

Viet Nam

Education

Sectoral and OR+ (Thematic) Report

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C. Abbreviations and Acronyms

BOET	Bureau of Education and Training
C4D	Communication for Development
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CO	Country Office
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DOET	Department of Education and Training
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECED	Early Childhood Education Development
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EMSBS	Ethnic Minority Semi-boarding Schools
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSO	General Statistics Office
IECD	Integrated Early Childhood Development
ICPS	Inter Censual Population Survey
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-governmental Organizations
HNUE	Ha Noi National University of Education
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
MP	Members of Parliament
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MTBBE	Mother tongue-based bilingual education
NA	National Assembly
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
OOSCI	Out-of-School Children Initiative
OSP	One Strategic Plan
ORR	Other Resources - Regular
ORE	Other Resources - Emergency
RR	Regular Resources

SEA-PLM	South-East Asia Primary Learning Metrics
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plans
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

D. Executive Summary

In 2016, UNICEF Viet Nam achieved major results at the national and sub-national levels on improving the access to and quality of education for disadvantaged children. Inclusive education of children with disabilities was strengthened through the participation and engagement of multiple stakeholders, including UN agencies, development partners, civil society organizations and the National Assembly. Quality evidence was generated for policy development and sector planning, including from the evaluation of the UNICEF-supported Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) Programme and the updated analysis on out-of-school children in Viet Nam based on the 2014 Inter-censal Population Survey. UNICEF strengthened the equity focus and result-based indicators in the annual and next five-year education sector plans. As a result of this strategic support, increased resources were mobilized by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and provincial Departments of Education and Training (DOET) to ensure increased investment to improve learning for the most vulnerable children in eight focused provinces. UNICEF influenced the inclusion of a chapter on equitable and inclusive education in the newly adopted Law on Children and the government's decision to develop the Decree on Safe, Friendly and Non-Violent Schools. UNICEF's high-quality technical assistance through policy dialogue and policy development, quality assurance, technical guidance and monitoring results for children contributed to these results. The Ministry of Education and Training finalized and operated a portal with a computerized information system on disaster management prior to, during and after emergencies, serving as important tools for preparedness and response planning in the education sector.

The 2016 Education Thematic Report starts with the Viet Nam strategic context and programming environment, followed by a detailed analysis of key results achieved both at the national and sub-national levels. A case study features the work on out-of-school children, especially UNICEF's strategies and how they contributed to quality evidence and national ownership and absorption of the analysis for policy development and sector management. The report also provides a financial analysis, linking with some of the key results. The section on Future Work Plan provides a forward looking perspective for education programming in Viet Nam, in the context of the new Country Programme 2017-2021 and against the backdrop of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

Children's education is an increasing priority for parents and Vietnamese society in general. Viet Nam has achieved universal pre-primary for the five years old and primary education as well as universal lower secondary education. Net enrolment rates for primary school stood at 98.96 percent in 2014, according to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2015 Report. The quality of education has been consistently improved. The primary school completion rate has risen from 81.7 per cent in 2006 to 95.9 per cent in 2014 (MICS, 2006 and 2014). During 2007-2016, the percentage of qualified teachers reached 99.6 per cent of all teachers in primary and lower secondary education, and 99.2 per cent in upper secondary education.

However, inequality in education access persists between the majority and the minority ethnic groups, migrant and non-migrant as well as between the rural and the urban populations. Quality of education remains a critical challenge. There is a huge need for educational reform in teaching and learning and for improvement of school facilities to ensure that the education system can keep up with the rapidly changing economy. Specifically, several groups of children are not enjoying their right to basic education: The primary school completion rate¹

¹ This indicator is calculated as the number of children (of any age) attending the last grade of primary school (excluding repeaters) [numerator] over the total number of children of primary school completion age (age appropriate to final grade of primary school) [denominator].

for ethnic minority children was 87.7 per cent, significantly lower than that of Kinh and Hoa children, at 97.6 per cent (MICS, 2014). Secondary school attendance was a reality for only 65.9 per cent of ethnic minority children, as opposed to almost 87.5 per cent of Kinh children. By region, the 2014 MICS also showed lower completion rates at primary education level in rural areas at 94.6% compared to urban areas at 99 percent.

According to Viet Nam's Out-of-school Children Updated Analysis 2016, out-of-school children (OOSC) are estimated to number 700,000, mainly among those 5-years-old and of lower secondary age. In the Central Highlands 5.2 per cent of children aged 6-10 years were out-of-school (6.4 per cent for boys and 3.8 per cent for girls), while lower secondary school net attendance was the lowest in country at 81.6 per cent.

Although the rate of out-of-school children at lower secondary level has decreased, falling from 11.2 per cent in 2009 to 8.1 per cent in 2014, certain groups of ethnic minority children lag behind significantly, for example 28 per cent Mong children and 25 per cent Khmer children at lower secondary age are out of school. There is stark disparity in OOSC rates among the poorest and richest households, and the difference is larger as higher levels of education. At 5-year-old, the OOSC rate among the poorest households is 3 times higher than that of the richest households (11.9 per cent versus 4.1 per cent and), 5.5 times at the primary school age (5.5 per cent versus 1 per cent) and 10 times at lower secondary school age (17 per cent versus 1.7 per cent). Children were out-of-school as a result of education system inefficiencies characterized by high financial burden for parents, but also because of other often cultural practices.

In 2016, UNICEF and the government concluded the 2012-2016 country programme while visioning for the new country programme 2017-2021 with an intensified focus on equity in line with the SDG Agenda. UNICEF strengthened the strategic shifts in the education cooperation with Viet Nam, particularly elevating the agenda of early childhood education and development and lower secondary education for adolescents. These directions were set out in the Mid Term Review jointly conducted between UNICEF and the Government of Viet Nam in 2014.

In the context of government's roll-out of the implementation of the Social Economic Development Plans (SEDPs) and the Education Sector Plans for the period 2016-2020, UNICEF continued to advocate for an equity focus in the government's annual planning cycle, to leverage resources and innovations in education. At the same time, UNICEF has become actively involved with national stakeholders and development partners to influence country actions for the SDG Agenda. The process started with a review of sectoral policy gaps, challenges and opportunities concerning the realization of SDG targets. UNICEF is directly providing technical assistance to the government to develop its action plan for the implementation of the SDG 4 - Education 2030.

Notable has seen the accelerated momentum at all levels to education reform, as part of the implementation of Communist Party's Resolution 29-NQ/TW and Government's Resolution 44/NQ-CP on comprehensive and fundamental renovation of the education system. The government developed a clear roadmap to renovation of curriculum of general education system covering from primary to lower and upper secondary education, with a focus on key competencies including creativity thinking, problem solving and decision-making. In this process, UNICEF has become strongly involved with the MOET and the partners to influence the education reform agenda from the SDG perspective.

Against this context, UNICEF achieved significant results in 2016 in policy and system development for inclusive education for most disadvantaged children in Viet Nam:

At the national level, UNICEF influenced the inclusion of a chapter on equitable and inclusive education in the newly adopted Child Law and the government's decision to develop the Decree on Safe, Friendly and Non-Violent Schools. Inclusive education of children with disabilities was strengthened through the participation and engagement of multiple stakeholders, including UN agencies, development partners, civil society organizations and the National Assembly. This **policy advocacy** resulted in greater awareness on access to inclusive quality education for children with disabilities and motivated policy measures to respond to the educational needs of children with disabilities.

Quality new **evidence** was generated for policy development and sector planning, including from the evaluation of the UNICEF-supported Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education Programme and the updated analysis on out-of-school children in Viet Nam based on the 2014 Inter-Censal Population Survey (ICPS). This knowledge has informed the approval of a number of decisions in 2016 on ethnic minority education, as well as provincial level actions to track out-of-school children. Furthermore, findings from studies on Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) in densely populated areas, industrial zones and ethnic minority areas in Viet Nam informed the development of a MOET-budgeted action plan for children under three years of age, embedded in the national ECED scheme for 2016-2025.

Early learning and development remained in the forefront in Viet Nam's education policy thanks to UNICEF strengthened advocacy in 2016, especially in connection with the formulation of the new country programme 2017-2021, in which the agenda of Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) was elevated. With UNICEF advocacy and technical support to the IECD platform centered in education, UNICEF has fostered linkages between education with other sectors evidenced through the increased engagement of the MOET in the diversified partnership to address gaps in quality and equity in early childhood education especially for disadvantaged children under 5. These serves as a strong foundation for advancing early childhood development in Viet Nam in line with SDG target 4.2 and the government's Early Childhood Education and Development Strategy for 2016-2025 in coordination with other service providers.

In 2016, **Inclusive education for children with disabilities** was strengthened through UNICEF's advocacy for participation and engagement of multiple stakeholders, including UN agencies, development partners, civil society organizations and the National Assembly. This resulted in greater awareness of the issue and enhanced not only policy measures to respond to children with disabilities' educational needs, but also implementation of inclusive education policy through the operation of provincial inclusive education resource centres. With UNICEF technical assistance and advocacy effort, an inter-ministerial circular on Job Code in 2016 was adopted, stipulating codes and standards for occupational titles and benefit allowances for staff working in education for people with disabilities in public institutions.

System strengthening has been achieved through UNICEF's influence of the quality of sustainable education sector plans at national and provincial levels in line with SEDPs and SDG targets through improving capacity of the MOET and provincial DOETs in evidence-informed sector planning and budgeting. Out-of-school children, particularly ones with disabilities and migrant children, are now better reflected in planned targets and interventions, financed through provincial level resources. UNICEF leveraged domestic resources and those from development partners to ensure equity in education.

The institutional capacity of MOET and DOETs continued to be strengthened, with UNICEF support, for coordinated sector response to **emergencies, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change education**. The government finalised and put into use an education portal with computerized emergency reporting tools for situation monitoring and system-wide management prior to, during and after disasters. The MOET built the capacity of 200 education

officials for its nation-wide operation. The ministry leveraged government resources for this online reporting system, building on education in emergencies needs assessment tools supported by UNICEF in 2012-2013. At the same time, curriculum on DRR and climate change was finalized and is available for dissemination through national training, starting with 300 core teachers in the Mekong Delta to strengthen school preparedness and resilience to disaster risks and climate change.

