Dear partners, colleagues and friends,

As 2014 draws to a close, it is an opportunity to review achievements, results and progress for children, within the Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Union of Myanmar and UNICEF.

The recommendations of the 2013 Mid-term Review of the UNICEF-Government of Myanmar country programme have resulted in a gradual shift towards greater contribution to policy reforms, stronger support to systems strengthening, advances in social budget monitoring, and development of State-level action plans for children. At the same time, new results achieved in 2014 are already changing the lives of millions of children in their families and communities.

This year is marked by important achievements for children, namely the adoption of an innovative national policy and strategic plan on social protection, which prioritises vulnerable children through social transfers and integrated social services, as well as the launch of policies on Early Childhood Development (ECD) and multi-lingual education, and a New Born Action Plan. Our joint efforts also resulted in a significant increase in the number of under-age recruits released from the Myanmar Army; and the implementation of a cold chain strategy, combined with the expansion of immunization services in previously unreached areas in Kachin and Rakhine.

Ongoing and unresolved conflict and inter-communal violence in Myanmar continues to affect children in Rakhine and Kachin and North Shan states. In spite of major setbacks, UNICEF and partners have assisted more than 180,000 children living in emergency situations.

Despite the overall lack of data and proper evaluations, effective planning is expected to improve with the release of new data from the 2014 census, planned evaluations, and the setup of a UNICEF Office unit dedicated to monitoring and evaluation.

2014 also had management implications for UNICEF, particularly with the realignment of its staffing structure; the strengthening of its Advocacy, Partnership and Communication Unit; the merging of key programme sections to provide integrated support towards under 5 mortality reduction; and the relocation of its field offices to State-capitals to promote decentralized governance for children.

Finally, this year, UNICEF has also made a special effort to better report on results.

UNICEF believes that to be sustainable, reforms must start with children and we must make sure that continued support to policy and systemic reforms figure prominently in our programme of cooperation. The 2104 results are testimony that joint efforts have generated short-term and longer-term results for children. We can build a better life for today’s and tomorrow’s children in Myanmar. Thank you.

Bertrand Bainvel
UNICEF Representative to Myanmar
In 2014, UNICEF and partners continued to support equitable service delivery interventions to help fill essential coverage gaps in key sectors such as education, and health and nutrition. Key results are as follows:

**EDUCATION:**
The number of 0-5 year old children accessing facility-based ECD services has increased from 8,300 in 2012 to 101,576 in 2014; the percentage of schools in targeted townships that have ECD facilities for children 3-5 years old has increased from 10% in 2012 to 17% in 2014.

The number of out-of-school children aged 10-14 enrolled in Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) programmes increased from 8,800 (2012) to 37,777; 96.2% of reached out-of-schools adolescents completed Extended and Continuous Education and Learning (EXCEL) in targeted townships, improving their life skills and increasing their livelihoods opportunities.

The School-based In-service Teacher Education (SITE) has expanded from 500 to nearly 5,000 teachers in 2014, covering half the teachers in Mon State, as part of a pilot partnership focused on strengthening teacher performance and increasing student learning.

1 million students across various states received textbooks and essential learning materials, and over 30,000 teachers were trained to implement a secondary life-skills curriculum.

**PROTECTION:**
Advocacy efforts resulted in an extension of the Plan of Action with the Tatmadaw to end the use and recruitment of children in the armed forces and accelerate the release of children from the Myanmar armed forces. As a result, 70% of all children released by the Myanmar Armed forces since the signing of the Action Plan in mid-2012 were released in 2014 (376).

**WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):**
Out of 120 targeted villages under Community Lead Total Sanitation initiatives 45 villages have been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF). WASH projects in 221 schools were completed and as a result a total of 15,834 students have access to improved WASH facilities and the work is in progress in the remaining 68 schools. The construction of 110 community-managed water systems is underway in three different regions benefiting a total of 107,000 people, who contribute with 30% to 40% of the total project cost.

