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Revised Supplementary Programme Note on the Theory of Change for the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017

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1. Introduction: Purpose and scope of the supplementary programme note

The Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 marks an important milestone for UNICEF. Bridging the last two years of the Millennium Development Goals and the first two years of the post-2015 development landscape, the Strategic Plan incorporates key decisions from the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and key lessons from the End-of-Cycle Review of the Medium-Term Strategic Plan of 2006-2013. It refocuses on equity, emphasizing the organization’s universal mandate and the need for greater transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

This Supplementary Programme Note complements the Strategic Plan by elaborating the theory of change that underpins the work of UNICEF in more detail. In particular, it describes the causal pathways by which UNICEF will achieve the results outlined in the Plan’s results framework (initially presented in E/ICEF/2013/21/Add.1 and currently being revised). The theory of change summarizes how the impact and outcomes will be achieved across each of the seven outcome areas of the Strategic Plan as a result of the concrete actions that UNICEF takes at country, regional and global levels, and why UNICEF has selected the particular actions that are being prioritized for 2014-2017. Additionally, the theory of change includes discussion of the assumptions and risks that are associated with the transitions between each step in the process of achieving impact.

Summarizing a global theory of change for a highly decentralized organization such as UNICEF is challenging because so many of the expected results and related implementation strategies are nationally led and specific to a particular context. Furthermore, the change processes that are needed to fulfil children’s rights with greater equity are often non-linear and challenging to plan or predict with sufficient detail for the medium term. Therefore, the theory of change for the work of the organization globally needs to strike a balance: it must be rigorous and specific enough to provide strategic direction for the organization as a whole, while being flexible enough to allow sufficient scope for decision-making based on local context and to be led by national governments through country programmes of cooperation.

It is also important to note that an organization-wide theory of change cannot replace the technical guidance needed, for example, to carry out an immunization campaign or support a government to determine how best to increase the enrolment of girls in primary school. UNICEF routinely provides detailed guidance that focuses – in the language of results-based management – primarily on the input and output levels of the results chain. Instead, this Note describes the causal pathways by which disparate actions by UNICEF offices across the world come together to contribute to impacts and outcomes.

2. Key principles

UNICEF is uniquely positioned to support the realization of the rights of children, especially the most disadvantaged and excluded children, given comparative advantages that include an international normative mandate based on the widely ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child; proven capacity in multiple sectors; a mandate that covers the development-humanitarian continuum; a strong field presence; and a capacity to engage concurrently at multiple levels – global, regional, country and local – on common issues, leading to synergies. The organization’s networking, convening and advocacy roles and its unique partnerships at all levels support development of collaborative, innovative and real-time solutions to the challenges and constraints that interfere with realizing rights for children and achieving equity in a diverse range of national contexts. The theory of change builds on this comparative advantage.

A key principle underpinning the theory of change is recognition of the importance of addressing equity. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias or favouritism. To the degree that any child has an unequal chance in life – in its
social, political, economic, civic and cultural dimensions – her or his rights are violated. There is growing
evidence that investing in the health, education and protection of a society’s most disadvantaged citizens –
addressing inequity – not only will give all children the opportunity to fulfil their potential but also will lead
to sustained growth and stability of countries. This is why the focus on equity is so vital: it accelerates progress
towards realizing the rights of all children, which is the universal mandate of UNICEF, while also supporting
the equitable development of nations.

The entire Strategic Plan is based on the premise that a more equitable world for children is achievable by
working in partnership with a variety of organizations and individuals at all levels, towards a common purpose.
Therefore this theory of change is also predicated on the commitment of UNICEF to engage in national and
global partnerships to inspire and mobilize others to work together towards the realization of equitable results
for children. Specific partnerships relevant to each outcome are discussed further in this document.

The final principle that guides both the Strategic Plan and this Supplementary Programme Note is an insistence
on founding actions in evidence. UNICEF has been the leader in generating high quality data on the situation
of children and women for the past 30 years. The organization plays a vital role in supporting governments
with data collection at the outcome and impact level through household surveys (Multiple Indicator Cluster
Survey [MICS]); compilation and analysis of data; and disseminating these data to inform sound policies,
legislation, and programmes for promoting children’s rights, and for global monitoring of goals and targets
including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and setting the baseline for the post-2015 agenda.

UNICEF programming is based on a range of evidence, some derived from data collected by MICS or other
nationally representative surveys and key analyses generated from these data, some derived directly from gold-
standard randomized controlled studies published in peer-reviewed journals, some based on the organization’s
60-plus years of experience in improving the lives of children and some originating in innovative experiences
of governments and other implementing partners, which UNICEF facilitates scaling up. In each area in which
the organization works, technical experts are regularly combing the literature – both from the formal academic
world and the ‘grey’ literature of operational research and documentation of good practices – for quantitative
and qualitative findings that provide evidence of what works (and what does not). Moreover, the organization
itself generates a lot of evidence, such as through targeted implementation research. Despite these efforts, there
are still areas in which the evidence base is less than optimal. In such situations UNICEF places more emphasis
on generating evidence as programming occurs and on strengthening knowledge management to ensure that
emerging good practice is captured and disseminated quickly.

Although evidence has directly shaped the contents of this Note, it does not summarize the evidence behind
the selection of the particular approaches that UNICEF has adopted. That is because this is not intended to be
a voluminous technical document replacing the regular reviews of evidence conducted for each of the
outcomes. The process of generating and then using evidence is highly iterative. UNICEF continuously adjusts
its programming approaches as a result of new developments in the field. The important implication of this is
that the theory of change itself will also evolve over time in response to the emergence of new evidence.

3. Overview of the theory of change

The purpose of all UNICEF work is to aid realization of the rights of every child, especially the most
disadvantaged. The impact of this work, consistent with results-based management tools, will be measured
through a set of impact indicators that track changes in the lives of children resulting from the shared, global
commitments to children. To achieve impact, the Strategic Plan identifies seven outcomes that orient the
the major areas of UNICEF support: health; HIV and AIDS; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); nutrition;
This document examines each of these outcome areas in turn and presents a separate theory of change for each.

For each outcome area, a common results structure is used. First, because the outcomes are broad, the organization has focused for 2014-2017 on a subset of programme areas within each outcome. For example, rather than trying to address all aspects of education, UNICEF concentrates on early learning, equity, learning outcomes and education in emergencies. Subsequently the note summarizes the causal pathways through which UNICEF interventions contribute to a set of outputs, which in turn contribute to the achievement of the outcome. With each transition between levels (e.g., from outputs to outcome, and from outcomes to impact) the number of stakeholders involved grows, as does the number of factors that must coalesce for progress to be seen. Therefore, certain assumptions are made about conducive or constraining external conditions that must hold for the transition between levels to occur as expected.

However, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. As a result, the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or in part, as reflected in underperformance in a subset of indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks to each assumption, so UNICEF has conducted a risk analysis. The relevant assumptions and risks are explicitly acknowledged as integral parts of the theory of change.

The arrangement of this document by outcome follows the structure of the results framework, which is similarly divided into outcomes and, within each, a set of outputs. This approach has been employed as a means to facilitate the presentation of the vertical linkages and corresponding assumptions and risks. However, this simplification should not be interpreted as ignoring the fact that there are important connections between the outcomes. Many of these outcomes are deeply related in the lives of children.

For example, access to improved sanitation – or the lack of it – directly influences results in nutrition, health and education. Similarly, HIV and AIDS have significant influences on the health and educational and nutritional status of children. Another example concerns the organization’s approach to multidimensional poverty. It leads to deprivations specific to each outcome, and both these challenges and their root causes are addressed for each of the outcomes. Additionally, one of the outcomes (social inclusion) specifically addresses the aspects of multidimensional poverty that extend beyond individual sectors, to ensure a comprehensive approach. UNICEF takes a holistic view of the rights of children and so seeks to promote multisectoral and integrated approaches.

There is an important additional caveat about the division of the theory of change into outcomes, which stems from one of the innovations in the Strategic Plan: recognition that a common theory of change underpins UNICEF’s work across sectors. Regardless of whether the focus is on health or education (or child protection, etc.), UNICEF delivers on a common set of six outputs. They are derived from the findings of the End-of-Cycle Review, which revealed that a common set of issues was being confronted in all the sectors in which UNICEF works. Categorizing the organization’s work using a typology that is common across the outcomes highlights the coherence underlying UNICEF’s approach that cuts across sectors. It could therefore be said to represent the organizational theory of change.

A. Outputs
The six common outputs can be grouped into three forms of programming (around the demand for services, the supply of services and the enabling environment); two cross-cutting themes (humanitarian action and gender equality and rights); and one type of supportive action (global and regional efforts). The balance between these six varies by outcome and by setting, but the commonalities between them represent an essential part of the organization-wide theory of change, so it is useful to explore them prior to discussing the individual outcomes.

Following are the first three outputs that drive programming:
• **Knowledge, behaviour change and participation:** Enhanced support for children, families and communities to promote knowledge, behaviour change, demand for services and opportunities for participation. The Strategic Plan aims to strengthen social demand by (a) reducing barriers to accessing and using social services; (b) promoting sociocultural practices and social behaviours that support the survival, development and protection of children; (c) fostering community and child participation in monitoring to ensure that services are relevant for disadvantaged and excluded populations and that duty-bearers are held accountable to their commitments; and (d) addressing financial accessibility of services. UNICEF works on demand because it is not possible to close equity gaps and ensure realization of the rights of all children unless communities, parents and children themselves understand the importance of the topics on which UNICEF is working and play active roles themselves in advocating for the rights of children.

• **Availability and access to services:** Increased national capacity to ensure availability of and access to services and to strengthen systems. An important aim of the Strategic Plan is to expand access to basic social services and protection measures by the most disadvantaged and excluded women and children by scaling up high-impact measures. Supporting the adaptation of services to strengthen resilience in the context of shocks and stress is also a priority. Furthermore, there is a need for well-coordinated multisectoral interventions, recognizing the fact that children’s capabilities and vulnerabilities are interconnected. The organization focuses on supply issues primarily because too often the systems that deliver health, education, nutrition and other services to children are not performing adequately. They fail to ensure that trained human resources, commodities, facilities and other key elements of service delivery are available for all children, including the most disadvantaged. Another reason for the emphasis on supply is because, even where services are available, too often they are not of high enough quality to ensure that children are fully benefitting.

• **National policies, laws and budgets:** Strengthened political commitment and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for children. In order to foster an enabling environment for children, technical assistance and advocacy for legal reforms, it is crucial to scale up evidence-based policies and child-friendly budgets at national and subnational levels. The Strategic Plan emphasizes costed sector implementation plans, enhanced social protection systems and mechanisms of data collection, monitoring and accountability that are focused on equity. UNICEF works on the enabling environment both because policies and laws are often insufficient to ensure realization of the rights of children, particularly the most disadvantaged. Another reason is that, even where strong policies and laws are in place, political commitment is always needed to ensure that services for children receive adequate priority in national decision-making, including in allocation of budgets.

The specifics of how UNICEF works on, for example, the demand for health services necessarily differ from the work on demand for education, but there are important commonalities across sectors that have thus far been insufficiently leveraged. Therefore, the organization is increasing the emphasis it gives to realizing these synergies. The specific mix of work on each of these three outputs in a given country differs considerably based on the national context. This is determined through an analysis of the barriers and bottlenecks to realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged, which is done through the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES). The outcome of the analysis related to MoRES, and the ongoing flow of information on the status of the relevant barriers and bottlenecks, plays a critical role in determining whether a given UNICEF country office concentrates more heavily on the demand for services, the supply of services or the enabling environment.

This emphasis on completing a high-quality, detailed situation analysis and review of the evidence related to each national context has an important implication for understanding the global-level summary of each outcome: because the Strategic Plan and results matrix reflect the organizational level, it is not possible to determine the specific emphasis of outputs that will be used to achieve a given outcome in a given country. For example, in better-resourced settings that have in place many of the basic preconditions for reaching children with health interventions, UNICEF is more likely to focus on the enabling environment. In under-
resourced settings where children struggle to obtain essential health information or access simple interventions, the organization focuses more heavily on supporting demand and supply interventions. Across the organization, the theory of change encourages all offices to emphasize the outputs that are most relevant, based on analyses of the relevant barriers and bottlenecks at both national and subnational levels.

Complementing these three outputs are two cross-cutting ones, which were also emphasized in the End-of-Cycle Review:

- **Humanitarian action**: Increased country capacity and delivery of services to protect and provide for children in humanitarian settings. The Strategic Plan encompasses the interventions UNICEF is committed to carrying out in support of national efforts around preparedness for response and early recovery, to save lives and protect rights as defined in the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action and consistent with internationally accepted standards. Accordingly, specific humanitarian indicators are defined under all outcomes. The focus is on lifesaving interventions as well as education, child protection, early childhood development and humanitarian coordination. These actions are being carried out in a manner that reduces vulnerability and builds resilience systematically where possible. In the four years of the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will also continue to build on recent improvements in systems that support humanitarian action, with the overall aim to achieve faster scaling-up of the response in major emergencies. This includes early identification of priorities and strategies, rapid deployment of qualified staff and clear accountabilities for the response. The organization also focuses on integrating early warning and preparedness into development planning and implementation. In situations of civil unrest or armed conflict, UNICEF supports responses that are consistent with humanitarian principles. It works on humanitarian action because so many children live in humanitarian situations around the world that it would not be possible to fulfil the organization’s mandate, especially in terms of reaching the most disadvantaged children, without addressing the needs of children in these situations. This is reflected in the fact that UNICEF has a mandate that extends across the development-humanitarian continuum.

- **Gender equality and rights**: Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to specific challenges related to the protection and promotion of the rights of children and gender equality. To translate the foundational principles of human rights and gender equality into programmable and measurable action, the Strategic Plan contains a number of outputs that increase the capacity of governments and partners to address human rights and gender equality. These operate through gender mainstreaming as well as targeted initiatives, including increasing the emphasis on girls’ secondary education, child marriage and adolescent health; gender-sensitive community participation; and specific policies and programmes addressing the rights of girls and women, ethnic minority children and children with disabilities. UNICEF works on gender equality and rights because these principles are foundational to the organization’s understanding of its mission and to its focus on equity.

The final output focuses on the actions that UNICEF takes to support work at the country level:

- **Global and regional results**: Enhanced enabling environment at global and regional levels to realize child rights. The achievement of outcomes and impact at country level benefits from regional and global public goods and, in some cases, may even depend on action at this level. For each outcome UNICEF has identified priority regional and global outputs that contribute to the desired change process. These include contributions to relevant global and regional human rights, legal and policy frameworks and processes; inter-country or cross-border programming; advancement of the relevant international evidence base through supporting data collection (e.g., through MICS) and analysis, research, innovation and strengthening guidance and tools. The sectoral research priorities are covered in each outcome, but a number of cross-cutting themes will also be prioritized over the period 2014-2017, including: how to mobilize demand for accountability for the realization of children’s rights, such as which accountability mechanisms, in what circumstances, contribute the most to the realization
of the rights of children, including the most disadvantaged; how to measure and monitor resilience, and how to strengthen it most effectively; how does technological innovation relate to equity concerns, and which groups tend to be excluded from benefitting and how can this be addressed; how best to stimulate demand for early childhood development, including by strengthening the understanding of what families and caregivers identify as the essential features of quality for these programmes.

B. Implementation strategies

The six outputs described above are at the heart of the theory of change, and the organization’s potential to achieve results is realized through how it implements activities that support these outputs. The Strategic Plan identifies seven implementation strategies that together explain how UNICEF accomplishes each of the outputs in the results framework:

- Capacity development;
- Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy;
- Partnerships;
- South-South and triangular cooperation;
- Identification and promotion of innovation;
- Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages;
- Service delivery.

Each of these is described in more detail in Annex 1 to this Note. (Annex 2 provides information about UNICEF’s approach to monitoring, evaluation and reporting, which are critical tools for ensuring that the theory of change is realized as intended.) Just as the diversity of contexts makes it impossible to specify in this document exactly how the outputs are combined, it is also not possible to define the precise combination of implementation strategies that will be used to achieve each output. At the country level, typically multiple implementation strategies are combined to achieve an output. The degree to which certain implementation strategies are particularly important for a given output is addressed in the outcome sections below.

For the implementation strategies to be delivered successfully, a range of key inputs must be available, such as financing, human resources and technical knowledge of effective responses. In a document that covers the totality of UNICEF’s work, it is not possible to itemize the precise inputs required for each implementation strategy, let alone each output. Country Programme Documents contain information about each country, while the Integrated Budget provides more information across the entirety of UNICEF. The assumptions, risks and mitigation measures around this issue are addressed further below.

In addition to the specific interventions included in the outputs on humanitarian action and on gender equality in each of the outcomes, these two areas are also addressed holistically throughout the organization’s work. The Strategic Plan sets out the UNICEF vision for these two areas clearly, but given their importance for the theory of change, information about each of them is provided again in this section.

C. Humanitarian action

UNICEF is committed to strengthening its involvement in systematic reduction of vulnerability to disaster and conflicts through risk-informed country programmes that help build resilience for several reasons. First, systematic vulnerability reduction is key to more effectively preventing and responding to humanitarian crises.

Second, it provides unique opportunities to improve the links between humanitarian action and development programmes and to promote human security. Humanitarian action will be used as an entry point for more structural and systemic changes. For example, support to emergency treatment of severe acute malnutrition
can lead to integration of decentralized treatment into the health system, supporting earlier detection and treatment of malnutrition in the future.

Third, it helps to promote rapid recovery and build community resilience to shocks that affect children. In situations of civil unrest or armed conflict, UNICEF will uphold humanitarian principles.

Strengthening links between humanitarian and development programming is a priority for 2014-2017. It will take place in many ways, articulated through risk-informed country programmes of cooperation and adapted to the country context. This may involve leveraging the influx of funding for humanitarian action to trigger more structural and systemic changes to address gaps in addressing the situation of children.

UNICEF will also use investments through regular country programmes to strengthen national capacities to respond to emergencies.

**D. Gender equality**


Gender equality is integral to the Strategic Plan as a normative principle and as a core element of the refocus on equity. As a cross-cutting, structural disadvantage, gender inequality exacerbates the multiple deprivations faced not only by girls but by all children due to disadvantages such as poverty, ethnicity or disability status.

The Strategic Plan emphasizes the empowerment of girls and women while also addressing the gender-related needs and actions of girls, boys, fathers, mothers and communities. UNICEF will identify and leverage positive synergies among related results, such as those aimed at improving girls’ education, ending child marriage and reducing maternal mortality. Programmatic interventions concentrate on increasing access to services and opportunities by women and girls and their inclusion and participation in all facets of life. This is complemented by advocacy and technical support on gender-equitable policies, budgeting and resource allocations. The organization also emphasizes both collecting and using sex-disaggregated and other gender-related data.

The Strategic Plan promotes gender-sensitive interventions as a core programmatic priority. All relevant policies, programmes and activities will mainstream gender equality to the extent possible, including in humanitarian clusters led by UNICEF. Some of the key issues for gender mainstreaming include reducing gender-based violence, especially in humanitarian crises; improving access to water and sanitation at home; promoting gender equality in child survival and by improving maternal and neonatal health; promoting gender equality in education; and advocating for social protection benefits for girls and women.

In addition to working to achieve these important outcomes, efforts focus on addressing key gendered bottlenecks and barriers. These include lack of mobility, safety and decision-making power by women and girls; their limited access to information, knowledge, resources and technology; their excessive work burden and dual responsibilities experienced by women and girls; the masculine and feminine social expectations and ideals of behaviour that inhibit gender equality; and the realization of rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities by both girls and boys. Gender is being integrated across the UNICEF country programme cycle.
4. Assumptions, risks and mitigation measures

A. Approach to assumptions, risks and mitigation measures

As noted earlier, an important element of the theory of change is the description of the assumptions, the risks associated with them and the measures being employed to mitigate the risks. This section describes how this document approaches each of these. It is important to note that there is no consensus in the theory of change literature on how these two concepts are applied, so UNICEF has adopted an approach that is based on guidance from the Executive Board, discussions with other United Nations organizations and an internal assessment of what would be most useful for the organization.

Within a theory of change approach, assumptions are the unstated or implicit beliefs or understandings about the nature of the world that underlie each part of the theory. It is important to note that assumptions apply to each of the three transitions in the theory of change: from the activities that UNICEF carries out to outputs; from outputs to outcomes; and from outcomes to impact. Thus there are three sets of assumptions contained in the document, each of which describes the conditions that must hold true for a transition to occur between two levels in the results chain. For example, even if all of the outcomes are achieved as planned, there is no guarantee that changes will be seen at the impact level unless certain external conditions hold true. That is, considerable progress could be seen across all seven outcomes, but it would not result in widespread realization of the rights of children if a wave of humanitarian crises sweeps across the world (e.g., as the result of new pandemic influenza strain) and kills millions of children.

The important consequence of this is that the nature of the assumptions differs depending on which transition is being explained. For example, assumptions that relate to the transition from outcome to impact level must address global phenomena that are significant enough to disrupt achievement of impact even if the outcomes are achieved. Given that results at the outcome and particularly impact levels are the product of collective action, by definition the assumptions relating to this transition refer to external conditions, rather than those controlled by UNICEF. Indeed, given that the transition between outcome and impact levels must involve multiple actors, by definition the assumptions at this level are about factors that are not specific to UNICEF but rather affect the range of stakeholders whose work influences the lives of children. It also means that the assumptions address issues that are large scale, rather than only affecting a few countries. To continue with the example from above, a limited number of humanitarian crises would undoubtedly pose challenges within individual countries, but they would be insufficient to disrupt the attainment of results at the impact level; if progress has been made at the outcome level, it would take a significant number of humanitarian crises to block changes at the impact level.

Conversely, the assumptions associated with the transition from the activities that UNICEF carries out to outputs relate to a lower level of phenomena. It is at this level that assumptions related to the internal workings of UNICEF are addressed. For example, if funding for UNICEF work falls off dramatically, it will have a significant effect on the organization’s ability to deliver outputs. External conditions are also relevant at this level. For example, to achieve the output of increasing demand for health services, if the target communities are systematically unwilling to receive information from UNICEF, then its communications for development interventions will not produce any changes at the output level.

Additionally, to be included as an assumption, the phenomenon must be highly likely to occur. This assessment is based on UNICEF’s experience and knowledge of the field. For example, the assumption that there will not be a massive surge in the number of deadly humanitarian crises is reasonable given UNICEF’s knowledge of emerging threats and the experience of the organization in helping countries to build resilience, supporting the development of early warning systems and strengthening health systems to cope with major crises. Conversely, the assumption should not be a truism: there must be some probability – albeit typically a small one – that the assumption will not hold over the course of 2014 to 2017. For example, although the probability of an enormous increase in the number of humanitarian crises occurring during the period 2014 to 2017 is low, it is not zero (e.g., if a new strain of influenza were to develop and spread rapidly).
The assumptions are phrased as what UNICEF expects to occur between 2014 and 2017. To continue with the same example, with regard to the transition between outcome and impact levels, the organization assumes that there will not be a massive surge in humanitarian crises in this period.

The risks that are detailed below are the factors that pose a threat to the assumption holding true. For example, for the assumption that there will not be a massive increase in the number of humanitarian crises, one key risk is the spread of a new, lethal pathogen such as a novel form of influenza. Similarly, if the planet suddenly reaches a tipping point with regard to climate change and feedback loops dramatically accelerate warming and result in a large increase in the number of extreme climatic events, the assumption will not hold true; while UNICEF does not expect this risk to occur over the course of the period 2014 to 2017, the probability of it happening is not zero.

A risk must be commensurate in type and scale with the assumption that is being addressed. Therefore the risks associated with the assumptions for the transition between outcome and impact level – which are global in nature and shared between many stakeholders – are external risks that have the potential to disrupt this transition, which means that by definition they are high-impact risks, though generally low probability ones. For example, a small outbreak of an emerging disease that remains contained in one or a handful of countries is not sufficient to pose a threat to an assumption at the level of the transition between outcome and impact related to the significant increase in the number of humanitarian crises, and so is not mentioned. Similarly, the capacity of UNICEF to respond to humanitarian crises – or the constraints of that capacity – is not a risk at this level, since the transition between outcome and impact levels is beyond the organization’s direct control and would be factored in at a lower level (e.g., the transition between activities that UNICEF carries out and outputs).

Conversely, the assumptions related to the transition between the activities that UNICEF carries out and the outputs are more directly related to UNICEF’s work. Thus the risks at this level are often more internal and related to things that UNICEF can control. These risks often have higher probabilities of occurring but their impact is generally not as catastrophic as those at higher levels.

It is important to note that this document is not intended to be a comprehensive catalogue of all the risks facing UNICEF. The organization already has a systematic approach to enterprise risk management, with an operational risk management policy that was developed and disseminated throughout the organization in 2009. A cornerstone of this approach is risk identification, with each unit responsible for producing and regularly updating a risk and control self-assessment. Through this tool, each office identifies the risks that are most significant for it, each of which falls into one of four categories: institutional; programmatic and operational; contextual; and other. These are further subdivided into 12 areas (e.g., fraud and misuse of resources; governance and accountability; results-based management and reporting; supply and logistics; and safety and security). It is in these operational assessments of risk that individual units assess the probabilities of each risk affecting their work, an exercise that is beneficial at the operational level but not feasible in this document.

The work around these self-assessments has informed this Note, but this document is not intended to replace the existing approach. Instead, the Note highlights the key risks that are directly related to the organization’s theory of change, and thus the emphasis is on risks that affect the entire organization rather than those applicable to one or a small group of countries. The emphasis on large-scale risks is important because of the relationship between this document and the results framework: if the risks highlighted below occur and the assumptions do not hold, UNICEF is unlikely to be able to demonstrate progress toward the targets set out in the results framework. These risks therefore provide important contextual information for interpreting the results framework and locating accountability for performance on it over the period 2014 to 2017.

The document also provides information about the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate the risks identified, and thereby to ensure that assumptions hold true. As with the risks, this document cannot replace a comprehensive operational approach to risk mitigation, and so is not intended to supplant the existing enterprise risk management system. Instead, the risk mitigation measures described below explain some of the
steps the organization is taking; it does not attempt to provide the full details of the organization’s actions in every programme country.

B. Structure of the presentation of assumptions, risks and mitigation measures in this document

The presentation of assumptions, risks and mitigation measures is complicated by the fact that they must be addressed at three levels (from activities to outputs; from outputs to outcomes; and from outcomes to impact) and by the fact that there are two different types of assumptions, risks and mitigation measures: those that relate to one specific outcome and those that cut across the entire organization. (There are other possible ways to categorize these, but for the sake of simplicity, this Note uses only these two categories, which are the most important for elaborating a theory of change.)

This section contains three sets of cross-cutting assumptions, risks and mitigation measures: those from outcome to impact levels; the cross-cutting ones related to the transition from outputs to outcomes that affect all of the outcomes; and the cross-cutting ones related to the transition from activities to outputs that affect all of the outputs. The fact that there are assumptions, risks and mitigation measures that are independent of sector and therefore common to the seven outcomes underscores the importance of the point made earlier about there being a common theory of change that underpins UNICEF’s work across sectors.

Each outcome section contains two sets of assumptions, risks and mitigation measures: those related to the transition from output to outcome level (presented at the beginning of each outcome section) and those related to the transition from activities UNICEF carries out to the outputs (presented within each of the outputs).

A further presentational challenge is the fact that an assumption may apply to more than one level in the causal pathway. For example, a massive increase in humanitarian crises (e.g., due to the outbreak of a novel pathogen) would affect the ability of outputs to lead to an outcome, but it would also jeopardize the transition from outcome to impact. This is because even if changes have occurred in institutions and/or if individuals have changed their behaviours, these shifts may be insufficient to improve the lives of a child confronted with a devastating pandemic.

C. Assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the transition between outcomes and impact

The achievement of an outcome means that implementation has proceeded as planned, with outputs having been achieved and having resulted in changes in institutional capacity or individual behaviour. However, even if an outcome has been reached, there is no guarantee that impact – changes in the lives of children – will automatically occur. UNICEF believes that the following assumptions are reasonable and will hold true for the period 2014-2017, but if they do not there is no guarantee that impact will be seen even if outcomes are achieved. For this reason, the organization has assessed the risks associated with each of them, and it employs a number of approaches to mitigate these risks.

The major assumptions behind the seven outcomes contributing to the impact, the key associated risks, and the key related mitigations measures are:

- **Numerous humanitarian crises do not overwhelm the capacity to respond:** UNICEF fully expects that humanitarian crises will occur over the course of the 2014-2017 period, and indeed that the number of emergencies is likely to increase. However, UNICEF expects the number of these crises to remain within reasonable parameters based on historical trends; it does not expect them to proliferate uncontrollably such that the number of situations increases by an order of magnitude. Similarly, an assumption has been made that there will not be a single, massive crisis that affects much of the world simultaneously (e.g., the emergence of a deadly, highly transmissible pathogen).
Key risks: A novel pathogen emerges that is both easily spread and highly lethal; feedback loops in the changing climate accelerate enormously or an unanticipated tipping point is reached climatically, massively increasing the number of extreme weather events; an existing geopolitical conflict dramatically escalates and draws in major powers from across the world on different sides, or a new conflict has the same effect; a major crisis takes place in the global economic system.

Key mitigation measures: Assisting countries to prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises, such as by strengthening resilience, supporting the development of preparedness plans and, in the event of a crisis, contributing to the humanitarian action; assisting countries to adapt to changing climatic conditions.

