

Mali

**Child Protection
Sectoral and OR+ (*Thematic*) Report**

January - December 2016



Girls in a school in Sabouciré n'di, the village where FGM/C and child marriage abandonment ceremonies by 42 villages took place on 3rd December 2016, Kayes region, Mali ©UNICEF/Balanzan Pixel, December 2016

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AMSOPT	Association Malienne pour le Suivi et l'Orientation des Pratiques Traditionnelles
AU	African Union
C4D	Communication for Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHW	Community Health Workers
CMA	Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CTFMR	Country Task Force on the MRM
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DNEC	National Direction of Civil Registry (Direction Nationale de l'Etat Civil)
DNPEF	National Direction for Children and Families (Direction Nationale de la Promotion de l'Enfant et de la Famille)
DRPFEF	Regional Directions of Promotion of Women, Children and Families (Direction Régionale de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille)
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad
MPFEF	Ministry of Promotion of Women, Children and Families (Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille)
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism of Grave Violations of Children's Rights
PNLE	National Programme on FGM/C (Programme National de Lutte pour l'abandon de l'Excision)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework

Executive Summary

The 2010 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys [MICS] has indicated that social and gender norms perpetuate harmful practices and gender-based inequalities: six out of ten girls are married before the age of 18 (one in six before age 15); nine out of ten women are victims of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting [FGM/C], and the practice is approved by eight out of ten people. Besides, 81% of children under five years old are registered at birth; while there is no significant difference between girls and boys, the figures are clearly worse for children rural settings than for those in urban settings. Based on this data highlighting the scale of such issues affecting the rights and protection of children, UNICEF's focus area were defined to address FGM/C, child marriage and birth registration – areas which strongly relate to Sustainable Development Goals [SDG] 5 and 16.

The above numbers have evolved as illustrated in the subsequent 2015 MICS but remain of significant concerns and require a long-term consistent commitment by multiple actors. According to the 2015 MICS, amongst women and girls between the ages of 15 and 49, 83% are victims of one form of FGM/C, 16% are married before the age of 15 years old and 49% before 18 years old. Besides, 87% of children under five years old are registered at birth.

As provided in UNICEF's CPD 2015-2019, based on the sector analysis and recommendations of the Committee for the Rights of the Child, the child protection sector aims to improve the governance framework for the protection of children, community level prevention and expansion of the response to abuse, exploitation and violence. At the macro level, the focus is on policy, legislative and budgetary frameworks and on coordination. At the medium level, interventions are centered on institutional support, and service- and capacity-building of governmental and non-governmental actors to improve responses. At the community level, efforts cover awareness raising and community dialogue to promote positive social norms and practices.

It is important to note that besides the above mentioned development issues, Mali faces a number of child protection issues relating to the crisis in the North of the country. This has a number of advocacy and programming implications for UNICEF, in terms of monitoring and analysing of children's vulnerabilities in changing humanitarian circumstances, ensuring coordinated action of protection actors at the national and sub-national levels (including in Clusters), providing services and support to children requiring special protection measures. It is also in direct link with several development issues, for example by significantly impacting birth registration of children born in the North.

While for the three thematic priorities, changing systems and social norms take time to occur and to be reflected in the prevalence at the outcome level, together with other actors, UNICEF has made a difference in building a protective environment for the children of Mali. In the child protection sector, UNICEF's key institutional partners are the Ministry of Promotion of Women, Children and Families (Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille [MPFEF]) and the Ministry of Territorial Administration (Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale). While the latter is a key partner on birth registration, the former encompasses a wide range of child protection issues affecting children in development and emergency contexts.

Regarding harmful practices, despite years of advocacy and engagement by civils society and government actors to bring the national legal framework in line with international and regional instruments ratified by Mali, the national legal framework is silent on FGM/C and allows girls to marry at 16 years old. While there are signs of the will to address harmful practices, such as the creation in 2002 of the National Programme on FGM/C (Programme National de Lutte pour l'abandon de l'Excision [PNLE]) in addition to national, regional and local levels

committees against harmful practices (Comité National d’Action pour l’abandon des Pratiques Néfastes) created in 1999, it has proved extremely difficult to obtain a result considering the opposition by decision making and influential groups including religious leaders.

Based on one of the key recommendations of a UNICEF-supported benchmark study in 2016 on the analysis of the drivers of continued resistance to FGM/C abandonment, efforts moved towards the more holistic and rights-based approach offered by Gender-Based Violence [GBV]. Such an approach aims to make progress on FGM/C and child marriage as well as other violence against children and women, shaping national level efforts for a law as well as community level interventions.

