

**CAMBODIA**  
**CHILD PROTECTION**  
**Thematic report**  
**SC149906**  
**January – December 2016**



Students and a teacher during a break in the school day at Por Preuk Primary School in Kampot Province;  
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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

3PC	Partnership Programme for the Protection of Children
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
C4D	Communications for development
MoSVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
VAC	Violence against Children

## Executive summary

The generous support through the Global Child Protection Thematic Funds, including contributions from the UNICEF Regional Office for the East Asia and Pacific, the Norwegian Committee for UNICEF, the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF and the 7: the David Beckham UNICEF Fund, enabled UNICEF Cambodia to strengthen child protection systems to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation and provide more services to highly vulnerable children.

In 2016, more than 9,000 children were better protected from violence and benefited from a protective family environment thanks to UNICEF Cambodia support to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), in collaboration with the Partnership Programme for the Protection of Children (3PC).

The Government's commitment to safely return 30 per cent of children in residential care to their families and communities is starting to have a real and positive impact on the lives of children in the five focal provinces. Approximately 50 per cent of the 800 children targeted for reintegration in 2016 have a case plan, with 140 being placed back with their families as part of UNICEF's support to MoSVY to reintegrate children.

The rights of Cambodian children recently took an important step forward with the long-awaited draft juvenile justice law finally being approved by the National Assembly on 30 May 2016. The law reform process started in 2002 and stalled in 2010. In 2015, UNICEF developed a new advocacy strategy (which included direct advocacy, a study tour and workshops) that directly contributed to this result.

Children subjected to violence will have greater protection as a result of the Government's commitment to ending violence against girls and boys. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to 13 ministries to finalize the inter-sectoral action plan to prevent violence, which will be launched in early 2017. The Action Plan is aligned to INSPIRE, the global framework for ending violence against children. As a parallel approach to fast track the design and roll out of key programme interventions while the Action Plan was being developed, UNICEF, along with Save the Children, provided technical support to the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) to finalize the Positive Parenting Strategic Plan.

The Positive Discipline initiative in schools, which is led by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports with expertise and financial assistance from UNICEF Cambodia, expanded its reach from 12 schools in 2015 to 172 primary schools in 2016. Approximately 51,145 boys and girls are now benefiting from positive discipline and effective classroom management following training of 1,608 teachers. With a range of partners, UNICEF is supporting the development of a government led, five-year communications for development (C4D) strategy to address violence against children and unnecessary family separation as part of a broader office-wide C4D approach.

Significant progress was achieved in generating new knowledge and evidence on alternative care, child marriage, adolescent engagement and violence prevention and response. A Theory of Change on Violence against Children was completed based on systematic literature review and analysis of existing datasets providing more rigorous evidence and knowledge on the determinants (including the risk and protective factors). An action plan to prevent and respond to child marriage in highly disadvantaged ethnic communities in remote areas of Cambodia was drafted based on an analysis of the data and estimations up to 2030 in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. With support from the data and analytics team at UNICEF HQ, a snapshot of key child protection data was prepared for launching in 2017. For the first time, a national mapping of all residential care facilities was conducted, providing essential information such as location of facilities and the number of residents,

offering an immense opportunity to access these places of care and assess their situation. A study on funding and financial models of residential care institutions was also completed, providing key knowledge for advocacy.

Despite this progress, the social services envelope remains fragmented and insufficient and the child protection system is only partially operational. Continued efforts are required in advocating for more government budget allocation and improved national and local level planning.

## Strategic context of 2016

Despite the vast number and severity of protection issues Cambodia's children face, the child protection system is largely underfunded and understaffed. The Government's budget for child protection is limited and relies heavily on donor funding.

UNICEF advocacy resulted in a long-awaited law on juvenile justice, critical for a separate juvenile justice system that guarantees respect of the rights of children in the justice process. In September 2016, the Government signed the National Action Plan and the development of five provincial operational plans for improving child care, targeting a reduction of 30 per cent of children in residential care by 2018. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to 13 ministries to finalize the inter-sectoral Cambodia Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence Against Children, to be launched in early 2017.

