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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations

COP Child Online Protection
CPP Child Protection Programme

CRBP Child Rights and Business Principles
CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSEC Commercial sexual exploitation of children

DOLISA Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs

GDP Gross domestic product GSO General Statistics Office

HCMC Ho Chi Minh City

HIV/AIDS Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome

ILO International Labour Organisation

INGO International non-government organisation

MDG Millennium Development GoalMICS Multiple Indicator Cluster SurveyMOET Ministry of Education and Training

MOH Ministry of Health MOJ Ministry of Justice

MOLISA Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs

MPS Ministry of Public Security

MTR Mid-term Review

NGO Non-governmental organisation

OR Other resources
PA Programme Area

PSPMO Political, social, professional and mass organisations

RR Regular resources

SDG Sustainable Development Goal SEDP Socio-economic Development Plan

SWSC Social Work Service Centres

UK United Kingdom UN United Nations

UNAIDS United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC UN Office of Drugs and Crime
USA United States of America
VAC Violence against children
WHO World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Viet Nam continues to reap the rewards of economic progress and stability, and is investing in extensive social development, including working to provide a safe and nurturing environment for its children. Traditional measures of poverty present a picture of growth and development; the vast majority of children in Viet Nam today are enrolled in or have completed primary school, have access to healthcare, and can expect to live longer than their parents. However, economic development has also brought about rapid urbanisation, migration, and cultural shifts, which exacerbate dangers, vulnerabilities and inequalities, and introduce new and uncharted risks for children. Despite overall growth, disparities and inequalities are growing between the rich and the poor, the urban and the rural, and the Kinh majority and ethnic minority populations. Violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination against children, especially for those with particular vulnerabilities related to factors such as ethnicity, disability, gender, lack of parental care, migration and trafficking (and interrelated combinations of all of these factors) continue at a rate often at odds with the country's economic and social progress.

As Viet Nam establishes itself as a lower middle-income country, it is experiencing decreasing levels of poverty and increasing levels of wealth and resources at the same time as donors are reducing their assistance to the country. In this context, UNICEF's role shifts from direct interventions to technical assistance, capacity building and knowledge sharing, supporting Viet Nam to develop structures, procedures and services to create a comprehensive child protection system. Throughout UNICEF Viet Nam's work in 2016, technical assistance from UNICEF's international and national experts was deployed with government agencies, service providers, communities, international, national and local civil society organisations, and the private sector.

UNICEF's Child Protection Programme (CPP) focus in Viet Nam is on the establishment of a comprehensive child protection system, including a solid legal and policy framework to support long term change, increased access to justice, improved number and quality of human resources (including developing social work profession), and equitable access to child protection services at the local level.

The lack of comprehensive child protection legal frameworks and service provision, a lack of awareness of the nature and causes of risks to children, and a cultural tendency to consider child protection efforts as a family concern, continue to hinder Viet Nam's ability to provide a protective environment for all children. According to the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), there are approximately 4 million vulnerable children in Viet Nam, of which 1.5 million are in need of special protection, including children with disabilities, children using drugs, children living with HIV/AIDS, children without adequate parental care, children in conflict with the law and child labourers.

In 2016, two core milestones for the CPP were reached. Both represent the result of many years of advocacy, evidence generation, technical support and capacity building. In March, the Law on Children was approved. The new law forms the foundation of a more integrated, comprehensive legal framework for children which includes concrete provisions on children's rights and a separate chapter on the child protection system, alternative care, and justice for children. The law links together child protection legislation, services, and the justice system. The law also extends government responsibility for child protection to all children, not just those in special circumstances as was previously the case.

In April, Viet Nam's first Family and Juvenile Court was launched in Ho Chi Minh City. The court represents an important step in achieving child-friendly and gender sensitive access to justice for children and demonstrates the application of international best practices. UNICEF is now working with the Supreme People's Court to establish a Family and Juvenile Court in Dong Thap province and potentially later Hanoi.

In spite of these and other milestones, violence against children (VAC) continues to impact large numbers of children in Viet Nam. UNICEF played a key role in keeping violence against children on the national and regional agenda. In June, the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children visited Viet Nam. She met with senior government officials, civil society and others to raise issues related

to VAC. To further understand specific VAC issues after the comprehensive multi-country research into the Drivers of VAC was completed, in 2016 UNICEF supported MOLISA to proceed to the next stage an undertake a mapping of interventions on the drivers of violence in the household. The research found links between violence in the household and at school and highlighted the need for social work resources in the school context.

UNICEF continued to advocate for evidence-backed child protection interventions, including in emerging areas of concern such as increased internet use, the increasing effects of climate change and children's mental health. In response to new and emerging challenges for child protection because of increased internet use, Viet Nam is seeking to position itself as a leader in the region in preventing online child abuse. UNICEF Viet Nam has advocated for and assisted in the drafting of the first National Programme on Child Online Protection (2016-2020). 2016 saw the Vietnamese call for humanitarian assistance for the first time since 1975 in response to a drought. The CPP supported response activities by conducting a rapid assessment of child protection implications and preparedness in an emergency. The report, the first of its kind, highlighted that child protection concerns, including family separation, neglect and psychological stress, were being ignored. In 2016 the first study in Viet Nam on the mental health of children and young people was conducted. The study and its findings will be released in 2017 but notes both the lack, and the importance, of specialised mental health services for children and young people.

UNICEF continued its partnerships with a range of stakeholders to create holistic protection and support systems for children. UNICEF has been actively engaging the private sector to protect children from new threats and to ensure equitable access to the benefits of development for all children. Through Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP), UNICEF has begun to build positive and productive relationships with the private sector. UNICEF has also undertaken 2 research studies, one on children's rights in the travel and tourism industry and another on child labour in the footwear and apparel industry. The studies have assisted UNICEF to gain deeper insight into child rights and child protection issues in these contexts and also to gain deeper understanding of developing, and utilising, effective partnerships with the private sector to improve outcomes for children.

In order to build a holistic child protection system based on solid legal structures and readily available services, UNICEF's national level advocacy and policy formation are accompanied by the promotion of community-based child protection services in eight focus provinces. UNICEF works in eight focus provinces to support community-based child protection systems which ensure access to social and child protection services for the most vulnerable groups of children. In 2016 about 4,551 children in need of special protection in the 124 project communes were provided with support, referred to relevant services and placed under case management. The community-based child protection systems have been expanded by the Government to around 1,400 communes across 41 of the 63 provinces in Viet Nam. These systems promote community responsibility for the welfare of children, including those who are most vulnerable, and improve access to essential support services for children in need. Communication activities and awareness raising on prevention of abuse and violence against children reached about 39,100 parents and children was also delivered through the Social Work Service Centres (SWSC).

UNICEF-supported provincial Social Work Service Centres are now operating in six provinces (An Giang, Dong Thap, HCMC, Lao Cai, Ninh Thuan, and Kon Tum), providing child protection services including case management, psychological support, care and support for victims of trafficking, legal aid, and community-based and residential support for orphans, and respite care for children with disabilities. These SWSCs provide frontline services as well as providing evidence to support UNICEF advocacy on the importance of integrated service provision for effective child protection.

As a flexible source of funding, thematic funds once again made a valuable contribution to UNICEF Viet Nam's ability to respond to emerging needs or to scale up efforts (such as amplifying advocacy efforts in the final days before the Law on Children was approved) in order to support the Government to build improved child protection systems and provide better access to and quality of services. Thematic funds enable UNICEF

Viet Nam to focus on long-term strategic interventions and advocacy which does not easily fit into cycles or may be overlooked by other donors.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF 2016

Key child protection issues in Viet Nam

Viet Nam has recently been classified as a lower middle-income country (MIC). While this has had a positive impact on millions of children, the benefits of economic development have not been experienced equally by all communities. There are growing disparities between the rich and the poor and across ethnic groups. Vietnam is experiencing rapid urbanisation and rural-urban migration as well as the erosion of traditional values and support networks. Economic, individual and inter-personal stress is increasing. Children are particularly vulnerable to these challenges as can be seen from rising reported cases of abuse, violence and exploitation (trafficking, sexual and labour) of children. In addition, classification as a MIC has impacted on access to funding from international development assistance partners due to a significant reduction in overseas development assistance being channelled through the UN.

The gap in living conditions and poverty rates between the Kinh and ethnic minorities has widened. In 1993, ethnic minorities accounted for 20% of the poor. In 2010 this figure had reached 50.3%. Ethnic minority children make up more than 60% of all poor children. Economic deprivation is a critical factor in influencing children's vulnerability to a range of protection risks, including early marriage, inadequate care and sexual exploitation. Disparity also exists between rural and urban areas. Thirty-four percent of children living in rural areas were poor, compared with about 12% of children living in cities. School drop outs are more frequent in rural and remote areas and the quality of learning and teaching in rural areas lags behind that in urban areas.

UNICEF continues to work with the government to understand and investigate child protection issues for children. Various studies conducted by UNICEF and the Government of Viet Nam highlight key issues which demonstrate the need for UNICEF's continued support in developing Viet Nam's child protection system, including:

Violence, abuse and neglect in the home

A 2010 study by the UN and the General Statistical Office (GSO) reported that up to 25 per cent of children living with their families were victims of child abuse at the hands of a family member, as indicated by their mothers during a national study on domestic violence. In the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2014, 68.4 per cent of children are reported to have experienced violent discipline in the home. For most children, physical violence at home predicts physical violence in the school and community, often in the form of bullying or fighting with peers. An emerging area of concern in Viet Nam is a rise in reports of children being violent with each other. Corporal punishment in schools is prohibited but continues to be viewed by teachers as an effective way to impose discipline in the classroom and shape children's behaviour. Corporal punishment and discipline in schools often manifest in gendered and discriminatory ways and has been linked to reduced school performance and increased school drop-outs.

MICS 2014 also found that 7 per cent of children aged under five had been left alone or in the care of another child aged ten or younger in the week preceding the survey, whilst other studies have found more worrying numbers with regards to neglect; one study found that 12 per cent of the families surveyed reported neglecting their children, whilst research conducted in 2009 with parent caregivers attending health centres found that one fifth of children in Viet Nam are left home alone regularly or on an occasional basis. Families' understanding of what constitutes violence, abuse and neglect is often limited, and society generally considers these issues as private family matters. Public awareness of available services that can support in resolving the issue is low.

The persistence of cross-border trafficking and child labour

According to a 2015 report from the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), between 2011 and 2014, 3,717 Vietnamese people were trafficked cross the borders to other countries (with the majority, 70 per cent, trafficked to China), with many more thousands of people missing from their communities without explanation. According to the MPS, 20 per cent of trafficked victims are children under 16 years old. These children were trafficked mainly for the purposes of forced prostitution, marriage, labour exploitation and adoption. The actual number of trafficked victims is likely to be higher as the majority of victims are returned through unofficial channels and excluded from official data. Viet Nam lacks a national comprehensive study on child trafficking nor does it collect separate data on children that are trafficked. Viet Nam also lacks coordination mechanisms on prevention of human trafficking with countries outside the region (e.g. Czech Republic, France, Russia, Sweden, Poland, the UK and USA).

A survey conducted by MOLISA in 2012 found that 2.83 million children were engaged in 'economic activities' (57.4 per cent boys and 42.6 per cent girls), and 1.75 million children were classified as 'child labourers'. Of those engaged in 'economic activities', more than 10 per cent of children actually started working when less than 10 years old and even more strikingly over 3 per cent of children began when 5-7 years old. Of the child labourers, the majority are boys (60 per cent to 40 per cent girls), and live overwhelmingly in rural areas (85 per cent to 15 per cent in urban areas). Alarmingly the number of child labourers in the 5-11 age bracket is nearly 15 per cent. The MICS 2014 (which includes domestic work) found a higher level of child labour, with 16.4 per cent of children aged 5-17 years involved in labour. More than half of all children do 5-20 hours of household chores per week, with children in rural areas tending to engage more than those in cities, and girls working more than boys.

The increasing threat of online abuse

Whilst data relating to children's internet use is limited, according to the World Bank for the period 2011-2015 the percentage of the population with internet access reached 48.3, and industry estimates place the number of smartphone users at 21-22 million, representing 23 per cent of the population. It is apparent that and children and young people are at the forefront of this surge in use. Social networking, gaming, entertainment browsing, reading news and chatting are the most popular online activities, and these often take place on private mobile devices and in internet cafes away from supervision. While there are many benefits to internet and associated technologies, children and adolescents are more vulnerable to online abuse and exploitation than adults as they are often poorly equipped to fully understand the potential associated risks. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional abuse and risks of cross border trafficking as a result of being unprepared to deal with online threats.

High rates of imprisonment for child offenders

According to statistics from the MOLISA and MPS, the number of juveniles in conflict with the law was 11,675 in 2012. The draft Situational Analysis of the Juvenile Justice System conducted by UNICEF and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) found that the rate of child offending tended to fluctuate between 2006 and 2013, but has generally been declining, yet there is reportedly public concern surrounding rising rates and seriousness of juvenile offending, and high levels of stigma surrounding child offenders. The draft Situational Analysis also found that despite the majority of crimes committed by children being minor property-related offences, and the limitations in national law and policy on the restriction of liberty, the number of children being sentenced to termed imprisonment remains very high. Between 2007 and 2009, over 80 per cent of child offenders sanctioned by the court were sentenced to termed imprisonment or suspended termed imprisonment.

The impact of gender, disability and ethnicity and other factors on opportunities, child protection risks and vulnerabilities

Various factors, including gender, disability and ethnicity, have strong impacts on the risks of harm faced by different children, and on their ability to access various services. For example, a UNICEF study on Out of School Children found that in 2009, of all the children out of school, 83 per cent were children

with disabilities and 16 per cent were from migrant and or ethnic minority families. The MICS 2014 found that children from ethnic minority groups are slightly less likely to have their birth registered, and it can be assumed that they have more difficulty accessing services as a result. The MICS 2014 also found that of women aged 15-49 years in Viet Nam, 0.9 per cent was married before the age of 15 and about 10 per cent of women aged 20-49 were married or in a union before their 18th birthday. Women in rural areas, with less education and from the poorest households are more likely to be married or in a union before the age of 18. The MPS reports that the majority of children in conflict with the law are male (highlighting the highly gendered nature of children in conflict with the law) and between the ages of 16 and 18. At the same time, girls make up the majority of reported victims of child sexual assault.

Children affected by migration

Viet Nam experiences significant internal and external migration. Whilst there are benefits, particularly economic, associated with migration, there are also a range of risks for children affected by migration. These children fall into three main categories:

- Children left behind (CLB) who stay in their place of origin after their parents migrate;
- Accompanied migrant children who migrate with their parents; and
- Unaccompanied migrant children (UMC) who migrate independently by themselves without their parents and guardians.

CLB are likely to be deprived of psycho-social stimulation (positive parenting), early childhood education, and other essential health, water and sanitation services. Some children, in the absence of parents' supervision, drop out of school at their own will to work and earn money. When left-behind children drop out of school, their level of vulnerability immediately increases, as does their risk of exposure to trafficking, exploitation and violence.