Political support for addressing inequity remains strong: The outcomes include a focus on equity that should lead to a positive impact for the most disadvantaged. However, it is possible that, for example, the new capacities that have been developed to reach the disadvantaged could be captured by those already in power to reinforce their status if political support swings from the disadvantaged to those who are already well off. Vested interests may be successful at preserving the status quo in isolated countries, but for the transition from outcome to impact to be affected at global level would require a fundamental reordering of political priorities, which appears unlikely over the course of 2014-2017.

Key risks: Vested interests become sufficiently threatened by the equity approach that they build large-scale, well-financed, cross-border coalitions; compelling research emerges from multiple parts of the world showing that the equity focus does not improve the lives of disadvantaged people and harms the better off, leading to a global revolt against the equity approach and support for an approach that focuses on the best off.

Key mitigation measures: Engaging with political and other leaders to highlight the problems of inequity and to keep attention focused on the importance of addressing it; publishing research on inequity.

Evidenced-based laws, policies and implementation plans combined with feasible and cost-effective technical solutions can make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged children: Changes at the outcome level reflect important shifts in capacity and behaviour, but there is no guarantee that they will result in improvements in the lives of children. UNICEF bases its work on evidence to the extent possible, so it is reasonable to assume that if outcomes are reached then impact will be achieved. But this expectation is based on UNICEF’s understanding of how, for example, improved learning outcomes contribute to realizing the rights of every child, and this understanding could be incorrect.

Key risks: Shifts in technology occur so quickly that children’s lives are increasingly shaped by new forces that cannot be addressed by traditional forms of programming; existing technical solutions stop working (e.g., because of the spread of drug resistance).

Key mitigation measures: Continuous scanning of the external environment to detect technological shifts that affect children’s lives; addressing innovation systematically across the organization through an innovation unit; reviewing the evidence continually to identify new approaches.

The global consensus on the importance of partnerships continues: For the transition between outcomes and impact to occur, many stakeholders must be involved. Partnerships between UNICEF and national governments, civil society, the private sector, multilateral organizations and other actors are central to this, as are the connections among these stakeholders that do not involve UNICEF. The global community currently embraces this approach to collaboration, so while there will undoubtedly be difficulties in some of these partnerships over the 2014-2017 period, a complete collapse of the model of partnerships is not expected, nor is a situation in which global cooperation is replaced in its entirety by rivalry and/or isolation.

Key risks: The post-2015 process collapses so acrimoniously that partnerships become impossible; global geopolitical conflict leads to a complete breakdown in the world order and introduces a phase of isolationism; the United Nations system disintegrates in the face of scandals or global economic collapse, requiring shuttering of all parts of the system.

Key mitigation measures: Contributing actively to the post-2015 process; supporting United Nations coherence efforts; strengthening engagement with the private sector and civil society.
The set of issues covered by the outcomes is complemented by progress in other areas necessary to realize the rights of children: The seven outcomes of the Strategic Plan are based on an assessment of the issues that must be addressed to realize the rights of children. However, they also reflect an analysis of UNICEF’s comparative advantages and thus do not include the totality of issues that shape the lives of children. Other actors play leading roles in addressing issues such as agriculture, employment, the environment, governance and peace and security. To realize the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged, progress must continue in these areas, or at least not derail so completely as to block the realization of children’s rights.

- **Key risks:** The weakening or even collapse of other actors that have important roles in addressing key issues outside UNICEF’s purview but that are important for the realization of children’s rights; governments globally stop devoting domestic resources to a key issue because of disillusionment with the topic or competing priorities; new issues critical to the realization of the rights of children emerge but are not addressed adequately.
- **Key mitigation measures:** Engaging with key partners responsible for issues beyond UNICEF’s focus (e.g., the World Bank, International Labour Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) to ensure that approaches are complementary and to avoid any gaps in coverage; highlighting the importance and benefits of prioritizing children (including in resource allocations) through advocacy.

D. Assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the transition between outputs and outcomes

As noted above, assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the transition between outputs and outcomes are contained primarily in the individual outcome sections below. However, there are several assumptions, risks and mitigation measures that are cross-cutting, and so these are highlighted here rather than in the individual outcome sections. If there are nuances to a particular assumption that make it especially important to a given outcome, this is addressed in the section on assumptions in the relevant outcome. Additionally, although some of the assumptions listed above also apply to the transition between outputs and outcomes (e.g., that the number of humanitarian crises does not increase massively, as this would obstruct the attainment of the outcomes even if outputs were delivered), these are not repeated below.

The major cross-cutting assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcomes, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- **Resources for the issues addressed by the outcomes do not disappear entirely:** Resources, both financial and human, are required to deliver the outcomes in the Strategic Plan. Financial resources for these issues have increased significantly in recent decades from both domestic and international sources. The Strategic Plan does not assume continued growth in resources, but it does rely on a belief that they will not completely dry up. Were this to happen, even if outputs were achieved, they would not lead to outcomes, given the need for resources from multiple actors to support this transition. Similarly, the outcomes would not be achieved if the human resources now focused on these issues vanished entirely.
  - **Key risks:** A major crisis takes place in the global economic system; a new threat emerges that is immediately deadly and requires massive investments to be addressed; enormous shifts in migration patterns draw a large portion of skilled human resources out of the countries that are most affected by the outcomes.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Advocating for increased resource allocation; assisting countries to build capacity, particularly to address skills shortages.

- **Political support for the issues covered by the outcomes does not vanish:** Outcomes reflect the collective action of multiple stakeholders, and political engagement is essential to ensure that all of them remain committed to the attainment of the outcome. UNICEF anticipates some fluctuation in
support for the various outcomes both nationally and globally, and this has been factored into the organization’s approach. However, if political support for moving forward on, for example, education and health disappears entirely, the outcomes will not be achieved even if the outputs are attained.

- **Key risks:** A new issue emerges that draws attention and political focus away from the issues covered by the outcomes; global scandals affect multiple outcomes simultaneously and lead political figures to withdraw support across most or all of them.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Advocating and communicating with leaders and the general public to ensure continuation of support for addressing each of the sectors; publishing research on the benefits (both individual and societal) of addressing key issues faced by children.

**Governments commit to acting to remove barriers and bottlenecks:** After nearly 25 years of experience translating the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other relevant international treaties into national laws and policies, considerable progress has been made in establishing supportive enabling environments. However, in numerous countries where governments have been committed to addressing inequities and have created an enabling environment through appropriate policies for children, implementation has lagged because of institutional weaknesses. Governments have generally expressed a willingness to improve capacity and act to remove barriers and bottlenecks, but without this willingness the transition from outputs to outcomes will not occur.

- **Key risks:** An increased focus on implementation threatens entrenched interests globally, leading to widespread reorientation away from action to remove barriers and bottlenecks; the post-2015 process leads to a dramatic swing back to focusing on laws and policies instead of implementation.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening the evidence base on the advantages of addressing barriers and bottlenecks; developing the capacity of governments and other key partners to identify and address barriers and bottlenecks; advocating to ensure that the post-2015 process remains focused on the concrete challenges confronting children around the world.

**Political upheaval does not engulf entire regions:** The rapid spread of political movements through the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 and 2012 dramatically affected UNICEF programming in the region, transforming the focus of multiple programmes from long-term development to humanitarian action. Should a similar wave of political upheaval sweep across other regions, the likelihood of achieving results at the outcome level would drop considerably, even if the outputs were accomplished.

- **Key risks:** Soaring food prices, widespread drought, or other regional or global factors spark uprisings that spread across national borders; growing inequality within countries gives rise to protest movements that have broad appeal.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening internal capacities on preparedness planning and business continuity; developing capacities in both governmental and non-governmental partners to anticipate and prepare for humanitarian crises.

**Outputs are combined in optimal ways:** The outcome will only be achieved if the balance between the outputs is appropriate, such that, for example, efforts to stimulate demand for maternal and newborn health services do not result in demand overwhelming health systems that have not adequately addressed supply constraints. As discussed earlier, it is not possible to design an ideal mix of the six outputs at the global level, as contextual factors must shape the selection of these in each country. UNICEF has invested and continues to invest heavily in tools and systems that support countries to make the right choices about which barriers and bottlenecks to prioritize, and which types of interventions are most likely to succeed. In particular, the MoRES approach is instrumental in this work. As MoRES is mainstreamed throughout the organization, UNICEF will continue to improve in identifying barriers, bottlenecks and appropriate responses, which is why this assumption is considered reasonable.

- **Key risks:** Vested interests that systematically favour one output over another (e.g., supply rather than demand) in spite of evidence to the contrary become influential enough to shape decision-making, causing neglect of the disfavoured output; as more evidence is generated about the use of MoRES, the approach is shown not to be effective at guiding programming decisions.
o **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening internal capacities to implement the MoRES approach throughout UNICEF; assessing regularly the effectiveness of the MoRES approach and adjusting it as necessary.

E. Assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the transition between activities and outputs

The individual output descriptions below describe many assumptions, risks and mitigation measures that relate to the transition between the activity level and the output level. In addition to these, though, there are a number of assumptions, risks and mitigation measures that cut across the individual outputs. These primarily relate to internal factors associated with UNICEF’s ability to deliver effectively and efficiently.

The major cross-cutting assumptions, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures at this level are:

- **UNICEF’s overall resource mobilization targets are attained:** As noted in the Integrated Budget, 2014-2017, endorsed by the Executive Board in September 2013, UNICEF resources are expected to increase from $15.4 billion over the period 2010-2013 to $18.6 billion over the period 2014-2017. This growth represents the organization’s best estimate of resources available, but there is no guarantee that this amount will be mobilized. For this document, however, it is assumed that the resource mobilization efforts are successful, which is consistent with the assumption in the Strategic Plan itself and is reasonable based on historical experience.

  o **Key risks:** Fraud, corruption or internal mismanagement by UNICEF results in a loss of faith in the organization by donors; evidence emerges that the programmatic approaches used by UNICEF are ineffective, resulting in a loss of donor confidence; a crisis takes place in the global economic system; issues outside of the UNICEF’s mandate (e.g., energy, agriculture) receive considerably more attention from the global community, or a new global threat emerges that is unrelated to UNICEF’s mandate and that requires massive investments to be addressed, diverting resources from UNICEF; resource projections are revealed to be excessively optimistic and lead to a considerable shortfall.

  o **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening internal financial and risk management systems; continuously reviewing the evidence that guides the organization’s programming; diversifying the donor base (including by tapping new or emerging donors more extensively); communicating regularly with key donors and the general public around the importance of the organization’s work; regularly reassessing resource forecasts.

- **The share of “regular” and “other” resources remains as projected:** The Integrated Budget, 2014-2017, also contains estimates of the share of total resources that will be regular (core) and other (non-core) over the period 2014-2017. In line with the experience and projections of other UN organizations, the share that is core is predicted to decline for 2014-2017 as compared with 2010-2013, although UNICEF estimates that the drop will be modest. Across the UN system efforts are under way to address this problem. In particular, the QCPR calls attention to the issue and highlights the importance of core contributions. The subsequent adoption of a harmonized cost recovery policy was also aimed at redressing the imbalance. Taken together, these and the other efforts under way to address the issue suggest that the assumption in the Integrated Budget provides a reasonable starting point for this document.

  o **Key risks:** Key donors do not feel adequately informed about and invested in strategic directions adopted by UNICEF and so shift increasingly to non-core contributions; political pressures within key donor countries result in an increasing emphasis on results that are directly tied to an individual country’s contributions; efforts to diversify UNICEF’s funding base fail; emerging donors prioritize non-core over core contributions; inter-agency funding modalities (which are typically
non-core) become significantly more important to key donors; external events (e.g., a new disease that disproportionately affects children) generate large increases in targeted contributions that are non-core; a shift occurs in global thinking about development financing toward highly projectized support and away from programme funding.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Engaging regularly with both traditional and emerging donors to ensure that they understand the importance of core contributions and the mechanisms through which they can see the results of their contributions; advocating with donors about the importance of the QCPR’s call for increased core contributions; diversifying the set of donors making core contributions (including by tapping more extensively new or emerging donors); communicating regularly about emerging imbalances between core and non-core contributions; adjusting the cost recovery policy to increase the cost-recovery rate.

**UNICEF continues to have an adequate complement of highly trained, professional staff:** The organization relies on having sufficient quantity and quality of staff to deliver. UNICEF projects that it will continue to have adequate financing to maintain reasonable staffing levels, and based on historical experience it is likely that the organization will continue to attract high-calibre staff and be able to support their further development through training and staff development opportunities.

- **Key risks:** Financial constraints limit the organization’s ability to hire adequate numbers of staff; UNICEF or the UN more generally becomes a less desirable place to work (e.g., as a result of scandals or changes in the terms of employment); new competitors (e.g., new foundations, non-governmental organizations or socially oriented private firms) emerge and prove more attractive than UNICEF to high-calibre potential recruits; staff retirements are not adequately planned for; staff training and internal capacity development do not keep up with hiring.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Advocating for sufficient financing; strengthening internal systems to plan for retirements, create career pathways for high-calibre staff and develop staff capacity; regularly benchmarking UNICEF’s terms of employment and opportunities to understand how they compare with potential competitors.

**The evidence underpinning UNICEF’s programming is sound:** As noted above, being evidence based is a key principle of this document and indeed of UNICEF’s programming more generally. The organization has mechanisms to review and assess evidence and then to incorporate it into programmatic decision-making. The organization has strengthened its ability to do this in recent years and so is confident in the evidence being used. However, in some areas in which UNICEF works there has been very little research to provide the evidence needed to guide programming, necessitating difficult decisions about how to use the evidence that does exist. Moreover, even on well-researched topics issues may arise regarding the soundness of the evidence base, as even the top peer-reviewed journals are forced to retract articles periodically.

- **Key risks:** Evidence emerges that UNICEF’s internal processes for reviewing and assessing research do not work; the recent emphasis on strengthening evidence-based programming is reversed and resources (both financial and human) are withdrawn from the process of reviewing, assessing and disseminating research findings; research reveals that the degree to which findings can be generalized and replicated is generally overestimated, limiting the value of many studies for informing programmatic decision-making in different contexts.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Regularly assessing the utility and effectiveness of efforts to strengthen evidence-based programming within UNICEF; continuing to invest in reviewing, assessing and disseminating evidence across the areas in which UNICEF works; engaging with leading external experts working on research methodologies.

**UNICEF and UN processes facilitate rather than impede programming for children:** UNICEF has developed a set of processes and procedures to conduct its programming effectively and efficiently. Additionally, there are UN system-wide processes that influence how UNICEF operates, particularly at country level. These two sets of processes do not currently prevent the organization from delivering
high-quality programming for children. However, if processes and procedures become more cumbersome, they could restrict the organization’s ability to deliver effectively for children.

- **Key risks:** A scandal related to the misuse of funds results in the imposition of onerous new requirements that, while intended to prevent another scandal, also impede programming; evidence emerges that UNICEF’s approach to programming is ineffective, leading to the introduction of new programming processes and procedures that end up being counterproductive; new UN system-wide processes that are intended to facilitate functioning as “One UN” inadvertently make it more difficult for UNICEF to operate efficiently and rapidly to address the needs of children.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening the process of identifying and mitigating risks before they result in scandals; assessing regularly the utility and efficiency of processes and procedures; building feedback mechanisms into the introduction of new processes and procedures to avoid unworkable new approaches; engaging with other UN organizations to develop One UN processes that build on good practices and so support rather than hinder programming for children.

- **The equity focus is an effective way of addressing the needs of all children, especially the most disadvantaged:** UNICEF’s emphasis on equity is a cornerstone of its approach to supporting the realization of the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged. There is a significant and growing evidence base about the importance of addressing inequity in different sectors and the problems associated with not tackling it. However, some stakeholders have voiced concerns that concentrating on inequity is inefficient because it can be costly and challenging to reach the most disadvantaged and because there is still a limited evidence base about how best to do so, increasing the risk of ineffective approaches that would divert resources from proven approaches of reaching the majority of children.

- **Key risks:** Evidence emerges that existing approaches to addressing inequity do not have durable benefits; research comparing the cost-effectiveness of focusing on inequity with traditional approaches shows that UNICEF’s approach benefits fewer people at higher cost; austerity measures cut social spending and redirect remaining efforts towards approaches that do not emphasize inequity (e.g., on the grounds of efficiency); attempts to strengthen targeting of programming to the most disadvantaged do not work because the quality of data is insufficient to identify them.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Investing in research to demonstrate the benefits of the equity focus; identifying and testing innovations that can facilitate reaching the most disadvantaged children effectively and efficiently; building capacity to collect and use disaggregated data.

- **Security threats directed at UNICEF or the UN more generally do not increase considerably:** UNICEF staff and partners work in some of the most dangerous parts of the world, and so regularly confront security challenges. In some cases, partners working on programmes that UNICEF supports have been directly targeted as a result of their work (e.g., on polio vaccination). Additionally, the UN more generally has come under attack in several countries, which in turn hampers UNICEF’s ability to reach children. Although UNICEF anticipates that security risks will continue to grow over the course of 2014-2017, the organization does not expect a considerable increase in episodes of UNICEF or the UN more generally being targeted with violence.

- **Key risks:** Global terror networks focus on UNICEF or the UN more generally; violent communal or religious movements expand and focus on issues that UNICEF works on (e.g., polio, girls’ education).

- **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening safety and security systems within UNICEF; collaborating closely with other UN organizations to address emerging threats; communicating with the general public about UNICEF’s mission and objectives to avoid misperceptions; building partnerships with key influencers in communities and religious groups that might oppose UNICEF’s work.
5. Schematic depictions of the theory of change

Given the complexity of UNICEF’s work, full descriptions of the theory of change in each outcome are necessarily complicated. To summarize the key elements of each, this section contains visual depictions, with one schematic per outcome. The schematics contain the assumptions related to each transition in the theory of change, but for reasons of space do not depict the associated risks or mitigation measures, which are contained only in the narratives for each outcome. The cross-cutting assumptions about the transitions from output to outcome levels and from activity and output level are also not presented here for reasons of space; they were presented earlier.

The subsequent sections provide considerable additional detail about UNICEF’s work in each outcome that complements these schematics.
A. Schematic for outcome 1: Health

**IMPACT:** Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

**OUTCOME 1:** Improved and equitable use of high-impact maternal and child health interventions from pregnancy to adolescence and promotion of healthy behaviours

**OUTPUT 1:** Enhanced support for children and caregivers, from pregnancy to adolescence, for improved healthy behaviours

**OUTPUT 2:** Increased national capacity to provide access to essential high-impact maternal and child health interventions

**OUTPUT 3:** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up of health interventions

**OUTPUT 4:** Increased country capacity and delivery of services to prevent excess mortality among girls, boys and women in humanitarian situations

**OUTPUT 5:** Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of maternal and child health

**OUTPUT 6:** Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child health

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**Strategic interventions (illustrative)**

**Capacity development**
- Support governments to develop comprehensive maternal, newborn and child health communication plans
- Support countries with the roll-out of their integrated community case management programmes, to train and deploy front-line community health workers who can diagnose illness and provide simple treatments
- Support countries to conduct thorough analyses of the risks that shocks pose to delivery of and access to health services, and to build resilience capacity within immunization programmes
- Develop capacity of national partners to undertake gender review of health policies
- Develop capacity to rapidly forecast, purchase and deliver large quantities of vaccines
- Develop capacity to manage the supply chain of essential commodities
- Develop capacity to prepare and monitor costing implementation plans for maternal, newborn and child health
- Develop capacity of communities and community-based organizations to monitor and demand quality services for women and children

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**
- Support countries to gather, analyse and use disaggregated data to identify barriers and bottlenecks to addressing persistent health inequities
- Address key gaps in policy, such as concerning home visits to newborns within the first week of life and the ability of community health workers to prescribe antibiotics for pneumonia
- Support countries to understand and address the reasons why some children do not receive polio vaccinations because of refusals

**Partnerships**
- Participate in and provide leadership for global initiatives such as A Promise Renewed, Every Woman Every Child, the GAVI Alliance, the UN Commission on Life-Saving Commodities and Family Planning 2020
- South-South and triangular cooperation
  - Share lessons on health systems strengthening and innovative monitoring of barriers and bottlenecks

**Identification and promotion of innovation**
- Conduct implementation research on novel techniques to implement and monitor health programmes

**Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**
- Support the integration of polio vaccination with routine immunization and other health, WASH and nutrition interventions

**Service delivery**
- In humanitarian contexts, work with national and local counterparts and through inter-agency mechanisms to provide lifesaving health interventions and commodities
- Use communication for development approaches to provide caregivers and community members with essential information on pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria
B. Schematic for outcome 2: HIV and AIDS

**Impact**
Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

**Outcome 2:** Improved and equitable use of proven HIV prevention and treatment interventions by children, pregnant women and adolescents

**Output indicators**
- **Output 1:** Enhanced support for children and caregivers for healthy behaviours related to HIV and AIDS and to use of relevant services, consistent with the UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework
- **Output 2:** Increased national capacity to provide access to essential service delivery systems for scaling up HIV interventions
- **Output 3:** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget to scale up HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment interventions
- **Output 4:** Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that vulnerability to HIV infection is not increased and HIV-related care, support and treatment needs are met in humanitarian situations
- **Output 5:** Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of HIV and AIDS
- **Output 6:** Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in HIV and AIDS

**Strategic interventions (illustrative)**

**Capacity development**
- Support governments to design comprehensive social behaviour change communication strategies for adolescents and youth
- Support countries to scale up voluntary medical male circumcision
- Provide guidance and support to implementation of task-shifting and -sharing to increase the involvement of non-physicians in delivering antiretroviral therapy (ART)
- Build local capacity to analyse and use data for decision-making by applying MoRES to elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to paediatric HIV care and treatment
- Strengthen capacity to programme for resilience and provide a minimum package for HIV prevention and treatment for adolescents in emergencies or post-emergency settings

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**
- Advocate for and support improved reporting of disaggregated data on adolescents (including key populations)
- Support resource mobilization for children and AIDS through large funding mechanisms such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- Provide recommendations on integrating prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and paediatric HIV care and treatment in emergencies to help ensure continuity of programmes in the wake of a shock
- Advocate for all sectors and clusters to include HIV-related interventions in humanitarian action
- Advocate to engage men and boys in promoting gender equality in the context of HIV

**Partnerships**
- Take leadership roles within UNAIDS co-sponsors on programming addressing elimination of mother-to-child transmission, on adolescents and HIV, and through the social protection, care and support working group

**South-South and triangular cooperation**
- Synthesize, translate and disseminate the latest scientific and programmatic evidence and innovations to various audiences through diverse platforms, with a specific focus on South-South exchanges

**Identification and promotion of innovation**
- Provide technical support to countries for strategic scale-up of early infant diagnosis

**Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**
- Support integration of HIV services into maternal health services
- Support integration of sexual and reproductive health and HIV services

**Service delivery**
- In UNICEF-supported programmes, ensure equal access for women and girls (in both of the first two decades of life) to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support
C. Schematic for outcome 3: Water, sanitation, and hygiene

**Impact indicators:**

**Impact:** Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

**Outcome indicators:**

**Outcome 3:** Improved and equitable use of safe drinking water, sanitation and healthy environments, and improved hygiene practices

**Output indicators:**

**Output 1:** Enhanced support for children and families leading to sustained use of safe drinking water, adoption of adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices

**Output 2:** Increased national capacity to provide access to sustainable safe drinking water and adequate sanitation

**Output 3:** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up of interventions to promote safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices

**Output 4:** Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that girls, boys and women have protected and reliable access to sufficient safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in humanitarian situations

**Output 5:** Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of water, sanitation and hygiene practices

**Output 6:** Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in safe water, sanitation and hygiene practices

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**Strategic interventions (illustrative)**

**Capacity development**
- Develop capacity to create and implement community-based water safety plans
- Develop capacity to implement national strategies to eliminate open defecation and establish targets to provide access to drinking water for disadvantaged populations
- Develop capacity for preparedness for WASH services in emergencies
- Support the expansion of Community Approaches to Total Sanitation

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**
- Support planning for sustainability of water supply, particularly through the use of Sustainability Compacts
- Build climate resilience into WASH sector plans
- Advocate for more funding for WASH
- Build a high-quality and accessible knowledge base on WASH programming and ensure that it is regularly updated with the latest evidence

**Partnerships**
- Collaborate with the WASH in Schools network to expand the availability of WASH services in educational settings, including improving menstrual hygiene management
- Serve as the global WASH cluster lead agency
- Support mechanisms for global action on WASH such as Sanitation and Water for All, the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme and others

**South-South and triangular cooperation**
- Use existing South-South networks to gather information and disseminate good practices

**Identification and promotion of innovation**
- Support various innovative technologies and processes that address sector priority areas

**Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**
- Continue to support WASH in School programming
- Develop the evidence base for WASH-nutrition linkages

**Service delivery**
- Use communication for development to support national hand-washing behaviour change communication programmes
- In humanitarian situations support increased access to drinking water, improved sanitation, and increased adoption of hygiene measures

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**Assumptions (risks, mitigation measures and cross-cutting assumptions in text)**

- **Humanitarian crises do not overwhelm capacity:**
- **Political support for addressing inequity remains strong:**
- **Evidenced-based approaches plus technical solutions make a difference in children’s lives:**
- **Consensus continues on the importance of partnerships:**
- **Progress occurs in other areas:**
D. Schematic for outcome 4: Nutrition

**IMPACT:** Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

**OUTCOME 4:** Improved and equitable use of nutritional support and improved nutrition and care practices

**OUTPUT 1:** Enhanced support for children, caregivers and communities for improved nutrition and care practices
**OUTPUT 2:** Increased national capacity to provide access to nutrition interventions
**OUTPUT 3:** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling-up nutrition interventions
**OUTPUT 4:** Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure protection of the nutritional status of girls, boys and women from the effects of humanitarian situations
**OUTPUT 5:** Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of nutrition
**OUTPUT 6:** Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child nutrition

### Strategic interventions (illustrative)

**Capacity development**
- Develop capacity to disaggregate nutrition data by key forms of vulnerability, and analyse and use the data to identify and address barriers and bottlenecks
- Use ProPAN (Process for the Promotion of Child Feeding) to build capacity to address critical bottlenecks to improving complementary feeding
- Build capacity for disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and emergency response
- Run a massive open online course to develop capacity on infant and young child feeding
- Build capacity to conduct gender reviews of nutrition policies

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**
- Support countries to develop nutrition policies and plans that are multisectoral and costed, include clear targets, define risk management strategies to address risks from disasters, conflict and climate change, and contain specific actions targeted to vulnerable groups
- Support legislative changes to help countries achieve full implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent World Health Assembly Resolutions, and of maternity protection
- Use cost-benefit analysis and investment cases, policy dialogue and advocacy to increase awareness of nutrition issues, generate commitment and action, and complement resource mobilization efforts
- Assist countries to develop anaemia reduction policies and plans

**Partnerships**
- Participate in global networks and initiatives for nutrition, such as Scaling Up Nutrition, the Standing Committee on Nutrition and Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition
- Serve as the global nutrition cluster lead agency

**South-South and triangular cooperation**
- Support South-South engagement with knowledge exchange and sharing between programme countries, in the contexts of multi-country projects and in the scale-up of specific interventions

**Identification and promotion of innovation**
- In partnership with Population Services International, pilot a market-based micronutrient powder programme

**Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**
- Link nutrition interventions with those of other sectors (particularly health, education and WASH) to provide integrated services, including for early childhood development

**Service delivery**
- In humanitarian situations and settings with weak capacity, directly deliver nutrition services, including through supplementation and fortification efforts
- Use social and behaviour change communication to address knowledge, behaviours, sociocultural beliefs and practices related to infant and young child nutrition

### Assumptions (risks and mitigation measures)

- **Humanitarian crises do not overwhelm capacity:**
  - Policy support for addressing inequity remains strong;
  - Evidence-based approaches plus technical solutions make a difference in children’s lives;
  - Consensus continues on the importance of partnerships;
  - Progress in other areas

- **Political leaders continue to support efforts to scale-up nutrition and improve equity:**
  - Global food prices do not increase dramatically;
  - Number of humanitarian crises remains limited

- **Openness from communities to receiving information and behaviour change messages:**
  - Existence of minimum level of capacity that can be supported;
  - Partners support incorporating evidence into sector policies and plans; Political commitment and capacity exist to translate policy changes into operational improvements;
  - No convergence of unmanageable numbers of crisis simultaneously;
  - Coordination in humanitarian settings does not collapse;
  - Partners understand the importance of employing a rights-based and gender-sensitive approach to nutrition programming;
  - No collapse in the global system of coordination and partnership

- **Number of humanitarian crises remains limited**

- **Existence of minimum level of capacity that can be supported**

- **Partners support incorporating evidence into sector policies and plans**

- **Policy changes into operational improvements**

- **No convergence of unmanageable numbers of crisis simultaneously**

- **Coordination in humanitarian settings does not collapse**

- **Partners understand the importance of employing a rights-based and gender-sensitive approach to nutrition programming**

- **No collapse in the global system of coordination and partnership**
**E. Schematic for outcome 5: Education**

**Impact indicators**

**IMPACT:** Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

**Outcome indicators**

**OUTCOME 5:** Improved learning outcomes and equitable and inclusive education

**Output indicators**

**OUTPUT 1:** Enhanced support to communities with disadvantaged and excluded children to start schooling at the right age and attend regularly

**OUTPUT 2:** Increased national capacity to provide access to early learning opportunities and quality primary and secondary education