**HEALTH AND NUTRITION:**
UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health (MoH) to conduct nationwide Vitamin A supplementation and deworming in 2014, reaching 6.4 million children between 6-59 months and 9 million aged 2-9 years, in each round.

UNICEF supported the increased availability of essential supplies for newborn and child health, including vaccines and cold chain equipment. With technical support from UNICEF and WHO, the Ministry of Health is preparing a nationwide Measles and Rubella vaccine campaign for January 2015, targeting around 15 million children from 9 months to 15 years of age.

**BIRTH REGISTRATION:**
The number of children receiving a birth certificate in Myanmar has substantially increased, with peaks in the three states where interventions were concentrated (an estimated 20% increased coverage in Mon State, 41% increase in Magwe, and an astonishing 300% increase in Chin state – where the coverage was the lowest in the country). Lessons learned and successful implementation in these three States must be scaled up nationally with government resources.
State-level Achievements – reaching the unreached

UNICEF work in Myanmar across all programmes contributes directly to achieving results for children at the sub-national level. Through its 8 Field Offices that are strategically located in different parts of the country, UNICEF support has contributed to increasing access to basic services and gradually building capacity and strengthening systems at State and Township levels. The summary of results achieved in the poorest States such as Chin and Rakhine as well as in conflict-affected States and Regions Kachin, Rakhine and the South-East (Covering Mon, Kayin and Tanintharyi) gives an indication of efforts made to reach the most disadvantaged children in the country.*

*Information about the humanitarian assistance in Kachin and Rakhine States is on page 5

Rakhine

**Fast facts on results for children:**

**Education:** 190,000 primary school children benefited from essential learning packages. 23,000 children are learning in child-friendly schools. 6500 children have access to Early Childhood Education and 2806 children benefitted from non-formal education.

**Health and Nutrition:** 214,417 (91%) children under 5 were reached with Vitamin-A supplementation and deworming supplies and 40,957 (50%) of women were reached with Iron Folate supplementation.

**WASH:** 25,625 people were provided with access to safe water, 14,641 people in host and nearby-communities provided with improved access to sanitation and 768 children benefitted from WASH in schools.

**Child Protection:** staff of the Department of Social Welfare were trained on child protection issues and case management. Around 40 police officers from 17 townships were trained as part of the institutional strengthening of the State Police force to improve care and protect children in contact with the Law.

Kachin

**Fast facts on results for children:**

**Education:** 62,108 students from 524 primary schools benefited from improved quality of teaching and learning. 2,414 children 3-5 years of age accessed to Early Childhood Development (ECD) services through 104 new ECD centres.

**Health and Nutrition:** quality immunization services in government controlled areas reached a total of 26,028 children under 1 year (78%) and 27,341 pregnant women (73%). 200,464 (94%) children under 5 were reached with Vitamin-A supplementation and deworming supplies.

**WASH:** 86 primary schools were supported with enhanced WASH facilities, benefiting 9,233 students that now enjoy access to sanitation facilities & are sensitized to hygiene practices.

**Child Protection:** A juvenile justice working group was created chaired by the State Chief of Judge. 40 Police Officers from 18 townships trainers on child-friendly procedures. A new regional working group on mine risk education (MRE) was supported.
Chin

**Fast facts on results for children:**

**Education:** school-based ECD was expanded to 35 centres benefitting more than 500 children. 1080 out-of-school children received literacy and life skills training.

**Health and Nutrition:** all health centres in Chin state received lifesaving drugs. Home visits for 1161 new-borns were completed by Community-based New-born Care Volunteers. 6,622 (94.2%) children of 6-12 months, 51,402 (97.4%) between the age of 1 to 5 years and 3,868 lactating mother received Vitamin A supplementation. 34,537 (98.4%) children took deworming tablets.

