

UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office

Education Thematic Report

January-December 2016



© UNICEF/UNI10236/Estey

Prepared by:

UNICEF EAPRO

March 2017

A. Map of Countries in the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Region



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any opinion on the part of UNICEF concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delineation of its frontiers or boundaries. EAPRO covers the following UNICEF Country Offices: Cambodia, China, DPRK, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pacific (Fiji), Philippines, PNG, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

B. Table of Contents

A. Map of Countries in the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Region	1
B. Table of Contents	2
C. Abbreviations and Acronyms	3
D. Executive Summary	5
E. Strategic Context of 2016	8
F. Results in the Outcome Area	9
PRIORITY 1: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)	9
PRIORITY 2: NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS	13
PRIORITY 3: ADOLESCENTS	21
PRIORITY 4: CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	23
G. Financial Analysis	27
H. Future Work Plan	30
I. Expression of Thanks	30
J. ANNEXES	31
Annex A: Human Interest Stories	31
Annex B: Donor Feedback Form	42

C. Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AMCDRR	Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction
APCSS	the Asia-Pacific Coalition for School Safety
APMED	the Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education
ARNEC	Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASPBAE	Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education
ASSI	ASEAN Safe School Initiative
C4D	Communication for Development
C/DRR	Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction
CDM	Center Directors Meeting
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CO	UNICEF EAPR Country Office
CP	Country Programme
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSS	Comprehensive School Safety
CWD	Children with Disabilities
CWR	Connect with Respect
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAP	East Asia and Pacific
EAPRO	East Asia and Pacific Regional Office
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECDIE	Early Childhood Development and Emergencies
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education For All
EiE	Education in Emergencies
ESCAP	The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
GAP	Gender Action Plan
HICs	High Income Countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HKU	University of Hong Kong
IDGC	International Day of the Girl Child
ILO	International Labour Organization
KOICA	the Korea International Cooperation Agency
LDCs	Least Develop Countries
LESC	Language Education and Social Cohesion
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MICs	Middle Income Countries
MLE	Multilingual Education
MLE WG	Asia Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group
MoE	Ministry of Education
NESP	The National Education Sector Plan
OOSC(I)	Out Of School Children (Initiative)
OPM	Oxford Policy Management

OSF	Open Society Foundation
PB	Peacebuilding
PBEA	Peacebuilding, Education, and Advocacy
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRC4ECCE	The Pacific Regional Council for Early Childhood, Care and Education
RIPA	Risk-Informed Programming Approaches
SA	South Asia
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
SEAMEO INNOTECH	SEAMEO Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology
SEA-PLM	Southeast Asia-Primary Learning Metric
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SITAN	Situation Analysis
SOWC	State of the World's Children
SRGBV	School-Related Gender-Based Violence
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
ToC	Theory of Change
TWG	Thematic Working Group
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UMIC	Upper Middle Income Country
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WS	Workshop

D. Executive Summary

Overview:

In 2016, the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) continued to support 14 UNICEF Country Offices to deliver inclusive and equitable quality education for all children in 28 countries. EAPRO support focussed on the following four priority areas: (i) promotion of early childhood development (ECD) as the foundations for overall well-being and school readiness; (ii) strengthening of national education systems to ensure quality learning opportunities for all girls and boys (incl. solid analysis around exclusion of most vulnerable children from schooling, promotion of learning assessment, heightened attention to gender equality in education, enhancement of education in emergencies and disaster risk reduction etc.); (iii) inclusion of children with disabilities; and (iv) enhanced attention to issues affecting development of adolescents, especially girls.

This report highlights the critical importance of the Education Thematic Funds which facilitated the regional office to provide strategic support to children across the countries in a flexible and predictable manner throughout the year. More specifically, the report presents key results achieved, challenges encountered and next steps/actions suggested to overcome such challenges in each of the priority areas in the context of education in the region. It will focus on the utilisation and impact we achieved and/or observed at the regional level, rather than attempting to aggregate the outputs and results achieved due to thematic funds across all Country Offices, although in reality, these dual levels of funding combine to have impact on children at the country level ultimately.

EAPRO uses thematic funds to support enhanced development effectiveness at the Country Office (CO) levels and also to support Global and Regional Programmes. Much of this report focusses on the latter. However, it should be stated from the outset that the EAPRO Education Team provided critical support for new Country Programme (CP) designs in Cambodia, China, DPRK, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar and PNG, while it reviewed all 14 CO annual reports to ensure that UNICEF demonstrates value for money across all its programmes. The support for effective country programming was provided by the respective specialists and the Regional Education Adviser, across the areas of ECD, basic education including sector analysis, gender in education through the UNGEI platform, adolescent development, inclusion of children with disabilities, and education in emergencies.

Key Strategies:

EAPRO leveraged multiple strategies in order to achieve results for children in the region, including the following:

- 1) Evidence generation and policy advocacy/dialogue (including on out-of-school children, ECD, gender in education, peacebuilding, children with disabilities, learning assessment)
- 2) Capacity development, including support for countries to translate policies into effective interventions and identify/address bottlenecks and barriers to educational inclusion and learning
- 3) Strategic partnerships, including through South-South Cooperation, key regional networks and intergovernmental bodies, e.g. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC), Pacific Regional Council for Early Childhood Care and Education (PRC4ECCE), Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), Asia Pacific Thematic Working Group (TWG) on Education 2030, United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI), Multilingual Education (MLE) Working Group.

Major Achievements:

- **ECD:**

The vital role of ECD policies, programmes and services has been recognized in most countries in the region in order to build concrete foundations for life-long development and learning. It is currently well understood that one of the most sensitive phases in human development happens from the prenatal period through to the age of 8, including the first 1,000 days, a time of rapid brain development and acquisition of foundations skills and competencies. Awareness has been raised in the EAP region that investing in early childhood development accrues long-term economic and social returns. The global campaign on 'Early Moments Matter' also helped communication and advocacy around this important area. In order to maximize the critical window of opportunity in the early years, EAPRO utilized thematic funds to strengthen systems for ECD, especially early learning, by engaging in evidence-based policy dialogue, strengthening regional partnerships, building capacity, and promoting ECD as foundational platform to foster resilience and social cohesion.

- **Education Systems Strengthening:**

In 2016, UNICEF EAPRO maintained a highly influential profile in the education sector in East Asia and the Pacific, continuing to influence the policy agenda in terms of equity and learning, through regional partnerships and initiatives, not least with UNESCO Bangkok, including support for an Asia Pacific meeting on the alignment to SDG4 in terms of education sector planning and monitoring, critical work around the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), gender equality and inclusion through UNGEI partnership, expanding participation of most ASEAN states in the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) learning assessment initiative, and continued engagement with education in emergencies, including DRR, Safe School initiative, Multi-lingual Education (MLE) etc.

- **Education and Gender:**

UNGEI continues to provide regional leadership with a focus on gender equality, marginalization, and School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV). Significant achievements include the development and translation of curriculum guidance tools and country situation analyses. UNGEI co-organised events for awareness raising on gender, child labour and education marginalisation.

- **Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI):**

Analytical work through OOSCI continued with UIS and was linked to an ASEAN Declaration on Out of School Children and Youth. Eleven countries are now being supported in the development of profiles, barriers analyses and policy recommendations through OOSCI reports.

- **Adolescence:**

EAPRO has advocated for regional and country level actions to promote more adolescent age specific analysis, focused age appropriate programmes that include adolescent participation by design, helping countries to strengthen analysis, identify data gaps and conduct adolescent SITANS to help identify priorities for advocacy and programming. China, Cambodia, Thailand, Mongolia country offices have completed cross sectoral Adolescent SitAns.

- **Children with Disabilities (CWD):**

As a result of strong collaboration between the Disability Unit, HQ and EAPRO the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) agreed to fund a multi-country project in EAP and regional efforts to enhance the rights of CWD. UNICEF engaged in two major conferences on education inclusion and the rights of People with Disabilities in Bangkok.

- **Education in emergencies and social cohesion:**

EAPRO has an active cross-sectoral Resilience WG composed of different RO sections which actively guides RO support to COs. EAPRO is an active member of key Resilience related networks/partnerships, such as the APCSS, MLE WG and Education and Resilience Committee, and has built a strong partnerships with organizations that prioritize the topic, such as UNESCO Bangkok and SEAMEO and is enhancing collaboration with ASEAN. Myanmar was supported to conduct a post-disaster needs assessment. DRR capacity building was strengthened in Thailand. Viet Nam was supported to evaluate and scale up Mother Tongue Education and PNG in strengthening peace and values education and ECD and peacebuilding.

- **LESC/MLE strategy:**

EAPRO supports further advocacy and fundraising for MLE and LESC initiatives in the region and for EAP countries. EAPRO is finalizing a guide on participatory language policy planning through Facilitated Dialogues to assist countries better engage in this area. EAPRO has collaborated with the Asia-Pacific MLE WG to promote the use of MTB-MLE in schools to address the issues of education quality, equity and language and social cohesion. Through 2013-16, UNICEF has been providing regular updates within the group on advancement of the PBEA LESC Initiative and some members were also peer reviewers of the research. Through this partnership and encouragement by UNICEF, the MLE WG participated in the PBEA programme-inspired international language policy conference in Mandalay, Myanmar in February 2016.

Financial Status:

In 2016, UNICEF EAPRO received the total contribution of US\$ 2,013,144 of which US\$ 939,885 came from Global Thematic Education Funds, and US\$ 1,073,259 from Korean Committee for UNICEF (US\$ 936,000) and Danish Committee for UNICEF (US\$ 137,259). However, with the planned amount of US\$ 3,700,000, the unspent funds from 2015 for the amount of USD 1,188,639.41 were re-phased and utilized to cover the cost of activities in 2016 for its work in education, leaving the shortfall of USD 498,216.59. The contributions have significantly supported programme achievements in many education areas at country and regional levels.

Future Plan:

Going forward, Education Thematic Funds will continue to help EAPRO enhance its strategic engagement and contribution towards equitable quality learning for all children in the region. ECD activities will continue to focus on strengthening support systems and regional partnerships that promote early learning and development. The work on education sector analysis will further be strengthened through the OOSCI and SEA-PLM, each provides strategic opportunities and necessary information/data for analysing key factors affecting children's access/participation as well as learning outcomes, from an equity perspective. In addition, there will be a strengthened focus on monitoring, evaluation and equitable sector planning, including analysis around gender and a more focussed and strategic approach to education in emergencies, linked to DRR and climate change as well as continued support to education's role in promoting social cohesion and peace-building. A key focus of this is mother tongue-based multi-lingual education for ethnic minority children. Inclusive education in its broader sense, including children with disabilities, those from poor households and minority communities etc. will be further promoted at both policy and practice levels.

E. Strategic Context of 2016

UNICEF's work in EAP is challenged by the **region's vast size and diversity** being home to one-third of the world's population and more than one-quarter of the world's children – around 580 million children in total – across a tremendous geographic spread. The development context is rapidly changing due to high economic growth rates. Almost **all countries are expected to achieve Middle-Income Country (MIC) status by 2020**, with several achieving Upper Middle Income Country status. 95% of the population lives in MICs (73% in UMICs), with the remainder in least developed countries (LDCs) and high income countries (HICs). However, such rapid economic growth has widened social inequalities, and socioeconomic status continues to be a major determinant of access to quality services. Several countries are still off track in terms of access to basic education (pre-primary, primary and lower secondary levels) and there are millions of children who are out-of-school and/or at risk of dropping out prematurely.

Migration is on the rise both within and between countries spurred by conflict, natural disaster and unequal economic development, contributing to the rise of urban poor populations and vulnerable children (e.g. refugee, migrant, undocumented etc.). For example, in Viet Nam, the demand for early learning services in urban industrial parks is forcing working parents to send their children to unlicensed, private facilities that do not meet national health and safety standards. When parents migrate without children they are often left in inadequate care. Nutrition also remains a major concern. Nine countries in the region have rates of stunting above 30%, and four (Cambodia, Lao PDR, PNG and Timor-Leste) have rates above 40% (SOWC, 2015). Poor nutrition in the early years can lead to life-long impairments. Hence the need for a cross-sectoral approach to ECD. Children from migrant families are often undocumented, thereby have no access to education and other social services.