The MOET with support from UNICEF country and regional offices, officially launched Viet Nam's participation in the **South-East Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM)**, a regional initiative for system-wide assessment of learning outcomes of 10-year-old children in the area of language, math and global citizenship. The MOET has formally established the national steering committee for SEA-PLM with a clear and budgeted work-plan as well as become well engaged with regional steering committees to advance preparations for a field trial in 2017. UNICEF was well recognized for supporting Viet Nam to successfully embark on this regional assessment, through which the government seeks to strengthen national procedures and techniques for learning outcomes assessment, which is central to the on-going general education system reform.

Situation monitoring of inclusive education of disadvantaged groups of children has been strengthened with the updated evidence for out-of-school children. The disaggregated data and in-depth analysis has not only contributed to more systematic monitoring of equity in education but also allowed MOET to track the achievement of universal education at provincial level. As a result of capacity development for 189 education statistical staff in 63 provinces, the MOET was able to generate timely and reliable data for the academic year 2015-2016 from the routine Education Management Information System (EMIS), which marked a major step forward in monitoring of equity in education in Viet Nam.

At the sub-national level, UNICEF's continued the strong partnership with eight provincial people's committees in 2016 through provincial child friendly projects. UNICEF supported capacity development of the education system in eight provinces namely An Giang, Dien Bien, Dong Thap, Gia Lai, Ho Chi Minh City, Kon Tum, Lao Cai and Ninh Thuan has resulted in improved skills of core education managers to benefit 1,971,120 pre-school and primary children in these provinces, according to MOET 2016 Report .

With UNICEF's support, in 2016 the most disadvantaged children, including children with disabilities, those from ethnic minority areas, migrant families and likely to drop out, benefited from equity-focused, culturally-sensitive and inclusive education interventions implemented in eight focus provinces to improve the quality and education management and teaching practices. Inclusive education for children with disabilities was strengthened in four provinces, with more than 500 education managers and teachers trained on early identification and interventions for children with disabilities and application of innovative techniques to work with children with learning disabilities and with autism.

Community-based early childhood education and childcare development interventions were initiated in Dien Bien and Lao Cai and Ho Chi Minh City. Childcare for migrant children in industrial zones was improved in Ho Chi Minh City following training of care-givers, a key initiative UNICEF supported together with a survey and an on-the-job training curriculum. The survey findings led to increased awareness of the city's authorities on issues related to childcare of working parents in industrial zones and resulted in adoption of a decision to support half of the allowance for overtime for pre-school teachers in selected districts in processing zones.

Ethnic minority children in Dien Bien and Lao Cai provinces enjoyed an improved learning environment, with trained teachers on culturally and gender-sensitive curriculum, child protection, life-skills education and hygienic sanitation practices as well as parenting

education. UNICEF supported Dien Bien and Lao Cai provinces to document good practices on ethnic minority education which was shared widely with other provinces.

In response to intensity of natural disasters and climate change, UNICEF pro-actively followed up with provincial authorities to ensure timely recording of education impacts and appropriate interventions for education continuity as well as for community and family support. The timely interventions of UNICEF has increased resilience of schools and teachers to be well prepared and recover quickly from the impact. UNICEF also supported four provinces to field-test the safe school model, with school-based interventions well aligned with three key pillars of school safety (1) safe learning facilities, (2) school disaster management and (3) risk reduction and resilience education.

Six provincial in-depth analytical reports on out-of-school children became available with updated analysis, based on the 2014 Inter-Censal Population Survey. The evidence was well utilised in education sector planning to identify measures to improve teaching performance and address drop-outs. Provincial DOETs also reviewed and improved the statistical system to track out-of-school children which is critical to cross-sectoral effort to accelerate access to education for all including migrant children.

UNICEF has influenced political commitment for mother-tongue based bilingual education (MTBBE) in four provinces. For example, in Gia Lai, local authorities finalized and submitted for the first Detailed Action Plan for J'rai MTBBE for provincial-level approval of local resources, which marked a major step forward in Gia Lai for MTBBE with political readiness on the ground to improve ethnic minority education through MTBBE. This plan is being actively utilized as a tool to mobilize local resources for MTBBE in the province through sector planning and budgeting processes. Ethnic minority education was strengthened at provincial level with implementation of MTBBE in An Giang and Lao Cai provinces with local resources.

In 2016, UNICEF intensified **strategic partnerships** at sector level with a wide range of government stakeholders at the national and sub-national level, UN and other development agencies, and the academia, resulting in improved legal framework for children, especially through the newly adopted Law on Children and the Job Code enhancing human resource provisions for inclusive education for children with disabilities, national ownership of updated evidence and analysis of out-of-school children and elevated agenda around Integrated Early Childhood Development. UNICEF also leveraged technical resources among UN and other development agencies to support the MOET to draft the Decree on Safe, Friendly and Non-violent Education Settings for submission to the MOET Minister and for enforcement of the Law on Children. At the same time, UNICEF is actively engaged in dialogues with other UN agencies such as ILO, UN Women, UNFPA and UNESCO to strengthen programing directions for 2017-2021 related to addressing vocational training, gender-based violence, life skills and resilience adolescents with adolescent girls. UNICEF has been a leading voice within the UN on policy issues with the MOET and the education sector.

In addition to the Thematic Funds as backbone to finance the education programme, UNICEF diversified its approach to resource mobilization through National Committees and some bilateral donors such as Luxembourg, and lately, the Private Sector through the Korean National Committee for UNICEF. One of the significant features and advantages of this flexibility is that the funds can be allocated to project technical support, including staff cost and monitoring. This is invaluable, especially for a middle-income country like Viet Nam where UNICEF is expected to focus less on service delivery and intensify policy advice and capacity development through high quality technical assistance which UNICEF staff provide at all levels though this is not always in line with donors' expectations. UNICEF technical assistance was highly recognised by the Government as the comparative advantage in the context of Viet Nam as a lower Middle Income Country. UNICEF-supported programme initiatives have been institutionalized in the entire education system, as such results are sustained through leveraging government resources.

Looking forward, the UN has intensified since 2016 the development of the One Strategic Plan 2017-2021 in cooperation with the government of Viet Nam, in the context of Viet Nam as a lower middle-income country characterized by a considerably high economic growth. With the vision of SDG Agenda 2030, UNICEF has strategized to strengthen evidence-based policy-making, demonstrate the effectiveness of holistic cross-sectoral approaches at local levels to influence investments for children and increase public awareness and forge new partnerships to reduce child vulnerabilities. The Government of Viet Nam and UNICEF have identified three programme components: 1) Accountability and system-building for child rights and protection; 2) Integrated early childhood development; and 3) Programme partnership, public advocacy and communication for child rights.

Under this new results structure of the new Country Programme 2017-2021, education results are planned under Outcome 1 (of Programme Component 1), Output 1.3 “By 2021, education policy-makers and decision-makers at central level have strengthened capacities to develop and manage inclusive, equitable and quality policies, programmes and budgets for the pre-primary to secondary school system”; and under Outcome 3 (of Programme Component 2), with Output 3.2 “Strengthened capacity of education service providers in focus provinces to deliver quality early learning and school readiness programmes for children under 8 years.”

Key priorities for 2017-2018 include *Integrated Early Childhood Development, System Strengthening and Inclusive Learning, Disaster Risk Reduction/Climate change adaptation and Education in Emergency.* UNICEF seeks to demonstrate good practice of inclusive and quality IECD interventions along a continuum of coordinated services at subnational level and the life cycle of the young child. Through a right mix of strategies such as model building and policy advocacy, it aims at strengthened capacities of education service providers in three focus provinces to deliver quality early learning and school readiness programmes for children under 8 years and to further support policy dialogue and nationwide scale up. UNICEF will support dissemination of equity evidence, particularly updated analysis of out-of-school children and drive advocacy to influence policy and legal frameworks for the realization of children’s rights to education including improved public finance management in education and strengthening accountability to deliver equitable and inclusive education in the context of SEDPs and education sector plans. UNICEF will support the development of competency-based curriculum, especially at lower secondary level and strengthen system-wide learning assessments, integrating language and culture in the process of curriculum and textbook development. UNICEF will facilitate Viet Nam’s participation in the field trial for South-east Asia Primary Learning Metrics and to prepare Viet Nam for the official assessment from 2018.

Inclusive learning will be facilitated through enhanced partnerships within the E.U/ERASMUS-funded project on Inclusive Education for children with disabilities positioning UNICEF in an advisory role. UNICEF will support assessment and innovative models for technical and vocational education and training for the lower secondary school age out-of-school adolescents. UNICEF will intensify effort to guide the development, adoption and rolling out of the Law on Children’s education related Decree on non-violence and child friendly learning environment including the development of the related action plan. UNICEF will support focused provinces to implement, document and advocate for the MTBBE replication and monitor the implementation of the Prime Minister’s Decision on related policies for ethnic minority education and the national targeted program supporting ethnic minority children and adolescents. Building on the strong foundation to date, UNICEF will consolidate education cluster coordination for emergency situation monitoring and response, including systematic utilization of the MOET portal for Emergency and Disaster Management for situation monitoring and disaster planning, and will enhance institutional capacity for nation-wide implementation of the global model for comprehensive school safety, which is being contextualized in Viet Nam, including learning on DRR and resilience.

E. Strategic Context of 2016

Viet Nam has undergone nearly three decades of rapid economic growth. Since “Doi Moi” (economic reform) in 1986, GDP has expanded fivefold and per capita incomes increasing from around US\$100 to around US\$2,100². In response, the poverty rate (at national poverty line) declined markedly, from 58.1 per cent in 1993 to just 13.5 per cent in 2014³. Since 2010 Viet Nam joined the rank of lower middle income countries.

The country has reached three MDGs; MDG1 to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; MDG2 to achieve universal primary education; and MDG3 to promote gender equality and empower women. The country has made significant progress to remaining MDGs: MDG4 and MDG5 relative to child and maternal mortality, close to completion; and the three other MDGs relative to HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability and global partnerships, positive progress made. While Viet Nam has achieved significant progress in building a Global Partnership for Development, stronger efforts are also required to fully realize specific targets such as ensuring debt sustainability, enhancing access to affordable essential drugs and development of a non-discriminatory trading and financial system.⁴

Despite significant MDG achievements, Viet Nam is at critical juncture. Overall significant disparities persist across various children’s outcomes according to ethnicity, geography, and wealth, most notably in the reduction of child mortality and maternal mortality between the Kinh majority and ethnic minorities. Serious challenges include an unfinished MDG agenda, widening social inequality⁵, and persistent disparities by ethnicity, gender and locality. A majority of the population, especially low and lower-middle income groups, are without social protection. Two-thirds of the workforce remains in the informal sector, only a fifth of workers have social insurance⁶, and state-funded social assistance is limited to the poorest.