South East

**Fast facts on results for children:**

**Education:** 250 School-Based ECD centres opened and 486 new ECD facilitators were trained. A total of 25,618 children are learning in 836 school-based ECD centres. 314,200 primary school children received Essential Learning Packages. 9 new schools were constructed in remote areas, and equipped with teaching materials and furniture. 114 schools received school grants to promote decentralization. 1,820 out of school children got access to Non-Formal Primary Education to complete their primary education. 991 out-of-school children of adolescent age got the chance to acquire life skills and HIV prevention awareness knowledge. 428 people completed adult literacy courses achieving competences in the three Rs Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic.

**Health and Nutrition:** 29,300 children and 32,000 pregnant women were vaccinated as part of the routine immunization. 130,269 children (96.8%) aged 9 months to under five years were reached with Vitamin-A supplementation and 12,890 lactating mothers (96.8%) were reached with Vitamin A supplementation. 191,721 school children (99.4%) and 81,281 children (95.7%) aged 2-4 years received deworming. 14,692 pregnant mothers, 15,091 post natal and 15,723 lactating mothers received Vitamin B1 supplementation.
Ongoing and unresolved conflict and inter-communal violence in Myanmar has continued to affect children in Rakhine, and Kachin and North Shan states. The instability and access constraints, in Kachin and North Shan states particularly, hampered UNICEF’s efforts to regularly provide and monitor assistance and promote longer-term solutions. In Rakhine, perceptions of biases in humanitarian interventions remained the major challenge to resuming UNICEF’s emergency and development operations in a secure environment, especially following targeted attacks on the Sittwe premises of UNICEF and international organisations in March. UNICEF has mobilised close to USD 11 million to work with partners in delivering conflict-sensitive emergency assistance and targeted service and strengthening local self-reliance and resilience, benefitting 336,000 IDPs and other affected persons, of which over 180,000 are children.

**Fast facts:**
The first ever Rakhine State Plan for Children covering both emergency and development needs has been implemented. Similarly, UNICEF developed its first State Work Plan for Children in Kachin.

**Health and Nutrition:** 200,000 children received medical treatment. 127,000 people were provided with access to basic health services, 9,000 households in affected areas received insecticide treated nets, and 2,500 women and children were immunized with polio, measles, pentavalent and tetanus toxoid vaccines. 241,000 children were screened for acute malnutrition, of whom 6,680 received therapeutic feeding to treat severe acute malnutrition. 51,400 children aged 6-59 months and pregnant and lactating women received micronutrient supplements. 8,952 pregnant and lactating women received infant and young child feeding counselling. Training on management of acute malnutrition was provided for medical staff in 17 townships. In terms of micronutrient supplementation, a total of 23,326 and 2,806 children and pregnant and lactating women were reached in Rakhine and Kachin.

**WASH:** 127,543 people have access to improved water sources. 108,047 have access to sanitary facilities. 136,188 received full emergency WASH packages including hygiene promotion. Around 70,148 children received Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene packages.

**Education:** 23,000 primary/pre-primary school-age children gained access to learning opportunities. 471 volunteer teachers were being supported. 5,700 adolescents were reached through Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) constructed in Rakhine. 21,500 children in IDP camps and host communities/nearby villages received essential learning packages. 5 TLS constructed/under construction for IDP children in Kachin

**Child protection:** 21,000 children reached by psycho-social support. 62,000 children covered by Case Management. 72 community facilitators were trained on building assets and life skills for displaced adolescents. 376 children were released from the armed forces and reintegrated in their communities.
Reforms represent a unique opportunity to generate new, at scale, results for children. Key Policy and legislative advances for children have benefitted from UNICEF’s support.

A considerably improved revision of the Child Law has been produced by the Ministry of Social Welfare. UNICEF has conducted a Child Law capacity building session for 40 staff of the Attorney General's Office.

