Philippines

Education Thematic Report

January-December 2016

Prepared by
UNICEF Philippines
February 2017

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A. Contents

Cover: Grade 2 pupils of Lamlifew Indigenous Peoples Integrated School read the story of *Dad Munung Di Blutu Tana* (Guardians of the Heart of the Earth) written by their teacher.
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B. Abbreviations and Acronyms

ALS	Alternative Learning System
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BBL	Bangsamoro Basic Law
BDA	Bangsamoro Development Agency
CCA	climate change adaptation
CDWs	child development workers
CPC	Country Programme for Children
DCC	day care centre
DepED	Department of Education
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DOH	Department of Health
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DRRM	disaster risk reduction and management
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
EBEIS	Enhanced Basic Education Information System
ECCD	early childhood care and development
ECCDC	Early Childhood Care and Development Council
EiE	education in emergencies
GPH	Government of the Philippines
IP	indigenous people
IPsEO	Indigenous Peoples Education Office
KCEP	Kinder Catch-up Education Programme
LGU	local government unit
MDG(s)	Millennium Development Goal(s)
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MIS	Multiple Indicator Survey
MTB-MLE	Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NER	net enrolment rate
NGO	non-governmental organization
NSO	National Statistics Office
OOSC	out-of-school children
OOSCY	out-of-school children and youth
PFM	public finance management
SBM	school-based management
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
SEA-PLM	Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics
SIP	school improvement plan
SNP	supervised neighbourhood play
SPMS	Shariff Aguak, Pagatin, Mamasapano and Shariff Saydona
SY	school year

C. Executive Summary

The main focus of the UNICEF Philippines Education Programme has been to improve the capacity of national and local government partners in providing holistic and inclusive education for children 3-11 years old and to improve early childhood care and development (ECCD), mainly early childhood education and elementary education outcomes in the 36 most vulnerable areas of the country. The Government of the Philippines (GPH) and UNICEF agreed on this focus based on a series of vulnerability analyses at the beginning of the GPH-UNICEF Country Programme for Children (CPC) 7. The education component supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4, "Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning"; Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2, universal access to primary education; and MDG 3, gender equality and empowerment of women. In 2016, the UNICEF executive board approved the two-year extension of CPC 7 (originally 2012-2016), which will continue up to the end of 2018.

The year 2016 was critical for the Philippine education sector. Because of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) reform, the country saw 1,517,610 children aged 16 years old enrolled as 11th graders for the first time in its history (as of October 2016). With those children proceeding to Grade 12, the country will see full reform implementation in 2017. While the 2016 national election brought leadership changes to the country and the education sector, the strong support to K-12 by the new administration brought stability to the ongoing development. The Department of Education (DepED) successfully negotiated a 2017 budget amounting to approximately PHP543.2 billion (USD10.97 billion), representing a 25 per cent increase over the 2016 budget of PHP433.38 billion (USD8.75 billion) to ensure full implementation of K-12 and enhancement of public finance management (PFM) and alternative learning system (ALS), which had been identified as the two major priorities of the sector.

Also in 2016, the UNICEF Philippines Education Programme made some notable achievements and progress. Following are the key results for the two components (ECCD and Basic Education):

1. **Ensuring that marginalized and excluded young children are ready to learn and enter school at the right age(Early Childhood and Development)**

   a. The DepED's 2016 Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten reaffirmed the adoption of developmentally appropriate approaches in curriculum implementation, the use of the ECCD checklist as the main tool for formative and summative assessment, and addressing the specific circumstances of diverse learners (e.g., development of a culturally-responsive kindergarten curriculum guide).

   b. Through the ECCD-Kinder-Primary Education Link initiative, the mapping of all children in the convergence areas resulted in serving more than 5,000 children aged 3-5 in remote areas through alternative delivery modes such as supervised neighbourhood play (SNP) groups and the Kinder Catch-up Education Programme (KCEP).

   c. The continuous advocacy to and training of local government units (LGUs) in mainstreaming ECCD and managing communication for development initiatives in the focus areas increased awareness and appreciation among key LGU stakeholders on the importance of ECCD, and improved their abilities in integrating ECCD into the LGU plans, budget and policies. Of the 36 focus areas, 30 (83 per cent) raised their ECCD budgets between 2013 and 2016, and 28 (78 per cent) demonstrated an average annual ECCD budget growth of at least 5 per cent (2016 LGU ECCD Budget Study).

   d. The National Competency Standards for ECCD Workers were also developed, and the accompanying Training and Development Framework for ECCD workers was drafted. ECCD focal persons from all regions and provinces were trained on the National Early Learning Curriculum for children 0-4 years old and on the new Standards and Guidelines for Centre-Based ECCD Programme.

   e. A more collaborative process led by the ECCD Council Technical Working Group supported the enhancement of the system for prevention, early identification, referral and intervention in developmental disorders and disabilities covering children 0-4 years old.

f. UNICEF and *Lingap Pangkabataan* continued supporting the DepED-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and selected focus LGUS in establishing the ECCD-Kindergraten-Primary Education Link in indigenous communities to ensure that young Teduray children can access preschool and smoothly transition to kindergarten and primary education. Working with the Indigenous Peoples Education Office (IPsEO) of the DepED Central Office, the initiative supports the contextualization of kindergarten and Grade 1 curricula according to the culture, tradition and practice of the Tedurays. It facilitated the smooth coordination between IPsEO and DepED-ARMM, particularly in supporting the teachers of ARMM-based schools who serve the children of indigenous peoples (IPs). IPsEO recognized the community-led development of the IP Education Framework, which uses the knowledge and experiences of the community as basis for improving IP education.

g. In partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)-ARMM, UNICEF spearheaded the ECCD Summit attended by the DepED, DSWD, Department of Health(DOH), Department of Interior and Local Government(DILG), Planning and Development Office, non-state agencies such as the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The summit became a venue for analysing the situation of children below 8 years old and identifying ARMM's vision for ECCD.

h. The *Tahderiyyah* (kindergarten for Bangsamoro children) programme, which helps kindergarten pupils transition to Grade 1, is now included as an educational facility for preschool children in the government's conditional cash transfer programme. Furthermore, the programme served 8,518 children of the *Bangsamoro* (Muslim nation) aged 3-5 in School Year (SY) 2015-2016.

i. The Bureau of Madaris (Muslim schools) adopted the *Tahderiyyah* curriculum in selected public schools. A total of 71 public kindergarten teachers were trained on how to use the curriculum. ECCD kits were also distributed to support curriculum implementation.

j. The Three-Year Longitudinal Study on ECCD[1] of a cohort of 4,287 kindergarten pupils which started in 2015 completed its second round of assessment (end of kindergarten) to assess the holistic development of young children, covering literacy, numeracy and social-emotional skills. In general, the study found (1) strong relationship among cognitive, social and emotional skills; (2) the performance level of most pupils in the three domains improved between rounds 1 and 2; (3) pupils in conflict-affected areas showed the poorest performance in all skills; (4) growth in literacy and social and emotional skills tended to rise as the school's number of basic facilities increased; and (5) pupils who attended preschool outperformed those who did not in all three domains, and this relationship tended to be stronger in the low socio-economic status group.

2. **Ensuring that marginalized and vulnerable children participate in and complete quality elementary education (Basic Education)**

a. Information from the Last-Mile Learner situational analysis[2] conducted by the DepED and UNICEF was used in the ongoing preparation of a strategic plan for disadvantaged learners including the expansion of the alternative delivery system. Last-mile learners refer to children who tend to be left behind in their education. Among them are children who have disabilities, who live in remote areas and who belong to indigenous communities.

b. With the support of the DepED, UNICEF and Basic Education Assistance for Muslim Mindanao-ARMM project, DepED-ARMM now has 229 school-based management (SBM) mentors ready to help school planning teams. The initiative will help the DepED institutionalize continuing school-based trainings on implementing and monitoring the school improvement plan (SIP).

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[1] ECCD Longitudinal/Tracer Study. A longitudinal study of the effects of ECCD Program on learning experiences and performance of kindergarten pupils through Grade 2. This research is part of the ECCD Project jointly funded by DFAT-Australia and UNICEF.

[2] Last-Mile Learner Situational Analysis Report. A report prepared by DepED Project Development Division (PDD) in coordination with various DepED offices, and with technical assistance from UNICEF.

c. In partnership with the global initiative on Data Must Speak Project[3], UNICEF initiated the creation of an equity-based teacher hardship index. The initial design paper is being discussed at the DepED. The project supports use of data from the Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS) for equity-based programming and advocacy.

d. The Philippines officially joined the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM), a learning assessment that carefully considers the social and cultural context of Southeast Asia.

e. In collaboration with the Basic Education Sector Transformation programme funded by the Australian government, UNICEF enhanced national coordination on the multi-grade programme that caters to children in poor and remote communities. UNICEF also forged a partnership cooperation agreement with the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO)-Innotech to improve learning outcomes in multi-grade schools through a classroom-based research and review of the multi-grade programme with the aim of generating recommendations for quality, institutional and school capacity building and supervision.

f. The documentation of Indigenous Populations (IP) knowledge, skills and practices served as a reference for the development of learning materials sensitive to the cultures of three indigenous communities: the B'laan, Tagakaolo and T'boli. The contextualized learning materials will be pilot-tested and are expected to improve teaching and learning outcomes for IP children, who have long been disadvantaged due to language barriers.

g. Building on the experience from Super Typhoon Haiyan, UNICEF and the government-led Education Cluster of agencies supported the DepED's efforts in consolidating a training package on education in emergencies-disaster risk reduction and management (EiE-DRRM) for DepED national and local personnel. The training package will be rolled out in early 2017. In the DepED-ARMM, the orientation of DRRM coordinators helped them understand better the complexity of mitigating the effects of disaster on children in a conflict-affected environment.

This report highlights the results achieved in 2016 using all funding sources to support the thematic area of ECCD and Basic Education. It also reflects on the challenges and lessons learnt. UNICEF is grateful to all the donors who contributed to the accomplishments outlined in this report and looks forward to further collaboration in 2017 and beyond for the greater benefit of Filipino children.