The MDGs are being supplanted by the ambitious and comprehensive Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which emphasize ending extreme poverty, reducing inequality and ensuring environmental sustainability by 2030.

Though official reports affirms the economy continued to strengthen with an estimated GDP growth rate of 6.7 per cent⁷, macro-economic conditions have been faced with multiple challenges in 2016. Accordingly to statistics released by the government, budget deficit in 2016 in Viet Nam remains nearly 6 per cent of GDP and public debt is equal to 62.2 per cent of GDP, increased from 53.3 per cent in 2010, and nearly approaching the limit of 65 per cent set by the National Assembly. The country is facing the continued burden of increasing expenditures with declining revenues, raising significant public concerns that the government might consequently continue to rely on borrowing to keep up. This points to a high risk that the deficit level might increase in the context of gaps and challenges in the country’s public finance management systems which might have implications for social spending.

²GSO (2015) Statistical Yearbook of Viet Nam 2015

³ At the national poverty line calculated by the General Statistics Office and the World Bank. World Bank Group data <http://data.worldbank.org/country/vietnam>

⁴ Viet Nam MDG Report 2015

⁵ *Ibid.* The Gini coefficient rose modestly from 0.33 in 1993 to 0.356 in 2015.

⁶ UNDP and VASS (2015), Viet Nam Human Development Report on Inclusive Growth

⁷ The World Bank (2016), [Viet Nam Overview](#).

Viet Nam is a disaster prone country and exposed to increased impact of climate change⁸. Viet Nam is the 7th country worldwide that has been most affected by extreme weather events between 1993 and 2014, with the loss estimated to 0.7 per cent of GDP per annum⁹. Each year, typhoons and flooding cause fatalities and extensive damage to infrastructure, such as schools and health centres, and impact on the livelihoods of already disadvantaged communities. In addition, climate change is increasingly a risk factor and part of emerging vulnerabilities for children in Viet Nam. In 2016, extreme weather patterns and intensity of disasters such as drought and salt intrusion in the Mekong Delta and typhoons and floods in the Central provinces have disrupted livelihoods particularly in the poorest areas, and had significant social and economic impact on communities, women and children¹⁰.

With a middle-income status and greater overall wealth, it is critical for Viet Nam to begin investing more in the social safety net and in reaching the poorest and most disadvantaged children. This will require more effective and child-sensitive policies and public finance management system, a legal framework based on child rights standards, and accurate data to support the inclusion of Viet Nam's children in this next phase of development.

Importantly, Viet Nam enacted the Law on Children in 2016 that spells out the government's responsibility to allocate resources for at-risk children and introduces a ground-breaking approach for the country that encompasses the prevention of violence against children and responses to violence when it occurs, including in schools. This is a clear step forward, although law-makers fell short of approving the clause that would have brought the age for definition of a child from 16 to 18 years old to comply with the international Convention of the Rights of the Child, of which Viet Nam was the second country globally to ratify.

In the area of education, Viet Nam has made impressive achievements during the last decade. Constant progress in education access is shown as the net enrolment rate at primary education level had consistently increased over the 2006-2015 period. The net enrolment rate in primary education reached 98.96 per cent, with all 63 provinces and central cities having met the national standard for universal primary education, according to Viet Nam's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 2015 Report. The net enrolment rate in lower secondary education was 92.27 per cent in 2015-2016. The quality of education has been consistently improved with the numbers of schools and teachers per class having increased at every education level. The primary school completion rate has risen from 81.7 per cent in 2006 to 95.9 per cent in 2014 (MICS, 2006 and 2014). During 2007-2016, the percentage of qualified teachers reached 99.6 per cent of all teachers in primary and lower secondary education, and 99.2 per cent in upper secondary education.

In 2016, the government continued to advance the education reform agenda in line with the Communist Party Resolution No.29/NQ-TW on Fundamental and Comprehensive Renovation of Education, particularly with a clear road map towards the renovation of a general education curriculum. Commitment to transform general education has been articulated in Socio-Economic Development Plans (SEDP), education sector plans and sector policies at national and sub-national levels, with strong government leadership to galvanize its own resources and Official Development Assistance (ODA) investments to improve education management, revising curriculum, and teacher training.

Despite these achievements and the Vietnamese Government's declared strong commitment and current investments in education, there remains an unfinished agenda to ensure inclusive

⁸ Institute for Meteorological Science and Climate Change and UNDP: Viet Nam's Special Report on Management of Disaster Risk and Extreme Weather Patterns for Adaptation to Climate Change (2015)

⁹ Germanwatch Global Climate Risk Index 2016. <https://germanwatch.org/fr/download/13503.pdf>

¹⁰ Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development and Ministry of Education and Training (2016).

education for all Vietnamese children. While improvements have been evident in provision of universal primary education, there are concerns about the participation at pre-primary and post-secondary levels. Disparities persist and certain groups of children do not enjoy their rights to basic education especially pre-primary age young children and those from disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minority children, children with disabilities, those affected by natural disasters and climate change, and migrant ones.

The government is now shifting focus to early childhood development, where significant gaps remain. The low level of awareness about essential childcare, especially in hard-to-reach communities, is a major barrier to realizing children's rights to health, nutrition, education and child protection. While there are vertical interventions in health, nutrition, water and sanitation, child protection and education, little has been done to integrate services for early childhood development (ECD), especially for children from 0-8 years old and particularly at household level. There is a lack of a coordination mechanism for integrated ECD services at national and sub-national levels. Very low public investment is made in the lower level of pre-primary education, especially for those under-5 years. The demand has not increased due to cultural practices, especially among the poor, favouring education within larger families for this age. Early childhood education (ECE), is largely financed by out-of-pocket expenses which is a major cost burden for poor and disadvantaged families. Approximately 77 per cent of kindergarten-age children (aged 0-3 years, 2.7 million) and 13 per cent of pre-primary school age children (aged 3-6 years, 570,000) do not attend any formal pre-learning programmes¹¹. While the government promotes universal access to pre-primary education for children aged five, pre-learning and pre-primary schools for young children aged 3-5 years is not free of charge. School fees for pre-school remain a major barrier for many poor families. Besides, children's attendance in pre-school and ECE centres is lower in rural areas than in urban ones and in southern regions than northern ones. Conversely, shortages of trained teachers and school facilities for early learning are major issues. In provinces and cities with high concentrations of migrant workers, the lack of care facilities for young children aged 6 months to 3 years and 3-5 years has caused problems with holistic early childhood care and development.

The primary school completion rate¹² among ethnic minority children was 87.7 per cent, significantly lower than that of Kinh and Hoa children, at 97.6 per cent (MICS, 2014). Secondary school attendance was a reality for only 65.9 per cent of ethnic minority children, as opposed to almost 87.5 per cent of Kinh children. By region, the 2014 MICS also showed lower completion rates at primary education level in the rural areas at 94.6 percent compared to urban areas at 99 percent. Overall, gender parity has been achieved in primary education, however, gender inequality remains in access to advanced education and decent work.

Clear disparities remain in access to education between rural and urban areas, ethnic majority (Kinh) and minorities and between geographical regions of Viet Nam. Certain regions are consistently worse off than others across all education indicators. For example, in the Central Highlands 5.2 per cent of children aged 6-10 years were out-of-school (6.4 per cent for boys and 3.8 per cent for girls), while lower secondary school net attendance was the lowest in country at 81.6 per cent. Out-of-school children are estimated to number 700,000, mainly among those 5-years-old and of lower secondary age¹³.

¹¹ MOET 2015 Report

¹² This indicator is calculated as the number of children (of any age) attending the last grade of primary school (excluding repeaters) [numerator] over the total number of children of primary school completion age (age appropriate to final grade of primary school) [denominator].

¹³ MOET and UNICEF, Viet Nam Out-of-school children updated analysis 2016. Final draft

Although the rate of out-of-school children at lower secondary level has decreased, falling from 11.2 per cent in 2009 to 8.1 per cent in 2014, certain groups of ethnic minority children lag behind significantly, for example 28 per cent Mong children and 25 per cent Khmer children at lower secondary age are out of school. There is stark disparity in OOSC rates among the poorest and richest households, and the difference is larger as higher levels of education. At 5-year-old, the OOSC rate among the poorest households is 3 times higher than that of the richest households (11.9 per cent versus 4.1 per cent and), 5.5 times at the primary school age (5.5 per cent versus 1 per cent) and 10 times at lower secondary school age (17 per cent versus 1.7 per cent). Children were out-of-school as a result of education system inefficiencies characterized by high financial burden for parents, but also because of other often cultural practices.

Children with disabilities also face challenges in education. The Viet Nam Out-of-School Children Updated Analysis in 2013 showed that almost 90 per cent of children with severe disabilities were out-of-school. Children with disabilities who receive an education are usually segregated by the education system and placed in separate schools or classrooms. Though policies for inclusive education are in place, the capacity of the current education system and management must be strengthened to provide inclusive learning opportunities that are flexible and relevant to children with disabilities.

Many factors explain the low quality learning in ethnic minority areas. To a large extent, inequities in education affecting ethnic minority children have root causes in the lack of school readiness. Low-quality schooling in ethnic minority areas contributes significantly to low learning outcomes and high dropout rates. Although ethnic minority semi-boarding schools (EMSBS) have been recognized to improve access to quality education for ethnic minority children, most such schools poor quality boarding facilities, such as water, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

Many ethnic minority children have no or very limited access to education in their mother tongues, thus increasing their risk of failing to succeed and/or completing their education. Language barriers are among critical factors that affect learning outcomes for ethnic minorities groups. Ethnic minorities who cannot speak fluent Vietnamese encounter great difficulties in comprehending learning materials and teachers' explanations and consequently cannot participate confidently in active learning. They lag behind and eventually drop out when they cannot catch up with classmates. Another important contributing factor is nationwide application of one standard set of curriculum and textbooks, despite the country's cultural differences. The content of the curriculum is often irrelevant and inappropriate for many ethnic minority children.

