and objectives as outlined in the Goals Hierarchy and the ToC. The UNICEF’s partnership with Ombudsman, Government and Parliament allowed for effective and coordinated development and modernization of policy and legal framework. Recommendations from studies on violence against children in residential institutions and schools and children’s vulnerabilities to risky behaviours, sexual exploitation and trafficking were provided to the Government. Based on this thorough evidence, the Project introduced a clear focus on the child rights and equity in the policy agenda and thus contributed to the acceleration of efforts to address outstanding CRC observations. Child rights violations are now more effectively addressed by the Ombudsman’s office, in cooperation with its government, akimats, CSOs and media. Practical models of integrated child protection services and violence prevention against children have been developed and piloted at regional and local level, and achieved important results. The close integration of the modelling process into the current strategies, action plans and programmes of the Ministry of Health in particular, enhanced the effectiveness of their results. Further work, especially assessment of cost-effectiveness, estimation of costs and preparation of operating instructions, is needed before national replication could be done. The Project effectively prepared professionals in the social, health and education system for their new roles in case management, referral and gatekeeping.

Still, efforts are needed to reach a critical mass of professionals to ensure sustainable change in work practices and mindsets. The factors which decreased the effectiveness refer to the insufficient child accessibility of the Ombudsman’s office to encourage children to address directly their complaints; insufficient tailoring of the violence prevention model to the needs of residential care institutions to ensure buy-in; low ownership at akimat level of the Government’s 5-step plan (assisted in its implementation by the Project), on the background of frequent institutional changes related to the child

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8 Based on the Performance Scoring detailed in the methodology of the evaluation.
protection coordination function at regional level and lack of a comprehensive strategic document on child protection to guide the reform process at all layers of the government; administrative hurdles, scarce housing and jobs, insufficient income support for vulnerable women; underdeveloped community-based services, especially for children with disability.

UNICEF has used all its Core Roles to the best possible to attain the expected results of the Project, however with various degrees of efficiency. The Project was very ambitious for the available resources and the particular context of the country. At the same time, the strategy employed by UNICEF to involve as much as possible the local stakeholders in the implementation of the Project worked well for empowerment reasons, but with some efficiency loss. The UNICEF Core Roles which were particularly efficient include strong advocacy for the most vulnerable children, policy advice for the advancement of reforms, monitoring and evaluation of most vulnerable children, leveraging of resources and facilitation of national dialogue and partnerships towards child friendly norms and international standards. The Project had two outstanding efficiency features: use of modelling and piloting of new services and practices to leverage further resources by providing evidence base for policy or programme in favour of children; and investment in the prevention of institutionalisation, which is the most expensive form of alternative care and which has dramatic negative consequences upon the normal development of a child. Project management was conducted professionally, with high quality and commitment from UNICEF, and following the donor's requirements for technical and financial reporting. With few minor exceptions, spending was in line with the planned levels. Results-oriented monitoring would have been more efficient in case of better reporting of contractors, more detailed financial reporting and monitoring of targets in accordance to clear baselines and to a ToC which should have been developed at the beginning of the Project.

Considering its rather limited resources, the Project had a good impact level in the pilot regions. It contributed to the overall decrease of the number of children left without of parental care and to the reduction of the placement rate in state residential institutions. The impact on children with disability and children under the age of three was however insignificant, indicating deficiencies in the gatekeeping capacity and underdeveloped foster care and community-based services. In terms of net impact (attribution), the Project increased the number of child protection services available in the pilot regions with five additional services and consequently the number of beneficiary children and families. Due to the piloted services, 352 children were ‘saved’ from being separated by their family, the child abandonment prevention rate reaching almost 41% in Astana, 50% in Semey and around 69% Karaganda. The overall reduction of institutionalisation at regional level and abandonment prevention in pilot cities meant that more cases of family separation were avoided and more family support solutions have been used in the targeted regions. The Project had thus a beneficial contribution to the progressive realisation of children’s right to grow up in a family environment. Significant impact has been achieved in the prevention of violence against children in the pilot schools, but almost none in the residential care institutions. Impact would have been higher in case the gatekeeping and referral system was functioning more efficiently, the overall family support system was better developed and consultation with residential care institutions was secured in the design phase of the violence prevention model.

Most effects and outcomes of the Project are likely sustainable especially in terms of modernized policy and legislative framework, which builds sustainable policy prerequisites for the continuation of reforms in child protection. The capacity building tools, training curricula, manuals, toolkits and protocols developed by the Project are already in use or could easily be used for future establishment of similar services. Staff functions have been revised for over 700 professionals to incorporate new responsibilities and methods of work. Financial sustainability is higher for child abandonment prevention services run from the very beginning by the health network; however, sustainability of
solutions aimed to avoid family separation is conditioned upon improvement of family support (job opportunities, social benefits, housing, etc.) and further development of community-based social services. Violence prevention service has been fully taken over by schools. Sustainability was facilitated by the strong credibility of UNICEF’s legal and policy inputs derived from undisputable evidence provided in various areas of child rights and child protection and from top level technical assistance employed to review, comment and recommend amendments to the legal framework; the close connection with the priorities of the Government; the national ownership of the findings and recommendations of studies on violence against children in schools and on child trafficking and sexual exploitation; high commitment of the primary healthcare system and schools to implement new approaches. Factors which decreased sustainability include lack of social workers in maternities where most cases of child abandonment are recorded; lack of attractiveness of the social worker profession for young people; insufficient investment in the continuous training of social workers. Sustainability of Project investment in the implementation of the Government 5-step integrated mechanism at akimat level is a matter of significant concern.

The Project had an important contribution to the promotion and realisation of children’s rights by embedding them in the revised legal framework and policy documents, improving the mechanism of identification, referral and redress of child rights violations at the level of Ombudsman and its NGO and media partners, in their quality of duty-bearers. It has also opened access of families at risk, in their double capacity of duty-bearers and rights-holders, to child abandonment prevention services and violence free educational environments. Empowering of beneficiary children to fully participate in the implementation of the violence prevention model in their schools and engagement of parents in various activities are also notable. The Project had a positive contribution to the strengthening of the capacity of a wide range of duty-bearers in Kazakhstan to protect and fulfil the children’s rights to grow in a family environment and in a safe educational unit. It contributed to women empowerment to avoid child abandonment and has also worked with the male partners of women at risk to ensure that relatives and family members support the reunification process and that child abandonment is prevented. The Project managed to ensure an equity focus by orienting the funds and domestic investment towards the regions with significant social problems as well as by focusing its intervention on the most vulnerable women and children through equity-focused methodologies and programming approaches.

Recommendations

The Report includes Strategic (S) and Operational (O) recommendations, which are summarised below:

**Recommendation for the Ombudsman’s office, with the assistance of UNICEF and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs:**

**S1** Further strengthen the capacity of the Ombudsman’s office in the area of child rights monitoring and direct interaction with children: use better disaggregated data in the monitoring and reporting on child rights violations; expand the coverage of monitoring mechanisms to all types of closed institutions; explore the feasibility of ensuring a regional representation in the country; develop a child-accessible complaint mechanism.

**Recommendations for the Government, with the assistance of UNICEF:**

**S2** Ensure a more coherent strategic and policy direction in the child protection area in line with the needs of children and their families, and Kazakhstan’s international commitments: form a Task Force at the level of the Government to screen existing strategies and cross-check their linkages; analyse institutional make-up and various structural adjustment options for increasing its efficiency; provide recommendations to key decision-makers for action
taking (e.g. revision and harmonisation of existing strategies, adoption of a comprehensive strategic policy document for child protection, reorganisation of central and akimat-level coordination function for child rights protection, etc.).

S3 Further invest in the development and diversification of country-wide family support and community-based social services to contribute to the social inclusion of the most vulnerable children and prevent unnecessary family separation: expand family-based and community-based services; diversify the range of services according to the needs of the vulnerable children and their families, in parallel with increasing their quality; develop a cross-sectoral approach among social, health and education systems in service delivery, develop joint standards for cross-sectoral services; promote inter-regional partnerships in the development of services; support the formation of a competitive market of service providers to ensure best quality of care at affordable prices for vulnerable children and their families.

S4 Ensure support for ‘active inclusion’ of vulnerable women as the best means to promote sustainable solutions for child abandonment prevention, poverty alleviation and social inclusion: facilitate access to active employment measures and flexible working arrangements for vulnerable parents in parallel with ensuring adequate income support and access to quality social services, based the concept of ‘active inclusion’.

S5 Develop a strong cadre of social workers and a culture of lifelong learning at various operational levels to ensure that they keep pace with reforms and are empowered to address the needs of beneficiaries at high professional standards: carry out a nation-wide training needs assessment for the identification of the learning needs of social workers; provide access of social workers to up-to-date learning opportunities for personal and professional development; implement capacity building programmes in case management, gatekeeping and referral; set up an internship system for young social workers; encourage the setting up of a national professional association of social workers to represent, defend and promote the rights and interests of members and to oversee the respect of professional ethics and conduct.

Recommendations for UNICEF country office:

S6 Adapt core roles of UNICEF in the area of child protection and welfare to the specific needs and development stage of Kazakhstan on short and medium term: although Kazakhstan is expected to reach the high income country status by 2020, it is recommended that UNICEF continues to assist the country for full achievement of the MDGs and compliance with human rights international commitments, strengthening the oversight mechanisms and service provision, at least until 2018; as from 2019, UNICEF’s role could be more prominent in enabling knowledge exchange, advising the country on getting engaged in triangular cooperation, as a way of fostering development by leveraging peer learning, knowledge and experience sharing in the field of child protection and welfare.

O1 Prepare the models of child abandonment prevention and violence prevention in schools piloted in the regions for scaling-up: finalise documenting of the piloted models; carry out cost-effectiveness analyses and costing estimates; develop a strategy for scaling up jointly with the Government; identify other ‘entry’ points (possibly through an integrated school-institution model) for introducing the programme on violence against children in institutions; for sustainability reasons, also address home violence as schools cannot be hold entirely accountable for violence against their students.
**O2 Improve the design and evaluability of future projects**: develop a ToC or a Logframe with well defined indicators, baselines and targets, at each level (goal, purpose, outputs) during the design phase of future projects; clearly define target groups and final beneficiaries; ensure the evaluability of the future projects by including in the DoA clear baseline indicators and targets, disaggregated by gender, age, disability, region and with established “control” and “treatment” groups; develop a risk mitigation strategy and a sustainability plan during the design of the project; use detailed budget and expenditures breakdowns to facilitate better financial monitoring.

The evaluation of the Project led to the identification of the following **Good Practices** and **Lessons learnt**:

1) **Good practice**: Strong research-based evidence combined with expertise, advocacy and cross-sector dialogue have the capacity to trigger policy development and modernization of legislation and practices in the beneficiary country

2) **Good practice**: Flexibility in project design and implementation is needed to cope with emerging needs and benefit of arising opportunities

3) **Lesson learnt**: Securing ownership and empowerment of national counterparts may decrease efficiency of support on short-term, but yield important investment returns on long-term

4) **Lesson learnt**: Efficient piloting of a model at local level requires proper engagement of local stakeholders in the design of the model and systematic coaching on documenting the practices
1. CONTEXT AND PROJECT BACKGROUND

1.1 Project Context

Kazakhstan is an upper-middle-income country with per capita GDP of nearly USD 13 thousand in 2013. Strong domestic demand, coupled with increased oil output and recovered crop production, boosted economic growth from 5% in 2012 to 6% in 2013, bringing the country close to reaching a high income status. Income growth in the country had a positive impact on poverty indicators, with prosperity shared broadly. Over the last year, the share of the population living in poverty went down from 5.5% in 2011 to 3.8% in 2012, as measured by the national poverty line (although low for an upper-middle-income country). Kazakhstan has thus achieved the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on poverty reduction. However, economic growth has not been converted into sustainable social gains for the most vulnerable groups of population. Social sector financing remained low compared to an average of OECD countries with 2.4% for health, 4.0% for education, and 4.1% for social protection.

Children were exposed to a high risk of living in poverty. In total, 45% of all children below the age of 18 live below the poverty line (compared to the average of 33% for the total population) and 7% below the extreme poverty line. Poverty is mainly concentrated among large households with small children (see Table 1 below), young families with children and single parent families as well as families of adults with disabilities and female-headed families.

| Table 1. Monetary Poverty for Households with and without Children below 6 years of age |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                                 | Poverty Headcount Rate | Distribution of the Poor |                                 | 2006     | 2007     | 2008     | Change (%) | 2006     | 2007     | 2008     | Change (%) |
| no children below 6 years of age | 16.7     | 10.6     | 11.3     | -32%     | 52.6     | 50.1     | 48.7     | -7%       |
| 1 child                         | 29.5     | 20.7     | 21.7     | -26%     | 31.4     | 31.2     | 31       | -2%       |
| 2 children                      | 38.8     | 30.1     | 34.4     | -11%     | 12.8     | 14       | 15.3     | 20%       |
| 3 or more children              | 58.3     | 47.9     | 48.8     | -16%     | 3.1      | 4.7      | 5        | 59%       |


The overall situation in the health care sector has improved: the under-5 mortality rate decreased by more than half from 54.1 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 18.7 per 1,000 live births in 2012; and infant mortality fell by 64%, from 45.8 to 16.7 per 1000 live births during the same period of time. The data show that Kazakhstan is on track for achieving the Millennium Development Goal target to reduce the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015. As well, maternal mortality rate has fallen from 78 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 13.5 in 2012, but it is still relatively high.

According to TransMonEE data, in Kazakhstan a number of 34,785 children were without parental care in 2012 (see Figure 1), of whom 10,887 children were living in public residential care institutions as compared to 14,052 in 2010. This number further decreased in 2012, reaching 9,653 children. Only 25% of these children are orphans. The rest of children are often dubbed “social orphans” as their families are unable to care for them for various reasons.

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7 UNICEF Kazakhstan, “Annual Report 2013”
8 UNICEF, “Child Well-Being in Kazakhstan”, prepared by Roelen, K., Gassmann, F., Maastricht University, July 2012
9 “Children without parental care whose parent(s) is/are unable or unwilling to care for them for different reasons are often improperly qualified as ‘social orphans’ in CEECIS societies (…). They are in the custody of the orphanage or foster parents, but
The proportion of 0-3 year old children in institutional care, one of the most vulnerable category of rights-holders, has fallen by almost half since 2000. In 2012 there were 1,552 children in institutions (see Figure 2, Ministry of Health figures). This number reduced to 1,302 children in 2013, but the institutionalisation rate remains high by international standards and a cause for concern11.

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**Figure 1. Children without Parental Care**


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**Figure 2. Children in State Residential Care**


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10 According to UN Guidelines (2009), residential care is part of ‘alternative forms of care’; yet, the UNICEF study in 2013 provides separate figures in an attempt to distinguish residential care from other forms of alternative care.

Despite the reductions in numbers of older children in residential care, every year about 2,000 children in Kazakhstan are institutionalised\textsuperscript{12}. Many institutionalized children in Kazakhstan spend their entire infancy, childhood and adolescence in institutions, losing all contacts with their families. Children who leave the institutions at the age of 18 are more likely to be unemployed, poor, in trouble with the law, and they are more vulnerable to exploitation such as trafficking and sexual abuse. Institutionalisation of children is often seen by parents, but also civil servants and residential staff as a viable, reasonable and ‘easy’ solution to the lack of means and opportunities of vulnerable parents, a legacy of the Soviet state policy which vested in the state the primary responsibility for raising children. A UNICEF mission to Kazakhstan found that “most professionals appear to think that parents express a wish for their child to be taken away as a rational choice, and do not appear to understand that parents are responding to social and economic pressures. Professionals appear to think that their role is to facilitate that wish rather than to see how they could improve the parents’ skills and facilitate their access to resources to enable them to care for their child.”\textsuperscript{13}

According to various regional and national studies and researches undertaken in Kazakhstan\textsuperscript{14} and in the Region\textsuperscript{15}, the leading causes of abandonment of children under the age of three include: shortage of financial resources; lack of appropriate housing; lack of required documents for access to benefits and social infrastructure (day nursery, kindergarten, rehabilitation centres, etc.); early pregnancy; negligence of parental duties; lack of basic parenting skills.

Table 2 below presents the profile of women who abandoned or are at the risk of abandoning their child under the age of three in Karaganda, East Kazakhstan and Astana city. It is to be noted that the profiles in these regions are mostly the same and could thus be representatives for the whole country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Karaganda</th>
<th>East Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Astana city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil status</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Single, not married</td>
<td>Never married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children</td>
<td>More than one</td>
<td>The first child</td>
<td>The first child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Income</td>
<td>20,000 KZT</td>
<td>10,000 - 15,000 KZT</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>Secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Unemployed or seasonal jobs</td>
<td>Mainly unemployed</td>
<td>Unemployed or seasonal jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>No permanent residence</td>
<td>No permanent residence</td>
<td>Usually in other localities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>No housing, temporary housing or rented flat</td>
<td>No own housing</td>
<td>No own housing, rented flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start of sexual life</td>
<td>Under the age of 16 or 18</td>
<td>Under the age of 18</td>
<td>Under the age of 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family planning</td>
<td>No birth control</td>
<td>No birth control</td>
<td>No birth control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical supervision during pregnancy</td>
<td>No visits to specialist during pregnancy</td>
<td>Very few visit to specialists during pregnancy</td>
<td>Very few medical visits to during pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations with own</td>
<td>Break of relations since</td>
<td>Occasional support</td>
<td>Occasional support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{12} UNICEF, “Report Analysis of the Situation of Children and Women in Kazakhstan”, 2013
\textsuperscript{13} UNICEF, “Prevention of Child Abandonment Programme”, Mission to Kazakhstan, July 2011
\textsuperscript{14} Of particular relevance for this evaluation are the studies/researches carried out in the three project pilot areas: SSPI, “Research Results on the Project of Development of New Interaction Methods and Multi-Disciplinary Approach in the Detection and Intervention System for Pregnant At-Risk Women and Families to Prevent 0-3 Aged Children Institutionalization and Reduce 3-6 Aged Children Placement in State Guardianship Institutions”, East Kazakhstan, UNICEF, 2011; Golomorzhina, T.V., Volkova, S.V., “Study on the causes of child abandonment (age 0-3) in Karaganda oblast”, Public Union Centre «Family», 2011; Reports of “Demeu” Educational and Practice Centre for Family Health in Astana
Progress has been achieved over the last three years in the prevention of child abandonment with the introduction of social workers in the primary health care in 2011 and reorientation of the role of infant homes towards prevention and family support. The Ministry intends to introduce a system of patronage (home-visiting) nursing at community level to improve intersectoral collaboration between health and social system and prevention of child abandonment. Still, there are insufficiently developed medico-social services in perinatology to support the mothers at risk of leaving the child or to encourage mother-infant bonding and emotional attachment; disfunctionalities in the functioning of the gatekeeping i.e. the process of referring children and families to appropriate services or care arrangement with the aim of limiting unnecessary separation from parents and institutionalisation; lack of understanding among professionals of the concept of "good enough parenting" to meet the child’s needs sufficiently; little information shared about children at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation between hospitals, doctors, schools and pre-school providers and the child protection authorities when abuse is suspected; no tradition of community-based services. Last but not least, if child abandonment prevention is to be successful, employment, housing and income support is crucial and needs to accompany any gatekeeping effort. These are issues which have not been fully addressed as yet.

According to Government data, there are 151,000 children with special education needs, including 65,800 children with disabilities who are also left without of their basic right to healthy development and who require special assistance to prevent them from becoming marginalized. Karaganda is one of the regions with the highest (absolute) numbers of children with disability (4,669 children), while East Kazakhstan and Astana city have a relatively high number of these children as well (4,401, respectively 2,446 children). According to the National Report on the State and Development of Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan (2009), only one third of children with disability received adequate education and services. They are also more likely to be placed in institutions because of widespread stigmatization, parents’ poverty and lack of care-giving capacities and insufficiently developed support services for parents to cope with their children’s disabilities. Despite of a comprehensive legal framework which provides protection for children with disabilities, they still face barriers to inclusion. Among the reasons is a prevailing understanding of these children as simply a vulnerable section of society, not as potentially active and valuable members of their communities.

Due to the lack of a strong child protection system, every day a number of children are exposed to violence, exploitation and abuse. In 2009, 10 cases of child trafficking were officially registered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but the scope of the problem is much broader. The national statistics report only several cases of trafficking, but a study carried out in 2012 by UNICEF identified 103 child victims of trafficking, 106 sexually exploited girls and sex workers between 11 and 23 years of age and 259 vulnerable children between 9 and 17 years of age. The borders between vulnerable children, sexually exploited or trafficked children are blurred. 84% of trafficking victims were female who in majority were trafficked as a child. Despite the lack of reliable data on child trafficking, there is no tradition of community-based services. Last but not least, if child abandonment prevention is to be successful, employment, housing and income support is crucial and needs to accompany any gatekeeping effort. These are issues which have not been fully addressed as yet.

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16 Ministry of Labour and Social Protection data for 2012
17 Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, “Situation Analysis of child’s disability for the development of inclusive societies in the Republic of Kazakhstan”, UNICEF Kazakhstan, 2013
Evidence that children from poor and single parent families, left without parental care are more likely to be subject of being trafficked internally and outside the country for the worst forms of child labour. According to ILO, 16 children of every 100 are involved in child labour (including children of 5 years of age) and 12 out of every 100 in the worst forms of child labour (slavery, servitude, prostitution). The country has the highest rate of suicidal behavior among teenagers and youth in the region, especially among girls in the age group of 15-19 years old. In 2010, the Ministry of Education reported 256 child suicides.

Violence and exploitation of children remain acute in schools, institutions and in the community, as revealed by a number of studies carried out by the Ombudsman with the support of UNICEF in 2010 and 2012. Every second child in state care or at school may experience or witness violence and self-harm among children, from a side of teachers or care givers. A high rate of violence was also observed in orphanages, shelters and institutions for children with deviant behaviour. Figure 3 illustrates the types of violence experienced by children in institutions in 2010.

Figure 3. Types of violence against children in institutions (2010)

![Figure 3: Types of violence against children in institutions (2010)](image)


A similar study in 2012 revealed serious violence against children in schools (see Box 1).

- 66% of school children were exposed to violence or discrimination of various forms at school;
- more than half of children were exposed to physical violence in school;
- one in four children reported that teachers used violence and/or discrimination against them; one out of five teachers and specialized staff reported using psychological violence and/or physical violence to discipline children; some of them (5%) also used physical labour to discipline children;
- 20% of teachers and specialized staff reported they send children to the school director for punishment;
- nearly 5% of children reported that school directors used violence and/or discrimination against them;
- 32-33% of children that witnessed school violence did not tell anybody about the incident.


In addition to violence in institutions and in schools, in 2011, 49.4% of children aged 2-14 years experienced different forms of violent discipline at home. The shocking findings of these studies made the Ombudsman and the Government to take immediate measures to improve the legal framework and to pilot a model of violence prevention in East Kazakhstan oblast with the intention of scaling it up at national level based on lessons learnt.

Kazakhstan has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1994 and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1998. Since then, the country has undergone important changes in the legal and institutional framework to advance the realisation of children’s rights and gender equality. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child positively evaluated the experience of the country in the field of alternative care for children left without parental care: the establishment of “hope homes”, youth homes and family-type children’s villages, family-type upbringing such as foster care, guardianship, adoption.

The general CRC principles have been embedded in several laws of Kazakhstan, most notably the Law on the Rights of the Child, the Marriage and Family Code of Kazakhstan, the Law on Specialized Social Services – which represents a progress towards introducing concepts such as ‘family support services’, the Law on Domestic Violence, the Law on social, medical, pedagogical and correctional support for children with disabilities. Recently, in July 2013, the Law on the establishment of the National Preventive Mechanism was adopted with the goal to prevent torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment, including against children.

A number of important strategies, plans and programmes have been also adopted with the same purpose of contributing to the strengthening of child protection system in the country: Strategy Kazakhstan 2050: new political course of the established state is the foundation for enhanced social reforms and gender equality in the country; Kazakhstan-2030 social development concept shapes the social policy in the area of mother and child health, early childhood development, social protection, disability, education, employment and housing; 2011-2020 National Education Development Programme; State Health Care Development Programme for 2011-2015 “Salamatty Kazakhstan”; National Human Rights Action Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2009-2012.

The country however lacks since 2011 a comprehensive strategic document on child protection to guide the reform process. At the moment, the institutional responsibilities are divided among a large number of central and local authorities. The Ombudsman, a key duty-bearer, is the national human rights institution mandated to independently monitor implementation of human rights in the country.

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24 UNICEF, “Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011”
26 Until 2011 there was the National Programme “Children of Kazakhstan”, valid for the period 2007-2011.
rights including those of children as well as to promote bringing human rights legislation into compliance with international norms and standards. It is accredited with Status B i.e. not fully compliant with Paris principles.\textsuperscript{27} The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) hosts the Committee on the Protection of Children’s Rights (CPCR), a crucial duty-bearer; it manages residential institutions for children left without parental care and family support services. The CPCR is mandated to develop and implement state policy on child rights protection and establish an effective system to guarantee the rights of all children. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern that the CPCR’s ability to address the full range of children’s rights may be limited because it was established under the Ministry of Education and Science.\textsuperscript{28} The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population (MoLSPP) oversees the delivery of social services and the development of an integrated child protection system. The Ministry of Health (MoH) oversees primary health care social workers responsible for work with vulnerable families. The Ministry of Internal Affairs keeps records of vulnerable families and works on prevention of child delinquency. There is also an Interagency Commission on Issues of Children and Protection of their Rights under the Government with a consultative role, which meets twice a year, whose secretariat is ensured by the CPCR.

At local level, the territorial Children’s Rights Protection Departments of the CPCR which functioned until mid 2013 have been abolished, their coordination functions being taken over by the akimats (regional and local public authorities), at a much lower scale, through the newly-set up Children’s Rights Protection Units. Following a Government Decree in January 2014, these units have been also abolished, with staff planned to be transferred in the first half of the year to the Guardianship and Care Unit and the new Moral and Spiritual Development Unit (within the Education Department of the oblast akimat). The Juvenile Police and Commissions on Juvenile Affairs and Protection of their Rights also play a role. Currently all departments hold their own data bases leading to fragmentation, significant amount of duplication and a total/ limited awareness from professionals as to which professionals are working / involved with specific families and what services are being delivered.\textsuperscript{29} These frequent institutional changes, overall fragmented institutional framework and lack of a comprehensive child protection policy document might explain the disconnected reform efforts to date and limited results in some areas such as transformation of residential institutions, gatekeeping and development of community-based family support services.

In an attempt to overcome these policy and institutional gaps, four line ministries (Health, Social Protection, Education and Internal Affairs) in charge of ensuring delivery of child protection services, with support from UNICEF, adopted in 2011 an action plan to establish an integrated child protection mechanism in line with the Law on Specialized Social Services. The “5-step” action plan included the setting up of interagency working groups (commissions) at the Ministry (national), regional and local levels which were supposed to promote training of social workers, particularly for carrying out the assessments for families, and create a system of comprehensive interagency planning for children. Achievements to date vary across the three pilot regions where the plan was tested, as analysed in the following sections of the evaluation report. The Law on Specialized Social Services has also introduced the social work functions, which were assigned to the MoLSPP, MoES and MoH as well as to local government. All three ministries started to develop the social work service provision, but in a way specifically designed to fit closely within their ministerial mandates. They have developed their own quality standards for the services which fall under their own responsibility. Their outcomes are unclear and they lack provisions concerning the minimum requirements for continuous training of the staff working in the respective services, the supervision procedures and the performance indicators.