**OUTPUT 3:** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling-up quality and inclusive education

**OUTPUT 4:** Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that girls and boys have access to safe and secure forms of education and critical information for their own well-being in humanitarian situations

**OUTPUT 5:** Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of school readiness and performance

**OUTPUT 6:** Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in education

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**Strategic interventions (illustrative)**

**Capacity development**
- Strengthen the capacity of school management committees to act upon information and support school improvement plans
- Support teacher training programmes, provide guidelines and tools, and assist in implementing standards to assess learning outcomes
- Build capacity to put in place quality standards consistent with child-friendly education and for early learning

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**
- Support the roll-out of education management information systems
- Engage communities to discuss, address and abandon sociocultural beliefs and practices regarding children with disabilities, girls and other characteristics that result in children being excluded from education
- Through the Out-of-School Children Initiative, develop profiles of out-of-school children and develop evidence-based strategies to address key bottlenecks
- Advocate for the importance of student learning assessment systems, especially for the early grades
- Advocate for more funding for education, including in emergencies
- Use the Simulations for Equity in Education model and the education system analysis guidelines prepared in collaboration with the World Bank, UNESCO and the GPE to advocate for the rights of disadvantaged children

**Partnerships**
- Co-lead the post-2015 dialogue on education and provide strategic leadership and support to UNGEI
- Play an active role in cluster and sector coordination mechanisms on education

**South-South and triangular cooperation**
- In partnership with GPE, support South-South cross-fertilization through peer-to-peer learning processes and experience sharing

**Identification and promotion of innovation**
- Invest in innovative approaches to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged children

**Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**
- Scale up cross-sectoral work on early childhood development, girls’ education, children with disabilities and WASH in schools

**Service delivery**
- Engage in conflict-sensitive delivery of learning opportunities and psychosocial support to children in humanitarian situations
- Work with children, parents and communities to create awareness of the importance of education in alleviating stress and trauma
F. Schematic for outcome 6: Child protection

**IMPACT:** Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

**OUTCOME 6:** Improved and equitable prevention of and response to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children

**OUTPUT 1:** Enhanced support and increased capacities of children and families to protect themselves and to eliminate practices and behaviours harmful to children

**OUTPUT 2:** Increased national capacity to provide access to child protection systems that prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect

**OUTPUT 3:** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up interventions that prevent and respond to violence, abuse and exploitation

**OUTPUT 4:** Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that children’s rights to protection from violence, abuse and exploitation are sustained and promoted in humanitarian situations

**OUTPUT 5:** Increased capacity of governments and communities to identify and respond to the human rights and gender dimensions of child protection

**OUTPUT 6:** Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child protection

### Strategic interventions (illustrative)

**Capacity development**
- Strengthen child protection system – including both preventive and responsive services – at the national and subnational level by bringing together the key actors in a child protection system
- Assist countries to modernize birth registration systems
- Develop capacities to budget and track expenditures on child protection (e.g., by working with ministries of finance to develop national comparable benchmarks for expenditures on child protection services)
- Develop capacity to ensure that children in contact with the law are dealt with in a way that recognizes the specific needs of children and emphasizes diversion programmes and non-detention remedies

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**
- Work with governments to conduct mapping and assessments of legal frameworks to bring these into line with international best practices
- Support governments to undertake household surveys on violence against children to improve data on the prevalence and impact of violence on children and monitor programmes to track progress
- Advocate with political leaders to ensure that countries devote dedicated resources to child protection

**Partnerships**
- In humanitarian situations, lead the Child Protection Area of Responsibility and co-lead the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility
- Lead the global End Violence against Children initiative

**South-South and triangular cooperation**
- Support South-South and triangular cooperation efforts such as in the child protection master’s degree course that engages South-based academics and institutions

**Identification and promotion of innovation**
- Use mobile technology to support birth registration systems by reaching disadvantaged population groups and children not born in hospitals

**Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**
- Engage with the health and education sectors concerning birth registrations, child marriage, early childhood development and violence

**Service delivery**
- Engage with parents and caregivers concerning attitudes and social norms towards child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, physical punishment and other forms of violence and exploitation
- Provide psychosocial support, referral, case management and safe spaces for children and women in humanitarian situations

### Assumptions (risks and mitigation measures in text)
- Humanitarian crises do not overwhelm capacity;
- Political support for addressing inequity remains strong;
- Evidence-based approaches plus technical solutions make a difference in children’s lives;
- Consensus on the importance of partnerships continues;
- Progress in other areas

### Assumptions (risks, mitigation measures and cross-cutting assumptions in text)
- Governments and other stakeholders recognize that all children have the right to be protected from violence, exploitation and abuse;
- Governments willing/able to make meaningful financial investments in child protection;
- Benefits of a holistic approach continue to be recognized;
- Efforts to change social/communal norms are not broadly undermined

### Assumptions (risks, mitigation measures and cross-cutting assumptions in text)
- Openness from communities to receiving information and behaviour change messages;
- Existence of minimum level of capacity that can be supported;
- Political commitment exists to address gaps in laws and policies and to translate these changes into concrete improvements in the functioning of child protection systems;
- No convergence of unmanageable numbers of crisis simultaneously;
- Shared understanding of the importance of employing an approach to child protection based on human rights and gender equality;
- No collapse in the global system of coordination and partnership
G. Schematic for outcome 7: Social inclusion

**Impact indicators**

**IMPACT:** Realizing the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged

**Outcome indicators**

**OUTCOME 7:** Improved policy environment and systems for disadvantaged and excluded children, guided by improved knowledge and data

**Output indicators**

**OUTPUT 1:** Enhanced support for disadvantaged and marginalized children and families to use social protection systems and participate in decision-making processes affecting them

**OUTPUT 2:** Increased national capacity to provide access to inclusive systems that protect children and adolescents from poverty and promote social inclusion

**OUTPUT 3:** Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for inclusive social policies and social protection measures, including in risk-prone and fragile contexts

**OUTPUT 4:** Improved country capacity and national systems to promote resilience and strengthen response to humanitarian situations

**OUTPUT 5:** Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of social inclusion

**OUTPUT 6:** Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress towards social inclusion

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**Strategic interventions (illustrative)**

**Capacity development**

- Develop capacity of national statistical offices to collect better data for measuring both monetary and multidimensional child poverty
- Develop capacity of ministries of finance, national planning bodies and local governments to identify and address inequities in budget allocation and expenditure
- Support civil society actors and parliaments to analyse and advocate/legislate to address identified inequities
- Support countries to improve legal and policy frameworks to address human rights and gender equality, and strengthen institutions and accountability mechanisms in line with commitments to international conventions
- Support governments to undertake risk-informed budgetary planning, management and auditing to improve preparedness, prevention and response to stresses and shocks

**Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**

- Generate evidence on the driving factors and prevalence of child poverty as well as the impact of policy responses and services in social protection, child care and related areas
- Examine the impact of fiscal and economic trends and decision-making on child poverty and inequity through partnerships with government, universities, think tanks and civil society
- Ensure that the impact on children of emerging trends – such as urbanization, disaster risk and climate change – is taken into account in policy and programmes

**Partnerships**

- Work with the World Bank, International Labour Organization, European Union and other partners to ensure data are harmonized and resources maximized for social protection systems
- Lead the Child Poverty Network, which engages academia, policymakers and practitioners in the debate concerning child poverty measures and policy responses

**South-South and triangular cooperation**

- Use triangular cooperation approaches to convene city governments and encourage them to exchange knowledge on urban planning and programming

**Identification and promotion of innovation**

- Document and support emerging practices in the rapidly growing field of real-time monitoring
- To support social inclusion efforts, increase government receipts from natural resources, reinvest funds resulting from changes in public subsidies and use income from carbon credits

**Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**

- Engage with the health, education, nutrition, child protection and HIV sectors to improve the understanding and measurement of child poverty and jointly influence the design and implementation of social protection interventions in order to maximize the impact on multiple outcomes, including early childhood development

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**Assumptions (risks and mitigation measures in text)**

- Humanitarian crises do not overwhelm capacity;
- Political support for addressing inequity remains strong;
- Evidence-based approaches plus technical solutions make a difference in children’s lives;
- Consensus on the importance of partnerships continues;
- Progress in other areas

**Assumptions (risks, mitigation measures and cross-cutting assumptions in text)**

- Continued embrace of the concept of social inclusion;
- Greater participation of children/communities increases their inclusion;
- Well-designed systems are better at identifying/addressing the needs of disadvantaged populations;
- Partners remain willing to work in multisectoral ways

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**Assumptions (risks, mitigation measures and cross-cutting assumptions in text)**

- Openness from communities to receiving information and behaviour change messages;
- Existence of minimum level of capacity that can be supported;
- Governments are interested in addressing social inclusion in an evidence-based manner;
- Non-traditional partners are willing to engage on issues of social inclusion;
- No convergence of unmanageable numbers of crisis simultaneously;
- Coordination in humanitarian settings does not collapse;
- Partners continue to accept that human rights and gender equality approaches are critical for sustainable, inclusive development;
- No collapse in the global system of coordination and partnership

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**Service delivery**
6. Narrative description for outcome 1: Health

[Schematic for health located here.]

A. Outcome and programme areas

Despite significant advances in reducing child mortality worldwide, 6.6 million children under 5 years old died in 2012. Although tremendous advances have been made in immunization, 20% of children are not reached by immunization services, leading to major causes of morbidity and mortality from vaccine-preventable diseases, particularly among the most disadvantaged and excluded children. Furthermore, despite the extraordinary achievement of reducing the global incidence of polio by more than 99%, continuing circulation of the wild polio virus in a handful of countries threatens reintroductions of the virus and unsettles gains made thus far in the global polio eradication efforts.

Pneumonia and diarrhoea remain the leading causes of under-five mortality, together accounting for the deaths of almost 5,000 children under 5 years old every day, while malaria kills an additional 1,200 children under 5 every day, most in sub-Saharan Africa. Even within countries that are on track to reach MDG 4, overall reductions often mask inequities across regions and populations that must be addressed if all children are to be reached.

**Outcome for the 2014-2017 period: Improved and equitable use of high-impact maternal and child health interventions from pregnancy to adolescence and promotion of healthy behaviours.**

To accomplish this outcome, UNICEF is focusing on delivering results in six programme areas:

- Immunization;
- Polio;
- Maternal and newborn health;
- Child health: pneumonia, diarrhoea, and malaria;
- Strengthening health systems; and
- Health in humanitarian situations.

**Rationale for focusing on these programme areas:**

Increases in immunization rates over the past several decades have saved the lives of many children, but considerable gaps remain in services, with the result that far too many children get sick and die from vaccine-preventable illnesses every year. Weak health systems and funding constraints continue to pose significant challenges to improving immunization rates. The morbidity and mortality caused by vaccine-preventable illnesses are concentrated in a limited number of countries and particularly within disadvantaged communities.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative has succeeded in reducing the number of countries with endemic polio from 125 to 3. However, continuing circulation of wild polio virus in sanctuaries in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan poses a global threat of reintroduction, especially in areas with low population immunity. Further work is necessary both to understand and address the reasons why families and communities refuse to participate in polio campaigns, and also to overcome the political opposition that has arisen in some areas.

Although important gains have been made over the past two decades in child survival, progress in reducing newborn mortality (deaths in the first month of life) has lagged substantially. As a result, neonatal deaths now account for 44% of child deaths. The leading causes of newborn mortality include complications of
preterm birth, intra partum-related complications and neonatal infections. Neonatal tetanus still kills an estimated 58,000 newborns every year.

Pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria together account for one third of all child deaths – more than 2 million a year. Strong progress has been made on malaria in recent years, but it must be accelerated if the goals of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership’s Global Malaria Action Plan are to be met. Similarly, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF launched a Global Action Plan for Pneumonia and Diarrhoea in 2013 that sets the goal of ending preventable deaths from these killers by 2025, a target that requires ambitious efforts over the period 2014-2017.

The End-of-Cycle review highlighted the fact that progress in systems strengthening had lagged progress in more discrete interventions (e.g., distribution of treated mosquito nets, immunization). In most countries in which UNICEF operates, health systems face major challenges in scaling up interventions to reduce maternal, newborn and child mortality. To increase the coverage and quality of effective interventions, especially in hard-to-reach areas and population groups, transversal efforts are needed to strengthen systems in areas such as evidence-based planning, real-time monitoring and supply chain management.

Humanitarian crises endanger the health of children in numerous ways, including by disrupting access to health services, interrupting immunization efforts and increasing exposure to pathogens (e.g., because of the diminished likelihood of sleeping under mosquito nets or through worsened sanitation). Concerted efforts to prioritize child health in emergencies are necessary to avoid these consequences.

B. Assumptions, risk analysis and mitigation measures

The outcome is delivered through a series of six outputs. These are described in detail below but it is important to acknowledge that there are a series of assumptions that must hold true for the outputs to lead to the outcome. These assumptions are based on UNICEF’s understanding of the health sector and so are considered reasonable. However, given their importance and the fact that they are largely beyond the organization’s control, it is important to acknowledge them and also to conduct a risk analysis to understand the possible dangers should the assumptions not prove valid.

By definition, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. The consequence would be that the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or partly, such as would be reflected in underperformance in a subset of the outcome indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks associated with each assumption. UNICEF does not expect the risks articulated below to occur, but identifying them now and taking steps to prevent them is an important part of prudent programming. It also increases the organization’s ability to contribute to the outcome. Although many factors could pose risks, only the most significant are highlighted below. The measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks are also briefly summarized.

This subsection explores the assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the causal link between outputs and the outcome. There are also assumptions, risks and mitigation measures concerning the transition between the actions that UNICEF takes and each output, but these are handled within the discussion of each output.

The major assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:
Health remains a priority at both global and national levels: Political commitment to address health issues has increased considerably over the past 20 years, and has been instrumental in driving the policy change and increased expenditure – both international and domestic – that has fuelled progress in the sector. There are some signs that this rate of growth may not continue, with levels of official development assistance to health now stabilizing after years of increase, but it does not appear to be dropping considerably.

- **Key risks:** Issues in other sectors (e.g., geopolitical conflict, climate change) grow in importance and attract attention away from health; new research reveals that the increased investments in health have not resulted in improvements in health status.
- **Key mitigation measures:** Building the evidence base about the connection between investing in health and changes in health status; documenting the social benefits derived from improvements in health; advocating with political leaders about the benefits of investments in health.

Opposition to routine immunizations and polio remains localized: Pockets of opposition to immunization exist in many countries and have slowed progress in some areas, but these have not coalesced into the kind of broad-based opposition that could seriously threaten progress globally. This is not expected to change over the course of 2014-2017.

- **Key risks:** The increasing ease of global communication enables links between disparate groups, resulting in broader coalitions against immunization and in particular against polio, unravelling the success of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative; research reveals a connection between a vaccine and a health problem, undermining public confidence in immunizations.
- **Key mitigation measures:** Communicating regularly with the general public and traditional, political and communal leaders about the value of vaccines; identifying key influencers in communities and ensuring that they have adequate information about vaccines and their benefits; responding rapidly to efforts to mislead the public about vaccines.

No significant new global threats to child health emerge: The theory of change is based on the existing set of challenges facing the health sector, but a novel threat such as an emerging pandemic would likely divert scarce human and financial resources away from the current areas of focus to the new danger, jeopardizing the possibility of delivering on the outcome.

- **Key risk:** The emergence of a deadly new pathogen that spreads easily, which needs to be considered because new pathogens have been emerging and spreading at a historically unprecedented rate, largely as a result of globalization.
- **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening health systems to both detect and respond rapidly to emerging issues; building resilience to help communities, families and children cope in the event of a catastrophe.

Human resources for health are adequate to deliver health services: Successful delivery of health services requires considerable human resources from governments and non-governmental partners. Although there has been considerable interest in human resources for health in recent years, this has not resulted in a resolution of all of the capacity constraints, although a collapse does not appear likely.

- **Key risk:** Multiple humanitarian crises in rapid succession overstretch capacity to respond.
- **Key mitigation measures:** Developing capacity of health workers at all levels, including through training and technical assistance; supporting policy shifts to enable lower cadres of health workers to play more important roles (e.g., through task-shifting).
C. Outputs

The six outputs that contribute to the outcome are:

1. Enhanced support for children and caregivers, from pregnancy to adolescence, for improved healthy behaviours;
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to essential high-impact maternal and child health interventions;
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up of health interventions;
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to prevent excess mortality among girls, boys and women in humanitarian situations;
5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of maternal and child health; and
6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child health.

The descriptions of each output below focus on the primary implementation strategies that are being used, with brief accounts of the particular approaches being employed. Additionally, because certain assumptions must be made about the conditions necessary for UNICEF’s actions to lead to the achievement of each output, the one or two most important assumptions are discussed under the output, along with the major risks to these assumptions and the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks.

1. Enhanced support for children and caregivers, from pregnancy to adolescence, for improved healthy behaviours

Rationale for focusing on this output
Addressing demand for services is critical in several areas of UNICEF’s work on health. For example, work on knowledge, behaviour change and sociocultural practices is essential for ensuring individual and communal buy-in to immunization and polio campaigns. Similarly, it is impossible to reach the targets set for maternal and neonatal health and for pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria without successfully stimulating demand for health services in these areas.

Key areas of work on this output
Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy are all important in this output. For example, as the global community moves closer to polio eradication, it has become increasingly important to understand and address the reasons why some children are missed due to refusals, in order to make programme adjustments or develop new strategies to reach all children.

Capacity development at all levels is also a regular feature of UNICEF’s work in this area, such as in supporting governments to develop comprehensive maternal, newborn and child health communications plans. UNICEF also works with government and civil society partners on communication for development strategies and approaches, providing caregivers and community members with essential information on pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, and so supporting duty-bearers to seek services and make informed decisions on these issues.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
One of the key assumptions in this area is that the communities with which UNICEF is working are open to receiving information, behaviour change messages and other efforts to change sociocultural beliefs and
practices that impede health-seeking behaviours. Another assumption that is particularly important for the work on polio and immunization is that UNICEF and its partners will be able to access the communities that have lower uptake rates to be able to engage with these communities to understand the root causes of refusals to participate in these programmes. A key risk to this is insecurity, which appears to be worsening in some areas and has resulted in the tragic killing of health outreach workers in recent years.

Risk mitigation measures include increasing efforts to communicate about the value of UNICEF’s efforts on health and particularly on sensitive topics such as polio and immunization, including by responding promptly to public efforts to undermine these efforts. These efforts address not only the general public but also community and religious leaders in those areas that have seen heightened insecurity.

2. **Increased national capacity to provide access to essential high-impact maternal and child health interventions**

*Rationale for focusing on this output*

In many countries supply constraints are a major challenge to making progress in health results. These include critical shortages of lifesaving commodities, poorly trained and often insufficient human resources, inadequately equipped facilities and paucity of the data needed to make evidence-based decisions.

*Key areas of work on this output*

Much of the organization’s work in this area is around capacity development, while in some settings service delivery is also important. Cross-sectoral linkages are key to ensuring integrated services.

UNICEF supports numerous countries in rolling out integrated Community Case Management Programmes, a strategy to expand access to cost-effective and lifesaving treatments for children suffering from pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, especially in the most hard-to-reach areas. The core of the programme is the training and deployment of front-line community health workers who can diagnose illness and provide low-cost, simple treatments that save lives.

Robust and well-functioning vaccine delivery systems are critical for work on immunization and polio. Successful vaccination campaigns require countries to rapidly forecast, purchase and deliver large quantities of vaccine to get the right vaccines to the right place, at the right time, in the right condition, and so UNICEF provides assistance at each point along this continuum. The organization also builds capacity for supply chain management of other essential commodities, such as to reduce stock-outs of oral rehydration salts and vaccines.

The convergence of polio with routine immunization, sanitation and nutrition interventions is an example of how cross-sectoral linkages are being promoted to deliver an integrated package of services for children and their families. Cholera control is another area in which UNICEF employs an integrated strategy, particularly involving the health and water, sanitation and hygiene sectors, but also in collaboration with nutrition, education and child protection.

*Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output*

The most significant assumption underpinning this output is that a minimum level of capacity exists within governments and other partners so that capacity development efforts are not rendered useless through the absence of human resources with whom UNICEF can engage. The major risk to this is in humanitarian situations, where human resources are sometimes extremely limited and access may be constrained. Another risk in some settings is the increased emigration of skilled health personnel, who are often lured by better pay and working conditions in other countries.
To mitigate these risks, UNICEF focuses on developing the capacity of health workers at all levels, including through training and technical assistance, rather than focusing solely on the more senior cadres of health personnel. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF becomes more directly involved in providing services to address shortages of health workers.

3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up of health interventions

Rationale for focusing on this output
As noted earlier, political commitment has been critical to recent progress in health, driving increases in both domestic and international expenditure. However, there are signs that it has reached a plateau, particularly internationally, calling for renewed emphasis in this area. Additionally, enduring challenges remain in translating political commitment at national level into concrete plans and budgets at district and national levels; in finding synergies between the various initiatives within the health sector; and in ensuring that evidence-based planning and real-time monitoring take place at all levels of the health system.

Key areas of work on this output:
The primary implementation strategies in this output are capacity development and evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. Much of the organization’s investment in health systems strengthening is capacity development, such as in efforts to support countries to gather, analyse and use disaggregated data to identify barriers and bottlenecks to address the persistent health inequities among the most disadvantaged populations of women and children, particularly at district level. UNICEF also builds capacity to develop and monitor costed implementation plans for maternal, newborn and child health.

Work on policies is another key dimension of this output. UNICEF focuses its policy work on the areas that have emerged as key barriers to improving health, such as on home visits to newborns within the first week of life and the ability of community health workers to prescribe antibiotics for pneumonia. Another priority is supporting countries to ensure that 13 lifesaving commodities for maternal and child health are registered and that guidelines are in place for their use. UNICEF also advocates for and supports integration of preparedness into health and development plans and systems. In particular, the organization provides technical support to conduct thorough analyses of the risks that shocks (e.g., natural disasters and conflict) pose to the delivery of and access to health services, and also to build resilience capacity within immunization programmes.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The major assumption related to this output is that key partners are interested in developing their capacity, particularly in ways that facilitate evidence-based programming and efforts to improve the health of the most disadvantaged children. Key risks associated with this assumption are that in some cases national capacity is overstretched and so partners are unable to take on new issues, and that entrenched interests will oppose attempts to shift the focus to the most disadvantaged populations. Risk mitigation measures include supporting policy shifts to enable lower cadres of health workers to play more important roles (e.g., allowing community health workers to provide antibiotics for pneumonia) and documenting and highlighting the benefits of the approaches employed by UNICEF, so that partners can understand the benefits of focusing on disadvantaged groups.
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to prevent excess mortality among girls, boys and women in humanitarian situations

Rationale for focusing on this output
Addressing health in humanitarian situations is important because of the numerous ways that crises can endanger the health of children, as discussed earlier. Additionally, there is a major need to invest in building resilience of health systems so they are better able to cope with shocks from natural disasters, conflict, climate change or other sources.

Key areas of work on this output
In humanitarian contexts, UNICEF works with national and local counterparts and through inter-agency mechanisms to provide lifesaving health interventions and supplies to achieve UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. The organization addresses key killers of children in these settings, such as measles (through vaccinations) and malaria (through provision of treated mosquito nets and support for diagnosis of the disease in children). UNICEF also supports the development of comprehensive multi-sectoral cholera preparedness plans in countries where cholera is endemic.

Partnerships are particularly important in humanitarian settings, so UNICEF is an active participant in the global health cluster. The organization also supports the development of guidance materials on how to address key issues related to children’s health in emergencies.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
Several assumptions are necessary for the transition between these actions and the output to occur. First, because of the unpredictability of humanitarian crises, there is always a possibility that a large number will occur in rapid succession, overwhelming the organization’s ability to respond. It is assumed that this will not occur over the period 2014-2017, although this remains a risk that must be planned for. Second, coordination is a challenge in humanitarian settings, particularly in a crowded area such as health, but it is assumed that this will not worsen dramatically to the point that it completely undermines the effectiveness of interventions. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF actively supports coordination efforts around health, including by assuming responsibility for several elements areas.

5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of maternal and child health

Rationale for focusing on this output
Human rights and gender equality are foundational principles that influence all of UNICEF’s work on health. They are particularly important because significant disparities in health outcomes persist around the world. Women’s role in childbearing and child-rearing is both central to maternal and child health and survival, but also frequently a basis for gender-inequitable norms, expectations and limitations. Gender-inequitable norms and limitations are also critical to address for adolescent girls, whose pregnancies contribute significantly to high maternal and neonatal death rates. Gender and adolescent health is included as a targeted initiative in UNICEF’s Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017.

Key areas of work on this output
UNICEF regularly engages in both capacity development and evidence generation, policy dialogue, and advocacy on these issues. For example, UNICEF builds capacity of national partners to undertake gender reviews of health policies. The organization also works to strengthen realization of human rights and gender equality in the context of pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria treatment, including through capacity-building of women as front-line health workers and programme managers, and by supporting services such as
mother-to-mother support groups. UNICEF advocates for increased attention to adolescent pregnancy, including by supporting governments to develop plans and allocate budgets to address the matter.

UNICEF supports the collection and use of disaggregated data at all levels of the health system. The organization particularly emphasizes helping health systems managers to analyse this information in ways that identify disparities, with a view to addressing inequities in health outcomes.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

The main assumption that influences the likelihood of UNICEF’s actions leading to the output is that communities, national partners and donors understand the importance of focusing on human rights and gender equality in the health sector. The major risk associated with this is that there has been an increase in isolated attacks on these principles, particularly on gender equality, that could coalesce into a broader crusade against them. To address this risk, UNICEF continues to build the evidence base for the added value of addressing gender equality and the importance of using a human rights-based approach. Additionally, the organization ensures that its own staff prioritize these issues, including by providing staff with tools and regular training on these topics.

### 6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child health

**Rationale for focusing on this output**

The health sector has experienced a period of growth in recent decades with increased political commitment and funding having attracted new actors and approaches. This has increased the need for knowledge management and for sharing lessons learned between countries, as well as for implementation research on novel ways to implement and monitor health programmes. The fact that the sector is quite crowded also increases the need for global and regional coordination.

**Key areas of work on this output**

Much of the work at global and regional levels is in the form of evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. The global and regional levels are instrumental in gathering, assessing and disseminating evidence about what works in health. The organization is playing an active role in advocacy on health in the post-2015 process.

Partnerships are another important area of focus at the global and regional levels. Together with H4+ partners, UNICEF has made a global commitment to ensuring coordinated country-level support to strengthening national plans for reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, taking into account global initiatives such as the UN Commission on Life-Saving Commodities, the UN Commission on Information and Accountability, Family Planning 2020 and A Promise Renewed. UNICEF also continues to be deeply engaged in a wide range of partnerships and initiatives such as Every Woman Every Child, the GAVI Alliance, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and a number of collaborations with WHO. UNICEF supports South-South and triangular cooperation to share lessons learned and good practices on health systems strengthening and innovative monitoring of barriers and bottlenecks.

In addition, work at the global and regional levels is important for conducting implementation research on novel techniques to implement and monitor health programmes. Priorities have been identified for the period 2014-2017 each of the programme areas. Examples include: for immunization, what are the profiles of high risk communities, how do these profiles influence vaccine uptake, and what are the best strategies to identify and vaccinate such groups; for maternal and newborn health, how do maternal and perinatal death reviews contribute towards improvement in the quality of maternal and newborn care, and a randomized controlled trial on chlorhexidine for cord care; for child health, what are the best ways to build
on and strengthen existing monitoring systems to determine if the underserved are being reached through child health days; for health systems strengthening, to what extent does the district health systems strengthening approach contribute to improving equity.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The main assumption that must be made for these actions to lead to the output is that the global system of coordination and partnership does not collapse and be replaced by increased competition and rivalry. The risk that this will occur is small but it could conceivably happen as a result, for example, of a complete breakdown in the post-2015 process. Risk mitigation measures occur at both global and national levels. The organization devotes considerable resources at the global level to support the post-2015 process and UN coherence, and UNICEF country offices regularly play leadership roles within UN country teams and promote coordination among agencies at country level.

7. Narrative description for outcome 2: HIV and AIDS

[Schematic for HIV and AIDS located here.]

A. Outcome and programme areas
Considerable progress has been made across UNICEF’s areas of work on HIV and AIDS in recent years. For example, with improved access to antiretroviral treatment (ART) by pregnant women living with HIV, the number of new HIV infections in children under age 15 has continued to decline. In 2012 it reached 260,000, fewer than half the 550,000 infections in 2001. Despite this progress, expansion of access to ART by HIV-infected children has been considerably slower than the growth of coverage of ART among adults: among the 22 priority countries, only 34% of eligible children received ART in 2012, compared to 67% of adults.

In 2011, the global community and national governments committed to the “Global Plan Towards the Elimination of New HIV Infections among Children by 2015 and Keeping Their Mothers Alive”, which established a set of global, regional and country targets for reducing HIV infections in children and HIV-associated pregnancy-related deaths. UNICEF is an active partner in the Global Plan and contributes significantly to achievement of these targets, which focus on a core set of 22 priority countries.


The remaining gaps in response during the first two decades of a child’s life have informed UNICEF’s approach, which has now been reconceptualized to focus on each of these critical decades.

In the first decade of life, UNICEF concentrates on children under 5, pregnant women and mothers, contributing to the targets in the Global Plan. Although the recent reductions in new HIV infections among children are encouraging, the pace of decline must accelerate if the global target of an 85 per cent reduction in new infections is to be met. Similarly, more must be done to achieve a 50% reduction in the number of HIV-associated pregnancy-related deaths.