Viet Nam has achieved gender parity in universal primary education, yet gender disparities exist in the transition to lower secondary school with fewer boys accessing lower secondary education¹⁴. Enrolment rates for girls in remote rural areas and among ethnic minority communities are much lower than for boys. A substantial gap existed in literacy rates between ethnic minority boys and girls aged 10 years and older during 2009-2014. In 2014, the literacy rate for ethnic minority girls aged 10 years and older was 10.8 per cent lower than for boys. In highly disadvantaged areas such as the Northern Midland and Mountainous region, boys demonstrated higher levels of literacy than girls and although this gap has narrowed, it remained relatively high at 7.8 per cent in 2012.

Education governance faces key challenges associated with decentralized education management, particularly fragmentation of education financing where different departments manage different aspects of education investments without effective coordination. Further, the assignment of different sectors in the governance of education, as per decentralization, has constrained to a high degree the autonomy of education managers at all levels in crucial sector matters, for example of staffing and budget. The current governance of education is not

¹⁴ Ibid.

adequate to provide learning opportunities that are flexible and relevant to the most disadvantaged children.

The curriculum has not been geared to developing the “skills” or “quality workforce” and to prepare the young people for a modern market economy in a lower middle-income country context (Viet Nam Development Report 2014, World Bank). Current teaching methodologies discourage independent. They are also known to lack inclusion of children and young people in relevant issues, especially sexual education, climate change and limitations in quality and quantity of learning materials for non-formal education. A major development since 2014 was the launch of the Communist Party’s Resolution No.29/NQ-TW and the Government’s Resolution No. 44/NQ-CP on comprehensive and fundamental renovation of the education system. It continued to receive strong political commitment in 2015 and 2016, and the government has developed a roadmap to renovation of curriculum of general education system covering from primary to lower and upper secondary education, with a focus on key competencies including creativity thinking, problem solving and decision-making.

In 2016, UNICEF continued to realise the strategic shifts in the education in cooperation with Viet Nam, particularly elevating the agenda of early childhood education and development and lower secondary education for adolescents. These directions were set out in the Mid Term Review jointly conducted between UNICEF and the Government of Viet Nam in 2014.

In 2016, the government rolled out the implementation of the Social Economic Development Plan and the Education Sector Plans for the period 2016-2020. UNICEF continued to advocate for an equity focus in the government’s five year planning cycle, both at national and sub national levels, to leverage resources and innovations in education. In particular, the government initiated the national process led by the Ministry of Planning and Investment with engagement by all line ministries in developing a roadmap for implementation of the SDG Agenda 2030, building on national results on equity to date. The process started with a review of sectoral policy gaps, challenges and opportunities concerning the realisation of SDG targets based on which the government is developing action plans for SDG implementation. UNICEF has become actively involved with national stakeholders and development partners to influence the education reform agenda from the SDG perspective. However, it must be noted that the momentum has mainly been around establishment of national platforms and institutional mechanisms for monitoring progress towards SDG implementation.

Looking forward, the UN has intensified since 2016 the development of the One Strategic Plan 2017-2021 in cooperation with the Government of Viet Nam, in the context of Viet Nam as a lower middle-income country characterized by a considerably high economic growth. Against this backdrop and with the vision of SDG Agenda 2030, UNICEF has strategized to strengthen evidence-based policy-making, demonstrate the effectiveness of holistic cross-sectoral approaches at local levels to influence investments for children and increase public awareness and forge new partnerships to reduce child vulnerabilities. The Government of Viet Nam and UNICEF have identified three programme components: 1) Accountability and system-building for child rights and protection; 2) Integrated early childhood development; and 3) Programme partnership, public advocacy and communication for child rights.

Under this new results structure of the new Country Programme 2017-2021, education results are planned under Outcome 1 (of Programme Component 1), Output 1.3 “By 2021, education policy-makers and decision-makers at central level have strengthened capacities to develop and manage inclusive, equitable and quality policies, programmes and budgets for the pre-primary to secondary school system”; and under Outcome 3 (of Programme Component 2), with Output 3.2 “Strengthened capacity of education service providers in focus provinces to deliver quality early learning and school readiness programmes for children under 8 years.”

The programme is **in line with Government objectives**, particularly the Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2016-2020 and Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016-2020, which prioritize education and training. The programme will contribute to advance the country's education reform agenda in line with the Communist Party Resolution No.29/NQ-TW on Fundamental and Comprehensive Renovation of Education. Equity and inclusion are major elements of the education sector reform expected to shift from a passive, one-way teaching and learning system to a modern one that promotes creativity, self-motivation, innovative thinking and practical application of knowledge. It will move from knowledge-based teaching to competency-based instruction. This is a strategic move in line with the global education 2030 agenda and is aligned with several targets of SDG 4.

D. Results in the Outcome Area

As part of the country programme of cooperation 2012-2016, UNICEF jointly designed the 2015-2016 Education Work Plan with the Government of Viet Nam to produce these results:

- By 2016, disadvantaged children benefit from an education system that provides quality and relevant inclusive education
- By 2016, education managers undertake child-focused national education planning, monitoring and evaluation, and to provide response to emergencies and climate change
- By 2016, disadvantaged children in 8 UNICEF focus provinces benefit from relevant quality preschool and basic education supported by the provincial Education Sector Plans

The Education Programme directly contributes to UNICEF Outcome Area 5 under UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Improved learning outcomes and equitable and inclusive education with four programme areas including: (i) 05-02 Equity focus on Girls' and inclusive education; (ii) 05-03 Learning and child friendly schools; (iii) 05-04 Education in emergencies and (iv) 05-05 Education in General.

UNICEF support in 2016 was instrumental for the achievement of results at the national and the sub-national levels on improving the access to and quality of education for disadvantaged children, through its cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the Departments of Education and Training (DOET) in the eight focus provinces. The overall education programme performance in 2016 is on track, achieving annual planned targets and results. Programme outcomes and outputs which were monitored in a results framework by measureable indicators and targets were significant in progressing towards an equitable, quality and inclusive education system and relevant services at the national and sub-national levels in Viet Nam. The results contributed to advancing the inclusive education agenda through policy advocacy, capacity development, communication for development and knowledge generation.

At the national level, UNICEF **policy advocacy** through high-level consultation with MOET, MOLISA and National Assembly (NA) leaders has enhanced national adherence to international standards and resulted in Government's increased accountability for equity in education in Viet Nam, as evidenced in the milestone inclusion of chapters on equitable and inclusive education in the Law on Children adopted in 2016. To further the enforcement of the Law, UNICEF has actively supported the government in the drafting of the Decree on Safe, healthy, friendly, protective (non-violent) education environment which is in progress. The Decree is a major sub-law document to legalise inclusive education for vulnerable children, including ethnic minority ones and those with disabilities. In particular, the Decree would stipulate greater responsibility of duty-bearers for a rights-based, quality, and inclusive

education allowing participation for all children. Through cross-sectoral approaches and inter-UN agency partnerships, UNICEF successfully influenced the issuance of a decision, which is the written commitment, on development of a Law on Social Work, for which the inter-agency drafting team developed proposal papers that include social work in schools.

With UNICEF's support, the Ethnic Minority Education Department of the MOET worked closely with the Government Office, Committee for Ethnic Minorities and others to develop numerous decisions, such as one issued by MOET's Minister for quality ethnic minority education. Decision No. 5596, dated 24 November 2016, was approved by the MOET Minister on an action plan outlining education sector efforts to achieve the SDGs, especially through meeting ethnic minority education targets. UNICEF provided technical inputs for the development of ethnic minority education policies to ensure no child is left behind, such as to Decision No.52, dated 15 June 2016, on strengthening quality human resources for ethnic minority areas during 2016-2029 and towards 2030 with specific education sector targets. Ethnic Minority Semi boarding school (EMSBS) has been proved to government as a way to achieve quality ethnic education. With UNICEF's support, the MOET drafted an EMSBS development plan which has been submitted to the Prime Minister for approval. In addition, 159,212 EMSBS students (19,100 more students than 2015) enjoyed the improved child friendly learning environment as a result of applying the newly developed manual on managing EMSB school. MOET worked closely with the selected provinces like Lao Cai, Dien Bien which has the highest number of EMSBS in Viet Nam, to develop and roll out for the national wide application training manual on EMSBS. The manual addresses the critical issues of the management of EMSB schools such as child protection, gender sensitive issues, cultural diversities promotion.

New knowledge was generated in 2016 with UNICEF technical and financial support, resulting in the availability of updated evidence on out of school children in Viet Nam, based on data from the 2014 Inter Censual Population Survey. This analysis provided, for the first time ever, disaggregated evidence on disparities by quintiles and regions and allowed situation monitoring which observed the overall decrease of the number of out-of-school children in Viet Nam from 1.127.343 as reported in the 2009 Census to 715,412 children in the 2014 ICPS. It has also triggered policy review to explain the trends as well as to examine the outstanding barriers and bottlenecks such as inadequate investment in school readiness, entrenched cultural norms and practices which prevent girls' schooling and systems' inefficiencies in budgeting and out of pocket financing. In particular, the evidence showed critical gaps at lower secondary level, which informed in-depth analysis of lower secondary education wherein UNICEF supported a qualitative study focusing on five provinces with high concentrations of ethnic minorities. This analysis was welcomed with deep insights related to adolescent education including gender issues, the lack of culturally sensitive teaching and learning approaches and school management practices that do not efficiently address disparities and limit the transition from lower to upper secondary education, as well as the need to strengthen stronger linkages with technical vocational training and enhance the relevance of the curriculum reform.

Early learning and development remained in the forefront in Viet Nam's education policy thanks to UNICEF strengthened advocacy in 2016, especially in connection with the formulation of the new country programme 2017-2021, in which the agenda of Integrated Early Childhood Development was elevated.

UNICEF supported the broad dissemination of findings and recommendations from robust studies on Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) in densely populated areas, industrial zones and ethnic minority areas in Viet Nam for children under three years of age. Such evidence has informed the development of a MOET-budgeted action plan embedded in the national ECED scheme for 2016-2025. The action plan focuses on addressing issues of quality, safety and child development in independent, family-based childcare groups and

centres for young children, most of whom come from migrant families in big urban cities. This achievement marks an important milestone whereby education needs of young children from migrant families are addressed in formal government policies.