\textsuperscript{27} http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfNationalInstitutions.aspx, accessed 7 April 2014.
\textsuperscript{28} UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, “Concluding Observations: Kazakhstan”, 19 June 2007, UN Document CRC/C/KAZ/CO/3
There are 27,000 social workers in health, education and social welfare (another category of crucial duty-bearers), but the quality and integration of services and linkages to other sectors to sustain family reunification and better outcomes for the most excluded children are not yet fully accomplished\(^{30}\).

In this process, the country is supported by several international organisations, most notably UNICEF whose 5-year programmatic priority in Kazakhstan is to establish an effective child protection system that adequately responds to the needs of the most neglected and exploited children. Indeed, supporting the reform of the child care system became a major priority for UNICEF in CEE/CIS from 2000 onwards. The objectives of the reform were agreed at the regional high-level conference “Children Deprived of Parental Care: Rights and Realities” (Budapest, 2000) and in its outcome document “The Budapest Statement”\(^{31}\). Other international organisations and donors include the Government of Norway, OSCE, USAID, UNDP, UNFPA, WHO. The support of UNICEF and the Government of Norway will be further detailed in the next chapters of the evaluation report.

### 1.2 Project Description

The ToR (Annex 1), the Description of Action (Application for Grants) and the Goal Hierarchy (Annex 4 to the Application for Grants) provide an overall image of the Project to be evaluated. Given certain inconsistencies between the narrative part of the Description of Action (DoA) and Annex 4\(^{32}\), the evaluation team revised the Goal Hierarchy to serve for the purpose of the evaluation (see Figure 4).

The Project design did not include a Theory of Change (ToC), nor a logframe or similar document. As the ToR advice the evaluation to use a ToC approach, the evaluation team has constructed an implicit Theory of Change (Annex 2) whose broader architecture and key dimensions were validated by the UNICEF country office along with the revised Goal Hierarchy during the inception phase and, to the extent possible, by other Project stakeholders during the field phase. This implicit ToC is not an official Project document. Instead, it captures the evaluator's understanding of how the project conceptualizes the change processes at national, regional and local levels that it is aiming to influence and it served as a working tool for the evaluation team. Constructing a ToC at the end of a project has a number of shortcomings which we will discuss later on in the report.

The DoA, the revised Goal Hierarchy and the ToC provide an overall picture of the main features, logic and changes foreseen to be brought about by the Project to be evaluated, which we resume below.

#### Project Goal and Expected Outcomes

The Development Goal of the Project “Strengthening the Ombudsman’s Child Protection System in Kazakhstan” is "a sustained and operational child protection mechanism that prevents and responds to child abuse, exploitation and family separation in line with international standards". The Project is aimed to contribute to the attainment of the Development Goal by achieving two Outcomes:


\(^{32}\) One outcome and five outputs in DoA compared to two outcomes and six outputs in Goals Hierarchy (Annex 4); apart from three outputs which are the same in both documents, the remaining ones are different in DoA, respectively Goals Hierarchy i.e. Output "A research on vulnerable children in urban areas and study on violence against children in schools" in DoA is formulated "Recommendations from the study on violence against children in public settings and the research on scale of in-country child trafficking and child prostitution provided to the government" in Goals Hierarchy. Output "two oblasts have developed models of integrated child protection services, violence identification and referral mechanisms" is formulated "Two oblasts have developed models of integrated child protection services" and "A mechanism to identify, refer and respond to abuse and maltreatment of children" in Goals Hierarchy; 13 sub-activities in DoA (implementation plan) and 11 sub-activities in Goals Hierarchy, sometimes with different formulations.
1. Child rights violations monitoring and complaints from regions are effectively addressed by the Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office
2. Developed practical models of integrated child protection mechanism at local level are ready for national replication

**Expected Outputs**

In line with the intervention logic in the ToC, the Goal Hierarchy further develops the two overarching Outcomes into five expected Outputs, as follows:

**Linked to Outcome 1**

1.1 Recommendations from studies on preventing violence against children in public settings and schools, in-country child trafficking and child prostitution provided to the Government
1.2 Changes made to the Marriage and Family Code and other legal documents to address child rights violations
1.3 Increased access of children to the Ombudsman’s Office

**Linked to Outcome 2**

2.1 Models of integrated child protection services, violence identification and referral mechanisms developed, tested and implemented in two oblasts
2.2 Model of prevention of institutionalisation of children aged 0-3 have reached 20% more family care solutions
### Figure 4. Goal Hierarchy

**Development Goal/Impact**
A sustained and operational child protection mechanism prevents and responds to child abuse, exploitation and family separation in line with international standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child rights violations monitoring and complaints from regions are effectively addressed by Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office</td>
<td>Developed practical models of integrated child protection mechanism at local level are ready for national replication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Outputs
1. **Outcome 1**
   - Recommendations from studies on preventing violence against children in public settings and schools, in-country child trafficking and child prostitution provided to the Government
2. **Outcome 2**
   - Changes made to the Marriage and Family Code and other legal documents to address child rights violations
   - Increased access of children to the Ombudsman’s Office

#### Activities
1. **Strengthening the Ombudsman Office’s capacity**
   - Revision of the Ombudsman Office's child rights referral and complains mechanism
   - Capacity building program for Ombudsman's office staff
   - A study on violence against children in schools
   - Identification of gaps in legislation
2. **Models of integrated child protection mechanisms**
   - Modelling of integrated child protection services in two Oblasts
   - Design, test and evaluation of a model of prevention of institutionalization of children aged 0-3 in two pilot communities
   - Testing out an identification, referral and response system on abuse and maltreatment of children
   - Capacity building programs/Social work curriculum
   - Two study tours on effective child protection systems and violence prevention mechanism
   - Two National Conferences on progress and future directions
   - National Public Awareness Campaign to prevent institutionalisation of children
   - Establishment of peer support groups through youth NGOs and inclusive Youth Health Centers
   - Monitoring and evaluation, documenting best practices, support costs

#### Inputs
- Technical assistance (consultants, experts)
- Trainers
- Materials, studies, reviews
- Travel and per diems
- Financial resources
**Project Activities**

For the achievement of Project outputs and expected outcomes, the following activities were planned:

- Revision of the Ombudsman Office’s child rights referral and complains mechanism
- Capacity building program for Ombudsman’s office staff
- A study on violence against children in schools
- Identification of gaps in legislation
- Modelling of integrated child protection services in two Oblasts
- Design, test and evaluation of a model of prevention of institutionalization of children aged 0-3 in two pilot communities
- Testing out an identification, referral and response system on abuse and maltreatment of children
- Capacity building programs/Social work curriculum
- Two study tours on effective child protection systems and violence prevention mechanism
- Two National Conferences on progress and future directions
- National Public Awareness Campaign to prevent institutionalisation of children
- Establishment of peer support groups through youth NGOs and inclusive Youth Health Centres
- Monitoring and evaluation, documenting best practices, support costs

**Target Groups and Final Beneficiaries**

The DoA specifies that the target groups that will benefit **directly** of the Project include: 7,000 children currently placed in institutional care, including children with disabilities, by enhancing the system of child protection in targeted regions; at least 2,000 children likely to be placed in institutional care each year; 10,000 children (around 12,500) families, identified as being “at risk”; and a number of children at risk of self-harm, trafficking and child prostitution who will benefit of professional assistance. In addition, the document is also listing other four target groups who would benefit **indirectly** of the Project: all children from most vulnerable families in Kazakhstan by future replication of the models; 700 specialists working on child protection at central and local agencies whose capacity will improve; 10 local NGOs and 6 peer support groups which will be provided with knowledge and skills to deliver child protection services; and the general public by awareness campaign advocating for prevention of harm to children, trafficking and exploitation.

There is a confusion in the design of the Project (DoA) between Target Groups and Final Beneficiaries. In order to delineate the units of analysis and help the assessment of relevance and effectiveness of the Project and in line with activities undertaken during its lifetime, the following distinction was done by the evaluation:

**Target groups:**

- National Human Rights Centre (Ombudsman office): management and staff;
- Ministries of health, education, labour and social protection, and internal affairs responsible for coordination and implementation of new approaches in child protection and for modernising the policy and regulatory frameworks;
- Inter-agency working groups at the level of city and oblast akimats which tested and implement integrated child protection services, including child abandonment prevention
- 700 professionals working on child protection in central and local agencies;
- School/Institution management and staff engaged in the piloting of violence prevention model;

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• 10 local NGOs and 6 peer support groups which will be provided with knowledge and skills to deliver child protection services;
• NGOs and media, reporting on child rights violations.

Final beneficiaries:
• Children and parents benefiting from child prevention abandonment and violence prevention services in the pilot regions;
• 7,000 children currently placed in institutional care, including children with disabilities, by enhancing the system of child protection in the targeted regions;
• 2,000 children likely to be placed in institutional care each year;
• 10,000 children identified as being “at risk” (children at risk of self-harm, trafficking and child prostitution who will benefit from professional assistance; children from most vulnerable families in Kazakhstan - by future replication of the models);
• The general public in need of awareness raising for prevention of harm to children.

Strategic Approach
In order to implement the Project, the following strategies were planned to be used:
• Jointly with the Ombudsman Office, conduct a research on vulnerable children in urban areas subject to in-country child trafficking, prostitution, begging and street life and a study on violence against children in schools to map out the causes of high suicides rates and bullying;
• Based on revised national legislation related to child protection, jointly with the Parliament, introduce modern child protection legal provisions, including changes to the Family Code and other legal documents in Kazakhstan;
• Jointly with the MoLSPP, develop a model for national replication of integrated child protection services at local level in two selected regions;
• Prepare a system of identification, referral and response to violence against children; the modelled service will include professionally trained specialists in handling child abuse and maltreatment cases; NGOs will be also trained on identification and response to abuse and violence;
• Develop a model of prevention of institutionalization of children aged 0-3 in two pilot communities; based on lessons learnt, introduce legislation prohibiting institutionalization of children aged 0-3 and developing family-oriented care solutions;
• Model, evaluate and present key components of the future integrated child protection system providing statutory services for vulnerable children at local level to the Government as a base for its replication in the national law and practice;
• Strengthen the Ombudsman Office’s child rights monitoring and complaints system, including increasing a direct access of children to the Ombudsman’s Office;
• Run capacity building programmes for professionals working in the child care system at the central and local level and support the development of sustainable university curricula for creation of a cadre of professional social workers;
• Involve a network of international and national experts who can provide specific knowledge on setting up a child protection system at local and central level;
• Organise two study tours for key policy makers to European countries advanced in the child protection system and violence prevention programmes;
• Launch a National Public Awareness Campaign on prevention of child trafficking/prostitution;
• Set up peer support groups among youth NGOs and inclusive Youth Health Centers;
• Organise two National Conferences to evaluate progress and establish strategic priorities for upcoming years;
**Financing and Duration**

The total budget of the project is NOK 4,793,128 (USD 880,442\textsuperscript{34}), of which the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided NOK 3,588,158 (USD 659,103), while UNICEF contributed with complementary funds amounting to NOK 1,204,970 (USD 221,339). The implementation of the project was planned to last for 36 months, from June 2011 to June 2014.

**Implementation partners**

The Project was implemented by UNICEF Kazakhstan in partnership with Ombudsman, MoLSPP, MoH, and MoES and in close collaboration with the akimats of selected regions, as follows:

- **National Human Rights Centre** – jointly with UNICEF, conduct a study on defining the vulnerability of children in urban areas (internal trafficking, prostitution, forced begging) and ways in which the child protection system can prevent, identify and rehabilitate the disadvantaged children; jointly with the MoES, assess the prevalence of violence in schools and do high level advocacy on these issues; participate in capacity building actions on child rights monitoring and handling complaints.

- **MoES** – jointly with the Ombudsman, assess the prevalence of violence in schools; develop mechanisms for identifying, responding, reporting, referrals, and monitoring of different forms of violence and bullying against children in educational settings; testing of the community-based violence prevention programme in East Kazakhstan region; jointly with the Ombudsman, carry out high level advocacy on the issues of violence in institutions and school settings.

- **MoLSPP** – develop an integrated approach to the delivery of specialized social services; test the model in Astana, Karaganda and East Kazakhstan regions; review social work (case management) curriculum; oversee the training programmes of professionals.

- **MoH** – develop the child abandonment prevention model (for children under the age of three) and social services for vulnerable children and families; test the model in Astana, Semey and Karaganda region; contribute to effective policy change in the regulations on social work and standards and introduce 2,000 social workers at the primary health care level.

- **Local level authorities (Akimats)** – pilot the developed integrated child protection and child abandonment prevention models in the targeted regions; implement the violence prevention programme in a selected number of schools and institutions from East Kazakhstan region.

Other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Project were Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), as participants in working groups and training actions, partners in the testing of models and advocacy; academia, engaged in the development of training curricula in case management and social work as well as training delivery, monitoring of violence prevention programme in schools and residential care institutions; the schools and institutions themselves where the violence prevention programme has been implemented; media, as beneficiary of trainings and partners in the information campaign; youth health centres, advising the young people on family planning issues.

The role of **UNICEF Country Office** was two-fold: it ensured the technical and financial management of the Project, while also bringing in the technical expertise and policy advocacy leverage for the attainment of envisaged outcomes. Based on its inter-sectoral partnership with key national stakeholders, UNICEF facilitated the dialogue on how legislation, practices and training programmes can best meet the needs of vulnerable children and families. A detailed analysis of how UNICEF used its core roles in the implementation of the Project is presented in the efficiency section of the report.

Of significant benefit to the project implementation was UNICEF’s collaboration with the **Royal Norwegian Embassy** in Astana. The Ambassador of Norway to Kazakhstan and the staff of the

Embassy have actively participated in discussions, studies, evidence-based advocacy, conferences and workshops with the Government and the Ombudsman.

**Implementation arrangements**

All main decisions on the implementation of the Project were taken in consultation between UNICEF and its institutional partners, on the basis of a grant agreement with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, respectively a Joint Statement of Intent between the UNICEF Representative, Norwegian Ambassador and Ombudsman. There are also two-year rolling work plans signed between UNICEF and MoES, MoH, MoLSPP, Ministry of Internal Affairs and between UNICEF and the National Human Rights Centre (Ombudsman's Office).
2. Evaluation of the Project

2.1 Purpose, Objectives and Scope

The Purpose of this summative evaluation is to inform the Ombudsman and the Government of Kazakhstan (main national stakeholders of the Project), UNICEF (implementation partner) and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (donor) on the key directions for more efficient monitoring of child rights violations and for the continuation of reforms in the area child protection to address child abuse, exploitation and family separation, on the basis of an in-depth assessment of the results achieved by the Project and of the strategies used to achieve them. One of the most used strategy was the piloting in three target regions of models of integrated child protection services, child abandonment prevention services and violence prevention, and their testing phase has recently come to an end or will soon be finalised. The evaluation has been thus commissioned at this time in order to assess the achievements and bottlenecks of these models and to inform Government's decisions to support their scaling up across the country, in partnership with UNICEF. Finally, the evaluation has been also commissioned to provide a critical view on the possible transformed engagement of UNICEF in part of exercising its Core Roles related to Project areas in the future, given that the Kazakhstan is expected to reach the high income country status by 2020.

The Project will be completed in June 2014, according to the plan. The evaluation takes place three months before the end of the Project.

The Specific objectives of the evaluation agreed with UNICEF country office are as follows:

Specific Objective 1
Assessing the relevance and sustainability of interventions

Specific Objective 2
Assessing effectiveness and efficiency of Kazakhstan’s Government, Norway’s Government and UNICEF’s contributions to development of mechanisms for the independent Ombudsman’s monitoring and complaint system, prevention and responding to child abuse, exploitation and family separation

Specific Objective 3
Assessing the impact of interventions in the targeted regions

Specific Objective 4
Assessing the extent of application of Human Rights Based Approach and gender equality principles

Specific Objective 5
Assessing the extent of applying the equity approach within the intervention

Specific Objective 6
Identifying barriers and bottlenecks faced during implementation both on part of UNICEF and the Government

Specific Objective 7
Identifying good practices and lessons learned in the current approaches for possible scale up in and outside the country

Specific Objective 8
Developing recommendations for strengthening the reforms in the area of prevention and addressing child abuse, exploitation and family separation, informing programme directions and defining further funding needs

Compared to Terms of Reference (ToR), appended as Annex 1 to this report, an additional evaluation objective has been included (Objective 3 impact), based on agreement with UNICEF. The reasoning behind this amendment is explained in section 2.2.1.
According to the ToR, the main beneficiaries of the evaluation are the Kazakhstan national and local authorities, UNICEF, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway. The secondary beneficiaries are international and civil society organisations.

As far as the scope of the evaluation is concerned, the Project evaluation covers the implementation period June 2011 – March 2014 (33 out of 36 months) and all three targeted regions: Astana, Karaganda and East Kazakhstan, following the way the Project has been conceptualized in the DoA, various preparatory documents developed prior to the start of the project and later ToC. Given the fact that the Project has also worked in 10 schools and institutions on violence prevention issues, and considering the available resources and time for this evaluation, field consultations, interviews, focus groups and discussion groups were carried out only in a selected number of sites, representing 20% of schools and institutions targeted by the Project. This sample is described in the following section. The evaluation explores in its efficiency section all Core Roles of UNICEF (The ‘Voice’ for children and adolescents, Monitoring and evaluation, Policy advice and technical assistance, Leveraging resources from the public and private sectors, Facilitating national dialogue towards child friendly social norms, Enabling knowledge exchange, Modeling/piloting) in order to provide recommendations for a transformed engagement of UNICEF in the Project areas in the coming years until 2020.

The main Units of Analysis for this evaluation are the following:

- National Human Rights Centre (Ombudsman office), from the perspective of Project investment in its capacity building (training, working tools, advocacy, partnerships etc.);
- ministries of health, education and labour and social protection responsible for coordination and implementation of new approaches in child protection and for modernising the policy and regulatory frameworks;
- inter-agency working groups at the level of city and oblast akimats which have been empowered by the Project to test and implement integrated child protection services, including child abandonment prevention;
- professionals working in the child protection system who were trained to be prepared for their new role and use of new working procedures in piloted models of integrated child protection system (i.e.referral and case management);
- schools/institutions where the Project has piloted the violence prevention model;
- children and parents, as beneficiaries of child abandonment prevention services (children under the age of three and their parents) and violence prevention (students enrolled in 3rd-7th grades in pilot schools and their parents, students enrolled in 3rd-7th grades living in pilot residential care institutions).

Other target groups (NGOs, youth peer support groups and media) are also analysed, but to a lesser extent given the more limited focus of the Project on these groups.

Main themes addressed by the evaluation concern child abandonment prevention, reduction of the number of children without parental care in state-run residential institutions, reducing equity gaps in access to child protection services of vulnerable children and parents, prevention of violence against children, capacity building of professionals working in the child protection system, better monitoring and more efficient processing of complaints against child rights violations received by the Ombudsman, modernization of legislation and work practices.

The use of word ‘model’ in the evaluation report is mirroring the Project language (DoA, progress reports, deliverables) and the ToR and not the audit criteria of UNICEF whose compliance would automatically qualify a certain action as a ‘model’. Hence analysis of strengths but also weaknesses,
potential but also limitations for scaling up of models, as worded in the project documents, are extensively discussed in the report.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The Methodological Approach

The methodology approach which has been used for this evaluation aimed to utilize the best mix of data gathering tools to yield the most reliable and valid answers to the evaluation questions within the limits of resources and availability of data. The evaluation has been carried out in three consecutive phases: Inception/Desk Phase, Field Phase and Synthesis Phase, as described below.

I. Inception/Desk Phase

The evaluation commenced on 29 January 2014, after the conclusion of the contract between UNICEF and Promeso Consulting. The Inception Phase coincided with the Desk Phase. UNICEF Country Office provided a large number of documents, relevant for this evaluation. The team reviewed the project documentation (DoA, implementation plan, annual progress reports, technical assistance reports, several project deliverables), studies, reviews and other relevant project literature provided by UNICEF or downloaded from Government and international donors’ websites. It also reviewed various statistical databases and information sources (TransMonEE, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey - MICS, national statistics, databases of key ministries and of Ombudsman, local project reports, etc.) to check the availability of data and identify the gaps (Annex 3). Following a thorough evaluability assessment, an important body of missing documents and data gaps were identified. Additional documents and information were requested, including templates for structuring and presentation of information both by UNICEF and the Government. The literature review continued during the next phases of the evaluation as soon as new documents and information were received by the evaluation team.

In the absence of a ToC, the International Expert constructed an implicit, de facto theory (Annex 2), as explained in the previous section, and based on guidance provided by the UNICEF Country Office. The ToC for this Project was thus developed retrospectively and only for the purpose of this evaluation. It would have been far more useful to construct it at the beginning of a Project, as outcomes and processes are viewed differently with hindsight. Indeed, a ToC approach could have sharpened the planning and implementation of the Project. In its design phase, it would have increased the likelihood that stakeholders have clearly specified outcomes and outputs, the activities that need to be implemented to achieve those outcomes, and the contextual factors that are likely to influence them. Developing a ToC at the end of a project risks of inducing a bias in choosing indicators and targets and of being deprived of the required participatory level of key stakeholders and ownership for change. The evaluation team used extensive time resources to develop the ToC and made all efforts to validate it with stakeholders during the field phase. Still, such a late, de facto theory, although validated to a satisfactory extent, missed the opportunity of being owned by its stakeholders and thus is more open to being challenged.

During this phase, primary data collection methods were designed to cover the identified information gaps and ensure the required level of information needed to answer the evaluation questions in relation to the various units of analysis. These methods are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Primary Data Collection Methods
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Research method</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Sample (as the case)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF management and project team</td>
<td>4 In-depth interviews</td>
<td>Interview guide</td>
<td>Deputy Representative, Child Protection and Education team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ombudsman, MoH, MoLSPP, MoES, CPCR, Parliament, Norwegian Embassy, Social Workers Training Centre Astana, East-Kazakhstan State University, Semey State University (Pedagogical Institute), Semey Medical University, Youth Health Centres, CSOs, schools, consultants</td>
<td>23 Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>Interview guide</td>
<td>Representatives of all relevant stakeholders, nominated by their management to meet the evaluation team (as the case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akimats in East Kazakhstan and Karaganda oblasts, and Astana city</td>
<td>3 Discussion groups</td>
<td>Discussion guide</td>
<td>8-10 participants/group in each location (members of inter-agency working groups for integrated child protection services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals (social workers, psychologists, medical staff) testing of the integrated child protection model and who were trained by the Project</td>
<td>3 Focus groups</td>
<td>Focus group guide</td>
<td>6-8 participants/group in each location targeted by the Project (Ust-Kamenogorsk, Astana, Karaganda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/Institution Safety Teams (SST), where the violence prevention model was implemented</td>
<td>2 Focus groups</td>
<td>Focus group guide</td>
<td>Full SSTs in the sampled General School no.27 in Ust-Kamenogorsk and Children's Home 8 in Semey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of users</td>
<td>3-4 Semi-structured interviews/ region</td>
<td>Interview guide</td>
<td>Individual interviews at home or at social welfare services; very sensitive, recruited by social workers/psychologists to be representative for the usual 'profile' of a beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'-' Mothers benefitting from child abandonment prevention and counselling services</td>
<td>2 Focus groups girls 2 Focus groups boys</td>
<td>Focus group guide</td>
<td>6-8 children/group, in sampled General School no.27 Ust-Kamenogorsk and Children's Home no.8 in Semey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'-' Children in schools and institutions where the violence prevention model has been implemented</td>
<td>1 Focus group</td>
<td>Focus group guide</td>
<td>Homogeneous groups: gender and age range (13-14 years old); children whose parents' consent was obtained prior to the discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'-' Parents of children attending schools where the violence prevention model is implemented</td>
<td>1 Focus group</td>
<td>Focus group guide</td>
<td>6-8 parents of children aged 13-14 years old attending sampled General School no.27 in Ust-Kamenogorsk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media representatives</td>
<td>1 Focus group</td>
<td>Focus group guide</td>
<td>Media representatives which participated in the Project training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site visits to Adaptation Centre for Minors in Semey, Children’s Home Semey, General School no.27 in Ust Kamenogorsk, Youth Health Centre Ust-Kamenogorsk, Family Support Centre Ust-Kamenogorsk, Demeu Family Health Centre, Polyclinic of the Hospital no.1 in Karaganda</td>
<td>Direct observation</td>
<td>Direct observation guide</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of data collection and evaluation instruments have been also developed, including:

- Evaluation Matrix, grouping the evaluation questions under the evaluation objectives and criteria and around specific units of analysis (Annex 5);
- Sampling of schools/institutions piloting the violence prevention model;
• Guides for in-depth/semi-structured interviews, focus groups and discussion groups (Annex 6)
• Performance Rating scale for the Project’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as well as for the overall Project performance.

The Inception/Desk Phase ended with the drafting of the Inception Report, which included a revised methodology, a draft ToC, a detailed work plan, a full set of the proposed data collection and evaluation tools, the sample and the list of information/data/indicators to be requested from the Government as well as an annotated outline of the final report. The revised Inception Report was submitted on 23 February 2014.

II. Field Phase

This phase has been mainly devoted to the collection of primary data from key stakeholders at national, regional and local levels, based on the data collection and evaluation instruments developed during the Inception/Desk Phase. The selection of sites to be visited has been based on the sampling methodology and the data collection methods described in Table 3 above.

The following methodological aspects need to be highlighted:

• It is common knowledge that each data collection method has its own limitations and can’t stand alone; therefore, the evaluation team included in the data collection process a wide array of sources to triangulate the findings and inform the analysis.
• Semi-structured interviews with key informants at national, regional and local level have been used to collect qualitative data and capture various perspectives on the way the project addressed the complexity of issues in child protection reform, monitoring and progressive realisation of children’s rights, how the Project worked and how could have been worked better for advancing the implementation of reforms.
• The evaluation team wanted to receive in-depth feedback from as many stakeholders as possible during the site visits to the three regions and therefore it was often not possible to conduct interviews with individual respondents. Therefore, the team organised focus groups and discussion groups with members of akimat inter-agency working groups for integrated child protection services, professionals testing the new integrated procedures and media representatives which were engaged in the project either as beneficiaries of training or participants in advocacy events.
• The evaluation team also designed a representative sample of schools and institutions where the violence prevention model has been piloted (2 out of 10). Site visits were necessary to conduct in-depth interviews, focus groups and discussion groups with management, school safety teams, children and their parents and to obtain factual evidence through direct observation. The sampling criteria and justification for the selection of General School no.27 in Ust-Kamenogorsk and Children’s Home no.8 in Semey can be found below in section 2.2.3. Given the large diversity of the pilot schools implementing the violence prevention programme and the impossibility to cover this diverse range by site visits given the time constraints, the evaluation team had group interviews with representatives of safety teams from other schools, apart from those visited on site. Thus, 60% of pilot schools and institutions were covered.
• Contact with service beneficiaries (users) is crucial for the evaluation. Given the timeframe and limited resources of this evaluation, it was not feasible to conduct a survey of beneficiaries in the regions where the project piloted new services. Instead, the evaluation team used the focus groups with professionals, children and parents and interviews with a number of beneficiary mothers in the targeted regions to collect vital impressions on the relevance,
accessibility and quality of provided services as well as a recent public opinion research\textsuperscript{35} on relevant issues for this evaluation.

The Field Phase ended with a debriefing of UNICEF concerning the preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation team. During the debriefing, UNICEF has specifically requested the evaluation team to formulate specific recommendations for the Ombudsman, the Government of Kazakhstan, UNICE, and other international partners and donors (notably and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), in line with the ToR and the particular needs of the country for the continuation of reforms in child protection. The debriefing took place on 18 March 2014.

\textbf{III. Synthesis Phase}

Information and facts collected during the first two phases have been analysed and integrated in this Interim Evaluation Report in line with the “UNICEF Evaluation Report Standards” (Evaluation Office, UNICEF NYHQ, September 2004). The analysis was based on the Evaluation Matrix and the Performance Rating scale developed during the Inception/Desk Phase of the evaluation process.