D. Background – GPH-UNICEF 7th Country Programme

GPH-UNICEF 7th Country Programme 2012-2016

The initial goal for CPC 2012–2016 was to contribute to the progressive realization of children's rights in line with the government's priorities set in Philippine Development Plan 2011–2016 to achieve the MDGs. The education component supports reaching MDG 2, universal access to primary education, and MDG 3, gender equality and empowerment of women.

The CPC education component has been working towards improving the capacity of national and local government partners to provide holistic and inclusive education for 3- to 11-year-old children and to improve ECCD, principally early childhood education, and elementary education outcomes in the 36 most vulnerable areas identified and agreed upon by the government and UNICEF based on vulnerability analyses. This initiative is aligned with the UN Development Assistance Framework Outcome 1, which aims to improve access to and use of quality social services by the poor and vulnerable by building on the MDGs of universal primary education, which align with the Sustainable Development Goals 2016-2030.

The programme focuses on two interventions: (1) ensuring that marginalized and excluded young children are ready to learn and enter school at the right age, and (2) ensuring that marginalized and vulnerable children participate in and complete quality elementary education. Programme activities are equity-focused and involve building scalable models of ECCD and elementary education innovations,

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[3] Data Must Speak Project is a project being implemented by DepED in partnership with UNICEF Philippines and New York. This is intended to build a sound and evidence-based calculation tool which will inform the Policy and Guidelines on Special Teacher Hardship Allowance.

particularly in three vulnerable settings: areas prone to natural disasters, conflict-affected areas and urban poor communities. The programme encourages participation of children and community members to work with schools in dealing with gender disparities, health and nutrition problems, violence, discriminatory practices, and disruptions caused by disasters and conflict.

UNICEF and the government agreed to extend CPC 7 for two years (until the end of 2018), in accordance with the cycle of the UN Development Assistance Framework 2012-2018.

Philippine Country Context during the CPC 7 Period

Some key changes in the economic, social and political contexts of the Philippines significantly affected CPC 7 implementation and shifted the programme approach and direction.

The Philippines enjoyed one of the highest economic growth rates in the region in the past several years. The World Bank projects continued strong economic growth from 2016 to 2018 which will contribute to poverty reduction in the country.[4] While growth has been robust, however, it has not translated into income gains and better access to services for all. Almost one-third of children in the country are still poor and stunted (short for their age).[5] This situation will undermine the country's ability to break the cycle of poverty for most of its people.

Under the Aquino administration from July 2010 to June 2016, milestone reforms took place. The major social programme that made an impact on the education sector was the expansion of the national conditional cash transfer *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program (4Ps), which aims to support 28 million poor Filipinos by providing cash if they fulfil several conditions[6]. The national K-12 reform made basic education (elementary and secondary) 12 years by adding two years of senior high school for 16- and 17-year-old children and making one year of kindergarten mandatory before children can proceed to Grade 1. The UNICEF Out-of-School Children Study launched in 2015 noted both reforms as the major factors needed to drastically reduce the number of out-of-school children in the Philippines.

The new Duterte administration affirmed the focus on education and K-12 implementation. The administration also proposed further curricula reforms including enhancing drug education, sex education, disaster risk reduction (DRR), PFM and execution of the ALS for out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY), estimated at 3.8 million Filipinos aged 5-24 years old (Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey 2013).

The government's social sector budgets increased drastically over the last five years. In 2016, PHP650 billion (approximately USD13 billion) was allocated for education-related programmes, accounting for 19 per cent of the national budget. Of the said amount, the DepED received PHP436 billion, the largest among all government agencies and a 15.4 per cent increase over its 2015 budget. For 2017, the DepED again received the lion's share of the national budget at PHP543.2 billion (approximately USD10.97 billion), which is expected to benefit more than 21.2 million learners.

However, challenges remain in efficiency and equitable allocation to reach the disadvantaged areas and schools with greatest needs. At the Philippine Education Summit 2016, the three government agencies mandated to deliver education services—the DepED, Commission on Higher Education and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority—acknowledged that using the budget to effect change on the ground is the largest challenge in the education sector.

In 2013, the Philippines suffered from a series of major disasters. It was still recovering from Category 5 Super Typhoon Bopha (local name Pablo) that seriously damaged Southern Mindanao in December

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[4] The World Bank, *Philippine Economic Update 2015,*
http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/philippines/publication/philippine-economic-update-october-2015.

[5] Tabuga, Aubrey, et al., 'Child Poverty in the Philippines', Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2014,
http://www.pids.gov.ph/dp.php?id=5398&pubyear=2014.

[6] Conditions include (1) pregnant women must avail of pre- and postnatal care, and be attended during childbirth by a trained professional; (2) parents or guardians must attend family development sessions, which cover topics on responsible parenting, health and nutrition; (3) children aged 0-5 must receive regular, preventive, health check-ups and vaccines; (4) children aged 6-14 must receive deworming pills twice a year; and (5) children-beneficiaries aged 3-18 must enrol in school and maintain an attendance of at least 85 per cent of class days every month.

2012, when confrontations erupted between a faction of the Moro National Liberation Front and the Philippine Army in Zamboanga City in September 2013. The fighting initially displaced about 100,000 people. This was followed by a magnitude 7.2 earthquake on Bohol Island in October 2013, killing some 222 persons, injuring 976 people and destroying approximately 14,500 structures. In November 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan (local name Yolanda), the strongest typhoon to make landfall, killed some 6,300 persons, damaged 1.1 million houses and displaced over 4.1 million people[7]. It triggered a Level 3 emergency response, which brought global-scale emergency interventions to the country.

Haiyan displaced over 1.7 million children and damaged or destroyed more than 3,200 schools and day care centres. Other schools became evacuation centres for displaced people. The government and the Education Cluster, guided by the minimum standards of the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, formulated a strategic response plan targeting 500,000 preschool and school-aged children (3-17 years old). The plan focused on rehabilitating schools and restoring school administration, psychosocial support to teachers and back-to-school-related activities. The Haiyan response programme was closed in November 2015 with all the targets met (see Section G for details).

The signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro on 27 March 2014 stopped the armed conflict and hostilities between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). As part of the normalization process, both parties agreed on the creation of a new political entity to replace the ARMM through the passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) in Congress. This development brought hope to the Bangsamoro people for long-lasting peace, stability and opportunities for much-deserved socio-economic development in the area. However, an armed encounter in January 2015 between government forces and the alleged breakaway faction of the MILF reduced and challenged the level of support and political commitment from the members of Congress to pass the BBL. The BBL discussion is in the hands of the Duterte administration, which set Mindanao peacebuilding as a priority in its political agenda. Because the future of the BBL and peace process is unclear and fragile, stronger support and advocacy for peaceful political transition are now a priority for the development partners.

These major events and changes in the economic, social and political landscape provided important lessons. The government and its national and international development partners now recognize that frequent disasters and other risks are the 'new normal', and have started putting more weight on risk-informed programming. The experiences also reconfirm the importance of addressing the deep-seated social inequity and vulnerability, as those hardest-hit are the most disadvantaged.

In 2015, learning from the major events and rapid changes in the country's economic, social and political contexts, UNICEF undertook a Mid-Term Review of the Country Programme with the government and civil society partners. The Review renewed and strengthened the focus on equity in programming. Inter-sectoral ECCD addressing inequity from the earliest possible stage of children's life was identified as a key focus of the CPC along with targeted and more tailored interventions for the most disadvantaged, such as the indigenous population, conflict-affected children, OOSCY and children with disabilities. The 2016 Annual Work Plan was formulated based on the Mid-Term Review results and the subsequent discussion with government, local and civil society partners.

E. Strategic Context of 2016

The year 2016 was critical for the education sector. The K-12 reform reached the implementation stage in 2016-2017, with 1,517,610 16-year-old children enrolled as 11th graders for the first time in the country's history (data as of October 2016). With those children proceeding to Grade 12, the country will see full reform implementation in 2017. While the 2016 national election brought leadership changes to the country and the education sector, the strong support to K-12 continuation by the new administration brought stability to the ongoing reform.

The new DepED leadership presented two flagship sector priorities. The first is PFM improvement, an acknowledgment that the DepED is one of the agencies most inefficient at fund execution. The DepED expedited the spending of the 2015 budget while pushing for the 2016 budget utilization. The new DepED secretary appointed two undersecretaries for finance and procurement to address the inefficiency. The second priority is ALS for 5- to 24-year-old OOSCY estimated at 3.8 million (Functional

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[7] UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Report 2014.

Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey 2013), to accommodate 'unreached' children, especially those left out from the new senior high school system. The DepED also successfully negotiated a 2017 budget amounting to PHP543.2 billion (about USD 10.97 billion), representing a 25 per cent increase from the 2016 budget, to ensure full implementation of K-12 and new ALS initiatives.

The country's overall education sector indicators, on the other hand, show alarming trends. After six consecutive years of decline in the net enrolment rate (NER for 2010 = 95.9 per cent), the primary gross enrolment rate was 106.3 per cent and the NER 91.0 per cent in SY 2015-2016 (90.2 per cent for boys, 92.0 per cent for girls). Kindergarten enrolment also stagnated at 74 per cent (72.4 per cent for boys, 75.9 per cent for girls).

In SY 2014-2015, the elementary completion rate was at 82.6 per cent and school-leaving rate at 2.9 per cent.[8] In SY 2015-2016, both the elementary completion rate and school-leaving rate improved to 84.0 per cent (81.0 per cent for boys, 87.4 per cent for girls) and 2.7 per cent (3.3 per cent for boys, 2.0 per cent for girls) respectively. However, the geographical disparity is still significant. ARMM, the most disadvantaged region, showed little improvement with NER of 69.6 per cent, kindergarten enrolment rate of 49.8 per cent, completion rate of 56.9 per cent and school-leaving rate of 17.2 per cent. The data also continue to reveal the disadvantaged situation of boys. In terms of preschool enrolment of 3- to 4 year-old children through day care centres and alternative modalities, due to the absence of updated data, there is no information if the national net enrolment has improved from 42 per cent in 2013 (Source: DSWD).