In addition, UNICEF facilitated a policy oversight by the Members of Parliaments (MP) of a Prime Minister's decision on universalization of five-year pre-primary education. As a result, the understanding and capacity of newly elected MPs in the National Assembly's Ethnic Council has increased with regard to key early childhood education issues and the MPs have compiled oversight findings and recommendations on what to improve and how to improve the implementation of this policy.

With UNICEF advocacy and technical support to the IECD platform centered in education, UNICEF has fostered linkages between education with other sectors evidenced through the increased engagement of the Ministry of Education in the diversified partnership to address gaps in quality and equity in early childhood education especially for disadvantaged children under 5. This serves as a strong foundation for advancing early childhood development in Viet Nam in line with SDG target 4.2 and the government's Early Childhood Education and Development Strategy for 2016-2025 in coordination with parents and other service providers.

In 2016, **Inclusive education for children with disabilities** was strengthened through UNICEF's advocacy for participation and engagement of multiple stakeholders, including UN agencies, development partners, civil society organizations and the National Assembly. This resulted in greater awareness of the issue and enhanced not only policy measures to respond to children with disabilities' educational needs, but also implementation of inclusive education policy through the operation of provincial inclusive education resource centres. With UNICEF technical assistance and advocacy effort, an inter-ministerial circular on Job Code in 2016 was adopted, stipulating codes and standards for occupational titles and benefit allowances for staff working in education for people with disabilities in public institutions. UNICEF was well recognized for this strategic contribution as this regulation helps systematically bridging the gap in human resources which is crucial in the implementation of policies of inclusive education for children with disabilities. Following this circular, UNICEF supported the development of a pre-service curriculum at university-level for training support workers, with a new training code approved by MOET for Ha Noi National University of Education (HNUE) to launch. At the same time, MOET developed an in-service teacher training course, aiming at creating sustainable human resources in inclusive education for children with disabilities. UNICEF enabled the expansion of the scope of knowledge, research and evidence through organization of international workshops on related issues such as human resource development for inclusive education for children with disabilities and occupational therapy in special and inclusive education. Altogether, UNICEF's support was strategically leveraged by HNUE and the National College of Education to expand their international partnerships with other development partners to enhance inclusive education for children with disabilities. The European Erasmus funds are supporting MOET and these institutions for a three-year programme on teacher training and expansion of inclusive education resource centres nationwide.

During 2016, UNICEF support contributed to critical results across key areas of **education system strengthening**. Notable is UNICEF's influence of the quality of sustainable education sector plans in line with SEDPs at national and provincial levels and SDG targets through improving capacity of MOET and provincial DOETs in evidence-informed sector planning and budgeting. As a result, education managers have systematically adopted equity-focused and quality education sector plans and budgets, allowing greater attention to ensure inclusive education for disadvantaged children. Out-of-school children, particularly ones with disabilities and migrant children, are now better reflected in planned targets and interventions, financed through provincial resources. At the same time, these officials have effectively engaged other ministries, such as the ministries of Finance, of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs as well as of Planning and Investment (MPI), in influencing policies and programmes to advance

education for disadvantaged children. MOET was successful in mobilizing substantive support from other high-level decision-making institutions, such as the MPI, provincial Departments of Finance and of Planning and Investment, through policy dialogue and consensus on equity in education issues. As such, UNICEF leveraged domestic resources and those from development partners to ensure equity in education.

An ODA database for the education sector is now available. This marked an important stepping-stone towards an assessment of system-wide monitoring of external financial resources from national level to individual schools. UNICEF's contribution to this tool was key in terms of enhancing education managers' capacity to manage ODA in a more transparent, effective way through utilization of this database.

The institutional capacity of MOET and DOETs continued to be strengthened, with UNICEF support, for coordinated sector response to **emergencies, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change education**. The government finalised and put into use an education portal with computerized emergency reporting tools for situation monitoring and system-wide management prior to, during and after disasters. The MOET built the capacity of 200 education officials for its nation-wide operation. The ministry leveraged government resources for this online reporting system, building on education in emergencies needs assessment tools supported by UNICEF in 2012-2013. At the same time, curriculum on DRR and climate change was finalized and is available for dissemination through national training, starting with 300 core teachers in the Mekong Delta to strengthen school preparedness and resilience to disaster risks and climate change.

MOET with support from UNICEF country and regional offices, officially launched Viet Nam's participation in the **South-East Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM)**, a regional initiative for system-wide assessment of learning outcomes of 10-year-old children in the area of language, math and global citizenship. MOET has formally established national steering committee for SEA-PLM with a clear and budgeted work-plan as well as become well engaged with regional steering committees to advance preparations for a field trial in 2017. These institutional structures and mechanisms demonstrated a strong commitment towards conducting official assessment which would start in 2018. UNICEF was well recognized for supporting Viet Nam to successfully embark on this regional assessment, through which the government seeks to strengthen national procedures and techniques for learning outcomes assessment. It is expected that the assessment outcome would identify priority areas for policy and programming to boost the quality of education in Viet Nam, especially addressing disparities in learning achievements, which is central to the on-going general education system reform.

Situation monitoring of inclusive education of disadvantaged groups of children has been strengthened with 2016 updated evidence for out of school children. The disaggregated data and in-depth analysis has not only contributed to more systematic monitoring of equity in education but also allowed MOET to track the achievement of universal education at provincial level. In an effort to improve the education system's administrative database and reporting, with UNICEF support, 189 statistical officers from DOET, BOET and schools (Pre-school, primary school, lower secondary) from 63 provinces were trained on how to operate the on-line EMIS system. These officers are able to enter disaggregated data on different indicators on school profile and have enhanced capacity to operate and manage EMIS from data entry, reporting and management. As a result, MOET was able to generate timely and reliable data for the academic year 2015-2016 from the routine EMIS system, which marked a major step forward in monitoring of equity in education in Viet Nam.

At the sub-national level, UNICEF's continued the strong partnership with eight provincial people's committees in 2016 through provincial child friendly projects. UNICEF supported capacity strengthening of the education system in eight provinces namely An Giang, Dien

Bien, Dong Thap, Gia Lai, Ho Chi Minh City, Kon Tum, Lao Cai and Ninh Thuan was pursued through improvements to skills of core education managers to benefit 1,971,120 pre-school and primary children in these provinces (accounting for 16 per cent of pre-school and primary children), according to MOET.

With UNICEF's support, in 2016 the most disadvantaged children, including children with disabilities, those from ethnic minority areas, migrant families and likely to drop out, benefited from equity-focused, culturally-sensitive and inclusive education interventions implemented in eight focus provinces to improve the quality and education management and teaching practices. UNICEF provided technical guidance to local authorities in equity-focused education planning and budgeting in order to secure local resources the most disadvantaged children. Field-testing of the safe school model was conducted in four provinces. The training reached 240 education managers and core teachers who further led this initiative in 8 provinces, with school-based interventions well aligned with three key pillars of school safety (1) safe learning facilities, (2) school disaster management and (3) risk reduction and resilience education. The support from UNICEF has formed a strong foundation for preparedness and resilience building, while feeding into the MOET-led process to develop a national guidance package for comprehensive school safety.

The intensity of natural disasters in 2016, especially droughts and floods in different parts of the country, has had aggravated impacts on the livelihoods of women and children including in terms of education, with school drop-outs and temporary disruptions to schooling. UNICEF pro-actively followed up with provincial authorities to ensure timely recording of education impacts and appropriate interventions for education continuity as well as for community and family support. The timely intervention of UNICEF has increased resilience of schools and teachers to be well prepared and recover quickly from the impact.

UNICEF supports the development of six provincial in-depth analytical reports on out-of-school children, and the updated analysis has been well utilised in education sector planning to identify measures to improve teaching performance and address drop out. Provincial DOETs also reviewed and improved the statistical system to track out-of-school children which is critical to cross-sectoral effort to accelerate access to education for all including migrant children.

Inclusive education for children with disabilities was strengthened in four provinces, with more than 500 education managers and teachers trained on early identification and interventions for children with disabilities and application of innovative techniques to work with children with learning disabilities and with autism. An important platform for education managers from 10 provincial DOETs was convened in Ninh Thuan province to share good practices and lessons learned on the establishment and operation of provincial inclusive education resource centres. Community-based early childhood education and childcare development interventions were initiated in Dien Bien and Lao Cai provinces and Ho Chi Minh City. Childcare for migrant children in industrial zones was improved in Ho Chi Minh City following training of care-givers, a key initiative UNICEF supported together with a survey and an on-the-job training curriculum. Findings from this survey led to increased awareness of the city's authorities on issues related to childcare of working parents in industrial zones and resulted in adoption of a decision to support half of the allowance for overtime for pre-school teachers in selected districts in processing zones.

Ethnic minority children in Dien Bien and Lao Cai provinces enjoyed an improved learning environment, with trained teachers on culturally and gender-sensitive curriculum, child protection, life-skills education and hygienic sanitation practices as well as parenting education. UNICEF supported Dien Bien and Lao Cai provinces to document good practices on ethnic minority education, shared widely with other provinces. As a result, Dien Bien's

EMSB school development plan was approved by its people's committee with greater resources for its improvement and Lao Cai was selected by central government as a pilot location for nationwide innovation in ethnic minority education.

UNICEF contributed to a policy dialogue on selection, deployment and development of ethnic minority teachers in An Giang and Ninh Thuan provinces to ensure effective use of available ethnic minority teaching resources. Ethnic minority education was strengthened at provincial level with implementation of MTBBE in An Giang and Lao Cai provinces with local resources. In Gia Lai, local authorities finalized and submitted for the first Detailed Action Plan for J'rai MTBBE for provincial-level approval of local resources, which marked a major step forward in Gia Lai for MTBBE with political readiness on the ground to improve ethnic minority education through MTBBE. This plan is being actively utilized as a tool to mobilize local resources for MTBBE in Gia Lai in sector planning and budgeting processes.

Thanks to UNICEF's comparative advantage in upstream policy advocacy and advice, national and sub-national linkages were fostered, for example through systematic policy monitoring, which enabled barriers to policy implementation and emerging issues to be captured in a timely manner for appropriate systems adjustments and further policy development, for example around the issue of out-of-pocket payments for schooling which place increased burden for poor and deprived families, or prolonged impact of disaster and climate change in education which made children out of school or at increased risk of dropout.