The Government has taken positive steps towards mapping all residential institutions and enforcing the inspection and application of minimum standards. Despite government policy that residential care should be a last resort and temporary solution for children, the number of residential care institutions formally registered with MoSVY expanded from 154 to 254 between 2005 and 2015, accompanied by a rise in the number of children living in them from 6,254 to 11,171. The actual figure is estimated to be much higher as institutions in Cambodia often operate without registration or inspection by government authorities. Decades of research show that living in residential care can harm children's social, physical, intellectual and emotional development. In particular, children who are placed in residential care institutions in their early childhood are at risk of being deprived of critical social and emotional development, which can affect their future learning abilities.

According to the Cambodia Violence Against Children Survey, which was conducted in 2013, one in two children have experienced physical violence. One in four children have experienced emotional violence. One in twenty children have experienced sexual abuse. Child victims of violence suffer adverse life-long consequences. This includes developing learning difficulties and a tendency to engage in high-risk behaviours, such as drug and alcohol abuse, which can impact negatively on their physical health.

Violence against children not only causes emotional and physical harm, but also results in a financial burden on Cambodia's economy. The annual economic burden of some of the health consequences of violence against children in Cambodia is estimated to be at least US\$168 million—more than 1 per cent of the country's gross domestic product. Annual productivity losses due to childhood violence is estimated to be around US\$83.3 million.

Violence against girls and boys in Cambodia is rooted in social traditions and norms that have been negatively affected by the recent civil war, which fractured families and communities, and destroyed many positive child care practices. As a result, perpetrators of violence often find it difficult to change their behaviour when the norms and behaviours that prevail in their community remain unchallenged. Encouraging steps have been taken by the Government to develop the C4D Strategy for Behavioural Change Communication

Campaign to address social norms that legitimate violence against children and unnecessary family separation.

## Results in the Outcome Area

The key outcome and outputs for child protection in Cambodia, based on the new Results Framework in the joint Royal Government of Cambodia-UNICEF Country Programme Action Plan 2016-18, are as follows.

**OUTCOME 3: By 2018, girls and boys vulnerable to and exposed to violence and those separated from their family, or at risk of separation, are increasingly protected by institutional and legislative frameworks, quality services and a supportive community environment.**

- **OUTPUT 3.1: By 2018, strengthened capacity of the national government and five provincial authorities to formulate and implement the institutional and legal framework and costed plans for the scaling-up of child protection prevention and response interventions, including deinstitutionalization and reintegration services.**

The child care sector reform national action plan was formulated and signed by the Minister of Social Affairs in September 2016. The plan promotes family preservation, de-institutionalization, reintegration, better gatekeeping and alternatives to institutional care, and also outlines key principles, implementation strategies, expected results, responsibilities and critical success factors.

The Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Children (VAC) was endorsed in July 2016 by the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, which is composed of 13 different ministries. The VAC Action Plan includes high-impact interventions to address violence against children. UNICEF supported the work of the Steering Committee, including the participation of some of its key members in regional South-South workshops in Bangkok, Thailand, in March 2015 and Beijing, China, in May 2016, to exchange experiences and lessons learned with government and INGOs from different countries.

The development of Theory of Change Strategy on Violence against Children in Cambodia was completed in September 2016. It is a key advocacy tool to help policymakers and practitioners more effectively and strategically address violence against children in Cambodia. It is also a key reference document for the Behaviour Change Communication strategy.

The first Round Table Discussion on Online Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children was conducted and hosted by the Cambodian National Council for Children in July 2015, with the support of UNICEF (Cambodia and Regional Office) and UK Embassy.

A concept note and project document was finalized to guide establishment of a National Child Protection Information Management System, which is being developed in partnership with Family Care First, USAID, Global Alliance for Children, Save the Children and World Vision. A concept note proposing the development of a three-year strategic and operational plan of the Juvenile Justice Law was drafted and submitted to MoSVY for review.

Children living in natural disaster prone and mine-contaminated areas are receiving more timely response thanks to UNICEF support bringing together government and NGO representatives to review the Child Protection in Emergency Plan and capacity building of

service providers and of data collection staff of the Cambodian Mine/Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) Victim Information System.

- **OUTPUT 3.2: By 2018, strengthened capacity of social service providers (health, education, justice, and child protection) to provide quality services that protect girls and boys vulnerable to and exposed to violence, those separated from their family, or at risk of separation, and those being deinstitutionalized and reintegrated.**

More than 9,000 children have been better protected from violence and benefited from a protective family environment through an innovative partnership called 3PC. Involving MoSVY, UNICEF and Friends-International, 3PC brings together 10 NGOs and 40 community-based organizations to provide essential child protection services as part of a broader approach to strengthening service delivery of the child protection system. In 2016, a total of 9,746 vulnerable children (46.2 per cent female, against annual target of 8,000) benefited from a range of targeted preventive and responsive child protection services, including education (formal, remedial and non-formal education classes), community prevention (outreach sessions on alternative care, prevention of child maltreatment, child rights, safe migration and other life skills), vocational training, job placement and drug prevention.