In Education:
*In cooperation with partners in the Quality Basic Education Programme (QBEP) and INGOs,*
The National Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Policy, an inter-sectoral policy framework led by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR) was developed with UNICEF support. The Ministry of Education is initiating a number of activities, including the plan to introduce Kindergarten for 5 year olds into every primary school nationally (44,000 in total) in 2016 and establishing ECD care givers as a permanent teaching cadre. UNICEF is also supporting the adaptation of the existing Pre-School Curriculum and Care Giver Guidelines into 20 local languages.

The Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) is coordinating the Ministry of Education reform efforts and developing a National Education Sector Plan (NESP). UNICEF advocacy and technical inputs are ensuring key cross-cutting elements are integrated, including gender, disability, conflict-sensitivity, WASH and Disaster Risk Reduction.

In Social Protection:
*In cooperation with the WB, ILO, WFP, and INGOs and NGOs,*
A national social protection strategy has been finalised by the National Technical Support Group led by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. The strategy will be included in the budgetary discussions for 2015. The strategy reflects a very progressive approach by promoting universal cash transfer programmes for pregnant women and children, and for children with disabilities – together with five other “flagship” programmes including school feeding, public works, and a universal social pension. The strategy also contains two highly innovative components, i.e. the promotion of integrated social protection systems through the creation of social welfare units and the involvement of social workers at township level, as well as a strong link between integrated social protection services and disaster risk reduction.

In Health and Nutrition:
*In cooperation with WHO, UNFPA, WFP and FAO,*
UNICEF supported the development and implementation of the newborn action plan.

Under the national strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding and Five Years Plan of Action, an order on marketing of breast milk substitutes was endorsed by government in July 2014. Maternity leave for the public sector was extended up to 6 months to establish the enabling environment for improving exclusive breastfeeding. In the private sector, maternity leave was extended from 12 to 14 weeks to support exclusive breastfeeding.

Making decentralisation work for children:
The decentralization reforms currently ongoing in Myanmar are presenting new opportunities and challenges for the realisation of child rights. UNICEF is gradually engaging at the decentralized level much more strategically than in the past. In this respect, in Rakhine and Kachin, UNICEF supported the development of State Plans for Children, which are multi-sectorial plan that brings together health, nutrition, education, water & sanitation and protection covering the period 2014-2015. The first Local Social Plan has also been developed by the State Government in Chin, with the technical support of UNICEF. The proposals developed within the plan have been submitted by the State Government to the central budgetary commission for increased budget allocations starting from 2015. If approved, they will represent the first decentralised allocation of funds for social services ever implemented in the country.
Good quality services for all children cannot be delivered without strong systems. More than ever in 2014, UNICEF has cooperated with the Government to strengthen Education, Social, and Health government systems:

**In Education:**
In education innovations in early learning, in teacher training, school based management, township education planning and non-formal education are being mainstreamed into government systems and policy frameworks in order to go to scale at a national level.

**In Child Protection:**
A critical shift took place in 2014 within the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) leading to their commitment to invest in social work case management with their own resources. UNICEF is supporting this effort to ensure that the reach of government social workers is effective, positioned to go to scale, and is linked with other departments, ministries, and NGOs working on child protection.

UNICEF secured additional training time for judges in child-friendly judicial procedures and the rights of the child. The Child Protection team trained 189 judges on child rights in the context of the justice system.

UNICEF trained, for the first time, 80 police officers in Rakhine and Kachin states, on child-sensitive police procedures.

UNICEF supported the development of the first Child Labour Monitoring Checklist in Myanmar. The instrument has been piloted in 31 factories, shops and establishments. All labour inspectors have been trained on children’s rights at work, child labour and the usage of the checklist. 780 employers received training on child protection, child labour and children’s rights at work.

**In Health and Nutrition:**
UNICEF jointly with WHO and UNFPA, is advocating for developing an integrated national strategic plan for reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health. This plan will provide guidance on integrated service delivery and avoid overlapping strategies. UNICEF’s technical assistance has resulted in a review of the new-born and child health programme.