Children and adolescents who migrate are at high risk of becoming 'invisible' residents, particularly when moving from rural to urban areas where they do not appear in statistics or administrative records. They are regularly exploited through debt bondage and non-payment/under-payment, and harsh and abusive working and living conditions. These children face deprivation of services including health care, water and sanitation, and early childhood and primary education

Climate change

Climate change is increasing extreme weather conditions and Viet Nam is particularly vulnerable to negative impacts from changing weather patterns leading to an increase in natural disasters. Disasters impact children's access to education and other services, increase health and well-being vulnerabilities and can exacerbate existing inequalities. Viet Nam lacks an adequate child protection framework for children in emergencies, and increasing vulnerability to disaster only exacerbates this lack of preparedness. Climate change also impacts communities in the day-to-day by increasing food and livelihood insecurity, increasing the likelihood of rural urban migration which increases the number of children affected by migration. Climate change could rapidly escalate a range of trends which already have child protection implications.

In 2016, a severe drought prompted the Government of Vietnam to call for international humanitarian support for the first time since 1975. The CPP supported the government to conduct a rapid assessment to identify child protection gaps in disaster risk-preparedness and response and identify potential interventions to ensure a child focused response to emergencies.

Despite becoming the first country in Asia and the second in the world to ratify the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), understanding of child protection amongst the government, justice system, local authorities and the public remains limited. Child neglect, abuse and exploitation are still considered private

family matters and any action on these issues is expected to occur as a result of charity work. Despite recent improvements, in particular the Law on Children, Viet Nam's child protection system is nascent; legal frameworks are in place but implementation is weak, particularly as problems grow more complicated with development. The system is uneven in quality across the country, over-reliant on volunteers and propaganda campaigns, and severely lacking in a capable workforce, with a lack of investment into the social work profession. Child justice principles, for victims, witnesses or alleged offenders, do not yet fully inform the justice system or courts.

Numerous expert committees have been created to respond to domestic violence, trafficking and other specific harmful practices, but this has led to fragmentation and a lack of cohesiveness in the response to these issues as well as often little focus on the special circumstances for children. As a result, there are gaps in terms of availability and capacity of services for prevention, identification, early intervention, rehabilitation, and alternative care (i.e. a continuum of coordinated services), for at-risk of vulnerable children, such as those experiencing or at risk of neglect, abuse, exploitation; orphans; abandoned children; children with disabilities; children in conflict with the law; or children affected by HIV/AIDS. Inequalities related to both ethnicity and gender continue to lead to both increased vulnerabilities and disparities in access to child protection and justice services.

The UNICEF Viet Nam Child Protection Programme (CPP) therefore focuses on the establishment of a comprehensive child protection system, including a solid legal and policy framework to support long term change, increased access to justice, improved number and quality of human resources (including developing the social work profession), and equitable access to child protection services at the local level.

The UNICEF Country Programme and Child Protection Programme

The UNICEF Country Programme 2012-2016 was developed to support the Government of Viet Nam to implement the CRC, and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The programme supports key Government goals, priorities and programmes, including the Socio Economic Development Strategy (2011-2020), and the Socio Economic Development Plan (2016-2020).

The CPP aims to strengthen social welfare and justice systems to sustainably address child protection issues and their root causes, and develop an adequate protective legislative and regulatory framework that protects children from neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation. This framework aims to protect all Vietnamese children, but especially the most vulnerable, such as abused and exploited children, orphans and abandoned children, children with disabilities, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children in conflict with the law, children in emergencies, ethnic minority children, and migrant children. Working closely with the Government of Viet Nam, the Programme supports the implementation of the National Programme on Child Protection (2016-2020), the National Programme on Social Work Development, the National Programme on Crime Prevention, the National Programme of Action against Human Trafficking, legal reforms including Resolution N.49 on Judicial Reform Strategy until 2020 and Resolution N.48 on Legal System Reform until 2020, the National Programme on Care and Support for Children Affected by HIV/AIDS, the National Programme on Support for People with Disabilities and the National Plan of Action for Children, 2011-2020.

CPP works towards Outcome 2 of the UNICEF Viet Nam Country Programme 2012-2016

By 2016, a more effective national social protection system provides increased coverage, quality, and equitable access for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

This outcome will be achieved by the realisation of four key outputs:

2.1. Child protection human resource and service structures better able to prevent and respond to child neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation.

- 2.2. Special protection measures developed and implemented to provide care, support and protection for the most vulnerable groups of children, including exploited and trafficked children, children without parental care, children affected by HIV and AIDS and children with disabilities.
- 2.3. Child-friendly justice system established in line with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and other key international standards to protect the rights of children in contact with the justice system.
- 2.4. Provincial child protection systems in eight provinces are effectively preventing and protecting children from neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation, in particular the most vulnerable children and juveniles in conflict with the law.

The UNICEF Viet Nam CPP is guided by Outcome 6 of UNICEF's global Strategic Plan 2014-2017:

"Improved and equitable prevention of and response to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children".

Eight Programme Areas (PAs) of work come together to achieve this outcome:

- Data and child protection;
- 2. Child protection system;
- 3. Violence, exploitation and abuse;
- 4. Justice for children;
- 5. Birth registration;
- 6. Child protection and emergencies;
- 7. Child protection: strengthening families and communities; and
- 8. Child protection: general.

The results reported later in this report are organised under these PAs.

The CPP is also directed by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and as of 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs provide more specific targets than the MDGs, and are more closely aligned with UNICEF Viet Nam's CPP. The adoption of the SDGs by the Government of Viet Nam provides a more relevant frame of reference for the CPP and represents renewed commitment by the Government to work towards improved child protection systems and services. The CPP is closely aligned to SDGs 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), 8 (Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all), and 16 (Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies). SDG 16 is the main goal that guides the work of the CPP.

MDGs/SDGs

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere.
- Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

SDG 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies

- End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.
- •By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.
- •Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

SDG 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

UNICEF's Global Strategic Plan 2014-2017 Outcome 6:

Improved and equitable prevention of and response to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children.

PA 06-01: Data and Child Protection PA 06-02: Child Protection System PA 06-03: Violence, exploitation and abuse

PA 06-04: Justice for children

PA 06-05: Birth registration

PA 06-06: Child protection and emergencies

PA 06-07: Child protection strengthening families and communities

PA 06-08: Child protection general



UNICEF Viet Nam Country Programme 2012-2016 Outcome 2:

By 2016, a more effective national social protection system provides increased coverage, quality, and equitable access for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Output 2.1

Child protection human resource and service structures better able to prevent and respond to child neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation

Output 2.2

Special protection measures developed and implemented to provide care, support and protection for the most vulnerable groups of children, including exploited and trafficked children, children without parental care, children affected by HIV and AIDS and children with disabilities.

Output 2.3

Child-friendly justice system established in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other key international standards to protect the rights of children in contact with the justice system.

Output 2.4

Provincial child protection systems in eight provinces are effectively preventing and protecting children from neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation, in particular the most vulnerable children and juveniles in conflict with the law.

The One UN Plan 3

Viet Nam is a pilot Delivering as One (DaO) country; all UN agencies in Viet Nam work together to more effectively and efficiently achieve commonly shared goals, and support Viet Nam in its journey. This has been facilitated by the relocation of UNICEF Viet Nam, along with the 13 other agencies, into the Green One UN House in 2015. This physical closeness has reduced costs related to operations, communications, monitoring and evaluation and security.

The UN in Viet Nam is currently executing the third One Plan (2012-2016) - a coordinated, collaborative plan that aims to enable all agencies to more effectively and efficiently achieve common goals in Viet Nam. The CPP supports the achievement of One Plan outcomes 2.1, 2.4, 3.2, and 3.4 in particular, and especially the associated outputs, which are also related to Social Protection and Governance.

One Plan outcomes	One Plan outputs
Outcome 2.1: By 2016, a more effective national social protection system provides increased coverage, quality, and equitable access for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups	Output 2.1.1: High-quality evidence is available for use by decision-makers to inform the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of social protection related legislation and policy
	Output 2.1.2: Policy advice and technical support provided and considered by the Government to enhance the effectiveness of the social protection system, with a particular focus on coherence between different pillars and with other relevant policy frameworks
	Output 2.1.3: Alternative legal, policy, targeting, and financing options are available and considered by the Government for the expansion of integrated and adequate social assistance, social insurance and social welfare and protection services
	Output 2.1.4: Institutional and human resource capacity strengthened to design and deliver social assistance, social insurance, and social welfare and protection services
Outcome 2.4: By 2016, national and subnational institutions, in partnership with communities, more actively address inequalities through implementation and monitoring of laws, policies and programmes that promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and an effective and sustainable response to HIV, reducing stigma and discrimination	Output 2.4.3: Gender related legal and policy frameworks programmes and practices strengthened to effectively address gender inequality and inequity, gender discrimination and gender-based violence
Outcome 3.2: By 2016, all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, benefit from strengthened legal and judicial reform and increased access to justice, enhanced capacity of legal and judicial professionals, and strengthened national legal frameworks to support the	Output 3.2.1: Policy, legal and regulatory framework strengthened to better reflect the rights of the most vulnerable groups, and increase their access to justice.
	Output 3.2.2: Law enforcement and judicial institutions strengthened to better protect rights, and provide increased access to justice to all people, particularly the most vulnerable groups

implementation of international conventions ratified by Viet Nam	Output 3.2.3: Legal, law enforcement and judicial personnel have enhanced knowledge and skills to carry out their obligations under Viet Nam's Constitution and laws as well as ratified international conventions
	Output 3.2.4: Awareness raising programmes and legal support services developed and effectively implemented to enable all people, particularly the vulnerable groups to be aware of, and claim their rights
Outcome 3.4: By 2016, political, social, professional and mass organisations (PSPMOs) participate effectively in policy discussion and decision-making	Output 3.4.1: Enabling legal, policy and institutional framework and dialogue mechanism available for PSPMOs to participate in policy discussion and decision-making processes.
rocesses for the benefit of the most ulnerable and disadvantaged groups	Output 3.4.2: PSPMOs' human resources and organisation capacities strengthened to provide significant contributions in the development of policies in the best interests of the most vulnerable groups

Child Protection Programme Strategies

In order to achieve the CPP Outcomes, and contribute to the One UN Plan 2012-2016, UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2014-2017 Outcome 6, and SDGs, the UNICEF Viet Nam CPP applies the following seven strategies:



- 1. **Knowledge management:** The programme will support generation and dissemination of evidence on a range of child protection issues in order to advocate for policy development or reform.
- 2. **Evidence-based advocacy:** Partnerships with the Government, National Assembly, and Communist Party will be strengthened to advocate for the adoption and adherence to international conventions and for child-sensitive and gendered policies, laws, and budgets that lead to the creation of a protective environment for children.
- 3. **Policy and legal development:** The programme will strengthen the legal and regulatory framework on child protection, and improve monitoring of its enforcement. This includes the provision of expertise for development/reforming and monitoring of the implementation of related laws, national strategies, policies, and programmes as well as increasing budgeting for child protection at national and sub-national levels.
- 4. Capacity development and systems strengthening: The programme will strengthen national and local capacities of key government ministries, mass organisations, and civil society organisations to protect children. This includes support to strengthen the social welfare system, such as the development of the social work profession and improving child protection structures, mechanisms, and services. It also includes support for improving the capacity of partners and for reforming law enforcement and justice agencies for the establishment of child-friendly justice systems.
- 5. **Demonstration and innovations:** At the sub-national level, the programme will support the rolling out of national policies and programmes or demonstrations of new programme approaches and innovations to produce evidence to influence policies and systems.

- 6. **Strengthening communication for development:** Support will be provided to promote behaviour change to reduce the prevalence of negative or discriminatory attitudes and beliefs and of harmful practices towards children.
- 7. **Emergency response:** The programme will strengthen the understanding of child protection in emergency issues. This includes advocacy for policy development/reform, and the provision of technical expertise to develop and integrate child protection interventions in national and subnational plans to respond to disasters and climate change.

Alongside these strategies, UNICEF Viet Nam applies gender equality approaches as a crosscutting concept throughout activities.

Partnerships

As Viet Nam's poverty levels decrease, many donors have begun scaling down their development assistance, either as a result of Viet Nam achieving 'lower middle income country status' or due to the global policy positions of their organisation. As development assistance in Viet Nam is shifting from financial support to technical assistance, UNICEF's position as a technical leader in child protection and child justice facilitates this transition.

UNICEF plays a role as a gateway to international experience and expertise on children's issues for the Government of Viet Nam and adds particular value by combining this global vantage point with the local knowledge of UNICEF staff at the country level. At the same time, UNICEF also helps to share Viet Nam's experience and expertise with the world. In 2016, UNICEF Viet Nam provided technical assistance to the MOLISA, MOJ, MPS, SPC, SPP, the National Assembly and relevant committees, the Communist Party of Viet Nam, Women's Union, non-government organisations, and in selected provinces the Provincial People's Committees, Provincial Department of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs, Provincial Department of Justice, Provincial Department of Public Security.

UNICEF also engaged universities and academia, local and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), international development partners, and the private sector in a multistakeholder approach towards child protection. In this period of transition, it is particularly important for UNICEF Viet Nam to continue to engage the growing local civil society and academia as fellow knowledge leaders and partners in policy advocacy efforts. UNICEF's work with civil society includes, for example, ensuring that special protection measures are available for particularly vulnerable groups of children through its support to Thao Dan Centre in Ho Chi Minh City. UNICEF supported the centre with capacity building efforts including training on project development, proposal writing, assistance to develop the centre's 2017-2019 strategy. The centre now hosts social work university students to complete practical training in conducting outreach with street children.

UNICEF has been actively engaging with the private sector in the country's social as well as economic development, to protect children from new threats and to ensure equitable access to the benefits of development for all children. Through Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP), UNICEF has begun to build positive and productive relationships with the private sector. UNICEF has also undertaken 2 research studies, one on children's rights in the travel and tourism industry and another on child labour in the footwear and apparel industry. The studies have assisted UNICEF to gain deeper insight into child rights in these contexts and also to gain deeper understanding of developing and utilising effective partnerships with the private sector in these industries to improve outcomes for children.

The impact of strategic context on the work of 2016

2016 was the last year of the current programme cycle for the CPP and the UNICEF Country Programme, and the first year of the National Programme on Child Protection 2016-2020. It was thus a year of both reflection and planning. The country office mobilised efforts to develop a new five-year

country programme approved by the Executive Board in September. The Programme for 2017-2021 builds on the key achievements to date while identifying and addressing unfinished Millennium Development Goals and aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

UNICEF was able to leverage several high impact communication activities on social media to raise awareness of child protection issues, particularly violence against children. UNICEF translated a video featuring Goodwill Ambassador David Beckham on ending violence against children which reached about 44,000 views and allowed sensitive issues to break through state-controlled traditional media. UNICEF Viet Nam also hosted a high-level visit from Goodwill Ambassador Katy Perry in June 2016. She focused on the issue of children left behind. The visit generated extensive coverage in both social and traditional media. The 4th ASEAN Children's Forum was held in Hanoi which was attended by the Special Representative to the Secretary General on violence against children and also provided an opportunity for children to discuss issues of violence and offer their recommendations on preventing violence. Finally, UNICEF provided extensive support to the Viet Nam delegation to the Third High Level Meeting on South-South Cooperation on Child Rights in Asia and the Pacific which led to a commitments from Governments on ending violence against children.