The Clinical Handbook on Healthcare for Children Subjected to Violence or Sexual Abuse was finalized by the Ministry of Health with technical and financial assistance from UNICEF. Technical inputs were provided from various ministries and national and local-level departments, UN agencies and NGOs through a two-day workshop held by the Ministry of Health and UNICEF in July 2016, which contributed to finalization of the handbook with its quality assured. The handbook is expected to be launched in March 2017 during a joint event with the Ministry of Health and UNFPA, during which the Clinical Handbook for Women will also be released.

With technical guidance from UNICEF Child Protection and Education programmes, an end-line knowledge, attitudes and practices survey was conducted by the Royal University of Phnom Penh to assess disciplinary methods in primary schools. This targeted 1,080 students, 145 teachers and 24 school directors in 24 primary schools of three provinces. The report will be finalized in early 2017. Most importantly, UNICEF Cambodia has closely monitored the training of master trainers in Phnom Penh and training on positive discipline and effective classroom management for teachers and school directors in three targeted provinces. It reached 172 primary schools with 265 school directors and 1,608 teachers, which would lead to prevention of violence against 51,145 children.

More than 25,000 children in schools and 13,500 children out of school were reached with mine risk education sessions by trained teachers and children peer educators, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Five hundred child survivors of landmines/unexploded remnants of war received community-based rehabilitation assistance, including medical, material and education support, thanks to UNICEF support to local accredited community-based organizations.

816 children and youths in residential care institutions and separated from their families were newly identified in 2016 and benefited from more effective case management thanks to UNICEF support for local-level deployment and capacity building of 29 social workers working with MoSVY and 3PC NGOs. 670 children deprived of family care were provided with a range of services, including short-term and long-term placements. A learning needs assessment exercise with the social workers was conducted and a capacity development plan for social works is in the process of being developed.

- **Output 3.3: By 2018, strengthened capacity of commune councils and religious leaders to protect girls and boys vulnerable and exposed to violence and those separated from their family, or at risk of separation.**

Following the completion of development of the Theory of Change on Violence Against Children, UNICEF started to develop a five-year C4D Strategy (Behaviour Change Campaign) to prevent and respond to violence against children and unnecessary family separation. This comprehensive multi-sectoral behavioural change campaign aims to reduce violence against children and family separation by addressing social and cultural norms that legitimize and promote violence against children as well as family separation, and instead promotes positive changes in mentality, attitudes and practices. Implementation of the strategy by sub-national administration including commune councils and commune committees for women and children will commence once the strategy is finalized and endorsed by MoSVY, which is expected in April 2017.

Children will receive increased access to appropriate and timely parenting support thanks to UNICEF work with MoWA and Save the Children in developing the Positive Parenting Strategic Plan, which aims to prevent and reduce violence and risk factors contributing to violence against children and family separation. The development of positive parenting training toolkits has been initiated in collaboration with a local NGO, Improving Cambodia's Society through Skilful Parenting, with the aim of building the capacity of social workers, community volunteers and local authorities who will further support parents and caregivers in communities.

UNICEF continues to take the lead in mobilizing civil society organizations to work together with the Ministry of Cult and Religion and faith leaders to end violence against children through the promotion of interfaith dialogues and celebration of the Day of Prayer and Action for Children. Moreover, following the official incorporation of "Buddhist's response to violence against children" in the Buddhist Education programme, the curriculum is being finalized by the technical working group of the Ministry of Cult and Religion and the Buddhist graduate programme division. A booklet, 'Novice Sokha', which aims to enhance the capacities of Cambodian monks to contribute to the prevention of violence against children, is being printed. At least 23,188 Buddhist monks (of whom 50 per cent are children) will be reached through the curriculum and booklet.

To reduce children's vulnerability to trafficking, UNICEF supported 35 government officials and NGO members (34 per cent female), including participants from Thailand, border police, tourist police, immigration police and the Poi Pet governor, to be trained on safe migration. The event focused on sharing best practices and better collaboration to protect children at risk. The support from UNICEF Norway has enabled UNICEF Cambodia to increase its funding support to key NGOs to rollout new interventions in 2017.