Asia-Pacific is one of the most **disaster-prone regions in the world** according to death tolls and economic impact from disasters. Most of the world's largest recent disasters, triggered by natural hazards, have occurred here. In PNG, the Philippines, Myanmar and Timor-Leste, the need for peacebuilding through education and ECD platforms, is increasingly acknowledged.

While there has been notable progress in expanding access, **inequalities in learning outcomes** are a huge issue. The lack of quality assessments has led EAPRO to support the ECD Scales and SEA-PLM. Children with disabilities and children from poorer households are especially at risk of marginalization and gender inequalities are also very significant in certain contexts.

Asia and the Pacific is the only region in the world to have maintained an effective co-ordination mechanism around Education for All (EFA). 2015 marked the expiration of the MDGs and EFA and adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNICEF EAPRO played a lead role as co-chair of the Asia-Pacific Technical Working Group on EFA, in the roll out of regional consultations that would ultimately culminate in the Incheon Framework for Action. The new Education 2030 TWG is built on this previous success and enhancing partnerships around the new SDG agenda. UNICEF has been actively playing a leading role, together with UNESCO, as the co-chair of this TWG, and promoting the integration of SDG4 targets/indicators etc. into national education sector planning and monitoring processes.

How vital were thematic funds to enhancing UNICEF's impact in the region?

Without the benefit of predictable thematic funds, UNICEF would not have been able to:

- Ensure that equity continues to be a key highlight of the policy agenda, including at the regional level through the Education 2030 TWG.

- Strengthen the regional UNGEI partnership, and provide leadership on SRGBV in collaboration with key partners in the region
- Enhance government capacity to ensure that all children access education through OOSCI
- Develop and roll out new initiatives to measure learning (SEA-PLM and ECD Scales)
- Establish such a robust case for Children with Disabilities that brought additional donor funding
- Help change the education and development landscape in terms of persuading all governments in the region to invest in ECD.

F. Results in the Outcome Area

PRIORITY AREA 1: Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Outcome: Strengthened regional mechanisms and partnerships to improve school readiness and holistic early child development.

The vital role of ECD policies, programmes and services has been recognized in most of countries in the region in order to build concrete foundations for life-long development and learning. It is currently well understood that one of the most sensitive phases in human development happens from the prenatal period through to the age of 8, a time of rapid brain development and acquisition of foundations skills and competencies. Awareness has been raised in the EAP region that investing in early childhood development accrues long-term economic and social returns. In order to maximize the critical window of opportunity in the early years, EAPRO utilized thematic funds to strengthen systems for ECD, especially early learning, by engaging in evidence-based policy dialogue, strengthening regional partnerships, building capacity, and promoting ECD as foundational platform to foster resilience and social cohesion.

Output-1. Support for evidence-based ECD policies and implementation plans for early learning at national level. Status: On Track

EAPRO supported 12 countries in the region through in-country visits and virtual support. These include Myanmar, China, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, Pacific, Mongolia, PNG, Indonesia, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Philippines, and Thailand. ECD is emerging as a priority for all 14 countries in the region as demonstrated by the presence of ECD or ECCE policies in every country. UNICEF at HQ, EAPRO and CO levels, as well as other key partners, played a key role in leveraging these commitments. The ASEAN work plan has been influenced with advocacy for standards for 0-3 incorporated. Work on these standards is ongoing. Additionally, active engagement in the localization of SDG target 4.2 in the regional SDG framework through APMEDII (Asia Pacific Meeting on Education) II, held 16 -18 November 2016, has been significantly discussed and identified ways forward.

During the Asia Pacific Regional Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy Forum in Putrajaya, Malaysia in July 2016, which was hosted by the government of Malaysia and co-organized by UNICEF, UNESCO, and ARNEC, Ministers and vice-ministers overseeing education, and other policy-level delegates from 36 countries were joined by representatives from UN agencies, NGOs, bilateral cooperation agencies, intergovernmental organizations and ECCE donors for the three-day forum. Delegates shared innovative practices in areas such as policy, planning, service delivery, monitoring and evaluation to reach marginalized children; financing and partnerships to boost ECCE investment; coordination mechanisms to promote children's holistic development as well as in teaching approaches and human resource development to raise ECCE quality. The event was the first regional policy forum to focus specifically on SDG 4.2 since the adoption of the Agenda for Sustainable Development. The event aimed to build concrete steps to actualize their commitments to ECD through adopting an ECD Declaration (the Putrajaya Declaration): EAPRO strongly influenced and participated in the drafting committee on enhancing holistic language in inter-ministerial dialogue. The Declaration identified strategies to achieve SDG Target 4.2, establish modalities for South-South partnerships and cooperation for ECD, and create a monitoring mechanism to track actions taken to follow-up on commitments made in the Regional ECD Declaration.



Asia Pacific Regional Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy Forum in Malaysia, July 2016 at Marriot Putrajaya Hotel.

EAPRO introduced cutting-edge research, knowledge sharing, capacity building, and high-level advocacy to support countries to develop and implement evidence-based holistic ECD policies. EAPRO also undertook an effort to develop a Regional ECD dashboard in order to monitor and track efforts across sectors that contribute to advancing SDG Target 4.2, which focuses on the need for all boys and girls to have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education. A draft dashboard was shared with members and colleagues from all sectors with the planned organisational “programme scorecards”.

Output-2. Strengthening and expansion of strategic partnerships for ECD with focus on South-South cooperation, innovations and resource mobilization. Status: On Track

EAPRO supported ARNEC as a platform through which to generate and share evidence on innovative practices in ECD. In 2017, EAPRO plans to provide support for the 2017 Asia-Pacific regional ECD conference to be held in Siem Reap, Cambodia in March. The theme of the conference is “The transformative power of Early Childhood Development: the importance of holistic interventions” and covers three topics: (i) policies and programmes (ii) equitable access and (iii) quality monitoring. The conference provides a gathering opportunity among members of governments, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academia with the opportunity to learn from one another as they develop action plans to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

In addition to high level advocacy, EAPRO played a key role in disseminating evidence from neuroscience, making advocacy through Keynote presentations, initiating dialogues on the inter-sectoral nature of ECD for Ministries of Education (and other relevant ministries) in Mongolia, Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines to government officials. In many of these countries, MOEs are leading or collaborating with other related ministries to ensure school readiness of children.

The success of partnerships for ECD in the region has also led to a widening of the partner base. In 2016, EAPRO received requests for technical support from regional partners including the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) and the Asia Multi-lingual Education Working Group (MLE) to promote holistic, quality, and inclusive ECD programmes in the region. In 2016, EAPRO also supported and provided technical assistance to SEAMEO for a feasibility study to establish a Centre for Early Childhood Care, Development, and Parenting (expected to be established in 2018, in Bandung, Indonesia).

Output-3. Capacity building and research on early learning metrics at national level to effectively utilize available ECD resources. Status: On Track

A Holistic Regional Data Portal on key Impact/outcome indicators in ECD was launched, in collaboration with ARNEC. Additionally, in collaboration with ARNEC, University of Hong Kong (HKU) and Open Society Foundation (OSF), a short version of the EAP ECD Scales has now been developed and is ready for rollout in 2017. The ECD and Peacebuilding Working Group which UNICEF Co-chairs in the region, under ARNEC, hosted several regional online discussions on emerging issues in building social cohesion through ECD. Curriculum guidelines, idea cards and a concept note for parenting guidelines for social emotional development have been developed in partnership with the regional ECD and Peacebuilding Working group. Newsletters and policy briefs on ECD and the SDGs have been published with UNICEF support.

To enhance capacity for understanding brain development, and for ensuring that sectors work together to achieve target 4.2, an ECD- Nutrition toolkit was finalized, and is now ready for rollout. This is a comprehensive toolkit that provides concrete guidance to countries on how to integrate ECD into ongoing nutrition interventions through Health and Preschool/Community-based platforms, and also on how to integrate nutrition interventions in preschool, community-based and other early learning contexts. The toolkit can help concretely advance recent research calls (e.g. Lancet, 2016) to integrate ECD interventions through ongoing health, education and social protection initiatives.

EAPRO continues to provide support to countries to develop ECD resources including curriculum guidelines, learning assessments, and monitoring tools, such as the regional dashboard on ECD.

Output-4. Promoting holistic ECD as a platform to foster social cohesion and resilience, especially for disadvantaged communities. Status: On Track

EAPRO has been a leader in strengthening knowledge on ECD and Peacebuilding. EAPRO supported ECD and Social Cohesion in which noteworthy pedagogical approaches to teaching peace in the early years through early learning settings were shared and findings from “Peace building through early childhood development – a guidance note”, which were printed out for distribution. This suggested that activities can be integrated into ongoing early learning and ECD programmes to promote PB. With EAPRO support, there is a strengthened knowledge base on topics related to ECD and PB, under the ARNEC umbrella. For ECD and Emergencies (ECDiE), an initial draft of “directions forward” has been produced and will be further strengthened in 2017.

EAPRO also developed a set of Regional Curriculum Guidelines for Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Early Years to Promote Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion. The guidelines identify seven core social and emotional competencies and describe activities that adults can do with children in early learning settings to support the development of each skill. In 2016, EAPRO developed a SEL and PB one pager in order to promote the development of the social and emotional competencies that are

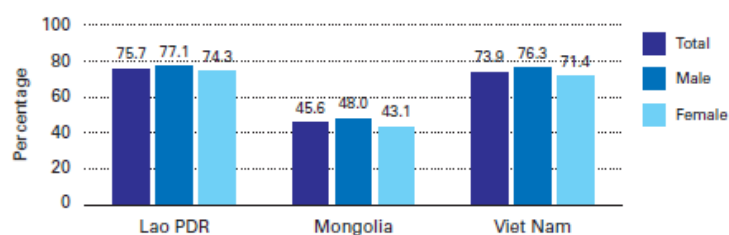


foundational to socially cohesive and peaceful societies toward SDG 16, promoting peace, and SDG 4, life-long learning. These key materials have been shared, and preliminary work to pilot their guidelines will begin in three countries: PNG, Viet Nam, and Cambodia.

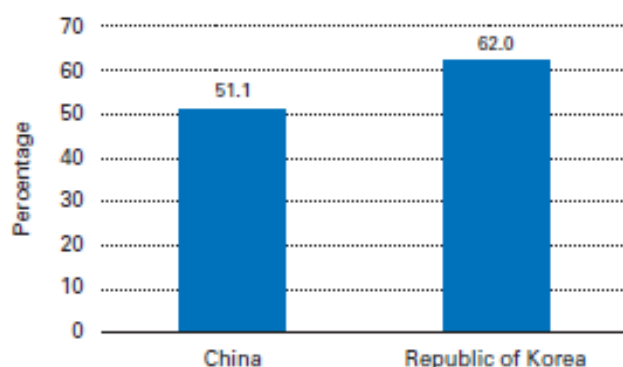


©UNICEF EAPRO/Chemba/2016
A kindergarten visit in Mongolia.

Violence against children continues to be a barrier in the achievement of education outcomes. In the EAP region, the percentage of parents reporting violent discipline or corporal punishment ranged from 43 -76% ¹ and the figures of elementary school children reporting corporal punishment by teachers can be as high as 62%². Corporal punishment is also highly prevalent in several Gender Action Plan (GAP) countries.