The CPP continues to build on previous achievements to, step-by-step, create a comprehensive and inclusive child protection system for all children. Notable achievements from 2015 and earlier paved the way for the achievements of 2016. For example, the establishment of the Family and Juvenile Court in 2014 and the amendment of the Law on Administrative Violations in 2013 opened the door for substantial reform of the Penal and Procedure Codes in the interests of boys and girls in 2015. Evidence generated from the pilot community-based child protection systems in UNICEF partner provinces beginning in 2008 demonstrated the need for a legal framework for child protection. This demonstrated need created demand, eventually realised in the Law on Children in 2016, which creates a legal framework and establishes governmental responsibility for a comprehensive child protection system. Likewise, the ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* enabled UNICEF to better advocate for targeted mechanisms to support children with disabilities. The ratification of The Hague Convention on Adoption, effective from 2012, enabled UNICEF to improve alternative care for children; UNICEF offered technical assistance, which contributed to increased adoption rates, by promoting domestic adoption, and prioritising children with disabilities or special care requirements for international adoption.

Viet Nam's journey from a centrally planned to a market-based mixed economy has given rise to tensions between differing views of the role of the state in the lives of its citizens, and in particular the role of the state in the family sphere. The state has been more at ease relying on the family to be responsible for matters traditionally considered internal to the family, including protection of children. Concurrently, the level of understanding of child protection amongst the public remains limited, with child neglect, abuse and exploitation considered private family matters, and child protection efforts seen primarily being championed by social organisations and charities rather than the state. Whilst this is changing, building the understanding and capacity of Government counterparts as well, as the public at large, continues to be a large part of UNICEF's role. The ongoing awareness raising and advocacy from UNICEF to senior Government officials as well as staff at the central and sub-national level is hugely time consuming, particularly in the development of policy and legal documents. In response, UNICEF collaborates with different development partners, including UN agencies, INGOs and bilateral partners to coordinate efforts to maximise advocacy impact.

Based on evaluation of previous achievements and challenges yet to be addressed, the CPP, remains committed to continuing its focus on supporting the Government to build and implement national and local child protection systems and increasing access to justice for children. At the provincial level,

the CPPs aims to build on local evidence to inform and support MOLISA for a nationwide scale up of a well-documented, costed and budgeted community- based child protection system.

RESULTS IN OUTCOME AREA 6: CHILD PROTECTION

Eight Programme Areas (PAs) of work come together to contribute to Outcome Area 6: Child Protection. UNICEF Viet Nam's key results, constraints and remaining challenges in 2016 for each of these PAs are given below.

PA 06-01: DATA AND CHILD PROTECTION

UNICEF has made several important contributions to improving the data and evidence base of child protection in Viet Nam, including a mapping analysis of violence in the home and a strengthened data monitoring system through the creation of child protection indicators and a guideline on data collection. These are critical contributions that inform the development of national legislation, national policies and programmes on child protection. Clear and targeted child protection data collection increases knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, especially for the most vulnerable children, those at-risk and in need of protection. It enables the government to respond appropriately with targeted interventions, it improves capacity for monitoring and evaluating the child protection system and it informs the development of policy and legal frameworks.

Key Results

Violence Against Children

In 2016 UNICEF continued its important work to counter violence against children. Viet Nam is one of the four countries that has joined the *Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children (2014-2017)* research project. In 2015 UNICEF Viet Nam collaborated with MOLISA, UNFPA and research agencies to join a significant multi-country study on the Drivers of Violence against Children (VAC). The study found that violence in the home predicts violence in the school and community and that corporal punishment (which continues to be viewed positively) manifests in gendered and discriminatory ways and has been linked to reduced school performance and increased school dropouts. In 2016, UNICEF organised a workshop to share the findings of the study with participants from line ministries, civil organisations, research institutes, universities and international and local NGOs.

The study outlined a number of areas where children face violence and MOLISA, with UNICEF support in 2016, moved to Stage 2 of the research project to conduct a mapping exercise on existing interventions to address VAC in the home to better understand the advantages and disadvantages of the current system as well as determine gap areas. MOLISA will use the findings of this study to develop an evidence-based intervention for national implementation to prevent violence in the home. UNICEF support for the mapping project included technical expertise on literature review as well as technical meetings. The technical meetings offer the opportunity for capacity development and participants included MOLISA, MOET, Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, the Viet Nam Association for Protection of Children's Rights, research institutes and INGOs.

THE MULTI-COUNTRY STUDY ON THE DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE AFFECTING CHILDREN (2014-2017)

The Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children is a current action-research project in Italy, Peru, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. It is led by the UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti in close collaboration with national research teams and the University of Edinburgh as its global academic partner. It stands at the intersection of evidence, policy and practice by undertaking quality research, translating findings into policy-relevant evidence, and using it to inform the design of more effective, context-specific violence prevention policies and interventions. The objective is to support policymakers and other relevant actors in understanding the greatest threats to children and to plan interventions that address the factors that shape those threats.

The Vietnamese research team:

- MOLISA
- Institute for Development
- Institute for Family and Gender Studies
- Viet Nam Academy of Social Sciences
- UNICEF Viet Nam

The study consists of three interrelated stages, each with a distinct set of objectives, activities and milestones that feed into the main outcomes and outputs of the study, and inform both ingoing country programming and the emerging global evidence base on violence prevention:



Viet Nam has catalysed other governments in the East Asia and Pacific Region—including Indonesia, the Philippines and China—all engaging in similar drivers of violence studies.

The mapping exercise highlighted a lack of comprehensive prevention and response services to issues surrounding violence in schools. The findings also highlighted that social work services in schools are vital to support inclusive and quality education for all children. This result is now being incorporated into national-level advocacy to introduce social work into school nationwide.

The VAC study was also used to inform the development of a National Programme for Online Protection awaiting approval by the Government, the National Programme on Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour (2016–2020) and other government interventions.

Mental health

In 2016, two studies relating to mental health were undertaken. The first, a first-ever study on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing amongst children and youth in Viet Nam, looked to provide an overview of the mental health of children and young people in Viet Nam and helped to fill data gaps in respect of perception, risk/protective factors and coping strategies. Findings from this study will inform recommendations on how to address mental health and psychosocial challenges and will feed into both existing national level programmes, including the National Programme on Social Support and Rehabilitation for People with Mental Illness and the Targeted Programme on Health, as well as future programming.

The second study looked at the mental health service system in the social welfare and labour sector. One of the main weaknesses associated with the mental health system in Viet Nam is the lack of community-based services. It is also clear that mental health services for children and youth in Viet Nam are relatively undeveloped. Mental health treatment and services for children and youth need to be specialised to address the unique mental health problems that exist amongst children and youth as adult mental health treatment and services are often not appropriate for use with young individuals and their families. The findings from this study will inform the elaboration of the Social Care component in the Master Plan for Social Assistance Reform (MPSAR).

Child protection indicators to assist data collection

UNICEF has also contributed to the gradual progress of a strengthened child protection data monitoring system of MOLISA, by developing a set of 25 national child protection indicators and a guideline on data collection. The new indicators are disaggregated into age, gender, types of disabilities, level of education and other categories. The new indicators also now cover community-based child protection services as well as institutional child protection services. Data from the new indicators is not yet available but it is anticipated that the changes will enable the Government to have a much clearer understanding of child protection issues across the country, as well as differences based on gender and age, which will be used to inform timely and effective development of policies and programmes on child protection.

These indicators were approved by MOLISA in 2015, and subsequently disseminated to 63 provinces. A technical guideline on data collection was finalised in 2016 and training was conducted with DOLISA staff from each of the eight UNICEF provinces. The guidelines are designed to promote inter-sectoral data collection and can be utilised by the MOH, MOET, MOF, MOJ, the People's Court, police and other departments.

To understand the relationship between children and substance abuse, UNICEF supported a situational analysis of children and substance abuse in Viet Nam in partnership with the Department for Social Vices Prevention, MOLISA. The study is due for completion in 2017 and aims to influence the social welfare, justice and law enforcement responses to children with substance abuse problems, in particular children in conflict with the law.

Costings of child protection system

To influence the national budget allocation to child protection, UNICEF, in partnership with the Child Rights working group (currently co-chaired by Plan International and Child Fund) supported MOLISA to conduct a costing analysis of the child protection system. Key technical support was provided to 30 national and provincial welfare officers through training on costings which meant that essential costings information was gathered as well as increasing local capacity to undertake costing methodologies. The research, due for completion in 2017, will be used to advocate for an increase in the budget allocation to child protection.

Constraints and remaining challenges

Several key gaps in high quality, verifiable and available data continue to affect UNICEF's ability to support Viet Nam to construct effective and inclusive child protection mechanisms. Capacities for data collection, monitoring, analysing and reporting on child protection and justice for children must continue to be strengthened if the extensive data and findings produced by UNICEF Viet Nam are to be translated into effective child protection systems and interventions.

For example, a comprehensive national survey of children in special circumstances has not yet been conducted, partly contributing to questionable and contradictory data on children in special circumstances. UNICEF also supported a specialised subset of juvenile justice indicators, but their implementation has been limited, resulting in inconsistent data collection and hindered analysis of the situation of juvenile offending. Data, collected by UNICEF or the Government, is not always disaggregated according to age, gender or ethnicity (or cross-reference both of these factors), restricting the abilities of both parties to adequately identify the specific issues which affect girls and boys, different ethnic minority groups, or different age groups (and indeed, different cross-sectors of these groups) in different ways. It is anticipated that the new child protection indicators will assist with these data challenges.

Gaps in understanding and data also remain in emerging and under-researched child protection issues; analysis of such issues is sorely needed in order to inform law, policy and programme development for an effective and comprehensive child protection system. These gaps include: the impact of climate change, urbanisation and migration on vulnerable children; child protection concerns among ethnic minority children and especially girls; juvenile offending, substance use and abuse by children (to be completed 2017), and children's experience of online abuse.

PA 06-02: CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS

In 2016, UNICEF Viet Nam has supported numerous improvements to the child protection legal and policy framework. Implementation of these laws will create an enabling environment for child protection at both national and provincial levels. These include:

- the approved Law on Children
- technical support at the provincial level to support the rollout of the National Programme on Child Protection
- advocacy and technical support for social care service delivery and a Master Plan on Social Assistance Reform
- approved National Plan to implement the Convention of the Rights of People with Disabilities
- institutionalising support for children with disabilities, mental health problems, and living with HIV/AIDS

Key Results

The Law on Children

After a sustained campaign of advocacy, evidence generation and technical support, the approved Law on Children represents a significant achievement for the CPP. The new law forms the foundation of a more integrated, comprehensive legal framework for children which includes concrete provisions on children's rights and a separate chapter on the child protection system, alternative care, and justice for children. The law links together child protection legislation, services, and the justice system. The law also extends government responsibility for child protection to all children, not just those in special circumstances as was previously the case.

UNICEF has continued to work with Government agencies to develop two decrees which will guide the implementation of the new law. UNICEF provided technical assistant to conduct 5 reports on policy analysis and service mapping to support the development of these decrees. UNICEF also supported a

number of technical workshops, with participants from MOLISA, other line ministries, civil society organisations and INGOs, to review and provide input to drafts of the Decree.

More detail about the Law on Children can be found in the Case Study.

National Programme on Child Protection 2016-2020

The National Programme on Child Protection 2016-2020, approved in December 2015, focuses on establishing a comprehensive child protection system and expanding the coverage of the local child protection system at subnational levels. The National Programme includes four core projects:

- 1. communication on child protection and violence against children
- 2. strengthening child protection structures and capacities
- 3. development of the child protection service system
- 4. justice for children

In 2016 UNICEF focused on providing support, particularly capacity development, at the provincial level to implement the national programme, in order to provide a stronger framework for accelerating provincial efforts in protecting children from neglect, abuse and exploitation as well as assisting children in special circumstances (such as children with disabilities, children living with HIV/AIDS, or children without adequate parental care).

Social Care Service Delivery Reform

Social care services aim to deliver quality care and other support services such as social work, protection or social support services, to children or adults in need or at-risk. In Viet Nam, social care services are one part of a 3-pillar approach to social assistance which includes:

- 1. Cash transfers
- 2. Social care services including counselling, psychosocial support, support for those in institutions and social work services, preferably in a community-based setting
- 3. Emergency support

The CPP has been working closely with the Government to support the development and delivery of quality social care services that are able to support and respond to the needs of different vulnerable groups. A comprehensive approach to community-based social care services is a relatively new concept for Viet Nam and UNICEF assisted MOLISA to conduct a study to facilitate a common understanding of 'social care' in Viet Nam. UNICEF also contributed substantial technical inputs to improve and finalise the social care component, one of three core pillars, of the Master Plan on Social Assistance Reform 2016-2030, which is currently under final review for submission to the Prime Minister for approval.

Viet Nam is moving towards a community-based approach to care. A key element of community-based child protection is the development and professionalisation of social work to provide the human resources essential to the delivery of community-based child protection. UNICEF advocated for, and assisted in the finalisation of the Strategic Plan for Social Work Development (2016-2020). Ongoing advocacy efforts are targeted towards the development of a law on the social work profession which will recognise the role, functions and activities of social workers in various sectors as well as

strengthen the social work service system as a whole. Legal recognition of the social work profession will promote stronger service delivery at the local level.

The Ministry of Health was supported to develop and disseminate a policy on social work in hospitals, including training of 40 hospital managers on implementation. UNICEF also worked with the MoET to conduct a feasibility study on social work in schools to inform policy advocacy and programming. Six courses on school social work were developed for integration into the social work bachelor programme at Hanoi University of Education. At the local level, 80 social welfare managers were trained on social work administration, a community-based case management guideline and a child protection services manual for Social Work Service Centres were developed and disseminated.

The CPP has also worked with the government to include a more enhanced concept of protection in the third pillar to extend the provision of emergency support beyond victims of natural disasters to now also include victims of trafficking and accidents.

Systemising support for children with disabilities and mental health problems

Ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in November 2014 has prepared the way for better realisation of the rights of children with disabilities in Viet Nam. With the support of UNICEF, other UN agencies, NGOs and disabled people's organisations, the National Committee on Disability was established in January 2016. Later in the year, Viet Nam's Action Plan on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was approved and launched.

The National Plan of Action for the implementation of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) advocates for specific targets for children with disabilities. UNICEF supported a launch and dissemination workshop for the national plan in order to develop sectoral and provincial level plans to improve the lives of children with disabilities. The Action Plan emphasises the importance of increasing public understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities, amendment of laws to align with the CRPD, and implementation of programmes and policies relating to persons with disabilities. The plan includes action for inclusive education; early identification and intervention; better social assistance and improved community-based care (as opposed to institutional care as was previously the case). This work has increased the understanding and commitment of relevant government sectors at both central and local levels to realising the rights of adults and children with disabilities. Technical assistance for the drafting of the plan was provided by UNICEF, USAID, NGOs and disabled people's organisations.

UNICEF provided technical support to MOLISA to coordinate the Government's first report on the implementation of the CRPD which will be completed in 2017. UNICEF also supported the Viet Nam Federation on Disability to conduct an assessment on Viet Nam's performance in delivering the 4 key rights of the CRPD. This analysis will be used to develop a Shadow Report for the UN Committee on People with Disabilities.

UNICEF Viet Nam also played a leading role in the development of the National Strategy on Mental Health, which will guide the reform of current mental health systems, advocating for a comprehensive and integrated service that addresses the diverse needs of adults and children with mental health problems. Alongside this, UNICEF supported the development of an inter-ministerial circular by MOH and MOLISA on procedures of care, treatment and rehabilitation for people with mental illness in local social protection centres. This circular is being finalised to be in line with the national framework on mental health.