- **Output 3.4: By 2018, strengthened capacity of at least 20 adolescent and youth focused organizations to work with and for adolescents (aged 10-19) and implement age- and gender-appropriate interventions to promote safe and protective behaviours and practices.**

Life skills education for adolescents was scaled-up in 2016 and key data systems redesigned to better capture service delivery interventions through the 3PC partnership, funded by UNICEF. Through this partnership 9,746 children (46.2 per cent female) including adolescents vulnerable to violence, exploitation, trafficking, substance use and HIV infection received various support services such as remedial education to facilitate their entry back into the formal education system, targeted life skills, vocational training, career advice, business development and labour programme. In addition, approximately 244 participants from NGO partners (21 per cent from 3PC partners) were trained to work with/for adolescent



and youths, including how to find support job placement. UNICEF, One World UK and People Health Development developed two video animations that were uploaded on the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport social media platform called 'Youth Chhlat', with the goal of reaching 143,000 adolescents.

With one in four ethnic minority girls marrying before the age of 18, girls in ethnic minority communities are particularly vulnerable to this practice. In collaboration with MoWA and Plan international, an action plan to prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancy in ethnic minority communities in Ratanakiri province, was drafted, supported by a theory of change. The Together for Girls partnership and the Government of Canada are partners in this work.

UNICEF continued to engage the Adolescent and Youth Reference Group in developing their capacity to enhance participation of adolescents and youths in policy dialogue and programme development, including the process of finalizing the VAC Action Plan, led by MoWA. UNICEF supported six capacity-building sessions and a consultative workshop with the adolescent and youth reference group and NGO partners on various topics related to violence against children and interventions to promote safe and protective behaviours and practices. Through these sessions and workshop, 39 adolescents and youths were trained on topics including proposal writing, communications and advocacy skills. They also participated in the annual the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, which achieved its goal of reaching more than 140,000 children and adolescents between November and December 2016. To sharpen and better guide UNICEF's work with and for adolescents, a strategic action plan on adolescents was drafted.

## Financial analysis

**Table 1: Planned budget by outcome area**

**Outcome Area 6: Child Protection  
Cambodia**

**Planned and Funded for the Country Programme 2016 (in US Dollar)**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Funding Type<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Planned Budget<sup>2</sup></b>
Output 3.1: Capacity to formulate child protection plans	RR	534,000
	ORR	500,000
Output 3.2: Quality child protection services	RR	210,000
	ORR	1,500,000
Output 3.3: Strengthened commune council capacity to protect children	RR	90,000
	ORR	750,000
Output 3.4: Strengthened capacity of youth organizations	RR	100,000
	ORR	250,000
<b>Total Budget</b>		<b>3,934,000</b>

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

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

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

\* The figures are generated by inSight as of March 2017

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

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

Donors	Grant number	Contribution amount	Programmable amount
Norwegian Committee for UNICEF	SC1499060069	235,838.70	220,410
United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF	SC1499060089	144,700.38	135,234
<b>Total</b>		<b>380,539.08</b>	<b>355,644</b>

\* The figures are generated by Vision as of March 2017

**Table 3: Expenditures in the outcome area**

**Outcome Area 6: Child Protection  
Cambodia  
2016 Expenditures by Key Result Areas (in US Dollars)**

Organizational Targets	Expenditure Amount*			
	Other Resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	All Programme Accounts
06-01 Data and Child Protection	6	11,138	18,680	29,824
06-02 Child Protection systems	250	908,105	119,276	1,027,630
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	92	286,506	93,523	380,121
06-04 Justice for children	2	885	10,756	11,643
06-05 Birth registration	5	125	24,120	24,250
06-06 Child Protection and emergencies	15	57,326		57,341
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen families and communities	160	351,248	427,688	779,096
06-08 Child Protection # General	266	540,979	672,843	1,214,088
<b>Total</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>2,156,311</b>	<b>1,366,885</b>	<b>3,523,993</b>

\* The figures are generated by InSight as of March 2017

**Table 4: Thematic expenses by programme area (in US Dollars)**

Fund category	All programme accounts
Year	2016
Business area	Cambodia - 0660
Prorated outcome area	06 Child Protection
Donor class Level 2	Thematic
Row labels	Expense
Other Resources - Emergency	818
06-01 Data and child protection	7
06-02 Child protection systems	257
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	94