Inequity has been the longstanding challenge of the Philippines. Disadvantaged children are still deprived of education and other basic social services. Both access and quality of basic education for children in the ARMM are significantly lagging behind. Some 2.4 million indigenous children are reported to be in school (EBEIS 2015), but IP learners' population is estimated at 4-5 million. While data collection methodologies need further analysis, only 0.5 per cent of the children enrolled at the elementary level in 2013 were reported to have some sort of disability (vis-à-vis the global standard of 10-15 per cent of the total population). More than 30 per cent of Philippine public schools operate multi-grade teaching, mostly in remote areas, and over 3,100 schools are incomplete.

The World Bank Public Expenditure Tracking Survey 2016 suggests that system inefficiency further worsens inequity. It shows that the school grants disbursement system and stringent financial and procurement rules give advantage to already better-off schools in accessing more funds. While the DepED's aggressive classroom and teacher procurement drastically improved overall national supply indicators, the analysis noted some distribution inefficiency, resulting in more schools reporting excess classrooms and teachers while gaps remained in other schools, possibly disadvantaged ones.

The new administration's priorities are relevant to the sector's context. The K-12 reform put more focus on establishing high-school-level education, but now the focus needs to shift to the disadvantaged and marginalized. The country needs a long-term, well-targeted and costed strategic plan to tackle the issue of the high number of OOSCY and considerable challenges of inequity. PFM improvement meanwhile needs to aim at increasing financial and procurement efficiency.

F. Results in the Outcome Areas

Key Results for Each Outcome Area

1. Early Childhood Care and Development (Output 1)

In the focus areas, the enrolment rate of 3- to 5-year-old children increased from 51 per cent in 2012 to 58 per cent in 2016. Efforts are underway to further broaden access to quality, inclusive and holistic ECCD services.

a. National-Level Results

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[8] Department of Education, Fact Sheet: Basic Education Statistics.

- UNICEF's support was geared towards inclusive, quality and holistic ECCD programmes and services, including training-orientation of ECCD focal persons in all regions and provinces on the National Early Learning Curriculum and Standards, and Guidelines for Centre-Based Childhood Programme. The National Competency Standards for ECCD Workers were also instituted as a basis for human resource development and management in the sector.

- The system developed in 2013 to address the needs of 3- to 4-year-old children with disabilities was enhanced to cover children aged 0-5 through a more collaborative process led by the ECCD Council Technical Working Group. The system focuses on building the capabilities of child development workers and parents in the prevention, early identification, referral, and intervention on developmental delays.

- UNICEF supported the preparation and initial execution of the National ECCD Communication Plan by producing the content for an initial set of materials to be used by child development workers in parenting education sessions.

- The 2016 DepED Omnibus Policy on Kindergarten reaffirms the adoption of developmentally appropriate approaches in curriculum implementation, use of the ECCD checklist as the main tool for both formative and summative assessment, and contextualization of kindergarten to address the specific circumstances of diverse learners. The latter includes the ongoing contextualization of the kindergarten curriculum guide for Muslim children.

- A national training programme on mainstreaming ECCD in LGUs, linked to the Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit of the Department of Interior and Local Government, was developed and introduced to the 36 focus areas to strengthen the capacity of LGUs in managing ECCD.

- The *Tahderiyyah* Programme is now included as an educational facility for preschool children in the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program.

- As part of upstream work, UNICEF is supporting the Three-Year Longitudinal Study on ECCD to better understand how the cognitive, social and emotional skills of young children unfold in different contexts, and how ECCD relates to children's later development, learning experiences and performance in school. The study started in 2015 and tracks a cohort of 4,287 kindergarten pupils. It already completed two rounds of assessment, with the following general findings: (1) a strong relationship among cognitive, social and emotional skills; (2) the performance level of most pupils in the three domains improved between rounds 1 and 2; (3) pupils in conflict-affected areas had the lowest performance in all domains; (4) growth in literacy and social and emotional skills tended to rise as a school's basic facilities increased; and (5) pupils who attended preschool outperformed those who did not in all three domains, and this relationship tended to be stronger in children with low socio-economic status.

  The results of the study will feed into reforms in areas such as curriculum and assessment (integrating social-emotional skills in K to 12), teachers' education and training, basic resources for early grades, and enhanced approaches in conflict-affected areas.

b. Local-Level Results

- Through the ECCD-Kinder-Primary Education Link initiative, the mapping of all children in the convergence *barangays* (villages) was intensified, resulting in more than 5,000 3- to 5-year-old children served in remote areas through alternative delivery modes such as SNP groups and KCEP. Replication of the Link started in focus areas and selected Teduray communities in Maguindanao.

- The continuous advocacy to and training of LGUs on mainstreaming ECCD and managing communication for development initiatives in the focus areas increased awareness and appreciation among key LGU stakeholders on the importance of ECCD, and improved their ability to integrate ECCD in the LGU plans, budget and policies. Of the 36 focus areas, 30 (83

per cent) raised their budget from 2013 to 2016, and 28 (78 per cent) demonstrated an average annual increase of at least 5 per cent (2016 LGU ECCD Budget Study).

- The *Tahderiyyah* programme, which supports the transition of kindergarten pupils to Grade 1, served 8,518 children aged 3-5 years old in the Bangsamoro.

- To build networks of ECCD advocates and supporters, advocacy to LGUs was pursued through the Leagues of City and Municipality Mayors. In the ARMM, the ECCD Summit, which drew concerned regional government agencies, produced preliminary inputs to the region's medium-term plan for children 0-8 years old in the Bangsamoro.

2. Basic Education (Output 2)

In the 36 focus areas, the participation rates of 6- to 11-year-old children increased in general from the baseline, with the lowest still in the conflict-affected areas. Improvements in school-level planning and national-level capacities for evidence-based policy are driving systemic changes for programmes to reach the most disadvantaged children.

a. The Philippines officially joined SEA-PLM, which will enhance the DepED's capacity to benchmark with participating Southeast Asian countries and inform the K-12 reform on how to improve quality in basic education.

b. The Last Mile Learner situational analysis jointly undertaken with the DepED's Office of Planning gave inputs to the ongoing preparation of a strategic plan for disadvantaged learners, including the expansion of the alternative delivery system. The analysis revealed that the main reasons why children do not attend school are family and community conditions. Thus, more attention is being given to strengthening the links of schools with families and communities.

c. Strengthening school governance is seen as a critical element to improve learning outcomes. The continued SIP rollout focused on the ARMM to strengthen school-based management and address the limited distribution of school funds. Through the support of the DepED Central Office, UNICEF and Basic Education Assistance for Muslim Mindanao-ARMM Project, DepED-ARMM now has 229 SBM/SIP mentors ready to support school planning teams in formulating SIPs that follow national standards. Instructional materials for equity-based school-community planning were prepared. These will help the DepED institutionalize continuing school-based trainings on SIP implementation and monitoring. The toolkits for documenting experiences in district synthesis were used to gather evidence on its effects upon local advocacy and resource mobilization.

d. In partnership with the global Data Must Speak Project, an equity-based teacher hardship index was created. Consultations with teachers, supervisors and finance officers revealed a broader range of factors other than school distance and remoteness which need to be considered in the provision of teacher hardship incentives. The project also supported further use of EBEIS data for equity-based programming and advocacy using school report cards and district synthesis.

e. UNICEF and the Australian government-funded Basic Education Sector Transformation programme enhanced the implementation of the multi-grade programme catering to children in poor and remote communities. Curriculum guides and daily lesson plans were aligned with the new curriculum, and teach-learn packages that meet the needs of diverse learners, including children with learning disabilities, are ready for pilot testing in multi-grade schools. UNICEF also partnered with SEAMEO-Innotech to improve learning outcomes in multi-grade schools through a multi-grade programme review and capacity building for multi-grade monitoring and supervision. An agreement among the DepED, SEAMEO-Innotech and UNICEF is underway.

f. DepED Region 8, with support from UNICEF, launched Project IncluED 8, an inclusive education initiative that seeks to develop a comprehensive information management system for mapping, profiling, and tracking OOSCYs in order to identify their barriers to learning, give them the appropriate interventions and encourage them to acquire the academic and life skills required to reach their potential.

Furthermore, UNICEF helped establish the Regional OOSC/Y Steering and Advocacy Committee. The Committee serves as a platform for stakeholders to conduct a collective analysis of the OOSC/Y situation, formulate strategies, discuss and address programme implementation bottlenecks and advocate OOSC/Y issues.

g. The documentation of IP knowledge, skills and practices served as a reference for the production of learning materials that are culturally sensitive to three indigenous communities: B'laan, Tagakaolo and T'boli. The contextualized materials, written in their mother tongues, are ready for pilot testing and are expected to improve the teaching and learning outcomes for the IP children, who have been long disadvantaged due to language barriers.

h. The development of an EiE-DRRM training package for the DepED informed the preparation of a DRRM capacity building work plan. DepED-ARMM drafted a policy paper clarifying the roles, accountabilities and protocols for DRRM preparedness and response in both natural disasters and conflict emergencies. In DepED-ARMM, the orientation of DRRM coordinators enhanced their understanding of how to mitigate the effects of disaster in a conflict-affected environment.

3. **Emergency Response**

UNICEF Education supported the following emergency responses:

a. **Education Cluster Coordination and Support to Emergency Response**

UNICEF is actively involved in the Education Cluster at both national and sub-national levels, in partnership with the DepED (DRRM Service and DepED-ARMM). UNICEF, with cluster co-lead Save the Children, closely coordinated with DepED-DRRM Service in identifying affected schools that need temporary learning spaces and supplemental learning materials and supplies.

In July 2016, approximately 11,339 children in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao provinces benefited from tents for temporary learning space, ECCD and school-in-a-box kits, and 238 teachers received supplemental kits. UNICEF distributed these supplies to 34 schools affected by conflict and a dry spell in the ARMM.

During the response in areas affected by Typhoon Haima last November 2016, UNICEF helped approximately 11,188 children aged 6-11 years old by giving elementary student kits, school-in-a-box and teacher kits. These learning supplies were distributed to approximately 80 schools in Region II and the Cordillera Administrative Region through the DepED-DRRM Service.