\textbf{Evaluation criteria: why and how used}

All standard OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, set in the ToR, have been endorsed by the evaluation team in the Inception Report for several reasons:

- they are sufficient to provide a sound assessment of the quality, value and significance of the aid intervention, are all necessary and equally important (see below explanatory information on each of these criteria and how were they used);
- they are fully appropriate for the evaluation purpose (to inform key directions of reform and scaling up of models, transformed engagement of UNICEF), after careful examination of the Project’s strategy and Theory of Change;
- they are in line with internationally recognised best practices for a summative evaluation of a Project and also consistent with recommended methodologies for evaluating external assistance.

In addition, the impact criterion has been added, as explained below. The project evaluation criteria have been approached as follows:

a) \textbf{Relevance:} The assessment of the project relevance was based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges of the child protection reform, the needs and priorities of various stakeholders and beneficiaries for the prevention and mitigation of child abuse, exploitation and family separation.

b) \textbf{Effectiveness:} Using the Description of Action, Goal Hierarchy and ToC, the evaluation team analysed to what extent the results obtained following the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives. Using evidence collected during the first two phases of the evaluation, the report explains the factors that contributed or hampered the achievement of results in terms of strengthening the Ombudsman’s monitoring and complaint system, implementation of integrated child protection approaches, prevention of child abandonment and violence, improvement of local and national capacity to foster promotion of child rights. In this respect, a thorough assessment of the Project outputs was carried out. Analysis of coordination and synergy between activities at the national and local level was also done. In addition, the report discusses the additional/unplanned (positive or negative) effects of the Project.

c) **Efficiency:** The report analyses how well UNICEF organized itself in delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency of the two-level activities – national and local. Analysis of efficiency was based on the assessment of outputs/activities in relation to Project inputs, costs and planned timelines. The report incorporates a detailed discussion on the efficiency of ways UNICEF has fulfilled its Core Roles to achieve the results of the Project.

d) **Impact:** Impact evaluation was missing from the ToR, although they included impact indicators as did the DoA. The evaluation team raised this issue and, following discussion with the UNICEF management and staff, it was agreed to evaluate the impact - to the extent possible - only in the targeted oblasts (East Kazakhstan, Karaganda) and Astana city. Concern was expressed that real sustainable impact at national level takes time to achieve; it was honestly stated by UNICEF that the established Development Goal was too ambitious for a 3-year project duration. Moreover, the evaluation took place three months before the end of the project and models piloted in the regions are still to be documented for impact and scaling up, according to reports of consultants and statements of UNICEF country office. The evaluation team was also informed that three important in-depth assessments and evaluations will take place next year which will be helpful in assessing the impact of the Project i.e. MICS, repetition of the study on violence against children in schools (after one year of model implementation) and evaluation of the UN joint programme in East Kazakhstan. The evaluation team was thus advised to look into some impact elements of the models piloted in the targeted regions to the extent these were evaluable and sufficient reliable information was available. The team shared these concerns and designed the evaluation of the impact based on this information and client expectations. In this respect, the key task of the evaluation was to examine to what extent the project contributed to ensuring that more vulnerable children in targeted regions where the new models were piloted grow up in a family environment and benefit from community services in case of need.

e) **Sustainability:** The evaluation report reviews the sustainability factors in terms of project design, process, implementation and country context. Sustainability was analysed from various perspectives: legal, institutional, capacity building, and financial. The report highlights the factors that facilitated or decreased the sustainability prospects of the results of the Project (legislation, synergy and partnership with various layers of the Government, engagement and ownership by local stakeholders, etc.) and of the piloted models with a view of their scaling up.

The Synthesis Phase took place from 20 March 2014 until 29 April 2014. The Interim Evaluation Report was released on 30 April 2014 and feedback from key stakeholders was incorporated in this final version.

2.2.2 The Evaluation Questions and Performance Rating

The ToR specify:

- 10 Evaluation Questions (EQs) linked to the four evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability);
- 3 EQ on lessons learnt and recommendations;
- 2 EQ linked to human rights-based approach, equity and gender equality.

Based on this, a comprehensive Evaluation Matrix has been developed (Annex 5). All EQs – formulated as in the ToR or slightly reformulated - have been assigned to a specific evaluation objective and evaluation criterion. At the same time, new EQs have been added for important
analytical aspects which were not specified in the list of EQs in the ToR, including impact aspects, as follows:

EQ3 Have the planned results been achieved to date (quantitative and qualitative)?

EQ8 Has the project provided any additional (not directly planned by the Project) significant contribution/outcomes towards improving the child protection mechanism in the country?

EQ11 What Project impact on the right of children to grow up in a family environment can be observed in the three targeted regions?

EQ12 What was the impact of the Project on specific groups of vulnerable children in the targeted regions?

EQ15 What is the likelihood that the national and regional authorities will continue financing the new models and services introduced by the Project?

EQ19 What are the needs that should be addressed by future interventions for strengthening the reforms in the area of child protection in Kazakhstan?

EQ22 Which good practices can be identified? What lessons can be learned from the Project approaches for possible scaling up in and outside the country?

As a result, 22 EQs have been introduced in the Evaluation Matrix. For each EQ, one or several judgement criteria have been included as well as the related quantitative and qualitative indicators. Sources of information and methods of data collection have been also introduced in the Matrix. Table 4 presents an overview of the grouping of questions.

Table 4. Grouping of questions and issues in the Evaluation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>No. of EQ</th>
<th>EQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>EQ 1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>EQ 3-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>EQ 9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>EQ 11-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>EQ 13-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Child rights, equity, gender equality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>EQ 15-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Conclusions (general assessment)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EQ 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Policy direction, funding needs, UNICEF future role, lessons learnt</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>EQ 19-22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions in the Evaluation Matrix have been to the extent possible framed based on the units of analysis, indicating their relative importance and the relative emphasis on the different target groups.

The rating of the Project performance was determined by separately evaluating and ranking the evaluation criteria specified in the ToR and the additional impact criterion, i.e.: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Each criterion was assigned a scale point between 0 and 3. A descriptor corresponding to each scale point was also assigned. The average of the values
for the evaluation criteria ratings was the overall project assessment rating. Fixed cut-off points were used to assign appropriate descriptors (highly satisfactory, satisfactory, moderately satisfactory, moderately unsatisfactory, unsatisfactory and highly unsatisfactory) to the aggregate numeric rating. The table below summarizes the approach and shows the relationship between the evaluation criteria, rating descriptors and scale points.

Table 5. Performance Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation criterion</th>
<th>Definition according to the ToR</th>
<th>Rating descriptor</th>
<th>Scale point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Relevance</td>
<td>The extent to which the Project responded to the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries.</td>
<td>Highly relevant Relevant Partly relevant Irrelevant</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effectiveness</td>
<td>The extent to which the Project met its outcomes as defined in the Hierarchy of Goals.</td>
<td>Highly effective Effective Moderately effective Ineffective</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Efficiency</td>
<td>The extent to which the Project management ensured timeliness and efficient use of resources. The extent to which UNICEF Core Roles were mobilised to attain Project outcomes.</td>
<td>Highly efficient Efficient Moderately efficient Inefficient</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Impact</td>
<td>The extent to which the Project contributed to ensuring that more children in targeted regions grow up in a family environment and benefit from community services in case of need</td>
<td>High impact level Good impact level Low impact level No impact</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sustainability</td>
<td>The extent to which the achieved Project outcomes are sustainable.</td>
<td>Most likely Likely Less likely Unlikely</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.3 Evaluation sample

Sampling has been done only in the case of schools and institutions where the Project has piloted and implemented the violence prevention model. As for the integrated child protection model and child abandonment prevention model, the evaluation team visited all 4 project sites where these models have been introduced and had interviews, focus groups and discussion groups with all key stakeholders (akimat representatives, working groups, professionals and service users).

The Project has piloted the violence prevention model in 10 schools and institutions: 7 schools (6 general education schools and 1 school-lyceum) and 3 residential care institutions (2 children’s homes and 1 special school for children with deviant behaviour). These schools and institutions are located in East-Kazakhstan region, in four cities: Ust-Kamenogorsk - 4, Semey - 3, Ridder - 2 and Serebryansk - 1. For the purpose of evaluation, a sample of schools and institutions for site visits was constructed, based on the following sampling criteria:

1) Representation in the sample of both schools and residential care institutions, given the particularities of violent behaviour, risk levels and challenges of the violence prevention model implementation in these two different settings36

36 Based on various UNICEF studies on violence in schools and in state-run residential institutions. "Although residential institutions for children were established to provide care, guidance, support, and protection to children, children that live in these institutions are at increased risk of violence, compared to children whose care and protection is governed by parents at home. In fact, the UN World Report on Violence Against Children has revealed that violence in residential institutions is six times higher
2) Relative weight of the type of school and of the type of residential care institution in the overall number of pilot schools and institutions i.e. selection of general education schools – 85.7% of total schools and of children’s homes – 66.6% of total institutions, as basis for further sampling

3) Rate of reported incidents of problem behaviour/violence among children for the period 2012-201337 i.e. selection of the general education school and the children’s home institution with the highest rate of reported incidents

4) Geographical location i.e. in different cities, in urban and peri-urban areas.

The Sample which resulted after the screening of all schools and institutions against the sampling criteria above included38,

- General Education School no.27 in Ust-Kamenogorsk
- Children’s Home no.8 in Semey

They cover 20% of the total number of schools and institutions where the violence prevention model has been piloted by the Project and 14% of children benefitting of this model. The features of the sample are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. The Violence Prevention Evaluation Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampling criteria</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>General Education School no.27</th>
<th>Children’s Home no.8 in Semey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representation of both schools and institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of school / institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education School (6)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Lyceum (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Home (2)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special School for children with deviant behaviour (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of reported incidents (incidents/no.of children)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest among pilot General Education Schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes (0.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest among pilot Children’s Homes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>known to be high as in any institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ust-Kamenogorsk</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridder</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


37 Based on the reports of safety teams and monitoring reports of East Kazakhstan State University, the local institutional partner of UNICEF in the implementation of the violence prevention model in the region.

38 Initially, the sample included the Children’s Home “Umit”, having the largest number of students and the highest rate of reported incidents of violence against children. However, given the refusal of the management of this institution to be part of the evaluation process, the evaluation team reconstructed the sample, by replacing Umit with the other children’s home in Semey. The representativeness of the final configuration of the sample has been preserved.

39 Reports of East Kazakhstan State University indicate that residential care institutions refrain from reporting violence incidents because of the fear of being ‘punished’ or of getting lower assessment rates by the governing bodies. However, there is evidence that violence in most institutions is significant (see the Assessment referenced in footnote 27)
2.2.4 Evaluation constraints

There have been a number of constraints which were faced by the evaluation team. Table 7 presents an overview of constraints and mitigation strategies.

Table 7. Constraints to the Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraint</th>
<th>Mitigation approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of disaggregated data and baseline data for some of the Project components</td>
<td>Following an extensive review of existing databases and project indicators during the Inception Phase, the International Expert identified key missing data and sent to UNICEF a detailed request for baselines and targets, disaggregated by gender, disability and residence (see Annex 9). UNICEF made great efforts to provide as many disaggregated data as possible. The evaluation team also used primary data collection methods (interviews, focus groups, discussion groups) to cover some gaps and triangulate official data to check their reliability. Still, no sufficient data disaggregation was available for certain indicators (as detailed in the next chapter of the report) which made the evaluation of efficiency and impact difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff turnover in the MoLSPP which limited the opportunity to reach key “organizational memory” in relation to the coordination of the implementation of the 5-step plan at central level</td>
<td>The evaluation team interviewed other key informants at government level, closely engaged in the implementation of 5-step plan (MoES, Committee for Child Rights Protection, MoH), discussed intensively with the UNICEF country office on various aspects of the implementation of the plan and reviewed a large number of relevant secondary data (reports from the regions to the MoLSPP, reports of consultants, Project progress reports, etc.). Discussion groups at akimats level with members of inter-agency commissions in charge of implementing the 5-step plan were also used to capture the regional side of the implementation work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity of vulnerability issues made difficult the recruitment of service users, especially of beneficiary mothers who wanted to abandon their child because of difficult life situation in the past</td>
<td>Recruitment was done with the support of the social workers and psychologists who developed a trust relationship with the beneficiary mothers over time. Questions were formulated as to avoid any discomfort and sensitivity. The evaluators created an open, trustful atmosphere which facilitated open sharing of views and opinions; participants were assured about the confidentiality of their answers; interviews took place either at the centre or at home, in Kazakh or in Russian, according to the will of interviewees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The focus groups with children in the sampled Children's Home took place in the presence of a social pedagogue, a condition imposed by the management. Children who are victims of violence in state-run residential institutions are often reluctant or</td>
<td>The evaluators have used various methods to overcome this constraint: a fully confidential and individual answer to a key question on violence addressed during the focus group (see the respective Interview Guide in Annex); direct observation of behaviour of children and attitudes during the discussion and of other children and staff during the tour of the institution which followed the focus group; regular reports of East Kazakhstan University which monitors the implementation of the violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
afraid to report such incidents due to fear of punishment or retaliation from staff. The presence of the social pedagogue constrained even more an open dialogue.

No baselines and targets for various indicators in the project documents, lack of ToC or logframe for the overall Project. Logframes have been included in the PCAs with targets at the level of ‘Purpose’.

Together with UNICEF and based on the review of a wide range of official and project documents and statistics, the evaluators have reconstructed some of the missing data and the ToC, using significant time resources for doing this exercise.

2.3 Evaluation Design

The evaluation was designed to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability (OECD/DAC) of the Project based on the DoA and ToC, including indicators that the Project used for monitoring performance and attainment of estimated results. The reasons for using these OECD/DAC criteria have been extensively explained in section 2.2.1 in III. Synthesis Phase.

The evaluation used a non-experimental design, whereby the vulnerable children and parents (the so-called “treatment groups”) were compared before and after the project implementation. An experimental design, although a more robust method, has been impeded by the lack of sufficient and reliable baseline data both at the level of ‘treatment’ and ‘control’ groups, as explained in various sections of this report, and thus by the difficulties in constructing groups of reasonable numbers to mobilise the power of statistics. Nevertheless, whenever data was available, the report clearly highlights the contribution and the attribution findings (see, for instance, the 4.4 impact section of the report where contribution and attribution/net impact of the Project are highlighted based on impact indicators presented at the beginning of the respective section).

The design of the evaluation methodology combined a Results-Based Management with a Human Rights-Based Approach to programming and evaluation, i.e. achievement of planned results through morally acceptable processes to realise human rights.

The Human Rights-Based Approach applied by the evaluation team was guided by five core principles: normativity, participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency, and by the Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation and Programming, approved by the United Nations Development Group in 2003:

- All programmes of development cooperation, policies and technical assistance should further the realization of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.
- Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process.
- Development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of ‘duty-bearers’ to meet their obligations and/or of ‘rights-holders’ to claim their rights.
This evaluation identified the children without parental care, children at risk of being abandoned by their parents and children subject to violence in schools and residential care institutions as “rights-holders” of the Project.

Attention was also given to the evaluation of the gender mainstreaming and gender equality in the Project, in line with Kazakhstan’s international commitments, most notably CEDAW and UNICEF Gender Policy (2010)\(^\text{40}\) which states that UNICEF aims to work with partners to pursue gender equality and the equal rights of girls and boys “to contribute to poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals through results-oriented, effective and coordinated action that achieves the protection, survival and development of girls and boys on an equal basis.”

The Evaluation assessed the extent to which the project outcomes contributed to the achievement of children’s rights and addressing of gender sensitive issues. In this respect, the Evaluation Matrix included specific evaluation questions, as follows:

- Has the project actively contributed to the promotion of child rights?
- To what extent has the project integrated gender equality into its design and implementation?
- To what extent and how the project ensured an equity focus?

The evaluation used to the extent possible disaggregated data by gender and deprivation profiles.

### Ethical considerations related to the evaluation design

During data collection, attention was paid to ensuring that the evaluation process is ethical and that participants in the process can openly express their opinions, protecting the confidentiality of their answers. Overall, the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System (March, 2008) was strictly respected, notably independence of judgement, impartiality, honesty and integrity, accountability, respect and protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, confidentiality, avoidance of risks, harm to and burdens on those participating in the evaluation, accuracy, completeness and reliability of report, transparency. The evaluators were sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and acted with integrity and honesty in their relationships with all stakeholders, ensured that their contacts with individuals were characterized by respect, protected the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information.

The process of recruiting stakeholders from different institutional levels followed a standard procedure in order to ensure an informed consent to participate in the evaluation (letter of introduction presenting the evaluation process, protection of privacy and information confidentiality, followed by a written/verbal communication regarding the interview/focus group details). Participation in the evaluation was voluntary and opinions were presented in the report in an anonymous manner. No difficulties were encountered in meeting stakeholders and visiting the sites, except in the case of the Children’s Home Umit from Ust-Kamenogorsk, one of the three pilot institutions for the violence prevention programme, which was sampled for the evaluation. Although approval from the akimat department of education was obtained much in advance, the management of institution refused at the last moment to participate in the evaluation. Their decision has been respected and the evaluators replaced this institution with another pilot institution in Semey while preserving the representativeness of the sample, as explained in the previous sections of the report. Nevertheless, the refusal of Children’s Home Umit from Ust-Kamenogorsk has been reported by the evaluation team via UNICEF to the department of education of East Kazakhstan akimat for follow-up actions.

Selection of service users was a challenging and sensitive process, as it was rather hard to convince mothers who wanted to abandon their children in the past, for instance, to talk to the evaluators. In this respect, the support of social workers and psychologists from the target regions was crucial and the evaluators were able to meet a number of vulnerable mothers (in their double function of duty-bearers and rights-holders) who benefitted from the Project support. Individual interviews took place either at the home or at the family support centre or polyclinic, as requested by the respective mother, in full confidentiality.

The participation of children (service users and rights-holders) in the data collection process required the approval of the responsible akimat department, school/institution and the consent of their parents. Children were informed about the scope and themes of the discussion. Before starting the focus group, the evaluators explained again the purpose of the discussion, the way their opinion would be processed ensuring the confidentiality. They were also asked to confirm their consent. Children were informed that they could withdraw anytime during the focus group without any obligation to explain the reasons. Parents of children were approached through the schools where violence prevention model was piloted. The school safety teams informed the selected parents about the scope of the focus group and its main discussion topics and asked for their consent to participate.

Interviews and focus groups required the use of both Kazakh and Russian languages, depending on the will of the participants. This has been ensured by the bilingual National Expert, member of the evaluation team.

Throughout the process, the evaluation was in compliance with the United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards.

**Involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation**

Involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation is of utmost importance for the collection of vital data and critical insights, but also for validating findings and conclusions as well as checking the feasibility of recommendations while ensuring buy-in. The evaluation was so designed to ensure the involvement of stakeholders at three levels: information, consultation and participation, depending on the nature of each stakeholder and engagement in the Project.

More than 150 people have been involved during the evaluation, representing the key stakeholders of the Project: target groups, final beneficiaries (children and their families), implementing partners, donor, oversight bodies, parliament, civil society organisations, as detailed in Table 3, first column, above.

Interviews, focus groups and discussion groups were used for: a) data collection; b) qualitative insights from stakeholders; c) direct participation of stakeholders in the analysis and evaluation of the Project results and impact; and d) checking the perceived priorities for the continuation of the child protection reforms and promotion of children’s rights in Kazakhstan by the key stakeholders and the role each of them will have to play in the future. In this respect, specific questions have been included in the Interview Guides (Annex 6) to capture the various perspectives of a large range of stakeholders. This was very useful for informing the recommendations of the evaluation based on an open and participatory process initiated during the Field Phase and continued during the presentation and dissemination of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations in June 2014, as explained in the recommendations section of the report.
3. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 Relevance

The relevance of the Project has been assessed using available data, facts and statistics for year 2011 when the Project started as well as relevant legal and strategic documents of the Government, Kazakhstan's international commitments to comply with human rights standards and UNICEF strategies in the country. Interviews with key stakeholders were also used to triangulate findings. The basic shortcomings in the area of child protection have been already presented in Chapter 1 and they were also highlighted in a number of studies, assessments and research carried out by UNICEF, Ombudsman, government partners, think tanks and NGOs.

Analysis identified that the Project was in accordance with the needs and priorities identified in Kazakhstan's strategies and laws aimed to guide and advance the realisation of child rights and child protection reforms. In this respect, the Project has most notably addressed the need to overcome fragmentation of support in the area of child protection, which has been signalled in various policy documents and which was aimed to be tackled by the Five-step implementation of integrated model of specialized social services provision (Government Decree passed in 2012). The Project has thus included in its design technical assistance to the formation of national and regional inter-agency commissions and modelling of an integrated child protection mechanism at regional and local levels. At policy level, the Project responded to the need of MoLSPP, MoH and MoES as well as akimat inter-agency commissions - key duty-bearers at central, respectively at regional and local level - to develop their capacity of coordinating the implementation of new, integrated approaches in child protection, based on the Five-step plan. As put it by a key informant interviewed for the purpose of this evaluation: “We learnt that we can't do very much in isolation”. It has also documented the effects of a fragmented child protection system upon children and the loss of efficiency through various assessments, studies and research which are presented in more detail in the effectiveness section of the report.

The activities implemented by the Project were in line with other national strategies and programmes, most notably the State Health Care Development Programme for 2011-2015 “Salamatty Kazakhstan”, which introduced a socially oriented system of primary health care, the National Human Rights Action Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2009-2012 and The long-term Education Development Programme until 2020. The latter makes clear references to the need to set up by 2020 a system for the protection of the rights and legal interests of children, provision of family-oriented educational and social services, alternative forms for family-based rearing of children abandoned by their parents and aid to children in difficult life circumstances as well as the need to improve the qualifications of specialists in the protection of children's rights, and of social counsellors and psychologists (pages 28-29, English version).

The enforcement of the Law on specialised social services (2008) and related secondary legislation required a modernised cadre of professionals, adjusted quality standards and new working procedures. To be mentioned is that the law targets the individuals in difficult life situation and identifies ten ‘grounds’ for being in such a state (art.6), of which seven are directly or indirectly related to children\(^{41}\). The Project was so designed to support the government, key duty-bearer, to implement this crucial law by developing the capacity of professionals working in the child protection system, service providers and key national and local institutional stakeholders to better perform their role and responsibilities deriving from the legal framework and use of new working procedures in piloted models of integrated child protection system (i.e.referral and case management).

\(^{41}\) Orphanhood, lack of parental care, child neglect, early development delays of children under the age of three, child abuse, homelessness, disability.
As mentioned in the ToC and in various independent assessments, the policy and legal framework in Kazakhstan provided legal space for institutionalisation, child abandonment and abuse. The Project response was to test pilot models for child abandonment prevention, to promote the development of family-based care, to introduce violence prevention programmes in pilot schools and institutions and to support the Ombudsman office in the monitoring of child rights violations. It has also addressed the need for the modernization of the policy and legal framework, by including in its design and implementation work of actions aimed to support the government revise or adopt new legislation, notably the Law on the Rights of the Child, the Marriage and Family Code, the Law on National Preventive Mechanism, the Law on Domestic Violence, Regulation on Commission on Minors, Regulations on Infant Homes, Regulations on the status of social workers at primary health care level.

The Project has also responded to the emerging evidence of significant violence against children in schools and institutions, by implementing a violence prevention model in a pilot region and by providing expert inputs to the draft strategic paper on violence prevention. The piloting has been triggered by two studies with alarming evidence, of which one finalised in the second year of Project implementation, thus pilot work has not been initially planned in the Project.

The Project has been fully in line with international human rights standards ratified by Kazakhstan, specifically with the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child (CRC) – see box below; the UN Convention Against Torture (CAT) - by providing inputs for the development of the National Preventive Mechanism; and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) - by promoting gender equality, documenting gender equality gaps among vulnerable mothers and providing evidence on girls trafficking and prostitution (issues of continuous concern in Kazakhstan42). Box 2 illustrates the Project response to a number of recommendations of the Committee for the CRC.

**Box 2. Response of the Project to CRC Concluding Observations for Kazakhstan, 2007**

- **CRC Recommendations**: Vest the Ombudsman office with a clear mandate to monitor children’s rights and implement the Convention at national, regional and local levels in accordance with the Principles relating to the status of National Human Rights Institutions; intensify cooperation and collaboration with NGOs and civil society in the implementation and monitoring of the Convention  
  **Project Response**: technical assistance, training and tools provided to Ombudsman office and its partners (media, child rights NGOs) to increase the effectiveness of the monitoring system of child rights violations at national level and in the regions and the efficiency in ever-increasing complaints processing, referral, reporting and follow-up.

- **CRC Recommendation**: Ensure availability of disaggregated data in important areas of the Convention such as on child abuse and neglect, children involved in sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking  
  **Project Response**: independent assessments, studies and research providing disaggregated data on children’s vulnerability to abuse, exploitation and trafficking, violence against children in schools and institutions

- **CRC Recommendations**: Raise teachers’ awareness for peer mobbing and bullying in classroom and school and encourage schools to adopt action plans for combating these rude and humiliating behaviours; Promote non-violent, positive, participatory methods of childrearing and education and of knowledge among children of their right to protection from all forms of corporal punishment; Explicitly prohibit in law corporal punishment of children in all settings  
  **Project Response**: implementation of a violence prevention model in 10 pilot schools and institutions in East Kazakhstan region, training of teachers, school staff and staff in institutions in

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42 Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, "Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan", CEDAW / CKAZ/C/3-4, 10 March 2014, art.21
the area of violence prevention, development of manuals and curricula to support the implementation of the model, provision of comments and recommendations for the improvement of the legal framework in the area

- **CRC Recommendations:** Continue awareness-raising activities on parenting issues in order to prevent and reduce separation of children from their families and their abandonment; increase the number of well trained professionals, including social workers, providing assistance to parents in the upbringing of their children; develop community-based and family-focused services for families at risk; develop alternative care policies, regulations and practices placing greater emphasis on family reunification of children or placement in family-like environment of children without parental care

  **Project Response:** modelling of new child abandonment prevention services for children under the age of three in several pilot regions, training of professionals (social workers included) and provision of technical assistance for its implementation, development of toolkits and working procedures, technical assistance for the transformation of centres for the adaptation of minors and for expanding the role of infant homes towards more family-type services and encouragement of family reunification; public information campaign on prevention of institutionalisation

- **CRC Recommendation:** Develop a care plan for every child in need of out-of-family care, monitor the status of children placed in kinship homes, foster care, pre-adoptive homes and other care institutions; develop and implement an effective system for reporting of cases of child abuse and neglect

  **Project Response:** modelling of integrated child protection services in three regions, development of coordination, gatekeeping and referral mechanisms and procedures, promotion of case management in the work of child protection services at akimat level (requiring the development of individualised care plans for each child in need), development of case management manual and training of professionals

*Source: Based on Committee on the Rights of the Child, "Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Kazakhstan", Forty-fifth session, CRC/C/KAZ/CO/3, 8 June 2007*

The Project was relevant for the priorities of **UNICEF Kazakhstan**, implementing body, as highlighted in the Country Programme Action Plan 2010-2015 (outcome 1, outputs 1.1 - policy and legal framework, 1.2 - data collection, 1.3 - children with special needs) and by UN family generally according to UNDAF 2010-2015 (outcome 3, outputs 1.2 - Ombudsman and 3.1 - policies for better well-being of children). Based on the interview with the Norwegian Embassy officials, it was also relevant for the priorities of the **Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs** in Central Asia region, the main donor of the Project, in the area of good governance, democracy, human rights and gender equality.