With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry MPFEF led workshops to coordinate actors and advocacy efforts aim at the adoption of a law on GBV, which led to the signing in 2017 of a ministerial decree to follow the process. In addition, workshops were help with elected officials from the national and local levels (including the members of the national assembly) to raise their awareness on the issues and highlight their critical role in bringing the national legal framework in line with international commitments.

On the ground, UNICEF continued to support service provision for survivors of GBV, and community mobilization to end FGM/C and child marriage in Mali, mainly in partnership with a national NGO in the Kayes region and health district. Survivors received quality services strengthened by the training of health care providers and social service workers. Besides, community level awareness raising and mobilization led to the abandonment of FGM/C and child marriage in 42 villages by the end 2016 (in addition to 96 that have abandoned in previous years).

In addition, in 2016, UNICEF Mali supported the Government and civil society to engage in a significant revision of the bilateral agreement on child trafficking between Mali and Guinea Conakry to address FGM/C, child marriage and cross-border movement of children.

Regarding birth registration, UNICEF made significant advances in 2016 in moving towards reform of the Civil Registration sector. The validation of a National Evaluation of the Civil Registration System contributed to the drafting a National Strategy, finalised technically and currently awaiting political validation. Besides, UNICEF provided institutional support to civil registration centres and trained civil registration actors.

Regarding to child protection in emergencies, UNICEF was largely involved in the prevention and response to the situation of children affected by armed conflict, including alongside MINUSMA through the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism [MRM] of Grave Violations of Children’s Rights, training, sensitization on mine risk education, and the provision of psychosocial care, specialized services or reintegration support to children.

Strategic Context of 2016

Outcome Six under the Country Programme Document (CPD) positions UNICEF Child Protection programming to focus on reinforcing the Child Protection System in Mali by addressing the two harmful practices of child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation / Cutting (FGM/C) as well as birth registration. This will contribute directly to SDGs 5 and 16: (5) achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and (16) promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. More specifically, the efforts of Outcome 6 address the two indicators under Target 5.3 on harmful practices for child marriage and FGM/C and the sole indicator under Target 16.9 on legal identity for all, including birth registration.

Changes in prevalence at the outcome level for all three thematic priorities are difficult to assess in a year's time for methodological reasons as well as the slow nature of transforming the underlying social and institutional norms and systems that are responsible for them. Nevertheless, UNICEF has observed – and made significant contributions towards – positive trends over the past year in bringing about improvements in the lives of the children of Mali.

Data from the 2015 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) provided revised estimates of the three key thematic outcome indicators for Child Protection in 2016. For the harmful practices of Child Marriage and FGM/C, there do not appear to be any significant changes from previous estimates: nearly half of girls in Mali are married as children, including almost one in five before age 15, and the prevalence of FGM/C remains exceedingly high, with little indication of changes in the social and gender norms that promote the gender inequality and other root causes responsible for these harmful practices.

Revised data on the prevalence of birth registration, however, suggests that the overall trend towards universal coverage is on track with 87% of parents of children 0-5 years of age reporting that their births were registered, but this estimate does not include children affected by the conflict in the North of the country where 150,000 children under six years of age are estimated to have had no access to birth registration services in 2015. Moreover, there remains a significant gap in children whose births have been registered and those who have attained a copy of their birth certificate. In addition, another pressing issue that has become increasingly apparent in 2016, particularly in the North of the country, is the impact on school-aged children who do not have a birth certificate and as a result are unable to sit for exams or even attend school in some cases.

Key challenges and changes in bringing about the desired results targeted through UNICEF's Child Protection programming were also observed in 2016. Addressing the harmful practices of Child Marriage and FGM/C faced a mix of both successes and setbacks. After years – even decades, in the case of FGM/C – of struggle by activists and advocates for gender equality and protecting children's rights to end the harmful practices of child marriage and FGM/C in Mali, 2016 marked a critical turning point. One of the key recommendations of a UNICEF-supported study in early 2016 on the drivers of continued resistance to FGM/C abandonment was the call for moving towards the more holistic and rights-based approach offered by GBV programming. With complementary assistance from the global Joint Programme on FGM and Regular Resources, UNICEF used Thematic Funds to expand both the depth and coverage of GBV-focused programming to address harmful practices through support to government and civil society partners.

As a result of the new GBV orientation, new momentum has emerged in trying to update laws in Mali, which effectively condone harmful practices with no explicit criminalization of FGM/C or child marriage (the legal age of marriage for males is set at 18 while girls can be married at 16), despite the recognition of the cruciality of addressing these two harmful practices in recommendations from periodic reports on the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Yet, at the same time, 2016, as compared to 2015, faced some notable setbacks.