% of respondents reporting using violent discipline by county and gender, source: UNICEF EAPRO 2014



% of a sample of elementary school children who report experiencing corporal punishment by teachers, China and South Korea, source: UNICEF EAPRO 2014

The literature has indicated that these harmful practices can negatively impact learning. To address this, countries in the EAP region and the RO have identified Parenting as a priority area. In June 2016, the Education Section with a collaboration with the Child Protection Section, ECD Focal Points, and Gender Focal Points organized a Regional Parenting workshop in Manila with 11 country delegations participating. Based on the conclusions and requests from this meeting, the development of Regional Guidelines for Positive Parenting has been identified as a next step. Advocacy needs to be also strengthened on ending corporal punishment and promoting Positive Discipline in all settings including preschools and early learning centres.

¹

² Violent Against Children in East Asia and the Pacific, A Regional Review and Synthesis of Findings, UNICEF EAPRO 2014

Constraints and challenges

Early learning policies do not usually sufficiently address the multiple dimensions of exclusion. Assuring the quality of ECD programmes requires developing and applying ECD quality standards that are holistic and inclusive, with explicit attention to children with disabilities, and need to address all domains of child development. To address this issue, caregiver capacity building, effective curricula and pedagogical approaches, and monitoring systems need to be in place to track adherence to quality standards.

Government capacities to implement early learning policies have improved with more action plans and implementation mechanisms being established. In the EAPR countries where standards, guidelines and assessments on ECD exist, there is a need to expand the scope for younger ages and for more cross-sectoral work. EAPRO will continue to support countries to develop and implement quality early learning action plans and to develop and use effective tools to monitor and assess early childhood development.

Another constraint is an absence of recognition and defined plans for ECCE subsectors. Even in countries where these subsectors exist, funding is typically constrained. In collaboration with SEAMEO, ARNEC and the PRC4ECCE, EAPRO has advocated for explicit strengthening of the ECCE subsector and for allocating/increasing budgets with effective implementation plans.

Funding constraints continue to be a concern for an enhanced focus on ECD at country and regional levels. The relative lack of dedicated human resourcing to support ECD from the regional level is also a challenge given the high demand from countries for ECD support. Despite such challenges, EAPRO managed to have a major impact on the commitment and capacity of key partners, not least governments, to enhance equitable access to ECD services throughout the region.

PRIORITY AREA 2: National Education Systems

Outcome: Strengthened regional and global partnerships and initiatives to strengthen policies and systems for enhanced access to equitable, inclusive and quality learning for all children

In 2016, UNICEF EAPRO maintained a highly influential profile in the education sector in East Asia and the Pacific, continuing to influence the policy agenda in terms of equity and learning, through regional partnerships and initiatives, not least with UNESCO Bangkok, including support for an Asia Pacific meeting on the alignment to SDG4 in terms of education sector planning and monitoring, critical work around the Out-of-School Children Initiative (OOSCI), gender equality and inclusion through UNGEI partnership, expanding participation of most ASEAN states in the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) learning assessment initiative, and continued engagement with education in emergencies, including DRR, Safe School initiative, Multi-lingual Education (MLE) etc.

Output-1. Strengthening research, evidence and knowledge management in education. Status: On Track

To ensure enhanced attention to equity in education policies and plans, the Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI) – a partnership between UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) – continued to ‘turn data into action’ by developing detailed profiles of out-of-school children, identifying barriers that are keeping or pushing children out of school, and proposing changes in partner government policies and strategies to address these barriers. Thematic Funds have

contributed to stronger technical support and oversight to all the 11 OOSCI countries in the region, including support for analytical work, as well as quality assurance of reports and guidance for translating policy recommendations into actions.

Out of the 11 countries engaged in the OOSCI, four have finalized (Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, Timor-Leste), two are considering updating the report with new data (Thailand, Indonesia), three are making good progress (Lao PDR, PNG, Malaysia) and two will initiate in 2017 (Myanmar, Vanuatu). In each country, effective governance structure was established with Steering Committees and Technical Teams. At the regional level, UNICEF EAPRO provides necessary support and guidance to the Country Teams in collaboration with UIS and Oxford Policy Management (OPM), while developing a Regional Synthesis Report on OOSC in East Asia and Pacific (to be completed in 2017).

Moreover, several countries in the region have initiated national consultations on the integration of the SDG4 targets and indicators into national sector plans. Such consultations included, for example, data mapping exercises, review, formation and/or revitalization of coordination committees, and translation of key documents such as the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Translating the SDG4 targets into national priorities requires the systematic integration of the targets into existing national education sector plans, financing and monitoring processes and mechanisms. It also requires the localization of the entirety of SDG4-Education 2030 under the overall framework of countries' sustainable development policies, plans and programmes which often goes beyond the education sector, and thus requires multi-sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration. All stakeholders including government, international development agencies, civil society, private sector and others need to be mobilized and engaged to contribute to its implementation and successful delivery of key results for children. While coordination and partnership mechanisms were initiated at the national and sub-national levels to support the implementation of SDG4-Education 2030, regional and national monitoring and reporting mechanisms are also critical alongside global monitoring. In 2017, EAPRO will actively provide support to these efforts around SDG4 planning and monitoring, in collaboration with UNESCO and other stakeholders/partners at global, regional and national levels.

Output-2. Support to policy dialogue, advocacy, and communication for education across the region with regional partners. Status: On Track

In 2016, the Education Team in collaboration with UNESCO organized the 2nd Asia-Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 (APMED II) in November 2016. Prior to the meeting, in May 2016, UNESCO Bangkok launched a survey, requesting Member States, to update their country-level progress in the SDG4 integration and implementation. The responses received indicated that many countries still face difficulties in “unpacking” the concepts and languages of SDG4 targets to their national/local contexts. More importantly, some states sought guidance on how to effectively and systematically integrate, align and mainstream the targets and indicators into education sector strategic plans and socio-economic development plans. Some countries also reported challenges in finding the ‘right’ entry point(s) to initiate national consultations, mobilizing partners and coordinating with relevant actors and stakeholders.



APMED 2030 II ©UNESCO 2016

During the 3-day APMED II, hundreds of participants from the government, international agencies, civil society, researchers/academics etc. engaged in discussions on key priorities, milestones, and

actions needed and to be followed up for the implementation of SDG4-Education 2030. The outcomes of APMED II contributed to global level processes. EAPRO co-led with UNESCO in facilitating the session on target 4.5 on equity, while EAP UNGEI facilitated a session on Education for Gender Equality (focus on target 4.7), this session led to requests for more support for articulating gender in education in education sector plans.

Output-3. Promotion of gender equality to deliver inclusive and quality Education for All (EFA).

Status: On Track

Three key results were achieved under the UNGEI Partnership: (1) The EAP UNGEI has increased visibility, with UNGEI being invited to key regional events such as the APMED 2030, the MLE regional conference and the CIES global conference, to present their work; (2) Strengthened Knowledge sharing and dissemination: Specifically, the dissemination of the Connect With Respect (CWR) tool is a stepping stone to raise awareness about gender equality in broader terms, and has also increased demand and appetite for stronger gender analysis in 4 countries; and (3) Strengthened regional Partnership which was expanded to include key regional networks and increased south-south cooperation with South Asia.

Connect with Respect (CWR) Regional Workshop was held during 1-2 September 2016, following with Regional Workshop on CSE. The workshop was facilitated by the University of Melbourne with participants from regional agencies as well as country representative from UN and MOE. Following this, CWR trainings were held at country level in four countries.



The Connect with Respect workshop held in Sep 2016 in Bangkok.

Viet Nam introduced the CWR tool to teachers and ministry of education officials addressing School Related Gender based Violence (SRGBV) and gender equality in education. Thailand targeted teachers to promote the tool and explore how practitioners can use it more effectively. PNG introduced the CWR tool to Department of Education officials and teachers. China is getting initial reactions from teachers and begins discussing adaptation.

Possible entry points included bullying and violence in schools which the Government is currently conducting a national survey on bullying in schools.

- The ongoing collaboration on the adaptation and dissemination of Connect with Respect Tool is a joint effort with UNESCO and UN Women (core partners).
- The secretariats for the regional UNiTE network and EAP UNGEI network have strengthened their collaboration since areas of work are often overlapping (SRGBV) and to maximize regional efforts. This was the case for the launch of the Connect with respect Tool, the regional WS on the tool, the IDGC and the 16 days of activism.
- Considerations to establish a joint project to strengthen the partnership around efforts to address SRGBV. The partnership is suggested among UN Women, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF.
- The Southeast Asia Ministries of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Secretariat is now a partner of EAP UNGEI. During the SEAMEO annual Center Directors Meeting (CDM), which includes participants from 21 Centers, EAP UNGEI approaches and materials was shared.
- EAP UNGEI and SA UNGEI have been discussing a joint partnership around development of several knowledge products to provide evidence on gender quality in education – with special reference to the SDGs. This is in progress, and will be further strengthened in 2017.
- An UNGEI presentation on Girls Education and SRGBV was well-received in Seoul in November 2016 during the 18th General Assembly of Asia Pacific Parliamentarians' Conference on Environment and Development/KOICA.

- Additionally, EAP UNGEI advocated for inclusion of a strong gender component in the work plan and contributed to planned work in the region on gender equality and the SDGs. 16 Days of Activism to end Gender Based Violence is tweeted (as developed by HQ), sharing of updates/news to regional network including activities by other regional partners such as UN Women, UNESCO, UNFPA and ASPBAE. A newsletter has also been developed and disseminated across the region.

Output-4. Strengthening and expansion of strategic partnerships for education with focus on South-South cooperation, innovation and resource mobilization. Status: On Track

As described in the above output areas, UNICEF EAPRO Education Team has been actively pursuing strategic partnership with a number of regional entities and networks to further contribute to the achievement of equitable quality learning for all children. In addition to the aforementioned key initiatives (e.g. OOSCI, SDG4 sector planning and monitoring, UNGEI, ECD etc.), we present two specific initiatives as 'Case Studies' below.

Case Study-1: The South-East Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM)

Background

The Asia Pacific region has witnessed great progress in basic education access and participation, gender parity, and literacy; however, there is growing concern about the quality of learning (EFA report, 2015). While the number of education assessments conducted in the region has increased steadily since 2000, there is still a lack of consistent evidence to document improvements to the quality of education in the region. In the recent Global Education Monitoring Report (2016) the conflict between such increase in learning assessments conducted and the (lack of) information available on children's quality of learning are, among others, linked to the low level of capacities and resources dedicated to such assessment efforts. As a result, the region is still facing several multi-faceted challenges in delivering effective strategies to assess and monitor students' competencies and to demonstrate measurable learning outcomes.

The call for improved evidence on quality learning as part of the SDG's commitment to measure progress and inequalities in learning outcomes therefore raises the importance of implementation of effective strategies to deliver quality measures and shared technical standards which allows for comparison of progress across various socio-political environments (cross-national assessments). Such strategies would build and encourage greater commitment from governments and administrators to report and act on the findings from such learning assessments.

The Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) was initiated to address many of these challenges and have gained strong traction within and beyond the region for the same reason. Its main purpose is to measure and analyse the complex and multiple factors involved in achieving inclusive and equitable quality education and learning outcomes. Due to its characteristic of being a large scale system level assessment, it will provide feedback on the overall performance of the education system within Southeast Asia relevant to grade 5 in the domains of reading, writing, maths and global citizenship. It measures a number of various contextualised competencies within each subject-domain. As such the methodological foundation within the literacy concept reflects a core intention of the SEA-PLM: to measure learning in the context of ASEAN cultural and social characteristics. The inclusion of the Global Citizenship domain reflects similar intentions by emphasising the importance of attaining knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed for securing a world which is more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable. In addition, assessment of writing (across scripts) skills have been included due its importance and relevance to concepts of 21st century skills.

SEA-PLM is not a stand-alone effort, but rather it aims to complement and support existing efforts to enhance assessment at regional and national levels and encourages cross-national knowledge- and experience-sharing. It offers a sound technical framework and standardised methods and criteria to ensure valid and reliable assessment practices and outcomes. Combined with a strong emphasis on capacity building and government ownership, it is developed to ensure scientific rigour and support for quality standards - which are often among the causes for poor quality (or lack of) data on children's learning. Such efforts will be crucial to the realization of SDG4, and indispensable for the monitoring of Target 4.1 regarding "relevant and effective learning outcomes" in primary education within the Southeast Asia region.