06-04 Justice for children	2
06-05 Birth registration	5
06-06 Child protection and emergencies	15
06-07 Child protection # strengthen families and communities	165
06-08 Child protection # general	274
<b>Other Resources - Regular</b>	<b>353,037</b>
06-01 Data and child protection	10,969
06-02 Child protection systems	143,121
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	31,195
06-06 Child protection and emergencies	683
06-07 Child protection # strengthen families and communities	76,392
06-08 Child protection # general	90,676
<b>Total</b>	<b>353,855</b>

\* The figures are generated by inSight as of March 2017

**Table 5: Expenses by specific intervention codes (in US Dollars)**

Fund category	All programme accounts
Year	2016
Business area	Cambodia - 0660
Prorated outcome area	06 Child Protection
Donor class Level 2	Thematic
<b>Row labels</b>	<b>Expense</b>
06-01-02 Child protection and violations # routine administrative data collection and analysis	10,969
06-02-01 Child protection systems strengthening	118,918
06-02-02 Child protection # mapping and assessment	24,204
06-03-01 Violence against children (general)	19,001
06-03-02 Prevent and address emotional and physical violence (including corporal punishment)	10,236
06-03-05 Adolescent development # protection from violence	657
06-03-06 Prevent and address child labour	859
06-06-09 Child protection # emergency preparedness	683
06-07-01 Child protection # parenting programmes	1,909
06-07-02 Child protection - Alternative care	44,933
06-07-06 Prevent and address child marriage	468
06-07-07 Child sensitive social protection to prevent, reduce vulnerability and/or exclusion	28,475
06-08-01 Child protection # general	90,676
08-01-02 Annual review	818
08-09-06 Other # non-classifiable cross-sectoral activities	1,049
<b>Total</b>	<b>353,855</b>

\* The figures are generated by inSight as of March 2017

## Future work plan

UNICEF will further support the Government of Cambodia and work with various stakeholders to strengthen child protection systems through the following intervention activities:

- Provide technical advice to the Government to reform key policies, plans and procedures related to alternative care
- Train social workers to support effective case management, family-preservation approaches and alternatives to institutional care
- Support NGOs to return one in three children in residential care back to their families or communities and promote more child-friendly and community-based alternative care practices
- Support NGOs to provide essential violence prevention and response services to around 8,000 children per year
- Strengthen the child protection system to develop and implement a costed inter-ministerial action plan to prevent and respond to violence against girls and boys
- Establish and roll out a national child protection information management system
- Strengthen 3PC and community-based rehabilitation for children with disabilities to provide child protection services, including in emergencies, and to reintegrate children back to their communities
- Advocate for law reforms to protect children, including children in conflict with the law
- Train the police and NGOs in child-friendly justice mechanisms for reporting, referring and responding to child survivors of violence and children in contact with the law
- Protect children affected by disasters such as floods, droughts and unexploded remnants of war (landmines and bombs), and build children's resilience to disasters through improved disaster preparedness and response plans
- Train teachers to implement positive discipline practices and protect girls and boys from abuse in at least 800 primary schools
- Train health workers to screen, treat, report and refer children subjected to violence and sexual abuse
- Conduct behavioural change campaigns to prevent and respond to violence against children and unnecessary family separation
- Train key caregivers and community leaders to promote the protection of children from violence and unnecessary family separation, including in emergencies
- Support the implementation of the national strategic framework on positive parenting practices to prevent violence and unnecessary family separation
- Design the Child Protection Pagoda Programme to make pagodas safe for children, and equip monks with the knowledge to prevent and respond to violence against children in communities and prevent children from unnecessarily being placed in residential care
- Conduct community-based life skills and peer education programmes to reach adolescents with messages that promote safe and protective behaviours and practices
- Work with 3PC to scale up remedial education activities to reach more out-of-school adolescents and facilitate their entry back into the formal education system
- Mobilize civil society and community-based interventions and coordinate action with local authorities to reduce teenage pregnancy and early marriage in minority communities
- Work with the Adolescent and Youth Reference Group to contribute to policy dialogue and programme development for child protection and broader child rights