In early August, UNICEF supported DepED-ARMM in convening a Cluster coordination meeting. The group looked into the effects of intensified law enforcement operations on the island provinces of Basilan and Sulu, and in the Shariff Aguak, Pagatin (Datu Saudi Ampatuan town), Mamasapano and Shariff Saydona (SPMS) box in mainland Maguindanao and Lanao provinces. Incident reports from the schools and districts were assessed to determine the extent of effects to schools. Cases of grave child rights violation were recorded for verification. The partners who attended the Cluster coordination meeting were Balay Rehabilitation, Edukasyon Initiativa, International Organization for Migration and Save the Children.

(Note: SPMS box is a term used by the military to refer to the area where the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters operate—the adjoining towns of Shariff Aguak, Pagatin (Datu Saudi Ampatuan town), Mamasapano and Shariff Saydona, all in Maguindanao.

b. **System Strengthening Support to DepED-DRRMS**

To strengthen the system and disaster mitigation, preparedness and response mechanisms in DepED-DRRM Service, UNICEF provided technical support through a DRR-EiE consultant who facilitated the development of the DRRM Training Package for DepED Personnel. Two booklets of school DRRM manuals were reviewed, published and distributed to schools. The capacity of DepED-DRMM Service staff from the national to division levels will be built through the 25 learning modules of the DRRM Training Package that will be rolled out by the first quarter of 2017. The modules are based on the lessons learnt and different DRR-EiE training experiences gained from

Super Typhoon Haiyan. Trainings from different Cluster partners were reviewed, harmonized and sequenced based on the training needs of DepED staff. Moreover, continuous technical and coordination support in preparedness measures were provided through the facilitation of contingency and preparedness planning at regional and national levels.

c. Establishment of a Conflict-Sensitive DRRM Policy Framework

With Save the Children, UNICEF supported DepED-ARMM in holding a second policy write-shop to establish a conflict-sensitive DRRM policy framework. Based on inputs from the write-shop, a policy framework was drafted and will be lobbied to the ARMM government for adoption and implementation.

d. Continuous Support to Haiyan-Affected Areas

Candelaria National High School-Roxas Extension, located in an upland far-flung area in the town of Tapaz, Capiz Province, is one of very few schools providing education to the children from the significantly disadvantaged ethnic community in the area. In November 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan caused substantial damage to the community, especially on the school buildings, rendering most unusable because of structural integrity and safety issues. With the generous support of FUJI TELEVISION NETWORK and UNICEF, Candelaria National High School received new facilities: one disaster-resilient classroom; one home facility with bathroom for the teachers, many of whom are volunteers who used to sleep in a classroom; restrooms with hand-washing facility (one for boys, one for girls and one for persons with disability). Damaged classrooms were also repaired. The project sought to provide at least 1,000 beneficiaries with new facilities they can use for conducting not only regular classes but also life skills programmes for the most at-risk or vulnerable indigenous adolescents from other upland *barangays* as part of a broader development programme.

e. Supply Replenishment

UNICEF replenished 1,200 student kits as prepositioned supplies for emergency response to conflicts and natural calamities. Other supplemental learning materials such as teacher kits, school-in-a-box and recreation kits are due for replenishment in the first quarter of 2017 as these are below threshold levels as well.

f. Development of Curriculum to Integrate DRR/Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) in Early Childhood education

The *Tahderiyyah* programme is implemented mostly in conflict areas. Because of this, one manual that was developed focuses on how teachers can integrate DRR/CCA in the *Tahderiyyah* sessions. A total of 303 teachers were trained on the use the said manual. Emphasis was given on the mitigation and preparation phases of a disaster, and the importance of play as a disaster response and recovery mechanism to support the psychosocial first aid to children affected by disasters, both manmade and natural.

Key Results for Each Outcome Area
Country Facts and Figures (Basic Indicators)

Indicator	2012 Baseline	2016 Progress
Under-Five Mortality	30.4/1,000 (World Bank, 2012)	28/1,000 (World Bank, 2015)
Gross National Income/Capita(Purchasing Power Parity)	USD7,410 (World Bank, 2012)	USD8,940 (World Bank, 2015)
Population	92.34 million (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2010)	100.98 million (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2015)

* No updated data available for the indicators

Indicator	2012 Baseline	2016 Progress
Life Expectancy Rate at Birth (Total Years)	68.01 years (World Bank, 2012)	68.27 years (World Bank, 2014)
Fertility Rate, Total (Births per Woman)	3.09 (World Bank, 2011)	2.98 (World Bank, 2014)
Urban Population	51.98% (World Bank, 2011)	53.86% (World Bank, 2015)
Gender Ratio	102 males for every 100 females (National Statistics Office [NSO], 2010)	102 males for every 100 females* (NSO, 2010)

Programme Facts and Figures (Basic Indicators)

Indicator	2012 Baseline	2015 Progress
Population of Children 3-11 Years Old	8.5 million (NSO, 2010)	8.5 million* (NSO, 2010)
- Population of 3-5 Years Old	6.2 million (NSO 2010)	6.2 million* (NSO 2010)
- Population of 6-11 Years Old	12.3 million (NSO 2010)	12.3 million* (NSO 2010)
Number of Children in Day Care Service	1,808,528 (DSWD, 2013)	1,808,528* (DSWD, 2013)
Percentage of Grade 1 Entrants with Early Childhood Education Experience in Public Schools	82.4% (DepED, 2011)	82.4%* (DepED, 2011)
Kindergarten Net Enrolment Rate	74.2% (DepED, 2011)	74.1% (DepED, 2015-2016)
Elementary Level Net Enrolment Rate	97.3% (DepED, 2011)	91.05% (DepED, 2015-2016)
Elementary Level Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate	99.6% (DepED, 2011)	94.5% (DepED, 2014)

 * No updated data available for the indicators

Key Strategic Partnerships

Partnerships are fundamental to UNICEF's work, as the challenges the country faces are too great for any agency to solve alone. Through cooperation and partnerships, UNICEF shares its global knowledge and experiences to help find local solutions. In the Philippines, important work is focused at the community level, interfacing with NGOs and civil society organizations, and closely coordinating with the government. UNICEF has strong, effective and highly credible linkages at both local (decentralized) government (the LGUs) and central government levels. In 2016 UNICEF partnered with the following main government agencies:

• **Council for the Welfare of Children**. The Council is the focal coordinating agency of the government for children's concerns. An agency directly under the Office of the President, it is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of all laws, programmes and services for children.

• **Department of Education**. The DepED is the major implementing partner of the education component of the CPC. It has supported the child-friendly school initiative since 1999.

• **DepED-ARMM**. The DepED-ARMM is the major implementing partner of the education component of the Country Programme, specifically educational development in the ARMM.

• **Department of Health (DOH).** The DOH coordinates and carries out various projects of the Health and Nutrition component of the CPC. It helps conduct maternal death reviews, establish basic emergency obstetric care clinics and set up water supply and sanitation systems. It also formulates plans of actions to fight child deaths, under-nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. Other attached agencies working on the CPC are the Bureau of Food and Drugs and the National Nutrition Council.

- **Department of Interior and Local Government**. The DILG helps promote child-friendly governance and advocates the localization of the MDGs.

- **Department of Labor and Employment**. The Department supports the campaign against child labour.

- **Department of Science and Technology**. Attached agencies of the Department, such as the Food and Nutrition Research Institute and the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development, work on research and development projects of the Country Programme.

- **Department of Social Welfare and Development**. The DSWD implements major activities of the Children in Need of Special Protection component of the Country Programme. It is also the focal agency for the early childhood development project.

- **DSWD-ARMM.** DSWD-ARMM is a major ECCD implementing partner. UNICEF supported the Regional Sub-Committee on the Welfare of Children to serve as the inter-agency group for ECCD in ARMM.

- **Early Childhood Care and Development Council**. The ECCD Council was strengthened "to ensure the State's focus on building a strong foundation for the development and learning of children during the early years from age zero to four years, to support the full range of health, nutrition, early education and social development programmes for the child's holistic development and ensure sustained interagency and multi-sectoral collaboration."

- **National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)**. NEDA and its regional offices are major CPC partners. NEDA heads the National Steering Committee and monitors implementation of the Country Programme. It also helps monitor the progress of the country in achieving the MDGs. Agencies attached to NEDA are the National Statistical Coordination Board and the National Statistics Office.

- **Philippine Information Agency**. The Agency is the government's chief information arm. Its various projects give technical assistance in promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Aside from the government agencies listed above, UNICEF has been closely working with the BDA on providing culturally sensitive early learning (*Tahderiyyah* programme) through centres within Muslim schools, reaching more than 35,000 children in conflict-affected, MILF-controlled communities.

UNICEF also partnered with the University of the Philippines Los Baños Foundation in building the communication-for-development capacity of the 36 focus LGUs and overseeing the execution of the strategic communication plans drafted by six focus LGUs: Parang and Mamasapano in Maguindanao; Siayan, Zamboanga del Norte; Milagros, Masbate; and Bobon, Northern Samar. The six focus LGUs received on-the-ground mentoring on refining their communication plans and starting implementation.

External donor governments are crucial partners of UNICEF as well. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments. In the Philippines, major funding comes from the international donor community. The availability of funds is subject to a donor country's interest in proposed projects. Donor governments also respond to emergency appeals that result from natural calamities or situations of armed conflict.

The NGO community is a vital and active partner of UNICEF in delivering its commitments for Filipino children. UNICEF works with NGOs to ascertain the situation of children on the ground and find ways to best help them. Alliances through human rights networks, leagues, professional groups and the academe enable research, technical assistance, capacity building, monitoring, rescue, rehabilitation, counselling, advocacy and other activities that protect and promote children's rights.