Most importantly, the Project was relevant to the **needs of children** (abused, exploited, separated from their family), as rights-holders, **and their families** (both duty-bearers and rights-holders), as it was designed on the basis of a wide range of in-depth children’s needs assessments and studies (e.g. reviews of child protection system – 2010; studies on violence against children in state-run residential institutions and in schools – 2011, 2013; studies on suicide, child vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation - 2012, etc.) and reports of the Ombudsman’s office, which was directly involved in the design of the Project. As concluded by a key informant, “*Child rights were relevant for yesterday, are for today and will be for tomorrow*”, indicating the fact that any effort directed towards the realisation of children’s rights, such as the Project under evaluation, are very much welcomed by the country.

An important part of the Project targeted children under the age of three at risk of being abandoned by their parents due to difficult life situation. In this respect, the Project developed a model of child abandonment prevention services within the primary health care system and tested it in three regions. **The selection of vulnerable children under the age of three as final beneficiaries of the modelled services was a correct and most relevant decision** for the needs of these vulnerable group as life of children abandoned by their mother right after the birth is of a great concern.
“Child physical and mental development experts and any interested parent know excellently that babyhood is featured with the rapidest development. Not only months play a key role in child growing up but weeks and days as well. Receiving lots and lots of new information, a brain of an infant actively builds up neuronal axons due to which its weight is redoubled by three-four months and tripled by one year. Brain growth is insignificant after one and half years. Multiply complicated brain structure is a physiological basis for further mental, emotional and behavioural development of a child. Baby emotions that have been actively studied over the last twenty-thirty years are vital both for physical and mental health of the child and for functioning of the whole emotional sphere of a person through his life. Very first year of life of the child is important because a special mental formation is developed, namely emotional devotion, love for a close adult that fills the baby’s life with a joy and meaning, and promotes his/her development. After being abandoned children became unadopted and they have to live in hospital wards for the first several months of their life immobile and deprived of walks, any events, toys, communication and hugs resulting in significant development retardation as compared to their “family” peers. They feel major depression with reduction of all vital functions and level of physical health” (UNICEF Agreement no. PCA/2012/07 with Family clinic Demeu Astana, page 1).

Studies show that the risk of being deprived of parental care within one year is the greatest for newly born babies; it is almost three times as high as for children of all other age groups combined (see Figure 5 below), indicating that the Project took a right decision to focus on these children.

**Figure 5. Probability of losing parental care within one year in Kazakhstan, 2006-2008**

(number of cases per 100,000 children of relevant age)


There was however an instance when the relevance of the Project was lower than expected. Although a UNICEF study in 2011 highlighted very high incidence of violence in institutions in Kazakhstan, reservations have been expressed by several professionals during interviews and discussion groups concerning the relevance of the violence prevention actions piloted by the Project in residential care institutions of East Kazakhstan. While violence against children in schools and institutions is definitely an issue which requires urgent redress, the application of the same model (manual, primary prevention curriculum, tools and templates, staff training programme, etc.) to both schools and institutions (except referral mechanism) has been challenged by various local stakeholders. According to UNICEF, joint training of the institutions and school staff, based on the same manual and training programme, was aimed to improve interaction and buy-in of institutions. Feedback from the field phase show no evidence of results in this respect. It is the belief of the evaluation team that the prevention programme would have required a better tailoring to the peculiarities of institutions, based

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on thorough consultation and engagement of the management and staff in the design of the model, in order to secure its relevance. Indeed, UNICEF has confirmed that the piloting of violence prevention in institutions was an immediate response to the situation that was revealed by the study on violence against children in institutions, leaving insufficient time for preparation and participation of the institutions in the design of the programme, beyond its mere presentation.

It is important to mention that overall the Project remained relevant in time, as demonstrated by several reports, policy documents and strategies adopted or under implementation during its lifetime. As mentioned by Ombudsman in his 2012 Annual Report: "Thus, we should note that issues of protection of child rights require the most keen attention and consistent work of the government organs in cooperation with international organizations and NGOs. The Commissioner’s office will continue its work in that direction". A revealing example is presented in the box below, with highlights of areas of Project compatibility with a major strategic document adopted by the country in 2013.

Box 3. Nationwide Concept of Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030 (2013):

"...the integrated provision of social services will ensure close cooperation and coordination between government agencies whose competences include the provision of social services. The citizen, who signs a social contract, will be provided with the state comprehensive and integrated support rendered with the help a “single window” principle” (page 31)

"By 2025, a model of integrated social services and social aid provision will be created with the aim to prevent social disadvantage. The new model will use the principle of individual and complex care for citizens in need and their families. For that purpose, a coordination mechanism will be developed for social workers in education, health, social protection and other areas, which will allow the provision of social services to citizens in need by means of a “single window”. By 2020, the integrated model of social services will be tested in several pilot regions. Implementation of the integrated model will enhance the targeting of the integrated social services, types of aid, and will increase the coverage of families in need with such measures of support, and as a consequence, will reduce poverty and social disadvantage, and strengthen the family". (page 33)

"An effective intergovernmental cooperation to provide the help to children in difficult life situation, including children with disabilities in development. The practical mechanism is created to ensure children’s rights are protected, who became the victims of violence and abuse, human trafficking, human labour. The special attention will paid to the settlement of social ill-being of children, the prevention of domestic violence and child rights and interests protection in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child". (page 33)

The findings of various studies and analyses carried out during the implementation of the Project also indicate that it remained relevant in time, i.e. UNICEF, "Child Well-Being in Kazakhstan", prepared by Roelen, K., Gassmann, F., Maastricht University, July 2012; UNICEF, "Analysis of the Situation of Children and Women in Kazakhstan", 2013; UNICEF, Public Opinion Research Institute, "Public Opinion Research on Establishment of Inclusive Society for Disabled Children and Preventive Measures against Abandonment of Infants", Astana 2013.

4.2 Effectiveness

Analysis of Project effectiveness has been a challenging exercise for the evaluation team given the lack of baselines and targets for many indicators set in the DoA, the lack of a ToC developed at the beginning of the Project and insufficient detail and disaggregation of data on achievements in the

progress reports of the Project. Apart from the violence prevention activities for which a detailed monitoring and evaluation matrix with baselines and targets was developed, the PCAs concluded by UNICEF with local contractors for the implementation and monitoring of pilot models included targets in the respective logframes only at the level of the ‘purpose’; reporting back to UNICEF was heterogeneous in terms of structure, content of information and depth of analysis, possibly due to limited capacities of partners and significant staff turnover.

Analysis of effectiveness was also challenging due to the following additional factors:
- an improper selection of indicators in the DoA i.e. some impact or outcome indicators are actually output indicators\(^45\);
- indicators aimed to measure impact in progress reports were set to measure outcomes in the DoA\(^46\);
- in progress reports, in some cases, the same indicators were used to measure both outcomes and outputs\(^47\);
- incomplete choice of indicators\(^48\);
- different sets of indicators monitored during the implementation of the Project as compared to those established in the DoA.

Annex 7 presents an overview of the indicators set in the DoA and those monitored by the progress reports. Suggestions for indicators which might have been more appropriate to measure the impact, outcomes and outputs of the Project are also included, in the hope that they could steer reflection within the UNICEF team when new projects are to be designed in the future.

The ToC as well as a part of missing baseline and target information have been (re)constructed together with the UNICEF project team and, to a certain extent, with other stakeholders during the field phase as well as on the basis of review of a massive amount of secondary information to fill in the data gaps on achievements. Still, there are information gaps, as illustrated in Annex 8, which presents a comprehensive overview of the achievements of the Project in relation to its intended results, target groups and final beneficiaries. This section of the evaluation report will discuss only those achievements related to the envisaged Project outcomes and outputs.

The Project planned to achieve two outcomes and several outputs.

**Outcome 1: Child rights violations monitoring and complaints from regions are effectively addressed by the Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office**

**Output 1.1 - Recommendations from studies on preventing violence against children in public settings and schools, in-country child trafficking and child prostitution provided to the Government**

\(^{45}\) E.g. ‘Knowledge on vulnerable children and their challenges brought to the government’s attention’ (DoA) or ‘Study on vulnerable children conducted’ (progress reports), and ‘No of capacity building trainings for Ombudsman staff conducted’ (progress reports) are not impact, respectively outcome indicators, but rather output indicators.

\(^{46}\) E.g. ‘Data management on the most vulnerable children’, ‘No. of staff with revised functions’, ‘No. of new child protection services’ are impact indicators in DoA and outcome indicators in the progress reports.

\(^{47}\) E.g. ‘No of complaints received directly from children and processed’ is both an outcome and output indicator in the progress reports. The same with ‘Two models incorporate all necessary components for the delivery of integrated child protection services’ and ‘No. of children placed into family care or reunited with their families’.

\(^{48}\) E.g. for outcome 1, to measure how effectively the Ombudsman’s office is addressing child rights violations and complaints, it is not enough to consider the number of processed complaints, the number of capacity building trainings for the staff, the toolkits and studies carried out, but especially how many child rights violations were identified by the Ombudsman office itself, how many cases of child rights violations were monitored, what was the resolution rate of child rights violation cases following recommendations issued by the Ombudsman, what was the average duration of case resolution, what were the learning outcomes following the trainings, etc.
This output has been fully achieved by the development, dissemination and presentation to the Government of recommendations deriving from three studies carried out by UNICEF consultants on the issues of violence in state-run residential institutions and in schools (2011\textsuperscript{49}, respectively 2013\textsuperscript{50}) as well as on children’s vulnerabilities to risky behaviours, sexual exploitation and trafficking (2012\textsuperscript{51}).

The evidence and recommendations of these studies have been used for the adjustment of the existing legal framework in line with international human rights standards, development of a new brand strategy on the prevention and redress of violence against children, investigation by the Prosecutor General of some violence cases and testing of a violence prevention model in East Kazakhstan region which was not initially foreseen in the Project.

The study on violence against children in schools, demonstrating that 66% of 4,207 interviewed children experienced school violence or discrimination, provided a better understanding of the scale and the need for strategically planned independent monitoring and referrals in the system and policies. Violence prevention in educational settings was highlighted as a priority by the Ministry of Education and Science, i.e. the Committee on the Protection of Children’s Rights issued directives for local authorities to prevent violence against children. Very importantly, these studies have informed the new Law on the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under OPCAT, adopted in 2013, in the area of child rights monitoring, which resulted in the inclusion of several types of children’s institutions (centres for the adaptation of minors, special education institutions and educational institutions with special detention regime) within the NPM’s monitoring process and in the opening of access to independent experts and CSOs to closed-access institutions to conduct monitoring. Currently, the inclusion within NPM of educational institutions for orphans and children without parental, and of children’s institutions in the health and social protection is under discussion, based on the recommendations of independent EU and UNICEF international experts\textsuperscript{52}.

The study on child sexual exploitation and trafficking has revealed the gravity of the situation, with 209 identified cases in 2012 as compared to zero cases recorded in the national statistics. It signalled flaws in the identification and reporting system as well as the urgent need to undertake prevention and redress measures. As a result a separate article on internal trafficking was introduced in the draft criminal code of Kazakhstan. The 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report of the U.S. Department of State also acknowledges the issue of domestic trafficking and highlights some of the other key findings from the conducted study\textsuperscript{53}. Confidential letters on outcomes of the study were sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Prosecutor General’s Office by the Ombudsman.

According to opinions expressed by various key informants, these studies will further contribute to the development of an integrated child protection system that can adequately prevent, identify, and respond to child abuse, neglect and exploitation, torture and maltreatment.

In addition, the improvements registered in the data collection and coordination systems at the level of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Republican Centre for Health Development and the Agency of Statistics (for instance, collection of data on the number of children under the age of three entering residential care yearly, with gender disaggregation, number of children with disability under

\textsuperscript{49} Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Kazakhstan and UNICEF, “Violence Against Children in State-Run Residential Institutions in Kazakhstan: An Assessment”, prepared by Haarr, R. N., May 2011. This study has been produced before the Project started, but its results were presented to the Government and disseminated as an activity of the Project.


\textsuperscript{53} http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rs/lprp/2013/index.htm, accessed 16 April 2014

the age of three residing in institutions, closer cooperation of the Agency of Statistics with line ministries and improved inputs to TransMonee database on children in institutions etc.) will provide better evidence on various vulnerability profiles to inform policy-making in the future.

**Output 1.2 - Changes made to the Marriage and Family Code and other legal documents to address child rights violations**

During the lifetime of the Project, an important number of contributions have been made by UNICEF and hired consultants for the modernization of the legal framework and its alignment with international standards and commitments of the country. In this respect, it is worth noting the reviews and recommendations provided for the amendment of the draft Marriage and Family Code, Law on Specialized Social Services and implementation standards, monitoring and coordination functions, Government 5-step plan, draft Law on National Prevention Mechanism (NPM), legislation and draft strategy on violence against children, Draft Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes, Regulations on Infant homes and social workers, Regulations on foster care, draft Law on improving the system of juvenile justice, etc. Table 8 below provides an overview of the Project contribution to the development of the legal and policy framework.

**Table 8. Project Contribution to the Improvement of the Legal and Policy Framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of law/policy document</th>
<th>Project contribution</th>
<th>Stage of adoption by the Government/Parliament</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-steps to the integrated delivery of specialized social services</td>
<td>Revision in June-Dec 2012</td>
<td>Revised and adopted by four ministries (health, education, social welfare and internal affairs) in July 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on specialized social services</td>
<td>Review and recommendations</td>
<td>30% recommendations accepted by the MoLSPP to be considered in revised law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation on the social workers in health</td>
<td>Design and comments</td>
<td>Adopted in December 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on NPM (considerations for children)</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td>Adopted in July 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on public monitoring (on conditions and treatment of children in institutions)</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030 Social development Concept</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td>Adopted in December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of legislation on violence against children</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft strategy on violence against children and ill-treatment</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td>In progress in the Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulations on job description of the staff in schools</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td>In progress in the Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and Marriage Code</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td>Review of the Code is planned in 2014 in the Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal, criminal procedural, executive codes</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td>In progress, 1st reading in the Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on social benefits and taxes</td>
<td>Provision of examples from other countries</td>
<td>Law on taxation adopted in 2013. Law on benefits is in progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on Youth (youth participation and access to support services of vulnerable adolescents and youth)</td>
<td>Comments and recommendations</td>
<td>In progress in the Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation on the infant homes</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>In progress in the Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the Parliament and Ombudsman’s office representatives interviewed by the evaluation team, much appreciated was to the Project support in the revision of the Family and Marriage Code and in the development of the Law on National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under OPCAT. Contribution of UNICEF is considered to have been instrumental in aligning the Code to the international norms for adoption processes and in clarifying and introducing new concepts and terms related to child care, alternative family-based solutions and surrogacy. As far as the other legal document is concerned, the NPM Law was adopted in 2013, embedding most of the recommendations provided by the Project.

According to interviews with the Parliament, Government and UNICEF, over 30% of recommendations have been approved to be introduced in the revision of the legislation concerning specialized social services, which is an important achievement.

The Project has also supported the process of developing the 2030 Social Development Concept (adopted in 2013), an overarching policy paper, by introducing a clear focus on the child rights and equity agenda and thus contributing to the acceleration of efforts to achieve MDGs and to address outstanding observations of the Committee of the Rights of the Child (2007). In the document one could easily distinguish several action priorities in the area of child protection, such as Priority 3. Integrated support for motherhood and childhood and related, action 3 “Develop mechanisms for interagency cooperation in providing assistance to children in difficult situations, including children with developmental disabilities” which clearly indicates the taking over of Project philosophy and piloted approaches in a policy document of major importance.

The Project provided UNICEF national partners in the Government and Parliament, critical duty-bearers, a very valuable ‘library’ of critical reviews, presentations of international practices, commentaries and recommendations that could be further used in the modernization of the domestic legal and policy framework and as an informed discussion basis for policy-makers and professionals.

**Output 1.3 - Increased access of children to the Ombudsman’s Office**

This output has been only partially achieved, as no complaints were received so far directly from the children, as planned by the Project (see project indicators, Annex 7). According to the annual reports of the Ombudsman, the intake of child rights complaints increased from 43 in 2010 to 94 (23 made orally) in 2012; still, none of them have been submitted by the children themselves, but by parents and relatives on their behalf, and the situation remained the same in 2013. The evaluation was informed that according to the Civil Code of Kazakhstan, children do not have legal capacity to submit complaints; the Ombudsman’s office was ready to receive complaints directly from children, despite these legal limitation. These issues (legal limitations, reservation of children to approach the Ombudsman, possible insufficient information among children, etc.) need to be reviewed in the coming period, as recommended by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2007: “Furthermore, the Committee recommends the State party to provide the Ombudsman Office with the human and financial resources necessary to carry out its mandate and ensure that the Office has a child accessible complaint mechanism” and also signalled more recently by child rights NGOs in their 2012 alternative report, i.e. the Ombudsman “has no complaint submission mechanism accessible for children”.

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54 Committee on the Rights of the Child, “Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Kazakhstan”, Forty-fifth session, CRC/C/KAZ/CO/3, 8 June 2007, page 4
Apart from legal issues, there might be other hindering reasons such as the lack of awareness among children about the possibility to submit complaints, especially since the Ombudsman does not have a regional presence in the country or, as several interviewed NGOs and media representatives mentioned, a possible lack of trust of children in an institution considered to be 'too far, too official' for them. It is nevertheless hoped that the Ombudsman's child-friendly web-page and distribution of child-friendly communication materials, as well as partnerships with media (production companies, media professionals) and NGOs, which have been strengthened with the Project support (trainings, joint monitoring visits to institutions within the NPM, joint events) will help raise the awareness of children and encourage them to get in direct contact with the Ombudsman. An important challenge to be addressed will be the outreach of children in remote and rural areas, where access to internet is poor and where information gets usually with much more difficulty. In this respect, media outreach events and partnership with grass-roots NGOs could provide a valuable support.

In general, the capacity of Ombudsman to address child rights violations and complaints from the region has been improved considerably (outcome 1 of the Project) and its effectiveness would have been much higher if it got an independent status and if a (deputy) Ombudsman for children was appointed. These two opinions are shared by all key stakeholders interviewed during the field phase of the evaluation; they are also highlighted in the National Human Rights Action Plan 2009-2012, in the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in several independent assessments and reports of international experts; it constitutes an issue of discussion at the Parliamentary conference planned for 28 May 2014.

Still, as a result of Project support and due to excellent cooperation of UNICEF with Ombudsman's Office, a number of significant results have been achieved, contributing to the improvement of children’s rights monitoring system in the country and tackling of children’s rights violations:

- completion of two studies on violence in schools and on child exploitation and trafficking mentioned above and presentation to key stakeholders in Government, Parliament and the general public [benefit]: awareness raising among policy-makers, professionals, media and the public on violence against children and evidence-based recommendations to inform policy making;

- four capacity building courses and workshops for Ombudsman’s staff (20 trainees, 36 training hours) on complaints handling mechanism, monitoring of children’s rights and annual reporting [benefit]: timely, increased efficiency in handling an ever increasing number of complaints on child rights’ violations (43 in 2010, 94 in 2012)[56]; an almost double number of visits to child institutions (10 in 2010, 18 in 2012)[57]; much better reporting on child rights in annual reports: compared to 2010, the annual reports include now a separate chapter on children’s rights, highlighting issues signalled by the complaints on child rights violations, gaps in the national legislation on preventing torture and ill-treatment against children, results of monitoring visits to child institutions and challenges faced by children with disabilities. Figures reported in the annual reports are however not disaggregated by type of complaint, gender, age, disability, region, an issue which require remedial action in the future;

- development and testing of comprehensive monitoring tools on child rights (Toolkit on Monitoring Child Institutions, Training Manual on children's rights for monitors) [benefit]: Ombudsman’s staff and its partners are now better equipped with the necessary working tools to prevent and identify child rights violations, process the complaints, refer cases and provide recommendations to competent bodies, follow-up on cases referred to protect and reduce the vulnerabilities of children, adolescents and youth;

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56 Annual Reports of Ombudsman 2010 and 2012
57 ibid

- training and mobilisation of 10 child rights NGOs for independent monitoring of children’s institutions and children’s rights generally (27 trainees, 22 training hours) \[ \text{benefit: better prevention of suicide, violence, exploitation and neglect, better identification of child rights violations;} \]
- strengthening Ombudsman’s cooperation with media in the area of children’s rights; capacity building for media professionals and production companies (50 trainees, 24 training hours) \[ \text{benefit: regular media monitoring on violations of child rights; better identification of child rights violations.} \]

The training events for NGOs and media were organised by the Ombudsman’s office together with the international consultants and trainers contracted by the Project. Child rights monitoring, communication with children, understanding sensitive issues, ethical principles in reporting on child issues, communicating about violence, addressing complaints were among the training topics. The feedback received from NGOs and media professionals during the interviews was positive: ‘opened our eyes on totally unexpected issues’, ‘deepened our understanding on vulnerabilities of children’, ‘taught us how to be ethical in our reporting’, ‘practical, interesting, kept us alert during entire training’.

**Outcome 2: Developed practical models of integrated child protection mechanism at local level are ready for national replication**

At the time of this evaluation (three months before the end of the Project), outcome 2 has been only partially achieved. Five models of child protection services have been developed, tested and implemented in three pilot regions and nine different services have been introduced in the area of child abandonment prevention, work of transformed centres of adaptation of minors and violence prevention in schools and institutions; however, they are not ready for national replication at this stage.

Two out of five models (child abandonment prevention in Semey and violence prevention in East Kazakhstan) have started in September last year and are still under implementation, other two (child abandonment prevention in Astana, Karaganda and Shakhtinsk cities) are not fully documented yet, while MoLSPP’s assessment and recommendations for the replication of the integrated child protection services model within the 5-step plan are still pending. According to UNICEF Country office, the next MICS and the repetition of the study on violence against children next year will bring about the needed evidence for national scaling-up. Nevertheless, some preliminary assessment of their replicability potential could be done based on achievements to date and analysis of favouring and blocking factors. These issues are discussed later on in the report under each Project output.

Although not ready for national replication, the testing of the models has already yielded important results and lessons learnt that are worth being presented. Table 9 provides an overview of the design, implementation process and scaling-up calendar, in the understanding of the evaluation team.

**Table 9. Modelling Innovative Approaches in Child Protection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>Integrated child protection mechanism (1 model)</th>
<th>Child abandonment prevention (3 models)</th>
<th>Violence Prevention and Response (1 model)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Guidelines for conducting pilot initiatives</td>
<td>Available, internal guidelines UNICEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Template for model description</td>
<td>Available, annex to the internal guidelines UNICEF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Yes, developed by int’l consultants</td>
<td>Yes, developed by int’l consultants</td>
<td>Yes, developed by int’l consultants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toolkits (manuals, guidelines,</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

etc.) etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Strategy document for the establishment of integrated model for provision of specialized social services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Handbook: Case management in social work at the local level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regulation of inter-agency commission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protocol &amp; procedure for referral &amp; monitoring of children 0-3 at risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Handbook: Case management in social work at the local level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Typical operation algorithm on prevention of abandonment of children in the age of 0-3 years old</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mechanism of professional supervision for social workers and psychologists in the health care system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Curriculum “Prevention of abandonment of children in the age of 0-3 years”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regulation Resource Centre for specialized social services in health care system for Semey city</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Referral mechanisms for responding to cases of violence in residential institutions for children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manual for the model programme to prevent and respond to school violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Primary violence prevention curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Monitoring and reporting templates (quantitative, qualitative) | Partially, available for PCA reporting |
| Template/Guidelines for documenting practices | Not available |
| Participation of children, families and communities in the design* | Partially (consultations with akimat authorities and specialists) |
| Process | |
| Testing | Yes East Kazakhstan, Karaganda, Astana |
| Yes East Kazakhstan (Semey city), Karaganda (Karaganda city, Shahtinsk city), Astana |
| Yes East Kazakhstan (Ust Kamenogorsk, Semey, Ridder, Srebryansk) |
| Training for professionals and akimats | Yes Topics: integrated approach to the delivery of social services, social work, case management |
| Yes Topics: integrated approach to social services delivery, social work, case management, gate keeping and child abandonment prevention |
| Yes Topics: school violence prevention, key tools to support school safety teams and teachers, M&E techniques |
| 145 trainees 40 training hours | 155 trainees 64 training hours |
| 40 trainees 24 training hours |
| Implementation | Akimat Inter-agency commissions |
| Local contractors PCAs (Demeu Centre - Astana, NGO Sem’ya - Karaganda) |
| 7 pilot schools |
| 3 pilot children’s institutions |
| Monitoring | Inter-agency commissions (regular reports to MoLSPP, UNICEF) |
| UNICEF/Local contractors (progress reports to UNICEF, according to PCA) |
| UNICEF/Local contractor PCA (East Kazakhstan State University) |
| Consultancy | Int’l contractor ** |
| Int’l contractor |
| Int’l contractor |
| Scaling up | |
| Documenting local practices | Int’l contractor **, mid 2014 |
| Local contractors, 2013 |
| Int’l contractor, mid 2014 |
| Evaluation*** | 2014/2015 |
| 2014/2015 |
| 2014/2015 |
| Policy recommendations, presentation | 2014, by the MoLSPP |
| 2014 |
| 2014/2015 |

* As requested by UNICEF Kazakhstan, “Office internal guidelines for conducting pilot initiatives” ** Based on the ToR of contractors *** As per information received from UNICEF country office

As seen in the table above, there are some missing monitoring templates to document the process as well as specific guidelines. The progress reports of the akimat inter-agency commissions to the MoLSPP are primarily descriptive, with little analysis and disparate figures. The progress reports of local contractors on piloted models are heterogeneous in terms of structure, level and depth of
analysis and presentation of figures. These are significant barriers for documenting the results of the piloted model. A similar concern was raised by the audit report of the UNICEF country office carried out last year. The office has already started to take action to address this area, by incorporating training on documentation into the office training plan for 2013 and by approaching the Regional Office for assistance to identify an appropriate trainer. UNICEF will also need to provide more guidance to experts in the future to ensure a unitary approach to documenting the models.

The evaluation team has identified only partial evidence of participation of children, families and communities in the design of the models, which might explain some loss of relevance (violence prevention model in institutions), ownership (integrated child protection services mechanism) and effectiveness (child abandonment prevention model). It is true that the models were based on previous thorough assessments. They were also presented to the institutions and professionals aimed to put them in practice. Still, the discussion groups with akimats, the focus groups with professionals and the interviews with beneficiary mothers during the field phase as well as the project documentation reviewed by the evaluation team indicate that the design was rather top-down and there was insufficient consultation and explanation provided at the local level to ensure buy-in of the implementing bodies, apart from the presentation of the models. These issues are discussed below, under each project output corresponding to outcome 2.

Output 2.1 - Models of integrated child protection services, violence identification and referral mechanisms developed, tested and implemented in two oblasts

This output has been fully achieved. One model of integrated child protection mechanism and one model of violence prevention have been developed, tested and implemented in three pilot regions (East Kazakhstan, Karaganda and Astana), respectively in East Kazakhstan region.

The model of integrated child protection mechanism

The overall aim was to reduce the institutionalisation of children and address fragmentation of the child protection system by introducing case management-based identification, referral and response mechanisms in the work of responsible akimat departments (education, health, social protection, etc.) and to align their functions by testing an integrated delivery of specialized social services. The model was based on a mapping of the child protection system and possible scenarios for reforming the statutory services, carried out by UNICEF in 2010. Four line ministries (Health, Social Protection, Education and Internal Affairs) adopted the 5-step action plan aimed to pilot an integrated child protection mechanism drawing upon the implementation of the Law on specialized social services (2008). The plan included the establishment of inter-agency commissions at the national (ministry), regional and local level to promote training of social workers, particularly for carrying out the assessment of families, and to create a system of comprehensive inter-agency planning for children. In 2011, the action plan started implementation in three pilot areas, i.e. Astana city, Karaganda region and East Kazakhstan region (where inter-agency commissions were set up), a process which was supported by the Project through intensive trainings (145 trainees, 40 training hours, see Table 9), provision of top level international expertise, development of manuals, toolkits and working protocols, awareness raising and exchange of experience.