**Table 6: Planned budget for 2017**

**Outcome Area 6: Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse  
Cambodia  
Planned Budget and Available Resources for 2017  
(in US Dollars)**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Funding type</b>	<b>Planned budget<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Funded budget<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Shortfall<sup>2</sup></b>
Output 3.1: : Capacity to formulate child protection plans	RR	583,649.00	583,649.00	0.00
	ORR	1,119,000.00	606,526.00	512,474.00
Output 3.2: Quality child protection services	RR	75,238.00	75,238.00	0.00
	ORR	1,426,294.00	1,129,263.00	297,031.00
Output 3.3 Strengthened commune council capacity to protect children	RR	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
	ORR	751,705.00	645,705.00	106,000.00
Output 3.4 Strengthened capacity of youth organizations	RR	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
	ORR	423,724.00	284,230.00	139,494.00
<b>Sub-total Regular Resources</b>		<b>688,887.00</b>	<b>688,887.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Sub-total Other Resources - Regular</b>		<b>3,720,723.00</b>	<b>2,665,724.00</b>	<b>1,054,999.00</b>
<b>Total for 2017</b>		<b>4,409,610.00</b>	<b>3,354,611.00</b>	<b>1,054,999.00</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>2</sup> Other Resources shortfall represents ORR funding required for the achievements of results in 2016.

\* The figures are aligned with the Child Protection Rolling Work Plan 2017-18, updated as of March 2017

## Expression of thanks

UNICEF would like to extend its appreciation for the unwavering support and generous contribution from the Global – Child Protection Thematic Fund and its donors in supporting the protection of vulnerable children in Cambodia.

In particular, the contribution from the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF has enabled UNICEF Cambodia to support 13 ministries to finalize the inter-sectoral action plan to prevent violence against girls and boys.

With the financial support from UNICEF Norway and the 7: the David Beckham UNICEF Fund, UNICEF Cambodia was able to increase service delivery for highly vulnerable children through the partnership with MoSVY and 3PC, which reached more than 9,000 children who are vulnerable to or at risk of violence or unnecessary family separation.

Support from the UNICEF Regional Office for the East Asia and Pacific enabled UNICEF Cambodia to successfully advocate the Government of Cambodia to take an important step to guarantee the respect of the rights of children in the justice process. This resulted in the long-awaited draft juvenile justice law finally being approved by the National Assembly.

Without this contribution, UNICEF would not have been able to achieve the major milestones and longer-term sustainable gains that have improved the well-being of children throughout Cambodia.

## ANNEX A: Human interest story

### Girls not brides – ending child marriage in Cambodia

By CHAN Kanha and REAM Rin

Ratanakiri, Cambodia, March 2017 – In a small house in a traditional rural Cambodian village, a teenage girl carries a tiny baby and smiles at the UNICEF team that has come to visit her family.

All seems content in this typical home where 15 year-old Romas Linda lives with her parents and two younger twin sisters. The family resides in a village in Ratanakiri province, located in the north-eastern part of Cambodia.

Despite her young age, Romas shows an intuitive maternal bond to the newly-born infant. This is because the baby boy she dotes on is actually her son – the result of her marriage at the age of 13. Romas comes from the Jorai ethnic community. She married her husband Sok Chantha two years ago.

This marriage took place before she even reached puberty, when her husband was just 17 years old. Their baby is now six months old.

Romas said the migrant lifestyle of her parents in their search for work was one of the reasons she married so young and abandoned her schooling.

Reflecting on her life, she said: “One day, a friend gave me a phone number and told me that a boy loved me so much.

“I made a call then just to say hello to him. A few days later he came to visit me frequently and we felt really in love and agreed to get married. That time I was about 13 years old.

“I married my husband because I felt bored and stressful when I did not have any one to take care of me. Sometimes when my parents went out I slept only with my two young sisters. Other times when my mother was not in, I went to sleep over at my neighbours’ house”.



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In Cambodia, the legal age for marriage without parental consent is 18 and the legal age for marriage with parental consent is 16 for both genders.

However, the traditional practice of marrying off children before they are 18 is still widely practiced especially among ethnic groups and without authorization from the commune – as in Romas’ case.

This influence of community culture and social norms plays a strong role in teenage marriages for both girls and boys in Ratanakiri province.

Marrying at a very early age is equated with girls having value and being ‘beautiful’, ‘good’ and ‘modern’. The community often discriminates against older girls and unmarried women and men tend to view girls over the age of 18 as being too old to marry.