UNICEF also taps universities, colleges and research institutions for technical assistance in programme execution, such as in the rollout of developed planning tools (e.g., SIP Toolkit and district synthesis matrix), capacity building and mentoring of school heads, and the conduct of the OOSC Study and

ECCD Longitudinal Study. In emergency situations, higher educational institutions also implement education assistance. Major partners are the University of Philippines, Western Mindanao State University, Mindanao State University, Notre Dame University, University of the Philippines Los Baños, SEAMO-INNOTECH and the Australian Council for Educational Research.

The private sector plays an important role in helping UNICEF improve the quality of children's lives. Linkages between businesses and UNICEF offer mutual benefits by helping companies fulfil their corporate social responsibility and marketing needs while supporting and improving UNICEF programmes that address the needs of children. UNICEF maximizes the value of its partnerships with the private sector by cultivating integrated alliances that tap the resources of a company's business units and go beyond fundraising. For example, its partnership with the SM Group of Companies, one of the Philippines' largest conglomerates, is multi-faceted, ranging from corporate philanthropy, advocacy, cause-related marketing, in-kind assistance and event sponsorship to supply chain monitoring in its supermarkets. UNIQLO and FUJI TV supported the improvement of the learning environment of the most disadvantaged children through quality ECCD and increased access to basic education.

Constraints/Risks and Lessons Learnt

1. Constraints/Risks

While the Philippines has shown moderate improvements in the last few years in ensuring access to basic education as part of its commitment to Education for All, constraints remain in reaching this goal and eliminating inequity issues. Following are the major constraints and risks in accomplishing the Programme Component Result for ECCD and Basic Education.

a. Early Childhood Care and Development

The ECCD sub-sector has been facing the following key challenges:

i. Increasing access to ECCD, especially of marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and facilitating transition to primary school

- While effective ECCD alternative delivery modes such as SNP, mobile ECCD and other home-based modalities are available for 3- to 4-year-old children in remote and sparsely populated areas, these are not yet well-known and accepted by stakeholders. Alternative and community-based ECCD is often seen as 'second-class' compared with centre-based ECCD or day care centres (DCCs). However, proven effective innovations catering to the needs of children who are Muslim, indigenous, have disabilities or live in conflict-affected and disaster-prone areas, need to be systematically expanded to reach a critical mass.

- The DepED's KCEP is a good 'stop-gap' intervention for children 5 years old and above who are unable to attend and/or complete regular kindergarten. However, not all public elementary schools in the focus areas, especially in ARMM, are implementing the programme primarily because they lack kindergarten teachers who will handle the KCEP classes. Furthermore, the ongoing ECCD programme evaluation study finds some feasibility challenges on the ground that may require further review.

- While the Country Programme is successful in supporting and advocating the establishment of SNPs in focus LGUs to reach 3- to 4-year-old children in remote areas, some of the SNP completers may not be able to transition to kindergarten and Grade 1 given the far distance of the nearest public elementary school. Hence, an annex school or any other modality of providing education needs to be set up in these communities.

- Some programmes/initiatives that aim to broaden the access of marginalized and disadvantaged children to ECCD and kinder services face challenges in getting recognized by the government because of the 'high,' often unrealistic, quality standards expected from these services. One identified constraint among *Tahderiyyah* is that majority of the centres have no permit to operate yet. Another is complying with requirements such as the need to have a land title, which most *Tahderiyyah* centres do not have. There is continuing

advocacy to contextualize the guidelines for *Tahderiyyah* centres. The absence of a permit to operate is causing problems in the transition of kindergarten pupils who started in *Tahderiyyah* and intend to move up to Grade 1 in elementary schools.

- In implementing early childhood programmes in Mindanao, one risk is the ongoing conflict in some areas. In certain instances, day care or *Tahderiyyah* services had to be stopped.

ii. Improving the quality of ECCD services by developing and enhancing the competencies of ECCD workers and addressing their welfare and tenure

- Non-security of tenure among day care workers, coupled with very low honorarium, leads to high staff turnover. Existing policies (e.g., Department of Budget and Management circular on maximum limit or cap to personnel services) keep LGUs from creating permanent positions for day care/SNP workers. Misinterpretation of these policies in some LGUs even resulted in no permanent posts for ECCD workers. But good LGU practices on addressing the tenure, welfare and benefits of ECCD workers also exist, such as the non-replacement of accredited, trained and experienced day care workers. Such practices can be shared with and replicated in other LGUs. But they have yet to be systematically documented and shared by concerned national government agencies such as the ECCD Council Secretariat, DSWD and DILG.

- While the Country Programme supported the training of ECCD supervisors, this is not enough to ensure that ECCD workers are getting quality technical assistance from their supervisors. Developing competency standards for supervisors anchored on the newly adopted National Early Learning Curriculum for 0-4 Years Old and Competency Standards of ECCD Workers is in order.

iii. Strengthening ECCD Governance at the National and Local Levels

- At the national level, the roles of concerned national government agencies as the ECCD Council members need to be clarified vis-à-vis their specific roles as national executive agencies and in relation to the ECCDC Secretariat. The absence of the DILG on the ECCD Council poses a big challenge, as LGUs are under DILG supervision. The ECCD Technical Working Group, whose main function is to prepare the Annual Work and Financial Plan of the Council, was tapped to discuss and resolve technical issues towards more coordinated, integrated and holistic ECCD standards, policies and programmes. In the short term, this facilitated the endorsement of policy actions to the ECCD Council Governing Board. However, officially expanding the functions of the ECCD Technical Working Group and including the DILG as a Council member will be strategic.

- At the local level, the Early Years Act is vague on the responsibilities and accountabilities of ECCD management, and the coordinating structures at the provincial, city, municipal and *barangay* levels. If this lack of clarity will not be addressed, ECCD programme implementation will be fragmented and incoherent, and will result in overlaps and duplication of efforts that run contrary to the essence and intent of the Early Years Act.

- Monitoring of ECCD programme results remains fragmented, and coordination among the national ECCD implementing partners towards integrated monitoring is also unclear. The untenable situation challenges the progress gained at the local level in institutionalizing the project-driven system of data collection, reporting, analysis and dissemination to be used in planning and programming.

b. Basic Education

Basic Education faces the following challenges:

- While the DepED has given attention to equity issues by releasing DepED orders on adopting the IP curriculum framework, the Mother Tongue Based Multi-Lingual Education (MTB-MLE) for lower graders and the revision of the Inclusive Education Law, challenges lie in carrying out those measures and reaching hard-to-reach and disadvantaged children and schools.

Since Republic Act 9155, also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, the DepED has been decentralizing the basic education sub-sector under a policy of shared governance with the regional and division levels, principal empowerment and SBM. Although the intention of decentralization was to raise the academic standards of basic education and enhance administrative efficiency in delivering educational services, inadequate support from the central office, stringent financial and procurement procedures, and capacity constraints in some regional and division levels seem to inhibit policy and programme implementation. In general the DepED structure is still seen as highly centralized compared with other departments such as health and social welfare.

- The geographical and linguistic diversity of the country—more than 7,000 islands, of which about 2,000 are inhabited, and 180 languages spoken—also pose considerable challenges in directing educational programmes effectively. The DepED recognized 19 languages as the first set to be used as medium of instruction and subjects for children in kinder and Grades 1-3 under the MTB-MLE policy. However, actual implementation faced challenges caused by the delay in developing MTB-MLE learning materials, limited guidance and instructions given from the national office to the local DepED offices on the implementation, inadequate capacity, lack of teachers who can speak the mother tongues of the pupils and lack of resources at the regional and division levels. MTB-MLE implementation varies from place to place, and often the remote and disadvantaged schools are left behind.

- Constraints in the governance system were also observed in the DepED Central Office. Its centralized and stringent procurement and financial process is slowing down the implementation of key programmes and fund flows to decentralized entities. Preliminary findings from the World Bank's Public Expenditure Tracking Survey focusing on the DepED's School Grants system saw major progress in efficiency in transferring the funds to schools from the central level, but schools struggle to liquidate their instalments because of stringent financial and procurement rules and regulations, resulting in reduced access to the grants.

- As earlier mentioned, the DepED embarked on K-12, the largest-ever education reform in the country which primarily aims to create two years of senior high school. The DepED's attention and resources therefore centred on senior high school education by constructing thousands of high school classrooms, hiring teaching staff, etc. As a result, in recent years support to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged 'last mile learners' (OOSC, disabled, at risk of dropping out, conflict- and disaster-affected, minority) was a lower priority. As K-12 reform is approaching its full implementation after five years, the DepED is gradually widening the area of focus to lower graders, learning assessment and disadvantaged children.

- During the CPC 7 period, the DepED also went through significant organizational rationalization and restructuring. The rationalization process was completed in December 2015, and the personnel appointed to new responsibilities are now transferring to relevant offices and units. This transition, along with the uncertainty and unclear job security experienced by the staff during rationalization, was considerable. Slowdown was observed in implementing different DepED programmes and administrative/financial processes.

- The long-existing conflict in ARMM leads to a vicious cycle of weak capacity-low autonomy, thus resulting to significant inequity in access and quality of basic social services including education.

- The governance challenge and resource constraints led to high shortages in classrooms, teachers, learning materials and school operational budgets, as well as inaccurate educational data (such as number of schools, students and teachers). Systematic, comprehensive and longer-term capacity development in government and at school/community level is needed to achieve a firm education management system and evidence-based policy implementation in DepED-ARMM. Additionally, the capacity building support has to be put in the context of the overall Mindanao peace process and transition.

c. General Constraints

The country has no systematic and structured ways of collecting age- and sex-disaggregated data of children at the LGU level in order to identify the needs of educational services and planning. The 2010 census data are not yet finalized because of some major data discrepancy. The Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS) is an administrative data system for the education sector, and it captures only the children who are in the school system. Schools usually have no good record of the children who dropped out or a system to track them, resulting in challenges in identifying OOSC and children at risk. UNICEF advocated through the SIP guideline development that schools, communities and other local players such as health, nutrition and welfare personnel, should be 'child-seeking', i.e., reaching out to the community and finding all children who can avail of their services and protection through a comprehensive, community-level child-mapping exercise.

The political instability and security risks, especially in Mindanao, result from unresolved peace talks between the government and the MILF and New People's Army. Close coordination with the BDA, the MILF's development arm, should take place in order to closely monitor the situation and provide necessary assistance in case of conflict.