In addition, findings from the first-ever study on children's mental health helped fill data gaps in respect of perception, risk/protective factors and coping strategies. The recommendations from this

study will inform the improvement of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing services for children in Viet Nam.

National Programme on Child Online Protection

Viet Nam is seeing rapid growth in internet access and the use of internet-enabled mobile phones; according to the World Bank, for the period 2011-2015 the percentage of the population with internet access reached 48.3, and whilst data is limited, industry estimates place the number of smartphone users at 21-22 million, representing 23 per cent of the population. Awareness of child protection issues is limited, and children and parents remain relatively ill prepared to deal with online risks and as a consequence, children in Viet Nam are increasingly vulnerable to online abuse and exploitation.

With the support of the UK Government through the #WeProtect global multi-stakeholder alliance, UNICEF generated momentum, commitment, awareness and capacity among key stakeholders to combat online abuse and exploitation. With UNICEF assistance, a National Programme on Child Online Protection (COP) was drafted and the capacity of law enforcement, justice and welfare officers was strengthened through specialised training. In addition, the capacity of key COP stakeholders was enhanced, including through a study visit by Vietnamese officials to the Philippines to learn about the laws and services provided to child victims of online sexual exploitation and abuse.

The draft National Programme on Child Online Protection (2016-2020) is currently awaiting Prime Ministerial approval. Currently, initiatives on child protection online in Viet Nam are limited to sporadic training courses for law enforcement. The development of the draft national programme represents strong commitment from the Government of Viet Nam to tackle this issue and formalise and standardise interventions. The draft programme proposes an inter-agency approach involving the social welfare sector, the private sector and law enforcement. Initiatives will build awareness and capacity amongst relevant sectors and stakeholders, and develop detection, reporting and removal mechanisms for online materials and situations that threaten the safety and wellbeing of children. Dealing with child online protection will be integrated into the curriculum of the police academy, further promoting the institutionalisation of child protection measures in relation to the internet. Furthermore, UNICEF also supported MOLISA to conduct a COP capacity assessment on child online protection to generate evidence for programming and drafting of a National Programme on COP.

Support for children affected by HIV/AIDS

Stigma, discrimination, lack of understanding and awareness, and a lack of access to services (often because of stigma, discrimination and a lack of understanding also), can result children living with HIV/AIDS being prevented from accessing adequate treatment and care.

UNICEF supported a workshop to conduct a review of the 2014-2020 National Plan of Action to Support Children affected by HIV/AIDS. The workshop provided an opportunity to conduct a 'lessons learned' process and share experiences to enhance the implementation of the national plan and the achievement of SDG 3 (*Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*). More than 150 participants from line ministries, other government agencies, the National Assembly and the provinces have committed to:

- community-based mechanisms to reduce stigma and discrimination against children affected by HIV/AIDS,
- · improved cross-sectoral monitoring mechanisms,
- Strengthened capacity to create quality and friendly learning environment for children affected by HIV/AIDS, and

 improved capacity of social welfare staff in caring for and support to children affected by HIV/AIDS.

The information gathered as a part of this review workshop will be used for further improvements in terms of planning and delivering interventions and programmes supporting children affected by HIV/AIDS.

UNICEF supported MOLISA to develop a circular, approved in early 2016, which provides clear procedures for assessment, needs identification, development of intervention plan, and referral mechanisms for supporting children affected by HIV/AIDS contributing to improving accessibility of children affected with HIV/AIDS to necessary care and social support services.

In addition, 32 social welfare officers of 12 provinces have increased their knowledge and skills in providing care and support for children affected by HIV/AIDS.

Constraints and remaining challenges

Passage of the Law on Children, which sets the framework for a comprehensive structure for child protection, will now enable the building of effective child protection systems. Building these systems is a challenging task, as in the past, laws, policies, and programmes for child protection were formulated on a piecemeal basis, focusing on meeting the needs of specific categories of children rather than building comprehensive social welfare and legal systems for the protection of all children. As a consequence, national duty bearers have had considerable capacity gaps to realise the rights of children. Although the new Law on Children explicitly requires an inter-sectoral approach, this approach is relatively new and will require a change in the way that line agencies approach child protection. Previously, each sector worked vertically, resulting in limited collaboration and integration to comprehensively address children's issues, particularly children in special circumstances.

UNICEF continues to advocate for budget allocation for child protection work in the socio-economic development plans (SEDPs) at national and sub-national levels. The new Law on Children requires the allocation of resources to child protection and UNICEF, along with Plan International and Child Fund, has worked with the government to develop child protection costings so that MOLISA is able to advocate for appropriate funding levels for child protection in the SEDP. UNICEF is also conducting advocacy with the government to allow the employment of social workers at local levels despite a current government policy to freeze public servant employment.

PA 06-03: VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Key Results

Ending Violence Against Children (VAC)

Ending violence against children is an ongoing concern of the CPP as research shows that violence against children in Viet Nam is still pervasive, leading to lifelong inequities. UNICEF has continued to play a central role to place VAC firmly on to the regional and national agenda. In 2016, UNICEF supported Viet Nam to host a visit from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, Marta Santos Pais. The SRSG gave the keynote speech at the 4th ASEAN Children's Forum and discussed with senior government officials, civil society and other stakeholders, issues related to VAC. UNICEF was able to utilise this high-level public advocacy event to reinforce its ongoing support to MOLISA's work on VAC. In 2016 UNICEF supported the Government to prepare and present its study on the Drivers of VAC to the 3rd High Level Meeting on South-South Cooperation

for Child Rights in Asia and the Pacific. Viet Nam's involvement in this research project established it as a regional leader and has catalysed other governments in the Asia Pacific region to engage in similar research on VAC.

UNICEF also worked with young people to look at issues related to violence against children, identify root causes of violence against children and create community solutions to prevent violence. Based on evidence gathered from the Drivers of VAC study, the Social Policy and Governance programme of UNICEF Viet Nam worked with young people who were selected to share their voices, ideas and solutions to senior government officials at the 3rd High Level meeting on Child Rights.

In addition to its work on VAC, UNICEF's assistance in the development of the National Programme on Child Online Protection is an important early step in tackling the emerging threat of internet-related child abuse. As outlined above, children's use of the internet in Viet Nam is increasing yet public awareness of the potential risks of internet use remains limited.

Tackling Child Labour

Greater Government attention to eliminating child labour was catalysed through UNICEF and ILO support to MOLISA to develop a National Programme of Action (NPA) on Prevention and Reduction of Child Labour (2016-2020). A workshop to launch the NPA was held, with the participation of senior representatives from Government, the UN, civil society and provinces, and following on from this, 15 provinces developed local action plans to address child labour.

Children can be engaged in paid or unpaid work that is not harmful, but a child is classed as a 'child labourer' when s/he is either too young to work, work for too long hours, or is involved in hazardous activities that may compromise their physical, mental, social or educational development. Unlike adult labour, child labour is not only defined by the activity but also by its consequences, including negative impact on children's schooling. According to MOLISA statistics, there were 1,750,000 child labourers in 2012. This equates to between 10 and 12% of the child population. When we broaden our view to include children who are engaged domestic work – such as cooking, cleaning, or caring for other siblings – which places significant burden on children and deprives their time to play and learn, especially for girls, who are more likely than boys to perform work in a household – then the figure, according to the MICS survey conducted by GSO and UNICEF in 2014, reveals that 16.4% of children aged 5-17 years were involved in household chores and economic activities, being classified as child labourers. UNICEF advocacy efforts have led to the criminalisation of forced child labour in the Penal Code (2015).

To further understand issues relating to child labour, UNICEF conducted research on children's rights in the travel and tourism industry, another study on child labour in the footwear and apparel industry, and a broader study on the drivers of child labour. These assessments will be used to inform the development of industry-specific tools for addressing child rights violations in addition to child labour and children's wellbeing in the supply chain.

Responding to child trafficking

Following Prime Ministerial approval of the National Plan of Action on Counter Human Trafficking (2016-2020) in late 2015, UNICEF supported the Women's Union to further develop the component on Education and Communication on Prevention of Human Trafficking into concrete steps in the Plan of Action. The Women's Union organised two workshops with participation and technical contributions from local Women's Unions from all 63 provinces nationwide. The Women's Union provided guidance and instructions for its local offices to implement the Plan of Action in respective local contexts.

Child trafficking victims are now benefiting from support provided to the Women's Union and MOLISA to develop child and gender-sensitive prevention, victim support and protection strategies, plus direct support for emergency protection, recovery and reintegration. For example, in 2016 the Women's Union Counselling Department in Hanoi provided counselling to 1,168 children and women, of whom 66 were referred to the Peace Shelter, a refuge in Hanoi dedicated to survivors of trafficking and violence. In 2016 the Women's Union also provided direct support for recovery and reintegration of 39 child victims of abuse, trafficking and violence. This support included healthcare, legal aid, birth registration and vocational training services. Based on these direct interventions, the Women's Union has developed a guideline and leaflets on working with child victims of domestic violence, child abuse, violence and trafficking. These materials have been used to improve Women's Union staff capacity and raise public awareness.

To improve the quality of services and referrals among relevant stakeholders, the Women's Union organised a networking workshop with representatives from localities with high volumes of trafficking victims, such as Dien Bien, Lao Cai and Lai Chau provinces bordering China in the north. The workshop also attracted representatives from the social welfare sector and Border Guard to discuss ways to improve services. The Women's Union was supported to send staff to Dien Bien, Ha Giang, Kien Giang and Soc Trang (provinces with high prevalence of human trafficking) to increase referrals by relevant stakeholders and ensure successful reintegration. At these visits, Women's Union staff interacted with welfare, police and Border Guard representatives and local Women's Unions and agreed on procedures for effective victim referrals. In addition, the team also conducted counselling and advice sessions with high-risk populations in these provinces.

UNICEF supported institutional capacity building within the MPS through an increased pool of trainers on anti-human trafficking. The MPS organised two inter-sectoral training-of-trainers courses for government officials from 16 provinces identified as human trafficking hotspots. The four-day training courses attracted 60 participants from the police, social welfare, Border Guard and Women's Union. In addition to legal and policy frameworks, participants also received training on becoming trainers on human trafficking prevention, investigation, victim assistance and protection.

UNICEF supported MOLISA and the Women's Union to implement components of the National Plan of Action on Human Trafficking components related to the reception, identification and protection of trafficking victims, contributing to improved access and referral of trafficked victims, predominantly girls and women, to available services. Together with other UN agencies, UNICEF and its UN partners contributed to greater public awareness of about human trafficking through support to the Government to hold the first-ever Anti-Trafficking Day.

Child marriage

In 2016, UNICEF, together with other UN agencies and civil society organisations undertook work to position the issue of child marriage on the national agenda. UNICEF and UNFPA supported a study on child marriage which found that rates of child marriage are not reducing and that child marriage is occurring across ethnic groups, not just amongst ethnic minorities as was previously believed. The study showed that there is not a strong understanding of why child marriage is occurring. The findings were presented at a UNICEF and UN-supported national policy dialogue attended by more than 200 key Government and National Assembly stakeholders, to advocate, for the first time, for a comprehensive response to child marriage.

In addition, the study triggered government discussions on the provision of sexual and reproductive health programmes for sexually active adolescents in order to reduce adolescent pregnancy rates, one of the potential drivers of child marriage. The evidence was also utilised to advocate and raise

awareness of VAC through the National Symposium on Sexuality, Health and Society, jointly organised by civil society organisations, UNICEF and other UN agencies.

Constraints and remaining challenges

Despite increased public awareness of VAC and the government's commitments to prevent and respond to VAC and sensitive issues such as child sexual abuse, several key aspects of VAC continue as social norms in Viet Nam. Corporal punishment is still widely used by parents and caregivers in nurturing, caring and educating children. Early marriages in boys and girls are accepted. VAC, even when not publicly accepted, continues to be seen as a private matter to be dealt with amongst the family, and so reporting of VAC is low. Transforming awareness into behaviour change and changing the social norms related to VAC remains an unfinished agenda. Even if an issue is reported, the lack of a child-friendly reporting mechanism, the infancy of the whole child protection system – structures and legal frameworks, procedures and standards, and services and resources (such as a lack of professional social workers) – means that there is a lack of options for children affected by violence.

Enforcing child labour regulations amongst the informal sector remains a challenge, such as family-run restaurants or hidden sweatshops, as is enforcing the law against child trafficking. Due to differences in the way that the law is applied for children aged 16-uner 18 years compared to those under 16, it is harder to prosecute trafficking cases for young adults aged 16-under 18 years old, but the key issue is that the majority of returnees do so independently and reporting of trafficking crimes is low. This is due to a protracted and insensitive legal process and a lack of trust between law enforcement and victims. It is therefore extremely difficult to identify both victims and perpetrators. Furthermore, if returnees do not report the crime, they cannot access support services following their trauma.

Overall, specialised services for the most vulnerable children, including those who have experienced violence, exploitation or trafficking, remain very limited. Responses are not tailored to individual cases, authorities often rely on cash-based restitutions for victims, and there remains a reliance on traditional institutional care as the main state-regulated alternative care for vulnerable children. The piloting of temporary shelters combined with community rehabilitation and reintegration services, for children victims of trafficking, sexual exploitation, needs to be documented, and advocacy needs to be undertaken for policy development and further replication.

PA 06-04: JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

2015 and 2016 have seen high-profile and impactful legal reforms in Viet Nam, leading to significant steps forward in child-related justice and the protection of children's rights. Most recently, the new Child Law contains a dedicated section on child justice principles, and recognises children's right to protection during judicial and administrative violation handling proceedings and stipulates protection measures for child offenders, victims and witnesses. Amendments to the Penal Code, Penal Code Procedures, Civil Code and Civil Procedure Code mean that Viet Nam's laws now include:

- stronger measures to divert children away from the criminal justice system,
- provide alternatives and stronger limits on detention of children and
- greater protection against child trafficking, forced labour and sexual abuse.

Child and gender-sensitive proceedings have been introduced to strengthen access to justice and protection of all children during criminal proceedings. For example, court cases involving children are

now closed to the public and contact between child victims and alleged perpetrators is restricted. Viet Nam's new civil laws better protect children's identity, particularly those from ethnic minority communities and strengthen judicial processes for appointment of guardians to ensure children's rights to have their views taken into account by relevant bodies.

Key Results

Family and Juvenile Court

The launch of the first Family and Juvenile Court in Ho Chi Minh City in 2016 represented a major child rights milestone for Viet Nam and is the result of many years of UNICEF advocacy and technical support. Since its launch, 551 cases have been handled, comprising 95 criminal matters involving children as victims or defendants, and 456 family and marriage matters. UNICEF is working with the Supreme People's Court to develop a plan to demonstrate best practices in children's courts through the Family and Juvenile Court in Ho Chi Minh City and later in Dong Thap province and Hanoi. It is expected that the court in Dong Thap will be operational by mid-2017.

Through UNICEF-supported training, thirteen newly appointed specialist judges of the court and 30 judges who will be responsible for children's cases of 24 district courts were equipped with essential knowledge on justice for children principles. UNICEF supported the Judges Training Institute to develop a syllabus and textbook materials for a new professional course on justice for children for specialist judges and other Family and Juvenile Courts personnel to be delivered nationwide. This course will roll out in 2017.