Romas' twin sisters are 10 and currently study at grade one level. Their marital destiny is in the distance, but Romas is indicative of the fate of many girls in the community who have dropped out of school, got married and given birth at a very early age. Significantly, Romas' mother was also a child bride who married at the age of 14.

Child marriage has a multifaceted and profound impact on children's lives, affecting their health, education, psychological development, social life, relationships and increased risk to future adversities.

The majority of teen brides do not receive any information about sexual and reproductive health, family planning, or childcare before they become pregnant which adds an extra dimension to the complexities of motherhood.

If a mother is under the age of 18, her infant's risk of dying in its first year of life is 60 per cent greater than that of an infant born to a mother older than 19.<sup>1</sup> Even if the child survives, he or she is more likely to suffer from low birth weight, under nutrition and late physical and cognitive development.<sup>2</sup>

In Cambodia, many girls living in rural areas say they face pressure to quit school to help their own, or their husband's families with farming or domestic chores. This lifestyle exposes them to a higher risk of complicated pregnancies and sexual assault.

It also has a life-changing impact on their future as they are forced into social isolation, with virtually no opportunities for career and vocational advancement – which passes on poverty to the next generation.

Although the country's overall fertility rate declined between 2010 and 2014, the adolescent pregnancy rate rose from eight to 12 per cent.<sup>3</sup> Rural girls are also twice as likely to become pregnant.

In Romas' case, she became pregnant at the age of 14. During her pregnancy, she had just one health check-up at the district referral hospital where she delivered her son.

"When I was pregnant, I went there to check my health and [the] health officer gave me some medicines (iron foliate acid) but I couldn't take as I terribly vomited." she said.

After the delivery of her son, Romas stayed as an in-patient in the hospital for five days as she had high blood pressure.

Since this treatment, she has never returned to the hospital for a health check-up. Her baby boy Seiha has not had the normal routine immunisations scheduled for a baby and to date he has only received one of three vaccinations an infant of his age should be given. However, he was exclusively breast-fed which is a health bonus.

Another important issue is the fact Seiha doesn't have a birth certificate yet. A child who is not registered at birth is in danger of being shut out of society and denied the right to an official identity, a recognized name and a nationality.

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, State of the world's Children, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF, State of the world's Children, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2014.



Romas said: “I am very busy with taking care of my son and my two younger sisters and I don’t have time yet to go to the commune office to register the birth of my son. I have been through difficult situations.” she added.

Her father was killed in a road accident. Her mother remarried in the hope of giving her family security but this relationship failed, so she has remarried for a third time.

Analysis of administrative data from Keh Chong Health Centre in Borkeo district during the first 10 months of 2016 revealed that 22 per cent of child birth deliveries were from girls aged 13-18 years old, indicating a high rate of teenage pregnancies in this area.

Additionally, in 2015, UNICEF conducted a household survey in the O’Chum district of Ratanakiri of 80 mothers with children under the age of five and this disclosed that 59 per cent of mothers got married before the age of 18.

This high prevalence of child marriage confirms findings in the 2014 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey which identified a higher prevalence of adolescent marriages in rural or remote geographic locations, ranging from a high of 36 per cent in Monduliri and Ratanakiri provinces.

Research shows that improving the education levels of girls and women contributes to decreased numbers of child marriages and early pregnancy. Unfortunately, education rates are still low among girls and women from ethnic minority communities.

Nationwide, one in three women – aged 15 to 19 – who have never attended school have begun childbearing.

UNICEF is working to deliver activities aimed at reducing child marriage and promoting safe behavior among adolescents by providing support to the Ministry of Women’s Affairs in developing the Provincial Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy for Ratanakiri province. This action plan, which is expected to be finalized during the course of this year, will address both child marriage and teenage pregnancy as two strongly interlinked issues.

This is part of the Royal Government of Cambodia’s commitment to taking action to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against children.



*Her Excellency Nob Mareth, Chair of the Women and Children Consultative Committee (WCCC), addresses delegates at a consultation workshop to review the draft action plan to prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancy, held in Ratanakiri in December 2016.  
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## ANNEX B: Donor Feedback Form

### Report Feedback Form

UNICEF is working to improve the quality of our reports and would highly appreciate your feedback. Kindly answer the questions below for the above-mentioned report. Thank you!

Please return the completed form back to UNICEF by email to:

Name:

Email:

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0

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

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

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

**Thank you for filling this form!**