Gaps in five key areas are being prioritized for attention during the 2014-2017 period:

- HIV testing and treatment through antenatal and delivery services for pregnant women;
• Provision of ART to all HIV-infected pregnant and breastfeeding women to protect their own health and prevent transmission to their children and sexual partners;
• Infant HIV testing including early infant diagnosis through various entry points such as immunization clinics, nutrition rehabilitation centres, sick child clinics, early childhood development programmes, community child survival programmes and hospitals;
• Paediatric HIV treatment and care, including follow-up care for HIV-exposed uninfected infants (since HIV-exposed, uninfected children born to pregnant women with HIV are at increased risk of morbidity and mortality, optimizing the identification of HIV-exposed children through various child health platforms will be critical); and
• Voluntary medical male circumcision for infants in the 14 focus countries with high HIV prevalence and low rates of medical male circumcision.

For the second decade of a child’s life, UNICEF addresses the fact that the rate of decline of new HIV infections among adolescents has been lower than those for either adults or children under 5. The populations at higher risk of HIV exposure include adolescent girls (especially in generalized epidemics) and adolescent key populations in all epidemic types, such as adolescents boys who have sex with other males, adolescents who inject drugs and adolescents who are sexually exploited or who engage in commercial sex. Another challenge is ensuring that adolescents living with HIV receive adequate care and treatment. To respond to these issues, for 2014-2017 UNICEF is addressing gaps in the following areas:

• Promotion and provision of condoms;
• Harm reduction in adolescents who use drugs and other targeted approaches for key populations;
• Voluntary medical male circumcision for adolescents in the 14 focus countries with high HIV prevalence and low rates of medical male circumcision;
• Behaviour change communication;
• HIV testing and counselling, and prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV; and
• Antiretroviral treatment.

UNAIDS has identified 38 high-impact countries that account for the majority of new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths. As with other UNAIDS co-sponsors, UNICEF emphasizes addressing the needs of these countries. Given the ways in which humanitarian crises can accelerate the transmission of HIV and reduce access to HIV-related services, UNICEF also works to ensure the integration of HIV interventions into humanitarian action.

B. Assumptions, risk analysis and mitigation measures

The outcome is delivered through a series of six outputs. These are described in detail below but it is important to acknowledge that there are a series of assumptions that must hold true for the outputs to lead to the outcome. These assumptions are based on UNICEF’s understanding of HIV and AIDS and so are considered reasonable. However, given their importance and the fact that they are largely beyond the organization’s control, it is important to acknowledge them and also to conduct a risk analysis to understand the possible dangers should the assumptions not prove valid.

By definition, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. The consequence would be that the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or partly, such as would be reflected in underperformance in a subset of the outcome indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks associated with each assumption. UNICEF does not expect the risks articulated below to occur, but identifying them now and taking steps to prevent them is an important part
of prudent programming. It also increases the organization’s ability to contribute to the outcome. Although many factors could pose risks, only the most significant are highlighted below. The measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks are also briefly summarized.

This subsection explores the assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the causal link between outputs and the outcome. There are also assumptions, risks and mitigation measures concerning the transition between the actions that UNICEF takes and each output, but these are handled within the discussion of each output.

The major assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- **Political commitment and the accompanying resource allocation do not drop precipitously:** The increase in political commitment on HIV and AIDS over the past two decades has been a critical factor in the global community’s successes in responding to the epidemic. However, recently there have been some worrying signs that this commitment is waning, such as the plateauing of development assistance for HIV and AIDS. If political commitment were to disappear, progress would be set back dramatically, but this is unlikely.
  - **Key risks:** A new issue (e.g., a global pandemic or geopolitical conflict) arises that diverts significant attention from HIV; research emerges that investments in the response to HIV are not correlated with the progress seen on HIV.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Advocating for the continued need to invest in the HIV response, including by highlighting the continued gaps in progress on areas in which proven interventions are available (e.g., the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV); communicating with the general public and leaders about the possibilities of an AIDS-free generation, and the societal benefits of one.

- **New technology does not revolutionize the response to HIV:** The development of a highly effective new product against HIV, particularly a vaccine, would have a dramatic effect on the global response. This would be very positive news, but it would require significant adjustments to the theory of change and would likely result in considerable reorientation of the organization’s work. Unfortunately, there is not a high probability of a major breakthrough (particularly one that can be immediately used operationally) occurring over the course of the 2014-2017 period.
  - **Key risks:** Research and development efforts led to an unexpected discovery; a massive shift of resources into research and development accelerates some of the existing early stage research in a manner that facilitates rapid development of a new product.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Since this would be a welcome development, the main mitigation measure would be to support countries to prepare for the roll-out of new technologies.

- **Stigma and discrimination do not increase significantly and cripple the response to HIV:** HIV has been a stigmatized disease since it first appeared. However, considerable progress has been made in addressing it, and stigma does not now prevent the delivery of HIV services on a large scale (although it does still remain a significant problem in many settings). If stigma and discrimination were to increase dramatically around the world, they could undermine the HIV response globally.
  - **Key risks:** A major scandal related to HIV shifts global public opinion and is not effectively addressed by institutions working on HIV and governments.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Communicating regularly on the importance of using a human rights-based approach to addressing HIV; responding rapidly in the event of any scandals.
Drug resistance to antiretroviral drugs does not spread rapidly and widely: Resistance to antiretroviral drugs occurs in all settings, but generally at relatively low levels that do not hamstring efforts to provide treatment. If this were to change suddenly and the current set of antiretroviral drugs were rendered ineffective, it would be very difficult to achieve the outcome.

- **Key risks:** Adherence programmes are de-emphasized as resources become more constrained, leading to increasing resistance; a significant increase in humanitarian crises results in major disruptions to supply chains and delivery systems, leading to a major rise in intermittent drug-taking and thus resistance.

- **Key mitigation measures:** Strengthening health systems to ensure that governments and other partners have the capacity to administer and monitor ART; building capacity on supply chain management, including preparedness planning around it; advocating for continued investments in HIV to ensure adequate funding for ART and for adherence and drug resistance monitoring programmes.

### C. Outputs

The six outputs that contribute to the outcome are:

1. Enhanced support for children and caregivers for healthy behaviours related to HIV and AIDS and to use of relevant services, consistent with the UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework;
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to essential service delivery systems for scaling up HIV interventions;
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget to scale up HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment interventions;
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that vulnerability to HIV infection is not increased and HIV-related care, support and treatment needs are met in humanitarian situations;
5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of HIV and AIDS; and
6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in HIV and AIDS.

The descriptions of each output below focus on the primary implementation strategies that are being used, with brief accounts of the particular approaches being employed. Additionally, because certain assumptions must be made about the conditions necessary for UNICEF’s actions to lead to the achievement of each output, the one or two most important assumptions are discussed under each output, along with the major risks to these assumptions being borne out and the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks.

1. **Enhanced support for children and caregivers for healthy behaviours related to HIV and AIDS and to use of relevant services, consistent with the UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework**

   **Rationale for focusing on this output**

   UNICEF supports efforts to create demand for HIV services because historically HIV has been a stigmatized disease, which has the effect of reducing demand for HIV services. Additionally, because behaviour change is so important to HIV prevention, it is critical to generate demand for information and to increase willingness to change.
Key areas of work on this output

The implementation strategies used include capacity development, evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy, and use of communication for development to deliver key messages directly. Given the importance of partnership in the HIV arena and the fact that the response to the epidemic cuts across sectors, UNICEF routinely operates closely with a range of other stakeholders, including governments, civil society organizations, other international institutions and academia.

UNICEF partners with key sectors to integrate demand creation on HIV testing and counselling and interventions for HIV prevention, treatment, care and support into strategic platforms reaching adolescent girls and boys. These platforms include school health programmes and comprehensive sexuality education in the education sector; adolescent and community engagement initiatives supported through civil society; household and community systems-strengthening programmes including cash transfers and livelihood development initiatives supported through social protection programmes (with a particular focus on child-headed households, given both the role that HIV has played in orphaning children and the clear evidence that children living in child-headed households are at higher risk of HIV infection); and initiatives addressing sexual- and gender-based violence and social norms supported through the education, legal and child protection sectors.

Capacity development efforts include supporting governments and other partners to design comprehensive social behaviour change communication strategies for adolescents and youth, including the most disadvantaged (including children in child-headed households) and those from key populations. These campaigns are important ways of ensuring that adolescents and youth have access to comprehensive information about HIV and AIDS.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output

One of the key assumptions in this area is that the communities with which UNICEF is working are open to receiving information, behaviour change messages and other efforts to change sociocultural beliefs and practices that impede health-seeking behaviours. The experience to date is generally positive, with some communities having made enormous changes in behaviour in short periods of time in response to effective programming. The risk associated with this is that as improvements are seen globally with regard to HIV, communities and individuals may be less attuned to efforts to generate demand for HIV services. Efforts to mitigate this risk focus on highlighting the ongoing threats posed by HIV and AIDS, while also advocating to ensure that the disease remains visible to the general public and to key leaders.

2. *Increased national capacity to provide access to essential service delivery systems for scaling up HIV interventions*

Rationale for focusing on this output

Addressing supply constraints is a necessary part of UNICEF’s work because there are still significant bottlenecks to availability of commodities, human resources and other building blocks of service delivery, especially at district level. The effect of this is that too many children, adolescents, pregnant women and mothers who come to facilities seeking services them leave empty handed, without information or life-saving commodities such as ART.

Key areas of work on this output

UNICEF uses multiple strategies to address supply. For example, the organization provides guidance and support in the implementation of task-shifting and -sharing to increase the involvement of non-physicians in the delivery of ART, including by involving communities to address human resources constraints.
Guidance, tools and technical support are provided for areas such as integrating HIV services (including HIV testing and counselling and ART for prevention of mother-to-child transmission and for ongoing treatment of mothers) into maternal health services, and ensuring that provider-initiated testing and counselling is done in a manner that is sensitive to the specific needs of adolescent girls and boys. UNICEF supports countries to scale up voluntary medical male circumcision, particularly the 14 global focus countries that have high HIV prevalence and low medical male circumcision rates.

Given how rapidly the HIV field is changing, priority is also being given to identifying and introducing innovations. One example of this is providing technical support to countries for strategic scale-up of early infant diagnosis, including through the introduction of new point-of-care technologies.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The most significant assumption underpinning this output is that a minimum level of capacity exists within governments and other partners so that capacity development efforts are not rendered useless through the absence of human resources with whom UNICEF can engage. The major risk to this is in humanitarian situations, where human resources are sometimes extremely limited. Poor coordination in the sector is another risk, as it results in inefficiencies that weaken capacity in some settings.

To address capacity constraints, UNICEF continues to support efforts to mainstream the HIV response and ensure that staff throughout the health system and in other sectors are trained and equipped to address HIV, rather than relying solely on specialists. To support coordination, UNICEF is an active co-sponsor of UNAIDS and works collaboratively with partners on joint programming.

3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget to scale up HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment interventions

Rationale for focusing on this output
As noted earlier, political commitment has been instrumental in the advances made in responding to HIV, and without it there is considerable concern that progress would lag significantly. This is why UNICEF places great emphasis on improving the enabling environment for HIV. The current moment is particularly critical because international assistance for HIV services is not keeping pace with the rising need, meaning both that further advocacy efforts are needed globally and that programme countries need to be supported to increase domestic budgetary allocations and to become more efficient in delivering HIV services.

Key areas of work on this output
Over the course of 2014-2017, UNICEF will significantly increase its efforts to advocate for and support improved reporting of disaggregated data on adolescents, including key populations. The organization will also support countries to plan and set targets for a more holistic response to HIV and adolescents that combines scale-up of high-impact interventions with community engagement, legal and policy work, and leverage of synergistic sectors including education, child protection and social inclusion. This will include supporting governments to develop national HIV/AIDS strategies that include evidence-based approaches to addressing HIV among adolescents. Governments will also be aided in developing national policies to ensure that upper primary schools include comprehensive sexuality education and life skills-based HIV education.

UNICEF continues to apply the MoRES approach to the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to paediatric HIV care and treatment in order to identify and monitor key barriers and bottlenecks and to assist in building local capacity to analyse and use data for decision-making. Special attention is being paid to addressing key bottlenecks around task-shifting and -sharing, stigma, discrimination and
gender, and the specific needs of children. Support is also being provided to review national policies, strategies and related laws to ensure an enabling environment.

UNICEF National Committees continue to be important champions and influencers of the AIDS response, both through advocacy with their governments and through their significant fundraising efforts. UNICEF will also play a more active role in supporting resource mobilization for children and AIDS through large funding mechanisms such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The major assumption related to this output is that there will not be a significant increase in opposition to identifying the needs of adolescents (including key populations) through better data and using data to understand and ultimately address barriers and bottlenecks to improving service delivery. The major risk associated with this assumption is that entrenched interests will oppose the generation and use of this kind of evidence, as it might result in a shift of resources away from these interests. To mitigate these risks, UNICEF advocates with governments concerning the needs of adolescents, including by facilitating the involvement of adolescents in decision-making forums. Additionally, the organization builds capacity in its partners around evidence generation and use.

4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that vulnerability to HIV infection is not increased and HIV-related care, support and treatment needs are met in humanitarian situations

Rationale for focusing on this output
UNICEF focuses on humanitarian situations in its HIV work for a number of reasons. Humanitarian crises create significant difficulties for the delivery of HIV services, particularly because successful use of ART requires reliable supply chains to deliver drugs and monitor treatment. Reduced psychosocial support, malnutrition and increased vulnerability to infection are all threats to children living with HIV, while food insecurity, poverty and issues related to protection can exacerbate risks and vulnerabilities, particularly for adolescent girls and women. Additionally, emergencies can contribute to the spread of HIV as populations are displaced and lose access to preventive technologies, and also as women and girls are put at increased risk of infection through sexual violence.

Key areas of work on this output
There is not a special set of HIV interventions during a crisis; the same services need to be delivered, so it is the delivery mechanisms that need to be adjusted and adapted to the new context. Therefore, the primary implementation strategy used by UNICEF is evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. For example, advocacy is crucial to ensure that all sectors and clusters include HIV-related interventions in humanitarian action. HIV-infected individuals face a number of specific risks in humanitarian situations, so the organization is also developing tools to help guide countries in planning and implementing risk-informed humanitarian programmes. Recommendations for integrating prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and paediatric HIV care and treatment in emergencies will be provided to help ensure continuity of programmes in the wake of a shock.

UNICEF also works to strengthen country capacity for programming for resilience and provision of a minimum package for HIV prevention and treatment for adolescents in emergencies or post-emergency settings. Addressing the needs of child-headed households is a particular focus in these contexts.
Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
Several assumptions are necessary for the transition between these actions and the output to occur. First, because of the unpredictability of humanitarian crises, there is always a possibility that a large number will occur in rapid succession, overwhelming the organization’s ability to respond. It is assumed that this will not occur over the period 2014-2017, although this remains a risk that must be planned for. Second, for HIV to be incorporated into the work of all clusters, functioning coordination mechanisms must exist. Coordination is sometimes a challenge in humanitarian settings, but it is assumed that this will not worsen dramatically to the point that it completely undermines the organization’s ability to engage with the various clusters on the delivery of HIV services. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF plays an active role in the cluster coordination system.

5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of HIV and AIDS

Rationale for focusing on this output
Since the emergence of HIV, stigma and discrimination have been major challenges, and therefore a rights-based and gender-sensitive approach is at the heart of all of UNICEF’s work on HIV. The epidemic has become increasingly feminized over time, another reason why UNICEF focuses on this output.

Key areas of work on this output
In its programming, UNICEF puts a strong emphasis on ensuring equal access for women and girls to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support programmes and integrated sexual and reproductive health and HIV services. Because of the direct links between HIV infection and violence against women and girls, the organization advocates strongly on this issue. UNICEF also encourages the engagement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality in the context of HIV and AIDS, and engages with communities to help transform social norms that foster discrimination and inequality on the basis of gender and sexuality. UNICEF’s Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017, prioritizes gender inequality as it affects prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

The work described earlier on supporting countries to disaggregate data is also important for this output, since identifying patterns of disadvantage and discrimination is a critical first step to addressing them. UNICEF also assists countries to conduct gender reviews of national HIV/AIDS strategies and policies.

In adolescent girls the epidemic reflects the strong combined impact of gender and income inequality, early sexual debut, age-disparate sexual relationships and the heightened biological vulnerability of adolescent girls. Adolescents exploited by the sex industry are particularly invisible. Therefore cross-sectoral linkages are very important, especially with child protection and social inclusion.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The main assumptions that influence the likelihood of UNICEF’s actions leading to the output are that communities, national partners and donors understand the importance of continuing to focus on gender equality and human rights even as stigma and discrimination have become less common. The main risk associated with this is that, because stigma and discrimination have dropped in many parts of the world, key stakeholders will grow less aware of the central role that gender equality and human rights must play in the HIV response. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF documents and publicizes the impact that stigma and discrimination have on children, particularly those with HIV.
6. *Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in HIV and AIDS*

**Rationale for focusing on this output**

HIV is a very crowded field, which requires a high level of coordination and necessitates engagement at global and regional levels as well as at country level. Additionally, the response to HIV evolves very rapidly, which increases the need for good knowledge management and rapid reviews of emerging evidence.

**Key areas of work on this output**

UNICEF is a UNAIDS co-sponsor, and within the co-sponsors takes leadership roles as a co-convenor on programming around the elimination of mother-to-child transmission in the first decade of childhood and on adolescents and HIV in the second decade of a child’s life. In addition, UNICEF also co-convenes the social protection, care and support working group.

Another key element of UNICEF’s work at global and regional levels is evidence generation. The organization is active in developing international guidelines and writing articles for influential peer-reviewed journals, which contributes to improving action at the country level. Similarly, UNICEF’s ability to gather and distribute the best evidence on children and AIDS also supports the achievement of results at all levels. This entails synthesizing, translating and disseminating the latest scientific and programmatic evidence and innovations to various audiences through diverse platforms (e.g., webinars, social media, communities of practice) with a specific focus on South-to-South exchanges. For the period 2014-2017, research priorities include questions such as what are the best mechanisms for integration of HIV and maternal, newborn, and child health services; what are the best interventions to support the implementation of the new WHO infant feeding recommendations; and what are the best ways to reach most-at-risk adolescents with highly effective HIV prevention interventions.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

The main assumption that must be made for these actions to result in the output is that the existing global system of coordination and partnership, particularly UNAIDS, continues to function. The main risk to this is that the post-2015 development agenda ends up deprioritising HIV to the extent that a reconfiguration of the coordination mechanisms is necessary. Risk mitigation measures occur at both global and national levels. The organization devotes considerable resources at global level to support the post-2015 process and UN coherence, and UNICEF country offices have leadership roles on UN country teams and promote coordination among agencies at the country level.

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8. **Narrative description for outcome 3: Water, sanitation, and hygiene**

[Schematic for water, sanitation, and hygiene located here.]

**A. Outcome and programme areas**

Globally, significant progress has been made to increase access to water and sanitation during the MDG era. Over the last two decades more than 2 billion people gained access to safe drinking water and 1.8 billion to improved sanitation. However, 768 million people still lack access to drinking water, and questions remain about both the sustainability and the safety of drinking water supplies. Of great concern is the fact that the world is unlikely to meet the MDG target for sanitation; around 2.5 billion people do not
use improved sanitation facilities and over 1 billion practise open defecation. Notably, many countries in Africa are unlikely to meet the MDG targets for either water or sanitation.

Furthermore, there are substantial disparities in access both within countries and between regions. Significant rural-urban disparities are evident in both sanitation and drinking-water access. Inequity is also highly visible when the data are disaggregated into wealth quintiles. Perhaps of most concern is the limited and uneven progress in the poorest countries. For example, in the 48 countries designated as “least developed” by the UN, nearly one quarter of the population practises open defecation and 10% relies on surface water for drinking and cooking purposes.

WASH contributes to UNICEF’s mandate to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. Not only is access to safe drinking water and sanitation a human right, but WASH interventions make significant contributions to reducing preventable child deaths and undernutrition, helping girls and boys realize their right to education, reducing the burden – particularly on women and girls – of fetching water, ensuring dignity, and preventing gender-based violence associated with inadequate access to water and sanitation.

**Outcome for the 2014-2017 period: Improved and equitable use of safe drinking water, sanitation and healthy environments, and improved hygiene practices.**

To accomplish this outcome, UNICEF is focusing on delivering results in five programme areas:

- Water supply;
- Sanitation;
- Hygiene;
- WASH in schools and early childhood development centres; and
- WASH in humanitarian situations.

**Rationale for focusing on these programme areas**

Addressing water supply is necessary to address the needs of the 768 million people who still lack access to safe drinking water. Of particular concern is the inequity in access to improved drinking water. For example, just 29% of the rural population has access to piped water on premises compared to 80% of the urban population. In total, 83% of the population lacking access to safe drinking water lives in rural areas. Bringing water near households has a number of benefits across multiple sectors, including increasing productivity (particularly for women) and school attendance (especially among girls), with economic benefits for the household and the community.

The second area of sanitation has been prioritized because of the lagging progress in this area; as noted above, the MDG target for sanitation is unlikely to be achieved. Adequate sanitation is important as a basic right and also for its considerable health and nutrition benefits, as sanitation reduces diarrhoeal and other faecal-oral disease. As with drinking water, there are significant inequities related to sanitation. Globally, 47% of the rural population uses improved sanitation, compared to 80% of the urban population. An analysis of 35 sub-Saharan African countries revealed that in urban areas more than 90% of the richest quintile use improved sanitation whereas for the poorest quintile in rural areas open defecation is practised by more than 60% of households.

UNICEF is focusing on hygiene particularly because of the importance of hand-washing in preventing child mortality. Hand-washing with soap is proven to be a cost-effective intervention that can reduce the incidence of diarrhoea by 40% and acute respiratory infections by around 20%, thereby addressing two major causes of death among children under 5.
These three areas are mutually complementary, so investing in a combination of water, sanitation and hygiene interventions provides the greatest health benefits. Therefore, the two other areas of programmatic focus for 2014-2017 aim to bring a package of interventions to two key settings: schools and emergencies.

UNICEF is committed to ensuring that all children have the opportunity to go to a school with access to safe water, child-friendly sanitation facilities and hygiene education. WASH in schools plays a key role in improving education (particularly girls’ education, as a result of the link to menstrual hygiene management) and health outcomes.

WASH is lifesaving and an immediate priority in responding to humanitarian situations, and UNICEF’s commitments are clearly stated in the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. Effective and efficient delivery of WASH services contributes significantly to other sectoral interventions and to the success or failure of both emergency and WASH programmes generally.

B. Assumptions, risk analysis and mitigation measures

The outcome is delivered through a series of six outputs. These are described in detail below but it is important to acknowledge that there are a series of assumptions that must hold true for the outputs to lead to the outcome. These assumptions are based on UNICEF’s understanding of the WASH sector and so are considered reasonable. However, given their importance and the fact that they are largely beyond the organization’s control, it is important to acknowledge them and also to conduct a risk analysis to understand the possible dangers should the assumptions not prove valid.

By definition, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. The consequence would be that the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or partly, such as would be reflected in underperformance in a subset of the outcome indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks associated with each assumption. UNICEF does not expect the risks articulated below to occur, but identifying them now and taking steps to prevent them is an important part of prudent programming. It also increases the organization’s ability to contribute to the outcome. Although many factors could pose risks, only the most significant are highlighted below. The measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks are also briefly summarized.

This subsection explores the assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the causal link between outputs and the outcome. There are also assumptions, risks and mitigation measures concerning the transition between the actions that UNICEF takes and each output, but these are handled within the discussion of each output.

The major assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- **Government capacity, including financial and human resources, and political commitment are adequate to deliver and sustain WASH services:** Successful delivery of WASH services requires government capacity and political commitment. If the existing resources deployed to WASH services were suddenly withdrawn, the sector would face a major crisis and be unable to achieve the outcome. Fortunately, this appears unlikely.
  - **Key risks:** A new threat (e.g., a global pandemic, geopolitical conflict) arises that diverts significant resources from WASH; multiple humanitarian crises in rapid succession overstretch capacity to respond; the spread of a new water-borne pathogen dramatically increases the need for WASH services, and existing capacity is insufficient.
Key mitigation measures: Advocating for the continued importance of WASH; building capacity to prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises; strengthening systems to monitor the emergence of new water-borne diseases.

The enabling environment provides the necessary conditions for service providers (private and/or public) to deliver cost-effective WASH services: The service providers that deliver WASH services (from both the public and the private sectors) must be able to operate effectively in order to achieve the outcome. The enabling environments within which these service providers operate have not generally prevented the delivery of services, and this is not expected to change over the course of 2014-2017.

Key risks: A major scandal related to the delivery of WASH services leads to a global proliferation of efforts to restrict the sector’s work.

Key mitigation measures: Supporting governments to develop or revise policies and regulations that facilitate the provision of WASH services; responding rapidly in the event of emerging issues that could turn into scandals.

Delivering services to disadvantaged populations is given funding priority: As noted above, inequity is significant in access to WASH services, so resources must be devoted proactively to disadvantaged populations. Experience in the sector suggests that this prioritization will be widely embraced.

Key risks: Entrenched interests become threatened by the emphasis on the most disadvantaged groups and so devote resources to oppose it; as urbanization increases, resources and political attention shift away from rural areas.

Key mitigation measures: Continuing to document the effects of poor access to WASH services on the disadvantaged; building the evidence base on the social and individual benefits of providing WASH services to disadvantaged populations; advocating for an approach that balances the needs of both rural and urban populations.

C. Outputs

The six outputs that contribute to the outcome are:

1. Enhanced support for children and families leading to sustained use of safe drinking water, adoption of adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices;
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to sustainable safe drinking water and adequate sanitation;
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up of interventions to promote safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices;
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that girls, boys and women have protected and reliable access to sufficient safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in humanitarian situations;
5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of water, sanitation and hygiene practices; and
6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in safe water, sanitation and hygiene practices.

The descriptions of each output below focus on the primary implementation strategies that are being used, with brief accounts of the particular approaches being employed. Additionally, because certain assumptions must be made about the conditions necessary for UNICEF’s actions to lead to the achievement of each
output, the one or two most important assumptions are discussed under each output, along with the major risks to these assumptions being borne out and the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks.

1. **Enhanced support for children and families leading to sustained use of safe drinking water, adoption of adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices**

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
Addressing demand for services is a key pillar of UNICEF’s WASH strategy because the lack of information about key aspects of WASH (e.g., the benefits of hand-washing with soap) is an impediment to scaling up services and because the engagement of communities is critical to ensuring sustainable solutions to water delivery and sanitation systems. The End-of-Cycle Review validated this approach, affirming the strong results emerging from the shift to demand-based sanitation approaches through UNICEF’s Community Approaches to Total Sanitation.

**Key areas of work on this output**
UNICEF uses several implementation strategies to address demand, particularly capacity development and evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy.

One of the shifts introduced in 2014-2017 is a focus on community-based water safety plans, which will help guide water suppliers, including communities, in assessing and managing the risks of water contamination. The introduction of these plans will necessitate considerable investment in building capacity across multiple levels, beginning with national governments, which have important roles to play in the adoption of the approach. Strategies for promoting and supporting water safety planning at community level are less well developed than those in other areas, so UNICEF will collaborate closely with partners such as WHO in this area, as well as devote resources to capturing lessons learned.

Another focus for 2014-2017 is on national hand-washing behaviour change communication programmes. UNICEF works closely with partners to develop these, and in some settings it utilizes its expertise in communication for development to contribute to implementing them by employing approaches such as social mobilization, social marketing and community participation.

Finally, the Community Approaches to Total Sanitation is continuing to be scaled up as a means of generating increased demand for open defecation free communities.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**
One of the key assumptions in this area is that the communities with which UNICEF is working are open to receiving information, behaviour change messages and other efforts to change sociocultural beliefs and practices. Strategies like Community Approaches to Total Sanitation have been well received to date, but there is always a risk that other issues (e.g., geopolitical conflict, the spread of a new disease) could divert focus from WASH, making communities less responsive. Another assumption is that important stakeholders will be receptive to the new focus on water safety planning. Key partners have been quite engaged thus far, suggesting that this is unlikely, but because it is a new topic there is a risk, and UNICEF itself is still developing its own internal capacity in the area. The major risk mitigation approach employed in this area is advocacy, with UNICEF working with communities, leaders and other partners to ensure that the importance of WASH, and particularly of new issues like water safety planning, is adequately understood.
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to sustainable safe drinking water and adequate sanitation

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
Supply is a major element of UNICEF’s work in WASH for a number of reasons. The organization focuses on this because supply – and particularly sustainable supply – is often a major bottleneck in providing access to safe drinking water. Improved water supply facilitates hygiene by providing readily available water for hand-washing and reduces consumption of contaminated drinking water.

**Key areas of work on this output**
The focus of the organization’s work on supply is shifting the emphasis from direct service delivery to capacity development. Therefore, over the 2014-2017 period the organization will support governments to take important steps such as implementing national strategies to eliminate open defecation and establishing targets for providing access to drinking water among disadvantaged populations.

WASH in School programming addresses another important aspect of supply by focusing on expanding the availability of WASH services in educational settings, including by improving menstrual hygiene management and using the new Three Star Approach, which aims to improve hygiene behaviour change programmes for children. Partnerships are key to the success of the WASH in School approach, and so UNICEF leads the growing WASH in Schools network, which has seen more than 70 organizations sign on to its flagship publication.