In 2016, UNICEF intensified strategic partnerships at sector level with a wide range of government stakeholders at the national and sub-national level, UN and other development agencies, and the academia, resulting in improved legal framework for children, especially through the newly adopted Law on Children and the Job Code enhancing human resource provisions for inclusive education for children with disabilities, national ownership of updated evidence and analysis of out-of-school children and elevated agenda around Integrated Early Childhood Development. UNICEF also leveraged technical resources among UN and other development agencies to support MOET to draft the Decree on Safe, Friendly and Non-violent Education Settings for submission to the MOET Minister and for enforcement of the Law on Children. At the same time, UNICEF is actively engaged in dialogues with other UN agencies such as ILO, UN Women, UNFPA, UNESCO to strengthen programing directions for 2017-2021 related to addressing vocational training, gender-based violence, life skills and resilience adolescents with adolescent girls. UNICEF has been a leading voice within the UN on policy issues with the MOET and the education sector.

Thanks to the flexibility funds such as thematic contributions and regular resources, the UNICEF country office can decide how to best spend the funds within the Strategic Plan areas i.e., accommodate the short-falls due to the uncertain arrival of some ear-marked funds (for certain provinces), and cover short-falls in other provinces. One of the significant features and advantages of this flexibility is that the funds can be allocated to project support, including staff cost and monitoring. This is invaluable, especially for a middle-income country like Viet Nam where UNICEF is expected to focus less on service delivery and increase its engagement in policy advice and capacity development through high quality technical assistance which UNICEF staff provide at all levels though this is not always in line with donors' expectations. UNICEF technical assistance was highly recognised by the Government as the comparative advantage which UNICEF has brought to the education sector in the context of Viet Nam as a lower Middle Income Country, allowing it to maximise the utilisation of national resources for education outcomes for children.

E. Results Assessment Framework

Programme interventions in 2016 have significantly contributed to Programme expected outcomes set for 2016 upon completion of the programme of cooperation 2012-2016. These

outcomes include increased quality and effective management of education and training system, increased access to pre-primary, primary and continuing education for most vulnerable children through three specific outputs namely (i) Disadvantaged children benefit from an education system that provides quality and relevant inclusive education; (ii) Education managers undertake child-focused national education planning, monitoring. and evaluation, and are prepared to respond to emergencies and climate change and (iii) Disadvantaged children benefit from relevant and quality preschool and basic education supported by the Provincial Education Sector Plans in eight provinces of Ho Chi Minh City, An Giang, Dong Thap, Ninh Thuan, Dien Bien, Kon Tum, Gia Lai and Lao Cai. Below table illustrated these outcomes/outputs in details.

Level	Indicators	Baseline (2012)	Target (2016)	Progress (2016)
Outcome 4: Increased quality and effective management of education and training systems, and increased access to pre-primary, primary and continuing education, particularly for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.	1. Pre-primary net attendance rate of Kinh and Hoa children	73%- Source MICS 2011 (covers the age group 3-5 years old)	80%	91.65% <i>(Remarks: this data is for 3-5 year group)</i> 2015-2016 school year data, MOET
	2. Pre-primary net attendance rate of ethnic minority children	68%- Source MICS 2011 (covers the age group 3-5 years old)	75%	88.28% <i>(Remarks: this data is for 3-5 year group)</i> 2015-2016 school year data, MOET
	3. Primary school completion rate of Kinh and Hoa children	103% (Source MICS 2011)	100%	93.30% 2015-2016 School year data, MOET
	4. Primary school completion rate of ethnic minority children	80% (Source MICS 2011)	90%	87.81% 2015-2016 school year data, MOET
Output 1: Disadvantaged children benefit from an education system that provides quality and relevant inclusive education;	5. Number of evidence-based policy briefs on inclusive education for disadvantaged children available and disseminated for policy advocacy and education planning	0	5	5 (MTBBE programme briefs)
	6. Number of Government officials, policymakers and stakeholders with increased understanding on barriers on education for ethnic minority children	100	300	420 in 2013 195 in 2014 260 in 2015 104 in 2016
	7. Number of newly developed national guidelines to support	0	3	4

	inclusive education for disadvantaged children			
Output 2: Education managers undertake child-focused national education planning, monitoring, and evaluation, and are prepared to respond to emergencies and climate change	8. Number of education managers trained on the use of standard planning, monitoring and assessment tools and instruments	0	100	70 in 2013 32 in 2014 30 in 2015 189 in 2016
	9. Number of education managers trained on newly developed national guidelines for education planning for emergency preparedness, response and recovery at all levels of education	0	300	539 in 2012 and 2013 320 in 2014 556 in 2015 404 in 2016 (Increased number of people trained thanks to leveraging government resources)
	10. Availability of school curriculum addressing natural disasters, emergencies and climate change	Not available	Available	Curriculum framework available. Detailed curriculum addressing natural disasters, emergencies and climate change available for final approval by MOET
Output 3: Disadvantaged children benefit from relevant and quality preschool and basic education supported by the Provincial Education Sector Plans in eight provinces of Ho Chi Minh City, An Giang, Dong Thap, Ninh Thuan, Dien Bien, Kon Tum, Gia Lai and Lao Cai.	11. Number of provincial Socio Economic and Development Plans 2016-2020 that contain specific indicators to assess and monitor inclusive education for disadvantaged children	0	7	7
	12. Number of provincial, district and school managers and officials and master teachers newly trained on inclusive education for disadvantaged children	0	1,250	1,965 in 2013 1,174 in 2014 1,100 in 2015 999 in 2016

	13. Number of province specific, evidence-based policy briefs on inclusive education for disadvantaged children available and disseminated for policy advocacy and education planning	0	9	6

F. Case Study

Top Level Results: in 120 words provide numbers and/or qualitative information vis-à-vis children and the particular outcome area.

In 2016, the profile of out-of-school children (OOSC) in Viet Nam was updated with data from the 2014 Inter Censual Population Survey (ICPS). With UNICEF support, this evidence enables the first-time sector-level monitoring of equity in education, through tracking OOSC rates in the 2009 Census and the 2014 ICPS, from 12.19 per cent to 6.7 per cent among children aged five, from 3.97 per cent to 2.51 per cent among children aged 6-10, and from 11.17 per cent to 8.05 per cent among children aged 11-14 years. The total number of out-of-school children has decreased from 1.127.343 to 715,412 children. The disaggregated analysis shed light on different levels of disparities, informing actions to close the gaps in education.

(119 words)

Issue/Background: Describe the context/situation analysis 2 paragraphs (100 words): Provide general information that set the scene, e.g. emergency situation, programme, location, organization's involvement in country, etc.

The first analysis on out-of-school children based on 2009 Census data was disseminated in 2013. The Ministry of Education and Training recognized the added value of using Census data since it allows the profiling of OOSC according to key social economic characteristics such as ethnicity, urban/rural, geographical, and migration which is not captured through routine education data from EMIS. Disaggregated analysis helped to strengthen sector policy and management practices to accelerate access to education for disadvantaged children who are excluded from the system.

Viet Nam's government was motivated to periodic tracking of OOSC trends based on new available data.

(99 words)

Rationale: Why did UNICEF undertake this activity - include: a) statement of the problem and the purpose/objective; b) underlying assumptions for the proposed intervention/solution; c) expected results; d) time frame.

Rigorous evidence on education equity, manifested in inter alia out-of-school children, plays a critical role in guiding policy development and improving education sector governance as well as facilitating effective policy advocacy. However, such evidence is not available in the sector's database.. The sector generally operates with aggregate totals and national averages which mask disparities and gaps in enrolment, completion and dropout. As a results, government policies and management actions are not systematically geared toward groups that lag behind in education such as children with disabilities, ethnic minorities and migrant children.

Seizing the opportunity of available data from the 2014 ICPS, and the momentum from the first OOSC analysis, UNICEF supported the government to update the evidence base on education equity and to make comparative analysis of the OOSC trends and progress towards closing disparity gaps in education.

The OOSC analysis follows the global Conceptual Methodological Framework adopted by UNESCO Institute for Statistics and UNICEF, examining the 5 dimensions of exclusions:

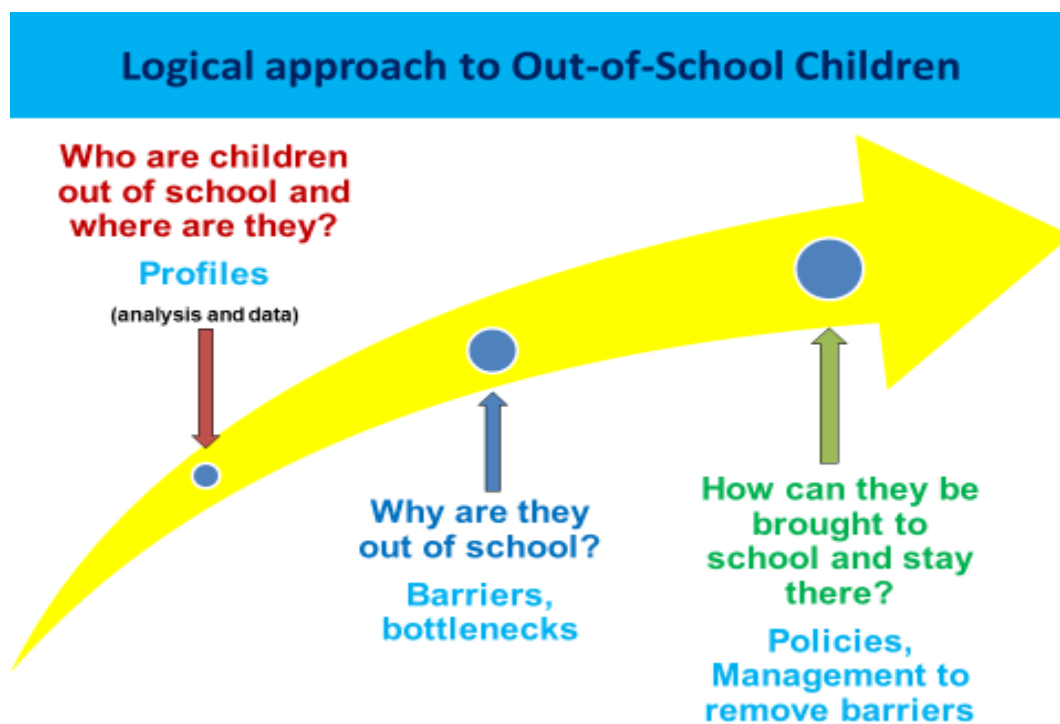
Dimension 1: Children of pre-primary school age who are not in pre-primary or primary school

Dimension 2: Children of primary school age who are not in primary or secondary school

Dimension 3: Children of lower secondary school age who are not in primary or secondary school

Dimension 4: Children who are in primary school but at risk of dropping out

Dimension 5: Children who are in lower secondary school but at risk of dropping out



While showing the reducing trends in the number of out-of-school children across the age-groups, the updated evidence of OOSC in 2016 has also shed light on critical issues including enrolment, drop out, over-age, particularly featuring gaps concerning various social-economic segments of the populations. The disaggregated analysis will strengthen equity-based sector planning and budgeting at national and sub-national levels and leverage resources to accelerate education for disadvantaged and out-of-school children. At the same time, it was

envisaged that the evidence will inform the strategic actions led by the MOET in 2016 and beyond to implement SDG 4 in education.