Legal aid

2016 also saw significant reforms to Viet Nam's legal aid system to benefit children. UNICEF-supported activities to enhance drafting of the Legal Aid Law which is due for submission to the National Assembly in 2017. The proposed changes have expanded the provision of legal aid to all child offenders, all children under 16 years old in financial difficulty and those aged 16- under 18 years in financial difficulty who are victims or witnesses to criminal cases. This represents a major expansion of legal aid to children. This result was achieved through UNICEF support of a joint UN, Government, Civil Society International Workshop to learn from global child-friendly legal aid experiences, which resulted in concrete recommendations for strengthened legal aid for vulnerable children in Viet Nam, particularly those in contact with the justice system. UNICEF also financially and technically-supported reviews of international standards to children's right to legal aid, an assessment of costs and benefits of expanding the scope of legal aid to all children and the drafting of specific legal provisions in the draft law on children and legal aid.

Children in conflict with the law

Reform of justice systems to better protect children in contact with the law has been a long-standing UNICEF objective. Since 2013, UNICEF has supported the piloting of a "community-based support for juveniles in conflict with the law" model in Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Thap province in the south of Vietnam. It aims to prevent offending and reoffending by juveniles through provision of community-based support and rehabilitation services to juveniles at-risk and in conflict with the law. Trained justice collaborators were supported to conduct regular outreach in the selected communes, including visiting children and their families, conducting assessments of children, and developing an individualised intervention plan for each child. In 2016, 98 new cases of children at-risk and in conflict with the law in Dong Thap and 49 new case in HCMC were put under regular case management, increasing the total number of children at-risk and in conflict with the law being supported to 272 and 138 cases respectively.

As a result of this pilot and UNICEF supported research on community-based rehabilitation for juveniles in conflict with the law, a new sub-law on community-based rehabilitation for children in conflict with the law has been developed. The sub-law improves the likelihood of children being diverted from the formal justice system. This likelihood was also increased by simultaneous capacity building of judges and police through the development of a commentary book on Penal Code provisions related to child offenders and crimes against children as well as a training handbook on children and the Law on Handling of Administrative Violations which will be supplied to judges and police nationwide. These guidance tools were heavily based on real-life experiences of children under the pilot community-based support to juveniles in conflict with the law in Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Thap province. Alongside these national-level results, approximately 115 justice, police and child protection officers in Dong Thap and the country's largest city (Ho Chi Minh City) received training on applying diversion measures and alternatives to detention of children in conflict with the law.

Community-based rehabilitation

Provincial-level justice and police officers now have stronger guidance on how to divert children away from the formal justice system to community-based rehabilitation as a result of a new inter-agency training manual on responding to children in conflict with the law. Developed by the MOJ and MPS, the manual is being pre-tested with 222 welfare and justice officers in Dong Thap province and Ho Chi Minh City. Through the Viet Nam Lawyers' Association (VLA) some 44 lawyers, legal aid officers and law counselling centre staff were equipped with fundamental knowledge on justice, special needs and vulnerabilities of children in conflict with the law, child victims and witnesses, and basic skills to work effectively with such children. Findings and recommendations from research conducted by the VLA on exercising children's right to defence counsel representation were provided to the Government and used to influence Penal Procedure Code reforms.

Penal Code

Reform of the Penal Code has been a long-term advocacy strategy for UNICEF which came to fruition in 2015. It was expected that the amended Penal Code would go into force in 2016, however technical issues with the new law have delayed its implementation. UNICEF has used this delay as an opportunity to continue to advocate for extra revisions to the Penal code relating to child trafficking and child pornography to be included. If successful, these inclusions would bring the amended Penal code into closer alignment with the CRC. Despite the delay, UNICEF is continuing to provide technical assistance to support the development of sub-laws which will guide implementation.

UNICEF has also supported the Supreme Procuracy to conduct a survey amongst practitioners on criminal procedures for juveniles. The survey will determine what supports are needed by practitioners in order to deliver the proposed changes.

Capacity building for legal practitioners

In addition to building the capacity of existing legal practitioners as outlined above, UNICEF has worked with universities to bring concepts of justice for children to law undergraduates as they are undertaking their studies. With a view to broadening these efforts to the next generation of legal and justice actors, Hanoi Law University has developed and incorporated a subject on justice for children into the training curriculum for undergraduate law students. The introduction of this subject will equip undergraduate law students with fundamental knowledge on justice for children, including international norms, standards and good practices to enable them to contribute to the country's ongoing reforms to protect the rights of children in contact with the justice system. The first course will commence in 2017's spring semester. This is a result of various activities, including training of

trainer sessions on juvenile justice for selected lecturers to serve as an introductory specialist training for lecturers at Hanoi Law University. These participants are now recognised as capable trainers for future training on juvenile justice nationwide. Following the training, a one-day workshop was held with managers and lecturers from Hanoi Law University, Ho Chi Minh City Law University and other law training institutes on training needs for law school students on justice for children.

Constraints and remaining challenges

Whilst much has been achieved in recent years, the reforms have not yet achieved the level of coherence needed to create a comprehensive juvenile justice system in Viet Nam. There remains a lack of coordination and strategic planning across juvenile justice, with various agencies playing different roles without coordination. This has resulted in fragmentation, a lack of collaboration, and reduced effectiveness of handling measures for children. Viet Nam does not yet have a comprehensive and specific juvenile justice law to provide a solid foundation for a separate and distinct justice system for children. Whilst many special provisions for children exist within the current administrative and criminal justice systems, these provisions are scattered across many different laws and sub-laws, and are not fully in line with international standards and best practices.

The new Law on Children (2016) provides for prevention, support and intervention measures for children in need of special protection, including children in conflict with the law; however, under this law the definition of a child is 16 years, so that persons between 16 years and under 18 years cannot access the relevant protection measures. This is in spite of the fact that the majority of juveniles in conflict with the law are those aged 16 to under 18, accounting for over 55% of all juveniles in conflict with the law.

While a specialised children's court has been established, specialisation has not been recognised in other justice agencies; the police, procuracy, judges and lawyers have limited access to specialised training on how to effectively handle cases involving children. As a result, children in conflict with the law, child victims and witnesses are not always handled in a child- and gender-sensitive manner due to lack of consistent knowledge, skill and training of procedure conducting bodies. Local authorities and the judicial system tend to have an over-reliance on costly and ineffective incarceration of children, and the use of diversion measures is severely limited. To remedy this situation Viet Nam needs to build the breadth and capacity of community-based support and rehabilitation services for child offenders.

Roles of social workers in administrative, civil and criminal proceedings are not yet recognised, and there remains a lack of specialised services for effective young crime prevention, supervision, rehabilitation and reintegration of child offenders. Community-based support available to children in conflict with the law is very limited, both in terms of quality and diversity of services available and the roles of families, agencies, organisations in supervising children is still symbolic. This lack of services extends to children that come into contact with the justice system as victims or witnesses of crimes.

Finally, law-making bodies and the judicial system are facing increasing public pressure to impose harsher penalties against children in conflict with the law. This is in response to the perceived rise in the number and seriousness of offences committed by children in Viet Nam. Without a nuanced understanding of the underlying causes and nature of child offending by the public and officials, a lack of an effective national monitoring and reporting system to assess child offending, and a lack of alternative responses, such bodies are often unable to counter these demands for stronger punitive actions. The dearth of specialised child protection police units and police officers, combined with frequent staff turnover also challenge the sustainability of capacity building efforts.

PA 06-05: BIRTH REGISTRATION

Birth registration is a fundamental right of every child; a birth certificate is a vital item in ensuring the protection of multiple other rights and access to essential services. According to MICS 2014, 96.1 per cent of children under five years old have had their birth registered, but children in the Central Highlands and Mekong River Delta are less likely to have their births registered compared to children in other regions, as were those from the poorest households.

In late 2014 the new Law on Civil Status, which recognised the right of children to birth registration and to have a birth certificate, was approved. In 2015, UNICEF supported the development of a decree and circular guiding the implementation of this law, introduced measures to improve birth registration for children in need of special protection, especially abandoned children, children of cross-border trafficked victims, children of failed marriages between Vietnamese and foreigners, migrant children and children living in remote areas. A social audit was also conducted to identify factors which restrict birth registration. In 2016, UNICEF provided technical and financial support for training on the implementation of the new procedures with provincial partners. Regional training workshops were conducted to support implementation of the law, decree and circular. More than 300 registrars from District and Provincial levels from 50 (out of 63) provinces participated.

Key Results

In late 2016, following on from information gathered in a UNICEF supported a citizen report card study in Lao Cai province on the quality of birth registration services, the MOH and MOJ (with WHO support) developed a circular to define a role for health workers to inform commune level registrars of a child's birth. This role initiates birth registration processes even in challenging circumstances such as parents living in remote regions and/or those who do not speak Vietnamese. If families have not utilised formal health care services, village health workers can still collect information on the birth of a child and report that information to the commune. These changes will help to address some of the barriers identified in the social audit, such as a lack of outreach and complicated registration procedures.

The effective implementation of the Law on Civil Status in relation to vulnerable groups will also support other programmes and measures related to social services, education, health, and others, to address inequalities and ensure equitable access to protections and opportunities across the population.

Constraints and remaining challenges

Despite the introduction of the Law on Civil Status and the following Decree and Circular, gaps in the legal framework remain, and underlying inequalities between different groups, especially for ethnic minority groups who face a language barrier, as well as low awareness of the need for or right of children to a birth certificate, continue to restrict access to birth registration.

PA 06-06: CHILD PROTECTION AND EMERGENCIES

In 2016, Viet Nam experienced its most severe drought in 60 years, leaving half a million children and more than one million women affected by malnutrition and acute water shortages. This emergency led the Government to request humanitarian assistance from international partners for the first time since 1975. Viet Nam's disaster risk profile and vulnerability to climate change is creating a challenging context for children. Viet Nam is the seventh country worldwide most affected by extreme weather events between 1993 and 2014, with a yearly average of 391 people killed and loss estimated to 1.01

% of GDP per annum. Children are amongst the most vulnerable groups in emergencies, such as when natural hazards like floods or typhoons occur. Disaster impacts can lead to the disruption of education and access to social services, increased health and well-being vulnerabilities and indirect consequences resulting from a disaster's impact on family livelihoods. Children in vulnerable groups such as migrants, ethnic minorities, urban and rural poor are also most at risk, meaning that disasters can exacerbate existing inequities.

Key results

In response to the severe drought, UNICEF, in partnership with Save the Children and Plan International, supported MOLISA to conduct a rapid assessment in Ninh Tuan province which highlighted the importance of addressing child protection concerns in the context of an emergency. The report, the first of its kind, highlighted that child protection concerns, including family separation, neglect and psychological stress, were being ignored. The rapid assessment, including specialised assessment tools, showed the importance of incorporating child protection issues into risk planning and response and is intended to operate as a model for incorporating child protection into emergency assessments. The findings and recommendations were disseminated in Ninh Thuan and reported to leaders of MOLISA, leading to follow-up actions at the national and provincial level. UNICEF's capacity building for child protection in emergencies also continued, with training for 66 key leaders and staff of provincial welfare authorities in 22 disaster-prone provinces on planning and implementing local plans on prevention and response to child protection in emergencies.

The drought crisis clearly showed how environmental and climate change related risks exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and disparities among children in Viet Nam. A vision paper on child-centred risk reduction was developed by UNICEF and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which marks the foundation of a formalised partnership. A new partnership cooperation agreement with the Viet Nam Red Cross also marks an important milestone in child-focused risk-informed programming.

Constraints and remaining challenges

Although there has been strong support for physically protecting children in relation to emergencies such as flooding, with climate change clubs in schools and community planning for disaster risk reduction for children, there has been a lack of awareness of the increased risks of violence, abuse and exploitation faced by children in emergency situations. UNICEF believes that the recent drought crisis marked a turning point in governmental acceptance of the need for improved child protection procedures in emergencies, including preparedness and response.

PA 06-07: CHILD PROTECTION: STRENGTHEN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

UNICEF promotes community-based support for vulnerable children which enables families and communities to better protect their children. UNICEF has expanded community-based child protection systems to 124 communes in 35 districts in the focus provinces. UNICEF's work at the provincial level is focused on eight provinces: An Giang, Dong Thap, HCMC, Ninh Thuan, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, Dien Bien, and Lao Cai. The models tested and evidence generated from these provinces are used to inform the Government of relevant community-based child protection services. In addition to UNICEF project areas, local governments have funded and implemented community-based child protection systems – a model initiated by UNICEF, in a further 175 communes.

Key results

Commune-level community-based child protection systems

In order to build a holistic child protection system based on solid legal structures and readily available services, UNICEF's national level advocacy and policy formation are accompanied by the promotion of community-based child protection services at the sub-national level. The model involves different government agencies, civil society organisations, NGOs and individuals in providing systematic responses to child protection issues at local levels. In 2016, UNICEF supported community-based child protection systems in 124 communes in UNICEF's eight focus provinces. In these areas, inter-sectoral child protection committees have been established and are functioning to prevent, identify and provide protection responses to cases of child abuse and children in need of special protection. Since the beginning of the current CPP in 2012, about 200,000 children have already received direct or indirect support as a result of the establishment of these local child protection systems.

Within these systems, case management (the coordination of different services for an individual child) has been implemented to increase the access of abused, trafficked and exploited children and other children in need of special protection to relevant social and protection services, including emergency protection services, counselling, birth registration, social assistance, health care, education, legal aid and alternative care. About 2,825 children in need of special protection and those at-risk in the project communes have been referred to relevant services each year.

In the Southern regions of Viet Nam, in 2016 UNICEF continued its support of community-based child protection systems in the provinces of An Giang, Dong Thap, HCMC and Ninh Thuan.

- In An Giang, UNICEF has supported the expansion of the community-based child protection systems to 20 communes so far. In 2016, 240 vulnerable children were under case management and accessing services such as, counselling, legal aid, cash assistance, vocational training, job creation, or life skill training. Around 2,400 vulnerable children across An Giang provinces benefitted from such services in 2016.
- In **Dong Thap**, UNICEF supported community-based child protection systems in 17 communes in 2016; this is a lower figure than the 23 communes reported in 2014 as the Government began to support 12 of these communes themselves in 2015. The local government now supports 53 communes. Across the whole province, 2,042 vulnerable children were referred to appropriate services to prevent and protect them from neglect, abuse, and exploitation.
- In **HCMC**, UNICEF has supported the expansion of community-based child protection systems to 43 communes, providing services for 10,650 vulnerable children in 2016, including children at-risk and in conflict with the law. Supported services include case management, emergency support, counselling and/or psychosocial support, legal aid, vocational training etc. Approximately 350 of those children were under case management.
- In **Ninh Thuan**, UNICEF supports community-based child protection systems in 14 communes, and the local government supports a further 18 communes. More than 1,050 children with special circumstances in these communes were supported and 170 received community-based case management support in 2016.

In the Central Highlands region, in 2016 UNICEF continued its support of community-based child protection systems in Gia Lai and Kon Tum.

- In **Gia Lai**, UNICEF supported 15 communes and local government supported a further 26 communes. 278 children received community-based support.
- In **Kon Tum**, UNICEF supported 17 communes and local government supported a further 24 communes. 456 children received community-based support.