UNICEF experience with WASH in Schools programming is also being used to inform the expansion of support to other institutional WASH service delivery programmes, especially in health and early childhood development centres.

Innovation is another important implementation strategy in this area. The organization has recently supported several innovative technologies and processes at various points in the innovation cycle. This has included field testing of an on-site chlorine production unit for emergency situations and research into the development of a real-time bacteriological water quality test unit.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**
The most significant assumption underpinning this output is that a minimum level of capacity exists within governments and other partners so that capacity development efforts are not rendered useless through the absence of human resources with whom UNICEF can engage. The major risk to this is in humanitarian situations, where human resources are sometimes extremely limited. Poor coordination in the sector is another risk, as it results in inefficiencies that weaken capacity in some settings. To mitigate these risks, UNICEF works on sustainable approaches to capacity development and builds resilience to facilitate addressing humanitarian crises. In humanitarian situations, UNICEF also becomes more directly involved in the provision of services to address the shortages of skilled personnel.

3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up of interventions to promote safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and good hygiene practices

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
One of the key reasons that UNICEF places considerable emphasis on improving the enabling environment is that the WASH sector is chronically underfunded, so the organization has an important role to play in bringing attention and resources to it. Additionally, because many new WASH approaches are regularly
being tried (such as water safety planning) and because there are significant opportunities to improve the effectiveness of existing approaches (such as with behaviour change communication for hygiene), strategies and policies need regular adjustment to reflect the latest evidence about what works.

**Key areas of work on this output**

The primary implementation strategy in this output is evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. Sustainability has emerged as a key concern in water supply, so UNICEF is working to improve planning in this area, particularly through the use of “Sustainability Compacts” that identify explicit commitments for sustainability among key stakeholders. Another focus is on building climate resilience into WASH sector plans, given that climate change is emerging as a major long-term threat to improving WASH outcomes.

Advocacy is essential in this output, as the WASH sector suffers from insufficient funding and does not always receive the political support necessary to ensure adequate resource allocation. Knowledge management is also relevant in this output, particularly because the large number of sector partners coupled with weak coordination has led to a scattered and poorly documented knowledge base on WASH programming. Therefore UNICEF is focusing on building a high-quality and accessible knowledge base on WASH programming.

Another implementation strategy with a role to play in this output is partnerships. For example, collaboration with the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) partnership is an important component of UNICEF’s work in this area, given SWA’s mandate to improve commitment and accountability at the national level.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

The major assumption related to this output is that government and sector partners incorporate newly generated evidence about what works into sector plans and then operationalize these plans, particularly in ways that prioritize delivery of WASH services to disadvantaged populations. The major risks to this are insufficient political commitment to making these changes and insufficient capacity to implement the laws and policies that have been formulated. The main way these risks are mitigated is advocacy, both to emphasize the importance of evidence-based decision-making and to generate and maintain political commitment.

4. *Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that girls, boys and women have protected and reliable access to sufficient safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in humanitarian situations*

**Rationale for focusing on this output**

UNICEF focuses on this output because, as discussed earlier, WASH services are critical in humanitarian settings. Access to WASH services can literally make the difference between life and death for children caught in emergencies.

**Key areas of work on this output**

UNICEF’s work in this area is guided by the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, and so spans the continuum from preparedness to response to early recovery. With the increasing complexity, size and frequency of humanitarian crises, UNICEF, in partnership with sector partners, academia, civil society and the private sector has adopted a risk-informed and intersectoral approach to programme implementation to ensure an increased country capacity and delivery of improved WASH services for girls, boys and women, especially the disadvantaged, during humanitarian situations, in order to prevent and reduce sickness and deaths due to sanitation-related diseases.
UNICEF also ensures that these efforts are carried out in coordination with non-emergency capacity development initiatives, including efforts to improve governance and sector reform and promote resilience.

As the global WASH cluster lead agency, UNICEF places considerable emphasis on coordination and engagement with the range of partners providing WASH services in emergencies. Capacity development is also important in this output, with a particular focus on strengthening preparedness, so that WASH systems can respond more effectively in the event of a crisis.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output

Several assumptions are necessary for the transition between these actions and the output to occur. First, because of the unpredictability of humanitarian crises, there is always a possibility that a large number will occur in rapid succession, overwhelming the organization’s ability to respond. It is assumed that this will not occur over the period 2014-2017, although this remains a risk that must be planned for. Second, coordination is a challenge in humanitarian settings, particularly in a crowded area such as WASH, but it is assumed that coordination problems will not worsen dramatically to the point that they completely undermine the effectiveness of interventions. To address these risks, UNICEF emphasizes building resilience to strengthen the capacity to cope with challenges, and in the event of a crisis the organization plays an active role in coordination by serving as the cluster lead for WASH.

5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of water, sanitation and hygiene practices

Rationale for focusing on this output

This output reflects the cross-cutting work that UNICEF does around gender equality and rights in the context of WASH services. Security, privacy, accessibility and rights issues related to the location and design of water and sanitation facilities is an area requiring special attention, given what has been learned about the ways in which design issues can either facilitate or reduce discrimination and violence against women. Similarly, the design of facilities and hygiene education programmes must take into account menstrual hygiene. Both gender-based violence in emergencies and menstrual hygiene management are prioritized in UNICEF’s Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017.

Key areas of work on this output

To address this, UNICEF is taking a number of concrete steps. Within UNICEF programmes, gender analyses will be carried out at the beginning of the programme and after five years of implementation. All UNICEF-supported programmes will ensure that women and men have equal voices in decision-making bodies at community and district levels, as well as equal access to training opportunities. The organization is also increasing its efforts to support countries to implement menstrual hygiene management in WASH programmes. UNICEF supports countries to develop or strengthen equity monitoring frameworks at national levels.

In an example of cross-sectoral work, the organization focuses on ensuring that good health and hygiene practices are taught to both girls and boys as mandatory subjects in schools and that school sanitation facilities are designed as friendly for boys and girls and are separated, with girls’ needs for menstrual hygiene management specifically addressed.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output

The main assumptions that influence the likelihood of UNICEF’s actions leading to the output are that communities, national partners and donors understand the human rights approach and gender mainstreaming imperatives for sustained WASH outcomes, and that evidence and disaggregated data on
WASH are available to help identify the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach communities. The risk associated with the first assumption is that there has been an increase in isolated attacks on these principles – particularly on gender equality – that could coalesce into a broader crusade against them. The major risk associated with the second assumption concerns the capacity to collect and analyse disaggregated data. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF devotes considerable energy to generating disaggregated data, both through its own systems and by building capacity in partners.

6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in safe water, sanitation and hygiene practices

Rationale for focusing on this output
There are two main reasons why UNICEF complements its national level work with global and regional activities. First, the sector needs to increase political commitment and resource allocation. Second, given the large number of actors working on WASH services, it is challenging for those at national level to obtain an adequate overview of the state of knowledge in the WASH sector, including the latest evidence to support and guide WASH programming, without support from global and regional levels. Additionally, the Strategic Plan period spans the period of preparing the post-2015 development agenda, in which UNICEF’s advocacy on WASH is important for raising the profile of the issue.

Key areas of work on this output
Much of the work at global and regional levels consists of evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. This includes areas such as building a high quality and accessible knowledge base on WASH programming and ensuring that it is regularly updated with the latest evidence; developing strategies for responding to the growing challenges to water resources and the environment posed by global climate change, environmental degradation, and urbanization; and advocating for additional resources for the sector. UNICEF also disseminates information on WASH to the global community of stakeholders by publishing findings from its experience and approaches, including in peer-reviewed journals. For the period 2014-2017, the organization has identified a number of key research priorities for WASH, including investigating the cost-effectiveness of alternative management models to the prevailing community-based management system (including examining the greater involvement of local government and the private sector), understanding ways to ensure the sustainability of behaviour change with regard to sanitation and hand-washing, and identifying strategies for developing community-level water safety plans and seeking to build the evidence base with regard to impact of these plans on health and other outcomes.

Partnerships are another major focus at global and regional levels. UNICEF continues to participate in and support mechanisms for global action on WASH such as Sanitation and Water for All, the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, the Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water, UN-Water, the Global Framework for Action on Sanitation and Water Supply and the UN Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation.

The global and regional levels are also quite important for strengthening cross-sectoral linkages. In addition to the connections already mentioned around education and health, other examples of linkages include collaboration with partners to better understand the relationships between WASH and nutrition, and work under way on WASH and social safety nets and social inclusion.

UNICEF also makes use of the existing South-South networking to gather information and disseminate good practices in the WASH sector as well as to promote horizontal learning and information exchanges.
Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The main assumption that must be made for these actions to lead to the output is that the global system of coordination and partnership does not collapse and be replaced by increased competition and rivalry. The risk that this will occur is small but it could conceivably happen as a result, for example, of a complete breakdown in the post-2015 process. Risk mitigation measures occur at both global and national levels. The organization devotes considerable resources at the global level to support the post-2015 process and UN coherence, and UNICEF country offices regularly play leadership roles within UN country teams and promote coordination among agencies at country level.

9. Narrative description for outcome 4: Nutrition
[Schematic for nutrition located here.]

A. Outcome and programme areas
UNICEF’s work in nutrition is critical to achieving the organization’s goals, given that undernutrition contributes to almost half of child deaths globally, especially afflicting the most vulnerable children and communities in programme countries. Globally, 162 million children under 5 were stunted in 2012, representing a global stunting prevalence of 25%. Furthermore, 51 million children under 5 were wasted in 2012. Across regions with available data, stunting prevalence remains higher in the poorest households. Micronutrient deficiencies (including vitamin A, iron, iodine, zinc and folic acid) are common among women and children: 25% of children aged 6-59 months globally do not receive full coverage of vitamin A, and a similar fraction do not benefit from iodized salt.

This is an ideal moment to focus on nutrition because the global nutrition landscape has undergone unprecedented change in recent years and has reached consensus on a number of key issues. First, there is increased recognition of the importance of investing in reducing stunting, given its critical link to child development as well as national development. Stunting has been endorsed as a key indicator for monitoring maternal, infant and young child nutrition by the World Health Assembly.

Second, there is greater understanding of the short-term and long-term consequences of undernutrition in all its forms, especially during the critical period of vulnerability (the first 1,000 days of life) between pregnancy and a child’s second birthday, at which point such deficits are potentially irreversible.

Third, sophisticated estimates of the cost and cost-benefit of different interventions are now guiding the delivery of key interventions at scale to address undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies during the first 1,000 days.

Fourth, greater consensus supports adoption of multisectoral approaches that are both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive to bring about a more holistic and sustainable response to improving child nutrition.

Outcome for the 2014-2017 period: Improved and equitable use of nutritional support and improved nutrition and care practices.

To accomplish this outcome, UNICEF is focusing on delivering results in five programme areas:

- Infant and young child nutrition;
- Micronutrients;
• Nutrition and HIV;
• Community management of acute malnutrition; and
• Nutrition in humanitarian situations.

Rationale for focusing on these programme areas
The first 1000 days of a child’s life represent a critical window. The long-term effects of stunting have become increasingly clear, but this fact has not been systematically incorporated into national policies, let alone into the training and practice of front-line staff and community health workers. Moreover, communities and families are often unaware of the importance of ensuring better nutritional status during this period of a child’s life.

Adequate micronutrient status in women of reproductive age, pregnant women and children improves the health of expectant mothers and the growth, development and survival of their children. However, micronutrient deficiencies are still common, and although the reach of supplementation and fortification programmes has expanded, they still do not cover all those in need. The challenges are particularly acute among the most disadvantaged communities, so a special push on reaching them must be made.

Mothers living with HIV and HIV-exposed infants are more prone to undernutrition due to factors such as increased energy requirements, loss of appetite and reduced capacity to metabolize food. At the same time, nutrition is critical in boosting the immune system to fight the virus. Adding to the complexity of this area is the fact that policies, guidance and information provided to mothers needs to reflect both the local availability of HIV-related services and culturally acceptable practices.

Severe acute malnutrition is a major threat to child survival in both humanitarian and development settings. Community-based approaches to it are an innovative means to increase access to quality treatment and mitigate the risks to nutritionally vulnerable populations such as children exposed to HIV, and so they are an important element of UNICEF’s overall approach to nutrition. To reduce the global burden of acute malnutrition there is a growing need to focus on prevention by strengthening the continuum of care and multisectoral coordination.

Children are among the most vulnerable people in the event of humanitarian crises, with those in the first 1,000 days of life at particular risk of malnutrition. Addressing this is a pressing priority in responding to most emergencies, and UNICEF’s commitment is are clearly stated in the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action.

B. Assumptions, risk analysis and mitigation measures
The outcome is delivered through a series of six outputs. These are described in detail below but it is important to acknowledge that there are a series of assumptions that must hold true for the outputs to lead to the outcome. These assumptions are based on UNICEF’s understanding of the nutrition sector and so are considered reasonable. However, given their importance and the fact that they are largely beyond the organization’s control, it is important to acknowledge them and also to conduct a risk analysis to understand the possible dangers should the assumptions not prove valid.

By definition, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. The consequence would be that the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or partly, such as would be reflected in underperformance in a subset of the outcome indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks associated with each assumption. UNICEF does not expect the risks articulated below to occur, but identifying them now and taking steps to prevent them is an important part
of prudent programming. It also increases the organization’s ability to contribute to the outcome. Although many factors could pose risks, only the most significant are highlighted below. The measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks are also briefly summarized.

This subsection explores the assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the causal link between outputs and the outcome. There are also assumptions, risks and mitigation measures concerning the transition between the actions that UNICEF takes and each output, but these are handled within the discussion of each output.

The major assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- **Political leaders will continue to promote and support efforts to scale up nutrition and improve equity:** Successful delivery of nutrition programming requires political commitment, both in the form of visible leadership and through the allocation of resources. Historically the sector has been able to count on this support, although there is no guarantee that it will continue, particularly with regard to prioritising disadvantaged children.
  - **Key risks:** A new issue (e.g., a global pandemic, geopolitical conflict) arises that diverts significant resources from nutrition; a major scandal occurs concerning child supplementation and/or fortification; vested interests unite to oppose shifting to focus more on the disadvantaged.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Advocating for the continued importance of nutrition, including by highlighting the increasing consensus around addressing stunting; regularly monitoring new developments concerning supplementation and fortification, and responding rapidly to emerging issues with them.

- **Global food prices do not increase dramatically:** Globalization has contributed to the increased commodification of food and has facilitated global movements in the prices of key products, to the extent that global swings in the prices of grains and other foods now occur regularly. Some fluctuations are expected over the course of 2014-2017, and likely will have adverse consequences on nutrition, particularly among disadvantaged communities. However, massive and sustained spikes in the prices of key products are not expected.
  - **Key risks:** Significantly increased speculation on food in the financial markets; simultaneous and prolonged droughts in major producing countries (e.g., as a result of climate change).
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Building the resilience of communities and families to cope with shocks; partnering with the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization and other partners to assess and address the impact on children from swings in agricultural pricing.

- **The number of humanitarian crises remains limited:** As noted above, humanitarian crises can have significant impacts on the nutritional status of children. The international community often plays an important role in addressing nutrition in the event of an emergency, but this support is subject to capacity limitations. Thus a dramatic increase in the number of severe humanitarian situations would pose significant challenges to the ability of the international community to respond.
  - **Key risks:** The frequency of severe weather events increases significantly (e.g., because of climate change); large-scale geopolitical conflict breaks out; efforts to build resilience do not succeed.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Developing the capacity of partners to plan for and respond to humanitarian crises, including through training and technical assistance; building the resilience of communities and families to cope with shocks.
C. Outputs

The six outputs that contribute to the outcome are:

1. Enhanced support for children, caregivers and communities for improved nutrition and care practices;
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to nutrition interventions;
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up nutrition interventions;
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure protection of the nutritional status of girls, boys and women from the effects of humanitarian situations;
5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of nutrition; and
6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child nutrition.

The descriptions of each output below focus on the primary implementation strategies that are being used, with brief accounts of the particular approaches being employed. Additionally, because certain assumptions must be made about the conditions necessary for UNICEF’s actions to lead to the achievement of each output, the one or two most important assumptions are discussed under each output, along with the major risks to these assumptions being borne out and the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks.

1. **Enhanced support for children, caregivers and communities for improved nutrition and care practices**

   **Rationale for focusing on this output**

   Focusing on knowledge, behaviour change and participation is critical to achieving success in nutrition, as inadequate care and feeding practices, especially in the first 1,000 days of a child’s life, are key underlying causes of undernutrition. For example, late initiation and non-exclusive breastfeeding and inadequate, inappropriate, unsafe and untimely introduction of complementary foods are key bottlenecks.

   **Key areas of work on this output**

   Empowering and supporting children, caregivers and communities to improve care and feeding practices typically leads to healthier, better-nourished children. Based on formative research on the bottlenecks to and facilitators of good nutrition, communities’ and families’ knowledge, behaviours and sociocultural beliefs and practices related to infant and young child nutrition are addressed through implementation of comprehensive strategies for social and behaviour change communication, with a focus on women, who tend to be the primary caregivers. Early childhood development and other community-based interventions such as micronutrient interventions are combined with infant and young child nutrition counselling services, using appropriate entry points. Strengthening data collection, monitoring and reporting contribute to better understanding of infant and young child feeding practices by geographical area, residence and socioeconomic status, as well as the status of interventions, which lead to better evidence-based programming and more equitable approaches to improving nutrition.

   Stimulating demand at community and family levels is also a crucial element of UNICEF’s approach to severe acute malnutrition and to exclusive breastfeeding.
Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
One of the key assumptions in this area is that the communities with which UNICEF is working are open to receiving information, behaviour change messages and other efforts to change sociocultural beliefs and practices. Initiatives aimed at sharing knowledge and promoting behaviour change have generally been readily embraced by communities and families, but there is always a risk that other issues (e.g., geopolitical conflict, the spread of a new disease) could divert focus from nutrition, making communities less responsive. The key risk mitigation measure is continued advocacy efforts to highlight the importance of nutrition, including by engaging with political, religious and community leaders and by publicizing information in forms that reach the general public.

2. Increased national capacity to provide access to nutrition interventions

Rationale for focusing on this output
UNICEF focuses heavily on supply issues in nutrition because they are frequently a significant bottleneck to improving nutrition outcomes, not only in terms of food and micronutrients, but also the human resources needed to deliver services. Challenges with supply are often particularly acute in emergencies.

Key areas of work on this output
The work that UNICEF carries out on supply includes capacity development, the identification and promotion of innovation, cross-sectoral linkages and service delivery.

Capacity development interventions focus on helping governments and other partners build sustainable responses to nutrition challenges, including through training and technical assistance in areas such as supply chain management, such that governments have adequate human resources and supplies to ensure that all children receive their required vitamin A doses. UNICEF also uses ProPAN (Process for the Promotion of Child Feeding), a tool to design, implement and evaluate interventions and programmes to improve infant and young child diet and feeding. This tool can be used to address critical bottlenecks to improving complementary feeding.

Identifying and promoting innovation is an important implementation strategy, as new approaches are needed to close the remaining gaps in coverage. For example, in partnership with Population Services International UNICEF started implementing a pilot market-based micronutrient powder programme in Madagascar in late 2012, and is now expanding this to the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Somaliland. Subsidized delivery models for micronutrient powder are being explored as a sustainable and cost-effective way to reduce micronutrient deficiencies among children in certain contexts.

UNICEF works to link nutrition interventions with those of other sectors to provide integrated services to girls, boys and women. Linkages with the health, education and WASH sectors are particularly important. Additionally, in some settings where local structures are weak or non-existent, UNICEF becomes involved in the direct delivery of nutrition services, including through supplementation and fortification efforts.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The most significant assumption underpinning this output is that a minimum level of capacity exists within governments and other partners so that capacity development efforts are not rendered useless through the absence of human resources with whom UNICEF can engage. The major risk to this is in humanitarian situations, where human resources are sometimes extremely limited. Poor coordination in the sector is another risk, as it results in inefficiencies that weaken capacity in some settings. To mitigate this, UNICEF works to build resilience in communities, including by building capacity of some non-traditional actors, including the private sector.
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up nutrition interventions

Rationale for focusing on this output
There is still considerable scope for strengthening nutrition laws and policies to build a healthy enabling environment, particularly to ensure adequate attention to disadvantaged people. Additionally, the fact that nutrition requires multisectoral efforts complicates planning and budgeting, necessitating strong support in this area.

Key areas of work on this output
Much of UNICEF’s work in this output is evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. For example, in alignment with the Scaling Up Nutrition framework, UNICEF supports countries to develop nutrition policies and plans that are multisectoral and costed, include clear targets, define risk management strategies to address risks from disasters, conflict and climate change, and contain specific actions targeted to vulnerable groups. UNICEF supports legislation, such as by addressing maternity protection and helping countries to achieve full implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and related World Health Assembly Resolutions. The organization also assists countries to develop anaemia reduction policies and plans.

Evidence generation is important in understanding patterns of inequity in nutrition outcomes, so UNICEF works to ensure that countries have data disaggregated by key forms of vulnerability. In addition, using cost-benefit analysis and investment cases and through policy dialogue and advocacy, UNICEF works to increase awareness of nutrition issues, generate commitment and action, and complement resource mobilization efforts.

The organization provides training and technical assistance to improve design, implementation and evaluation of nutrition policies and plans; improve coordination mechanisms for nutrition and intersectoral collaboration; and strengthen budgeting practices. Because of the importance of cross-sectoral linkages, early childhood development and other community-based interventions such as micronutrient interventions are combined with infant, youth and child nutrition services using appropriate entry points. Similarly, early childhood development components are included in the curricula for training nutrition service providers, to promote the combined feeding and stimulation of infants.

Partnerships are important in this area, so UNICEF works closely with a range of groups (including those from civil society), such as the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, the Micronutrient Initiative, Save the Children, Helen Keller International and Action Contre la Faim.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The major assumption related to this output is that government and sector partners incorporate newly generated evidence about what works into sector plans, and that they have sufficient capacity and commitment to translate these changes into operational improvements, particularly in ways that prioritize delivery to disadvantaged populations. The major risks to this are insufficient political commitment to making these changes and insufficient capacity to implement the laws and policies that have been formulated. UNICEF works to mitigate these risks by highlighting the importance of nutrition efforts and building capacity to assess and use evidence, so that a broad range of stakeholders can work together to improve implementation through the use of better evidence.
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure protection of the nutritional status of girls, boys and women from the effects of humanitarian situations

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
Crises pose considerable risks to nutrition by undermining the provision of services, interrupting supply chains (both public and private) and making traditional coping strategies less effective. Ensuring that children – particularly those in their first 1,000 days – have adequate nutrition in emergencies is both an intervention that is immediately lifesaving and one that provides important lifelong benefits, given the implications of early nutritional deficits.

**Key areas of work on this output**
Ensuring that vulnerable children are protected against food insecurity and malnutrition requires coordinating the emergency nutrition response (e.g., community-based management of acute malnutrition, infant and young child feeding in emergencies, provision of micronutrients and interventions to prevent acute malnutrition) and integrating programming by providing technical leadership, developing national capacity and procuring supplies. In accordance with UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, the organization may act as the cluster lead agency coordinating the nutrition response, seeking to improve the effectiveness and accountability of emergency preparedness and response across agencies.

Given the conditions during humanitarian crises, UNICEF is more heavily involved in direct provision of services in emergencies than in other settings, including through vitamin A supplementation, salt iodization, flour fortification and community-based management of severe acute malnutrition. The organization also works to build capacity for disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and emergency response.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**
Several assumptions are necessary for the transition between these actions and the output to occur. First, because of the unpredictability of humanitarian crises, there is always a possibility that a large number will occur in rapid succession, overwhelming the organization’s ability to respond. It is assumed that this will not occur over the period 2014-2017, although this remains a risk that must be planned for. Second, coordination is a challenge in humanitarian settings, but it is assumed that coordination problems will not worsen dramatically to the point that they completely undermine the effectiveness of interventions. UNICEF’s work on resilience plays a key role in mitigating this risk, but the organization also supports coordination by acting as the global cluster lead for nutrition.

5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of nutrition

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
This output is important both because it reflects foundational principles of UNICEF’s approach to nutrition and because there are some forms of malnutrition that affect women and girls disproportionately. In particular, to avoid anaemia, deficiencies in iron and folic acid must be addressed, particularly in pregnant women and girls. Additionally, as women and girls are usually the primary care providers, addressing gender dynamics is critical to ensuring demand for and delivery of good nutrition for children.

**Key areas of work on this output**
Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy are particularly important in this output, as is capacity development. The organization supports the collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data so that barriers and bottlenecks to reaching key populations can be identified and addressed. A particular focus on
gendered bottlenecks and barriers can help to improve programming by addressing women’s lack of decision-making power, mobility, resources or information, which often prevents their access to good nutrition options or adoption of good nutrition practices. Finally, UNICEF supports countries to conduct gender reviews of nutrition sector plans so that both gender differentials and gender determinants of nutrition for children are adequately addressed.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**
The main assumption related to this output is that UNICEF’s partners understand the importance of employing a rights-based and gender-sensitive approach to nutrition programming. The risk associated with this assumption is that there has been an increase in isolated attacks on these principles – particularly on gender equality – that could coalesce into a broader crusade against them. To address this risk, UNICEF continues to build the evidence base for the added value of addressing gender equality and the importance of using a human rights-based approach. Additionally, the organization ensures that its own staff prioritize these issues, including by providing tools and regular training on these topics.

6. **Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child nutrition**

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
UNICEF complements its national level work with global and regional activities mainly because there is considerable scope to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of nutrition programming by sharing lessons learned and evidence about what works (and what does not) between countries. Further, given the number of new actors focusing on nutrition, partnerships and coordination have become more important.

**Key areas of work on this output**
Much of the work at global and regional levels is in the form of evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. For example, UNICEF launched and is continuing to run a highly successful massive open online course (MOOC) for capacity development in infant and young child feeding. The organization regularly supports South-South engagement with knowledge exchange and sharing between programme countries, both in the context of multi-country projects and in the scaling up of specific interventions, such as distribution of micronutrient powders.

UNICEF also publishes in peer-reviewed journals the findings of its nutrition research, in order to raise awareness of key issues and approaches. For the period 2014-2017, the key overarching research question is around what works to reduce stunting at scale, including how best to combine different interventions and how to explain the successes that have been achieved in a number of countries. In partnership with Population Services International, UNICEF is establishing a community of practice for country-based implementers and supporting agencies to exchange and disseminate knowledge on home fortification of complementary foods for children 6-23 months. Users post questions and answers and share information on this Internet-based platform.

Strengthening partnerships and coordination globally is important, so UNICEF is active in global networks and initiatives for nutrition, such as Scaling Up Nutrition, the Standing Committee on Nutrition, Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition and several micronutrient networks. It also serves as the cluster lead for nutrition in emergencies. Cross-sectoral linkages are also facilitated by work at global and regional levels, with emphasis on collaborating with the health and WASH sectors.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**
The main assumption that must be made for these actions to lead to the output is that the global system of coordination and partnership does not collapse and be replaced by increased competition and rivalry. The
risk that this will occur is small but it could conceivably happen as a result, for example, of a complete breakdown in the post-2015 process. Risk mitigation measures occur at both global and national levels. The organization devotes considerable resources at the global level to support the post-2015 process and UN coherence, and UNICEF country offices regularly play leadership roles within UN country teams and promote coordination among agencies at country level.

10. Narrative description for outcome 5: Education

[Schematic for education located here.]

A. Outcome and programme areas

Education is both a fundamental human right and a smart investment, providing economic, health and societal benefits to nations, communities and individuals. Denying today’s children the right to education has far-reaching impacts on the rights and opportunities of future generations to survive, thrive and fulfill their potential. Despite significant progress, education for all is still an unfinished agenda. Worldwide, 57 million primary school-aged children are still out of school, along with another 69 million children of lower secondary school age. Some of these children drop out early and others never enter school. However, just getting children into school is not enough, as millions of children who go to school do not learn the basics. Out of around 650 million children of primary school age, as many as 250 million either do not reach grade 4 or reach it without learning to read or write.


To accomplish this outcome, UNICEF is focusing on delivering results in four programme areas:

- Equity, with a focus on girls’ education and inclusive education;
- Learning, with an emphasis on improved learning outcomes and child friendly school, to help children to secure basic skills such as literacy and numeracy and a wider range of social, emotional and cognitive skills to equip them not only to survive but to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world;
- Early learning; and
- Education in humanitarian situations.

Rationale for focusing on these programme areas

An increased emphasis on data is revealing patterns of marginalization that highlight the importance of focusing on equity. Given the significant development gains associated with girls’ education, especially to secondary level, UNICEF prioritizes improving primary and lower secondary access and learning outcomes for girls in countries where significant numbers of girls are routinely excluded from education. Currently only 36% of programme countries have reached gender parity in enrolment at lower secondary level; 35% have policies to address suspected abuse, sexual harassment, violence and bullying in schools; and 42% guarantee that pregnant girls and young mothers can continue their education. Additionally, UNICEF pursues actions that increase education opportunities for children with disabilities. For example in Indonesia, less than 30% of children with disabilities aged 6-11 attend school, compared with 85% of children without disabilities.

The need to focus on learning can be seen in the data from standardized surveys. They show that only 66% of programme countries have increased learning outcomes during the preceding years and that, as noted in
the End-of-Cycle Review, half of children who have completed grade 2 cannot read anything at all. Improving learning outcomes is fundamental if children are to fulfil their potential and if education is to contribute to wider national and child development objectives.