Strategy and Implementation: Describe in 2-3 paragraphs (200 words) the strategy used and how it was implemented. This should link to the issue outlined above and highlight main steps in implementing the strategy. Strategies may include in terms of advocacy, participation, gender equity, ownership, coordination and partnerships, and monitoring and evaluation.

UNICEF adopted key strategies including ensuring statistical rigour, applying a bottom-up approach and facilitating multi-sectoral coordination. Given that it remains a relatively new practice in Viet Nam to undertake analysis of education based on population data, UNICEF advised the MOET to engage the General Statistics Office (GSO), which has the authority voice on statistics. GSO's technical expertise in data calculation and validation has increased the credibility of the OOSC evidence. At the same time, UNICEF supported a methodical process in six provinces, including examining disaggregated evidence on OOSC and undertaking qualitative analysis of social economic and political determinants which keep children out of school. UNICEF used insights from the field to inform policy dialogues at the central level, leveraging political support from key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs and the National Assembly.

The right mix of these strategies have strengthened the quality of the evidence and enhanced national ownership of OOSC analysis. There has also been shared consensus of the recommendations. As a result, officials from the education sector and other agencies have actively incorporated in their work-plans the actions to improve monitoring of out-of-school children and to reduce the barriers.

(197 words)

Resources Required/Allocated: Describe the human and financial resources that were needed, and who was involved.

The generation of evidence on out-of-school children was initiated since 2012, as part of UNICEF's support for MOET to embark on the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative. UNICEF has utilised contributions from One Plan Fund and Thematic Funding for Basic Education and Gender Equality. The resources were allocated for the following key interventions both at the national and sub-national level:

- Calculation of data and analysis following the Conceptual Methodological Model **USD 30,000 USD**
- Field consultations and fact finding missions in six provinces **USD 30,000**
- Policy dialogues and validation of analysis and recommendations **USD 15,000**
- Printing publications and dissemination **USD 25,000**
- In-depth qualitative study on equity in lower secondary education **USD 22,000**
- Development of equity-focused education sector plans drawing upon OOSC analysis **USD 22,000**
- Advocacy and communication activities **USD 20,000**
- Integrating OOSC in the routine statistical system and capacity development **USD 20,000**

At central level, the OOSC Initiative has been led by the Planning and Finance Department of the MOET which is the entity with the official mandate policy development and financing in education. The Planning and Finance Department led a Technical Team, with support of UNICEF professional staff and a qualified technical consultant with strong statistical background and experience in education was hired to support the work. The focal department systematically engaged key departments within MOET and external partners such as General

Statistics Office, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, and the National Assembly. UNICEF facilitated the engagement of UN agencies and NGO community in the process.

At the provincial and district levels, the program has been managed and implemented by the Provincial and District Education and Training Departments with support from People's Committees at all levels as well as parents, community peoples and children/adolescents with and without disabilities.

At UNICEF, with the overall supervision and guidance from the section chief, a full time education specialist is responsible for the implementation of the OOSC Initiative which is part of the Systems Strengthening component of the education programme.

Progress and Results: Summarize in 2-3 paragraphs (200 words) the progress and any verified results in implementing or applying the initiative based on indicators and results metrics. The results could be at output, outcome, impact levels depending on the stage of the implementation. Describe the factors that enabled progress and any challenges. Describe the adequacy of M&E system in place. Relevant high resolution photos relevant to the progress and results are welcomed by donors.

The updated analysis showed OOSC profile by age-groups, gender, ethnicity, urban/rural and migration status, allowing comparisons with trends observed from the 2009 Census. Important data is available by wealth quintiles featuring stark disparity, for example, OOSC rates at lower-secondary-school age are 10 times higher among poorest households than the richest (17 per cent versus 1.7 per cent).

Though OOSC rates at lower secondary level has decreased, falling from 11.2 per cent in 2009 to 8.1 per cent in 2014, certain groups of ethnic minority children lag behind significantly, e.g. 28 per cent Mong children and 25 per cent Khmer children at lower secondary age remain out of school. This informed further in-depth qualitative analysis on lower secondary education, conducted in five provinces with high concentration of ethnic minorities. The analysis highlighted gender issues, the lack of culturally sensitive approaches and gaps in school management that perpetuate disparities and limit the transition to upper secondary education.

Government authorities welcomed the evidence as practical reminders to improve their work. Schools improved learning environment to demonstrate respect for the diversity which ethnic minority children bring. Teachers provided additional support to enable those children who need help to catch up with their lessons.

(199 words)

Lesson Learned: Describe briefly the main lessons learned from this experience. Please include information on what worked and what did not to improve programming. Can this lesson learned be applied to other context? Do you think this is an emerging best practice?

Strategic partnerships were central to the entire process of evidence generation, dissemination and utilization. Such dynamic partnerships built understanding and consensus among stakeholders and fostered a strong sense of ownership at all levels. As a result, they have become champions who drive coordinated actions to increase attention to disadvantaged children in education sector planning and budgeting, improve data management practices for effective tracking of out-of-school children, and engage with the family and communities in accelerating access to schools for disadvantaged children.

Though the starting point for this work was with the Global Out-of-School Children Initiative, UNICEF has successfully rooted it in the local context, reflected in the methodical process with various stakeholders including children in 6 provinces. Most importantly, **the voice from**

the field about the reality of out-of-school children has been critical to validate the analysis and its relevance for Viet Nam. UNICEF and the MOET has effectively utilized such voices to build consensus and to influence political commitment at all levels. Such voice contributes to successful advocacy for systemic changes which reduce barriers and constraints to equitable quality education for all.

The journey is as good as the destination. UNICEF and the MOET did not have to wait till the availability of complete data and finalized analysis on out-of-school to start action. Rather, each step along the process is actively used for building understanding and national ownership, reality check and rallying like-minded actors around equity in education, gaps, challenges and opportunities. Such dynamics has generated significant interest and inspiration on the part of all concerned stakeholders, either from technical discussions or policy dialogues. By the time the findings are available, the education officials have made systemic changes such as including OOSC as an indicator in the EMIS system, incorporating OOSC analysis in defining priority actions in provincial education sector plans and improving teaching learning approaches to make learning more participatory and stimulating to the children.

Last but not least, this work has emerged as an innovation in the education sector in Viet Nam. OOSC analysis facilitated a critical and systematic review of sector performance from within and below, allowing internalization and ownership of the issues. This has been most appreciated by education officials at all levels, given sector review is normally an exercise which is top-down and external.

Moving Forward: Describe any plans in implementation e.g. scalability/ replicability/sustainability. Highlight any changes in strategy.

UNICEF will utilize the OOSC evidence to inform the national process to implement SGDs, especially in education. In particular, the disaggregated analysis on the gaps concerning pre-school and lower secondary will sharpen the targets and indicators of education sector plans to ensure alignment with SDG targets.

The conceptual methodological framework of the Global Out-of-school Initiative is currently analyzing the out of school children aged 5-14. The analysis and fact finding missions have identified issues such as transition from school to work and technical and vocational training, which concern especially the 15-17 years group. The MOET is planning to utilize the same methodology for analysis of out-of-school children aged 15-17 years.

Seeing the strategic added value to date for the education sector, Viet Nam government is keen to update the OOSC analysis utilizing data from the 2018 Census, which will allow continued tracking of disparities in education at the national and sub-national level.

With the emerging South East Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM), a regional initiative for system-wide assessment of learning outcomes for primary students in the domain of language, mathematics and global citizenship. UNICEF will support the MOET to maximize the impact to the sector by enhancing coherence between OOSC analysis and SEA-PLM, for example, examining co-relations of learning outcomes and issues such as dropouts and over-age and the implications for sector governance.

G. Financial Analysis

Resources/ Revenue

Table 1

**Outcome Area 5: Education
Viet Nam
Planned and Funded for the Country Programme 2016
(in US Dollar)**

Intermediate Results	Funding Type ¹	Planned Budget ²
05-01 Early learning	RR	255,208
	ORR	1,162,545
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	RR	21,383
	ORR	61,904
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	RR	62,926
	ORR	575,237
05-04 Education in emergencies	RR	10,813
	ORR	77,291
05-05 Education # General	RR	260,353
	ORR	688,275
Total Budget		3,175,935

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

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

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

On the overall, in 2016, a combination of resources were utilised for this Outcome Area. These include Regular Resources and Other Resources (as mentioned in Table 1). The funds were allocated to key results areas around equity issues focusing on girls and inclusive education, learning and child-friendly schools, education in emergencies and education in general, as demonstrated in Table 1 for both at the national and sub national levels.

Table 2: Country-level thematic contributions received in 2016

**Outcome Area 5: Education
Thematic Contributions Received for Outcome Area 5 by UNICEF Viet Nam in 2016
(in US Dollars)**

Donors	Contribution Amount
Korean Committee for UNICEF	
Total	

In 2016, no Committee for UNICEF made any contributions to UNICEF Viet Nam.