In the Northern Mountainous provinces, in 2016 UNICEF continued its support of community-based child protection systems in Lao Cai and Dien Bien.

- In Lao Cai, UNICEF supported 12 communes and local government supported 6 communes.
 Approximately 1,500 children benefited from community-based protection support systems, including 150 under case management.
- In **Dien Bien**, UNICEF supported 17 communes and local government supported 6 communes. Approximately 1,700 children benefited from community-based protection support systems, including 147 under case management.

Nationwide, local governments have now used their own resources to extend this system to 1,400 communes in 41 provinces, out of 11,145 communes across 63 provinces in Viet Nam.

Provincial and district-level social work centres

As part of community-based child protection systems, provincial and district social work centres offer more specialised services for children in need of protection, and provide a demonstration model for UNICEF's ongoing work to develop the social work profession in Viet Nam. Thirty-four provincial and district social work service centres (SWSC) are now operating, including nine supported by UNICEF in six of the eight focus provinces (An Giang, Dong Thap, HCMC, Ninh Thuan, Kon Tum and Lao Cai). Annually, the 34 centres provide services for 5,000 neglected, abused and exploited children across the country. They are contributing to improved child protection service delivery including case management, psychological support, care and support for victims of trafficking, emergency support, legal aid, referrals to foster care, and transfers to residential care for orphans and children with disabilities. Case conferences are conducted on a monthly basis where case managers, multidisciplinary specialists and social workers discuss specific cases of children in need of special protection to find the best solutions for the child and their family.

UNICEF supports two social work service centres in An Giang, three in Dong Thap, and one in HCMC, which offered services to 200, 419 and 200 children in need of special protection in 2016. In Ninh Thuan, the UNICEF supported social work service centre provides services, including alternative care for children without adequate parental care, for approximately 100 children. UNICEF also supports one centre in Lao Cai and one centre in Kon Tum; however, data for how many children are supported by these centres are not yet available. In 2015, Viet Nam had 32 SWSC which provided services to 6,000 vulnerable people, of which 15% were children. In 2016, Viet Nam had 45 SWSC which provided services to about 9,000 vulnerable people, of which 20% were children.

Community-based support for vulnerable children, including those with disabilities, victims of trafficking, and children in conflict with the law

Alongside promoting effective mental health care within child protection systems (as mentioned above), UNICEF Viet Nam promoted community-based approaches for supporting children with mental health problems. UNICEF has supported social welfare managers to be trained on social work administration in mental health, and a new training programme on Clinical Social Work in Mental Health for Children and Youth began development. The training programme will involve the training of trainers from universities and social work centres, who will then conduct in-service training with

social workers. It aims to equip practitioners with necessary knowledge and skills on community-based clinical mental health interventions. This will allow the identification of children and youth with mental health problems, provide necessary clinical social work interventions for children and youth with mild to moderate levels of mental health problems and their families, and connect those with severe mental health problems to necessary services.

UNICEF Viet Nam has continued to demonstrate the benefits of respite care services for children with disabilities (and their families), by supporting five respite care centres in Da Nang, Kon Tum and HCMC. Annually, more than 150 children with severe disabilities who are unable to attend regular schools receive care during weekdays in three centres of the Da Nang Association for Victims of Agent Orange (DAVA). About 250 children are being cared for in a respite centre in HCMC, and around 25 children receive care at the respite centre in Kon Tum. They are given the opportunity to socialise, acquire new skills such as self-care, learning how to read and write, and are provided with basic rehabilitation services. The day-care centres in Da Nang have been recognised as model centres; other provinces are now using their own resources to replicate these centres to improve services for children with disabilities.

As well as supporting the establishment of respite centres, UNICEF Viet Nam works to ensure quality care by enhancing the capacity of the human resources supporting vulnerable children and children with disabilities. In 2016, 40 social workers, teachers and health workers, as well as 80 other staff, of the respite care centre for children with disabilities in HCMC were trained and coached by local experts on case management and community-based support and rehabilitation approaches. Staff also received training on interaction skills to support children with behaviour disorders. Further specialist training on psycho-social therapies and counselling to support children with disabilities was provided to teachers, medical and rehabilitation staff. As a result, the 250 children with disabilities who are cared for at the respite centre benefited from improved care and treatment services during 2016.

UNICEF also supports the provision of services by shelters for victims of trafficking, and community-based support for children conflict with the law. In 2016, in Lao Cai province, four communes and one Reception Centre for Victims of Trafficking provided psychological support to child victims of trafficking and provided children's access to social services. The pilot project on community-based support for juveniles in conflict with the law was expanded to 30 communes in HCMC, providing support to 138 children at-risk or in conflict with the law, and 33 communes in Dong Thap province, supporting 272 children.

UNICEF also supported training programs and materials on life skills education for vulnerable youth and children. In HCMC, 25 local child welfare staff were trained to be trainers who then undertook training for 44 child protection workers. A community football programme, supporting 120 vulnerable adolescents in 2 selected districts of HCMC to participate, was piloted in partnership with the Manchester United Foundation. Thirty local football coaches and social/youth outreach workers were trained to facilitate regular football activities and provide life-skills through football, with the support of coaches from the Foundation. More than 100 children (including 15 girls) joined newly established football clubs which integrate life skills education into football practice and club-based activities. 32 football and life skills sessions were held in community or child care centres. The programme helped to raise confidence, self-esteem and build valuable life skills for these children.

Through support by the UK National Committee for UNICEF and their partner Wella, 50 vulnerable adolescents (including 8 boys) were equipped with hairdressing skills and critical life skills through a Wella Making Waves hairdressing vocational training program.

As the capacity and influence of civil society continues to grow in Viet Nam, so must UNICEF's attention on engaging civil society organisations as active partners in child protection. In HCMC, partnerships with the Buddhist Association and Thao Dan, a civil society organisation working on child protection, continued to receive support for organisational

UNICEF and Civil Society Partnership – a detailed look

In HCMC UNICEF provided financial and technical support to Thao Dan Centre to reach some of the most vulnerable children, including children living and working on the street, child victims, and those at risk of abuse and violence, children affected by HIV/AIDS, child labourers and poor migrant children.

In 2016, the centre reached an average of 30 – 40 children working on the streets per month and make relevant referrals and conducted home visits to 78 children. Approximately 861 children have been provided with psychosocial care, advice and counselling, safe accommodation, case assessments and referrals to health care, legal aid and education. 726 children benefitted from communication and life-skills training (including communication and online safety, first aid and budgeting). These children are now better equipped to recognise risks and protect themselves from sexual abuse and exploitation, HIV and AIDS and substance misuse. Through these activities Thao Dan

strengthening and child protection service delivery improvement, resulting in preventive and protection services for hundreds of vulnerable children.

Strengthening foster care and adoption processes

A key element of community-based support for vulnerable children is to provide community-based alternative care for children without adequate parental or familial care, rather than relying on institutionalisation. Following UNICEF technical advice, the Law on Children, which becomes operational in June 2017, includes a provision on foster care. An implementing circular has been developed to guide implementation once the Law on Children becomes operational, however there are some delays to the circular due to unclear departmental responsibilities. This will supplement the provisions for foster care under Decree 136, which has enabled the establishment of foster care systems in An Giang and Dong Thap provinces, with the support of UNICEF. A foster care guideline and subsequent operational manual for sub-national social welfare staff to establish fostering services in the provinces were finalised and distributed, and another manual for social workers and foster carers is under development.

UNICEF support contributed to greater inter-ministerial co-ordination between MOLISA and the MOJ on adoption, leading to improvements in domestic and inter-country adoption. It is expected that

circular will lead to more children being placed for adoption. By October 2016, 433 cases of intercountry adoption and more than 1,000 cases of domestic adoption were finalised. UNICEF also provided technical assistance to review implementation of the Law on Adoption and the Hague Convention, which generated findings, lessons learned and recommendations that can be used to for further improve of adoption in Viet Nam.

Constraints and remaining challenges

The local child protection system faces entrenched challenges which will take time to change. Local child protection system building continues to face the difficulties of limited understanding of local leaders and the public on the need for, role and functions of a child protection system, and lack of financial resources for child protection work. UNICEF has worked closely with local authorities, DOLISA, and concerned departments to identify key areas of concern to address these challenges and make local child protection systems a priority of local authorities. About UNICEF's focus provinces, gaps in the reporting systems means that comparable figures of how many children are reached by various services are not available. This lack of comprehensive data is also indicative of wider issues related to administration and data management. UNICEF will continue its work with the authorities in the provinces to gain a clearer picture of the direct and indirect impact of UNICEF support on vulnerable children, and support them to ensure an accurate picture of their work, and ultimately provide more reliable data be fed into the national child protection system.

Another key challenge with community-level service delivery is the lack of a professional workforce of social workers. Training opportunities remain limited, and due to a lack of investment of resources and a circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs limiting the recruitment of public employees, there is a lack of employment opportunities for current and newly graduating professional social workers within the public sector. Under the 2017-2021 country programme, the CPP will collaborate with Social Policy and Governance programme and wider office efforts to advocate and generate evidence to influence public sector reform as it impacts on this issue.

The piloting of respite day care for children with disabilities, shelters for children victims of trafficking and exploitation, and other social work services, needs further documentation. Advocacy should then be undertaken for policy development, including improvements and investment into the social work profession and social care system, and further replication of successful models.

Understanding of The Hague Convention and the Law on Adoption is still very weak among officers of DOLISA, Department of Justice and amongst the community, impacting negatively on the implementation of the National Programme on Adoption. For example, the process of adoption of children with special needs is especially slow, and domestic adoption is still primarily based on the needs of the parents as opposed to what is in the best interest of the child. Direct contact between prospective domestic parents and institutional care facilities, hospitals or relinquishing mothers in order to adopt a child continues, rather than the effective use of the social care system as an intermediary. This ignores the principle of 'best interest of the child' in determining the most appropriate alternative care option for a child; adoptive parents are free to 'choose' their child, rather than an adoption system 'choosing' suitable parents for a child. To prevent such practices, UNICEF will continue to support MOJ and MOLISA to strengthen child protection systems and the alternative care system, including regulation and practice of domestic adoption.

PA 06-08: CHILD PROTECTION: GENERAL

Key results

As Viet Nam establishes itself as a lower middle-income country, UNICEF's role shifts from direct interventions to technical assistance, capacity building and knowledge sharing, supporting Viet Nam to develop structures, procedures and services to create a comprehensive child protection system.

Throughout UNICEF Viet Nam's work in 2016, technical assistance from UNICEF's international and national experts was deployed with government agencies, service providers, communities, international, national and local civil society organisations, and the private sector.

As 2016 was the last year of the 2012-2016 UNICEF Viet Nam Country Programme, the CPP continued to contribute to the development of UNICEF Viet Nam's 2017-2021 Country Programme, focusing on the needs of the most vulnerable, including ethnic minority children, girls, orphans, children with disabilities, out of-school children and children with migrant parents. The ensuing plans are closely aligned with Viet Nam's National Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2016-2020. UNICEF continues to advocate for resources to be allocated to child protection in the SEDP, including for social workers as the human resources of child protection.

UNICEF was also actively involved in the development of the One Strategic Plan 2017-2021 of UN in Viet Nam. UNICEF's involvement ensures that children, their rights, their unique needs and their need for protection are clearly articulated in the new One Strategic Plan.

As an active member of the One UN Gender Joint Programming Group UNICEF has been working to ensure that gendered issues are incorporated into child protection measures. At the local level, specialist services to support survivors of gender-based violence were delivered through the Centre for Women's Development (CWD) of Viet Nam Women's Union. In 2015, the CWD built capacity of 48 staff from the Hanoi Women's Union and Hanoi Legal Aid Centre through a three-day training on working with children and women survivors of gender-based violence and its perpetrators. The training also served to strengthen connections between participating agencies for referrals of gender-based violence survivors. In April 2016, CWD held a networking workshop with stakeholders tasked with protection and assistance of trafficking victims. The 57 participants were drawn from the Women's Union, the social welfare sector, social work service centres and central level Border Guard representatives from several human trafficking hotspots, such as Dien Bien and Lao Cai provinces in the far north of Viet Nam. The workshop also strengthened networking and referrals among such stakeholders and identified solutions to enhance services. CWD also provided direct support to 25 child victims of trafficking, which included health checks and care, travel costs, basic necessities and schooling expenses.

Constraints and remaining challenges

Broadly, capacity development, the provision of technical support and utilising evidence based down-stream work are resource intensive and are essential to enhance national capacity to develop and maintain international standard child protection structures, procedures and services. This places continued pressure on UNICEF to raise funds, especially for components that receive limited interest from donors, yet are crucial to improve child protection in Viet Nam, such as social work development, justice for children, and child protection systems strengthening.

RESULTS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Outcome 2: By 2016, a more effective national social protection system provides increased coverage, quality, and equitable access for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups

Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Status as of 30 November 2016
Number of beneficiaries receiving benefits from social assistance under Decrees 67 and 13 on policy support for social assistance	200,000 (2011)	300,000 (2015)	MOLISA report	250,000 out of 1.7 million children in need of special protection
Number of children under 18 receiving free legal assistance	2,587 (2012)	3,700 (2016)	MOJ report	In 2015, 5,473 children accessed legal aid services. Final figures for 2016 are not yet available. Estimates suggest that there are approximately 16,000 children in contact with the justice system in Viet Nam annually.
Clear operational procedure and interagency protocols for delivery of prevention and response services for child protection developed and implemented	No (2012)	Yes (2016)	MOLISA report	The inter-agency circular is on hold as MOLISA wants to include these inter-agency directions in a Decree which has more authority than a circular. The Decree will be issued by mid-2017.

Output 2.1: Child protection human resource and service structures better able to prevent and respond to child neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation

Submission of a revised Law on Protection, Care and Education for Children with stronger provisions on child protection in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other international standards by the Government of Viet Nam to the National Assembly	Not submitted (2012) (i.e. child protection not adequately addressed in the current Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children)	Submitted (2015)	Government of Viet Nam submission documentation to the National Assembly	The Law on Children has been approved by the National Assembly. It will begin to be implemented mid-2017. The new law brings child protection, justice for children and child participation provisions in line with the CRC, with the notable exception of the definition of children being those aged 16 and under.
Submission of a new National Programme on Child Protection for the years 2016-2020 with a stronger focus on system building submitted to the Government	Not submitted (2012) (i.e. initial attempt toward development of CP system)	Submitted (2016)	Document of approval of the PM	The new National Programme on Child Protection 2016-2020 was approved in early 2016. It will continue national and subnational efforts on child protection system building.
Submission of a two-year technical/vocational social work training programme to improve the capacity of front line workers to work with children and other vulnerable groups, to the Government by MOLISA	Not submitted (2012) (i.e. no social work training for front- line workers available)	Submitted (2013)	MOET/MOLISA documentation of approval	In 2013, the MOET approved the two-year technical social work training programme supported by UNICEF, which is being used by universities to develop training programs to strengthen capacity of front-line workers who work directly with children and vulnerable people.
Number of UNICEF focus provinces that use first phase of child protection indicators for reporting on children's issues at all levels	0 (2012) (i.e. no province with functional child protection data collection system)	At least 4 (2014)	Child Protection provincial data	The national child protection indicators were approved by MOLISA and disseminated to 63 provinces. A technical guideline on data collection was finalised, approved and disseminated to the provinces.