The SEA-PLM framework and tools have been collaboratively developed with all countries in the region, including those that have not yet committed to field trials. It is led by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) and UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) with technical support from Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). It also receives support from UNESCO Bangkok, ESCAP and numerous other agencies. Since its start in 2012, considerable progress has been made and high level political support has been established along with strong consolidation of relationships at national level, leading to its institutionalisation within government systems. Due to its strong traction within the region, a number of notable accomplishments in 2016 were achieved.

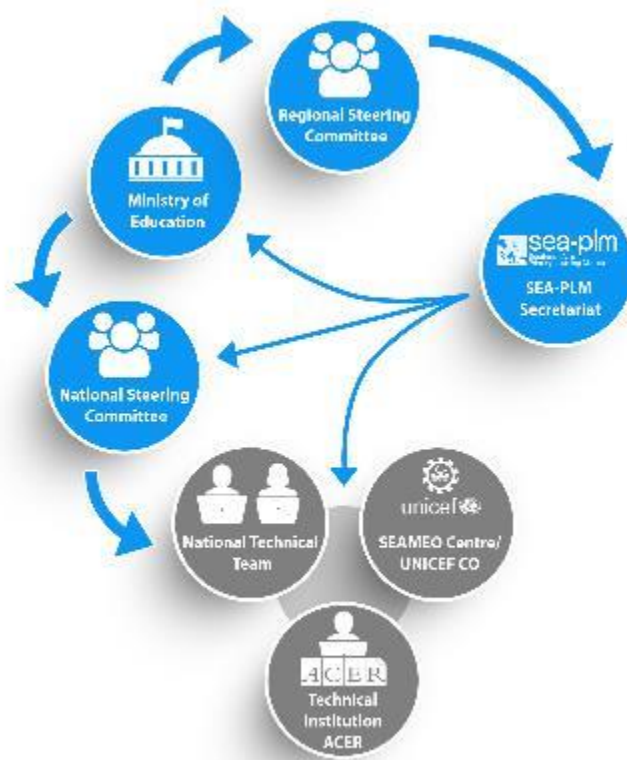
Progress

In 2016, the first round of field trials in Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Brunei Darussalam were completed along with the first draft of SEA-PLM tools, manuals and protocols. Myanmar has completed the test administration and are waiting to finalise the analysis of the results including coding and data analysis. Due to the increased interest from other countries in the region, a second round of field trials will be conducted in 2017 to ensure a solid foundation for the main survey planned for 2018-2019. The additional countries to conduct the field trial in 2017 are Malaysia, Philippines and Viet Nam. All three countries have confirmed their engagement and country visits have been conducted by SEAMEO Secretariat and EAPRO in close collaboration with the UNICEF Country Offices and the respective Ministry of Education.

A key characteristic of SEA-PLM is that it is driven by each of the participating Ministries of Education and capacity building activities are an integral aspect of SEA-PLM. Such capacity building is led by the technical institution ACER and supported by the SEAMEO and EAPRO. Training programmes have been designed and implemented in each of the respective countries throughout 2016 and includes technical training and hands-on support in areas such as application of translation software for adaptation of items and questionnaires, administration of the survey, training in coding of item responses, and data cleaning of item results. A regional workshop was conducted in August 2016 on techniques to measure responses and how to code these. The workshop included ministry officials from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia and Lao PDR with expertise in assessment and data analysis. While all the training has been framed around SEA-PLM activities, the capacity built and the recommendations around strengthened investments in measuring quality learning are transferable to other activities related to national and international learner assessments.

While this regional assessment will generate findings and evidence on learning outcomes to guide interventions to enhance learning for all children, the repeating nature of the assessment (every 4 year cycle) will make it possible to identify national and sub-national trends over time, creating evidence and opportunity to share best practices across the region on how to improve learner achievements, not least for the lower achievers.

Organizational Structure of SEA-PLM



Constraints and challenges

Developing and rolling out a major regional assessment exercise from the scratch requires a considerable investment in terms of financial support and human capacity. To date, UNICEF and SEAMEO and the key technical partner, ACER, have managed the challenges well, particularly investing through UNICEF Thematic Fund for Education which allowed this flagship initiative to grow over the years in a flexible manner. A major challenge has been to ensure that SEA-PLM goes beyond data gathering and dissemination to impacting on education reform to actually improve the teaching and learning processes for better learning outcomes. This entails building a commitment to utilize data and engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders from the outset. This work is on-going as we prepare countries for the main survey. Another challenge has been to ensure that the survey fits within broader commitments to assessment and quality in country. It has also been important to ensure that it is linked to broader capacity development efforts in country.

The SEA-PLM Steering Committee has made several recommendations based on their expert knowledge and observations of lesson learned as we progress, including lessons learned from the Brunei Darussalam field trials. To ensure that SEA-PLM is responsive to actual needs on the ground a very flexible approach has been taken. Several adjustments and adaptations were made to the SEA-PLM rollout strategy to address challenges and mitigate risks.

Now that the momentum has gathered and the majority of countries in the Southeast Asia region have committed to actively engage in the SEA-PLM field trial and main survey (7 countries), the SEA-PLM Steering Committee, UNICEF EAPRO, SEAMEO Secretariat and ACER are preparing to address the challenge of going to scale and working on a longer term development and sustainability strategy for SEA-PLM. A fundraising strategy is also being developed to ensure that SEA-PLM can go beyond trailing to implementation of the initial main surveys.

Case Study-2: Strengthening of Social Cohesion and Education in Emergencies

Background

No child should have his or her education interrupted due to an emergency or crisis. The gap between emergency responses and longer term development must be bridged and migration should be addressed more broadly. UNICEF has played a lead role in the development of the Education Cannot Wait initiative – a global fund for education in emergencies which is expected to reach US \$ 1.5 billion over the next 5 years.

In this context, support for emergency preparedness and response in education remains a key commitment for UNICEF, as does our commitment to DRR not least in a region so affected by disasters. EAPRO has also broadened this by playing a leading role in strengthening of social cohesion (through the Peace-building Education and Advocacy Programme utilising parallel funding from the Netherlands Government). We have also established and led robust regional partnerships to promote advocacy around these areas. At the country level, we have supported training to sensitise school communities and UNICEF field offices on safety standards, as well as conflict and disaster risks. EAPRO formed the Education and Resilience Steering Committee in partnership with UNESCO Bangkok, SEAMES and SEAMEO INNOTECH, and development partners in support of the following initiative: Capacity Development of Ministries of Education on Education and Resilience: Crisis-sensitive Educational Planning and Curriculum to Strengthen Resilience, Social Cohesion and Comprehensive School Safety in East Asia and Pacific. This activity was funded jointly with UNESCO.

Progress

In June 2016, the EiE Hub of the Education Section (New York HQ) supported the EAPRO EiE/PBEA team to organize the UNICEF Regional Workshop on EiE and Risk-Informed Programming Approaches (RIPA) which also included sessions on the PBEA Programme, peacebuilding and conflict sensitive education. 14 Education staff members and EiE Focal Points, mostly national specialists from 11 COs, participated in the RIPA training. The participants formulated individual actions plans highlighting intent to apply their learning to their Section, Country Office and to the education sector.



EiE and Risk-Informed Programming Approaches (RIPA) Workshop ©UNICEF 2016

EAPRO is advancing PB by developing and bringing to scale tools to support early learning on PB competencies. This is consistent with UNICEF's responsibility (under Articles 29 and 39 of the UNCRC) to take appropriate actions to advance physical and psychological health and dignity of children subjected to exploitation, neglect or other forms of inhumane treatment, but, also to prepare them to develop their potential to the fullest and be ready to lead a responsible life in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all people. This PB-related mandate is also in accordance with the UNICEF Guidance Note on PB through ECD, which identifies the need to develop peace education curricula in early childhood.

EAPRO has worked towards increasing the awareness and capacity of the Regional Office, Country Offices, governments – especially, in Myanmar – and other key education stakeholders in the region³, to provide conflict-sensitive education and education services at all levels contributing to peacebuilding and social cohesion. EAPRO contributed to the generation and use of evidence and knowledge to inform education policies and programmes for resilience, peacebuilding and conflict and disaster risk reduction (C/DRR).

EAPRO developed its PBEA programme work plans based on two theories of change (ToCs). The first ToC assumed that “IF the capacity and awareness of UNICEF Country Offices and governments, particularly in Myanmar, are strengthened to include peacebuilding/social cohesion (PB/SC) components into policies and programming, THEN they will be better able to support conflict reduction and social transformation in their respective countries”. The second ToC stated that “IF education policy and programming are informed by adequate and rigorous evidence, THEN governments and UNICEF Country Offices will be better positioned to address and mitigate education-relevant conflict drivers”. EAPRO placed high priority in the considerations of ‘all risks’ and the linkages between education and social cohesion, school safety, and resilience in its programming and PBEA work plans. This is in alignment with UNICEF’s Strategic Plan 2014–2017, which has given priority to strengthening the organization’s involvement in the systemic reduction of vulnerability to disasters and conflicts faced by children and their families through risk-informed country programmes that help build resilience.

EAPRO is a founding member of APCSS, formed in 2012 and has continued to advocate the goals and three pillars of Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) and ensure that they are featured on the regional (and global) agenda, in particular the post-2015 HFA⁴ on DRR. APCSS provided contributions to the planning and safe school-related sessions in the 6th and 7th Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR (AMCDRR). APCSS closely supported the development of the Regional Guidance on Education and Resilience. It continues to provide TA to new champion countries of the World-Wide Initiative on Safe Schools and to ASEAN (ASEAN Safe School Initiative (ASSI).

Constraints and challenges

The challenges in the implementation of the PBEA programme could have been 1) political sensitivity in advocating and literally using the words ‘conflict’ and ‘peacebuilding’; and 2) limited human and financial resources and programme focus to cover the large EAP region.

The first issue is related to socio-political dynamics that EAPRO believed could not be altered in just a span of a four-year PBEA programme implementation, given the decades-long impact of social tensions in countries. However, continuous advocacy, based on evidence/research and an example of some ‘champion countries’ could systematically pave the way for the realization of governments to confront the reality of conflict and social tension. Governments can then effectively carry out conflict and peacebuilding strategies with the support of different local, regional and international development institutions.

Limited human and financial resources and programme focus are another challenge which has been recognized. While significant support has been documented, limited staff, time and resources to support multiple countries could also be reflective of the relatively low level of programme “buy-in” within EAPRO and the COs, coupled with the donor/HQ-guided focus on one programme country, Myanmar, in the EAP region.

³ Other education stakeholders such as the Asia Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group, ARNEC Sub-Committee on ECD and PB, Education and Resilience Steering Committee, SEAMEO, UNESCO, ASEAN and UNGEI.

⁴ Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Effective practices can be assured as the PBEA goals are aligned to the overall resilience and risk-informed programming goals of EAPRO and COs. UNICEF has committed to continuously engage and strengthen the many existing partnerships and joint efforts with ARNEC, SEAMEO, ASEAN, UNESCO, APCSS, MLE WG, UNGEI and the Education and Resilience Steering Committee. These institutions and structures have been effective platforms for joint advocacy and implementation of education-related strategies and programmes for resilience and SC/PB. Meanwhile, further programme guidance will be provided to those COs that have not as yet implemented such changes effectively.

While enhanced knowledge, capacity and expertise have been noted as results of the PBEA Programme, it should still be recognized that the levels of awareness and capacities of the UNICEF Regional and Country Offices, MoEs and other stakeholders vary in scope and in terms of the quality of their implementation strategies. For MoEs, while some developed C/DRR-related policies, their implementation was either not actualized or remained small-scale. However MoEs in Myanmar and Philippines developed policies and programmes which are already being implemented widely in the education sector nationwide.