2. Lessons Learnt

The major lessons learnt from the implementation of the 2016 Education Programme are as follows:

a. The national and local levels of government and the development partners showed extensive buy-in in adopting the equity-driven policy and programming, and accepting the pathways of change being advocated by the Country Programme to reach the hard-to-reach children and thus attain the education-related MDGs. Further advocacy is needed to transform policy into action and address inequities.

b. The engagement of *barangay* LGUs early on in CPC implementation is crucial to increasing and sustaining support for ECCD. As written in the Local Government Code, DCC maintenance is a function devolved to the *barangay*. However, the CPC strategy is to directly support and engage the city/municipal LGUs. Raising the awareness of key stakeholders from city/municipal LGUs on the importance of ECCD and the irreversible negative effects of not having early education resulted in more financial support from some cities and municipalities to DCCs/SNPs in *barangays* that provide counterpart funding. This form of incentive works if the chairman of a *barangay*, particularly one where ECCD coverage is low, appreciates the importance of ECCD. Otherwise, this might widen the inequity between *barangays*.

c. In the absence of a formal/organized structure that will manage and coordinate ECCD at the city/municipality level, directly engaging the local chief executives and city/municipal social welfare development offices works in addressing immediate and short-term ECCD issues. Expanding this effort to cover other key stakeholders from the *Sangguniang Bayan* (legislative body) and Planning and Budget Offices proved to be more strategic, effective and sustainable. While having a more systematic and organized local structure is highly desirable for long-term sustainability, this approach creates more ECCD champions and advocates at the LGU level.

d. Support to upstream work such as developing manuals, systems and tools, and training of trainers, will be effective and sustainable only if structures and adequate budget to support/ facilitate rollout to centres/schools are in place. While the DSWD is mandated to provide technical assistance to LGUs, it is present only down to the regional level. Thus, engaging the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office is very crucial.

e. Given the DILG's mandate to help the Office of the President supervise LGUs, the adoption of ECCD policies and standards should have been made through Joint Resolutions between the ECCD Council Governing Board and the DILG. This will ensure that while the DILG is not an ECCD Council member, the Department will be engaged in policy/standards development and undertaking quality assurance (monitoring and technical assistance).

f. Continuous and intensive advocacy and communication for development efforts enhance support from parents and communities towards ensuring children's access to education.

g. The *barangay*-based data collection method is most effective not only in capturing where the OOSCs are but also in educational advocacy through house-to-house visits.

h. No one-size-fits-all approach can solve the issue of OOSCs. Multiple flexible approaches should be used to address each major reason why children are not in school. Further advocacy to the DepED should take place to strengthen its policy on implementing alternative delivery modes of education and to ensure sustained investment and full and timely use of resources for the production of supplementary learning materials.

i. As with most distribution activities, one-off provision of items such as oral hygiene kits, checklists, furniture and learning materials is helpful but insufficient for sustained impact. In most instances, schools cannot pursue activities because parents are too poor to afford these materials. Sometimes parents or teachers incur out-of-pocket expenses to purchase these items. This is problematic in areas where most parents, especially those not enrolled in 4Ps, are extremely poor. As such UNICEF will have to continue engaging with actors at the regional and national levels to create a facilitating environment and infrastructure in which their programmes can work.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To capture the inequity issues in the country, in 2016 the UNICEF Education Programme conducted various research initiatives, including the ECCD Longitudinal Study, OOSC Study and Last Mile Learners Analysis. Sources used to monitor the progress of the CPC were periodic reports of the DepED, ECCD Council, DSWD, and UNICEF; national data from the Basic Education Information System and ECCD Council/Information System; and education-related household surveys of the National Statistics Office (e.g., Annual Poverty Indicators Survey). The UNICEF Monitoring and Evaluation Team is also tracking the progress of the programmes in terms of outcome and outputs, based on the UNICEF Multiple Indicator Survey, a house-to-house sample survey in all focus LGUs.

Further, as UNICEF transitions to the next country programme, the UNICEF Education Programme initiated a comprehensive education programme evaluation which seeks to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Education component of the UNICEF 7th Country Programme as well as to generate solid recommendations and lessons learnt for the design of the programme in the next country programme. The preliminary recommendations included the further strengthening of linkages between the policy work and the field level modelling so that the modelling has clear policy intensions and the lessons learnt from the models can effectively inform the policies.

G. Financial Analysis

The total allocation for 2016 from Regular Resources, Other Resources (Regular and Emergency) and Integrated Budget was USD4,167,352. By year end, USD4,167,352 or 100 per cent of the total allocation was used. The unused balance is tied to grants, which are valid beyond 2016 and are part of 2017-2018 work plans. Three grants with a total value of USD1,608,879 expired this year and had an average utilization rate of 100 per cent.

In 2016, the planned budget for ECCD and Basic Education activities from UNICEF's Regular Resources and Other Resources (Regular and Emergency) was USD1,813,191.

Table 1. Planned Budget for Outcome area

Output	Funding Type	Planned Budget (USD)
05-01 Early Learning	Regular Resources	635,639
	Other Resources Regular	1,177,552
	Other Resources Emergency	-

Total		1,813,191

As of 31 December 2016, Basic Education had major funding gaps, especially in areas such as support to the development of school-financial management guidelines and training of selected schools in ARMM; support to multi-grade programme implementation, including conflict-sensitive context; support to alternative delivery modes of learning for children at risk of association or re-association with armed groups; and support to Education Cluster coordination for effective and efficient emergency preparedness response and necessary supplies during emergencies.

The grant, being thematic, is flexible and enables UNICEF Philippines to respond to priority areas within the programme, whose achievements are critical to improving the lives of Filipino children.

Table 2. Country-level Thematic Contributions to Outcome Area Received in 2016

Donor	Contribution Amount	Programmable Amount (USD)
UNICEF-United Arab Emirates	103,101	97,946
Total	**116,273**	**110,459**

Table 3. 2016 Expenditures in the Outcome Area (in USD)

Organizational Targets	Other Resources-Emergency	Other Resources-Regular	Regular Resources	All Programme Accounts
ECCD	131,227	2,540,395	332,575	3,004,197
Learning and Child-Friendly Schools (Basic Education)	74,139	82,964	390,608	547,711
Education in Emergencies	674,595	123,073	102	797,770
Education in General	1,987,256	491,815	206,258	2,685,330
Total	**2,867,218**	**3,238,248**	**929,543**	**7,035,008**

Table 4. Thematic Expenses by Programme Area (in USD)

Organizational Targets	Other Resources-Emergency	Other Resources-Regular	Total
ECCD	131,227	2,540,395	2,671,622
Learning and Child-Friendly Schools	74,139	82,964	157,103
Education in Emergencies	674,595	123,073	797,668
Education in General	1,987,256	491,815	2,479,072
Total	**2,867,218**	**3,238,248**	**6,105,465**

Table 5. Expenses by Specific Intervention in 2016 (in USD)

Organizational Targets	Total
Early Childhood Care and Development (Output 1)	1,925,848
Basic Education (Output 2)	2,045,118
Total	**3,970,966**

H. Future Work Plan

The priority activities for 2017-2018 identified by UNICEF together with its national and local government counterparts and other education partners are as follows:

1. **Early Childhood Care and Development**

   a. **Improved mechanisms for emergency preparedness**

      - Formulation of guidelines for local implementation of RA 10821 (Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act), particularly on ECCD in emergency

      - Prepositioning of ECCD materials/supplies for 3- to 4-year-old children affected by disaster and conflict.

   b. **Stronger implementation of a culturally sensitive ECCD programme for children in conflict-affected areas (peacebuilding)**

      - Support to *Tahderiyyah* programme implementation in ARMM and non-ARMM regions in partnership with the BDA

      - Enhancement of the *Tahderiyyah* curriculum.

   c. **Adoption of National Strategic Plans on ECCD and Parenting Education**

      - Formulation and adoption of the National ECCD Strategic Plan and National Strategic Plan for Parenting Education

   d. **Enhanced ECCD policies, standards and programme frameworks for service providers and children 0-4 years old towards holistic ECCD (c/o DSWD/ECCD Council)**

      - Finalization and adoption of the Competency Standards and Training and Development Framework for Child Development Workers (CDWs)

      - Development of mentoring session guides and additional training modules anchored on the Competency Standards and Training and Development Framework for CDWs (for adoption by the ECCD Council Governing Board)

      - Further enhancement and adoption of the system for addressing the needs of young children with disabilities

      - Capacity building of a cadre of regional trainers on the enhanced system for addressing the needs of children with disabilities and other emerging priority training areas based on the Competency Standards and Training and Development Framework for CDWs

      - Adoption of the National ECCD Communication Strategy and National ECCD Communication Implementation Plan

      - Review and enhancement of Early Learning Development Standards and Philippine ECCD Checklist (expansion of coverage from 0-5 year-old to 0-8 year-old children)

      - Advocacy to Congress on priority legislative agenda: Magna Carta for CDWs, Inclusive Education, national subsidy for ECCD in fifth- and sixth-class municipalities and *barangays* without internal revenue allotment, etc.