Children with opportunities for early learning stay longer in school, perform better than their peers and have better learning outcomes. Globally, the gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education is only 48%, with rates as low as 15% in low-income countries and less than 17% in sub-Saharan Africa. Equally concerning is the poor quality of early learning opportunities. Only 47% of UNICEF programme countries have a national policy on universal school readiness and only 41% have national standards and assessment tools in use for monitoring school readiness.

Humanitarian contexts now account for half of the world’s out-of-school children. It is estimated that 500 million to 1.5 billion children around the world are subjected to some form of violence and that more than 1 billion children live in areas affected by conflict and violence. Education is a public good that can help to mitigate conflicts and build resilience of individuals, communities and societies to prevent or cope with natural disasters. Classrooms can be safe, healing spaces that support children and families alike. However, education’s share of global humanitarian funding decreased from 2% in 2011 to 1.3% in 2012.

Additionally, UNICEF will continue to play a lead role in key education partnerships, including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI). The organization will also work within the UN family to shape and implement an ambitious post-2015 agenda for education.

B. Assumptions, risk analysis and mitigation measures

The outcome is delivered through a series of six outputs. These are described in detail below but it is important to acknowledge that there are a series of assumptions that must hold true for the outputs to lead to the outcome. These assumptions are based on UNICEF’s understanding of the education sector and so are considered reasonable. However, given their importance and the fact that they are largely beyond the organization’s control, it is important to acknowledge them and also to conduct a risk analysis to understand the possible dangers should the assumptions not prove valid.

By definition, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. The consequence would be that the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or partly, such as would be reflected in underperformance in a subset of the outcome indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks associated with each assumption. UNICEF does not expect the risks articulated below to occur, but identifying them now and taking steps to prevent them is an important part of prudent programming. It also increases the organization’s ability to contribute to the outcome. Although many factors could pose risks, only the most significant are highlighted below. The measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks are also briefly summarized.

This subsection explores the assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the causal link between outputs and the outcome. There are also assumptions, risks and mitigation measures concerning the transition between the actions that UNICEF takes and each output, but these are handled within the discussion of each output.
The major assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- **Availability of quality data and evidence continues to increase, in particular regarding education and learning of the most disadvantaged groups:** The focus on data improvement is well supported by main stakeholders in the education sector, as there is increasing consensus on the importance of improving the value for money of programmes based on solid evidence. Based on this experience, UNICEF believes it is reasonable to expect that willingness to improve data and evidence will continue, with an increased focus on the most disadvantaged groups, such as girls, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities and the poorest children.
  - **Key risks:** The lack of technical capacities impedes improvement of the data and their increased use for policymaking; entrenched interests become threatened by the emphasis on the most disadvantaged groups.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Increasing the emphasis on data and evidence generation in education both internally and in UNICEF’s engagement with partners; supporting efforts to develop the capacity to generate and use evidence among partners.

- **Receptiveness on the part of the education community to put more emphasis on learning outcomes and their measurement:** Considerable efforts internationally have been put into raising enrolment rates in recent years, and significant progress has been made as a result, although gaps remain. A growing number of stakeholders recognize the need to pair a continued push to close these gaps with a stronger emphasis on ensuring that children are learning in schools. However, the practical implications of improving learning assessment and using it to improve learning outcomes remain challenging. It is reasonable to assume that the increased focus on learning will continue.
  - **Key risks:** The challenges with operationalizing measurement of learning outcomes give rise to sceptics who argue that learning outcomes cannot be assessed properly, or that assessment on its own does not improve learning and so should not be prioritized; the increased national use of learning metrics leads to high-stakes testing and dissatisfaction among teachers, impeding the impact on improving learning outcomes.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Working with partners to strengthen the measurement of learning outcomes; generating evidence how assessment of learning outcomes can be used to improve the quality of education.

- **Funding gaps in education do not widen:** Over the past decade, most low- and middle-income countries increased their funding for education, as a share of both their economies and their government expenditure. In part as a result of the global financial crisis, this trend has stagnated over the past several years, as has development assistance for education. However, continued economic growth in many countries and new approaches to financing education suggest that funding gaps for education are likely to close in the coming years.
  - **Key risks:** A new issue (e.g., a global pandemic, a rapid acceleration in climatic warming) arises that displaces education as an international priority; the process to set a post-2015 development agenda collapses and leads to widespread disillusionment with international development, causing a significant drop in development assistance for education; the use of education resources is skewed towards entrenched interests and not used in the most efficient ways for improving learning of the most disadvantaged groups.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Advocating for the societal and individual benefits of education, including by highlighting the benefits of gains in primary education in recent years and the
potential associated with the new areas of emphasis (e.g., early learning); continuing to highlight the importance of focusing resources on the most disadvantaged children.

- **Limited resources are reprioritized to support early childhood and basic education:** As evidence has grown about the importance of early childhood and basic education, more countries have been willing to invest in it, with a more significant focus on learning outcomes. This trend seems likely to continue, although it may remain uneven over the course of 2014-2017.
  o **Key risks:** Progress achieved towards universal primary education and the lack of political power among the most marginalized groups intensifies the pressure to reallocate public resources to secondary and higher education, which mainly benefits the wealthiest and most influential groups; general resource constraints lead to increased competition for resources, and the advocates of other issues generate enthusiasm for different approaches.
  o **Key mitigation measures:** Continuing to build evidence on the value of primary education and in particular for the gains seen as a result of the increased enrolment of girls; increasing the participation of disadvantaged groups in the education system so their voices can be heard in discussions addressing priorities in the education sector.

### C. Outputs

The six outputs that contribute to the outcome are:

1. Enhanced support to communities with disadvantaged and excluded children to start schooling at the right age and attend regularly;
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to early learning opportunities and quality primary and secondary education;
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up quality and inclusive education;
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that girls and boys have access to safe and secure forms of education and critical information for their own well-being in humanitarian situations;
5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of school readiness and performance; and

The descriptions of each output below focus on the primary implementation strategies that are being used, with brief accounts of the particular approaches being employed. Additionally, because certain assumptions must be made about the conditions necessary for UNICEF’s actions to lead to the achievement of each output, the one or two most important assumptions are discussed under each output, along with the major risks to these assumptions being borne out and the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks.

1. **Enhanced support to communities with disadvantaged and excluded children to start schooling at the right age and attend regularly**

   **Rationale for focusing on this output**

   UNICEF invests heavily in addressing demand for education because increasing awareness of the benefits of quality education for all and strengthening community engagement with the education system are both key ways to address inequity in education and poor learning outcomes. For example, sociocultural beliefs
concerning girls’ education often shift as communities better understand the benefits of educating girls. Similarly, active and empowered children, adolescents, parents and communities are vital to efforts to improve the quality of learning, as they can drive increases in standards within the education system.

Key areas of work on this output
Much of the work that UNICEF does to increase demand for education is in the form of evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. For example, the organization supports the roll-out of education management information systems that provide easy-to-understand information to parents and communities (such as school profiles, supported by the GPE) to strengthen management and accountability at all levels. UNICEF also engages communities to discuss, address and abandon sociocultural beliefs and practices regarding children with disabilities, girls, and other characteristics that result in children being excluded from education. The organization advocates for girls not to be left out from accessing and non-formal education and learning, and for all children to start school at the right age and progress through school year-on-year (recognizing that late entry, over-age enrolment and repetition are strong predictors of dropout). These efforts are essential for increasing enrolment in both primary and pre-primary education.

Another significant area of work is the use of communication for development to engage parents and communities to create demand for education and spread understanding of the importance of it for both boys and girls. Communication for development is particularly important in increasing awareness of areas that historically have been neglected, such as early learning. Finally, capacity development – such as training and sharing good practices – is important in areas such as strengthening the capacity of school management committees to act on information, supporting school improvement plans and strengthening accountability between communities and service providers.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The primary assumption that is relied on for the actions described above to lead to the output is that the communities with which UNICEF is working are open to receiving information, behaviour change messages and other efforts to change sociocultural beliefs and practices and to engage parents and others more fully in education. Although this assumption has generally held true in UNICEF’s work to date, there is a risk that it might not over the course of 2014-2017, if, for example, there was significant new competition for parental and communal attention (e.g., because of the rise of geopolitical conflict, the spread of a new disease or climate change-related migration). There is also a risk of parents becoming discouraged if they try to engage with the education system but find it does not welcome them or that the supply constraints are so significant that the education system is incapable of responding to parents. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF advocates on education issues and engages communities and parents in a manner that simultaneously encourages their participation but also manages their expectations about the change process.

2. Increased national capacity to provide access to early learning opportunities and quality primary and secondary education

Rationale for focusing on this output
There are several key reasons why UNICEF is focusing on issues related to the supply of education. Improving the quality of the provision of education is a prerequisite for improving learning outcomes, and without sustained efforts to strengthen capacity in the education system, learning outcomes are unlikely to improve. Strengthening supply of early learning opportunities is also essential for making the most of a critical juncture in the lives of children, as at the moment too few children have access to early learning opportunities.
Key areas of work on this output
To address supply constraints, UNICEF uses a range of implementation strategies, such as capacity development, knowledge generation, the identification and promotion of innovation, and service delivery.

UNICEF is engaged in a range of capacity development activities, such as support to teacher training programmes, the provision of guidelines and tools, and assistance in implementing standards to assess learning outcomes. The organization provides a range of support to countries to identify which approaches are working best in improving learning outcomes and reaching underserved children, including through evaluations and by generating better data on, for example, children with disabilities. UNICEF also supports countries to build the capacity to put in place quality standards consistent with child-friendly education and for early learning, and then to monitor the implementation of those standards.

Particularly in countries where girls are systematically failing to complete primary school, are not transitioning to secondary school or are routinely underperforming in school, UNICEF invests in developing and implementing evidence-based programmes that seek to improve educational indicators for the most disadvantaged girls. This is a particular focus in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where the disparities between girls and boys are the most significant. In targeted disadvantaged areas, especially rural areas where preschool coverage is very low, UNICEF supports the provision of early learning opportunities that meet minimum standards, with a focus on low-income countries.

The organization also invests in innovative approaches to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged children, paying attention to evidence, cost effectiveness and robust evaluation. While UNICEF is looking into a broad spectrum of innovative initiatives, it recognizes the importance of information and communication technology (ICT) as a driver of innovation and is testing several possible applications. One example is the use of mobile phone-based data collection systems to conduct real-time monitoring of school life issues such as teacher attendance, sanitary infrastructure and effective delivery of materials with community help. Use of these platforms has grown exponentially and they are evolving to become a platform for dialogue between the community and the government on education and learning issues.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The most significant assumption underpinning this output is that a minimum level of capacity exists such that capacity development efforts do not falter due to, for example, an absence of teachers, or that innovative new approaches do not collapse because staff are so overstretched that they are unable to focus on learning new areas. The major risk to this is in humanitarian situations, where human resources are sometimes extremely limited. Another risk to this assumption would arise if education budgets were reduced significantly, as many countries would lack adequate resources to hire the new teachers needed to handle the increasing population of students.

To mitigate these risks, UNICEF assists governments in planning human resources for the education sector, including as part of disaster preparedness planning. The organization also regularly advocates for increasing financing to the education sector to ensure adequate resources for it.

3. **Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling-up quality and inclusive education**

Rationale for focusing on this output
UNICEF focuses on improving the enabling environment for education because, despite improved laws and policies in many countries, there are still key gaps in many areas, such as improving learning outcomes
and reaching the most disadvantaged children. Moreover, even when solid laws and policies are in place, political commitment is always needed to ensure adequate budget allocations, which has been a challenge in too many programme countries over the past decade.

**Key areas of work on this output**

Much of the work that UNICEF does in this output is around knowledge generation and advocacy. For example, the organization works to improve education data at national and local levels so that educational disadvantage (typically in terms of gender, economic status, location, ethnicity, language and disability) is better captured. Another example is the Out-of-School Children Initiative, which develops profiles of out-of-school children and evidence-based strategies to address key bottlenecks. Advocacy efforts address topics such as financial support for the education sector and the importance of establishing student learning assessment systems, especially for the early grades.

UNICEF also supports the development of national policies on early learning and works to improve equity in terms of the distribution of teachers across schools. Advanced planning is critical to building resilience and responding effectively, so the organization supports national and subnational capacity to undertake risk assessments in the education sector, taking into account disaster and conflict risk reduction, climate change and conflict analysis as appropriate. It also works to ensure that education policies and plans reflect these assessments and appropriate risk management measures.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

The major assumption related to this output is that shifts in laws and policies will be reflected in operational changes in the functioning of education systems. The key risk to this is that the capacity to formulate laws and policies may exceed the capacity to implement. The primary risk mitigation measure is to increase capacity to implement, as well as to advocate for additional resources to ensure that sufficient financing is available for operationalizing legal and policy changes.

4. *Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that girls and boys have access to safe and secure forms of education and critical information for their own well-being in humanitarian situations*

**Rationale for focusing on this output**

The fact that half of the world’s out-of-school children are in humanitarian settings explains why UNICEF prioritizes education in emergencies. Additionally, education is a public good that can help to mitigate conflicts and build the resilience of individuals, communities and societies to prevent or cope with natural disasters. Classrooms can be safe, healing spaces that support children and families alike.

**Key areas of work on this output**

UNICEF’s work in this area is guided by the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, and so spans the continuum from preparedness to response to early recovery.

Due to the nature of the contexts where UNICEF works, the organization puts a heavier emphasis on service delivery in this output than in most others. The organization engages in conflict-sensitive delivery of learning opportunities and psychosocial support to children in humanitarian situations through intersectoral approaches, including in preschool/early learning and in non-formal and formal education to marginalized groups in a safe environment, thereby building resilience and reducing the risk of renewed conflict or unequal development opportunities. UNICEF also supports initiatives that work with children, parents and communities to create awareness about the importance of education in alleviating stress and trauma.
Effective partnerships are important to successful humanitarian action, so UNICEF plays an active role in cluster and sector coordination mechanisms on education. Through advocacy efforts UNICEF aims to increase resources allocated to education in Consolidated Appeals and to raise the share of overall humanitarian resources that are devoted to education.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

Several assumptions are necessary for the transition between these actions and the output to occur. First, because of the unpredictability of humanitarian crises, there is always a possibility that a large number will occur in rapid succession, overwhelming the organization’s ability to respond. It is assumed that this will not occur over the period 2014-2017, although this remains a risk that must be planned for. Second, the share of global humanitarian funding that goes to education, already very low, has dropped recently, but it is assumed that funding will not disappear completely (although that is a risk, particularly if a large number of emergencies occur within a short period of time). The major measure to mitigate this risk is to engage with the partners that finance the humanitarian action to ensure they understand the importance of addressing education in emergencies. UNICEF is also strengthening the internal connections between development and humanitarian action.

5. *Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of school readiness and performance*

**Rationale for focusing on this output**

This output reflects the cross-cutting work that UNICEF does in terms of gender equality and rights in the context of education. These principles are foundational to the organization’s approach to education because without adequate attention to them, sustained progress in improving equity in education would be impossible. Therefore, although there are some specific actions focused on gender equity and rights, it is important to note that they are also woven throughout the work done in other outputs.

**Key areas of work on this output**

At the heart of the organization’s approach to human rights is the concept of child-friendly schools. This places the child at the centre, supported by good-quality teaching. The approach advocates for schools that are rights-based, inclusive and gender-sensitive, that engage the community, that promote better health outcomes, that are safe and protective, and that are academically effective.

Advocacy efforts address topics such as policies on inclusive education that include children with disabilities. UNICEF also advocates for the education rights of disadvantaged children on the basis of cost and effectiveness. This includes, for example, use of the Simulations in Education Equity model and the education system analysis guidelines prepared in collaboration with the World Bank, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the GPE, which includes benefit-incidence analysis. In addition the organization advocates for education policies and plans that stipulate procedures for reporting and taking action against violence in schools, including gender-based violence.

To reduce barriers to access and improve learning outcomes, UNICEF advocates for and assists multilingual education in countries with a diversity of languages. For example, the organization works in partnership with the Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group to ensure that all children in the region and beyond have access to education in their mother tongue from the early years, recognizing that not only do children learn best in the language they know best, but also that mother tongue-based multilingual education is integral in the Education for All process.
The efforts to strengthen education management systems described earlier are also linked to this output. Such systems are important tools for providing disaggregated data, which enable the analysis of barriers and bottlenecks for disadvantaged children.

Girls’ secondary education is prioritized as a targeted initiative in UNICEF’s Gender Action Plan, and UNICEF is working with government and civil society partners to improve girls’ entry, retention and learning in secondary school. UNICEF also works with key partners such as GPE, UNESCO and UNGEI to improve data and measurement on gender equality in education. Equally critical to the focus on gender equality are the cross-sectoral linkages that are fostered with social protection or health systems, which aim to delay marriage and pregnancy for girls and influence gender norms and socialization for both girls and boys.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**
The major assumption related to this output is that a global movement that challenges the basic principles of gender equality and human rights will not emerge and start influencing policies and resource allocation over the period 2014-2017. The major risk associated with this assumption is that there has been an increase in isolated attacks on these principles – particularly on gender equality – that could coalesce into a broader crusade. To address this risk, UNICEF continues to build the evidence base for the added value of addressing gender equality and the importance of using a human rights-based approach. Additionally, the organization ensures that its own staff prioritize these issues, including by providing tools and regular training on these topics.

6. **Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in education**

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
Although the majority of UNICEF’s work on education occurs at national and subnational levels, there are several reasons why it must be complemented by global and regional activities. The programmatic areas that UNICEF is focusing on for the 2014-2017 period have generally been underemphasized internationally, with the result that there is a paucity of standards, good practices and evidence of effectiveness. These are all areas in which support at global and regional levels can provide valuable support to efforts at national and subnational levels. Additionally, the Strategic Plan period includes the development of the post-2015 development agenda, in which UNICEF’s advocacy on education is particularly important.

**Key areas of work on this output**
Much of the work at global and regional levels is in the form of evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. This includes developing and testing improved learning metrics, contributing to improving the global evidence base on what works, increasing the availability of evidence needed to underpin programming in girls’ education and building the evidence base on education for peacebuilding and on the mechanisms through which education contributes to resilience. Other research priorities for the period 2014-2017 include understanding which education interventions are most effective in promoting improved learning outcomes at all levels; identifying the best mechanisms to increase access to and completion of quality post-primary education, particularly for girls; and determining how best to mainstream data collection on identification and participation of children with disability in education and better support countries in delivering inclusive education.

Advocacy is essential in the organization’s efforts to mobilize more funding for education in emergencies, as well as to increase the number of education sector plans supported by GPE that pay adequate attention to inclusive education.
UNICEF also continues supporting South-South and triangular cooperation. For example, in partnership with GPE, UNICEF supports peer-to-peer learning processes and experience-sharing to encourage South-South cross-fertilization among participating countries and regions in work on school profiles and gender-based violence in schools.

Cross-sectoral work and linkages are being pursued and strengthened, in particular in the areas of early childhood development, girls’ education, children with disabilities (including strengthening the questionnaire for MICS so it provides better evidence on disability) and WASH in schools.

Partnerships are another major area of emphasis at global and regional levels. UNICEF is co-leading the post-2015 dialogue on education and providing leadership and support to UNGEI to strengthen global, regional and in-country partnerships on girls’ education, including through GPE and UNICEF programming. UNICEF will continue to play an active role in GPE, through membership on its board, country level coordination and implementation of partnerships.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

The main assumption that must be made for these actions to lead to the output is that the global system of coordination and partnership does not collapse and be replaced by increased competition and rivalry. The risk that this will occur is small but it could conceivably happen as a result, for example, of a complete breakdown in the post-2015 process. Risk mitigation measures occur at both global and national levels. The organization devotes considerable resources at the global level to support the post-2015 process and UN coherence, and UNICEF country offices regularly play leadership roles within UN country teams and promote coordination among agencies at country level.

**11. Narrative description for outcome 6: Child protection**

[Schematic for child protection located here.]

**A. Outcome and programme areas**

Every year, between 500 million and 1.5 billion children worldwide are subject to some form of violence. International studies reveal that 20% of women and 5-10% of men, on average, have been victims of sexual violence over the course of their childhoods. Around 11% of all children – 168 million girls and boys – are engaged in child labour with half of them working in hazardous conditions. Approximately one third of women aged 20-24 in developing countries were married as children, and approximately 30 million girls are at risk of female genital mutilation/cutting.

Violence, exploitation and abuse – which affect children’s emotional, social, cognitive and physical development – represent the ultimate violations of children’s rights. Together they pose considerable threats to the achievement of the MDGs. Child labour impedes access to education (Goal 2, universal primary education) and hampers retention and learning achievement, especially for girls involved in domestic work (Goal 3, gender equality). Girls who are victims of sexual violence are more likely to have their maternal health compromised (Goal 5, maternal health), and be at higher risk of HIV infection (Goal 6, HIV and AIDS). Child marriage frequently leads to early withdrawal from school by girls and impedes gender equality (Goals 2 and 3). It also curtails personal freedoms and often leads to early pregnancy, which carries health risks for girls (Goal 5) and their babies (Goal 4, child mortality).
UNICEF takes a holistic “systems” approach to child protection that addresses the full spectrum of risk factors and underlying vulnerabilities in the lives of children and their families. The organization focuses on the complex interaction between social norms and national policies and legislation. It uses advocacy strategies to work with lawmakers and opinion-shapers at national level while also promoting positive social customs and behaviours at community level. Other elements of the holistic approach include developing globally agreed standards, including measurable indicators, and increasing use of a “cluster approach” in programming to target groups of countries for investment of resources and expertise on what works in key priority areas.


To accomplish this outcome, UNICEF is focusing on delivering results in six programme areas:

- The systems approach to child protection;
- Violence, exploitation and abuse;
- Justice for children;
- Birth registration;
- Strengthened families and communities; and
- Child protection in humanitarian situations.

Rationale for focusing on these programme areas
Child protection systems often have many diverse elements, potentially drawn from the social welfare, education, health, justice, labour and security sectors, and increasingly from ICT, travel and tourism. As a result there is a risk of fragmentation and poor delivery to those children who fall between the cracks. Conversely, comprehensive policies can set programming priorities, secure sufficient and reliable budgets, strengthen service delivery, influence legal frameworks and motivate the general public, which in turn can be a powerful force for instigating wide-ranging reform. This explains why one of the organization’s key programme areas for 2014-2017 is strengthening the systems approach to child protection. One key element of this is strengthening data and research, which are critical for determining the scale and scope of child protection violations, identifying vulnerable groups, ascertaining risk factors and protective assets and mechanisms, informing policy and programming, and ensuring accountability. Data collection has improved markedly in recent years, but significant gaps remain, and these disproportionately affect the most disadvantaged groups, hindering efforts to reach them.

Evidence from national household surveys shows that violence is an everyday reality for many children. Recent national surveys in Africa and the Caribbean suggest that 26-38% of girls and 9-21% of boys had experienced sexual abuse before the age of 18, many being victimized more than once. Approximately 30 million girls are at risk of female genital mutilation/cutting in the next 10 years. Violence, exploitation and abuse can affect a child’s physical and mental health in the short and longer term, impairing their ability to learn and socialize and hampering their transition to adulthood, with adverse consequences later in life. Additionally, sexual abuse of girls exposes them to the risk of pregnancy and disease, thus burdening them physically and socially with adult responsibilities while still children and creating a pattern of disempowerment.

Currently, at least 2 million children continue to live in residential care, which is acknowledged to hinder their emotional, social, cognitive and physical development. Children with disabilities are disproportionately affected by placement in institutions. Additionally, 1.1 million children are estimated to be detained through justice systems worldwide at any one time, although this is likely a significant
underestimate, given the difficulties in obtaining data about overlooked and unreported children in custody. The rights of these children are not always respected, necessitating UNICEF engagement to ensure that these systems operate in the best interest of the child.

Birth registration within civil registration and vital statistics is central to ensuring that children are counted and have access to basic services such as health, social security and education. Knowing the age of children is critical to protecting them from child labour and from arrest and treatment as adults in the justice system; forcible conscription in armed forces; child marriage; and trafficking and sexual exploitation. However, current estimates suggest that the births of approximately 230 million children under age 5 have not been registered. Many of them come from disadvantaged groups, which accounts for UNICEF’s emphasis on this issue.

Violence against children within the family is one of the most common forms of child mistreatment. Data from a range of low- and middle-income countries show that, on average, three in four children aged 2 to 14 experience some form of violent discipline (psychological and/or physical) at home. Another reason that UNICEF works on strengthening families and communities is the continued prevalence of child marriage, which is often enabled by communal norms.

In emergencies, child protection systems are weakened and disrupted. Forced displacement and separation of families and communities place children and women at increased risk of violence and abuse. Disasters and conflict situations exacerbate the vulnerability of children and women to gender-based violence, including sexual assault, rape, physical violence and harmful practices. Landmines and other explosive weapons kill and maim children and their families. Lack of safe spaces increases the risk of gender-based violence, especially in large temporary settlements and when children are unable to access alternative care.

B. Assumptions, risk analysis and mitigation measures

The outcome is delivered through a series of six outputs. These are described in detail below but it is important to acknowledge that there are a series of assumptions that must hold true for the outputs to lead to the outcome. These assumptions are based on UNICEF’s understanding of the child protection sector and so are considered reasonable. However, given their importance and the fact that they are largely beyond the organization’s control, it is important to acknowledge them and also to conduct a risk analysis to understand the possible dangers should the assumptions not prove valid.

By definition, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. The consequence would be that the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or partly, such as would be reflected in underperformance in a subset of the outcome indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks associated with each assumption. UNICEF does not expect the risks articulated below to occur, but identifying them now and taking steps to prevent them is an important part of prudent programming. It also increases the organization’s ability to contribute to the outcome. Although many factors could pose risks, only the most significant are highlighted below. The measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks are also briefly summarized.

This subsection explores the assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the causal link between outputs and the outcome. There are also assumptions, risks and mitigation measures concerning the transition between the actions that UNICEF takes and each output, but these are handled within the discussion of each output.
The major assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- **Governments and other stakeholders recognize that all children have the right to be protected from violence, exploitation and abuse:** All the work on child protection flows from the basic recognition that children have rights, and in particular that they have the right to be protected from all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse.
  - **Key risks:** Backsliding on commitments to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or to the concept of human rights.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Continuing to use and to support partners to use human rights-based approaches to programming; increasing children’s participation in policy dialogues, so that they can advocate for realization of their own rights.

- **Governments are willing and able to make meaningful financial investments in child protection:** The holistic approach to child protection requires investments in human resources and the supply of many different types of services; otherwise gaps appear that weaken the entire system. For the holistic approach to work, children as a group must continue to be given political priority.
  - **Key risks:** A new issue (e.g., a global pandemic, geopolitical conflict) arises that diverts significant resources from child protection; multiple humanitarian crises in rapid succession overstretch resources and capacity to respond.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Advocating for the importance of investing in child protection; building resilience in key partners to ensure that child protection services can be delivered even in the event of an external shock.

- **Key stakeholders continue to recognize the benefits of a holistic approach:** The holistic approach to child protection employed by UNICEF has been embraced by other key stakeholders, although there are still some efforts that focus narrowly on a single form of vulnerability without taking into account the child’s broader context. The systems approach is crucial, as without it response would be fragmented along sectoral lines, leading to less effective services for children.
  - **Key risks:** Insufficient financial and human resources are provided to support and sustain a holistic approach, leading major actors to revert to siloed sectoral approaches.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Supporting partners to implement a holistic approach to child protection and document the effect it has on children’s lives; advocating for the importance of investing in child protection.

- **Efforts to change social and communal norms are not broadly undermined by spurious allegations about the motivations of UNICEF and other actors:** Many of the issues that UNICEF addresses in its child protection work are sensitive and/or controversial. The organization is broadly recognized as having the legitimacy to tackle topics such as child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting and sexual violence against children, but there have been occasional efforts to argue that the United Nations and other international actors should not engage on issues that are deemed “culturally-specific”.
  - **Key risks:** False allegations about the motivations of UNICEF’s work on child protection from those with vested interests in the status quo; high-profile scandals related to UNICEF’s work on child protection.
  - **Key mitigation measures:** Communicating clearly and regularly about the origin, motivation and legitimacy of UNICEF’s focus on realizing the rights of children, especially the most
disadvantaged, and about the UN’s neutrality; addressing issues that might prove controversial as soon as they arise.

C. Outputs
The six outputs that contribute to the outcome are:

1. Enhanced support and increased capacities of children and families to protect themselves and to eliminate practices and behaviours harmful to children;
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to child protection systems that prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect;
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up interventions that prevent and respond to violence, abuse and exploitation;
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that children’s rights to protection from violence, abuse and exploitation are sustained and promoted in humanitarian situations;
5. Increased capacity of governments and communities to identify and respond to the human rights and gender dimensions of child protection; and

The descriptions of each output below focus on the primary implementation strategies that are being used, with brief accounts of the particular approaches being employed. Additionally, because certain assumptions must be made about the conditions necessary for UNICEF’s actions to lead to the achievement of each output, the one or two most important assumptions are discussed under each output, along with the major risks to these assumptions being borne out and the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks.