PRIORITY AREA 3: Adolescents

Outcome: Strengthened regional partnerships and evidence to improve the meaningful participation and life skills of adolescent boys and girls

In 2016, UNICEF EAPRO has advocated for regional and country level actions to promote more adolescent age and sex specific analysis, focussed age appropriate programmes that include adolescent participation by design, helping countries to strengthen analysis, identify data gaps and conduct adolescent situation analyses (SitAns) to help identify priorities for advocacy and programming. Country offices are encouraged in making adolescent participation and programming the norm, with sectoral pooled funding and cross-sectoral results.

Continued efforts have been made to reinforce the regional partnership with the ASEAN on Youth and adolescents. EAPRO facilitated the development of the work plan on Youth with ASEAN, identifying synergies in collaboration with UNESCO, UNFPA and other partners in the development of the first ASEAN Youth Development Index.

EAPRO provided technical support to China, Cambodia, Thailand, and Mongolia country offices to undertake and finalise cross sectoral Adolescent SitAns. It is foreseen that UNICEF COs in these countries can become the "go to" organization on Adolescents by playing a convening role, consistently bringing together partners and adolescents on a range of issues or relevance to adolescent survival and development. While UNICEF COs cannot and need not address all adolescent issues/needs, but should stay engaged (participate, advocate, convene, initiate, pilot, partner, champion) on all issues that impact adolescent development and wellbeing based on evidence.

Finding new ways of engagement with secondary education going beyond science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), with a focus on mental health promotion, physical activity and prevention of non-communicable diseases, global identities/citizenship, and acceptance of diversity and life skills. In EAP, secondary schools offer the best opportunities to engage with this age group in large numbers at a time, efficiently.

Output-1. Development and strengthening of research, evidence and advocacy to promote inter-sectoral initiatives on adolescents. Status: On Track

While the EAPRO Cross Cutting Group was somewhat active in the early stages, more efforts are underway to ensure mainstreaming adolescence issues into the regional agenda/sectoral planning process and results. Two COs in the region have dedicated ADAP focal persons. Other COs have individual focal points from sectors who are committed to adolescent programming. Commitment at senior management level is increasing to ensure that roles and results for children in the second decade of life are reflected in work plans, UNICEF personal evaluation reports, key processes and documents.

In 2016, compilations on specific Adolescent themes on WASH and one on Critical Thinking skills were produced and disseminated to COs and partners. ADAP specialist supported the development of a new curriculum on Life skills based Education which has been introduced in vocational schools in China. A pilot programme focussing school-based counselling and mental health initiated in Mongolia which has the highest adolescent suicide rates among the 14 countries in the region. The adolescent Country Tracker was piloted and is in use by Thailand and Indonesia. This is a global framework of outcomes and/or targets on adolescents at country level with a set of indicators against which to measure progress against sectoral accountabilities and to provide a platform for advocacy and reporting. Malaysia and Cambodia country offices are working to develop Adolescent C4D strategies. Thailand has completed their Adolescent Pregnancy SITAN and disseminated the findings to the Government and partners. A strategy for addressing adolescent pregnancy is also available. A review of the Thailand programme on Sexuality Education Programme in schools was also undertaken and the findings disseminated. EAPRO has worked closely with Thailand and Cambodia COs and provided significant support to these process, from the start.

Additionally, EAPRO continued its cross-sectoral effort to compile evidence and produce advocacy materials - Eight two-page briefs on adolescent issues for use by Country Offices. These included: 1) participation; 2) pregnancy; 3) HIV/AIDS; 4) mental health; 5) nutrition; 6) traffic injuries; 7) social media; and 8) interpersonal violence.

Output-2. Strengthening and expansion of strategic partnerships to engage in policy dialogue, advocacy and communication on adolescents across the region. Status: On Track

At regional and country levels, UNICEF is actively engaged in partnership with governments and other key stakeholders, including UN agencies; however, limited coordination and joint efforts to advance the Adolescents agenda still remain a major bottleneck. To advance engagement in policy dialogue, advocacy and communication on adolescents, EAPRO expanded its strategic partnerships with UNESCO Bangkok. This included working with UNESCO in planning the Asia Education Summit on Flexible Learning Strategies for Out-of-School Children held in 2016. Additionally, through the United Nations Development Groups' "Asia-Pacific Thematic Working Group on Youth", the Regional Coordination Mechanism co-chaired by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), EAPRO contributed to a regional youth report entitled *Switched on: Youth at the heart of sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific*. This report highlighted the importance of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development of youth and examined the 2030 Agenda from a youth perspective.

Output-3. Promotion of gender equality and mainstreaming of adolescents' participation within an inclusive approach to quality services for all. Status: On Track

EAPRO continued its efforts to build safer, healthier, more inclusive and gender-sensitive school environments for adolescents. EAPRO recognizes that menstrual hygiene management (MHM) is one

of the culturally sensitive issues that deprives and impacts many adolescent girls of the right to equal education. Insufficient and inadequate facilities and support for schoolgirls and female teachers is a barrier to their full participation in school. Lack of accessibility and availability of affordable female hygiene products is a hidden need of adolescent girls. In many settings, girls drop out of school because there are no facilities to change sanitary pads and safely and privately dispose of them.

ADAP, Education and WASH teams at EAPRO collaborated to produce a regional synthesis of UNICEF's experience of MHM through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in Schools Programmes in East Asia and the Pacific Region. The synthesis aimed to provide a concise overview of the current situation and lessons learned for UNICEF programmes, government counterparts, implementing partners and other stakeholders. Other outputs included a dissemination strategy, a policy guidance note, a strategy note and presentation slides that summarize the key findings from the report.

Some Country Offices have ensured adolescents' participation within an inclusive approach to quality services for all. UNICEF China is supporting Beijing Normal University and CAST in operating "Life Skills for Girls," a WeChat app programme to empower adolescent girls in China. Through this participatory approach, the Country Office aims to provide the key information for adolescents by building a platform to reflect good experiences and to better understand adolescents' needs through questions they raise. In April of 2015, several articles were published and shared with subscribers: "Girls in Adolescence" including a series of short articles that introduce girls to important topics such as the physical changes of adolescence and the menstrual cycle.

Constraints and challenges

Work around adolescent issues is constrained by funding in many country offices and at EAPRO. Also at the country level, staffing is often very limited and the programmatic focus becomes stretched if too many cross-sectoral areas are to be addressed. However, EAPRO is working with Country Offices to develop cross-sectoral strategies required to respond to the holistic needs of adolescents. Additional fundraising opportunities are also being explored for these.

Up to June 2017, EAPRO has committed support for the Youth and Adolescent development specialist position at P4 level funded by the Education Thematic Fund and reporting to the Regional Education Advisor. After intensive discussions, the RO is now establishing an Adolescent Advisor position at P5 level from mid-2017 while the specialist P4 position will be abolished in July 2017.

PRIORITY AREA 4: Children with Disabilities

Outcome: Strengthened regional and global evidence-based policy framework, mechanisms and partnerships to enhance the inclusion and participation of children with disabilities and their care-givers

SDG4 sees education as life-long learning which means improving the education sector as a whole. For UNICEF, our focus is on the child from birth to adolescence. UNICEF support for education in this region is to ensure that all children attend and complete basic education by getting all children into school. It is estimated that 90% of children with disabilities in low income and lower-middle income countries do not go to school. UNICEF is supporting the enhancement of data and the global agenda for inclusive education.

UNICEF's capacity to help identify and address the needs of children with disability was considerably enhanced by the Education Section with support from the Cross-Cutting Working Group on Disability and Education Section. Building on the foundations of work in 2014 funded by thematic fund, including

a regional overview document and regional stakeholder meeting, EAPRO and the Disability Unit HQ developed a successful proposal for Australian DFAT funded multi-country project on children with disability. The inception phase of the project is now being developed in Viet Nam, PNG and the Pacific and a disability specialist P4 position has been recruited in 2016. This work links with the OOSCI and with our work on assessment and gender and will be a major part of our work in EAPRO going forward. This success demonstrates the catalytic impact of the Education Thematic Funds.

Output-1. Strengthening research, evidence and knowledge management on Children with Disabilities. Status: On Track

EAPRO has strongly advocated for regional and country level actions that favour children with disabilities, helping countries to strengthen gap analysis, mapping and planning disability mainstreaming. Determined efforts have been made to reinforce the regional partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that declared 2011-2020 the Decade of People with Disabilities. Recently, UNICEF EAPRO reviewed its priorities and work plans in the area of disability with ASEAN, identifying synergies with different sections and the ASEAN Action Plans targeting disadvantaged groups, including children with disabilities.

Detailed Situation Analysis (SitAn) reports for Viet Nam, the Pacific, Papua New Guinea and Myanmar with key findings and recommendations are being used for the development of results frameworks for the countries. Also, Malaysia conducted a Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Survey on children with disabilities and the findings are used to design a comprehensive plan to address the stigma and discrimination, as well as to promote the social model to disability.

Meantime, it is evident that the lack of coherent understanding and agreement on approaches to and definitions of disability is a major challenge for improving measurement and data collection on disability, often resulting in non-inclusive policies and programmes for children and adults with disabilities in the region. Thus, UNICEF EAPRO, in partnership with the HQ and key stakeholders at the country level, have now joined the advocacy efforts for the adoption of a social approach to disability, promotion of a comprehensive definition on disability and adoption and localisation of the UNICEF/Washington group Child Functioning Assessment Module to be part of the MICS, census and other household surveys.

Output-2. Strengthening and expansion of strategic partnerships to engage in policy dialogue, advocacy and communication on Children with Disabilities across the region. Status: On Track



@UNICEF Viet Nam

UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS, EAPRO and the Cambodia Country Office contributed to the First International Conference on Special Education, held in Bangkok, using the occasion to advocate for inclusive education. In June 2016, UNICEF EAPRO Education Adviser and newly recruited Programme Specialist responsible for children with disabilities participated in the 2nd AICHR Regional Dialogue on the Mainstreaming of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community presenting the regional overview on children with disabilities and its links to the Education for All, CRPD, CRC, CEDAW and the newly adopted SDGs. The basic principles

for policy development on Inclusive Education, including the main barriers and challenges to school participation and opportunities to overcome them, as well as good practices were presented. In

addition, UNICEF also contributed to the final panel discussion summarising the recommendations and the way forward for the development of a Regional Plan of Action for Mainstreaming the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community.

Also, in June 2016, UNICEF Viet Nam partnered with Hanoi National University of Education and Wakayama University (Japan) to organise an International Symposium on the Development of Human Resources for Inclusive Education for children with disabilities in Viet Nam. The symposium was a platform for more than 300 education managers, scientists, researchers, teachers and experts to exchange ideas, knowledge, and experience on the development of human resources for inclusive education for children with disabilities internationally and in Viet Nam. It contributed to the National Education Development Strategy for the period 2011-2020, especially the goals concerning children with disabilities and the Education for SDGs by 2030 which aim at “leaving no one behind”.

Constraints and challenges

Currently throughout the region, there are no specific public budget lines dedicated to children with disabilities. This makes it difficult to establish inclusive services and to strengthen the in-house capacity of service providers. Thus, one of the priority areas for UNICEF’s work should be engaging in advocacy to ensure that children with disability issues are prioritised in the Government sectoral and local plans and that relevant budget is allocated to address their needs.

UNICEF has been advocating for programmes/interventions that promote the rights and address the needs of children with disabilities in the region for several years. In many countries, UNICEF is actively engaged in partnership with government and other key stakeholders. However, improved co-ordination and limited joint efforts to advance the disability agenda still remain a major bottleneck. Poor cross-sectoral coordination and limited referrals between health, education and social protection sectors create an additional barrier for many children with disabilities limiting their equal access to quality services.