      - Support to ECCD implementation in the ARMM (Rolling Work Plan with DSWD-ARMM) and more learning forums that will influence policy reform in the region.

   e. **Improved policy and programme environment for inclusive kindergarten to Grade 3 education**

      - Formulation of a National Strategic Plan for Inclusive Kindergarten to Grade 3 education anchored on the Inclusive Education Policy Framework

- Capacity building of a cadre of trainers and supervisors, including the Kindergarten Madrasah Technical Group, on the use of teachers, learning materials and resource books

- Review and enhancement of Early Learning Development Standards and Philippine ECCD Checklist (expansion of coverage from 0-5 year-old to 0-8 year-old children)

- Support to the implementation of Inclusive Kinder to Grade 3 Education in ARMM (Rolling Work Plan with DepED-ARMM)

- Strengthening of coaching and mentoring mechanisms for ECCD service providers

- Strengthening of the ECCD information system in the ARMM.

f. **Stronger, evidence-based, ECCD/kindergarten education policy/programme development through evaluation, documentation and research/studies**

- Documentation of good practices in implementing national ECCD programmes

- Conferences/policy fora to share ECCD/kinder research/studies, trends and developments

- Inventory, review and alignment of psychosocial support programmes for young children affected by natural disasters, and development of guidelines for implementing psychosocial support in the Child Development Centre

- Assessment of the Child-Minding Programme for 0- to 2-year-old children in terms of the capacity of Child-Minding Centres to implement the National Early Learning Curriculum for 0- to 2-year-old children, parent effectiveness services and other parenting education programmes, taking off from the results of the evaluation of family development sessions

- Evaluation of the *Tahderiyyah* programme (c/o UNICEF Monitoring and Evaluation)

- Research on the quality of non-government learning centres, particularly community-based providers of kindergarten service, as input to the review and refinement of standards for the issuance of permit to operate

- Strengthening of the coaching and mentoring mechanisms for ECCD service providers

- Assessment/evaluation of MTB-MLE implementation from kinder to Grade 3.

g. **Stronger ECCD/kindergarten coordination and management at the national and sub-national levels**

- Formulation and adoption of a National (Holistic) ECCD System Framework, and establishment of ECCD information systems interface

- Enhancement of quality assurance mechanisms at the national and sub-national levels (monitoring and provision of technical assistance to disadvantaged LGUs/schools)

- Capacity building of the ECCD Council Technical Working Group, DSWD ECCD Sub-Group and Kinder to Grade 3 Team on coordinating and managing ECCD and kinder programmes.

h. **Enhanced and institutionalized Training on ECCD Mainstreaming in LGUs as part of the Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit programme (c/o DILG)**

- Refinement of the Training Programme on Mainstreaming ECCD in LGUs, at city, municipality and *barangay* levels; training to include the development or adaptation of user-friendly planning, programming and monitoring tools, and a compendium of good ECCD practices

- Support for institutionalizing the Training Programme on Mainstreaming ECCD in LGUs through any or a combination of the following modalities: (1) a cadre of trainers at the regional level, (2) a partnership of DILG with local universities, and (3) Local Government Academy (ECCD orientation of newly elected officials)

- Support for continuous ECCD advocacy to LGUs through the national and regional chapters of leagues of politicians

- Revisiting of indicators of the Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit to include key ECCD indicators and scale-up of the rating system (proposed for inclusion in the ongoing partnership of UNICEF with Galing Pook Foundation – c/o UNICEF Social Policy)

i. **Strengthened capacity of LGUs in focus areas on mainstreaming ECCD (planning, programming, implementation and monitoring)**

- Follow-through training of city/municipal Councils for the Protection of Children on ECCD Mainstreaming in LGUs (outputs: situational analysis of children and comprehensive ECCD plan)

- Training of selected *barangay* Councils for the Protection of Children on mainstreaming ECCD in LGUs

- Support for the institutionalization of different components of the ECCD-Kinder-Primary Education Link at the municipality, city, district and division levels

- Inclusion in parenting education sessions of responsive care and early stimulation for children below 3 years old

- Modelling of the parent-to-parent modality of providing ECCD services

- Expansion and strengthening of parent networks as ECCD champions

- Implementation of contextualized parenting education sessions for Bangsamoro parents in Child Development and *Tahderiyyah* Centres.

2. **Basic Education**

National Level

a. **Enhanced sector coordination and policy advocacy to address barriers to participation and learning of disadvantaged children**

- Support to education sector-wide donor coordination for programme complementation (e.g., education sector fora, inclusive education)

- Support to ARMM's strategic coordination with government and non-government partners, donors, and major stakeholders in promoting culturally sensitive development assistance for conflict-affected children

- Capacity building for education sector planning and programme/project management for effective and efficient implementation and mainstreaming of innovations

- Support to advocacy and mainstreaming of programme/project best practices that address learner issues, particularly violence against children in schools, adolescent health, nutrition, hygiene, children with disabilities, gender and culture.

b. **Evidence generation to support equitable and inclusive basic education policy/ programme development, and enhancement of capacity for research and data analysis**

- Support to the completion of the ECCD Longitudinal Study (Rounds 3 and 4) through the development of learning assessment tools; training and participation of national and local DepED staff on test administration for a sample cohort of learners from kinder to Grade 1; and exposure to the analysis of data generated from the study

- Technical support to the creation of a Teacher Hardship Index that will inform a policy on the equitable provision of hardship allowance, the preparation of a School Report Card linked to EBEIS and the development of school typology to inform policy guidelines on District Synthesis (Data Must Speak Project)

- Technical support to the DepED's documentation of DRRM best practices that demonstrate holistic and multi-sectoral approaches to preparedness and response at school and community levels, and will inform the mainstreaming of child-centred DRRM, CCA and EiE

- Support to learning assessment research of the DepED through the Philippines' participation in SEA-PLM, which will enable the inclusion of learning outcomes in the equity analysis through a culturally appropriate learning metric for Southeast Asia, and inform K-12 reform

- Technical support to DepED-ARMM and BDA on the analysis of issues affecting OOSCY in the ARMM and the development of a strategic plan/flexible learning delivery options focused on those at risk of association or re-association with armed groups

- Support to research dissemination to inform policy, programme/project development and mainstreaming of best practices and innovations that will enhance the delivery of equitable and inclusive basic education for the most disadvantaged children.

c. **Improved school-based management in selected ARMM schools**

- Support to the development and national rollout of instructional materials for the training of division coordinators and school heads on E-SIP/SBM that strengthens school-community partnerships for school activities

- Capacity building of SBM mentors for iterative/continuous quality assurance of SIP development and implementation monitoring in ARMM, including school-community mapping and preparation of district synthesis for resource leveraging with LGUs and other stakeholders

- Support to the development of school financial management guidelines and training of selected schools in ARMM towards effective, efficient and transparent SIP implementation

- Development and implementation of a resource-leveraging advocacy strategy for ARMM which will draw the participation of the LGU/local school board, parents and stakeholders.

d. **Improved education delivery mechanisms for culturally sensitive, context-relevant, learning opportunities for disadvantaged children in selected areas**

- Technical support for improving multi-grade programme delivery mechanisms (e.g., programme implementation review and policy recommendations, documentation of best practices and development of classroom assessment tools and training modules for multi-grade education supervisors)

- Support to multi-grade programme implementation in selected schools to ensure the availability of context-appropriate teaching/learning materials, enhanced capacity of teachers and school heads on effective multi-grade teaching, and stronger community buy-in in addressing barriers to access and participation of children, particularly in remote areas

- Documentation of the experiences in contextualizing the IP education curriculum as input to the development of the MTB-MLE policy and delivery strategy for IP learners

- Support to the DepED's programme reviews/design of flexible learning modalities (alternative delivery modalities, ALS, flexible learning options)

- Technical support to the creation of supplementary teaching-learning materials for the prevention of adolescent health issues like HIV-AIDS, early pregnancy and sexual abuse ('good touch, bad touch'), and the promotion of menstrual hygiene.

e. Contextualized basic education and support to children at risk of association or re-association with armed groups in conflict-affected areas (peacebuilding)

- Support to strengthening the conflict-sensitive delivery of multi-grade and IP education programmes through curriculum contextualization, materials development and teacher training

- Support to children and youth's access to education options such as ALS and functional literacy and numeracy training

- Support to the delivery of psychosocial support to children disengaged/at risk in MILF base command communities and giving them access to literacy and life skills learning opportunities

- Support to monitoring, data analysis and reporting, and evidence-based planning and programme management.

f. Strengthened education DRRM systems for effective preparedness and response in disaster and conflict situations (emergency preparedness)

- Support to capacity building of DepED-DRRM coordinators on DRRM, CCA and EiE

- Development of a Policy Framework on the Protection of Schools Affected by Armed Conflict, covering conflict-sensitive DRRM in the ARMM, formulation of school protocols for conflict-affected areas and integration of DRR/CCA in the curriculum

- Support to capacity building of DepED-ARMM personnel on the implementation of a conflict-sensitive DRRM policy framework and management system at the regional, division and school levels

- Support to Education Cluster coordination for effective and efficient emergency preparedness response by the Cluster in both conflict and disaster situations

- Support to prepositioning of supplies for timely emergency response benefiting at least 7,000 affected children.

I. Expression of Thanks

UNICEF Philippines wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the Global Education Thematic Funds donors for their commitment to realizing the rights of all Filipino children to access quality ECCD and basic education. The generous and flexible contributions received from the donors made possible national and local ECCD and basic education support, and new innovations. The continued support also helped us explore new approaches in our programming with a more refined equity vision.

Special appreciation also goes to all the national, local and community counterparts; education partners; and many day care centres and elementary school stakeholders for their continued collaboration, feedback and support to this programme.

Human Interest Story No. 1:
Candelaria National High School—Roxas Extension: Giving IP Children Access to Education

Tapaz, Capiz — Candelaria National High School—Roxas Extension is eight kilometres from the town centre. The sections of road leading to it range from paved to mostly rough and poor. Therefore, the last thing one wants when going to and from the school is a vehicle problem, especially during or after rain. Even light rain can turn roadbeds into strips of mud, making them difficult, if not impossible, to traverse. Thankfully passers-by, whether on foot or on a motorcycle, usually offer help to 'save' the trapped vehicle from the muddy road and even offer to bring the passengers to their destination.

One might think this sad state of infrastructure extends up to the school. That used to be the case. Not anymore.

Providing conducive learning

Candelaria National High School—Roxas Extension is a learning facility founded to cater to the educational needs of indigenous people, especially those in upland far-flung *barangays* such a Mabini, Taganghin, Daan Sur, Daan Norte, Agpalali, Tabon, Siya and Nayawan. Before the extension school opened in 2011, the indigenous learners from these *barangays* used to travel more or less 50 kilometres from their houses to the main school in town just to get a good education.

Passers-by help move a vehicle stuck in the mud. This scene is common during and after rain on the unpaved road leading to Candelaria National High School–Roxas Extension.