From the very beginning, the approach was not too popular at local level, where most rayons (districts) and cities opposed to set up inter-agency commissions in the belief that the existing Commissions on

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Minors (CoM59) could carry out this new function. In reality, the CoM lacked skills in engaging with the families and were often taking a punishing, rather than a supportive approach. The Project therefore invested important resources for the adjustment of their responsibilities (gatekeeping), membership (inclusion of NGOs and other professionals directly working with families and children in difficult life situations) and working methodologies (according to the concept of ‘filter’ and ‘single window’). It also invested in capacity building for taking over the new roles, integration of the CoM into the system of prevention of child family separation; it supported raising awareness on the utmost need for an efficient gatekeeping, referral and oversight system for all children alleged to be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. In Astana city and Semey city (East Kazakhstan), new inter-agency commissions were set up and the Project assisted the functioning and training of their members.

According to feedback from discussion groups with akimat representatives, the approach was perceived to be somehow imposed ‘from the centre’, a kind of ‘command and control’ approach, which raised reservations in putting it into practice because of fear of criticism, especially since not much support and guidance were provided by the national inter-agency commission. The evaluation team has not identified any significant impact of this commission on the implementation of the 5-step plan in any of the three pilot regions. The Project has therefore functioned in difficult circumstances, facing big challenges in implementing the philosophy of the model, developing ownership and commitment for new working methods and procedures at local and regional levels, on the background of frequent institutional changes related to the child protection coordination function at regional level (explained in the Context section of the report) and lack of a comprehensive strategic document on child care to guide the reform process at all layers of the government. Although not entirely successful, the Project achieved a number of important results and UNICEF and Project consultants have to be commended for their unceasing commitment and energy to introduce change at local level, to challenge mindsets, to put people together and partner with other colleagues in the system and other services in order to serve best the children at risk. The recent positive experience in Semey, where a new commission was recently set up and where local commitment is strong according to the international consultant who is assisting it, shows that the model has chances to succeed.

There is a large body of international literature and experience concerning gatekeeping, referral and oversight roles and benefits, and the approach piloted by the Project has been fully in line with international best practices, showing that the decision of UNICEF and its partners to implement this model was a correct one. Although the inter-agency commissions are no longer functioning in the regions60 (5-step plan was piloted until December 2013 by Government decree), the CoMs are more open than in the past to collaborate with various services, departments and NGOs when vulnerable cases are brought to their attention. Case management has been primarily introduced in the primary health care with the aim of child abandonment prevention (as explained later on in the report) and in the work of transformed centres for the adaptation of minors, where staff functions have been revised in the case of 728 professionals; despite the fact that many improvements are still needed, key informants consulted for this evaluation do all agree that more and more professionals are aware of its benefit and the need to use it. The basics of case management has been also introduced in the curriculum of social work students at East Kazakhstan State University and Semey Medical University, thus preparing the ground for a more informed and better educated cadre of social workers in the future. The manuals, toolkits and protocols developed by the Project are perceived to be of a very good quality, user friendly, with practical guidance and including ready-made working templates.

The evaluation team considers that the model was based on a correct philosophy and

59 Multidisciplinary advisory board for decisions on the abolishment of parental rights
60 Except Semey, where the commission has been set up very recently
international practice and it obtained important achievements to date, but it requires to better engage the akimats and ensure their full, long-term commitment, be much better documented and be evaluated, especially in terms of its cost-effectiveness, before scaling up. The model requires further work to overcome an important number of bottlenecks at system and mindset level as well as dedicated capacity building programme for Guardianship and Care Units (functioning as CoM executive units) in the use of case management, early identification of vulnerable cases, better assessment, monitoring and follow-up. Lack of any minimum requirements for regular continuous training of social workers undertaking the role of case managers and lack of any supervision of social workers in the existing quality standards need to be also addressed as well as the fragmentation or duplication of services due to separate, disjointed databases of akimat departments. Last but not least, underdevelopment of community-based services could also impede an efficient prevention of child institutionalisation.

The model of violence prevention

Following the release and presentation of the results of two studies conducted by UNICEF in partnership with Ombudsman office on violence against children in state-run institutions (2011) and in schools (2013, part of the Project), the Government decided to implement with the support of the Project a pilot violence prevention model in seven schools and three institutions situated in East Kazakhstan region (Ust-Kamenogorsk, Semey, Ridder, Serebryansk), selected by the akimat education department. This activity has not been initially planned in this format, although some basis has been provided in the DoA through the foreseen study on violence in schools and the establishment of a mechanism to identify, refer and respond to abuse and maltreatment of children. UNICEF has responded to emerging evidence and request from East Kazakhstan region to do that pilot and mobilised own additional funding for its testing. The model started its implementation in September 2013 and is currently under implementation. Its aim is to prevent and address violence against children, by equipping teachers, students and parents with knowledge and tools to better understand their roles and identify early signs of abuse, physical violence, extortion of money, sexual abuse, cyber-bullying, discrimination and maltreatment. The model has also established an out-of-school referral mechanism enabling registration and timely response to allegations of violence against children and linking the regional activities in East Kazakhstan to the Ombudsman’s office via the regional NPM monitoring group. The model is focused “on creating and sustaining primary (school-wide), secondary (targeted), and tertiary (individualized) systems of support that make desired behaviour more functional and desirable to all students and school personnel, and makes undesirable behaviour less effective, efficient, and relevant. The goal is to create a positive school environment and climate for all students” (Manual to prevent and respond to school violence, page 3).

The model has successfully engaged school safety teams, parents, academia and NGOs in the identification, remedy, response and rehabilitation of the violent situations in pilot schools and residential care institutions. To build the capacity of schools and institutions (management and staff) to implement the model, training courses have been provided for 40 principals, teachers and pedagogues (24 training hours, see Table 9) composing the newly set up school/institution safety teams in parallel with the development of referral mechanisms for responding to cases of violence in residential institutions for children, a manual to prevent and respond to school violence and a primary violence prevention curriculum to be used by the teaching staff during the regular two 20-minute teaching sessions of students per week. The trainings functioned in a Training-of-Trainers system, whereby the graduates have provided, at their turn, training to their peers in the school. The model

61 Bilson, A., “The Development of Gate-Keeping functions in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS. Lessons from Bulgaria, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, University of Central Lancashire and UNICEF”, pages 12-13
was intended to cover only children from 3rd to 7th grade, but it was expanded to other grades as well at the decision of the school, meaning an increase of coverage from 3,000 to 6,348 students.

Implementation of the model went rather smoothly in the pilot schools and with much more difficulty in the pilot institutions. Monitoring reports produced by East Kazakhstan State University, the local partner contracted by UNICEF to monitor the implementation of the model, indicate that a large proportion of pilot schools and institutions (77%) have designed an action plan to prevent and fight against violence and all have set a school mission for violence prevention, behavioural expectations and matrix to follow them up. 9 in 10 schools and institutions teach the primary prevention curriculum and report on violence cases based on filling the forms provided in the manual. The secondary prevention system functions in 90% of cases, while the tertiary prevention system is in place in 55% of cases (where it was needed to use it). A referral system to non-education organisations and support services functions in 80% of schools and institutions.

Although in a rather early stage, the implementation of the violence prevention model in the schools seems to have already led to some notable achievements translated in benefits for students, teachers and parents, as reported during the discussion groups with the school safety teams and the focus groups with children and parents, and as documented in the monitoring reports of the East Kazakhstan State University. Eradication of teachers’ violence upon children, 80% decrease in the number of children abused by their peers, increased awareness of teachers as to the various forms of violence and its consequences upon the children, capacity of schools to prevent violence and refer the cases to responsible bodies in case of need, sense of safety and security in schools, better, more open communication of parents with children, switch of parents’ behaviour towards children from punishment to explanation and reward are several illustrative examples of the situation in February 2014 as compared to May 2013 (the baseline). Some difficulties were reported in the implementation of the secondary prevention tier of the model, especially related to filling in the forms - considered to be too time consuming and with redundant questions; investigating parents; unequal distribution of tasks across the members of the school safety team; some burnout of teachers who have to teach numerous other extra-curricular courses, especially in the case of larger schools.\textsuperscript{62} Important pending issues remain concerning the referral mechanism, given the difficulty to establish contacts with different services in the region/city and the lack of experience of akimat relevant services in case management; and domestic violence, as it was proved that 10% of violence is rooted in the family and schools should therefore not be kept solely accountable for eradication of violence and violent behaviour of children.

Despite these bottlenecks, the model has significant potential for scaling up: it enjoys an excellent methodology and supporting manuals, toolkits and curriculum; it is a functioning model which has already produced visible results in just seven months since its start up; the level of school safety teams’ commitment for the programme is generally high; it is accepted by children and parents; the violence prevention mission could be embedded into the overall school mission and set of values of the school, as confirmed by the principals; the Government and Ombudsman have demonstrated a high level of commitment in advancing the violence agenda in the country; it is an excellent advocacy modality at national level for clear reporting and referral paths, independent oversight on the schools environment and improved roles and capacity of the key statutory bodies, school management and teachers. As in the case of the other model, \textit{the scaling up will require a dedicated cost-effectiveness analysis after the end of piloting and possible extension to earlier grades of students as well.}

\textsuperscript{62} The school population ranges from 273 to 1,910 students!
As far as institutions are concerned, significant difficulties have been encountered in the piloting of the model, especially in the two children’s homes. The management is not supportive of the model as it considers it to be inappropriate for their institution. Based on feedback from the University, monitoring reports, interview with the management and focus group with the safety team of the children’s home which was sampled for the evaluation and visited on site, the resistance in implementing the model in full is reasoned by the strange belief that ‘violence’ is a notion detrimental to children’s mental health. It is considered that their existing system is good enough to address violence and that the model is irrelevant for their needs. Moreover, there is no sense of ownership and commitment also because the institutions feel that they were not properly consulted in the design phase of the model, apart from a brief presentation, to adjust it to their particular needs. They also consider that their participation in the Project was actually decided by the akimat education department without providing enough information about the aims and the content of the model. As mentioned in the relevance section above, UNICEF confirmed that the decision to pilot the model in institutions was an immediate response to the evidence revealed by the study on violence against children in institutions and that insufficient time was left for preparation and consultation of the target institutions. As a result, the monitoring team and international consultants have faced constant resistance to enter the institutions and advance with the implementation of the model. Also, the evaluation team encountered difficulties in meeting children’s homes, as explained in the methodology section of the report. Clearly, the evidence provided by the study in 2011 proves that violence prevention and redress in institutions is of utmost priority, but it seems that the way the model was introduced would not bear fruit and the expected results would take too long to yield. Another ‘entry’ point should be worked out in the future, based on a revised model designed in consultation with the institutions and with the full and permanent support for its implementation from the akimat management. To facilitate transparent disclosure of information and accuracy in reporting of violence incidents, the institutions should be exempted from punishment or downgrading by the akimat education department. The evaluation team has been informed by several specialists working in the education system that cases of violence represent a reason for reprimand and downgrading of the organisational performance level, hence reticence of institutions to report real data.

**Output 2.2 - Model of prevention of institutionalisation of children aged 0-3 have reached 20% more family care solutions**

This output has been overly achieved in the target regions and cities, as the Project developed, tested and implemented three models of child abandonment prevention in four cities (Karaganda, Shakhtinsk, Semey and Astana), targeting children under the age of three; institutionalisation has been prevented in more than 40% of assisted cases.

**The models of child abandonment prevention**

In order to prevent child abandonment and entry into infant home, the Project has developed, within the framework of the 5-step plan, a concept of early detection of women at risk of abandoning their child and referral to inter-sectoral support services. It was tested in Astana and two cities of Karaganda region in 2012-2013 with Semey city joining later, in the second half of 2013. Initially conceived to be a single model, it actually evolved into three different models as a result of various implementation modalities used in each locality.

In Astana, UNICEF signed a PCA with "Demeu" Educational and Practice Centre for Family Health, an independent family health organisation and Kazakhstani primary health care model for medical and social assistance that provides free health, social, psychological and legal services. The implementation of the child abandonment prevention model has been coordinated by Demeu Centre
which included in the test two polyclinics, one perinatal centre and one infant home from Astana. It developed and introduced a referral path of inter-agency and interdisciplinary support of women in difficult life situation at risk of child abandonment. It also designed and tested capacity building in-service training modules for health and social workers from primary health care (PHC) in case management, supervision and assessment of family and child needs. Demeu Centre has the capacity and a strong will to become a national resource centre for the development of cross-sector social work and social workers in the country. The Youth Health Centre functioning within Demeu Centre has been closely associated with the implementation of the model by identification and provision of counselling on family planning and available support services to adolescents. Demeu Centre managed to prevent 31 out of 76 cases (40.7%)\(^\text{63}\). According to the feedback received from the focus group with specialists in Astana, the model has been internalised into the practice of Demeu Centre and the participating institutions.

In Karaganda, the PCA was signed with the NGO "Public Union Centre "Sem'ya", with the aim to develop and test out a mechanism for identification of women in difficult life situations at risk of abandoning their children and interagency social and medical-psychological intervention. The testing included three maternity wards, three clinics and two infant homes and an interdisciplinary mobile team in charge of early detection and referral of women at risk to appropriate services. Training has been also embedded in the testing. Despite being carried out at high professional standards, having an excellent outreach due to the mobile team and very good results (94 out of 136 identified mothers at risk were prevented from abandoning their child, meaning 69%\(^\text{64}\)), the model ceased to function immediately after the end of PCA and funding from UNICEF. Although appreciated at akimat level (feedback from the discussion group), the model has not been taken over by the local authorities at the end of piloting, due to conflicting priorities for funding at local level.

Semey has joined the testing of the model much later, in September 2013, based on UNICEF efforts for leveraging of child abandonment prevention and engagement with local authorities (provision of technical assistance, training, development of partnerships). In Semey, the lead has been taken by a state polyclinic under the supervision of the regional akimat chief paediatrician. The testing in Semey, still under implementation, covers the entire state health network in the city. Polyclinic no.12 has a coordination role and is a resource centre for maternity wards, other polyclinics, infant homes, etc. Key staff participated in a training organised by Demeu Centre in Astana to get familiar with the model. The working procedure developed by the Project has been institutionalised and it is now part of the current, statutory practice of the health units. The referral experience is in an incipient stage of development as the testing has started only several months ago. The functioning of the model is fully funded from the budget of the health institutions. There is no PCA signed with UNICEF for the testing of the model. According to various key informants, it seems that this model is the most sustainable, but more informed judgement could be done once testing is ready and a cost-effectiveness analysis is done. Based on elaborated referral protocol for identification and dealing with families at risk, more than 70 cases were identified and successfully handled by the local specialists\(^\text{65}\), representing over 50% of identified women at risk.

Overall, the positive results of the implementation of the models in terms of abandonment prevention rate has been to a large extent the result of an excellent cooperation between UNICEF and the MoH and the close integration of the modelling process into the current strategies, action plans and programmes of the Ministry, in particular the State Health Care Development Programme for 2011-2015 “Salamatty Kazakhstan”. The introduction of social workers and cross-sectoral social work in

\[^{63}\] “Demeu” Centre progress reports, 2013
\[^{64}\] Sem’ya progress reports, 2012-2013
\[^{65}\] UNICEF figures reported to the evaluation team
primary health care, the redefinition of the roles of social workers with focus on young children at risk of abandonment, early identification of child disability and maltreatment (102 redefined roles during the Project), the mainstreaming of mother and child support strategies within the content of the services provided in the infant homes, as well as the promotion of new working procedures and methods have all contributed to very good results to date and promising replication potential to other regions.

At the same time, one should not underestimate a number of important barriers and challenges which have not been overcome yet. Thus, the challenges reported by professionals in Astana, Karaganda and Semey include:

- the insufficient capacity of social workers in gatekeeping and linkages to other sectors to prevent abandonment and sustain family reunification, as the capacity building actions implemented by the Project (155 professionals trained, 64 training hours) in the pilot regions have apparently not managed to reach the needed critical mass of professionals; this is all the more aggravated by the lack in the quality standards of minimum continuous training provisions to be annually provided to staff, as already mentioned before;
- the lack of social workers in maternity wards where most abandonments took place; and although the MoH introduced psychologists in maternity wards, they work only in few of them due to limited funding;
- existing organisational practices and culture that foster bureaucracy in registering and following up on documentation that delay urgent measures to prevent abandonment cases (the typical case of migrant mothers, those that do not have ID papers).

The interviews with beneficiary mothers, as rights-holders, have highlighted an additional challenge: although satisfied with the social and legal counselling and emotional support received, their needs were primarily related to housing, jobs and better income (see also the profile of vulnerable mothers in chapter 1, Table 2) – issues difficult to be fully addressed by the social workers and psychologists delivering the services piloted by the Project in the primary health care system. Despite important positive results obtained in terms of child abandonment prevention, the sustainability of solutions provided by the Project in the three pilot regions seems to have been shaken by a number of factors, some major ones outside the scope or control of the Project. The insufficient awareness of social workers concerning all available education, social and employment services in the region, the slow response and cooperation of some of these services, the lack of child care facilities for babies under the age of two which impedes female labour force participation, the scarcity of jobs on the market for low skilled labour (as is the case of beneficiary mothers), the long list of 299 professions prohibited for women (an issue recently raised by the CEDAW Committee67), the insufficiently developed flexible working arrangements, the lengthy process of obtaining identity documents, birth certificates or registration documents to qualify for various social benefits and several exclusion errors of the benefits system are all possible reasons which made the services piloted by the Project insufficiently able to satisfy the needs of mothers at risk in a more sustainable manner.

In case of housing, for instance, which is one of the most ardent needs of families at risk, a World Bank study identified that over 50% of the housing allowance expenditure leaks to the non-poor (defined as the top 60%, or quintiles Q3-5) and that the richest 20% (quintile) of the population receive the same level of housing support (24.4%) as does the poorest quintile (see Table 10 below).

66 There are 1,500 infant homes in the country, where 98% of children are ‘social orphans’ (interview MoH), indicating that the risk of abandonment and institutionalisation is dramatic.
67 CEDAW Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, “Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan”, CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/3-4, Observation 28
These facts advocate once more for concerted, integrated policies and support services that the Project has attempted to promote in the pilot regions. The replication of the child abandonment models to other cities or at national level has the potential to bring about major benefits to children and a lot of relief for families at risk; however, a prior in-depth analysis of all these interconnected factors and challenges seems to be needed especially with a view to empower vulnerable parents and ensure a sustainable solution for their needs.

Apart from modelling the violence prevention in East Kazakhstan region in institutions and of child abandonment prevention in Semey (none of them planned initially and for which UNICEF has contributed additional resources), other additional (unplanned) positive effects of the Project have been the following:

- revised Ombudsman Office’s child rights referral and complains mechanism;
- improvement of mortality indicators in the pilot regions as a result of early identification of children and women at risk (e.g. early child mortality in Semey decreased from 13.7% in 2012 to 11.3% in 2013, according to the feedback received from the focus group with professionals in Semey);
- introduction of violence against children issues into the curriculum of the Training Institute for Prosecutors;
- expansion of the violence prevention model from children in 3rd – 7th grade, planned by the Project, to children from practically all grades in the respective pilot schools;
- changes in the strategies of NGOs towards more child abandonment practices, introduction of violence prevention issues on the agenda of the NGO sector (e.g. SOS Kinderdorf);
- it provided practice places for students as well as an enriched university curriculum in primary prevention;
- the Project inspired a PhD thesis on causes of child abandonment at the Semey Medical University, which resulted in a manual for local providers of health services.

4.3 Efficiency

In the opinion of the evaluation team, the Project was a very ambitious one in terms of available resources on one side and envisaged Development Goal on the other side, also considering the particular context of Kazakhstan, a country which is advancing well on the realisation of children’s rights, but which is still characterized by centralisation of decision-making and rather traditional mindsets of thinking and acting at the level of local public administration and practitioners.
The mission of UNICEF to implement such an ambitious Project was therefore not easy. According to the ToC, UNICEF has used all its Core Roles to the best possible to attain the expected results of the Project, however with various degrees of efficiency.

It has been widely acknowledged by all stakeholders consulted for the purpose of this evaluation that UNICEF is a strong advocate for the most vulnerable children and that its actions are always guided by the international human rights standards. As formulated by several key informants of the evaluation, it is the “strongest partner of Ombudsman in defending child rights in the country”, “key Government partner in developing alternative care”, a “great advocate for children”. To achieve the planned Project results, UNICEF carried out permanent advocacy and awareness raising activities to serve the best interest of the child and challenge, as per ToC, the prevailing social and political norms conducive the abuse, exploitation and family separation. It implemented a public awareness campaign on prevention of institutionalisation and targeted family support and organised a conference with the participation of high level decision makers. UNICEF has also prepared information materials and policy briefs to inform government and parliamentary debates, communicated clear and evidence-based advocacy messages with explicit focus on most vulnerable children and around key issues of violence against children, child abandonment, sexual exploitation and trafficking. Last but not least, it promoted the direct participation of children and youth in the provision of evidence and implementation of the Project: evidence of violence in schools when they were interviewed by the research team, inclusion of youth via youth health centres, involvement of children as active participants in the implementation of violence prevention programme in schools.

This Core Role of UNICEF has been visibly and constantly put at work for the achievement of the project purpose and its estimated results. Along with other core roles detailed below and in partnership with Government and local authorities, with the support of the NGO sector, media and international partners, UNICEF has contributed to the decrease of the number of children left without parental care in residential institutions (from 12,925 children in 2011 to 9,879 children in 2013); more cases of child rights violations have been identified and addressed by Ombudsman (from 43 in 2010 to 73 in 2013); the legal framework has been modernised due to efficient UNICEF advocacy at the Government and in the Parliament; and the general public is more aware of the importance of the family for child development i.e. institutionalisation of small children is perceived to be by 13.5% of respondents to a recent national public opinion survey, a measure that ‘ruins the child and breaks his fate’ and for 41.4% respondents, ‘this measure is only possible if there is no other choice’. At the same time, there are areas where less efficiency has been noted, i.e. child accessibility to Ombudsman (no complaint submitted by children directly).

Another Core Role that UNICEF successfully employed during the Project implementation was that of policy adviser and source of top notch international and national expertise with the aim to strengthen capacity for child protection reforms. In particular, UNICEF supported changes in policy, most notably by introducing a child rights focus into the Social Development Concept 2030 and contributing to the development of the first strategy on violence prevention, but also through institutional transformation of centres for the adaptation of minors and infant homes into more family support-oriented institutions. Modernization of legislation in line with international standards was an important target of UNICEF policy advice and technical assistance; the evaluation identified notable contributions to the Family and Marriage code, NPM under CAT, violence against children, domestic violence, criminal procedure code, youth policies. UNICEF engaged national and international technical expertise for modelling and piloting of innovative services, development of tools and

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procedures for these services as well as for a better monitoring and reporting of child rights violation, development of curricula and training programmes for professionals working in the child care and child protection system, capacity building actions (curricula, trainings and technical assistance) for the prevention of violence against children, reform planning and action setting, etc.

The evaluation was informed by national and local stakeholders that they “learnt a lot from a methodological point of view”, “opened our eyes on a new perspective of monitoring child rights”, had an “undisputable contribution to the advancement of child rights agenda.” For example, at the High-level Regional Conference on Justice for Children (Brussels, 27–28 June 2013), the participating officials from Kazakhstan announced their three policy priorities in plenary. One of them was about independent monitoring: “Further develop a sustainable system of independent monitoring of closed institutions for children, including the finalization of the special monitoring tools developed by the Ombudsman’s office in partnership with UNICEF”.

Efficiency of efforts done to develop inter-agency cooperation and functional alignment of roles and procedures of bodies/structures involved in child protection was moderate, as discussed in the previous section of this evaluation report. The lack of local ownership of the 5-step plan has decreased the efficiency of UNICEF capacity building actions: “The overall immediate concern was the total lack of senior management presence in any of the training days, which suggested an apparent lack of commitment in Astana, Karaganda and EKO to this change programme. All participants commented on this throughout the training programme. There were strong feelings expressed that this change programme would not be supported by their line managers and there was limited / no confidence in their ability to understand the processes being put forward and potentially little willingness to operate differently”.

One of the most significant Core Role of UNICEF during the Project implementation was that of monitoring and evaluation of most vulnerable children, which was done based on independent assessments, studies and international indicators. In this way, UNICEF contributed to the improvement of the knowledge base on the situation of children without parental care, child abandonment, violence against children in schools and residential care institutions, child vulnerability to risky behaviour, exploitation and trafficking. It has also assisted independent assessments of the functioning of the child rights protection systems and equity gaps in child well-being. The revision of the legal system, the adoption or the preparation of new strategies and the Government decision to pilot redress models and innovative approaches in three regions of the country indicate that the resources which UNICEF used for developing evidence and closing the knowledge gap have been efficiently used. As put it by one of key informants of the evaluation, UNICEF “sparked the bees’ nest” by revealing “shocking evidence on issues we did not have a clue that they existed”.

Modelling and piloting new services and practices was another major Core Role that UNICEF used extensively for the implementation of the Project. Piloting has a key role to play in leveraging further resources by providing evidence base for a policy or programme in favour of children. Based on cross-sector cooperation, the various models developed and piloted by the Project for integrated child protection mechanism, child abandonment prevention services and prevention of violence against children in schools and institutions (extensively described in the effectiveness section of the report) were all aimed to inform policy making, demonstrate how system could meaningfully evolve to reduce equity gaps and children’s rights violations and enhance child care system management, coordination and planning; introducing new or revised working protocols, tools and procedures for such services as well as revised functions of staff, in particular of social workers and psychologists.

69 Allen, B., “Integrated Model of Specialist Social Service. Analysis of findings and the proposed implementation plan following intensive training in each of the three pilot areas Karaganda, East Kazakhstan Oblast and Astana”, 2011
working in primary health care, staff of transformed adaptation centres for adolescents as well as of teachers, pedagogues and psychologists who are members of the school safety teams. During the various focus groups with professionals, the evaluation team was told that "We appreciate UNICEF for its innovative approaches", for "challenging our mindsets" and for "introducing new ways of thinking and working".

To attain the results of the Project, UNICEF has also facilitated national dialogue towards child friendly norms and international standards by strengthening strategic partnerships for integrated approaches in child protection and monitoring of child rights violations, bringing together a wide range of duty-bearers from government, private sector and civil society to enhance public debate, participation, synergy and coherent action around equity and child rights issues in national conferences and meetings. It also promoted child-friendly corporate social responsibility. Efficiency of all these efforts varies, being higher in the area of monitoring child rights violation, prevention of child abandonment and violence, and lower in the area of integrated child protection mechanism at national, regional and local levels. Dialogue with Ombudsman, MoH and the Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights within the MoES as well as with the specialised commissions of the Parliament was efficient especially in promoting new legislation and putting in policy debate and public light issues of major concern and importance such violence against children (a completely 'untouched' issue by policy and legal framework), child exploitation and trafficking, harming effects of institutionalisation and family separation upon the development of children, areas of inequality and abuse. Institutional partners consulted for this evaluation appreciate that "everything UNICEF does is based on joint consultation", "they do not impose and do not block things" and "they keep a constant dialogue with us, keep us abreast of the developments of issues".