Output 2.2: Special protection measures developed and implemented to provide care, support and protection for the most vulnerable groups of children, including exploited and trafficked children, children without parental care, children affected by HIV and AIDS and children with disabilities.

Number of new national policies, guidelines and standards on prevention of and protection from child exploitation submitted by MOLISA/MPS/MD to the Government of Viet Nam	0 (2012) (i.e. National Plan of Action against Human Trafficking, 2012-2015 approved without projects to guide its implementation)	3 (2014) (i.e. project on reintegration support for trafficked victims (2013), and project on communication on prevention of human trafficking (2013) and decree and circulars to guide the implementation of these two projects (2014)	Submitted documentation of MOLISA/MPS/MD to the Government of Viet Nam	Target achieved. Subsequently a new National Plan of Action on Counter Human Trafficking 2016-2020 was developed and approved by the Prime Minister in Dec 2015; and a new National Plan on Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour (2016–2020) was developed and approved by the Prime Minister in 2016.
Number of new national policies, programmes or standards to support implementation of the Hague Convention submitted to the Government of Viet Nam by MOJ and approved	0 (2012) (i.e. Viet Nam ratified the Hague Convention in 2012 but has no national project to guide its implementation)	2 (2014) (notably National Project on Hague Convention (2013) and inter- agency Circular on finding alternative care for children with special needs	Government of Viet Nam 's reports on implementation of the Hague Convention	Target achieved. Subsequently an interagency protocol between MOLISA and MOJ on collaboration for adoption of children in institutions was approved in 2016. The protocol covers responsibilities of related sectors and institutions in identification of children, facilitating adoption procedures, and monitoring and supervision.

Issuance of a revised national policy on social assistance, including Decrees 67/13 with an expanded target group including poor and vulnerable children and increased level of support by the Government of Viet Nam	Not issued (2012) (i.e. decrees 67/13 had a low level of support and coverage for poor and vulnerable children)	Issued (2014)	Revised Government of Viet Nam national policy on social assistance document	Target achieved, with the Decree becoming operational from January 2015. Subsequently a proposal for reforming the social welfare facility system was developed and approved by the Minister of MOLISA in 2015.
Number of new guidelines on community-based alternative child care (i.e. respite care for vulnerable children and foster care) issued by MOLISA,	0 (2012) (i.e. no guidelines on respite care for vulnerable children, or for foster care are available)	2 (2016)	MOLISA reports	A guideline and its operational manual for provincial and district social welfare staff on foster care was finalised and distributed to provinces. Another manual for social workers and foster carers is under development. The Law on Children includes a provision on foster care however the development of an implementing circular is being held up due to unclear allocation of responsibility between two government departments.
Number of sub-laws, guidelines or standards with specific provisions guiding the implementation related to children of the Law on Persons with Disabilities submitted by MOLISA to the Government of Viet Nam	0 (2012) (i.e. laws on persons with disabilities exist but no sub-laws to guide the implementation of the laws)	At least 3 (2015) (Notably: Decree to be signed by Prime Minister; Circular issued by MOLISA; National Plan of Action approved by Prime Minister)	MOLISA and Government of Viet Nam documents	The Prime Minister established an intersectoral National Committee on Disability in 2015. A national plan for implementation of the <i>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i> has been developed and approved. The National Strategy on Mental Health was finalised and is now guiding the reform of mental health systems, aiming at a comprehensive and integrated mental health services for children and adults.

Output 2.3: Child-friendly justice system established in line with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and other key international standards to protect the rights of children in contact with the justice system.

	protect the rights of	Ciliaren in Contact with	The justice system.	
Approval of the Law on the Handling of Administrative Violations with specific provisions to protect the rights of boys and girls in contact with the law by the National Assembly	Not approved (2012) (i.e. the current law on the handling of administrative violations has been developed for approval by the National Assembly but needs revision to include specific provisions to promote the rights of boys and girls in contact with the law)	Approved (2013)	National Assembly documentation	REMOVED JUNE 2014
Submission of the revised Penal Procedure Code with special investigation, prosecution and adjudication procedures that are friendly and gender sensitive to children in contact with the justice system by Supreme People's Procuracy (SPC) to the National Assembly	Not submitted (2012)(i.e. Penal Procedure Code needs to be revised to include special investigation, prosecution and adjudication procedures)	Submitted (2014)	Supreme People's Procuracy submission document to National Assembly	Target achieved. The amended <i>Penal Procedure Code</i> substantially incorporates a number of child justice principles to strengthen protection of both juvenile alleged offenders and child victims/witnesses. Most notably, it includes specific provisions to restrict detention of juvenile offenders pending trial.

Submission of amended Penal Code with specific provisions for promotion of the rights of children in conflict with the law, children victims and witnesses by Ministry of Justice to the Government of Viet Nam	Not submitted (2012) (A Penal Code exists but does not include specific provisions for diversionary measures and alternatives to detention for juvenile offenders)	Submitted (2015)	MOJ Penal Code submission to GoV	Target achieved. The amended <i>Penal Code</i> introduces new diversionary measures, broadens alternatives to detention, further limits criminal records for juvenile offenders to facilitate better reintegration, and introduces parole as a new mechanism for early release of juvenile offenders from detention. The CPP has continued to advocate on incorporating child pornography and child trafficking elements into the Penal Code to bring it further in line with international agreements
Submission of National Project on Establishment of Family/Juvenile Courts to the Judicial Reform Steering Committee in line with <i>Convention on</i> the Rights of the Child (CRC) by Supreme People's Court	Not submitted (2012) (i.e. National Project on Establishment of Family/Juvenile Courts has not been developed or submitted)	Submitted (2016)	Submission document to the Judicial Reform Steering Committee	Target Achieved. Following the creation of the Family and Juvenile Court in HCMC, the jurisdiction of the court has been specified in the <i>Civil Procedure Code</i> . Preparations to establish a Family and Juvenile Court in Dong Tap are in progress.
Number of guidelines on the provision of services for children in contact with the justice system have been piloted and are issued by MOJ/MPS/MOLISA	0 (2012)	At least 2 (2015)	MOJ/MPS/MOLISA documentation	Target achieved. Guidelines for the pilot of 'community-based support for juveniles in conflict with the law' have been adopted and are being implemented in Dong Thap and HCMC. A Decree on 'administrative diversion

				and education at commune level' is being implemented nationally. Idren from neglect, abuse, violence and
exploitation	on, in particular the mos	st vulnerable children an	d juveniles in conflict w	ith the law.
Number of communes with an operational child protection system with effective case management	28 communes (2012)	88 communes (2014)	DOLISA reports	Target achieved. The community-based child protection systems have been expanded to 109 UNICEF-supported communes in eight districts providing prevention, protection and response for over 5,100 children.
Availability of documentation of results of a pilot of social Work/Child Protection offices in An Giang and HCMC.	No (2012)	Yes (2016)	DOLISA reports	In An Giang, the pilot continues with two social work service centres operating at provincial and district levels, servicing approximately 200 children in need of special protection. In HCMC, one social work service centre is operating at provincial level, working for approximately 200 children in need of special protection.

Number of provinces with a community-based alternative care model responding to special needs of children without adequate parental care, children with disabilities or other vulnerable children	0 (2012)	8 (2015)	DOLISA reports	Target not yet achieved. 2 provinces (An Giang and Dong Thap) have implemented foster care under Decree 136, with support provided to children in foster care through the existing case management system; 2 others (HCMC and Kon Tum) have provided respite care for children with disabilities, whilst the social work centre in Ninh Thuan provides alternative support for children without adequate parental care. No progress was made in Lao Cai or in Dien Bien; in the latter province this is due to a lack of a social work centre or social workers. Government partners are investigating the possibility of implementing the respite day care model in Gia Lai.
Extent to which the new child friendly interview rooms have been used	Non-existent (2012)	Room has been used for children in conflict with the law, child victims and witnesses (2016)	Dept. of Public Security reports in An Giang	This activity was not continued as part of the MTR recommendations.
Number of communes offering community based support for children in conflict with the law in Dong Thap and HCMC	0 (2012)	46 (2015)	DOLISA reports	Target achieved. The pilot on community-based support for juveniles in conflict with the law has been implemented in 23 communes in Dong Thap, and 31 communes in HCMC, providing support to 215 children at-

				risk or in conflict with the law during 2016.
Number of communes in Lao Cai province offering specialised services for children who are victims of trafficking	0 (2012)	5 (2015)	DOLISA reports	In 2016, four communes and one Reception Centre for Victims of Trafficking have provided psychological support to child victims of trafficking and increased children's access to social services.
Number of non-governmental child protection service providers in HCMC offering quality specialised support to children living and/or working on the street, children victims or at risk of trafficking, sexual and labour	1 (2012)	2 (2016)	DOLISA reports	Target achieved. Thao Dan Centre (a non-governmental child protection service provider in HCMC) and the Buddhist Leadership Initiative continued to receive support for organisational strengthening and child protection service delivery improvement. Subsequently providing preventive and protection services for over 400 vulnerable children.
Number of Social Work Service Centres in Dong Thap	0 (2012)	2 (2015)	DOLISA reports	Target achieved. Three social work service centres are in operation at provincial and district levels, servicing 419 children in need of special protection during 2016.

CASE STUDY

THE LAW ON CHILDREN: SUSTAINED ADVOCACY FOR LAW REFORM AND BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Outcome Area 6: Improved and equitable prevention of and response to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children

Programme Area 06-02: Child Protection Systems

Top Level Results

As a result of continued advocacy and technical support for law reform, in March 2016 the National Assembly passed the Law on Children which articulates an integrated and comprehensive framework for child rights, the child protection system, alternative care and justice for children in Vietnam. The law will come into effect in July 2017.

Background

Traditionally, in Viet Nam, child protection has been seen as a private issue to be dealt with by the family and community. Neither the government nor the general public felt that the State had an active obligation to play a comprehensive role in this sphere. Children in Viet Nam face a range of child protection challenges. Recent research shows us that:

- Violence against children remains pervasive. In 2014, 68 per cent of children aged 1-14 years in Viet Nam were subject to at least one form of psychological or physical punishment by household members. 15 per cent of parents believe children should be physically punished.¹
- More than 170,000 children are without parental care, most of whom are destitute orphans or abandoned children. Without a comprehensive child protection system which includes scope for alternative or foster care, there is no continuum of services or care for these vulnerable children and they are likely to be placed in institutional care.
- Children are at risk of exploitation, including trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation and child labour. In 2012 approximately 10% of the child population were child labourers.² Between 2008 and mid-2013 17,870 women and children were reported missing without reason, many of whom may have been trafficked. However, the hidden nature of the problem, low rates of reporting and delays in case identification suggest that real numbers would be much higher.³
- The situation of juvenile offending has been steadily improving, however Viet Nam's system of dealing with child offenders remains largely punitive – for example, of the 13,934 children convicted between 2007 and 2009, 11,475 (82 per cent) were sentenced to imprisonment.⁴
- Emerging child protection issues such as online child protection or comprehensive protection of children in emergencies lacked a framework foundation for action.

Report No.571/BC-BCD; Steering Committee 138/CP 2013.

GSO and UNICEF, 2015. Viet Nam Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014.

Viet Nam National Child Labour Survey.

MOLISA, 2013. Children Indicators 2012-2013. Hanoi, Viet Nam. Note: These figures are not completely reliable and are likely to be much higher, due to: (i) figures only include children under 16 years old in line with the current definition of "child" under the Law on Care, Protection and Education of Children; (ii) varying collection and reporting methods across provinces; and (iii) inaccuracies regarding certain groups of children, for example 'child labourers'.

In the child protection sector in Viet Nam, laws, policies and programmes had been formulated in a fragmented and piecemeal manner due to the past approach of focusing on meeting the needs of specific categories of children or addressing specific issues, rather than building a comprehensive framework for child protection. A comprehensive child protection system incorporates a proactive approach to harm prevention for all children, an inclusive social welfare system, a child-friendly and gender-sensitive justice system and specialised services for the protection of vulnerable children.

The lack of a comprehensive child protection system meant that not only were many children at-risk and in need of protection not receiving support, but also that broader and emerging issues such as online child protection were not dealt with in a timely and proactive fashion.

Strategy and Implementation

UNICEF has been advocating for a more comprehensive child protection system for over ten years. UNICEF identified that there was a need for a multi-pronged approach to develop a comprehensive child protection system which targeted both the strengthening of the legal framework and the strengthening of child protection structures and services in order for Viet Nam to align to the CRC.

UNICEF Viet Nam deployed a diverse and comprehensive advocacy strategy, which included policy dialogues, evidence generation, capacity building and high level advocacy. The strategy paid attention not only to the child protection system itself, but also to interlinked systems and agencies as well, such as the justice system, social workers, MOLISA, universities, and the courts.

The campaign for child protection reform has gone through many phases, and addressed a diverse range of stakeholders and issues in order to ensure that reforms are comprehensive and sustainable. UNICEF Viet Nam tackled the issue in a holistic way, developing an understanding on the relationships between child protection systems and other areas such as the justice, health and education systems. It was essential that UNICEF demonstrate the benefits of reform through evidence generation and pilot programs.

A situational analysis of violence and abuse against children in 2005 showed that children in Viet Nam were suffering from exceptionally high levels of violence and abuse. There were 2 key findings, the first, that there was no real understanding of what child protection is, even amongst professionals working with children. The second finding was that there was an urgent need for a comprehensive child protection system in Viet Nam. As such, UNICEF's first steps were to train key stakeholders on what a child protection was and how it could work.

To support the awareness and advocacy work around child protection, in 2008 UNICEF began to support pilot programmes in focus provinces to show the benefits of community-based child protection systems. These pilot programmes introduced concepts such as case management and social work into the conversation about children's rights and needs. Showing the benefits of these approaches increased demand for child protection services as well as demand to change the legal framework as it was clear that the legal framework was essential as the foundation of a functioning child protection system. In 2011 a National Programme on Child Protection was approved which expanded the child protection system to other provinces in Viet Nam.

The specific work on child protection systems and services ran alongside other issues that UNICEF was working on, including anti-trafficking, adoption, justice for children and violence against children. Each of these areas reinforced that a change in the legal framework was needed, one which reflected a more comprehensive approach to child protection rather than issue-based responses.

Of key importance in strengthening the legal framework was the proposed revision of the Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children (2004) to include adequate definitions of various forms of abuse and exploitation, increase the age of the child to 18 years and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various government agencies. Child sensitive procedures for reporting,

assessing, investigating and adjudicating chases of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and child offending were needed. Reformed legislation was required to give children increased access to support services and justice.

A significant opportunity arose with the planned amendment to the Vietnamese Constitution in 2013. UNICEF broadly engaged with key actors in the Government and the National Assembly, as well as more widely with highly influential identities in Viet Nam. More specifically UNICEF strongly advocated for special recognition of the right to protection of all children, and was successful with the inclusion of a constitutional provision recognising the obligation of the state in providing protection of children.

Building on this positive achievement, in 2014, UNICEF supported a comparative legal review of child protection in Viet Nam and other international approaches. Through studies such as this one which included comprehensive review as well as concrete recommendations, the government position on appropriate reform shifted from initially proposing minor changes to existing laws, to proposing a child protection chapter be added to the existing main law on children to eventually proposing a comprehensive new law on children which integrated child protection throughout.