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Last November 2016, new facilities—two classrooms, one home area for teachers and one restroom with hand–washing facility—were fully constructed in the school. The construction was made possible through the generous support of Fuji TV, a Japanese television network based in Tokyo, and UNICEF. The two classrooms are being used for Grade 9 and 10 classes.

G-Lu May Diez, a Grade 10 and consistent first honour student, said they can now focus on class lessons. "We had our classes on the school stage before. The stage was open, so we had to endure the noise, and we had difficulty listening to our teacher and to each other. Since the stage has a dilapidated roof, during rainy season either the class would stop or we had to continue despite the leak from the roof." This situation would normally discourage other students from attending school.

But with the new classroom, G-Lu believes that her classmates and the Grade 9 students will be motivated to go to school. "I noticed that my classmates are happier, and we feel that we are really in school," G-Lu added.

Nelia, a 49-year-old mother who sends her children to the same school, expressed her joy in having a school in the upland supported by other organizations. "We are blessed to have a school here on the mountain. We do not have to shell out extra money for our children's transportation just so they can attend school in town and pay for their snacks. I believe that if every child is in school, nobody in this community will be poor. Every family will be lifted from poverty."

Providing a home away from home for teachers

The new facilities put a smile not only to the students of the high school but also its teachers. For Mary Rose Cachuela, a Grade 9 teacher who has been volunteering at the school for three years now, she and the other teachers finally have a 'home' on campus. "From the time I started here until recently, the other teachers and I would sleep in one classroom to save money that would have been otherwise spent on daily transportation to and from town. As a volunteer teacher, I receive only PHP3,000 (USD80) every quarter, which is not enough to cover transportation costs."

It was a struggle for Mary Rose and the other teachers because they had to wake up very early each morning to arrange the classroom before the students arrived. Aside from that, they had to endure the cold floor during the night since they had only mats to sleep on.

"So we were very happy when we transferred to the newly constructed dormitory last November 2016. We finally have private space," Mary Rose beamed. The dormitory can accommodate eight teachers and has a restroom and kitchen. The *barangay* or the teacher-in-charge sometimes gives them rice, and the parents provide vegetables.

"The blessings have been continuously pouring. Last month, we transferred to our new dormitory. And anytime now I will be receiving my contract as a permanent teacher," Mary Rose joyfully added.

Reinforcing interest among students and teachers

According to Jocelyn Garbosa, the school's teacher-in-charge, the new facilities have sparked students' interest to learn. "The classroom is like a house. If your family has no house, the tendency is for children to get lost. If the students have no proper facility for learning, they will lose interest and skip school."

She also noticed the positive impact the new structures have on the teachers. "They are more inspired to teach because of the new classroom's good ventilation and because they have a safe space for teaching."

Top photo: Behind Teacher Mary Rose are the three new facilities constructed with support from Fuji TV and UNICEF. The leftmost structure is the dormitory for teachers, while the other two facilities are for Grade 9 and 10 classes.
Middle photo: Inside the teachers' dormitory.
Bottom photo: Inside the new Grade 10 classroom, students relax during recess while others are out practicing for the school's activity scheduled for January 2017.

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Enrolment at the school has been increasing in the past few years. Jocelyn expects this trend to continue in the coming years as the new facilities create an environment favourable to student learning among the IP children in their community.

(Janet Rosalie Anne H. Polita, UNICEF Communication for Development Officer)

Jocelyn Garbosa, teacher-in-charge of Candelaria National High School – Roxas Extension, believes the new facilities have inspired children to learn.
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Human Interest Story No. 2:
Bringing Early Learning to Teduray Children

Upi, Maguindanao – The road leading to *Sitio* (enclave) Lenilitan Day Care Centre bears last night's rain. The damp earth and huge potholes would make a back-breaking ride for some Tedurays who use motorcycles to go in and out of the *sitio*. But the seemingly oppressive 20-minute ride is forgotten once one sees the lushness of the trees surrounding the area. The trees are mostly rubber trees, the source of income for most families in the *sitio*.

The Tedurays are the major residents of *Sitio* Lenilitan. With a population of 110,559, they make up the biggest group of indigenous peoples in mainland ARMM, based on the 2013 indigenous population survey in the region.

Because of the relative distance of the *sitio* to the *barangay's* day care centre, a makeshift learning centre was built with support from the community, municipality and *barangay*. Parents contributed by buying materials and helping construct the learning centre.

Learning and realizing child development principles

Rischele Modbeg, a Teduray and the centre's day care worker, was sent by Upi's municipal

Top: Sitio Lenilitan Day Care Centre was built by the Tedurays to ensure that 3- to 4-year-old children have access to early learning
Bottom: Teduray children enjoy playing with toys.
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social welfare and development officer to a UNICEF-supported training on child development principles and the proper use of the ECCD checklist. The training was intended to ensure quality teaching by day care workers.

Rischele shared that children should not be forced in their learning, but instead should be engaged through activities that encourage them to learn new things. She added that the 17 children attending the day care centre have different paces and ways of learning things. "For instance, I don't force one of my pupils to join activities because she really feels too shy to mingle with her classmates. I let her play on her own until she is ready to join her classmates." From the training, Rischele also learned the importance of storytelling and of using toys to introduce concepts to children.

All of the children attending the centre are Tedurays. Mary Ann Real, a mother of two kids, enrolled her children in day care so they would know how to play and socialize with other kids, and learn basic ABCs. "We do not have books and toys at home. At the day care, my children will be exposed to toys and books, which they can happily use for free," Real said.

Since they have no toys at home, her children would play with a piece of firewood picked by her husband from the woods and imagine it as a sword or a hammer. "They like pounding things. They mimic what their father is doing at home… They carry the same creativity and imagination while they are in the day care centre. They put together blocks to create buildings; they draw dresses for dolls," Real explained.

On the other hand, Benefil de Guzman, a mother of four children, enrolled her 4-year-old Shaina so she would learn to loosen up and mingle with other people, especially children her age. She said that Shaina rarely plays at home, even with her brothers and sisters. She is always quiet. "I hope even before the school year ends, Shaina would engage more with her classmates," Benefil said.

Active parental engagement

Rischele noted that the parents are actively engaged in the centre. They help in the supplemental feeding programme by preparing and cooking the food. They also voluntarily made the seesaw and swing using bamboo, which grows abundantly in the area. The parents believe the day care centre should have a playground so children can do outdoor activities apart from sessions inside the centre. They also built the fence around the day care centre to ensure that the children will be safe from animals roaming around the area.

"I believe the parents put importance in bringing their children to day care. I overheard them exchanging stories of how their children are active at home, singing and playing with materials available. They are also more comfortable playing with their neighbours," Rischele said. She sees a bright future ahead for Sitio Lenilitan's children through the important step of participating in day care.

(Janet Rosalie Anne H. Polita, UNICEF Communication for Development Officer)

xxx

Top: Rischele happily breastfeeds her daughter, Margo, when the children are busy with play activities.
Centre and bottom: Parents of the children used bamboo to build the swing and seesaw in the spirit of *pintakasi*, communal unity and cooperation.
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5	4	3	2	1	0

What did we miss or what could we do better next time?

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Result Assessment of Focus Area 2: ECCD and Basic Education

The results of the Results Assessment Module indicator for ECCD and Basic Education are as follows. Only the data for 12 out of 36 focus areas are available, covering Regions IX and XII and ARMM, as the 2014 round of the first Multiple Indicator Survey (MIS) covered 12 areas only. The second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016.

Output 1. ECCD Status of Output Indicators as of end-2015

No.	Context-Specific Indicators	Baseline		Target		As of Date	Status	Primary Source
		Year	Value	Year	Value			
1	Proportion of 3- to 5-year-old children attending early childhood education (by sex, by age)		M: 70.5; F: 73.6		M: 80; F: 81	15 Dec 2015	**46.1** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
2	Proportion of respondents who cited reason (child is too young to go to Grade 1/ preschool) for not attending ECCD		76.6		70	15 Dec 2015	**69.9** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
3	Proportion of 6-year-old children who have completed kindergarten/ preparatory school (by sex)		M: 62.4; F: 62.6		M: 70; F: 70	15 Dec 2015	**65.6 (M: 64.1; F: 67)** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
4	Proportion of 6-year old children currently attending Grade 1 (by sex)		M: 59; F: 57.9		M: 66; F: 66	15 Dec 2015	**60.9 (M: 60.6; F: 61.2)** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
5	Proportion of 5-year-old children currently attending kindergarten/ preparatory school (by sex)		M: 58.2; F: 59.6		M: 70; F: 70	15 Dec 2015	**61.8% (M: 63.0%; F: 60.7%)** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
6	Proportion of respondents who expressed that early childhood education prepares children for school		92.8		95	15 Dec 2015	**96.7** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys

Output 2. (Basic Education) Status of Output Indicators as of end of 2015

No.	Context-Specific Indicators	Baseline		Target		As of Date	Status	Primary Source
		Year	Value	Year	Value			
1	Basic Literacy Rate of 6- to 11-year-old children (by sex)		Male: 92.2; Female: 94.2		Male: 95.0; Female: 95.0	15 Dec 2015	**82.3% (M:79.3%: F:85.4%)** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Sector Review(s)
2	Proportion of respondents who agreed children's education is not a priority		6.9		4.0	15 Dec 2015	**4.7** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
3	Proportion of 6- to 11-year-old children currently attending school, by sex		Male: 96.0; Female: 98.3		Male: 99:0; Female: 99	15 Dec 2015	**92.7 (M:91.5: F:93.9)** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
4	Proportion of 6- to 11-year-old children not attending school because family income is not sufficient to send child to school		43.4		32.1	15 Dec 2015	**44.1** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys
5	Proportion of people aged 12-24 years old who completed elementary education (by sex)		Male: 61.7; Female: 72.7		Male: 68.7; Female: 76.0	15 Dec 2015	**10.9% (M:11.3%: F:10.6%)** in 12 focus areas of Regions IX and XII and ARMM (2014 MIS – first round for 12 areas only); second round of MIS in all 36 focus areas was conducted in 2016	Studies and surveys