UNICEF has played a major role in leveraging resources from the public and private sectors to make available, as mentioned in the Determinants Analysis of the ToC child protection, family support and violence prevention services, to prevent and address child abuse, exploitation and family separation. It has done so by engaging in a strategic dialogue with Kazakh partners (Ombudsman, ministries, Parliament, akimats, schools, primary health care units, youth health centres) and international partners supporting the strengthening of child protection reform, most notably the Norwegian Embassy, UNDP and USAID. During the implementation period, the evaluation team was informed that UNICEF has contributed to the reorientation of mandates of several international organisations towards child sensitive programming in line with international standards. The feedback received from interviews and the review of secondary information sources demonstrate that UNICEF advocated with SOS Children’s Villages for changing the focus towards more work on preventing families at risk of separation: “Building on the organization’s mission and vision, the goal of Family Strengthening Projects (FSPs) is to enable children who are at risk of losing the care of their family of origin to grow up in a caring family environment. In doing so, FSPs primarily work towards preventing the separation of children from their families of origin70. According to “Sustainable Growth Strategy of SOS Children’s Villages Kazakhstan by 2020”, one of the objectives of the organisation is to become a professional and high skilled expert for the “prevention of social orphanage”. UNICEF has also engaged with Special Olympics Europe, contributing to a shift from ad hoc services to system change approaches and strategies for children with disabilities. Jointly with UNDP, UNICEF worked on orienting the MoLSPP toward inclusive service provision to children with disabilities.

UNICEF efforts directed towards obtaining financial resources have been efficient. It obtained funding for the implementation of the Project under evaluation from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NOK 3,588,158, equivalent to USD 640,93571), ATF/UniCredit Bank (USD 208,600 USD – see Box 4)

70 http://www.sos-kazakhstan.kz/?n=69&l=family_strengthening accessed on 14 April 2014
and local partners which implemented various models and carried out studies (Demeu Centre, Sem’ya, Family Support Centre in Ust-Kamenogorsk, East Kazakhstan State University – KZT 857,00072), and to a certain extent from the UN Trust Fund.

### Box 4. Leveraging resources from the private sector: the ATF Bank example

Following UNICEF advocacy for child-friendly corporate social responsibility, a 24-month cooperation agreement has been signed with ATF Bank for the development of a sustainable model for the prevention of abandonment and institutionalization of children 0-3 age in Astana and Karaganda oblasts. The work started in September 2012 and will last until September 2014, having a funding of USD 208,600 from ATF Bank.

The strategic areas of the project have been defined as follows:

- b. Revising national policies and strengthening the practices of prevention of child abandonment in light of its compliance with international standards.
- c. Increasing by 10 % a number of contacts of abandoned children with biological or foster parents/young and single mothers in targeted communities.
- d. Developing and testing a model of inter-sectoral mechanism for prevention of child abandonment and institutionalization of children 0-3 of age for its inclusion into national policies and practices.

Cooperation goes hand-by-hand with UNICEF and Government of Kazakhstan programme on developing integrated social services provision to vulnerable children and families (“5 Steps” programme) with the specific focus on prevention of 0-3 age child abandonment. The key organisations involved in the project implementation at local level include health and social welfare departments, social workers from polyclinics, infant homes, NGO Sem’ya, Credo and Family Health Centre Demeu.

Source: Project Agreement 012/09 between UNICEF and ATF Bank, first year progress report to the donor 2013

At the same time, the Project created new opportunities (violence prevention model, expansion of child abandonment prevention model, production of violence prevention materials, youth support) requiring additional funds which UNICEF secured and thus contributed to achievement of greater outcomes.

Public resources have been obtained from the national counterparts, at central and akimat levels (e.g. the child abandonment prevention model functioning in Semey is fully financed from public funds, apart from the initial Project support for training and coaching), from schools and institutions implementing the violence prevention model, from child rights NGOs and media as partners of Ombudsman in monitoring violations of child rights, from youth health centres engaged in preventing unwanted pregnancies and child abandonment. During the Project implementation, UNICEF has also leveraged resources from USAID office in Astana in generating knowledge on vulnerabilities of children to risky behaviours, sexual exploitation and trafficking73 and on child suicide74. It has provided guidance to NGOs on possible funding sources and helped donors (BOTA Foundation, Japanese grass-roots programme) in shaping the criteria for grant distribution. With support from UNICEF, a number of NGOs including Public Union Centre “Sem’ya” (local contractor for the implementation of the child abandonment prevention model in Karaganda) received donor funding for sustaining the UNICEF initiated pilot initiatives.

Last but not least, UNICEF has been enabling knowledge exchange by contributing to the global and regional UNICEF equity agenda, through documented innovations based on tested models with

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72 Calculated based on PCAs signed with various local contractors.
73 The study “A Rapid Assessment of Children’s Vulnerabilities to Risky Behaviours, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Kazakhstan” (2012) has been jointly financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Project and by USAID.
replicability potential. It fostered horizontal cooperation and exchange of experience within and among the three pilot oblasts; between these oblasts and others in the country; and among countries in Central Asia region, as was done in Dushanbe in 2013 on the occasion of the 4th Child Protection Forum for Central Asia, where the representative of the Ombudsman’s office presented the findings of the violence against children studies\textsuperscript{75}. It raised major interest of the participating countries, most notably of Tajikistan whose Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has been in contact with Kazakh Ombudsman for getting more information and assistance in implementing a similar initiative in their country. The Outcome Document of the Forum (4 August 2013) concludes that: “Efforts for putting into place a system of response to violence against children with disabilities must be accelerated covering institutions, schools, families and societies as a whole. Reporting systems must be combined with access to justice mechanisms, allowing victims to claim for redress.”

Knowledge exchange was also fostered through study visits to Turkey and United Kingdom. The reports of the study visits indicate that the participants shared the acquired new information and knowledge with their peers and that follow-up actions have been implemented in the area of prevention of child abandonment and institutionalisation by early detection and intervention, clarification of roles and responsibilities of social workers in the primary health care, development of outreach services. According to the feedback from various interviewed stakeholders, efficiency of transfer of knowledge and expertise would have been more efficient in case: a) study visits, trainings and technical assistance at central level were combined with long-lasting twinning arrangements with counterparts having a similar position in other countries’ ministries; and b) study visits and temporary work placements abroad were also organised for practitioners working in various public child protection services and in child care institutions.

As far as project management is concerned, the task of UNICEF was a very challenging one. It implied the work with multiple partners at central and local level, from all sections of society, governmental and non-governmental organisations, Ombudsman, national and international, public and private. It involved a complex range of activities, the organisation of numerous events, cooperation and coordination with a large number of stakeholders. It also implied the management of multiple contracts (ten PCAs and consultancy contracts\textsuperscript{76}) with local consultants and organisations for assisting the Ombudsman, piloting of new integrated working mechanism and new services in the targeted regions on one side, and with several international consultants and consulting organisations for the provision of technical assistance, training, carrying out studies and assessments on the other side. Project management thus required a complex monitoring and reporting work, which UNICEF managed to do it well.

UNICEF has carried out the results monitoring of the Project on the basis of the DoA, Grant Agreement concluded with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Joint Statement of Intent and Rolling Work Plans signed with Ombudsman and ministries, PCAs and consultancy contracts with a large number of contractors and regular progress reports. The ToC was produced retrospectively by the evaluation team for the purpose of this evaluation, while the DoA did not include a logframe either. It would have been much useful to construct the ToC at the beginning of a project, as outcomes and processes are viewed differently with hindsight. A ToC approach can sharpen the planning and implementation of a project. In its design phase, it increases the likelihood that stakeholders will have clearly specified the initiative’s intended outcomes and outputs, the activities that need to be implemented to achieve those outcomes, and the contextual factors that are likely to influence them.

\textsuperscript{75} Speech of Vyacheslav Kalyzhny, Head of the National Human Rights Center, “Interesting country example – Taking stock of violence against children in institutions in Kazakhstan, lessons learned and next steps”, 4th Child Protection Forum for Central Asia, 1-3 August 2013, Dushanbe

\textsuperscript{76} Based on documents made available to the evaluation team
Project monitoring was also done through regular meetings with local and international contractors aimed to discuss strategic developments, achievements and challenges; coordination meetings with Ombudsman, the MoES, the MoLSPP and MoH, Norwegian Embassy; field missions to the pilot regions; and last but not least, direct involvement in the resolution of challenging situations.

Reporting to the donor was in line with the calendar and structure established in the Grant Agreement. UNICEF delivered timely progress reports to the donor, on a yearly basis, as well as to UNICEF headquarters. Overall, the quality of the reports is good, apart from the use of a different set of indicators compared to those established in the DoA (see Annex 7); there is no evidence that this change has been agreed in advance with the donor.

Overall Project monitoring was, in our opinion, toughened by the lack of unitary reporting requirements and/or templates and/or guidelines in the PCAs and consultancy contracts concluded with various contractors, apart from a brief reporting calendar. Each contractor reported based on its own logic, own structure and own chosen depth; sometimes, reporting did not exist at all, such as in the case of training reports (which exist only for five out of fifteen training events delivered by the Project), apart from being mentioned here and there in the contractors’ overall reports. One would expect each training course to be based on an upfront Training Needs Assessment and end with a training report, explaining the objectives, structure and topics of the course, the dynamics of the learning process, any hurdles, evaluation of the satisfaction of trainees and of the training outcomes by the trainers themselves, recommendations for follow-up, with relevant annexes (entry-exit tests if the case, filled in satisfaction questionnaires, ‘products’ of the training, etc.). The report on integrated model of specialist social services, following the delivery of three intensive trainings in Karaganda, East Kazakhstan and Astana in September 2011 is an excellent example, a good practice of how a training report should be done.

This very heterogeneous reporting of contractors, with no clear, straight connection to established indicators of the Project against the background of missing baselines and targets for many indicators, made the monitoring task of UNICEF difficult, indicated also by the significant time resources needed to collect all required data and information for this evaluation. The lack of an evaluation culture in the country, whereby evaluation is frequently confused with control, audit or investigation with unforeseen consequences, makes any evaluation work even more challenging. At the same time, the very narrative, descriptive nature of the reports of regions to the MoLSPP concerning the implementation of the 5-step plan (no results-oriented reporting) and which is linked to outcome 2 of the Project as well as the insufficient capacity of local partners to document the piloted models (explained in the effectiveness section of this report) further complicated the process of a results-oriented monitoring by UNICEF.

According to the management of UNICEF country office, the national partners were encouraged to implement various Project activities and pilot new approaches and services by themselves, with technical assistance and guidance from UNICEF and its consultants. For ownership and empowerment reasons, the approach was one similar to ‘try, fail, start again, do it better’, however at the expense of efficiency in certain cases. More than half of activities were delayed and UNICEF had to agree a revised implementation schedule with the donor. Indeed, it had to frequently align the implementation schedule to the annual work plans and priorities of Ombudsman, Government and Parliament and to adjust deadlines to various deliverables accordingly. In other cases, validation with the national counterparts of various studies and researches was needed before starting the piloting of

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77 e.g. “There is a reluctance to acknowledge any service deficiencies exist for fear of being criticised”, Inception Report EveryChild (international contractor), Annex 2b; refusal of Umit institution to participate in the evaluation (see Methodology).  
78 See the latest Project progress report 2012-2013, section 4.2
new services in the region or launching the public awareness campaign. **These risks have not been identified in the DoA, especially related to the passing of legislation** (section 6.2. Risk factors).

According to the last Project progress report 2012-2013 made available to the team, three activities were planned to end 5-6 months later than the end of the Project itself i.e. the second national conference, the public awareness campaign and the documentation of practices. While reasons explained by UNICEF project team in their note dated 1 April 2014 to the evaluation team holds true, such as the need to continue the public awareness campaign well beyond the lifetime of the Project for reaching a lasting impact on changing mindsets and social norms conducive to institutionalisation and punishment, planning its finalisation after the end of the Project lifetime is against the very basic definition of a project which has a fixed, set duration within which planned activities have to be implemented with the available resources to reach certain established objectives.

Despite these bottlenecks and shortcomings, the feedback from all stakeholders confirm that activities and management of the Project were conducted professionally, with high quality and commitment, an opinion which is fully shared by the evaluation team. UNICEF managed to employ highly experienced and committed consultants for the conceptualisation work and provision of guidance and support to national counterparts for the implementation of various thematic segments of the Project.

**Financial monitoring** was based on regular financial reports appended to the annual progress reports to the donor.

**Cost Analysis of the Project**

The cost analysis of the project has been done from two perspectives i.e. of the new services piloted by the Project in the three target regions, respectively of the overall project activities and financial performance.

**A. Cost Analysis of piloted services in the targeted regions**

The selection of the themes for modelling (prevention of institutionalisation and abandonment of children under the age of three and violence against children) was a very cost-effective decision, as showed by several studies and independent assessments. Andreeva (2009) demonstrates that "In government spending on children in residential care, children who enter the residential care system as newly born babies use up the biggest share of resources among all other age groups at entry, because even though these children stay in the system for a short period of time, they are the most numerous age group of children entering residential care each year". The author of the study thus recommends that, given resource limitations, child protection efforts in Kazakhstan should be focused on prevention of abandonment of babies and early (unwanted) pregnancies. This is exactly what the Project did with its model, preparing it also for scaling up at national level. International studies show that institutional care is much more expensive than family-based care and that the transformation of residential care services into alternative community-based services will result, in the long run, in lower costs for the government. This is the situation in Kazakhstan, as shown in the Table below.

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Table 11. Annual Unit Costs per Child of Different Forms of Care (2008 prices)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of care</th>
<th>Unit cost (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Home</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children villages</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family-type home</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster care</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Selection of themes for modelling and piloting was a cost-effective decision from the perspective of the size of the problem as well. When violence in residential institutions and schools is experienced by 50%, respectively 66.2% of children, piloting redress and preventive measures for scaling up is fully justified.

Costing of all these pilot services is pending. It will inform, as mentioned in the Determinants Analysis of ToC, the financial implications for annual budget planning. Meanwhile, calculations done by the evaluation team based on the budgets of the child abandonment prevention models piloted in Astana (implemented by Demeu Centre) and Karaganda (implemented by NGO Sem’ya) and on their results indicate a rather similar unit cost per parent (family) at risk who benefitted from the respective services: USD 280.7, respectively USD 218.8. The difference between the two models in terms of unit cost for each case prevented from abandonment is however major: USD 688.2 in Astana, compared to USD 280.7 in Karaganda, as a result of different child abandonment prevention rates succeeded by the two organisations (40.8%, respectively 69.1%). The focus groups with professionals interviewed during the field phase as well as review of local progress reports highlighted two main factors explaining the different success rates between the two models: a) outreach capacity: the use of a mobile service, like in Karaganda, is more efficient in the identification and support of risk cases; b) characteristics of beneficiaries in Astana: there are many cases of women with unwanted pregnancies, who live in other localities and who are coming to Astana to give birth and abandon the child in perinatal centre; the time spent in Astana is very short and there is practically insufficient time to counsel them; moreover, it is hard to track them back to their locality as they are usually not registered with the local polyclinics.

B. Cost Analysis of project activities and financial performance

As far as the use of financial resources is concerned, the breakdown of the Project budget differentiates between activities and sub-activities and between various categories of costs (Attachment 1 to DoA). Financial reporting on actual expenditures (chapter 5 in the progress reports) is limited to a broad overview of planned and spent amounts disaggregated only by source of funding (grant and UNICEF contribution), as per reporting template provided by the donor. Neither the DoA nor the progress reports provide a clear picture of planned funding, respectively actual expenditures per different category costs, number of units and unit costs. The evaluation team was informed that such financial details were not requested by the donor and that UNICEF has strictly followed the donor requirements for budget reporting and breakdown. This is correct. Nevertheless, a detailed breakdown of expenditures against set budgets would have been in the interest of better financial monitoring of funds and support a better assessment of efficiency of utilisation. The

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81 Only the budget category used for the actual delivery of the services was considered. No other costs (development of the model, training, meetings of working groups/coordination council, workshops, documenting the practice, admin costs) were taken into account in the calculation.

82 31 out of 76 cases prevented from abandonment in Astana and 94 out of 136 cases prevented in Karaganda
The evaluation team has therefore asked UNICEF to provide a detailed breakdown of planned funds and expenditures until December 2013. Information received from UNICEF was broken down per units and unit costs only for spent funds and only in the case of some budget categories. It is therefore difficult to analyse the utilization of spent funds against planned budgets in a more detailed manner, apart from a comparison at the level of broad budget categories. Based on the figures made available, at the end of 2013, the spent amount was in line with the planned levels apart from four budget categories (training courses and seminars, publishing and printing, transport and insurance, monitoring and evaluation), where overspending was recorded, however within the margins allowed by the financial rules of the donor. Overall, expenditures at Project level were kept within the budget. Based on the latest financial figures provided to the evaluation team, in December 2013, around 91% of the budget (801,202 USD) has been spent. According to UNICEF estimations and the review of commitments in 2014, there is high probability that the full budget will be spent until the end of the Project in June 2014.

The analysis of unit costs for the budget category “cooperation partner” shows that the monthly fees paid to local contractors for the piloting of models and training of specialists were all in line with the market prices and salary levels for the respective level of qualification, experience and responsibility in the contract, varying between USD 100 and USD 433. The fees paid to local and regional consultants advising the Ombudsman and inter-agency commissions as well as to international consultants (budget category “fees for consultants”) were paid against submission of specific deliverables, as mentioned in their ToR. Administrative costs for project management and overheads (budget categories “administration” and “indirect costs”) represented 8.8% of the budget. This is in line with the usual thresholds for such costs in internationally-financed projects.

The evaluation team has identified two outstanding efficiency features of the Project. The first one related to the use of piloting, a significant strategy of UNICEF programme cooperation, especially since UNICEF resources are limited and small compared to national budget. It is assumed that a pilot project will generate findings, either positive (e.g. the interventions achieve the projected results) or negative (e.g. the tested interventions have only a limited effect, or the intervention is not feasible, is too costly, or has negative side-effects). If successful, with reasonable efforts and costs, the piloted interventions are then proposed for wider application. This is exactly what UNICEF did in this Project and the finalisation of their documenting and in-depth evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the models foreseen to be done in the near future will hopefully provide the answer for their replication.

The second outstanding efficiency feature of the Project was the investment in the prevention of institutionalisation, which is the most expensive form of alternative care (as explained earlier) and which has dramatic negative consequences upon the normal development of a child.

4.4 Impact

According to the Description of Action, the impact indicators which were meant to measure UNICEF contribution to reforms included:

1. Reduction in the number of children victims of in-country trafficking and child prostitution in targeted oblasts
2. 30% reduction in the placement of children in state child care institutions, including children with disability, by strengthening preventative and family support mechanisms in targeted oblasts
3. Integrated child protection mechanism ready for national replication
4. Modern child protection legislation framework introduced based on tested models and recommendations
5. Increased capacities of key state and non-state stakeholders engaged in child protection system at central and local level
6. Children and youth participate in peer support and establishment of child protection system in their communities
7. Knowledge on vulnerable children and their challenges was brought to the government’s attention

The Progress Reports measured a different set of impact indicators, as follows:

8. Developed practical model of local integrated child protection mechanism is ready for national replication
9. Data management system on the most vulnerable children and their families updated
10. # of new child protection services are introduced
11. revised national child protection legal and policy framework
12. # of staff with revised functions

As mentioned in the methodology section of the report, the impact evaluation was not initially required by the TOR, but following discussion with UNICEF country office, it was agreed to evaluate the immediate impact of the Project primarily in the pilot oblasts (East Kazakhstan, Karaganda and Astana). The reasons mentioned by UNICEF was that real sustainable impact at national level takes time to achieve and the established Development Goal of the Project as well as the estimated cohorts of beneficiaries were too ambitious for the project duration; evaluation took place three months before the end of the project and fully documented packages of piloted models will be available by the end of the year; three dedicated impact evaluations are planned for next year and they will be more fit to provide impact answers.

It was also discussed with UNICEF country office that some impact indicators included in the DoA and progress reports are rather outcome or output indicators (indicators 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12) and need to be analysed under effectiveness and sustainability evaluation criteria. Finally, it was agreed that indicator 1 is hardly evaluable given the lack of reliable data and that the established indicators might not be always enough to measure the project impact at oblast level.

The reconstructed TOC (Annex 2) thus took into consideration indicator 2 from the list above in a slightly reformulated version and added other five indicators in an attempt to better capture the project impact in the three targeted oblasts. The final list of immediate impact indicators considered for this evaluation is the following:

- No. of children deprived of parental care, disaggregated by gender, age, disability and region (reduction needed);
- No. of children deprived of parental care living in state residential care institutions, disaggregated by gender, age, disability and region (30% reduction needed);
- Placement rate of children deprived of parental care in state residential care institutions disaggregated by gender, age, disability and region (reduction needed);
- No. of children placed into family-based care, disaggregated by gender, age, disability and region (increase desired);
- No. of children benefitting from new services developed by the Project, total and disaggregated by type of service and oblast;
- No. of children under the age of three prevented from being abandoned in the pilot regions.

According to DoA, the estimated direct beneficiaries were: 7,000 children currently placed in institutional care, including children with disabilities, by enhancing the system of child protection in targeted regions; at least 2,000 children likely to be placed in institutional care each year; 10,000 children (around 12,500) families, identified as being “at risk”; and a number of children at risk of self-harm, trafficking and child prostitution who will benefit of professional assistance. See also discussion on indicators in the effectiveness section of the evaluation report.
Data provided by the Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights (MoES) to the evaluation team and which are presented in Table 12 below provides evidence that the Project has contributed to the overall decrease of the number of children deprived of parental care in state residential care institutions in the pilot regions where the Project was active, from 4,199 children in 2011 to 3,371 children in 2013, meaning an average reduction of 19.7% as compared to 23.5% at national level. The target of 30% reduction set in DoA is likely to be achieved by the end of the Project (June 2014) in East Kazakhstan, where the figure was 27.9% in December 2013, but hardly in Karaganda and Astana which registered only 13.9%, respectively 13.5% reduction by the end of last year.

Table 12. Children Left Without Parental Care (2011 and 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>East Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Karaganda</th>
<th>Astana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- girls</td>
<td>36,777</td>
<td>33,682</td>
<td>4,148</td>
<td>3,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- children with disability</td>
<td>17,542</td>
<td>15,935</td>
<td>1,912</td>
<td>1,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- children under the age of three</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children left without parental care in state residential care institutions, of whom:</td>
<td>2,106</td>
<td>1,773</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement rate of children left without parental care in state residential care (%)*</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- girls</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- children with disability</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- children under the age of three</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children left without parental care in family-based care, of whom:</td>
<td>23,852</td>
<td>23,803</td>
<td>2,401</td>
<td>2,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- girls</td>
<td>11,966</td>
<td>11,781</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>1,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- children with disability</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights, MoES. Placement rates calculated by evaluators as a ratio of children placed in institutions to the total number of children left without parental care.

n.a. = not available

The number of children under the age of three placed in institutions has also decreased in all pilot regions, from 404 children in 2011 to 234 children in 2013, meaning an average reduction of 42% as compared to only 18.8% at national level. As far as children with disability are concerned, the reduction was much lower, at around 11.9%. The figures in Table 12 indicate that institutionalisation is more severe in case of boys than of girls, reduction being witnessed in both cases.

According to the data made available by the Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights (MoES) to the evaluation team (Table 12, Figure 6), as a result of promotion of family reunification and preventive services, the Project contributed to the reduction of the overall placement rate of...
children in institutions in all pilot regions, from an average of 43.7% in 2011 to 37.6% in 2013. Figure 6 illustrates this decreasing trend of child institutionalisation in each of the pilot regions.

**Figure 6. Placement Rate of Children Left Without Parental Care in State Residential Care (2011 and 2013, pilot regions)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Placement Rate 2011</th>
<th>Placement Rate 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Kazakhstan</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karaganda</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astana</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated by evaluators based on data provided by the Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights, MoES

However, all children with disability left without parental care, one of the most vulnerable groups of rights-holders, were institutionalised during the reference period. The placement rate in institutions has also increased in the case of children under the age of three in Astana and Karaganda regions (see Table 12).

What was then the contribution of the services piloted by the Project for child abandonment prevention and which targeted children under the age of three? Could one draw the conclusion that they were useful in East Kazakhstan and had no impact in Astana and Karaganda? The response to these questions needs to be nuanced for each region. First, it should be mentioned that in Astana, the model engaged only few institutions and not the entire health care system. Secondly, in Karaganda region, the model functioned only in two cities: Karaganda city and Shakhtinsk city. Thirdly, in East Kazakhstan region, the new services were piloted only in Semey city. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to draw a definite conclusion on the extent with which the piloted services were useful or not in terms of impact on the overall placement rate of children left without of parental care in state residential care institutions. Most likely seems to be the poor functioning for these target groups of the referral system piloted by the Project within the integrated child protection mechanism (deficiencies already explained in the previous sections). In addition, the underdeveloped family-based solutions, most notably foster care, mentioned by several key informants to be in critical need of improvement, have also reduced the efficiency of the referral system. Table 12 above shows the decrease in the use of family-based solutions in all regions for this age category.

In terms of net impact (attribution), the Project increased the number of child protection services available in the pilot regions with five additional services (three child abandonment prevention services and two violence prevention services) and the number of beneficiaries: 352 children and 348 families benefitted of child abandonment prevention in Semey city (East Kazakhstan), Karaganda city and Shakhtinsk city (Karaganda) and Astana city; 3,000 students enrolled in schools in grades 3rd-7th and 211 children living in state residential care institutions from East Kazakhstan benefitted of violence prevention services (Table 13).
Table 13. Net Impact of the Project in the Pilot Regions (years 2011 and 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>East Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Karaganda</th>
<th>Astana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of children benefitting of new services:</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,351</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- child abandonment prevention (parents at risk of abandoning their child 0-3)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>140*</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- prevention of violence against in schools</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- prevention of violence in institutions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children 0-3 prevented from being abandoned in pilot regions</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>70**</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success rate of child abandonment prevention in the pilot regions</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>50%*</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Local projects statistics and interviews. Prevention rate calculated by evaluators.
* Estimate for Semey city based on interviews and secondary data; **Figure refer to Semey city; *** Figures refer to Karaganda city and Shachtinsk; **** Figures refer to Semey city; n.a. = not available (baselines)

The Project had another net impact (attribution): out of 348 women at risk of abandoning their child, 191 have been successfully assisted by the new services piloted in the four cities, meaning that 352 children were ‘saved’ by the Project from being separated by their mother (Figure 7). The child abandonment prevention rate varied from 40.8% in Astana city to an 69.1% in the two cities of Karaganda region.

Figure 7. Beneficiaries of Child Abandonment Prevention Services in Pilot Regions

It would have been very useful to have disaggregated data per gender and disability, but neither the progress reports of the local contractors nor the Project monitoring were able to provide them. Feedback from focus groups with professionals has not indicated any particular support provided to parents of children with disability. It is therefore difficult to draw an accurate conclusion on the impact of new services upon this vulnerable category of children.
The overall reduction of institutionalisation at regional level and abandonment prevention in pilot cities meant that more cases of family separation were avoided and more family support solutions have been used in the targeted regions. Overall, it could be concluded that the Project had a beneficial contribution to the progressive realisation of children’s right to grow up in a family environment.

**In case of violence prevention, a number of 3,211 children (3rd-7th grades) from 10 pilot schools and institutions in East Kazakhstan benefitted for the first time from such services.** These services are totally new for the country, as already mentioned in other sections of the report. According to focus groups with the school safety teams and interview with East Kazakhstan State University monitoring the implementation work, the model/services expanded to include other grades as well, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 6,348 children. Measuring of impact of the Project on beneficiary children was challenging, given the lack of reliable and complete baseline and monitoring data as well as the lack of a “control group”; we have therefore extensively used the site visits, the focus groups with children and parents and the discussion groups with school safety teams to identify a number of significant effects of violence prevention services on beneficiary children. The evaluation was informed that the number of reported cases of deviant behaviour among children decreased from 25 in May 2013 to 18 in February 2014. During the same period of time, 80% reduction in the number of children abused by other children and more than 50% decrease in the number of children registered with the school inspector/police were recorded. Moreover, teachers’ violence upon children has been eradicated. Money extortion, a widespread practice among children in the schools, has been fully removed as well.