Overall Summary of Progress across the Education Section:

It cannot be overemphasized how much and to what extent Education Thematic Funds have contributed to promoting quality, inclusive, learning opportunities for all children, one of the most powerful vehicles for sustainable and peaceful development. It was particularly so in East Asia and the Pacific Region because of the rapid economic growth and widening disparities where UNICEF’s resources tend to be decreasing while needs for high-level engagement through policy advocacy, evidence generation and system strengthening are more prominent than ever. Therefore, it needs to be stressed that the flexibility and predictability brought by the Thematic Funds have greatly contributed to the wellbeing of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in the region.

Thematic Funds supported the EAPRO to work across four key priority areas: (i) promoting early learning and development, (ii) strengthening national education systems, (iii) advancing the situation of adolescents and their education status, and (iv) reaching out to children with disabilities. They also ensured high quality UNICEF technical expertise continued to exist at the country level, thus providing opportunities for many of the innovative ideas generated at the regional and global levels to be applied where it really counts.

Thematic funds allowed EAPRO to strengthen existing partnerships and acted as a catalyst for critical new initiatives, not least the integrating the SDG4 agenda into sector planning and mechanisms, supporting SEA-PLM and developing the ECD Scales. These initiatives will allow us to better monitor and report on the situation of children across the region. The data generated will also help drive the

equity agenda as has been the case with OOSCI. Thematic funds have also meant that UNICEF has been able to convince other donors to provide additional funds – a notable example being DFAT support for Children with Disabilities and private sector funding promised for ECD.

G. Financial Analysis

In 2016, UNICEF EAPRO received the total contribution of US\$ 2,013,144 of which US\$ 939,885 came from Global Thematic Education Funds, and US\$ 1,073,259 from Korean Committee for UNICEF (US\$ 936,000) and Danish Committee for UNICEF (US\$ 137,259). However, with the planned amount of US\$ 3,700,000, the unspent funds from 2015 for the amount of USD 1,188,639.41 were re-phased and utilized to cover the cost of activities in 2016 for its work in education, leaving the shortfall of USD 498,216.59. The contributions have significantly supported programme achievements in many education areas at country and regional levels. The financial data provided in this report is accessed as of March 6th, 2017.

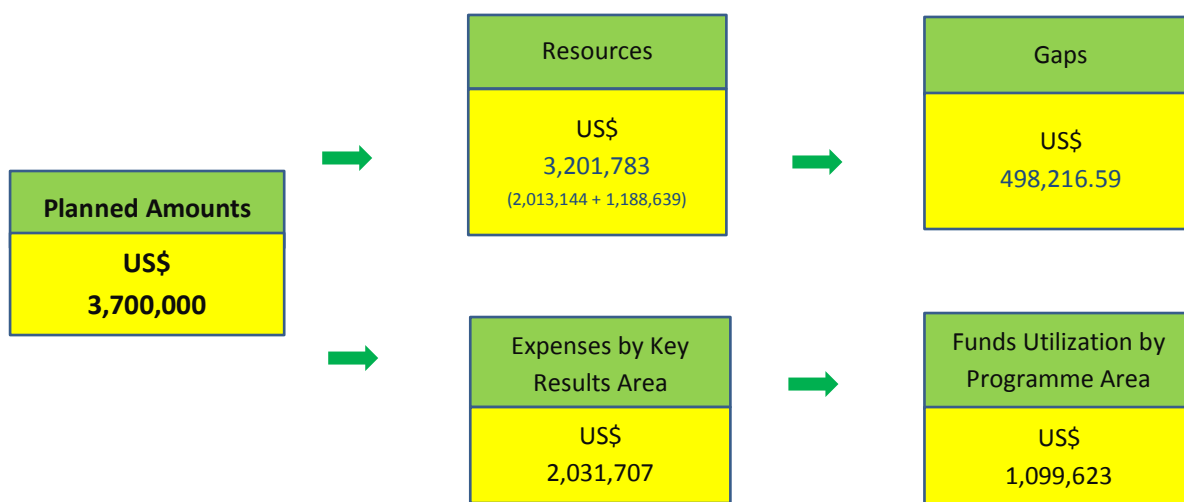


Table 1: Planned Budget for the Outcome Area (Education, EAPRO, in USD)

Intermediate Results	Funding Type	Planned Budget
05- Education	RR	0
	ORR	3,700,000
Total Budget		3,700,000

Data as of 6 March 2017

Table 2: Regional-level Thematic Contributions Received in 2016 (Education, EAPRO, in USD)

Donors	Grant Number	Contribution Amount	Programmable Amount
Danish Committee for UNICEF	SC1499050382	137,259	0
Korean Committee for UNICEF	SC1499050277	936,000	0
Total		1,073,259	0

Data as of 6 March 2017

Table 3: Expenditures by Key Result Areas (Education, EAPRO, in USD)

Organizational targets	Expenditure Amount			
	Other resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular resources	All Programme Accounts
05-01 Early Learning	93	1,531	161	1,785
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	13,728	226,632	23,840	264,200
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	21,853	364,942	37,951	424,746
05-04 Education in emergencies	10,875	182,706	18,886	212,467
05-05 Education # General	61,841	959,273	107,396	1,128,510
Total	108,390	1,735,084	188,234	2,031,707

Data as of 6 March 2017

Table 4: Thematic Expenses by Key Result Area (Education, EAPRO, in USD)

Organizational targets	Funding type		Expense (USD)
05-01 Early Learning	OR	23	1,519
	ORR	1,496	
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	OR	3,467	225,016
	ORR	221,549	
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	OR	5,519	134,633
	ORR	129,114	
05-04 Education in emergencies	OR	2,747	8,067
	ORR	5,320	
05-05 Education # General	OR	15,619	730,387
	ORR	714,768	
Total	OR	27,375	1,099,623
	ORR	1,072,247	

Data as of 6 March 2017

Table 5: Expenses by Specific Intervention Code (Education, EAPRO, in USD)

Specific Intervention Code	Total Utilized (USD)
05-01-01 National policies on early learning and school readiness	893
05-02-01 Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI)	127,363
05-02-05 UN Girls# Education Initiative	4,877
05-03-04 Learning assessment systems	210,513
05-04-02 Peacebuilding education	91,506

05-04-05 Education # Emergency preparedness	13,252
05-05-01 Education –Systems	-
05-05-08 Education -technical assistance to regional and country offices	357,625
05-05-09 Education -support to achieving global and regional goals	238,093
08-01-06 Planning # General	62,460
08-02-03 MICS # General	5,597
08-02-06 Secondary analysis of data	8,112
08-04-03 Early Childhood Development # General	172,380
08-04-04 RO technical support to countries on ECD	90,235
08-09-06 Other # non-classifiable cross-sectoral activities	69024
09-02-04 RO Planning and Quality assurance	427,569
2802 Support for Education programmes from RO/HQ	4
5033 Knowledge systems in humanitarian action including emergency preparedness plans, rapid assessments etc.	-
6901 Staff costs (includes specialists, managers, TAs and consultancies) for multiple Focus Areas of the MTSP	2
7921 Operations # financial and administration	66,338
Grand Total	2,031,707

Data as of 6 March 2017

Table 6: Planned Budget for 2017 (Education, EAPRO, in USD)

Intermediate Result	Funding Type	Planned Budget	Funded Budget	Shortfall
2.1 TA/QA of CP Planning, M&E	RR	N/A	N/A	N/A
	ORR	463,665	463,665	0
2.2 TA/QA of CP Implementation	RR	N/A	N/A	N/A
	ORR	60,000	60,000	0
3.6 Early Childhood Development	RR	N/A	N/A	N/A
	ORR	430,000	430,000	0
3.7 Education	RR	N/A	N/A	N/A
	ORR	2,344,000	2,344,000	0
3.8 Adolescents	RR	N/A	N/A	N/A
	ORR	0	0	0
3.9 Children with Disabilities	RR	N/A	N/A	N/A
	ORR	100,000	100,000	0
Sub-total Regular Sources		N/A	N/A	N/A
Sub-total Other Resources - Regular		3,397,665	3,397,665	0
Total for 2017		3,397,665	3,397,665	0

Data from EAPRO Education Section 2017 Work Plan

H. Future Work Plan

Going forward, Education Thematic Funds will continue to help EAPRO enhance its strategic engagement and contribution towards equitable quality learning for all children in the region. ECD activities will continue to focus on strengthening support systems and regional partnerships that promote early learning and development. The work on education sector analysis will further be strengthened through the OOSCI and SEA-PLM, each provides strategic opportunities and necessary information/data for analysing key factors affecting children's access/participation as well as learning outcomes, from an equity perspective. In addition, there will be a strengthened focus on monitoring, evaluation and equitable sector planning, including analysis around gender and a more focussed and strategic approach to education in emergencies, linked to DRR and climate change as well as continued support to education's role in promoting social cohesion and peace-building. A key focus of this is mother tongue-based multi-lingual education for ethnic minority children. Inclusive education in its broader sense, including children with disabilities, those from poor households and minority communities etc. will be further promoted at both policy and practice levels.

UNICEF will continue to co-lead education in Asia and the Pacific with the Asia Pacific Thematic Working Group for Education 2030. Other partnerships with key players such as ARNEC, PRC4ECCE, SEAMEO, MLE, and UNESCO will continue to be broadened and strengthened with greater attention to the cross-sectoral linkages required by the SDGs. The partnership with ASEAN will also be strengthened, alongside other inter-governmental bodies and within the over-arching framework to promote Education 2030 for Asia-Pacific through co-leadership with UNESCO and in collaboration with UNICEF ROSA.

I. Expression of Thanks

Without Education Thematic Funds, much of what has been achieved in the region, which was presented in this report, would certainly not have been possible. Thanks to the generous support of donors who provide such a flexible and predictable funding for children, UNICEF EAPRO and countries in the region have been able to expand quality learning opportunities to more girls and boys in the most challenging and vulnerable situations through evidence generation, enhanced advocacy, capacity development and technical assistance. We have been able to ensure that issues of equity, equality and social cohesion and peace have remained at the centre of government agendas at a time of growing economic inequality and disparities and worsening social division. Thanks to the Thematic Funding, we have been able to support longer term agendas like the OOSCI and SEA-PLM which take several years to bring about impact and results for children. We have also been able to use the funds to generate other complementary funds and to influence government investment in more equitable education systems. We have strengthened partnerships and South-South collaboration, and have also provided direct technical support to countries in order to achieve critical results for children.

UNICEF EAPRO is particularly grateful to the government of Norway, the Korean National Committee, the Danish National Committee, and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for their support. We also thank our UN sister agencies, NGOs and corporate donors, and not least governments and inter-governmental organisations whose collaboration was essential in helping us achieve these results across the 14 countries of East Asia and the Pacific.

J. ANNEXES

Annex A: Human Interest Stories

Story 1: Early Childhood Development

When there is a will, there is a way: Investing in early childhood development (ECD) in Nalaikh, Ulaanbaatar

By Mungunkhishig Batbaatar, Digital Communication Consultant, UNICEF Mongolia

“I want to be a doctor when I grow up so that I can heal others,” says 5-year-old Uranbileg, also known as Urnaa. She lives in Nalaikh, a peri-urban district in the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Her bright, intelligent smile belies the chronicle of her past pain and doubt. Having been born with bilateral orofacial clefts, her parents wondered if her little daughter would have a normal life in the future.

When Urnaa was over two years old, she had not yet learned how to speak like the other children of her age; thus, making her more and more isolated from her family, friends and the society at large. Worried about their child’s well-being, her parents enrolled Urnaa at an alternative kindergarten program because the regular one was not an option due to lack of slots and inadequate supply. This alternative form of early childhood education (ECE) service was initiated by the Education Division with support of “Sujetashand” NGO. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to arrange this alternative ECE service at grassroots level, benefiting children with disabilities (CwD).



Uranbileg and her favorite Teddy bear
©UNICEFMongolia/2016/Mungunkhishig Batbaatar

There she enjoyed a company of other children and professional care twice a week. Gradually, she started going to the public kindergarten regularly. As luck would have it, that is where Urnaa met Ms. Dorjkhand, a kindergarten teacher who was trained to work with children with special needs.