1. **Enhanced support and increased capacities of children and families to protect themselves and to eliminate practices and behaviours harmful to children**

   **Rationale for focusing on this output**
   Behaviours and attitudes towards violence, exploitation and abuse of children are key root causes for many of the challenges related to child protection. In many contexts, children and parents are unaware that prevalent sociocultural beliefs and practices cause significant harm to children. Increasing participation by children, families and communities is also important to address challenges in child protection, particularly regarding justice for children and birth registration.

   **Key areas of work on this output**
   UNICEF supports governments and civil society organizations to stimulate culturally sensitive dialogues, rooted in human rights, about the benefits of changing behaviours and attitudes that condone violence, exploitation and abuse. These processes often span multiple years and may require a generational shift to overcome entrenched power relations, but engaging families, communities and entire societies through face-to-face discussion, social mobilization, mass media, and through statements delivered by influential leaders in multiple settings can lead to sustainable change.

   UNICEF works directly with children to strengthen their life skills, including their ability to identify key protection risks and how to report violations. This is complemented by efforts to engage with parents and caregivers concerning attitudes and beliefs towards physical punishment, other forms of violence and exploitation, and child-rearing practices. UNICEF supports awareness-raising and capacity-building of teachers, community and religious leaders, civil society and faith-based organizations, the media and the
private sector to help break the silence around practices that harm children and to change deeply ingrained sociocultural beliefs and practices. This includes, for example, working with religious leaders to address corporal punishment in homes and schools and working with the private travel and tourism sector to prevent sexual exploitation of children.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

One of the key assumptions in this area is that the communities with which UNICEF is working are open to receiving information, behaviour change messages and other efforts to change sociocultural beliefs and practices. The issues that UNICEF addresses are sensitive by their very nature, so the organization has developed respectful ways to engage children, families and communities, but there is always a risk that localized opposition can coalesce into something larger. The primary risk mitigation measure is being attuned to the sensitivity of child protection issues and communicating proactively to ensure that the general public understands UNICEF’s work in this area.

2. **Increased national capacity to provide access to child protection systems that prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect**

**Rationale for focusing on this output**

Supply is a major element of UNICEF’s work on child protection, both because there are key weaknesses in the provision of important services (e.g., birth registration) and because too often gaps between different parts of the system jeopardize the well-being of girls and boys.

**Key areas of work on this output**

Much of the work in this area is capacity development. UNICEF works to strengthen the overall child protection system, including both preventive and responsive services, at national and subnational levels by bringing together the key child protection actors (e.g., social services, police, judiciary, teachers, health workers) to form a continuum of care that is able to both anticipate when a child is at risk and respond appropriately when a child experiences violence, abuse or exploitation.

Support for birth registration is another focus for 2014-2017. UNICEF will assist countries to modernize birth registration systems, support legal and policy reform, and strengthen the links between birth registration and other services, such as health and education. Birth registration is also an area in which UNICEF concentrates on identifying and promoting innovation, such as by using mobile technology to reach disadvantaged population groups and by working with actors traditionally outside the birth registration process, such as community leaders, to promote birth registration.

Another area of emphasis is developing capacity to ensure that children in contact with the law are dealt with in a manner consistent with their rights and international norms. This requires the system to recognize the specific needs of children and emphasize diversion and non-custodial measures.

Early childhood development plays a vital role in promoting a protective environment for children and so UNICEF supports efforts to develop and implement integrated early childhood development approaches, with a particular emphasis on effective coordination mechanisms and increased budgets.

To address child marriage UNICEF develops the capacity of partners in countries that have a high prevalence of child marriage to prepare national strategies or plans. The organization also works to ensure that these documents are costed and that budgets are subsequently allocated to them.
Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The most significant assumption underpinning this output is that a minimum level of capacity exists within governments and other partners so that capacity development efforts are not rendered useless through the absence of human resources with whom UNICEF can engage. The major risk to this is in humanitarian situations, where human resources are sometimes extremely limited. Poor coordination in the sector is another risk, as it results in inefficiencies that weaken capacity in some settings. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF diversifies the partners with which it works rather than focusing solely on one stakeholder. Additionally, the organization seeks to build resilience to cope with humanitarian situations.

3. **Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up interventions that prevent and respond to violence, abuse and exploitation**

Rationale for focusing on this output
Almost without exception, programme countries have some form of child protection legislation in place. However, in many countries, legislation still falls short of international standards established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international treaties. One common problem is that in many countries legislation does not recognize a child’s right to be heard (article 12 of the Convention). As a result, many children do not have the right to make their views known or are not viewed as having the capacity to contribute to decisions that affect their lives.

Key areas of work on this output
Much of UNICEF’s work in this output is evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. The organization works with governments to map and assess legal frameworks to bring them into line with international best practices. When gaps are identified, such as concerning a child’s right to be heard, UNICEF supports governments to revise laws and policies accordingly.

The organization supports system strengthening by building national capacities to budget and track expenditures on child protection, such as by working with ministries of finance to develop nationally comparable benchmarks for expenditures on child protection services. UNICEF also advocates with political leaders to ensure that countries dedicate resources to child protection.

Cross-sectoral linkages are important for successful implementation of a systems approach. Thus UNICEF places great emphasis on engaging with the health and education sectors, given the opportunities for synergistic action around issues such as birth registrations, child marriage, early childhood development and violence.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The major assumption related to this output is that political commitment exists not only to address gaps in laws and policies but also to translate them into concrete improvements in the functioning of child protection systems. The major risk to this is that in a number of countries, the capacity to formulate laws and policies exceeds the capacity to implement. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF supports capacity building at both the policy and implementation levels. Additionally, through advocacy and communications, the organization strengthens political commitment to child protection issues and public awareness of them, which generates increased accountability for delivery.
4. Increased country capacity and delivery of services to ensure that children’s rights to protection from violence, abuse and exploitation are sustained and promoted in humanitarian situations

Rationale for focusing on this output
As noted earlier, emergencies weaken and disrupt child protection systems and increase vulnerability to violence, exploitation and abuse. Gender-based violence (including sexual assault, rape, physical violence and harmful practices) often increases not only during crises but in their aftermath. This is particularly the case in large temporary settlements or when children are separated from their families as a result of dislocation.

Key areas of work on this output
UNICEF works in collaboration with partners to minimize the impact of armed conflict and natural disasters on children through the provision of psychosocial support, referral for services and case management and of support for the release and reintegration of children recruited or used by armed forces and armed groups. UNICEF is the lead UN agency on risk education to protect communities from landmines and other explosive remnants of war and also provides assistance to victims and survivors. The organization works with partners to provide safe spaces for children and women to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. UNICEF also supports efforts at family tracing and reunification.

In countries where the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism for grave violations against children is implemented, as mandated by the Security Council, it informs programme response, advocacy and prevention strategies. As co-chair of the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting, UNICEF is directly involved in dialogue with parties to conflict. The organization also participates in developing action plans in which parties commit to halt, address and prevent further violations against children.

As part of the UNICEF approach to building resilience, the organization supports emergency risk planning at national and subnational levels.

Partnerships are particularly important in humanitarian situations. Under the Global Protection Cluster UNICEF is the designated lead of the Child Protection Area of Responsibility and, in collaboration with UNFPA, co-leads the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility. UNICEF is working with partners to provide open source information management to improve and better measure the impact of humanitarian action for child protection, gender-based violence and grave violations, particularly for the most disadvantaged children. In addition the organization helps in building families’ and communities’ resilience and capacity to respond to external stresses.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The most important assumption related to this output relates to the unpredictability of humanitarian crises: there is always a possibility that a large number will occur in rapid succession, overwhelming the organization’s ability to respond. It is assumed that this will not occur over the period 2014-2017, but it remains a risk that must be planned for. In response, UNICEF supports preparedness planning and builds resilience at multiple levels.

5. Increased capacity of governments and communities to identify and respond to the human rights and gender dimensions of child protection

Rationale for focusing on this output
Cross-cutting work on human rights and gender equality are critical to UNICEF’s holistic approach to child protection. Respect for human rights underpins the organization’s response to violence, exploitation and
abuse, while a gender-responsive approach is critical because certain forms of rights violations and gaps in the child protection system affect girls disproportionately, such as child marriage, sexual violence in families and gender-based violence in the context of an emergency.

Key areas of work on this output
Central to the overall strategy is to ensure that governments at national and subnational levels have data disaggregated at least by sex and age to inform planning and policies. UNICEF supports governments to undertake nationally representative household surveys to provide national estimates of sexual, physical and emotional violence against boys and girls. Additionally, more attention is being given to strengthening the collection, analysis (particularly from a gender perspective) and use of routine administrative data as a key protection tool. UNICEF also uses its cross-sectoral mandate to connect programming strategies across health, education, social inclusion, WASH and child protection sectors to improve services, shift gender norms and advance policy and legal shifts to address issues such as child marriage, gender-based violence and early childhood development.

Preventing child marriage protects girls’ rights and can help to reduce their risks of violence, early pregnancy, HIV infection and maternal death and disability. Therefore UNICEF works to strengthen the capacity of governments and partners in a small group of countries so they can take to scale several of the most promising of five evidence-based cross-sectoral strategies: girls’ education; cash and incentive schemes; communications campaigns; community mobilization; and legislative and policy shifts addressing minimum age at marriage.

UNICEF also works to ensure that all child protection policies benefit from gender reviews.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The main assumption that influences the likelihood of UNICEF’s actions leading to the output are that communities, national partners and donors understand the importance of employing an approach to child protection that is based on human rights and gender equality. The risk associated with the first assumption is that there has been an increase in isolated attacks on these principles – particularly on gender equality – that could coalesce into a broader crusade against them. To address this risk, UNICEF continues to build the evidence base for the added value of addressing gender equality and the importance of using a human rights-based approach. Additionally, the organization ensures that its own staff prioritize these issues, including by providing tools and regular training on these topics.

6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress in child protection

Rationale for focusing on this output
Strengthening the evidence base for child protection is a central element of UNICEF’s work for 2014-2017, and action at global and regional levels is critical for this. Additionally, the Strategic Plan period includes the development of the post-2015 development agenda, in which UNICEF’s advocacy on child protection will be important for ensuring attention to key topics.

Key areas of work on this output
Much of the organization’s work at global and regional levels is in the form of evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. One key area of emphasis is building the evidence base around child protection. This involves both supporting countries to gather disaggregated data for analysis and identifying good practices and disseminating them publicly, including by publishing findings of UNICEF research in peer-reviewed journals. The two thematic priorities for research over the course of 2014-2017 are violence against children and child marriage. Given the limited evidence base on both of these, the research needs
stretch from understanding the prevalence of these two and identifying key drivers of them, to determining what works to prevent them, under what conditions and at what cost.

South-South and triangular cooperation are important strategies at global and regional level, such as in the child protection master’s degree course, which engages South-based academics and institutions, and capacity building of partners, including government officials. Similarly, UNICEF’s programming against child marriage has a significant component of sharing strategies and learnings among high-prevalence countries and regions.

The global End Violence against Children initiative is an important new approach to raising the visibility of this issue, and a good example of the work that UNICEF does in partnerships. In addition, advocacy around the post-2015 development agenda will be a focus in the coming years, with an aim of ensuring that several indicators related to key elements of child protection are included.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

The main assumption that must be made for these actions to lead to the output is that the global system of coordination and partnership does not collapse and be replaced by increased competition and rivalry. The risk that this will occur is small but it could conceivably happen as a result, for example, of a complete breakdown in the post-2015 process. Risk mitigation measures occur at both global and national levels. UNICEF devotes considerable resources at global level to support the post-2015 process and UN coherence, and UNICEF country offices regularly play leadership roles within UN country teams and promote coordination among agencies at the country level.

### 12. Narrative description for outcome 7: Social inclusion

[Schematic for social inclusion located here.]

**A. Outcome and programme areas**

UNICEF has long recognized the significance of multidimensional poverty, the compounded deprivations of health, education, nutrition, water and sanitation, and income poverty that violate a child’s rights today and stymie her chances for a better future. Moreover, strengthening social inclusion to address multidimensional poverty has long been a core part of UNICEF’s work. Many of the individual deprivations faced by children, as well as UNICEF’s efforts to address them through strengthening various forms of social inclusion, have already been covered in discussions of earlier outcomes: deprivations related to health and the organization’s work on social inclusion in health have been addressed under the health outcome, deprivations related to nutrition and the organization’s response to these have been included in the nutrition outcome, and so on. The final outcome, social inclusion, focuses on the detailed analysis and policy responses to child poverty, both by continuing UNICEF’s emphasis on multidimensional poverty, and undertaking new work and analysis in an area that has not heretofore been tackled: monetary poverty. This includes how the organization addresses both child monetary poverty and the combined effects of the multiple dimensions of child poverty that cannot be addressed through sectoral responses.

This outcome also covers the organization’s cross-cutting work on discrimination, both individual, in which social attitudes lead to marginalization or mistreatment in the family or community, and structural, in which systemic exclusion or differential treatment by those with power means that children’s best interests are not considered and children’s rights are violated. The impact of such discrimination is similar to the impact of
poverty, as it excludes children from opportunities and limits their futures. As with poverty, the preceding outcomes have addressed various elements of the efforts that UNICEF makes to address discrimination, such as in the context of HIV/AIDS. However, in addition to this sectoral work, UNICEF addresses both individual and structural discrimination through broader efforts at social inclusion.

The organization’s focus on social inclusion is particularly urgent in light of global trends. Despite unprecedented global prosperity and progress on the MDGs, children are disproportionately represented among the extreme poor: a staggering 47% of the world’s extremely poor people are aged 18 or younger, while 33% of the non-poor are aged 18 or younger. Over 550 million children aged 18 or younger are struggling in extreme poverty, trying to survive on less than $1.25 a day. Moreover, volatility at both the macro and household levels is increasing, creating new risks for children as external shocks lead to precarious living situations. At the same time, growing income inequalities and disparities in outcomes are becoming starker not just in low- and middle-income countries but also in high-income countries. It is increasingly clear that national average figures tell only partial stories, to the extent that the majority of poor children globally actually live in middle-income countries. Growing inequality makes it more difficult for families and children to escape poverty while also fuelling social unrest.

Discrimination in its various guises is also dishearteningly pervasive, even if the nature of discrimination makes it more difficult to quantify and aggregate. Newspapers around the world regularly document the stories of people killed simply because they had HIV and dared to speak about it, while every day countless millions of children suffer the effects of the kinds of discrimination that never make it into the media but that nevertheless impose limits on their daily experiences, narrowing their future opportunities.

When social inclusion succeeds, the most deprived and marginalized children and families have both the opportunities and the resources necessary to realize their rights. In order to achieve this, UNICEF works both to reduce child poverty and to address discrimination. The organization supports efforts to address equity in areas beyond the traditional social sectors and to better focus, measure and report on progress in ways that emphasize the impact on children’s lives. UNICEF’s contribution to eliminating child poverty and addressing both individual and structural discrimination includes working with ministries of finance, planning, justice and social protection, as well as national statistical offices. This work also extends to engagement with parliaments, national human rights institutions, local authorities, the private sector, social movements, the media and children themselves.

**Outcome for the 2014-2017 period: Improved policy environment and systems for disadvantaged and excluded children, guided by improved knowledge and data.**

To accomplish this, UNICEF is focusing on delivering results in five programme areas:

- Child poverty analysis and social protection;
- Human rights, non-discrimination and participation;
- Public financial management;
- Governance and decentralization; and
- Social inclusion in humanitarian situations.

**Rationale for focusing on these programme areas**

With 47% of people in extreme poverty 18 years old or younger, children are heavily overrepresented among the world’s poor. The multidimensional aspects of poverty have devastating effects on their development, and increase the likelihood of transmission of poverty into the next generation. Nevertheless, reporting, measurement and analysis of child poverty remain limited, hampering the development of effective policy responses. Integrated social protection systems have been shown to reduce the depth of
poverty in South Africa by 47% and in Mexico by 30%, with corollary improvements in child wellbeing. However, estimates suggest over 75% of the world’s population continues to live without adequate social protection coverage. Among services related to social protection, child care and parenting support in particular are effective in reducing child poverty, but the families most in need remain underserved, while child-headed households are particularly vulnerable.

Despite widespread ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and continued adoption of other key international human rights instruments important for children, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, effective mechanisms are often lacking to translate commitments into effective action, promote accountability and monitor progress. Actions are needed to counter and eliminate discrimination and bias children face based on socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, geography and other factors. Discrimination must be addressed because it is intrinsically unjust and impedes realization of the rights of children, but also because it has numerous harmful consequences on children, affecting their physical, psychological and emotional well-being in ways that fundamentally shape the realization of their rights.

A common factor driving multidimensional child poverty is the lack of adequate, equitable or effective allocation and utilization of public financial resources. While overall domestic financing has been increasing considerably in many countries, the latest data show declines in health and education per capita spending in a majority of the 66 countries for which data are available. Even where social spending has increased, socioeconomically disadvantaged areas often do not benefit. Further progress in child outcomes, especially for disadvantaged children, requires greater efforts by governments to tackle public financial management-related barriers and bottlenecks for children in national and subnational budgeting processes.

Child wellbeing is also directly affected by governance practices at national and subnational levels. Decisions on how to regulate and cooperate with the private sector, for example, can impact directly on the environment in which children live, and the quality and cost of essential services. In many countries local governments, including urban municipalities, are increasingly responsible for service delivery, and yet lack capacity to consult their constituencies and plan, budget and monitor services in ways that respond to the needs of the most deprived children and women. At both national and local levels, strengthening governance in support of child rights requires promoting public accountability and supporting state and non-state actors such as parliaments, civil society, social movements and communities to access budgetary information, advocate, monitor, and hold to account.

Social inclusion measures can help prevent or mitigate crises, improve the quality of humanitarian action, and facilitate recovery. For example, national actors and development partners increasingly use cash transfers as a humanitarian support measure. When effectively implemented these can serve as stepping stones to building or strengthening social protection systems that are sustained through the recovery and development phases. Peace-building measures involving children can contribute to social cohesion, as can strengthened human rights monitoring and justice mechanisms that incorporate child rights. Local authorities must be able to plan for potential crises, factoring in attention to vulnerable community members in emergency response plans.

**B. Assumptions, risk analysis and mitigation measures**

The outcome is delivered through a series of six outputs. These are described in detail below but it is important to acknowledge that there are a series of assumptions that must hold true for the outputs to lead
to the outcome. These assumptions are based on UNICEF’s understanding of the sector and so are considered reasonable. However, given their importance and the fact that they are largely beyond the organization’s control, it is important to acknowledge them and also to conduct a risk analysis to understand the possible dangers should the assumptions not prove valid.

By definition, each of these assumptions may not hold true exactly as predicted. The consequence would be that the causal link between the outputs and the outcome could be threatened, either entirely or partly, such as would be reflected in underperformance in a subset of the outcome indicators. Therefore it is important to understand the key risks associated with each assumption. UNICEF does not expect the risks articulated below to occur, but identifying them now and taking steps to prevent them is an important part of prudent programming. It also increases the organization’s ability to contribute to the outcome. Although many factors could pose risks, only the most significant are highlighted below. The measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks are also briefly summarized.

This subsection explores the assumptions, risks and mitigation measures related to the causal link between outputs and the outcome. There are also assumptions, risks and mitigation measures concerning the transition between the actions that UNICEF takes and each output, but these are handled within the discussion of each output.

The major assumptions behind the six outputs contributing to the outcome, the key associated risks and the key related mitigation measures are:

- **International and national leaders continue to embrace the concept of social inclusion**: Social inclusion has become a more widely accepted part of the development landscape in recent years, with support both at the international level and in many programme countries. This trend appears set to continue over the course of 2014-2017.
  - **Key risks**: Evidence emerges that social inclusion programming is ineffective in addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups; vested interests unite to oppose shifting the focus to these groups.
  - **Key mitigation measures**: Generating evidence about the social and individual benefits of social inclusion; increasing participation by the most disadvantaged communities in policy dialogue, so they can advocate directly for the importance of focusing on social inclusion.

- **Increasing participation by children and communities affected by a particular decision increases their inclusion in society**: Increasing participation is a key element of much social inclusion work. UNICEF sees participation as important both as a means (i.e., because engaging directly with children and communities leads to better decision-making in the course of programming) and as an end (i.e., because increased participation should translate into increased inclusion). However, while there has been a lot of research demonstrating the importance of participation as a means, there has been less on its importance as an end. Nonetheless, in the organization’s experience, increased participation does often lead to increased inclusion.
  - **Key risks**: Increased participation leads to disillusionment and withdrawal, reducing inclusion (e.g., if children’s hopes are raised and not fulfilled).
  - **Key mitigation measures**: Managing the expectations of children and communities, including by preparing them well for the challenges and inevitable setbacks that occur in advocacy efforts; generating evidence about the benefits resulting from increased participation and documenting good practices related to it.
• **Well-designed systems are better at identifying and addressing the needs of disadvantaged populations:** Much of the work on social inclusion addresses systems of various kinds, particularly efforts to strengthen them and make them more responsive to the needs of disadvantaged groups. However, given that this is a new area of emphasis, there is a dearth of data to confirm that systems strengthening will in fact lead both to better identification of disadvantaged children and more effective delivery to them.
  
  o **Key risks:** Systems are strengthened but continue to focus on less disadvantaged groups; systems improve in identifying disadvantaged groups but this does not translate into more effectively addressing their needs (e.g., because systems do not have the capacity to reach them or because demand-side constraints are so significant that improved supply does not help).
  
  o **Key mitigation measures:** Generating evidence about the importance and benefits of focusing on disadvantaged populations; continuing to improve the MoRES approach so that its effectiveness in identifying the most critical barriers and bottlenecks improves.

• **Partners remain willing to work in multisectoral ways:** A multisectoral approach is required to address social inclusion successfully, given the multitude of issues involved and the reality that they are inevitably handled by different parts of any large institution such as a national government. Multisectoral approaches have been more widely accepted, but in some places challenges remain both in principle and in practice.
  
  o **Key risks:** The global trend toward multisectoral approaches is perceived as having gone too far, promoting inefficiency, and a counter-reaction develops that swings the pendulum back to siloed sectoral approaches.
  
  o **Key mitigation measures:** Building the evidence base for the multisectoral approach to show the ways in which addressing the needs of children holistically improves results; highlighting the shortcomings for children of siloed sectoral approaches.

C. **Outputs**

The six outputs that contribute to the outcome are:

1. Enhanced support for disadvantaged and marginalized children and families to use social protection systems and participate in decision-making processes affecting them;
2. Increased national capacity to provide access to inclusive systems that protect children and adolescents from poverty and promote social inclusion;
3. Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for inclusive social policies and social protection measures, including in risk-prone and fragile contexts;
4. Improved country capacity and national systems to promote resilience and strengthen response to humanitarian situations;
5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of social inclusion; and
6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress towards social inclusion.

The descriptions of each output below focus on the primary implementation strategies that are being used, with brief accounts of the particular approaches being employed. Additionally, because certain assumptions must be made about the conditions necessary for UNICEF’s actions to lead to the achievement of each output, the one or two most important assumptions are discussed under each output, along with the major risks to these assumptions being borne out and the measures that UNICEF is taking to mitigate these risks.
1. Enhanced support for disadvantaged and marginalized children and families to use social protection systems and participate in decision-making processes affecting them

Rationale for focusing on this output
The willingness of disadvantaged children and families to use social protection systems and to participate in decision-making processes that affect them is shaped by sociocultural beliefs and practices, which can both stimulate and suppress demand for services. Addressing these beliefs and practices is also critical because they directly affect social inclusion, again both positively (e.g., beliefs and practices that encourage the participation of girls and women in political processes) and negatively (e.g., discrimination and marginalization leading to exclusion). Work on this output is also important because of the central importance of supporting opportunities for disadvantaged children and families to have a voice in decision-making at local and national levels, which is integral to a comprehensive approach to social inclusion.

Key areas of work on this output
UNICEF addresses this output primarily through capacity development and evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy. The organization works to increase the voice and visibility of excluded children and groups, and to provide the media, faith-based organizations, political leaders and other influencers with information, skills and support to counter stereotypes and biases, and to increase respect of and value for diversity and difference. This involves promoting community dialogue, working with the media and other national and local influencers to promote positive views of marginalized groups, and giving excluded children and groups the opportunity to tell their story themselves. UNICEF also supports the development of mechanisms that facilitate participation by children in the process of preparing local, subnational and national plans on the topics that touch their lives.

Recognizing the importance of public accountability in this area, UNICEF supports social movements that give voice to communities. It also aids efforts to build the capacity of civil society to demand more accountable institutions and more transparent policies and budgets, as well as systems designed to maximize the availability of resources for beneficiaries. In addition UNICEF promotes participation by children and communities in decision-making processes affecting them by helping countries provide the mechanisms and institutions necessary to foster dialogue with communities and children.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
One of the key assumptions in this area is that the communities with which UNICEF is working are open to receiving information, behaviour change messages and other efforts to change sociocultural beliefs and practices. Given that the area is relatively new, efforts to date have generally been readily embraced by communities and families, but there is always a risk that other issues (e.g., geopolitical conflict, the spread of a new disease) could divert focus and so make communities less responsive. There is also a risk that the publicity surrounding social protection schemes raises expectations that the schemes are unable to deliver upon, leading to disillusionment and disengagement. Risk mitigation measures include building the evidence base for social inclusion to demonstrate its importance and communicating clearly about what social inclusion can and cannot deliver.
2. **Increased national capacity to provide access to inclusive systems that protect children and adolescents from poverty and promote social inclusion**

**Rationale for focusing on this output**
In light of the relative newness of the concept of social inclusion and the lack of established practice in the area, governments face considerable challenges in translating the key principles into programmes that effectively improve social inclusion. The paucity of data is particularly problematic, as it impedes efforts to focus on disadvantaged groups. The potential of social protection to improve well-being and increase the resilience of families and communities is increasingly recognized, but more work is needed to make these measures child sensitive, systematic and sustainable. Additionally, it is increasingly clear that even if social protection schemes do not lift families out of poverty, they may nonetheless have important cross-sectoral benefits (e.g., the documented effects of modest cash transfers on indicators of health service utilization, immunization and HIV). Other services that address both child poverty and discrimination, including child care and access to justice, will also receive further concerted attention.

**Key areas of work on this output**
UNICEF works with partners to find cost-effective and inclusive approaches to expanding access to services such as social protection, child care and parenting support, and human rights and legal services. The organization also focuses on improving the quality of these services and promoting participation of users in their design. In addition UNICEF supports efforts to generate evidence on the driving factors and prevalence of child poverty, including monetary and non-monetary barriers to accessing and utilizing services, and the impact of policy responses and services in social protection, child care and related areas. The organization invests in strengthening national statistical offices to collect better data as a tool to measure both monetary and multidimensional child poverty. UNICEF also provides assistance to large urban municipalities to develop their capacity to generate and use data on the most disadvantaged groups.

Identifying and promoting innovation is important in this area, and so for example UNICEF is working to document and support emerging practices in the rapidly growing field of real-time monitoring. Real-time monitoring entails high frequency and systematic data collection, analysis and reporting of evolving vulnerabilities, which allows countries to adapt their policies and programmes to address fast-changing circumstances, especially in situations of heightened political, social or economic volatilities. Given how quickly and significantly a shock or trend can exacerbate conditions for disadvantaged or vulnerable populations, this innovative approach is particularly useful in promoting social inclusion.

UNICEF then supports governments to use that evidence to inform the design of social protection and other policy responses to poverty and exclusion. The organization provides training and technical assistance to support the government ministries responsible for social protection to build child-responsive approaches into all aspects of programme delivery. UNICEF is also concerned with building the capacity of countries to evaluate their social protection programmes. As such it is an active member of the Transfer Project, an innovative research and learning initiative that supports improved knowledge and practice on social transfers in Africa.

Given the cross-sectoral nature of multidimensional poverty, in generating evidence UNICEF engages with multiple sectors, including health, education, nutrition, child protection and HIV. The objective is to improve the understanding and measurement of child poverty and to jointly influence the design and implementation of social protection interventions in order to maximize the impact on multiple sectoral outcomes, including on early childhood development.
Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The most significant assumption underpinning this output is that a minimum level of capacity exists within governments and other partners so that capacity development efforts are not rendered useless through the absence of human resources with whom UNICEF can engage. A risk to this comes from the fact that, since social inclusion is a new area, some governments have not prioritized the allocation of resources to it. Another risk is posed by humanitarian situations, as these often significantly constrain the availability of human resources. As a risk mitigation measure, UNICEF generates evidence about social inclusion and uses it to advocate with governments and other partners to ensure that social inclusion receives the resources that it merits. The organization also supports preparedness planning to mitigate the risks associated with humanitarian crises.

3. **Strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for inclusive social policies and social protection measures, including in risk-prone and fragile contexts**

Rationale for focusing on this output
The laws and policies addressing social inclusion are works in progress in many countries, which creates significant opportunities to add value by sharing experiences and lessons learned. Additionally, capacity for planning and budgeting, particularly in child-responsive ways, is limited. Such work is also made more complicated by the fact that social inclusion efforts often cut across multiple government ministries, necessitating cross-sectoral responses.

Key areas of work on this output
UNICEF focuses on capacity development, and evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy to achieve this output.

The organization supports partners to put in place legislation and policies that aim to extend provision of social protection, child care, parenting support, human rights monitoring and legal services and make access to them more equitable. UNICEF assists ministries of finance, national planning bodies and local governments to develop the capacity to identify and address inequities in budget allocation and expenditure.