A cold chain capacity gap analysis followed by a plan resulted in a substantial increase in the storage capacity of cold chain systems to enable the implementation of a measles and rubella campaign and to introduce new vaccines in 2015.

UNICEF supports the Ministry of Health to ensure that all children born to HIV-infected pregnant women have a HIV virology test done and receive the results within first 2 months of age. The support includes establishing a laboratory information management system, building the capacity of service providers and implementing a mentoring program.

The technical aspects related to HIV have been integrated with the child health training module for basic health staff. Efforts to integrate these programs to a greater extent will continue to be a priority.

Manuals on the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), Community Infant and Young Child Feeding (CIYCF), and Integrated management of Malnutrition (IMAM) guidelines were drafted.
Evidence is key to guide action for children. Limited availability of data proves to be a challenge in Myanmar, as we wait for the full results of the 2014 census. UNICEF has contributed to an improved understanding of the situation of children and to what works for them across the programme of cooperation.

**In Public Finance:**
The analysis conducted by UNICEF and MDRI – “Public Finance for Children” – on budget allocations in Myanmar for the last 4 years, helps to highlight on one hand the serious concerns related to the scarce allocations in the social sectors, in particular for social welfare; on the other hand, has provided additional evidence on the large availability of resources that could be invested, in children to address any concern about fiscal space.

**In Health and Nutrition:**
*In cooperation with other UN agencies,*
A multi micronutrient survey protocol was developed in order to understand more about the magnitude of micronutrient deficiencies in country. Efforts to strengthen the national nutrition surveillance system was initiated by identifying sentinel sites and SMART survey townships.

The national nutrition surveillance system was strengthened by increasing 18 nutrition indicators in Health Management Information System, initiating sentinel surveillance in 33 townships, developing a multi-micronutrient survey protocol and exploring SMART survey in 50 high risk townships.

The situation analysis of children affected by AIDS, using a nationally representative sampling design was completed and disseminated. The study is expected to contribute to a greater focus on HIV sensitivity in programs focusing on social protection for orphans and vulnerable children.

**In Education:**
Efforts have been initiated to obtain evaluative evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and likely sustainability of service delivery and capacity development models supported by UNICEF and its Multi-Donor Education Fund partners under the QBEP. These include a formative evaluation of the Township Education Improvement Plan (TEIP) activities focused on strengthening the ability of duty bearers to plan, monitor, and manage education activities, and a final evaluation of the School-based In-service Teacher Education (SITE) Pilot Programme, focused on strengthening teacher performance and increasing student learning.

A CESR (Comprehensive Education Sector Review) Situation Analysis resulted in priorities being identified under 7 sub-sectors, and the framework agreed upon for the National Education Sector Plan to be developed.

**In WASH:**
With UNICEF support, a situation analysis and roadmap for WASH strategy development was presented. A knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) survey of WASH was completed in 16 townships.

**At Decentralised level:**
UNICEF supports an evidence-based comprehensive township investment plan in three townships in Kayin state. This will facilitate the decentralization process of the Ministry of Health and will contribute to improving and harmonizing the other planning models used in Myanmar.
Partnerships are critical to delivering results for children and to realising their rights. UNICEF Myanmar has worked with a broad range of partners at national, state and township levels. Here are the highlights of the partnerships established in 2014:

A new partnership with the Ministry of Finance, the Myanmar Development Research Institute, a coalition of local NGOs and Parliamentarians has amplified the “first call for children” in the budgetary debate, resulting in significant increases in the health, education and social protection proposed budget for 2015/2016.

In child protection, a coalition has been formed with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism sector, as well as local airlines, with support from Australia, to prevent orphanage and child sex tourism that might occur in the wake of the tourism boom in the country.

Recently, Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV), the Ministries of Health and Information and UNICEF signed an Action Plan for the “Community on Air” Initiative, which will reach out to 22 million TV viewers with children’s issues in Myanmar.