When alternative education meets inclusive kindergarten

Settling in a new environment and trying to make friends was no easy task, especially for Urnaa who was still struggling to speak. As teacher Ms. Dorjkhand incorporated orofacial muscle exercises and special techniques with her regular curriculum, Urnaa was able to learn how to speak. Most importantly, she was becoming more sociable in the classroom, and even at home.



Uranbileg and Ms Dorjkhand in their classroom
©UNICEF/Mongolia/2016/Mungunkhishig Batbaatar

“There are no children with disabilities if you ask me. All children are able to reach their full potential if we can provide the environment, care and love they need,” explains Ms. Dorjkhand. She is one of the 120 Early Childhood Education (ECE) professionals and kindergarten teachers who were trained on providing ECE services for the children with disabilities and implementing the national core curriculum for preschool education.

Moreover, her work with Urnaa is not bound by the classroom walls; Ms. Dorjkhand makes sure that her students get the care and exercise they need even when they go home with their parents or go on a summer vacation. Urnaa carefully explains “During the summer, my mother and I did our special exercises every day.” “So that she can maintain and add onto what we’ve achieved together so far,” adds her mother Sarantugs, highlighting the importance of continuous speech therapy.

When investment in ECD means foundation for social capital

“She is my only reason why I laugh and smile every day” says Sarantugs. Now she has the time to work as a nurse at a local hospital because her daughter is going to the public kindergarten regularly. She said “Knowing that my Urnaa is in reliable, professional care with teachers like Ms. Dorjkhand, I work without any worries which is such a big help for me and my family.”



Uranbileg and her mother Sarantugs in their yard
©UNICEF/Mongolia/2016/Munqunkhishia Batbaatar

Her family is an example of thousands of families that benefited from alternative ECE services for children with disabilities to which UNICEF has provided technical and financial support backed by the Government of Monaco.

By pulling these resources and efforts together in order to improve the lives of the next generation, the number of most disadvantaged children benefiting from ECE services has increased by 2,150 in UNICEF target areas. Some 1450 parents like Urnaa’s mother Sarantugs now have both the motivation and ECD skills to support their children’s development at home and their school

readiness through a combination of regular parent’s experience sharing meetings, trainings and assisting documents on child development. Mother Sarantugs added “That’s why I feel grateful for the work done in Nalaikh by UNICEF Mongolia and the Government of Monaco.”

Since 2012, UNICEF has been continuously supporting ECD in the national and sub-national levels and ensuring that children develop to their full potential. These initiatives required interventions in programmes for child survival and development, education, child protection, and social policy and partnerships. Particularly, UNICEF supports community and family care practices that impact young children, especially the most disadvantaged children. In addition, a handbook for caring and developing children with disabilities is one of the most important practical tools for parents and teachers to support CwD in the families and institutions.

However, the work here is not done yet. There are over 30,000 children with disabilities in Mongolia and they have the same rights as other children – to an education, health care, protection and survival. Early years of life are crucial not only for individual health and physical development, but also for cognitive and social-emotional development. Simply put, ECD is the key to a full and productive life for every child.

Story 2: Education in Emergencies

School's out: Cyclone Winston impacts education

By Cifora Monier, UNICEF PACIFIC

Adi Dokoni, a 42 year old mother of three and a kindergarten teacher in Navitilevu village, Fiji, tells her children to be careful while they run around the debris left behind by Cyclone Winston.

“Everything is damaged; our house and our crops,” she says watching her children move away from the sharp corrugated metal that lays on the ground broken and twisted by the storm.

“There is no school for the time being and we still have to rebuild our houses,” says Adi. “We don’t know how long it will take us. We don’t have money because the food we’d usually sell from our crops has been destroyed. That was our only way of getting money.”



Adi Dokoni, kindergarten teacher from Navitilevu village, with her daughters © UNICEF Pacific/2016/Sokhin

Fiji’s Ministry of Education has reported that at least 240 schools have been damaged or destroyed. Many schools are also being used as temporary evacuation centres, sheltering families who have lost their homes. This means many of 120,000 are being left without an education.

For many of the villagers in Navitilevu, the school that night became their last refuge. For them, it is difficult to imagine a more distressing night than when Cyclone Winston flattened everything before it.

“The winds started around 3pm,” says Adi as she looks at the wreckage around her. “Most of us who live in bamboo houses decided to hide in stronger houses with neighbours. But the wind was getting stronger and stronger. At this point we thought it was better to go to our school where I teach.”

Walking in the dark through torrential rains and storm winds, the villagers arrived to see the school half destroyed. “When we got to the school it was horrible, three out of our five classrooms were no longer there, they had blown away,” says Adi. “We were about sixty plus people in the two rooms.” At this point Adi’s voice breaks. It’s an ordeal that has clearly left a scar on her and her community. While the cyclone was being felt by everyone that night sheltering in the classrooms – from the 3 week old baby to an 85 year old great grandmother – the physical and mental scars will be felt for a long time to come.



85-year-old Siteri, the oldest person in the village holding Salomi, the youngest © UNICEF Pacific/2016/Sokhin

UNICEF has already supplied 60 temporary classrooms to most-affected schools – and many more are on the way. Each UNICEF temporary classroom kit includes a large tent and educational supplies sufficient for 40 students and teachers.

They allow children and teachers to quickly return to school, to routine and a sense of normality in

even the toughest of times. Temporary classrooms also help to keep children safe during the day, when parents and caregivers are focusing on recovery efforts and livelihoods.

In addition to supporting affected children to return to school, UNICEF is working closely with the Government of Fiji and development partners to ensure that affected children and their families have access to clean, safe drinking water, sanitation, health and protection.

“Our wish is for the government and aid agencies to help us rebuild,” says Adi. “But most important is for our kids to start school as soon as possible. We also need school supplies as ours have now been damaged and destroyed.”

Story 3: Children with Disabilities

Participation, expression and rights of visually impaired children

By Piangdao Noksapa, UNICEF EAPRO, 27 May 2016



@UNICEF EAPRO/2016/Piangdao
Noksapa

Can you experience the art if you cannot see it? What does the first drawing of a blind child look like? These are questions that come to mind while visiting a recent art exhibition by blind and visually impaired children art at the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre. The exhibition was appropriately called ‘Please Touch’. Most art events have numerous and prominently displayed signs saying “Do not touch” but this exhibition encourages visitors to touch and engage with art through touch as would be experienced by blind persons.

Most of the art was created using yarn or thread on sticky surfaces. The exhibition was on two themes or concepts: “Grow in the Dark” and “Glow in the Dark”. The first part shared 16 stories by children from several blind schools across Thailand. Stories were about their joy, fears, hopes, experiences, and other expressions from their imagination. Another section was from 12 well known Thai artists and cartoonists who created works of art to be experienced by the visually impaired and the blind.

Jirawat Boonpaem (Obb-cheoi), “The music band”: This drawing represents his dream on being a popular musician. He is 16 years old and has been blind since birth.

Natthaei Noppibul (Nim), “My home”: Nim, 9 years old, fully blind, made a drawing of many people in her seaside house. Inside the house, there are a dog and a cat named Nat as well as many household items.



@UNICEF EAPRO/2016/Piangdao
Noksapa

Sirapob Reabsamraet (Dream), “Things I am afraid of”: One of the fear series, Dream expressed his fear through his illustration about a Thai female spirit, called Kra-Sue. The spirit is hovering in the air for food at night, and around her there is a long snake and lizard, which makes a buzzing sound to indicate where it is.



@UNICEF EAPRO/2016/Piangdao Noksapa

Kriangkrai Rairaman (Bank), “The Sea” Bank, 7 years old and visually impaired, created his first drawing of his favourite place – the sea. He wonders if he could be in the deep part of the sea. He imagines the sea will have both small and big boats, and one of them is a banana boat that he wishes to ride on. He explained that the picture includes many other things such as soda cans, Buddha statues, and broken washing machines in this art.

The event is meant to promote awareness on the life-enhancing power of art to create connections between blind people and the general public. This is a good example demonstrating one way children with visual impairments can be provided

opportunities to participate and express themselves and communicate with society. Many visitors said they felt inspired by the artists, as I did.

Story 4: Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education Resource Centre Helps Preparing Children with Disabilities to Integrate Regular School

By UNICEF Viet Nam, December 5, 2016



UNICEF Viet Nam Representative Youssouf Abdel-Jelil interacted with Thang during his visit to Ninh Thuan Inclusive Education Centre in April 2016

Ninh Thuan, 3 December 2016 - Three-years-old Ha Phuc Nguyen was diagnosed with having generalized disorder two years ago. Nguyen then received treatment in a Paediatric hospital in Ho Chi Minh City which is about 1,000 km from his home town. However, he could only stay in treatment only for few months because his family could not afford staying in the big city. Trying to find a way to help him at home, his mother joined a Facebook group in which members shared ideas about how to help children with autism. Via this group, she knew about a newly established centre in the neighbouring town where Nguyen could receive professional assistance. It takes her about one hour and a half by bus to the centre and she brings Nguyen there twice a week.

Besides receiving support at the centre, Nguyen’s mother is also guided on how to work with him at home. Nguyen shows great progress after only few months. “He can communicate with me through his eyes, express his feeling and point finger to things that he wants, imitate simple gestures and play with some toys. These seem to be easy for other kids but for my son, it’s a great achievement”, his mother indicates.

Similar to Nguyen, Thang showed symptoms of autism since he was one year old. However, he had to wait for six years to get the first treatment because there was no service for children with autism or with disabilities that his family could access to. Since the new centre was set up, his father has been taking him there twice a week. In this center, he has undergone various interventions and

received special therapy which helped expand his span of attention, improve his communication skills and express his thoughts and feelings. “Since he started treatment quite late, it took longer time to see some progress”, says Doan Thi Thanh Thuy, a care-taker from the centre.

It took Ho Tuong Vi, a 14-years-old girl, much longer time to get support to overcome her disability. Born with hearing impairment, Vi was not enrolled in primary school formally because teachers did not have necessary skills to accommodate and teach children with special needs. However, she was allowed to sit with her younger sister in the classroom at the primary school. Although she enjoyed the company of her sister and her classmates, she hardly had any idea of what they were talking about. Now her younger sister is accompanying her twice a week to the new centre to learn sign language. “I want to learn together with her so we can communicate better”, says her sister.

Advocating for Policies on Inclusive Education

Lack of professional identification of disabilities, appropriate interventions and support in the early years have hindered the chances of children with disabilities to access to education in mainstream schools. Nearly 70 per cent of primary school-age children with disabilities in Viet Nam do not attend school. Most pre-primary, primary and lower secondary schools do not have appropriate facilities for children with disabilities. Teachers have not been trained to ensure inclusive teaching environment and they do not have adequate skills to identify and provide necessary interventions to address the needs of children with disabilities.

The Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC) is proven effective in preparing children with disabilities to integrate regular school with all other children. It provides screening and early interventions for children with disabilities as well as guidance and orientation for parents and teachers. UNICEF has been partnering closely with the national partners, both at the central and provincial levels, to promote the establishment of IERCs such as the one in Ninh Thuan Province. UNICEF has also pursued research with different academia to build strong knowledge to inform the development of policies for the welfare of children with disabilities in particular. In 2014, the Government regulated the establishment of IERCs and recently in June 2016, an inter-ministerial circular was issued recognizing the role of the staff supporting education for persons with disabilities. Although the decision of establishing an IERC is decentralized to the provincial level, to date only 14 IERCs have been set up throughout the country, which is far below meeting the needs of the 1.3 million children with disabilities in Viet Nam.

IERC in Ninh Thuan – from policy to practice

Guyen, Thang and Vi are among the first children benefitting from the services of the newly established IERC in Ninh Thuan, one of the poorest provinces in Viet Nam, situated in the south central coast region. Since the start of its operations in December 2015, the centre provides various services for children with disabilities such as identification, early intervention, counselling to parents, training of teachers and awareness raising in the community. Built on a premise of over 20,000m² and staffed with 15 teaching and non-teaching employees funded through a provincial budget, the centre serves children with disabilities in Ninh Thuan and its neighboring provinces.