Throughout the advocacy process UNICEF worked closely with government counterparts and worked to support champions for child protection reform. UNICEF had high-level advocates including senior government staff, key ministry staff, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Prime Minister, who supported the comprehensive changes that a comprehensive law on children would bring, including changing the definition of a child to be in line with the CRC by increasing the age of a child up to 18 years of age.

Results

In 2016, the National Assembly approved the Law on Children to replace the 2004 Law on Protection, Care and Education. The reforms have resulted in a child protection system that has greater capacity to protect the rights of children. The Law on Children extends the right to protection to all children and provides the legal framework for developing child protection systems. It outlines the government's responsibility to allocate resources for at-risk children. It also introduces a ground-breaking approach for the country that encompasses the prevention of violence against children and responses to violence when it occurs. Although lawmakers failed to bring the definition of a child in line with the CRC (a child in Viet Nam is aged 16 and under), the Law on Children is a clear and applauded step forward in child protection for the children of Viet Nam.

The impact of UNICEF's evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy can be seen through the drafting teams adopting UNICEF's positions and advocating internally for the reforms, as well as in the discussions in the National Assembly, where UNICEF's evidence and advocacy positions were quoted and utilised to marshal support for reforms.

Lessons Learned

2016's success in reforming the legal framework to create a comprehensive law for children was the cumulative result of a sustained advocacy campaign over many years. Flexible funding, such as thematic funds, is essential to enable UNICEF Viet Nam to conduct long-term campaigns that go beyond individual programme cycles, to adapt activities to serve new purposes, and to respond to unexpected events. This type of funding enables UNICEF to undertake essential advocacy and reform work which may be overlooked by other funding sources.

UNICEF must marry the political—economy context with technical knowledge in order to identify reforms to be supported or those to be actively rejected. This may open UNICEF to criticism; however, a solid rationale explaining UNICEFs position is important to counter such arguments.

This immense advocacy effort emphasised the importance of working with partners to highlight that child rights and child protection are elements of an inter-related and comprehensive system. It is only by taking a holistic approach to child protection systems and the legal foundation for rights and protection that all children will be protected participants in their own lives.

UNICEF Viet Nam found that identifying and developing specific champions on particular issues was invaluable in presenting key issues to relevant National Assembly Committees and line ministries, and in keeping certain issues at the forefront of policy and law-making processes. However, UNICEF also learned that it is imperative to not only keep up advocacy until the last moment, but to also have a comprehensive understanding of both supporters and those in opposition to reform. At the last moment, despite the significant support of MOLISA and other national partners, the National Assembly rejected changing the definition of a child from those under 16 to those under 18 years of age. It was an unexpected action which has prevented the Law on Children from bringing Viet Nam into alignment with the CRC. As the National Assembly is made up of community representatives from across Viet Nam, the lessons learned process suggested that UNICEF and other advocates, including INGOs and civil society, should have also incorporated a broad-based media campaign into the advocacy efforts in order to create an understanding of the importance of these changes, particularly the definition of a child, for the general public. Broad public buy-in may have swayed the National Assembly to change the definition.

Moving Forward

The passing of the Law on Children represents a significant achievement for the CPP, directly contributing to *Output 2.1: Child protection human resource and service structures better able to prevent and respond to child neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation.*

Although the Law on Children creates a much more comprehensive foundation for the realisation of child rights and child protection in Viet Nam, a number of gaps and challenges remain. There are ongoing opportunities for UNICEF to engage with partners to improve outcomes for children. UNICEF will continue to provide technical support to draft the decrees which will both guide implementation of the new law and provide an opportunity to clarify ambiguities within the law which currently exist. UNICEF will also support institutional capacity development including in planning and budgeting for children, support to monitor the new law, including child involvement in monitoring, as well as strengthening the child protection and child justice systems through Training of Trainers and integration of justice for children in curriculum of training institutions. UNICEF will also continue to advocate for further reform, including amending the definition of the child, to bring Viet Nam into alignment with the CRC.

UNICEF recognises that top-down legal frameworks are not enough to provide adequate protection for children. UNICEF will therefore also continue to lobby for and support the effective implementation of models for community-based support for children. This will include ongoing advocacy and technical support for legal recognition of the social work profession, as well as integrating child-friendly training modules into social work curricula.

FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION/ANALYSIS

In Viet Nam an enabling legal framework for local fundraising is still lacking. This means that thematic funds offer the most important source of flexible resources for child protection work of UNICEF Viet Nam. During 2016, thematic funds were utilised across the CPP supporting UNICEF's work in all PAs detailed above. They made particular contributions to those areas, which were the most resource-intensive in 2016: UNICEF's support to child protection system strengthening and violence against children; and ensuring children's access to justice and protection – these areas require significant technical assistance to government, service providers, communities, civil society, and private sector, yet continue to be a challenge to raise funds to support.

Table 1: Planned budget by outcome area
Outcome Area 6: Child Protection
Viet Nam
Planned and Funded for the Country Programme 2016 (in US Dollar)

Intermediate Results	Funding	Planned Budget ²
	Type ¹	
06-01 Data and Child Protection	RR	3,164
	ORR	91,793
06-02 Child Protection systems	RR	213,638
	ORR	1,082,471
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	RR	54,287
	ORR	238,207
06-04 Justice for children	RR	59,119
	ORR	258,449
06-05 Birth registration	RR	69,711
	ORR	16,196
06-06 Child Protection and emergencies	RR	8
	ORR	10,159
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen families and	RR	187,855
communities	ORR	533,085
06-08 Child Protection # General	RR	368,491
	ORR	617,553
Total Budget		3,804,184

¹ RR: Regular Resources, ORR: Other Resources - Regular (add ORE: Other Resources - Emergency, if applicable)

Table 2: Country-level thematic contributions to outcome area received in 2016

Outcome Area 6: Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse Thematic Contributions Received for Outcome Area 6 by UNICEF Viet Nam in 2016 (in US Dollars)

Donors	Grant Number*	Contribution	Programmable
		Amount	amount
Netherlands Committee for UNICEF	SC1499060117	275,938	
UNICEF Thailand	SC1499060092	200,000	
Total		475,938	

² Planned budget for ORR (and ORE, if applicable) does not include estimated recovery cost.

³ ORR (and ORE, if applicable) funded amount exclude cost recovery (only programmable amounts).

Table 3: Expenditures in the Outcome Area

Outcome Area 6: Child Protection Viet Nam 2016 Expenditures by Key-Results Areas (in US Dollars)

Organisational Targets		Expenditur	e Amount*	
	Resources-	Other	Regular	All
	Emergency	Resources -	Resources	Programme
		Regular		Accounts
06-01 Data and Child Protection		88,098	4,587	92,685
06-02 Child Protection systems		1,038,898	309,795	1,348,693
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse		228,618	78,722	307,340
06-04 Justice for children		248,045	85,727	333,772
06-05 Birth registration		15,544	101,087	116,631
06-06 Child Protection and		9,750	11	
emergencies				9,761
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen		511,626	272,406	
families and communities				784,032
06-08 Child Protection # General		592,694	534,345	1,127,039
Total	0	2,733,273	1,386,680	4,119,953

Outcome Area 6: Child Protection Viet Nam

Table 4: Thematic expenses by programme area 2016

	Expenses		
Organisational Targets	Other	Other	Total
	Resources -	Resources –	
	Emergency	Regular	
06-01 Data and Child Protection		7,368	7,368
06-02 Child Protection systems		253,192	253,192
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse		71,380	71,380
06-04 Justice for children		26,766	26,766
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen families		60,060	60,060
and communities			
06-08 Child Protection # General		199,226	199,226
Grand Total		617,991	617,991

Table 5: Expenses by Specific Intervention Codes

Outcome Area 6: Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse Viet Nam

Major Interventions Using Thematic Funds based on Specific Intervention Codes in 2016

Specific Intervention Codes	Total Utilised (US\$)
06-01-01 Child Protection and violations # periodic data collection and analysis	37,861
06-01-02 Child Protection and violations # routine administrative data collection and analysis	48,348
06-02-01 Child Protection systems strengthening	1,169,342
06-02-03 Child Protection # budget analysis and tracking	51,109
06-03-01 Violence against children (general)	112,462
06-03-03 Prevent and address gender based violence, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation	111,772
06-03-06 Prevent and address child labour	54,733
06-04-01 Access to justice (for all children)	247,672
06-04-02 Diversion programmes and other alternatives to detention of children	55,698
06-05-01 Birth and civil registration	83,049
06-06-03 Psychosocial support and child-friendly spaces	9,655
06-07-02 Child Protection -Alternative Care	133,909
06-07-03 Child Protection focused on care and support for children with disabilities	371,474
06-07-04 Child Protection to promote Safe Migration (incl. Child trafficking)	100,834
06-07-07 Child sensitive social protection to prevent, reduce vulnerability and/or exclusion	52,449
06-08-01 Child Protection # general	8,594
06-08-02 Child Protection -technical assistance to regional and country offices	922,578
08-01-06 Planning # General	21,913
08-02-01 Situation Analysis or Update on women and children	33,273
08-02-08 Monitoring # General	58,292
08-03-01 Cross-sectoral Communication for Development	51,490
08-03-03 C4D # training and curriculum development	794
08-09-01 Innovation activities	15,397
08-09-06 Other # non-classifiable cross-sectoral activities	231,803
08-09-07 Public Advocacy	66,345
08-09-08 Engagement through media and campaigns	15,324
10-07-12 Management and Operations support at CO	41,882
7921 Operations # financial and administration	3,700
Unknown	8,202
Grand total	4,119,954

^{*} Total Utilised figures exclude recovery cost and are indicative figures obtained from UNICEF Performance Management System.

Table 6: Planned budget for 2017 Outcome Area 6: Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse Viet Nam

Planned Budget and Available Resources for 2017

Intermediate Result	Funding Type	Planned Budget 1	Funded Budget ¹	Shortfall ²
06-01 Data and Child Protection	RR			
	ORR			
06-02 Child Protection systems	RR			
	ORR			
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	RR			
	ORR			
06-04 Justice for children	RR			
	ORR			
06-05 Birth registration	RR			
	ORR			
06-06 Child Protection and emergencies	RR			
	ORR			
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen families and communities	RR			
	ORR			
06-08 Child Protection # General	RR			
	ORR			
Sub-total Regular Resources				
Sub-total Other Resources -	Regular			
Total for 2017				

¹ Planned and Funded budget for ORR *(and ORE, if applicable)* excludes recovery cost. RR plan is based on total RR approved for the Country Programme duration

² Other Resources shortfall represents ORR funding required for the achievements of results in 2017.

FUTURE WORK PLAN

The five year child protection programme of work has reinforced well known knowledge that a country's economic development does not necessarily correlate with a decrease in violence against children; in fact, it may appear to increase with new social challenges as well as improvements in reporting and monitoring, public and professional awareness. As such, the child protection challenges faced by Viet Nam remain and are expected to continue in spite of its economic development.

Having reached the end of the country programme cycle (2012-2016), and in the context of Viet Nam as a lower middle-income country characterised by high economic growth, UNICEF Viet Nam's new overall programme cooperation (2017-2021) will focus on select priorities where UNICEF can strengthen evidence-based policy-making, demonstrate the effectiveness of holistic cross-sectoral approaches at local levels to influence Vietnamese Government investments for children and increase public awareness and forge new partnerships to reduce child vulnerabilities. The Vietnamese Government and UNICEF have identified three such programme components:

- 1. Accountability and system-building for child rights and protection
- 2. Integrated early childhood development
- 3. Programme partnership, public advocacy and communication for child rights.

These three components respond to the situation analysis and lessons from the Mid-Term Review of the 2012-2016 country programme. They support the achievement of selected national SEDP priorities, related SDGs and targets and respond to the unfinished MDG agenda. The priorities are aligned with recent concluding observations of the Convention of the Rights of the Child committee and UNICEF's strategic plan priorities. They also contribute to the One Strategic Plan between the Vietnamese Government and UN system 2017-2021 that uses a 'Delivering as One' approach.

More specifically, the new 2017-2021 Child Protection Programme will continue to support the Government of Viet Nam build a comprehensive child protection systems to respond to risks and vulnerabilities of children to neglect, abuse, exploitation, and violence, in line with the National Programme on Child Protection (2016-2020) whilst also addressing unresolved MDGs and aligning with the global SDGs.

The overall country programme outcomes with related child protection programme outputs structure is as follows:

Outcome 1: By 2021, there is an inclusive and protective legal and policy environment and improved State accountability for the realisation of children's rights.

- Output 1.5: The legal framework for an operational child protection system and the social work profession is developed.
- ➤ Output 1.6: Enhanced national capacity to improve access to justice and protection of children in contact with the law.

Outcome 2: By 2021, social protection measures are more equitable and inclusive and there is a functioning child protection system

Output 2.2: An operational child protection system and child-friendly justice services are developed that prevent and respond to child neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation and to the situation of children in need of special assistance. Outcome 3: By 2021, in selected areas of 3 Provinces, all children and their families, especially the most vulnerable, utilise inclusive and quality IECD services

➤ Output 3.3: Enhanced local capacity in focus provinces to develop and operationalise local child protection systems and services, including positive parenting and non-violent discipline.

This child protection programme will address the needs of vulnerable families for social and child protection services; contribute to strengthening the capacity of social welfare personnel; provide accurate information and data on child protection; and support legal and structural reform to make justice systems more child-friendly. This will be achieved through:

- i. developing model programmes which deliver inclusive and quality integrated early childhood development service,
- ii. establishing special protection measures and services for the most vulnerable children,
- iii. establishing a child-friendly justice system for children in contact with the law, and
- iv. enhancing the child protection legal framework and structure.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

UNICEF Viet Nam expresses our most sincere appreciation to all donors who have provided contributions to the thematic funds for Outcome Area 6, Child Protection, at the global level (Sweden, Norway and Hungary) and at the country level including the Netherlands and Thailand National Committees for UNICEF. Together this support has been instrumental in helping to protect children in Viet Nam from abuse, exploitation and violence in 2016.

These thematic funds have enabled UNICEF to provide flexible, timely and important support towards a stronger protective environment for children in Viet Nam. Over the course of 2016, thematic funds enabled UNICEF Viet Nam to make landmark achievements in the establishment of a child-friendly and gender sensitive justice system, and the strengthening of the comprehensive national child protection system with child protection local services. In enabling UNICEF Viet Nam to support the development of key pieces of legislation to prevent and respond to harm of children, such as child abuse, child labour, trafficking, and online dangers, thematic funds have contributed to the protection of girls and boys in Viet Nam from neglect, abuse, exploitation and discrimination. These solid achievements now lay the ground work for scaling up the reach and the quality of the protective environment for all children in Viet Nam.

We would also like to thank the Government of Viet Nam and public officers at the national, provincial, district and commune levels and civil society organisations, who are UNICEF's committed partners in our efforts to ensure protection for all children in Viet Nam, and the communities, families and children who worked to ensure that our joint efforts are sustainable. Our international partners, including Plan International, Child Fund, World Vision, Save the Children, UNFPA, UN Women, UNDP, UNODC, UNAIDS, and WHO have also played a critical role in our coordinated efforts for strengthened child protection systems and local services, an improved child justice system, and specialised protection for vulnerable and at-risk children.

Finally, our thanks to all children in Viet Nam, especially those who are working to overcome adversity and to claim their right to a safe and secure future. Whilst we may support them, they guide us in working towards a better world.



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