UNICEF also supports civil society groups and parliaments to analyse inequities and address them through advocacy or legislation. Partnerships with governments, universities, think tanks and civil society support development of evidence on the impacts of fiscal and economic trends and decision-making on child poverty and inequity. The organization seeks to ensure that the impact on children of emerging trends – such as urbanization, disaster risk and climate change – is taken into account in policies and programmes and that countries work to reduce risks and inequities and strengthen the resilience of families in these contexts. Given the increasing impact of climate change, the organization works to ensure that children’s rights are part of the policy dialogue on environmental sustainability.

In many countries UNICEF advocates for widening the fiscal space for effective investment in excluded children. Identifying innovative ways to do this is important to the organization’s approach, such as using increased government receipts from natural resources, reinvesting funds resulting from changes in public subsidies and using the income from carbon credits.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
The major assumption related to this output is that governments are interested in addressing social inclusion in laws and policies in an evidence-based manner. Another assumption is that some partners that have not traditionally worked as closely with UNICEF – such as ministries of finance and national planning offices
– are willing to engage on issues of social inclusion. The key risk to both assumptions is the lack of political commitment to the very concept of social inclusion. Additionally, there is a risk that the capacity to formulate laws and policies exceeds the capacity to implement them.

To mitigate the risk of lack of political commitment to social inclusion, UNICEF is building the evidence base on the dangers associated with social exclusion and the effectiveness of measures to improve social inclusion. This evidence is the starting point for the organization’s advocacy and communications on social inclusion, which aims to build political and societal support for strengthening it. UNICEF also supports efforts to develop capacity to implement social inclusion systems.

4. Improved country capacity and national systems to promote resilience and strengthen response to humanitarian situations

Rationale for focusing on this output
Addressing humanitarian situations is crucial to improving social inclusion for two key reasons. First, crises routinely push people on the verge of poverty and exclusion fully into both. Second, for those already confronting multidimensional poverty, emergencies typically result in further exclusion and deprivation and undermine mechanisms that children have been using to minimize the impact of their poverty.

Key areas of work on this output
A major emphasis is this area is building resilience by strengthening national capacities. UNICEF supports governments to undertake risk-informed budgetary planning, management and auditing to improve preparedness, prevention and response to shocks and cumulative stresses at both national and subnational levels. UNICEF also supports efforts to strengthen monitoring systems, including by developing mechanisms that facilitate consultation directly with affected populations as part of the process of humanitarian performance monitoring. In addition UNICEF is working to generate evidence to inform programming that better captures the potential for social protection to promote humanitarian outcomes as well as for emergency interventions to catalyse longer-term social protection system development.

In the recovery phase, UNICEF works to strengthen national capacity in areas such as public financial management for child-sensitive budgeting, and access to justice and ensuring the human rights of children in contact with the criminal justice system.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
Several assumptions are necessary for the transition between these actions and the output to occur. First, because of the unpredictability of humanitarian crises, there is always a possibility that a large number will occur in rapid succession, overwhelming the organization’s ability to respond. It is assumed that this will not occur over the period 2014-2017, although this remains a risk that must be planned for. Second, coordination is a challenge in humanitarian settings, but it is assumed that this will not worsen dramatically to the point that it completely undermines the effectiveness of interventions. To address these risks, UNICEF supports preparedness planning and efforts to build resilience at multiple levels, and works with partners to ensure coordinated responses.
5. Increased capacity of governments and partners, as duty-bearers, to identify and respond to key human rights and gender equality dimensions of social inclusion

Rationale for focusing on this output
The very concept of social inclusion does not make sense without reference to human rights and gender equality, as these principles provide the rationale for the entire area of work. Therefore, the inclusion of social inclusion as an outcome in the Strategic Plan is itself a reflection of the organization’s commitment and contributions to human rights and gender equality.

Key areas of work on this output
A key area of emphasis for 2014-2017 is to support countries to improve their legal and policy frameworks to address human rights and gender equality, as well as to strengthen their institutions and accountability mechanisms in line with their international commitments to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This includes supporting the development of national and local institutions (e.g., human rights institutions, ombudspersons, the judiciary) capable of monitoring, investigating and pursuing violations of children’s rights. It also includes the development of local services to help children and community groups to access informal and formal justice systems to redress discrimination and other rights violations. In humanitarian contexts and as mandated by Security Council Resolution 1612, UNICEF may play the human rights monitoring role directly.

Additionally, the organization promotes meaningful participation by children and thereby the inclusion of children and their communities in decision-making processes affecting their lives. This is achieved by helping countries to provide the mechanisms and institutions necessary to foster dialogue with communities and children, as well as by supporting children and their communities in building their capacity to effectively voice their views and demand their rights.

Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output
Because the concepts of social inclusion, human rights and gender equality are intertwined, the main assumption is that partners continue to accept that human rights and gender equality approaches are critical for sustainable, inclusive development. The risk associated with this assumption is that there has been an increase in isolated attacks on these principles – particularly on gender equality – that could coalesce into a broader crusade against them. To address this risk, UNICEF continues to build the evidence base for the added value of addressing gender equality and the importance of using a human rights-based approach. Additionally, the organization ensures that its own staff prioritize these issues, including by providing tools and regular training on these topics.

6. Enhanced global and regional capacity to accelerate progress towards social inclusion

Rationale for focusing on this output
Because this is a relatively new area, there is considerable scope for activities at global and regional levels to add value to engagement at country level, particularly through advocacy to raise awareness about the issue, along with evidence generation and knowledge management. Additionally, since the social inclusion area is still in formation, partnerships and coordination are particularly important, and the global and regional levels are important in facilitating them.

Key areas of work on this output
As part of the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board and the Social Protection Floor Initiative, UNICEF is engaged with partners in promoting effective and efficient expansion and strengthening of
social protection systems. UNICEF is also working with the World Bank, International Labour Organization, European Union and other partners to ensure data harmonization among development partners and to maximize resources for supporting social protection systems that respond to children’s vulnerabilities. The organization supports global dissemination of information about social inclusion by publishing findings of its research in peer-reviewed journals. For the period 2014-2017, a number of research priorities have been identified, including how can social protection systems best be designed and implemented to promote social inclusion; how can the impact of advocacy and policy work on social protection systems and on child-sensitive public finance management be identified and evaluated; and how can specific threats to child poverty and social inclusion that arise from urban phenomena and from environmental sustainability issues including as climate change adaptation, low carbon development and environmental degradation best be addressed.

In addition, UNICEF leads the Child Poverty Network, which engages academics, policymakers and practitioners in the debate on child poverty measures and policy responses. Together with the World Bank, UNICEF supports the Africa Community of Practice, which covers 29 countries and facilitates the exchange of lessons and experiences on the design and implementation of social protection programmes.

South-South and triangular cooperation is another important approach in this area. Triangular cooperation is at the heart of UNICEF’s efforts to convene representatives of city governments and encourage them to exchange knowledge on urban planning and programming.

**Key assumptions, risks and mitigation measures for this output**

The main assumption that must be made for these actions to lead to the output is that the global system of coordination and partnership does not collapse and be replaced by increased competition and rivalry. The risk that this will occur is small but it could conceivably happen as a result, for example, of a complete breakdown in the post-2015 process. Risk mitigation measures occur at both global and national levels. UNICEF devotes considerable resources at global level to support the post-2015 process and UN coherence, and UNICEF country offices regularly play leadership roles within UN country teams and promote coordination among agencies at the country level.
Annex 1: Implementation strategies

To achieve the results described in this paper, UNICEF employs a number of implementation strategies. These were identified from the End-of-Cycle Review and the QCPR, and are based on an analysis of the organization’s comparative advantage in achieving results for children through the human rights-based approach. The Strategic Plan defined each of the implementation strategies, but since they are relevant for understanding the theory of change, the definitions are included here. Examples of the concrete work that UNICEF is doing in each of these strategies can be found in the narrative and in the schematics accompanying each outcome.

In addition, it is important to note that for all of the implementation strategies described above, country offices require development effectiveness support from regional offices and headquarters. Activities to aid development effectiveness will include guidance and technical support on cross-cutting issues and for assessment, planning and review; global technical leadership and support of the outcomes and implementation strategies; effective management of supplies; and global technical leadership and support in humanitarian action. Development effectiveness support will also contribute to better system-wide coherence among United Nations entities at country level.

A. Capacity development

Capacity development at individual, community and government levels has always been one of UNICEF’s primary implementation strategies. Support to individual and community capacity development is often provided through communication for development, a cross-cutting strategy that promotes positive social norms and behaviours, including demand for services. Developing community capacity also creates opportunities for rights-holders to participate in accountability mechanisms that provide feedback to service providers and duty-bearers.

To strengthen the capacity of government at all levels, UNICEF focuses on training and technical assistance to reform government institutions and improve service provision; strengthening supply chain management; piloting models for scaling up, with attention to quality assurance; and using national and local systems. A growing priority is to strengthen national and subnational collection, analysis and use of data, particularly on children and women. This will include more systematic use of disaggregation to enhance equity-focused design and implementation of policies and programmes. An additional emerging cross-cutting priority is promotion of environmental awareness and related skills among children, including adolescents. This will be linked with capacity development work for disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and emergency response.

B. Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

A growing number of countries are generating insights and evidence that contribute to the realization of child rights and the promotion of equity. Such evidence is likely to be relevant and useful to other countries in similar situations. UNICEF helps partners to generate evidence by supporting design of research and data collection (e.g., through MICS), forming partnerships for conducting research and strengthening related quality assurance mechanisms. Evidence generated from research will support policy dialogue and advocacy related to the seven outcomes, gender equality and humanitarian action. Evidence generated across regions will be used to influence global policy.
Policy dialogue and advocacy by UNICEF will promote the understanding and application of evidence and innovation for children, emphasizing the obligations of human rights duty-bearers. Policy dialogue and advocacy is relevant across all countries, including high-income ones where UNICEF acts frequently in partnership with the National Committees for UNICEF. Policy dialogue and advocacy in high-income countries will address social inclusion and child protection concerns; child rights education in school curricula and learning environments; and increased public awareness and support for child rights around the world. A strengthened external communication strategy and brand will drive public advocacy and complement resource mobilization.

C. Partnerships
Being able to partner effectively and efficiently to enhance results for children, based on the UNICEF comparative advantage and shared commitments to common principles and results, has never been more important. Strategic partnerships with members of the United Nations family and international financial institutions will continue to play a central role in advancing results for children with equity. Catalysing and supporting social movements that call for fulfilment of child rights will become increasingly critical, as will the integration of child rights into other agendas. UNICEF will continue its long-standing practice of building capacity through partnerships with national and local governments, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector, reducing the dependence of governments and other actors on development assistance over time.

Global programme partnerships such as A Promise Renewed and Scaling Up Nutrition will continue to be cornerstones of UNICEF programmatic engagement, advocacy and leveraging of funds. Supporting appropriately structured private sector partnerships will be increasingly important, given the expanding role of for-profit enterprises in providing essential services to poor families. Building on the Children’s Rights and Business Principles Initiative, UNICEF will pursue an integrated approach to corporate engagement, incorporating resource mobilization, corporate social responsibility initiatives and programmatic cooperation.

D. South-South and triangular cooperation
Two long-standing and proven methodologies to support development and learning are South-South cooperation, in which countries support each other to learn from experience, and triangular cooperation, in which South-South engagement is supported or facilitated by a multilateral agency or donor. UNICEF will continue to support programme countries to realize the rights of children through South-South cooperation and to support newer forms of horizontal cooperation, as well as North-South and South-North cooperation. These methodologies are expected to become increasingly cost effective through the use of ICT.

E. Identification and promotion of innovation
Innovation is generating important opportunities to advance progress for children. At the same time, some countries find it difficult to identify and select among the many new technologies and approaches becoming available. UNICEF works to ensure that innovators are aware of and encouraged to address the rights and needs of children, especially those who are most disadvantaged. UNICEF helps to identify the most promising innovations for application in different contexts, supporting partners to adopt, adapt and scale up the approaches that are most useful and to quickly identify those that are not.
F. Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages

Governments around the world are organized into sectoral ministries for efficiency of management, delivery and accountability. At the same time, there is widespread recognition that outcomes in one sector influence those in another, and that certain strategies can help advance results in multiple spheres. For the first time, in this Strategic Plan, UNICEF identifies support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages as an explicit implementation strategy. The organization will emphasize learning from its partnerships and programmes that support integrated programming for children at different stages of the life cycle or that address intersectoral issues. This strategy will contribute to and inform evidence generation, policy dialogue and knowledge management specific to cross-sectoral dimensions. Those lessons and models will be shared widely, as many UNICEF partner governments and even non-governmental organizations strive to increase synergies and coordination across sectors and silos.

G. Service delivery

From the earliest days of UNICEF, delivering essential services – accompanied by communication for development to encourage people to use those services – has been a core approach of programmes in both humanitarian and development settings. For the majority of countries able to provide vital services to their own children, the UNICEF role in service delivery is diminishing. However, it is still critical in situations where institutional capacity for delivery is weak and during humanitarian action. In addition, UNICEF continues to have an important role in coordinating procurement of essential commodities such as vaccines to help governments to benefit from lower costs and better quality control.
Annex 2: Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

A. Introduction
Monitoring, evaluation and reporting are integral and individually distinct parts of programme preparation and implementation. They are critical tools for forward-looking strategic positioning, organizational learning and sound management. Monitoring and evaluation permit the testing of the continued relevance of the theory of change regarding a programme, and are also used to determine whether UNICEF’s country programmes effectively and efficiently respond to issues that affect the most deprived children and to determine the impact and sustainability of equity-based programmes.

UNICEF has invested considerably in strengthening monitoring, evaluation and reporting based on the recognition that these are critical tools for delivering results for children. As a result, the organization has a robust system that enable progress to be assessed and reported at key points along the continuum from inputs to outputs to outcomes to impacts. This system is inspired by the goal of providing relevant and actionable information for staff at all levels on the status of results and key performance indicators. This helps them to effectively monitor the achievement of results, institute corrective action as required and continuously improve the quality of the organization’s work. The reporting mechanisms facilitate accountability by enabling all stakeholders – including Member States, donors, partners and the ultimate beneficiaries of UNICEF’s work, children – to engage in monitoring the organization’s progress has made and promoting efficiency and effectiveness at all levels.

This Annex briefly describes the key elements of UNICEF’s monitoring, evaluation and reporting system. This description is included because evidence provided by the monitoring and evaluation system has been essential in developing the theory of change. This system will be critical to determining whether results have been achieved and making adjustments to the theory of change in the future, including by determining whether or not the assumptions included were realistic or if key elements have been overlooked. However, the theory of change also shape UNICEF’s approach to monitoring and particularly to evaluation. An evaluation should assess not just whether changes occurred, but if the approaches that UNICEF used – as articulated in a theory of change – were appropriate, effective and efficient in delivering these changes.

B. Progress and challenges
Efforts to strengthen results-based management within UNICEF have yielded the following progress:

- An increased emphasis on the quality of analysis at country level. This manifests as:
  - Improvements in situation analyses of children and women, including the identification of barriers and bottlenecks for the most disadvantaged children.
  - Explicit articulation of theories of change for country programmes of cooperation and for all programme components, providing comprehensive analysis of barriers and bottlenecks for the most disadvantaged children, the role of partners and the comparative advantage of UNICEF.

- An increased emphasis on high-quality, participatory and inclusive annual planning and review processes, at national and subnational levels, on progress towards expected results. These processes are based on the corresponding national planning and review processes to the extent possible (e.g., through sector-wide approaches). Other improvements in annual planning and review processes include:
  - Simplification of the results chain for long-term planning:
o Increased training and support for country offices, from regional and headquarters levels;
o Accessible guidance that includes examples of good practice.

- Improved reporting of results achieved in relation to expected results at each level. Specific changes include:
o Incorporation of a reporting system into UNICEF’s new enterprise resource planning system, VISION, which is globally accessible;
o Explicit attention to barriers and bottlenecks within the reporting system.

- A growing consensus within UNICEF that, in long-term planning (e.g., for a five-year country programme), the focus should be on outlining results at the strategic level and increasing flexibility to respond to changes in context and lessons learned. Substantive theories of change continue to be emphasized and made explicit.

- Greater public access to information: UNICEF became a signatory to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) in 2012; country office annual reports have been public documents since 2011; audit reports became public documents in 2012; and all evaluations are publicly accessible.

- Greater support for strengthening routine monitoring systems of governments, particularly for monitoring barriers and bottlenecks for the most disadvantaged children in each context. This helps inform decision-making at all levels. Improvements in national information systems facilitate improved results reporting.

- Increased attention to evaluation across UNICEF, with provision of clear guidance, training and support and establishment of a comprehensive quality assurance and feedback mechanism. Particular attention is being given to utilization of evaluation evidence, including preparation of a management response to the recommendations of each evaluation.

- Major efforts to promote national evaluation capacity development as a tool to encourage country-led development, working collaboratively with a wide range of partners to provide training and support.

The strengthening of results-based management within UNICEF still faces a number of challenges:

- Monitoring systems and performance indicators still focus mainly on programme results, with an emphasis on management-related indicators (e.g., implementation rates, indicators related to human resources, etc.). There has been less focus on measuring the “quality of programming”, such as the extent to which offices are effectively engaged in policy dialogue, capacity development, leveraging of partnerships or advocacy.

- Many country offices still need to clearly articulate a theory of change for policy-level work. Measuring the contribution to policy change is challenging but possible. Setting standards of performance and then undertaking self-assessment of performance against these standards has proven useful. Peer verification of performance at midterm will enable constructive engagement. Evaluations have proven valuable in learning lessons and improving performance.

- Strengthening national-level monitoring systems, in order to provide information and enable an analysis of progress of relevant indicators on barriers and bottlenecks for the most disadvantaged children, is a long-term process that requires significant resources, an enabling policy environment and other significant changes. There remain many gaps in information (particularly timely information) that is sufficiently disaggregated by key characteristics of children at local levels.
With increased attention to identifying UNICEF’s “contribution” (as opposed to lower-level results that are largely attributable to the work of the organization), there is a risk that the corresponding monitoring system will not measure UNICEF’s specific contribution to systemic (impact-level) change. Determining the “value for money” of UNICEF-supported interventions may also become more difficult. UNICEF’s involvement in sector-wide approaches and in other partnership frameworks, under the leadership of governments, is expanding; this will also increasingly represent a challenge to identifying the organization’s unique contribution.

- Reporting on lessons learned – not only from good practices for scaling up, but also from failures and mistakes – needs to be emphasized. Corporate culture continues to favour reporting positive experiences.

C. Status of UNICEF’s monitoring, evaluation and reporting system: Monitoring

Monitoring provides the opportunity to make adjustments to the country programme. By gathering and assessing information on organizational and programme performance, monitoring permits managers to make important decisions. Information generated during the monitoring process offers a constructive base from which to make decisions about adjusting results, programme design and workplans during the programme cycle and in the future. This does not mean that results and programme design should be changed cavalierly, but when monitoring signals that something is off course, a careful review or an evaluation of the situation should be undertaken to determine whether a modification is warranted. Adopting an adaptive planning style is usually more successful than following original plans rigidly since unexpected opportunities, as well as obstacles, often arise. In the many cases where the result is a change of behaviour, it is not always possible to accurately predict people's reaction to interventions; monitoring and subsequent adjustment of interventions are essential.

UNICEF employs two kinds of monitoring: situation monitoring and performance monitoring. An equity focus is fully integrated into both approaches.

Situation monitoring measures change or lack of change in a condition or a set of conditions. Monitoring the situation of children and women and development goals such as the MDGs is necessary when trying to draw conclusions about the impact of programmes or policies. It also includes monitoring of the wider context, such as early warning monitoring, or monitoring of socioeconomic trends and the country’s wider policy, economic or institutional context. UNICEF is broadly engaged in situation monitoring using the country analysis and the situation analysis of children and women, MICS and DevInfo, among other tools. Efforts to obtain and quickly respond to information on human vulnerability in the wake of the global food, financial and economic crises have led to innovative social monitoring tools such as UNICEF’s Real-Time Monitoring of the Most Vulnerable and the UN Global Pulse, launched by the UN Secretary-General.

Performance monitoring measures progress in achieving specific results in relation to an implementation plan, whether for programmes, strategies or activities. It is the core accountability mechanism for effective work planning and review.

Innovative use of portable computers, software packages and mobile phones is changing the way UNICEF offices monitor the situation of children and women and programme outcomes. High-frequency data collection, analysis and reporting will be key to tracking progress towards equity for children and narrowing gaps within countries. New technologies need to be used in ever more creative ways in monitoring and evaluation for the benefit of vulnerable and disadvantaged populations.
VISION is UNICEF’s enterprise resource planning information system, designed for use in planning, supporting and reporting on programme implementation and in monitoring programmes. This includes the country programme and how its results contribute to fulfilment of UNICEF’s Strategic Plan, national priorities and outcomes in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. VISION is comprised of a SAP-based transaction system and inSight, a performance management system that draws from data in SAP and other UNICEF databases to summarize and present key information on multiple aspects of UNICEF performance to staff at all levels of the organization.

VISION facilitates programme planning, budgeting and transaction processing with office-specific dashboards for programme implementation management. The Results Assessment Module (RAM) allows entry and storage of performance reports and ratings and tracking of performance indicators, baselines and targets for each outcome and output. All programme data and records of transactions and progress assessments can be accessed and viewed online on a real-time basis through dashboards (including regional and global dashboards) and management reports.

The global aggregation of programme and financial expenditure data from VISION supports the organization’s internal reporting needs. This includes assessments of progress towards achievement of results, management of grants, expenditure status and the status of specific transactions. VISION also provides the basic information required for reporting to partner countries, donors and the Executive Board.

UNICEF has given high priority to supporting the development and strengthening of monitoring systems. An important recent advancement was the development of the MoRES approach as part of UNICEF’s refocus on equity. MoRES builds on the existing human rights-based approach to programming and is intended to enhance and sharpen country programmes of cooperation for accelerated results for the most disadvantaged children. In particular, MoRES is based on a determinant framework to identify barriers, bottlenecks and enabling factors that either constrain or advance the achievement of desired outcomes for disadvantaged children. MoRES emphasizes strengthening the capacity of government and partners to regularly monitor outputs, outcomes and impacts as quickly as possible (i.e., striving for real time), to enable more effective programme implementation and timely course corrections in plans and strategies at all levels.

In countries with a high to medium risk of emergencies from natural disasters or conflict, applying MoRES can help to identify how and where emergencies interact with equity gaps and key determinants. In ongoing humanitarian situations, MoRES is adapted to reflect the necessary higher frequency monitoring of a narrower scope of priority needs based on the Core Commitments to Children in Humanitarian Action.

The MoRES framework entails four levels of planning, programming, implementation, monitoring and analysis of results, which feed into each other and are complementary:

- **Level 1:** This level addresses strengthening situation analyses, strategic planning and programme development with an emphasis on identifying and addressing inequities that prevent disadvantaged children from accessing adequate services for their survival, growth and development.

- **Level 2:** This level focuses on agency-specific contributions to removal of bottlenecks and barriers by monitoring of agency-specific inputs and activities. Supplementary analysis will be needed to understand the contribution and leveraging of agency inputs relative to partner resources for achievement of overall results.

- **Level 3:** This level addresses periodic decentralized/disaggregated monitoring to assess progress (or lack thereof) in reducing bottlenecks and barriers to achieving results for disadvantaged children. Level 3 is the crucial link between routine monitoring of inputs and outputs as part of
development programmes, and monitoring of high-level outcomes/impact every three to five years. (At present there is a lack of synchronicity between these two processes, and the former does not provide sufficient and timely information to explain why the latter is not achieved.)

- Level 4: This level concentrates on rigorous monitoring of final outcomes and impact, for example, through MICS, Demographic and Health Surveys, and other tools to track overall progress towards development goals. In the context of MoRES, monitoring at this level plays an essential role in validating results from level 3 monitoring and progress towards reducing childhood deprivations. In humanitarian situations, level 4 monitoring takes place more often and may include real-time evaluations or outcome and impact surveys following a response. The further elaboration of level 4 analysis will link to the processes of evaluation and research.

MoRES draws particular attention to the value of strengthening and increasing the frequency of outcome monitoring (i.e., level 3 monitoring) and introducing feedback loops from outcome monitoring to update situation analyses, plans and actions on a more frequent basis.

It is worth highlighting the organization’s work on monitoring at the outcome and impact levels, which produces information not only for UNICEF’s internal purposes but also for broader communities at national, regional and global levels. Over the last few years UNICEF has invested in supporting development of country capacities to monitor the situation of children and women through initiatives focusing on data collection, data analysis and data dissemination. These initiatives not only generate data on over 100 key indicators. These data inform sound policies, legislation, and programmes for promoting children’s rights, and for global monitoring of goals and targets including the MDGs and setting the baseline for the post-2015 agenda.

To date UNICEF has supported more than 100 countries to conduct more than 250 MICS surveys. Typically, a MICS provides data on over 100 indicators, which can be disaggregated by geographic zones, residence (urban, rural, urban-poor), sex, education, age, wealth, ethnicity and religion. UNICEF has invested in compiling a series of global databases across all development sectors. These are used for flagship publications such as State of the World’s Children, Progress for Children, official MDG reports, Countdown to 2015 reports and other joint publications with fellow UN agencies.

In a small number of countries, MICS will be used as a Level 4 monitoring tool to assess coverage and outcomes in targeted population groups or geographic areas identified as having the most deprivations. This requires appropriate methodologies, including over-sampling in certain areas within a national survey to provide valid estimates for both MDG monitoring and to validate Level 3 monitoring. UNICEF plans to do this as part of its work supporting national efforts to address the most vulnerable and deprived populations.

D. Status of UNICEF’s monitoring, evaluation, and reporting system: Evaluation

UNICEF work on evaluation is guided by the revised Evaluation Policy, adopted by the Executive Board in June 2013, which is consistent with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards. As the policy states,

“Evaluation in UNICEF serves to support planning and decision-making, and to provide a basis for informed advocacy – aimed at promoting the well-being of all children, everywhere. In focusing on the substantive rationale, value and performance of interventions and institutional functions, evaluation serves to improve results and stakeholder satisfaction. It carries out this function at all
levels of the organization, applicable in all contexts, from humanitarian crisis to transition situations to more steady development environments.”

Evaluation focuses on the expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality to understand achievements or lack of them. Increasingly it is used as a tool to test the logic underlying programme interventions, taking into account the global, national and local context. Hundreds of evaluations of UNICEF’s work are conducted every year, all of which are made available on the organization’s website.

The UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN System underline the importance of undertaking an evaluability exercise prior to conducting a major evaluation requiring a significant investment of resources to “verify if there is clarity in the intent of the subject to be evaluated, sufficient measurable indicators, assessable reliable information sources and no major factor hindering an impartial evaluation process”. In line with this and as part of its “Plan for global thematic evaluations 2014-2017”, the UNICEF Evaluation Office will conduct an “Evaluability Assessment of the Strategic Plan” in 2014 at the start of the Strategic Plan. The qualitative analysis done during the assessment will help to determine the feasibility and readiness of the various levels of UNICEF for an evaluation exercise of the Strategic Plan before the end of the plan period. The analysis will focus on what data needs to be collected and monitored, the robustness of the indicators and importantly point to any gaps that will address the likelihood of the country programme achieving the anticipated outcomes and changes that would be required to get better results for children. It will identify stakeholder interest in the evaluation and how the findings will be used.

According to the “Plan for global thematic evaluations 2014-2017”, the Strategic Plan is also subject to an independent final evaluation, planned for 2017. This exercise will be managed by the UNICEF Evaluation Office. The nature and scope of this exercise will be determined in the planned Evaluability Assessment. Such an evaluation will most likely look at results achieved under the Strategic Plan as well as offering lessons learned and recommendations to improve UNICEF’s performance and guide the organizational direction.

In addition, there is at least one thematic evaluation planned for each of the seven outcomes over the Strategic Plan period.

E. Status of UNICEF’s monitoring, evaluation, and reporting system: Reporting

Reporting about UNICEF’s work is a key way for the organization to be held accountable for its actions. Each year, UNICEF reports to the Executive Board on progress over the preceding year through the Annual Report of the Executive Director. A data companion to this assesses performance against organizational targets and key performance indicators. It reports on trends and achievements on impact and outcome indicators in the Strategic Plan; cumulative data on UNICEF actions and outputs; and financial expenditure and global trends on MDG indicators relevant to the plan.

UNICEF is committed to reporting on its work not only to the Executive Board but also to the general public. Each year, the organization releases multiple reports, videos and press releases that highlight the work carried out by UNICEF and its partners globally. UNICEF continues to support initiatives that promote greater transparency and accountability, including reporting on challenges as well as successes in attaining development and management results. It also reports on expenditures. Transparency efforts over the past year have put UNICEF in good standing, as demonstrated by the improved score received in the most recent Aid Transparency Index. This report also cited UNICEF as one of the organizations that have improved significantly in transparency over the past year.
In June 2013, UNICEF published details of its work on the website of the International Aid Transparency Initiative. This documentation covered 128 countries, 7 regional offices and 16 headquarters divisions. It included allocations for the 2012 programme budget; expenditures by sector for 5,922 output-level results; sectoral disaggregation; planned programme budget estimates covering the next five years; and links to resources such as evaluation and audit reports on the UNICEF’s public website.

UNICEF is striving to be fully compliant with the initiative’s common standard in 2014. An open data portal and microsite on transparency will be launched in 2014 along with quarterly release of datasets with more detailed information. By the end of 2014, UNICEF will also be publishing detailed results-level aid data with geographic mapping on its public website. This will greatly improve the public’s access to and use of UNICEF’s information on aid spending.