UNICEF has been critical in supporting Ninh Thuan IERC throughout the process, advocating for the establishment of the centre, engaging and supporting all the relevant stakeholders, providing technical assistance, building capacity for teachers and staff.

“Ninh Thuan IERC provides a good example of delivering on national commitments and policies at the provincial level to benefit of children with disabilities. At the national level, UNICEF is providing support to policy development, legal reform, and improving social services. UNICEF continues contribute to capacity building, as well as adapted and sustainable implementation of national policies at the provincial level. Ninh Thuan’s IERC has the potential to serve as a model to be replicated in other provinces”, says Youssouf Abdel-Jelil, UNICEF Viet Nam Representative.



Doan Thi Thanh Thuy, teacher of Ninh Thuan IERC showed the teaching aids that teachers made themselves as part of the training supported by UNICEF

“Quality education is a right for every child. It can only be achieved when each and every child, including those with disabilities, Na is in school receiving inclusive quality education that provides the learning required for life. UNICEF will continue to support Viet Nam to ensure that all children can receive holistic support that they need to promote their development and self-fulfillment with dignity”, he continues.

Story 5: Children with Disabilities

Cambodian teenager defies disability and campaigns for a better world

By Chansereypich Seng, Friday, November 18, 2016

On the 20 November annually, the world celebrates Universal Day of Children – the anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and a day specifically dedicated to children across the globe.

To mark this special yearly event, UNICEF Cambodia would like to introduce you to Seamsokim So, an intelligent and optimistic student who has made great progress in his personal and academic life despite the loss of his sight. Nineteen year-old Sokim is a grade 10 student who attends the Krousar Thmey foundation – a non-profit organization that provides care for underprivileged children – and Hun Sen Phnom Penh Thmey High School in Phnom Penh. He is also a Krousar Thmey representative for UNICEF Cambodia’s Youth Representative Group.

In this role, he works with other young people to give adolescents a voice in their collective campaign to prevent violence against children. Although he was born with vision, this was impaired because of cataracts, a clouding of the lens in the eye which leads to a decrease in vision.

A doctor told him he would eventually lose all sight at around the age of 50. However, he prematurely went blind in a freak accident when he tripped over and hit his head onto a fan. Despite



Sokim addresses the audience at the Krousar Thmey foundation’s ‘Theory of Change’ workshop held in Siem Reap recently @ UNICEF Cambodia.

this disability, Sokim has a passion for learning and with the cooperation of his parents and the support of Krousar Thmey he has acquired deep knowledge and skills. He can read through Braille, type on a specially adapted computer and speak English as a second language. This thirst for knowledge led to his relationship with UNICEF.

As an outstanding student with a bright personality, he was selected to host various events, including an association with UNICEF as a representative of the Krousar Thmey organization. He said: "I got some basic knowledge before I volunteered with UNICEF. However, I found out other skills of mine improved after being attached to the organization.

"I have developed capacity building, gained more insights about children and improved my public speaking skills.

"In the long run, UNICEF has expanded me in many ways. I have enhanced my capabilities in society and also contributed to future generations, who are the children of Cambodia," he said.

Sokim said he has encountered barriers to progress such as bullying and discrimination.

"Of course, it [discrimination] exists. But I'm just thankful that I've got a lot of love and support from my family, teachers and friends," he said.

"Even after I lost my eye sight, I have gained vision"

Despite this past bad experience, Sokim exudes an air of confidence and positivity for the future. "I'm still young and studying. But I am happy. My parents are being supportive, as well as my school. Even after I lost my eye sight, I have gained vision.

"This allows me to build critical thinking skills as well as analyzing. I have also received a great education.

"My life motto is: vision is the powerful second eye that allows me to always push forward." When asked what he sees himself doing in 10 years, Sokim said: "First, I want to be self-sustained, with a good standard of living, along with other young people.

"Then, I want to be an English teacher after completing my grade 12.

"For my long-term career, I want to become a politics author."

Sokim's hope is for every child in Cambodia, irrespective of their background, to live in harmony with a quality education, emotional support and well-being.

Story 6: Adolescents

Once a Child Bride, Now Longing to Go Back to School

By Dinda Veska

In Mamuju, West Sulawesi, there are 687 girls who are not going to school because they are married and are expected instead to take care of their new household. Most of these are arranged marriages, and one of these child brides is Ani*, 17.

Ani was married at age 15 and gave birth to a daughter shortly afterwards. In these past two years, she has fought many times with her husband and finally decided to get a divorce. Bringing up a baby



@UNICEF Indonesia

girl, she has thought a lot about her own life and the impact that education could have on her child in the future. So Ani is eager to go back to school and pursue a higher education to reach her dream as a teacher.

Her motivation is simple but noble: She wants to be her child's first source for knowledge and education. "If it doesn't come from me, I'm afraid my daughter would not grow up as a good person," she said.

At the moment, Ani and her parents are busy filling out the forms and going through the admissions process to enroll in a high school. Meanwhile Ani is working as a shopkeeper in a traditional market while waiting for school to start.

Improving access to quality education for children is one of UNICEF's programmatic areas. UNICEF works with Phillips Lighting Indonesia and the Government in the Back to School programme, to help children such as Ani to get the quality education that she deserves. UNICEF Indonesia also works with UNICEF's Dutch National Committee on child marriage.

Ani is keen to share her story and inspire many children in Indonesia to strive for their rights to education. "Going back to school is my vehicle to success!" Ani said.

**Photo, names of girls and villages have been changed*

Story 7: Early Childhood Development

Tahderriyah: A balanced education for the Bangsamoro children

By Karen Rivera

Half an hour before the class starts at the Tahderriyah (Islamic preschool), the Madrasah Nor-Faidah Al Islamiah in Malabang Lanao Sur, is already teeming with excited preschoolers.

Among the early arrivals are brothers Almar, 4, and Al Faiz, 5. They come to the Tahderriyah with their grandfather, Haji Mohmin Camid.

"They are always excited to go to school. I'm happy that they go at their own will," he says.

At 7:30, Ms. Montia Amor or teacher Lala as she is called, ushers in the children to a clean and inviting classroom. It is filled with colorful charts, pictures with English and Arabic captions and artworks of the children plastered on the walls.

While the children settle in, Haji Mohmin and the parents take their usual spot by the window to observe the class.

Lala starts the day with morning prayers. She gathers the children in a circle and reads from the Quran. The children repeat the words after her. She then she proceeds with the day's lesson on matching

colors and objects. Unlike in the regular preschool, the lessons in the Tahderriyah are delivered in both English and Arabic languages.

Before she ends her class at 12:00, she again gathers the children for a reading of the Quran.

Haji Mohmin meets his grandsons outside. As he had done in the past two weeks, he asks them to recite the new Arabic and English word they have learned in class, to make sure that they will remember it.

Play-based and learner-focused

The Tahderriyah is one of the peace and development programs in Mindanao that is supported by UNICEF and endorsed by the Department of Education (DepEd). The program enables children in targeted Bangsamoro communities to enjoy their right to culturally responsive early childhood care and development (ECCD), complemented by water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and child protection programmes.

It grew out of Days of Peace (DoP), a mass service delivery campaign launched in 2007 with the support of UNICEF, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA) and the Government of the Philippines (GPH). The campaign aimed to provide services to children in communities not commonly reached due to conflict, with an initial focus on micronutrients and immunization, and later expanded to the distribution of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) materials.

Following the campaign, UNICEF and the MILF signed a joint Action Plan that called for deliberate and sustainable efforts to increase ECCD services in conflict-affected communities through the Tahderriyah classes in Islamic schools. A curriculum that supported quality early learning within the context of Islam was then developed and piloted in 13 sites.

Continuous improvements ensured that the program is in line with child development principles and practices, aligned to universal human rights and is Islamic-responsive. The refinement is also in support of the Department of Education (DEPED) orders in Adopting the National Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED), and the Enhanced Basic Education Act which recognizes the right of indigenous people to basic education that is culturally rooted and responsive.

Now on its third phase, the Tahderiyyah Program which supports transition of Kindergarten to Grade 1 served 8,518 Bangsamoro children aged 3-5 years old for SY 2015-2016. Its curriculum is recognized by the Department of Education and is aligned with the National Kindergarten Curriculum and complements the Madrasah Kindergarten Curriculum implemented in kindergarten classes in all public schools under the Arabic Languages and Islamic values Education (ALIVE) and in government-assisted madaris. Further, the Tahderiyyah Program is now included as an educational facility for preschool children in the Philippines Conditional Cash Transfer Program (*Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program*).

“Tahderriyahs are instrumental in building peace in Mindanao in several ways. At the individual level, it impacts children at a time when the brain develops rapidly, habits are formed, differences are recognised, and emotional ties are built through day-to-day interactions. It teaches young children critical emotional skills that will influence their future and foster more peaceful communities,” Yul Olaya, UNICEF Philippines Education Specialist says.

“At the community level, Tahderriyahs bridge communal divides and allow opportunities for families and communities to appreciate and develop collective visions of the future based on children's needs. At the societal level, it is seen to address inequity by giving the best start to young children in depressed, disadvantaged communities that have been ravaged by conflict for so long,” he adds.

A balanced curriculum

The revised curriculum holds so much appeal to parents because it blends Islamic teachings and activities based on the principles of early childhood and development that enhances learning competencies of young children.

“The curriculum is ideal for the Muslim children because it provides a balanced education. It introduces them to the Islamic values and the lessons in a regular preschool,” she says.

Haji Mohim couldn't agree more on the appropriateness of the curriculum. “I'm glad my grandsons are learning about Islam at an early age. They are learning in both English and Arabic too, which will be useful to them when they grow up. If they speak both languages, they will have better options for work someday,” he says.

Salimbae Siawan, mother of Najima, 3, is also happy that her daughter has learned many things since she started in class. “When she gets home from school, she would teach me songs she learned from school and recite the alphabet in English and Arabic. Recently, I've heard her saying *Bismillah*, which is the word for blessing in Islam. She says she learned it from school,” she says.

The curriculum's emphasis on hygiene and sanitation has also prompted the Parents Mudaris Association to support the construction of a hand washing facility as counterpart for UNICEF's provision of supplies.

Enhancing skills

“I learned from the trainings that the best way to teach the children is to establish a connection with them in order to gain their trust first. Scare tactics do not work. It's a big help too, that we have available teaching materials. It makes learning a fun experience for the children,” says Lala.

Word have spread in town about the good teachings at the Tahderriyah and the highly capable teacher. Enrollment is at its highest this year, with 24 children with ages 3 to-5 years old enrolled in class that runs from Sunday to Thursday.

Annex B: Donor Feedback Form

Title of Report/Project: Education Thematic Report

UNICEF Office: EAPRO

Donor Partner: Danish Committee for UNICEF, Korean Committee for UNICEF

Date: 24 March 2017

UNICEF is working to improve the quality of our reports and would highly appreciate your feedback. Kindly answer the questions below for the above-mentioned report. Thank you! Please return the completed form back to UNICEF by email to:

Name:

Email:

SCORING: 5 indicates “highest level of satisfaction” while
0 indicates “complete dissatisfaction”

1. To what extent did the narrative content of the report conform to your reporting expectations? (For example, the overall analysis and identification of challenges and solutions)

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

2. To what extent did the fund utilization part of the report meet your reporting expectations?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

3. To what extent does the report meet your expectations in regard to the analysis provided, including identification of difficulties and shortcomings as well as remedies to these?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we could do better next time?

4. To what extent does the report meet your expectations with regard to reporting on results?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

5. Please provide us with your suggestions on how this report could be improved to meet your expectations.

6. Are there any other comments that you would like to share with us?

Thank you for filling this form!