Other important effects of the violence prevention services in schools which were identified are: increased awareness of children on the meaning and consequences of violence, desirable behaviour and behavioural expectations; improved behaviour of children in school and at home; more open and assertive with parents; increased self-esteem of children as active participants in the programme; a more responsible attitude towards peers and brothers/sisters (confirmed by parents as well). Children who were interviewed during the focus groups in schools were able to reproduce the mission of the school related to violence prevention and to operationalize very well the concept of “an environment free of violence”. They were also able to provide examples of their own behaviour which they were most proud of; they were also able to compare their school with other schools in the city where violence prevention has not been introduced, and therefore note and confirm the model’s high value added in terms of students’ and teachers’ behaviour. The other schools are considered to be plagued by extortion, frequent fights between students, verbal abuse from teachers and yelling to students.

The evaluation team has not identified any significant impact of the piloted services in the residential care institutions. The reasons have been explained in the effectiveness section of the report and mainly consist of the resistance of the management to implement the model, considered to be irrelevant for their particular institution. In addition, the work on violence prevention in institutions was an additional effect of the project and UNICEF confirmed that it requires extra input, resources and time before its impact could be measured in a meaningful way. During the site visit to the sampled institution, the evaluation team observed a very obedient behaviour of children towards the staff and the prevalent belief among children that the ‘correct’ behaviour simply means “not to shout”, “eat silently in the canteen”, “not run in the hall”, “obey the adults”, which confirms the findings of the study on violence against children in institutions.

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85 Some pilot schools and institutions tend to hide particular sensitive information (children’s homes, lyceum and special school for deviant children) for fear of being punished or downgraded by the akimat department of education.
4.5 Sustainability

Sustainability of the Project results has been analysed from three perspectives: policy/legal, institutional and financial.

From the **policy and legal standpoint**, the contribution of the Project to the modernization of the policy and legislative framework has a high sustainability level, given the embedment of many of UNICEF expert inputs into the legislation (e.g. Marriage and Family Code, Law on domestic violence, Government 5-step plan, Regulations on Infant homes and social workers, Regulations on foster care, Law on neglected and homeless children) and the preparation and/or adoption of new laws and strategies (e.g. Law on National Prevention Mechanism, Criminal and Administrative Offence codes, 2030 Social Development Concept, draft strategy on violence against children, etc.), extensively described in the effectiveness section of the report. One third of UNICEF recommendations for the revision of the Law on specialised social services were considered. Interviews with Parliament and Government confirmed that the credibility of UNICEF legal and policy inputs derives from thorough and undisputable evidence provided in various areas of child rights and child protection and from top level technical assistance employed to review, comment and recommend amendments to the legal framework.

The Project has also contributed to building sustainable policy prerequisites for the development of integrated approaches in social services (see mechanism piloted by the Project) for disadvantaged people and families. The overarching policy paper adopted in 2013 “Nationwide Concept of Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030” reads:

> “By 2025, a model of integrated social services and social aid provision will be created with the aim to prevent social disadvantage. The new model will use the principle of individual and complex care for citizens in need and their families. For that purpose, a coordination mechanism will be developed for social workers in education, health, social protection and other areas, which will allow the provision of social services to citizens in need by means of a “single window”. By 2020, the integrated model of social services will be tested in several pilot regions. Implementation of the integrated model will enhance the targeting of the integrated social services, types of aid, and will increase the coverage of families in need with such measures of support, and as a consequence, will reduce poverty and social disadvantage, and strengthen the family.” (page 33)

The “National Plan of Social Modernization for the period until 2016”, which operationalizes the 2030 Social Development Concept on mid-term, specifically targets children by prioritising the development of “mechanisms for interagency cooperation in providing assistance to children in difficult situations, including children with developmental disabilities” under Priority 3 “Integrated support for motherhood and childhood”. Responsibility is entrusted to four ministries (MoES, MoH, MoLSPP, Ministry of Internal Affairs) and akimats at regional and local levels. According to feedback received from high level officials in ministries and Parliament, the inclusion of this priority has been strongly promoted by the constant and well-documented advocacy of UNICEF within the remit of its Country Programme, including this Project.

An important sustainability feature has been also signalled by the intimate connection between the priorities of the Government on one side and the UNICEF work under the Project and beyond on the other side, as evidentiated by the two-year rolling work plans signed in 2012 by UNICEF with the MoES, MoH, MoLSPP, Ministry of Internal Affairs and respectively with the National Human Rights...
Centre (Ombudsman’s Office). As mentioned by the Ministry of Health, for instance, “all suggestions of UNICEF were incorporated in our programmes” and “the project should not be considered separately, but integrated into our reform processes and linked to other initiatives of our Ministry.”

The results of the Project (see also Table 8) have thus contributed to building policy and legal blocks for the continuation of reforms in child protection.

As far as institutional sustainability is concerned, the Project has successfully increased the capacity of the Ombudsman’s office and its partners from the NGOs sector and media in child rights monitoring and identification of child rights violations in the country. NGOs are now part of the National Preventive Mechanism under the new law and have been trained to monitor child rights in the institutions nominated in the new law. ‘Child rights’ is now a distinct chapter in the annual reports of the Ombudsman. The Toolkit on Monitoring Child Institutions and the revised child rights referral and complain mechanism are fully used. The staff of the Ombudsman’s office is now better equipped to process the complaints, refer cases to competent bodies and follow them up. An important sustainability feature is the ownership of the studies on violence against children in schools and on child trafficking and sexual exploitation86 carried out with the support of the Project and, most importantly, of their findings and recommendations: “These are not UNICEF studies, but Ombudsman’s studies”. They were referenced in the Ombudsman’s annual reports and their findings were jointly presented with UNICEF to high level decision-makers in the Government and Parliament and to the public. The Prosecutor General issued a public statement on the issue of violence against children in institutions, acknowledging the results of the studies. Findings informed the revision of legislation and triggered the preparation of a national strategy on violence prevention, the piloting of a model in East Kazakhstan, the introduction of violence against children topics into the curriculum of Training Institute for Prosecutors and in the education standards.87 This is an excellent example of research work which has not remained dead letter after release, but which boosted change at national level among top level officials and various layers of society – a practice nurtured by the Project with outstanding results!

The contribution of the Project to increasing the capacities at the level of primary health care units on child abandonment prevention was also acknowledged by the key informants. Focus groups with professionals from polyclinics, maternity wards and children homes in all three pilot regions confirmed that the new knowledge and skills acquired due to trainings have been integrated into regular activities and that the referral protocols and operation algorithms developed by the Project (see Table 9) are used in the daily working routine. Although not used at its full potential for reasons explained in the previous chapters, case management is part of the work of psychologists and social workers in the primary health care centres and also in the transformed centres for the adaptation of minors. As a result of the Project, staff functions have been revised for 728 professionals to incorporate new responsibilities and methods of work. Elements of case management have been introduced in the curriculum of social work students at East Kazakhstan State University and Semey Medical University. There is evidence of cooperation between the public services and the NGOs in the provision of child protection services, most notably in Karaganda and Astana. “Demeu” Educational and Practice Centre for Family Health has the capacity, the experience, the networks and the willingness to serve as a national resource centre for professional development (methodological assistance and advanced

87 The evaluation has been informed that the Department for Strategy and Development of Education Standards of the MoES consulted UNICEF on the content of training concerning violence when they were preparing the education standards last year.
training) of psychologists and social workers in the health care system as well as supervisors of social work.

There are however factors which might decrease the sustainability of the Project results in the future and concern has been expressed in this respect by various key informants. These factors refer to the insufficient number of psychologists and lack of social workers in maternities where most cases of child abandonment are recorded; lack of attractiveness for the profession of social worker to encourage young people to choose this field of study, given low salaries and the use of “social worker” to nominate both skilled and unskilled practitioners engaged in home-based care for the elderly and people with disability, which misleads the youth; lack of a strong professional association to advocate for the profession; insufficient investment in the continuous training of social workers for keeping abreast with professional challenges. These factors along with the costing of the child abandonment prevention services piloted in the regions will need to be carefully considered when preparing for replication to other regions or at national level.

In case of schools where violence prevention model was piloted, the feedback from safety teams confirmed the full use of primary prevention curriculum and, to a certain extent, of the secondary prevention investigation tools adapted by each school to fit their purposes. Training provided by the Project has been essential in putting in place the violence prevention model in the pilot schools. It is important to mention that the Project provided only the framework and tools, leaving each school to decide on its mission statement, behaviour expectations matrix, reward system, final version of the assessment, investigation and reporting forms, which has obviously increased the ownership level of the model. Principals of schools which were interviewed during the field phase confirmed the fact that the school safety teams will continue to function beyond the lifetime of the Project. The evaluation team shares this belief, however some schools, especially those with a large number of students and more pronounced vulnerability profile will need to be closely monitored and supported by the akimat Department of Education to keep their motivation high and continue to work at the same capacity after the end of piloting. **Sustainability of Project investment was weaker in case of violence prevention initiative in residential care institutions, where no sufficient buy-in and ownership were secured, as explained in the earlier sections of the report, and where a different approach has to be first tested before replication to other institutions in the country.** The new law on NPM which allows the access of NGOs in certain formerly-closed institutions is very useful in ensuring that violence is monitored. A manual on addressing violence in institutions, also linked to NPM is under preparation.

A weaker ownership was also registered in the implementation of the pilot 5-step integrated mechanism at akimat level which may explain the ups and downs in the work of the regional inter-agency commissions (working groups) in the pilot regions. According to the feedback received from the discussion groups, these commissions are no longer functioning as the 5-step pilot was regulated by the Government decree to last until December 2013. It is mainly the Commission of Minors which undertakes the role of an integrated body at regional level. It is however unclear to what extent the functioning guidelines and working protocols developed by the Project are used and with what results. The reporting of akimats to the MoLSPP are mainly focussed on narrating activities, rather than highlighting results of the inter-agency work based on new working procedures and tools. The last report made available to the evaluation team refers to the period August 2012 – September 2013 and it does not include any forward looking planning of the work beyond the end of 2013.

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88 Psychologists are either missing in some maternities or work only part-time.
89 In 2012, there was only one graduate with a degree in social work out of two universities providing training in a given specialty in Semey. The Medical University in Semey is willing to set up a Faculty on Social Work when the level of demand for the profession would justify it. Until then, an optional course is under preparation for continuous training.
Recommendations of the national multidisciplinary working group (under the leadership of the MoLSPP) for the replication of the model at national level, planned to be released in November-December 2013 (‘the fifth step’, article 18 of the 5-step decree), are still pending. The inclusion of mechanisms for inter-agency cooperation for provision of assistance to vulnerable children as a priority in the “National Plan of Social Modernization for the period until 2016” indicates that the model piloted by the Project has a future and that the Government is committed to continue with the implementation of integrated approaches in child protection. However, without securing the full commitment and ownership of the akimats, most notably of the deputy akim (the chairman of the Commission of Minors and also akimat budget holders), and without revising the regulations of the Commission of Minors (which is most likely to remain the core of the inter-agency work) to broaden its current mandate, entrust it with decision-making power and obligation to meet at least once a month, it is unlikely that the envisaged mechanisms for inter-agency cooperation will have a sustainable basis for operation to serve the vulnerable children.

In terms of financial sustainability, the costs of the new services on child abandonment prevention piloted in the regions have been fully taken over by the health care system and akimat health department: social workers and psychologists have been on the payroll of primary health care units from the beginning of the piloting and will retain their jobs, as confirmed by the Ministry of Health representatives interviewed by the evaluation team; the running costs of the new services are fully covered by the polyclinics and perinatal centres involved as partners in the Project. The only exception if the interdisciplinary mobile team which stopped its functioning in Karaganda after the end of Project financing, as local authorities were not financially able to take it over or to contract its services from the NGO Sem'ya. This is indeed unfortunate, since the results of the mobile team were remarkable, measured by the number of identified families at risk and rate of abandonment prevention (see Table 13). However, UNICEF country office is currently doing a cost-effectiveness analysis to advocate for the continuation of the mobile service. Also, the two polyclinics involved in piloting the model have the capacity to run the services, confirmed by the focus group with professionals as well as by the akimat department of health. Most sustainable appears to be the model developed in Semey which includes the whole health care network in the city, having at the centre of work Polyclinic no.12 which acts as a resource centre for all health units and whose functioning has been regulated by an akimat decision entitled “Regulation of the Resource Centre for specialized social services in health care system for Semey city” (August 2013).

For replication purposes, costing of services is needed for enabling budget review committees to plan the resources for the next financial period. Funding needs to be secured for the training of professionals, using the curricula and the training methodology developed by the Project or by incorporating these training modules by the in-service training centre of the Ministry of Health. Ideally, employment of social workers in maternity hospitals will also need to be considered when planning resources for the future. Last but not least, replication will require funding for further development of community-based social services to ensure sustainable child abandonment prevention solutions and transformation of infant homes, and generally to provide support to all vulnerable children and their families. Provision of a comprehensive range of new community-based family support services requires initially an important new funding, but which could eventually be obtained through reallocations of resources and a reduction in the use of residential institutions.

90 According to the Government regulations no.789/2001, 646/2002,1179/2005 and 415/2007, the commission is an advisory body which meets each 6 months and whose target group is composed of children and adolescents with deviant behaviour and offenders. Prevention of behavioural problems is part of the mandate as well.
As far as violence prevention is concerned, the model has been fully taken over by the schools in terms of its associated costs: school safety teams are composed of school staff and a police inspector who are on the payroll of the school, respectively akimat police department; running costs are covered by the schools as well, although they have already encountered some difficulties for covering the costs of printing and multiplication of teaching materials for students. As in the case of child abandonment prevention, the replication of the violence prevention models will require an accurate costing, funding for training and coaching of the school safety teams and embedment of violence against children issues into the in-service training of teachers. The financial sustainability of the model in institutions is not analysed in this report given its very limited implementation in the pilot institutions of the Project.

### 4.6 Human rights and cross-cutting issues

The Project had an important contribution to the promotion and progressive realisation of children’s rights. It did so through: promoting the progressive realisation of children’s rights in the revised legal framework and policy documents; improving the mechanism of identification, referral and redress of child rights violations at the level of Ombudsman and its NGO and media partners, in their quality of duty-bearers; opening access of families at risk, in their double capacity of duty-bearers and rights-holders, to child abandonment prevention services; ensuring a safe and violence free environment in the schools; empowering of beneficiary children, as rights-holders, to fully participate in the implementation of the violence prevention model in their schools and engage parents in various activities, thus developing not only knowledge, but also their self-esteem; developing the understanding of the parents, as duty-bearers, on their role in providing a safe and violence free environment at home and on the importance of communicating openly with their children; embedment of violence-related children’s rights into the curricula of in-service training of prosecutors.

Over the Project lifetime, UNICEF together with its partners has influenced significant shifts in thinking in Kazakhstan about the meaning and consequences of violence against children in schools and institutions, child trafficking and sexual exploitation. However, sustainable outcomes require changes of practices and ingrained cultural norms and values, which cannot be easily achieved in a 1-year time frame and which take time to happen. The reasons for reticence of residential care institutions to embrace the model has to be carefully analysed and a new approach, based on close consultation with the management and staff of these institutions, be worked out and retested.

The Project had nevertheless a positive contribution to the strengthening of the capacity of a wide range of duty-bearers in Kazakhstan (Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights, ministries, Ombudsman, akimats, schools, social workers and psychologists working in the primary health centres, NGOs, media) to protect and fulfil the children’s rights to grow in a family environment and in a safe educational unit.

The Project has been guided by the overarching human rights principles of non-discrimination, equality, participation, rule of law and inclusion. The principles of progressive realization of human rights and use of maximum available resources were implicit in the implementation of the Project. The empowerment principle worked very well at the level of duty-bearers, notably for school staff and professionals engaged in child abandonment prevention, but also at the level of children, as rights-holders, in their capacity of main protagonists and promoters of a community free of violence.

As far as gender equality is concerned, the DoA states that “Both women and men will be fully represented in the project activities” and that “Gender parity will be a guiding principle for the delivery

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91 The violence prevention model started its implementation in September 2013 and only in one oblast.
of the project", but without providing any further details. The formulation of target groups and of Project indicators is gender-blind. The progress reports 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 include a chapter on gender equality (with an identical content), highlighting important Project contributions in several areas: women empowerment to avoid child abandonment; advocacy and communication-for-development for gender-related changes in individual attitudes and behaviours as well as social norms (in line with ToC); gender disaggregated data collection and analysis in various studies on the status of children in institutions, vulnerabilities of children and youth to risky behaviour, sexual exploitation and trafficking, violence in schools; and opportunities provided to the female NGOs and 103 victims of trafficking (majority of whom are young women and teenage girls) to raise their voice following assessment of vulnerabilities of children.

However, there is no gender disaggregation in the progress reports of Project achievements at output or outcome level. Based on information provided by UNICEF following the request of the evaluation team, we learnt that 86.5% (425 people) of the total number of professionals trained by the Project were women, for a total input of 212 training hours. Also, 99% (101) of professionals involved in child abandonment prevention services in the pilot regions were women. The latter also benefitted from revised functions, in line with newly-assigned responsibilities. All 348 families which benefitted of child abandonment prevention services included women at risk (pregnant women and mothers).

Other gender-related information such as the proportion of girls and boys who benefitted from new services piloted in the regions, proportion of female staff members of centres for adaptation of minors in the total 728 staff members whose functions were revised following the transformation of these centres, proportion of women in the membership of the inter-agency commissions (working groups) and school safety teams have not been monitored and reported. Ombudsman’s annual report provide an overall number of complaints related to children’s rights, but without any further disaggregation by gender, typology of complaints, region, etc. Such information would have allowed a more comprehensive assessment of the extent to which equal opportunities were nurtured by the Project. Nevertheless, available data demonstrate that the Project had an important contribution to the promotion of gender equality, the child protection sector being practically a female-dominated sector.

At the same time, the gender-disaggregated regional figures, kindly provided to the evaluation team by the Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights (see Table 14) show that boys are more vulnerable to institutionalisation than girls.

### Table 14. Child Institutionalisation by Gender in Pilot Regions (2011 and 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>East Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Karaganda</th>
<th>Astana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children left without parental care, of whom:</td>
<td>36,777</td>
<td>33,682</td>
<td>4,148</td>
<td>3,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- girls</td>
<td>17,542</td>
<td>15,935</td>
<td>1,912</td>
<td>1,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- boys</td>
<td>19,235</td>
<td>17,747</td>
<td>2,236</td>
<td>1,968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of children left without parental care in state residential care institutions, of whom:</td>
<td>12,925</td>
<td>9,879</td>
<td>1,747</td>
<td>1,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- girls</td>
<td>5,576</td>
<td>4,154</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- boys</td>
<td>7,349</td>
<td>5,725</td>
<td>1,005</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement rate of children left without parental care in state residential care (%)</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
They also show a decreasing trend in the placement rate of boys left without parental care in state residential care institutions. Apart from East Kazakhstan where the placement rate decreased equally for boys and girls, in the other two regions the decrease was much higher in the case of boys. From this perspective, the Project contributed to the promotion of rights of boys to grow up in a family environment. It is important to highlight the fact that Project has worked primarily with women at risk, but also to the extent possible with their male partners, doing advocacy and counselling to ensure that relatives and family members support the reunification process and that child abandonment is prevented. In this respect, the Project was in line with the recommendations of a major evaluation carried out by UNICEF in 2007 on gender policy\textsuperscript{92} according to which UNICEF needs to work more explicitly with men and boys as both agents and beneficiaries of gender equality.

The Project planned to ensure an equity focus by orienting the funds and domestic investment towards the regions with major social problems as well as by focusing its intervention on the most vulnerable women and children.

Selection of East Kazakhstan and Karaganda as pilot regions were made after a thorough mapping of the child protection system and review of indicators. They are highly populated urban areas with high unemployment and poverty rates where a large number of child care institutions are located and where there is a high rate of deprivation of parental rights and suicide rates among youth. They are thus areas of high risk of child trafficking and exploitation. Both regions have a very high number of children with disabilities, ranking 3rd (Karaganda) and 4th (East Kazakhstan) in the list of 14 regions, with 3,796, respectively 3,616 children with disabilities in 2011\textsuperscript{93}. East Kazakhstan is also an area contaminated by almost 500 nuclear tests conducted during the Soviet Union period, which explains the high number of children with disabilities and health problems, especially in Semey city (the city selected for the child abandonment prevention piloting). It has also been requested by the donor to figure among the target regions precisely because of these reasons. The region has also the lowest child well-being rates in the country for children under the age of three\textsuperscript{94}. In addition, Karaganda region registers the highest level of early marriage among women (MICS 4, page 159) in the country: 0.7% of marriages before 15 years of age. For the child abandonment prevention, Karaganda and Shakhtinsk cities were selected. The latter is known to be one of the most socially vulnerable cities with high risk of child abandonment. Its Dolinka district has two colonies (prison-type settlements) and Novodolinka district has an orphanage. Astana was not initially targeted by the Project; it has joined later due to an increasing trend of child abandonment cases, especially of women with unwanted pregnancies coming from South Kazakhstan region to give birth and abandon the child there.

The Project was focused on the most vulnerable children, i.e. children left without parental care at risk of abandonment and institutionalisation, children with disability, children under the age of three. According to the DoA, “a special inclusive approach to children with disabilities would be a core principle through the entire project implementation”. The Project paid indeed a particular attention to these children, in terms of:

- better profiling of their needs and updating the data system e.g. Karaganda reviewed the data on children with disability, MoH carried out data collection on children in children’s homes disaggregated by age and disability, UNICEF has recently finalised a situation analysis, the


\textsuperscript{94} UNICEF, “Child Well-Being in Kazakhstan”, prepared by Roelen, K., Gassmann, F., Maastricht University, July 2012, Table 17, page 40.
studies on violence against children in schools and on child trafficking and sexual exploitation have provided new evidence of vulnerabilities of children with disabilities;
- inclusion of children with disability in communication activities and reports of Ombudsman; the chapter on children’s rights in the 2012 annual report of Ombudsman is extensively discussing the challenges faced by the children with disability compared to the reports in 2010 or 2011;
- mainstreaming disability in the working tools and procedures developed by the Project, such as in the Toolbox for monitoring children’s institutions, Protocol & procedure for referral & monitoring of children under three years at risk, etc.;
- advocacy and provision of expertise for the revision of the legislation to introduce benefits for carers of children with disability, inclusion of special education institutions for children in the monitoring system under the NPM;
- advocacy at the MoLSPP level to expand the network of day care centres to provide opportunities for parents to find employment and socialise;
- the establishment of a special group to support children with disabilities within the inter-agency working group in Astana.

The number of children with disabilities who benefitted from the new services developed and tested by the Project in the three pilot regions and four cities is not known, as neither the Project progress reports nor the reports submitted to UNICEF by local contractors (Demeu Centre, Public Union Centre Sem’ya) nor the reports of the akimat inter-agency commissions (working groups) submitted to the MoLSPP monitored such data. Feedback from focus groups and discussion groups is not conclusive enough, participants acknowledging support provided to this groups but being vague in terms of numbers. The regional figures provided by the Commission for the Protection of Children’s Rights (Table 12) show that the number of children with disability left without parental care decreased in one region and slightly increased in two pilot regions and that all of them have been placed into residential care institutions. It is clear that supporting these children is very challenging and that family-based solutions (foster care, guardianship) and community-based services (day care centres, respite care, home assistance) are either scarce or missing. In this respect, it was legitimate that the Project targeted these children through a wide range of advocacy and technical assistance activities; however change takes time to happen, especially at the level of prevailing social and policy norms, as presented in the ToC, and at the level of prioritising public funding towards creating family environments and family support for these very vulnerable children.

As far as selection of children under the age of three as one of the Project target groups is concerned, there is a large range of studies and research demonstrating that the risk of being deprived of parental care within one year is almost three times as high as for children of all other age groups combined and that the effects of separation from the mother at such an early age would have devastating effects on the normal development of the child. A percentage of 98% of children in infant homes in Kazakhstan are 'social orphans', indicating the very high risk of abandonment and justifying the choice made by the Project to target these children as well.

Concerning violence prevention, the pilot schools and institutions were selected by the education department of akimat of East Kazakhstan. The final list included various types of schools, of different sizes, located in both deprived and developed neighbourhoods, with students from different family backgrounds (both poor and better off families, more and less educated parents, etc.), having different material resources and opportunities (consumables, printing and copying facilities, premises, etc.). One school is also implementing an inclusive education approach, where children with disabilities study in the same class with the rest of the students. Selected institutions varied as well, from 'classical' children’s home to family-type children’s home and school for children with deviant
behaviour. All students in the pilot schools exposed to different forms of violence in schools, including corporal punishment, have fully participated in the implementation of the violence prevention model.

As far as beneficiary women are concerned, the child abandonment prevention services targeted the most vulnerable women as illustrated by the profile of women at risk of abandoning their child under the age of three (see in Table 2). Summarising, they are single, have a low income, have only secondary education, are unemployed or doing low-paid seasonal work, live in a rented flat/temporary housing, have no permanent residence in the locality where they live, have not visited a specialist during pregnancy, do not take birth control measures, are consumers of alcohol, are smoking and usually do not receive any support from their male partner.

Along with children under the age of three, the Project has thus identified and supported one of the most vulnerable group of women through equity-focused methodologies and programming approaches.
4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Relevance

The Project is highly relevant for Kazakhstan’s child protection reforms and national policies for improving the well-being of children and realisation of children’s rights as it addressed the top priorities of the reform. The Project is in line with country’s strategies on education, health and social welfare, while its primary objectives are tied to the implementation of the Law on Specialised Social Services and recently adopted Law on National Preventive Mechanism. It is highly relevant for Kazakhstan’s international commitments deriving from the ratification of the CRC and CEDAW and aligned with UNICEF and donor’s priorities. The Project addressed the most pressing needs of children at risk of family separation, abuse and neglect and their families, identified in the domestic and international reports and planning documents. The capacity building directed towards professionals, service providers and oversight bodies had a high relevance for the advancement of child protection reforms and progressive realisation of children’s rights in the country. The Project remained relevant over its entire lifetime, as documented by various studies, reports and assessments.

The main factors which facilitated the relevance of the Project were evidence-based design; engagement of UNICEF Project team in policy and legal framework development, which enabled the Project to keep abreast and adjust to emerging national priorities; and multi-pronged approach (including working on evidence-building, policies and legislation, developing methodologies and tools, local and regional piloting of models, capacity building, campaigning for awareness raising) which was appropriate in view of the underlying ToC and its key assumptions. Relevance might have been even higher in case the design of the Project also engaged in a more thorough way the residential institutions targeted by the violence prevention model.

Effectiveness

The Project was effective in achieving most of its planned results and objectives as outlined in the Goals Hierarchy and the ToC. The UNICEF’s partnership with Ombudsman, Government and Parliament allowed for effective and coordinated development and modernization of policy and legal framework. Based on thorough evidence, the Project introduced a clear focus on the child rights and equity in the policy agenda and thus contributed to the acceleration of efforts to address outstanding CRC observations. Child rights violations are now more effectively addressed by the Ombudsman’s office, in cooperation with its government, akimats, CSOs and media. Practical models of integrated child protection services and violence prevention against children have been developed and piloted at regional and local level, and achieved important results. The close integration of the modelling process into the current strategies, action plans and programmes of the Ministry of Health in particular, enhanced the effectiveness of their results. Further work, especially assessment of cost-effectiveness, estimation of costs and preparation of operating instructions, is needed before national replication could be done. The Project effectively prepared professionals in the social, health and education system for their new roles in case management, referral and gatekeeping. Still, efforts are needed to reach a critical mass of professionals to ensure sustainable change in work practices and mindsets.