Seizing the opportunity of the nascent decentralization reforms, UNICEF, through its Field Offices, has increased its engagement with State-level authorities, especially in Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, Mon, and Kayin, to develop local plans for children. In Mon State, a set of child-focused township profiles has been initiated. In Chin, a partnership with the Myanmar International Institute for Development has resulted in the development of a local social protection plan to be launched early 2015.

Recognizing the strong role of religion in the lives of children and families in Myanmar, UNICEF, the national NGO Ratana Metta Organization, the religious leaders of the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim communities formed an Inter-Religious Platform for Children, to promote positive behaviour change and the building of a tolerant society respectful of religious and ethnic diversity.
In 2014, the UNICEF Country Management Team (CMT) took major initiatives to improve operations and programme management performance, including addressing areas of weakness identified in annual and audit reports. Significant steps taken in the past year include the realignment of staffing structure; the strengthening of its Advocacy, Partnerships and Communication Unit; setting up a unit dedicated to monitoring and evaluation; the merging of key programme sections (wash, health, nutrition) to provide integrated support towards under 5 mortality reduction and optimal conditions for growth and development in the first critical 1000 days for a child; and the relocation of its field offices to State-capital to promote decentralized governance for children (for instance, Hakka in Chin, Malyawmin for the South East), and effective responses to emergencies including peace building efforts.

Such directions also address key recommendations arising from the 2014 internal audit of the UNICEF Myanmar Office, which concluded that all controls and processes in all audited areas (governance, programme management, and operations support) are generally established and functioning. The audit report provided 13 recommendations and the office has already started implementation of agreed actions.

The programme and Operations Group regularly monitored budget control and utilization, as well as internal and financial controls and work processes were effectively implemented and monitored. The Myanmar Country Office (MCO) also ensured efficient and cost effective utilization of organizational resources in a transparent manner.

During 2014, UNICEF spent more than USD 64 million, a 30% increase from 2014, out of which approximately USD 9 million was spent on humanitarian response. The total value of procurement (excluding services) was US$ 11.2 million or 20.4% of total programme expenditure as compared to US$12.2 million or 24.9% in 2013.

In 2015, UNICEF will closely work with the Government to increase opportunities to channel its resources through government systems, through the implementation of the UN Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) introduced to Government counterparts at the very end of 2014.
For more than 60 years, UNICEF has been working to positively change the lives of Myanmar’s children. Through its Programme of Cooperation in the country, UNICEF has had a strong working relationship with the Government of Myanmar over the decades and has also maintained significant engagement with other stakeholders thereby positioning itself to continue and strengthen its efforts to improve children’s lives.

The ongoing political and economic reform process including decentralization provides a good opportunity for UNICEF to continue working with Government and other partners and achieve major gains for all children. The current country programme (2011-2015) has been extended to 2017 to ensure that the opportunities provided by various reforms are effectively tapped to accelerate results for children, especially the most marginalized.

In this context, UNICEF support will focus on strengthening systems in education, health and child protection and making them accessible to the most disadvantaged, including through opportunities generated by decentralization. It will support capacity building at Union, State and Townships levels to develop and implement plans and budgets for children. The current momentum of engagement in various sector reforms will continue and support will be provided towards the development of policies and legislation, that will enable wider and accelerated realisation of children’s rights. Further strengthening of partnerships at national and sub-national levels with other key organizations and institutions, CSOs, and Non-State Actors will continue in order to leverage resources for children.

UNICEF will systematically implement a comprehensive advocacy strategy to influence a range of decision makers and other relevant audiences. UNICEF has identified 4 office-wide advocacy priorities for the period 2014-2017: increasing public finance for children; protecting and promoting the rights of all children in Rakhine State; children affected by armed conflict; and the first 1000 days of a child’s life.

To successfully meet the goals set for the next years, UNICEF cannot do this work on its own. UNICEF’s partnerships with the government, donors, international and national NGOs, the private sector, and civil society have showed that by working together we can create real and lasting change.