Table 3: Expenditures in the Outcome Area

**Outcome Area 5: Education
Viet Nam
2016 Expenditures by Key-Results Areas (in US Dollars)**

Organizational Targets	Expenditure Amount*			
	Other Resources – Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	All Programme Accounts
05-01 Early learning	-	1,115,748	370,075	1,485,823
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	-	59,413	31,007	90,420
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	-	552,081	91,249	643,330
05-04 Education in emergencies	-	74,179	15,680	89,859
05-05 Education # General	-	660,570	377,535	1,038,105
Total	-	2,461,991	885,546	3,347,537

Table 4: Thematic expenses by programme area

**Outcome Area 5: Education
Viet Nam
Expenditure of thematic contributions by programme area in 2016
(in US Dollars)**

Programme Areas	Expense
05-01 Early learning	458,317
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	867
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	126,719
05-04 Education in emergencies	35,414
05-05 Education # General	399,387
Total	1,020,703

Table 5

**Outcome Area 5: Education
Viet Nam
Major Interventions Using Thematic Funds based on Specific Intervention Codes in
2016**

Specific Intervention Codes	Total Utilized (US\$)
05-01-01 National policies on early learning and school readiness	70,980
05-01-02 Development and use of standards and measurements for early learning and school readiness	1,232,647
05-02-01 Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI)	78,137
05-03-01 Education materials for learning and teaching including classroom technology	302,728
05-03-03 Multilingual education and mother tongue language	183,728

05-03-05 Curriculum reform or development	80,283
05-04-01 Risk assessments and risk informed programming (DRR and CCA)	83,781
05-05-01 Education –Systems	29,544
05-05-02 Teacher development and deployment	132
05-05-05 Education sector plans (incl. coordinating role)	266,334
05-05-08 Education -technical assistance to regional and country offices	577,723
08-01-06 Planning # General	13,982
08-02-01 Situation Analysis or Update on women and children	29,022
08-02-08 Monitoring # General	37,579
08-03-01 Cross-sectoral Communication for Development	38,263
08-03-03 C4D # training and curriculum development	507
08-09-01 Innovation activities	11,172
08-09-06 Other # non-classifiable cross-sectoral activities	206,147
08-09-07 Public Advocacy	57,681
08-09-08 Engagement through media and campaigns	12,195
10-07-12 Management and Operations support at CO	26,725
7921 Operations # financial and administration	3,011
Unknown	5,233
Grand Total	3,347,537

* Total Utilized figures exclude recovery cost and are indicative figures obtained from UNICEF Performance Management System.

Of the total utilized amount, **458,317 USD** was spent on **Early learning**, with key interventions such as conducting and disseminating studies on Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) in densely populated areas, industrial zones and ethnic minority areas in Viet Nam for children under three years of age; development a MOET-budgeted action plan embedded in the national ECED scheme for 2016-2025; policy monitoring and capacity development, and technical support to the conceptualisation of IECD.

183,728 USD was spent on key interventions for **Multi-lingual education and mother tongue language** including dissemination and sharing of MTBBE experience in major policy fora, development and implementation of the provincial MTBBE plan in Gia Lai, An Giang and Lao Cai; development of MOET's Decision 5596 dated 24th November 2016 on the acceleration of the realization SDG targets on education among ethnic communities.

83,781 USD was utilised for *Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) work and education cluster coordination in humanitarian action*. Key interventions included strengthening institutional capacity of MOET and DOETs for emergency response and coordination; finalizing and running an education portal with computerized emergency reporting tools for situation monitoring and system-wide management prior to, during and after disasters; training 200 education officials to operate the portal and 300 core teachers in the Mekong Delta to support the learning of school preparedness and resilience education to disaster risks and climate change. field-testing of the safe school model in four provinces with training for 240 education managers and core teachers to support the trial implementation of the three key pillars of comprehensive school safety. There was significant matching funds from the government and education cluster partners which UNICEF was able to leverage.

577,723 USD was spent on **Technical Assistance** through which UNICEF was able to maintain high quality policy advice and capacity development to improve systems and practices for results monitoring at national and sub-national levels, for quality education in Viet Nam. The technical assistance was made available through policy advice, quality assurance, technical guidance, results monitoring, convening capacity and facilitating learning from global best practices and innovations.

A strong team of international and national technical staff are effectively in the forefront to engage strategically with the Ministry of Education and Training, other central level ministries, provincial Department of Education and Training, development partners and donors in policy dialogues, joint field missions, regional forum to generate commitment to education equity. The education programme also engaged non-resident capacity on specific assignments to ensure timely support to the programme implementation. The engagement and technical assistance by the programme team was not just limited to delivering the programmes funded by UNICEF, but it has systematically strived to influence system's practices and leverage resources for children. This has well prepared the foundation for UNICEF to further collaborate with the government on strategic outcome areas in the new country programme 2017-2021 to advance equity in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

Table 6: Planned budget for 2017

Since UNICEF Viet Nam is in the process of developing country programme cycle 2017-2021, the planned budget for 2017 is not yet finalized at this stage.

**Outcome Area 5: Education
Viet Nam
Planned Budget and Available Resources for 2017**

Intermediate Result	Funding Type	Planned Budget ¹	Funded Budget ¹	Shortfall ²
05-01 Early learning	RR			
	ORR			
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	RR			
	ORR			
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	RR			
	ORR			
05-04 Education in emergencies	RR			
	ORR			
05-05 Education # General	RR			
	ORR			
Sub-total Regular Resources				
Sub-total Other Resources – Regular				
Total for 2017				

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

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

H. Future Work Plan

UNICEF is jointly implementing the Country Programme 2017-2021 with the Government of Viet Nam. The Education Programme contributes to Outcomes 1 and 3 of the Viet Nam's Office Results Structure:

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

Output 1.3: *By 2021, education policy-makers and decision-makers at central level have strengthened capacities to develop and manage inclusive, equitable and quality policies, programmes and budgets for the pre-primary to secondary school system.*

This output is directly linked to the UNICEF's offer to the implementation of the SDG 4 by the Viet Nam Government and also considers the shifting of education needs to fulfil the requirements of the socio-economic context as stated in the SEDP, the renovation of the education system and the education sector plan as well as the prerequisites for the teaching of the 21st century skills. In addition, the output is included in the broader education outcome within Delivery as One of the UN system. It is expected to enhance **policy and legal frameworks** for the realization of children's rights to education and strengthening **accountability** of the education system, legislators and policy-makers to families, children and the public to deliver on commitments to equitable and inclusive education in the context of SEDPs and education sector plans.

Outcome 3: By 2021, in selected areas of 3 Provinces, all children and their families, especially the most vulnerable, utilize inclusive and quality IECD services.

Output 3.2: *Strengthened capacity of education service providers in focus provinces to deliver quality early learning and school readiness programmes for children under 8 years.*

The programme, through this output, contributes to demonstrate good practice of inclusive and quality IECD interventions along a continuum of coordinated services at subnational level and the life cycle of the young child. It aims at strengthened capacities of education service providers in three focus provinces to deliver quality early learning and school readiness programmes for children under 8 years and to further support policy dialogue and nationwide scale up.

Key priorities for 2017-2018 include:

IECD

- Support MOET with the adoption, rolling out and monitoring of ECE Strategy 2016-2025, including knowledge generation on ECE, delivery, M&E of the revised ECE curriculum, institutionalization of screening tools for early education interventions of children with disabilities at pre-school age.
- Strengthen mechanisms for integrated interventions on early childhood development at sub-national level; support quality and management of private and independent childcare centres and family-based groups in selected areas; early learning, stimulation, parental education and school readiness and continuity to quality primary education and informal learning programmes as part of a IECD package.
- Support advocacy for nationwide IECD scaling-up on the basis of documentation in the three provinces and promote cross-sectoral linkages to maximize outcomes for full development of children

System Strengthening and Learning

- Strengthen partnership within education sector network (INGO, bilateral partners, financial institutions) to support the implementation of SDG action plans.
- Support generation of knowledge and evidence to track inequities, enhance quality of education system and improved learning and for policy development
- Conduct policy dialogues on equity in education to advocate for improved public finance management in education
- Advocate for disaggregated data and gender responsive budgeting and analyses through research and studies, including costing of policies and plans in education and for advocacy to close gaps in education
- Support dissemination of the updated analysis of out-of-school children through innovative channels and policy dialogue.
- Support the renovation of competency-based curriculum and system-wide learning assessments, including monitoring, integrating language and culture in the process of curriculum and textbook development; support capacity development for curriculum delivery, especially at lower secondary level.
- Facilitate Viet Nam's participation in the field trial for South-east Asia Primary Learning Metrics and to prepare Viet Nam for the official assessment from 2018.

Inclusive Education

- Facilitate policy dialogues to contribute to the development, implementation and M&E of the national action plan on inclusive education for children with disabilities in the next five years.
- Strengthen partnership within the E.U/ERASMUS-funded project on Inclusive Education for children with disabilities positioning UNICEF in an advisory role
- Support assessment and innovative models for technical and vocational education and training for the lower secondary school age out-of-school adolescents
- Support the development, adoption and rolling out of the Law on Children's education related Decree on non-violence and child friendly learning environment including the development of the related action plan
- Support focused provinces to implement, document and advocate for the MTBBE replication and monitor the implementation of the Prime Minister's Decision on related policies for ethnic minority education and the national targeted program supporting ethnic minority children and adolescents

Disaster Risk Reduction/Climate change adaptation and education in emergency

- Strengthen education cluster coordination for emergency situation monitoring and response, including systematic utilization of the MOET portal for Emergency and Disaster Management for situation monitoring and disaster planning
- Strengthen capacity for operationalization of the global model for comprehensive school safety, which is being contextualized in Viet Nam, including learning on DRR and resilience building.

I. Expression of Thanks

UNICEF Viet Nam would like to express our sincere appreciation to all donors who provided thematic contributions to UNICEF Viet Nam. Their financial contribution has allowed UNICEF Viet Nam to continue supporting the improvement of the education system in 2016 to deliver quality inclusive education to disadvantaged children, in particular ethnic minority and disabled children, in order for the country to achieve equity in education. The flexible nature of thematic funding has allowed UNICEF to seize the opportunities which arose during the planning year and maximised the programme results.

J. Annexes: Human Interest Stories and Donor Feedback Form

Both public and particularly private sector partners' value receiving human interest stories with photos and captions to illustrate the impact of flexible OR+ (thematic) funding. Country and Regional Offices are encouraged to share additional human interest materials or case studies that may be relevant to the report as an annex, as well as attaching a donor feedback form:

English: [https://intranet.unicef.org/PARMO/PARMO.nsf/0/65C04DD38430DF04852579C80055C4E2/\\$FILE/Donor%20Report%20Feedback-PARMO.doc](https://intranet.unicef.org/PARMO/PARMO.nsf/0/65C04DD38430DF04852579C80055C4E2/$FILE/Donor%20Report%20Feedback-PARMO.doc)