The factors which decreased the effectiveness level of the Project include: insufficient child accessibility of the Ombudsman’s office to encourage children to address directly their complaints;

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38 Based on the Performance Scoring detailed in the methodology of the evaluation.
poor usage of disaggregated data in the monitoring and reporting work of Ombudsman’s office; insufficient tailoring of the violence prevention model to the needs of residential care institutions to ensure buy-in; low ownership at akimat level of the 5-step plan on the background of frequent institutional changes related to the child protection coordination function at regional level and lack of a comprehensive strategic document on child protection to guide the reform process at all layers of the government; administrative hurdles in obtaining documents, scarce housing, poor job opportunities and insufficient income support for vulnerable women at risk of abandoning their child; underdeveloped community-based services, especially for children with disability, to effectively prevent unnecessary separation of children from their families.

**Efficiency**

UNICEF has used all its Core Roles to the best possible to attain the expected results of the Project, however with various degrees of efficiency. The Project was very ambitious for the available resources and the particular context of the country. At the same time, the strategy employed by UNICEF to involve as much as possible the local stakeholders in the implementation of the Project worked well for empowerment reasons, but with some efficiency loss (especially related to timely implementation of activities). The UNICEF Core Roles which were particularly efficient include strong advocacy for the most vulnerable children, policy advise for the advancement of reforms, monitoring and evaluation of most vulnerable children, leveraging of resources and facilitation of national dialogue and partnerships towards child friendly norms and international standards. The Project had two outstanding efficiency features: use of modelling and piloting of new services and practices to leverage further resources by providing evidence base for policy or programme in favour of children; and investment in the prevention of institutionalisation, which is the most expensive form of alternative care and which has dramatic negative consequences upon the normal development of a child.

Project management was conducted professionally, with high quality and commitment from UNICEF, and following the donor’s requirements for technical and financial reporting. With few minor exceptions, spending was in line with the planned levels. Results-oriented monitoring would have been more efficient in case of unitary reporting of contractors, better guidance provided by UNICEF to local partners for documenting the piloted models, more detailed financial reporting and monitoring of targets in accordance to clear baselines and to a ToC which should have been developed at the beginning of the Project.

**Impact**

Considering its rather limited resources, the Project had a good impact level in the pilot regions. It contributed to the overall decrease of the number of children left without parental care and to the reduction of the placement rate in state residential institutions. The impact on children with disability and children under the age of three was however insignificant, indicating deficiencies in the gatekeeping capacity and underdeveloped foster care and community-based services. In terms of net impact (attribution), the Project increased the number of child protection services available in the pilot regions with five additional services and consequently the number of beneficiary children and families. Due to the piloted services, 352 children were ‘saved’ from being separated by their mother, the child abandonment prevention rate reaching almost 41% in Astana and around 69% Karaganda. The overall reduction of institutionalisation at regional level and abandonment prevention in pilot cities meant that more cases of family separation were avoided and more family support solutions have been used in the targeted regions. The Project had thus a beneficial contribution to the progressive realisation of children’s right to grow up in a family environment. Significant impact has
also been achieved in the prevention of violence against children in the pilot schools (with over 3,200 beneficiary children), but almost none in the pilot residential care institutions.

**Impact would have been higher in case the gatekeeping and referral system (piloted within the 5-step plan) was functioning more efficiently, the overall family support system was better developed and consultation with residential care institutions was secured in the design phase of the violence prevention model.**

**Sustainability**

Most effects and outcomes of the Project are **likely sustainable** especially in terms of modernized policy and legislative framework, which builds sustainable policy prerequisites for the continuation of reforms in child protection. The capacity building tools, training curricula, manuals, toolkits and protocols developed by the Project are already in use or could easily be used for future establishment of similar services. Staff functions have been revised for over 700 professionals to incorporate new responsibilities and methods of work. Another sustainability feature is the emerging resource centres in Astana and Semey for professional development of socio-medical staff. Financial sustainability is higher for child abandonment prevention services run from the very beginning by the health network; however, sustainability of solutions aimed to avoid family separation is conditioned upon improvement of family support (job opportunities, social benefits, housing, etc.) and further development of community-based social services. Violence prevention service has been fully taken over by schools.

Sustainability was facilitated by the strong credibility of UNICEF’s legal and policy inputs derived from undisputable evidence provided in various areas of child rights and child protection and from top level technical assistance employed to review, comment and recommend amendments to the legal framework; the close connection with the priorities of the Government; the national ownership of the findings and recommendations of studies on violence against children in schools and on child trafficking and sexual exploitation; high commitment of the primary healthcare system and schools to implement new approaches. Factors which decreased sustainability include lack of social workers in maternities where most cases of child abandonment are recorded; lack of attractiveness for the social worker profession for young people and of a strong professional association to advocate for the profession; insufficient investment in the continuous training of social workers for keeping abreast with professional challenges. Sustainability of Project investment in violence prevention in residential care institutions and in the implementation of the pilot 5-step integrated mechanism at akimat level are matters of significant concern.

**Human rights and Cross-cutting issues**

The Project had an important contribution to the promotion and realisation of **children’s rights** by embedding them in the revised legal framework and policy documents, improving the mechanism of identification, referral and redress of child rights violations at the level of Ombudsman and its NGO and media partners, in their quality of duty-bearers. It has also opened access of families at risk, in their double capacity of duty-bearers and rights-holders, to child abandonment prevention services and violence free educational environments. Empowering of beneficiary children, as rights-holders, to fully participate in the implementation of the violence prevention model in their schools and engagement of parents in various activities are also notable. The Project had a positive contribution to the strengthening of the capacity of a wide range of duty-bearers in Kazakhstan to protect and fulfill the children’s rights to grow in a family environment and in a safe educational unit. It contributed to **women empowerment** to avoid child abandonment and has also worked with the male partners of
women at risk to ensure that relatives and family members support the reunification process and that child abandonment is prevented. The majority of training beneficiaries were women. The Project managed to ensure an equity focus by orienting the funds and domestic investment towards the regions with significant social problems as well as by focusing its intervention on the most vulnerable women and children (especially in case of children left without parental care at risk of abandonment and institutionalisation and children exposed to violence and abuse) through equity-focused methodologies and programming approaches. Better disaggregation (gender, age, disability) of data in progress reports as well as in Ombudsman’s and akimat inter-agency commissions’ reports would have allowed a more in-depth analysis of Project achievements at outcome and output level.

To conclude, the future directions for more efficient child rights monitoring and continuation of reforms in child protection, which have been highlighted by the evaluation findings, are the following:

a) Development of child-accessible complaint mechanisms and better monitoring and reporting on child rights violations.

b) More coherent strategic and policy direction of the reform process in child protection; strengthening of the child protection coordination function at regional level.

c) Improvement of family support (job opportunities, income support, housing, etc.) in parallel with further development of community-based services, especially for children under the age of three and children with disability to sustainably prevent child abandonment.

d) Professionalisation of the social work in the country.

e) Scaling-up of models which tested new services for the prevention of child abandonment and violence against children in schools.

4.2 Recommendations and Lessons Learnt

4.2.1 Recommendations

The recommendations presented in Table 15 below are based on the findings and conclusions of the evaluation as well as consultation and validation by the key stakeholders that were interviewed during the field phase, respectively provided feedback on the draft report.

Each interview, focus group and discussion group has checked the perceptions of various stakeholders (UNICEF, donor, representatives of ministries, Ombudsman, Parliament, akimats, professionals, NGOs, media, service beneficiaries) concerning the top priorities of the child protection reform in Kazakhstan that needs to be addressed in the coming years and consequently the role each of these stakeholders should play (see Interview Guides in Annex 6).

Validation of recommendations was planned to be done in two phases: 1) by UNICEF and key stakeholders, following submission of the draft report; and 2) by other stakeholders, during the final conference of the project on 28 May 2014. Given some changes in the agenda of the conference, at the request of the Parliament, the evaluation team was informed that the results will be presented only to UNICEF country office in a separate meeting. The presentation took place on 29 May 2014 and the feedback of UNICEF team as well as their comments received on 22 May and on 4 June 2014 were incorporated in the final evaluation report. The draft report has been also distributed to the Norwegian Embassy and to the national stakeholders, thus providing the opportunity for feedback and
incorporation into the final version of the evaluation report and ensure that recommendations reflect these multiple perspectives and buy-in for future implementation.

Recommendations are addressed to Ombudsman’s office, Government of Kazakhstan and UNICEF, as requested by UNICEF country office during the debriefing meeting (see section on methodology), in line with the ToR and the need to engage all major stakeholders in the continuation of reforms on child protection in Kazakhstan.

The Recommendations are divided into two categories, as follows:

<table>
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<th>S - Strategic recommendations (6)</th>
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<td>O - Operational recommendations (2)</td>
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Each recommendation has an addressee and a proposed timing and it includes reference to the various sections of the report to substantiate the proposed course of action.
Table 15. List of Recommendations

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<td></td>
<td><strong>Strategic Recommendations (S)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td><strong>Further strengthen the capacity of the Ombudsman’s office in the area of child rights monitoring and direct interaction with children</strong>&lt;br&gt;The yearly reports of the Ombudsman’s office have undergone important improvements since 2010 in terms of analytical depth and diversity of reported child rights issues. Monitoring of child rights has been also considerably improved as extensively presented in the report. There are however areas in need of further strengthening, highlighted in the effectiveness and cross-cutting issues sections of the report, as follows:&lt;br&gt;a) usage of disaggregated data in the monitoring and reporting work – for the moment, the reports include only an overall figure on complaints related to child rights; disaggregation of complaints per region, gender, disability, type of child rights violation, type of petitioner, type of defendant, recurrency, etc. would provide a better understanding of the issues requiring attention from the duty-bearers in the country, hence a better evidence-based response;&lt;br&gt;b) expand the coverage of monitoring mechanisms to all types of closed institutions, especially those that are not covered by the NPM i.e. institutions for children with disabilities, institutions for children left without parental care, boarding schools, shelters and alike;&lt;br&gt;c) Explore the feasibility of ensuring a regional representation of the Ombudsman’s office in the country – it will help a more efficient identification and monitoring of child rights violations, especially in remote and rural areas; media outreach events and partnership with grass-roots NGOs could provide a valuable support;&lt;br&gt;d) Develop a child-accessible complaint mechanism which encourages direct complaints from children – continued efforts are needed for raising awareness among children on the possibility to address the Ombudsman directly, possibly in cooperation with schools and NGOs, but also through social media which is very popular among children and youth; production of ‘one-minute juniors’ videos (<a href="http://www.theneminutesjr.org">http://www.theneminutesjr.org</a>) could be also supported to present the children’s perspective on various child rights violations and ways the Ombudsman could be contacted and be of help.</td>
<td>Ombudsman’s office, in collaboration with NGOs, media, schools and with the assistance of UNICEF Country Office and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>mid 2014–mid 2016</td>
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<td>S2</td>
<td><strong>Ensure a more coherent strategic and policy direction in the child protection area in line with the</strong></td>
<td>Government, with the...mid 2014 –</td>
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The presentation of the Project context and the effectiveness section of the report show that, for the moment, policy-making and coordination of child protection in Kazakhstan are confined to various areas (education, health, social welfare, internal affairs, juvenile justice). Each of these has its own strategic document; they are not sufficiently well harmonised among themselves and have overlapping results and beneficiaries as well as own quality standards and own data bases, leading to fragmentation and significant amount of duplication. There is insufficient coherence of response to the needs of children, who are often been addressed in a fragmented way and, with few exceptions, with little inter-sectoral cross-fertilisation and coordination. There is a need for an integrated approach to child protection that would coagulate needs, actions, resources and accountability for results in a more coherent and efficient way. It is suggested that a Task Force is formed at the level of the Government, with participation of CSOs and children’s rights oversight bodies, to screen existing strategies and cross-check their linkages along the lines mentioned above and against Kazakhstan’s international commitments; and to analyse institutional make-up and various structural adjustment options for increasing its efficiency. The results of the screening and analysis process and its recommendations (e.g. revision and harmonisation of existing strategies, adoption of a comprehensive strategic policy document for child protection, reorganisation of central and akimat-level coordination function for child rights protection and care, new roles for Commissions on Minors, etc.) would be presented to key decision-makers in the country for action taking. It is suggested to UNICEF to provide strategic advice to the Task Force for the screening exercise and for carrying out a feasibility study to inform possible options for institutional fine-tuning or adjustment, as well as to the Government for putting in place the agreed recommendations.

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|  | **needs of children and their families, and Kazakhstan’s international commitments**  
 needs of children and their families, and Kazakhstan’s international commitments  
 The presentation of the Project context and the effectiveness section of the report show that, for the moment, policy-making and coordination of child protection in Kazakhstan are confined to various areas (education, health, social welfare, internal affairs, juvenile justice). Each of these has its own strategic document; they are not sufficiently well harmonised among themselves and have overlapping results and beneficiaries as well as own quality standards and own data bases, leading to fragmentation and significant amount of duplication. There is insufficient coherence of response to the needs of children, who are often been addressed in a fragmented way and, with few exceptions, with little inter-sectoral cross-fertilisation and coordination. There is a need for an integrated approach to child protection that would coagulate needs, actions, resources and accountability for results in a more coherent and efficient way. It is suggested that a Task Force is formed at the level of the Government, with participation of CSOs and children’s rights oversight bodies, to screen existing strategies and cross-check their linkages along the lines mentioned above and against Kazakhstan’s international commitments; and to analyse institutional make-up and various structural adjustment options for increasing its efficiency. The results of the screening and analysis process and its recommendations (e.g. revision and harmonisation of existing strategies, adoption of a comprehensive strategic policy document for child protection, reorganisation of central and akimat-level coordination function for child rights protection and care, new roles for Commissions on Minors, etc.) would be presented to key decision-makers in the country for action taking. It is suggested to UNICEF to provide strategic advice to the Task Force for the screening exercise and for carrying out a feasibility study to inform possible options for institutional fine-tuning or adjustment, as well as to the Government for putting in place the agreed recommendations. | assistance of UNICEF Country Office | mid 2015 |
|  | **Further invest in the development and diversification of country-wide family support and community-based social services to contribute to the social inclusion of the most vulnerable children and prevent unnecessary family separation**  
 Further invest in the development and diversification of country-wide family support and community-based social services to contribute to the social inclusion of the most vulnerable children and prevent unnecessary family separation  
 The support provided by UNICEF and other donors for the development of family support and community-based social services for children in need should continue in order to assist the Kazakh authorities at central and local level to cope with a number of challenges during the years to come (identified in the effectiveness, impact and sustainability sections of the report), as follows: a) expansion of family-based and community-based services, especially for children under the age of three and children with disabilities, to all regions across the country, which address both prevention and response | CPCR, MoES, MoH, MoLSPP, akimats, CSOs, with the support of UNICEF Country Office and other international partners | Gradually, starting from 2014 over a period of 3-4 years |
in the continuum of services; b) diversification of the range of services according to the needs of the vulnerable children and their families (e.g. child care facilities for babies under the age of two to allow labour market integration of their mothers, outreach services for vulnerable children in remote and rural areas), in parallel with increasing their quality; c) development of a cross-sectoral approach among social, health and education systems in service delivery and development of joint standards for cross-sectoral services based on inter-sectoral cooperation; d) promote inter-regional partnerships in the development of services to ensure economies of scale and budget efficiency through a multiplier effect, based on transparent budget appropriations and accountability rules; e) support the formation of a competitive market of service providers (including state and non-governmental bodies), to ensure best quality of care at affordable prices for vulnerable children and their families. Slow progress in the prevention of institutionalisation of children with disabilities calls for energetic support of their families, who should become the focus of future reform efforts of the Government and its national and international partners.

**S4** Ensure support for ‘active inclusion’ of vulnerable women as the best means to promote sustainable solutions for child abandonment prevention, poverty alleviation and social inclusion

Economic growth of the country has not been converted into sustainable social gains for the most vulnerable children and their families. Despite of laudable Government efforts over the last years to improve the social safety net system and service provision to the most needy, the proportion of children who live in poverty remains high. The interviews with beneficiary mothers at risk of abandoning their child highlighted that, although satisfied with the social and legal counselling and emotional support received through the Project, their needs are primarily related to housing, jobs and decent income (see context, effectiveness and sustainability sections of the report). One of the best means to promote their social inclusion without putting extra burden on public finances and to ensure the sustainability of solutions for child abandonment prevention is to give priority and support to their labour market integration based on the concept of ‘active inclusion’. According to this concept, access to active employment measures and flexible working arrangements should be combined with adequate income support and access to quality social services. The Government commitment to develop support measures for vulnerable groups has improved the quality of life of those who gained a job as a result. This positive trend needs to continue, particularly through generating durable synergies with education, child care, health, housing and social assistance services which should accompany any gatekeeping...
effort! It is important to ensure that the work ‘pays’ by identifying and tackling the specific disincentives the vulnerable women face when entering, remaining or progressing in the labour market, including those related to the design and interaction of tax and benefits systems. International assistance and private sector support are needed to partner with the government in implementing systematic and coherent active inclusion policies and measures.

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<td>S5</td>
<td><strong>Develop a strong cadre of social workers and a culture of lifelong learning at various operational levels to ensure that they keep pace with reforms and are empowered to address the needs of beneficiaries at high professional standards</strong>&lt;br&gt;Social workers employed in educational, health and social welfare services at regional and local level should be provided access to up-to-date learning opportunities for personal and professional development. Monitoring of learning outcomes and continuous improvement of knowledge and skills should be a priority. Regular skills profiling to check gaps between the existing expertise and demand deriving from reforms implementation and from beneficiaries should be carried out to inform the staff development policy of the respective employers. Capacity building programmes are needed for the development of the supervisory function of the social workers (see sustainability section of the report). Of particular importance is the need for strengthening social workers’ understanding of the “good enough parenting” concept and of capacities to work with parents (biological and foster) to raise their parental skills, provide informed and professional referral decisions as well as correct prioritising of access to various services. In this respect, the packages of trainings developed by the Project could be put of good use to ensure the development of a ‘critical mass’ of social workers throughout the country. An internship system for young social workers is also recommended to be established. Organisations, such as Demeu Centre - an example of institutional excellence, with outstanding expertise and staff commitment - could become Government partners in the delivery of in-service training programmes. For sustainability reasons, the quality standards of services which require the presence of social workers should include, as in other countries, compulsory requirements for annual continuous training of social workers and for their supervision. At the same time, as highlighted in the sustainability section of the report, the attractiveness and statute of the profession of “social worker” needs to increase, to encourage young people to chose this field of study at the university level. Another possible Government partner in this process of overhauling the social work in the country could be a strong, representative national</td>
<td>Government (MoES, MoH, MoLSPP, CPCR), akimats, public and private training providers, with the support of UNICEF Country Office and other international partners</td>
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### S6 Adapt core roles of UNICEF in the area of child protection and welfare to the specific needs and development stage of Kazakhstan on short and medium term

Kazakhstan is expected to reach the high income country status by 2020. However, international experience demonstrates that even in fast-growing economies, new prosperity and an expanding middle class often accompany unequal access to education, health and social welfare services of vulnerable groups in less developed regions. There are countries, such as Bulgaria and Romania which are EU members since 2007 and which still benefit of assistance from UNICEF, UNDP, Norway, Switzerland and other international partners, exactly in respect of residual traditional development agenda and the belief that support needs to prioritise poor, disadvantaged and marginalised people irrespective where they live rather than poorer nations.

UNICEF is recommended to continue to assist Kazakhstan for full achievement of the MDGs and compliance with human rights international commitments, all the more since the support agenda of other international donors and partner organisations do not focus on child protection and children’s rights. During the evaluation, the need for further assistance in the regions was striking and the request for exposure to international experience was unceasingly repeated. Apart from strategic advice to the Government and children’s rights monitoring and evaluation, it is the firm belief of the evaluation team that UNICEF should continue to provide assistance to the regions and the strengthening of oversight mechanisms and service provision, at least until 2018 (see phase I in the timeframe of recommendation). As from 2019, UNICEF’s role could be more prominent in enabling knowledge exchange, advising the country on getting engaged in triangular cooperation i.e. partnerships between developing countries (e.g.

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|    | professional association of social workers to represent, defend and promote the rights and interests of members and to oversee the respect of professional ethics and conduct towards the end beneficiaries. UNICEF’s plan to carry out a nation-wide Training Needs Assessment is very beneficial for the identification of the learning needs of social workers and of the most feasible delivery mechanisms of the capacity building programme, most likely in the form of “blended learning” (combining classroom courses with on-the-job training, on-line learning fora, twinning with counterparts from abroad, work shadowing, work placements, study visits). It is recommended that UNICEF also assists in the review of the rich international practices in the area of professional associations of social workers to enable Kazakh partners an informed decision in this respect. | UNICEF Country office and Regional office | Two phases:  
I. 2014-2015  
2016-2018 (current CPD and first 3 years of the next CPD)  
II. 2019-2020 (last 2 years of the next CPD) |
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<td>from Central Asia for implementing a development project/programme with the support of a developed country (Kazakhstan), as a way of fostering development by leveraging peer learning, knowledge and experience sharing in the field of child protection and welfare (phase II).</td>
<td>UNICEF Country office jointly with the Government</td>
<td>2014-2015</td>
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<td><strong>Operational Recommendations (O)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>O1</td>
<td><strong>Prepare the models of child abandonment prevention and violence prevention in schools piloted in the regions for scaling-up</strong>&lt;br&gt;The prerequisites for the replication of models of child abandonment prevention and violence prevention in schools to other regions or country-wide require proper documenting of the piloted models, cost-effectiveness analysis, accurate costing, workshops for the local structures/organisations in charge of implementation to introduce the model, adjustment of the model based on their expectations and feedback, a training curriculum, funds for training and coaching of professionals, revision of job descriptions and employment of additional staff (e.g. social workers, independent supervisors and monitors), as the case. For country-wide replication in particular, a system of competence certification needs to be worked out as well as accreditation of training providers, if needed. A part of these prerequisites are already met or under way of being met by the end of the Project, but work is still needed to finalise the documenting and costing before more practical preparatory actions are taken by Government and UNICEF for actual implementation (see the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability sections of the report). In this respect, a strategy for scaling up needs to be developed jointly by UNICEF and Government. As far as violence prevention in residential care institutions is concerned, other ‘entry’ points should be identified, based on a revised model, designed in consultation with the institutions and with the active support of akimat department of education. A possible entry point could be the schools which enrol children who live in the respective institutions. An integrated school-institution model of violence prevention might be envisaged, having the schools as shakers and movers of change in the institutions as well. For sustainability reasons, home violence should be also addressed as schools cannot be hold entirely accountable for violence against their students. The piloted integrated child protection mechanism needs further work to overcome an important number of bottlenecks at system and mindset level.</td>
<td>UNICEF Country office jointly with the Government</td>
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<td>O2</td>
<td><strong>Improve the design and evaluability of future projects</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Theory of Change for this Project has been developed retrospectively for the purpose of the</td>
<td>UNICEF Country office</td>
<td>For future projects</td>
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<td>evaluation. It is much more useful to construct it at the beginning of a project, as outcomes and processes are viewed differently with hindsight. Another option is to include a Logframe for the overall project, with well defined indicators, baselines and targets, at each level: goal, purpose, outputs. Since 2012, the country office has included logframes in each PCA, which is a good start. Target groups and final beneficiaries need to be clearly defined, as explained in the project description section of the report. Future projects should be designed from start in a way which allows their evaluability, with clear baseline indicators and targets, disaggregated by gender, age, disability, region and with established “control” and “treatment” groups (see effectiveness and impact sections of the report). It is recommended that a risk mitigation strategy is designed during the programming and regularly reviewed and updated, to inform the project management and donors about risks that could affect the estimated results and guide the prevention and remedial actions, as needed (see efficiency section of the report). A Sustainability Plan is also recommended to be developed during the design of the project to make sure that results and impacts of assistance are taken over and enhanced by the relevant national stakeholders and mainstreamed in policies and practices. Creating a written sustainability plan could provide a road map for the project management team and its partners as they work on sustainability actions. The process of creating a written sustainability plan can also strengthen partners' buy-in and understanding of the efforts needed to keep the project operating and improving. Engaging in sustainability planning gives an opportunity to map out how to maintain valuable projects and innovations in a changing environment. Financial monitoring and evaluation of efficiency are facilitated in case the planned budget and expenditures are broken down per units and unit costs and if a narrative financial report is accompanying the figures, even if the respective donor does not require such details and documentation (see efficiency section of the report).</td>
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96 The risks matrix described in the UNDG (2011), “Results-Based Management Handbook” could be used for the development of the mitigation strategy.
4.2.2 Good Practices and Lessons learnt

1) Good practice: The Project is an excellent example of how research-based evidence, expertise, advocacy and cross-sector dialogue were used to trigger policy development, revision of legislation and modernization of practices in the country, notably in the area of violence against children. The evidence provided by the studies on violence against children in schools and state-run institutions and their recommendations as well as the technical assistance, advocacy and multi-stakeholder dialogue facilitated by UNICEF have increased the understanding, enhanced capacity and triggered action by Ombudsman, the Government and the Parliament of Kazakhstan for the revision and modernisation of the existing legal framework, development of a new brand strategy on the prevention and redress of violence against children, the introduction of violence against children topics into the curriculum of Training Institute for Prosecutors and in the education standards, investigation by the Prosecutor General of some violence cases and testing of a violence prevention model with the aim of national replication.

2) Good practice: Flexibility in project design and implementation is needed to cope with emerging needs and benefit of arising opportunities. In this respect, UNICEF has to be commended for its versatility to address key emerging needs during the implementation of the Project and for its capacity of making the most of every opportunity created by the Project. In this respect, it leveraged resources for additional activities, which were initially unplanned, but intimately linked to the Development Goal of the Project, such as: revision of the Ombudsman Office’s child rights referral and complains mechanism, piloting of a violence prevention model in East Kazakhstan region, production of violence prevention and referral materials, expansion of child abandonment prevention model to another city (Semey), engagement in the modernisation of youth policies, especially in rural areas, for better outreach of adolescents and young women at risk. The donor should be also praised for encouraging UNICEF and its national partners to accommodate new activities within an existing Project frame.

3) Lesson learnt: Securing ownership and empowerment of national counterparts may decrease efficiency of support on short-term. UNICEF’s commitment to ensuring the government’s and akimats’ full involvement at every stage of the implementation work, and to advising policy making processes in an open and transparent manner meant that the original timelines envisaged for several activities were over ambitious. UNICEF had to frequently align the implementation schedule to the annual work plans and priorities of Ombudsman, Government and Parliament and to adjust deadlines to various deliverables accordingly. In other cases, validation with the national counterparts of various studies and researches was needed before starting the piloting of new services in the region or launching the public awareness campaign. These risks need to be identified during the design phase and a mitigation strategy is required to prevent or address them in case of occurrence. Over-reliance on the finalization of policy and legislative change as a prerequisite for the initiation of more practical activities should be avoided and negotiation of buy-in needs to be done at an earliest stage to begin practical implementation on the understanding that these run simultaneously with policy work. At the same time, building ownership and empowerment should not be underestimated given their strong investment returns on long term.

4) Lesson learnt: Efficient piloting of a model at local level requires proper engagement of local stakeholders in the design of the model and systematic coaching on
**documenting the practices.** Insufficient consultation with residential care institutions on violence prevention model and low ownership at the level of akimats on the 5-step plan (and integrated mechanism piloted by the Project) have decreased the effectiveness and efficiency of results. It is important not only to delineate roles and responsibilities, but also to evaluate and address expectations of stakeholders at the primary level of implementation. At the same time, the purpose of piloting is to test out a particular model intervention. Replication to other regions or nationwide requires demonstrated successful results with reasonable efforts and costs. Therefore, documenting the process over its entire duration and of effects of the piloted model is of utmost importance; local stakeholders and partners who are piloting it need clear guidelines and coaching for doing it since early stages. The recent changes in the modelling policies of the UNICEF Country Office call for a thorough preparation process before a certain action could be qualified as a ‘model’.