In late 2015, key milestones were reached in strategically moving forward on child marriage, principally under the leadership of the Ministry of Women, Children and Family Affairs (MPFEF). First, a major national engagement was made through Mali's participation in the African Union (AU) campaign to End Child Marriage, which included the First Lady's launch of the Mali National Campaign in October 2015, followed by a UNICEF-supported delegation from Mali to the AU Girl's Summit in Lusaka, Zambia in November 2015. In addition, the National Direction for Children and Families (Direction Nationale de la Promotion de l'Enfant et de la Famille [DNPEF]) oversaw the validation of a National Road Map to End Child

Marriage in Mali in October 2015. Yet despite these major gains in 2015, there was limited capacity or focus within the Ministry MPFEF to capitalize upon them in 2016 as lack of clarity on institutional leadership on child marriage was in question for much of the year.

In the area of birth registration, there was a major push on policy reform and a more strategic reorientation of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics [CRVS] sector over previous years. As a result, efforts in 2017 will focus on capitalizing on these strategic gains for improving the quality and availability of and demand for services, while addressing specific inequities, using thematic Funds to fill in geographic and programmatic gaps not covered through the Birth Registration for Maternal and Child Health if Africa programme and regular resources.

In particular, programming will focus on taking measures to modernize the CRVS sector. Currently, many civil registration centres rely on manual type writers for issuing birth certificates and have no means of transmitting birth registration data from the health centres that provide a vital link between parents and the formal CRVS system. For example, the use of mobile technology to facilitate communication and the interoperability between the health and civil registration sectors will be areas of focus in 2017. Thematic funds will also be used in 2017 to expand coverage of birth registration services in pockets of the North of the country.

Indeed, in addition to significant child protection concerns in its development context, Mali has been affected by an unprecedented complex crisis since January 2012, particularly affecting the North of the country, leading to large displacements of population and exacerbating children's vulnerabilities. UNICEF had to shift from development to a more emergency-led programming, taking into account additional risks of violation of children's rights and violence against children. While the political process made noticeable progress in 2015 with the Algiers Peace Agreement signed by the Government of Mali, the Platform coalition of armed groups (Platform) and the Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA), to date the implementation remains a challenge and a number of security incidents and renewed fighting continue to jeopardize peace, security and access to certain areas. In 2016, grave violations against children continued to be reported including, among others, incidents of recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, as well as attacks on schools and protected personnel (education staff).

UNICEF has since the very beginning of the crisis been instrumental in supporting coordination efforts alongside the Government of Mali in the child protection sub-cluster, and strengthening the capacity of actors on topics related to child protection in emergencies. The response allowed to provide children with recreational activities, psychosocial support, GBV services, reintegration with families, and mine risk education regarding the risk of mines and unexploded ordnance. UNICEF has also always been mobilized to prevent recruitment and use of children by armed groups, including through advocacy and dialogue with parties to the conflict, the elaboration of guidelines for humanitarian actors, and contribution to the monitoring and reporting of grave child rights violations (MRM activated in 2013) with MINUSMA. More recently, UNICEF is supporting the Malian authorities responsible to provide protection and relief to all children affected by the armed conflict, to ensure that children identified through the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process are separated and transferred to child protection actors. In the context of the pre-cantonment of signatory armed groups, a prerequisite for the national DDR program in Mali, 10 children were identified during the screening and registration of combatants in Gao in December 2016 and early January 2017.

Results in the Outcome Area

In 2016, in line with UNICEF's CPD 2015-2019 and UNDAF Plus 2015-2019, the Protection Outcome is dedicated to support the Government of Mali improve its policy and legislative framework, to support quality service delivery, to strengthen the resilience of communities and systems and to care for children affected by emergencies.

More specifically, UNICEF continued its engagement with the Ministry of Promotion of Women, Children and Families (MPFEF) to strengthen child protection systems and the Ministry's capacities in terms of planning, coordination, and policy environment. In collaboration with Technical and Financial Partners, UNICEF worked with the Ministry's various departments such as the National Direction for Children and Families (DNPEF), the National Programme on FGM/C (PNLE) and its Regional Directions (Direction Régionale de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille [DRPFEF]). Relating to the promotion of birth registration, UNICEF supports the Ministry of Territorial Administration (Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale), and more specifically the National Direction of Civil Registry (Direction Nationale de l'Etat Civil [DNEC]).

Output 1 - Policy and legislative framework

UNICEF's work on the policy and legislative framework focused on the following: advocacy for legislative provisions on FGM/C and child marriage, the reform of the civil registration sector relevant for birth registration, and a bilateral agreement on child trafficking.

In 2016, continued institutional commitment and support from related actors, including technical and financial partners, encouraged the adoption of legislation on FGM/C and child marriage that would bring Mali in line with its international obligations. The year was marked by a shift towards advocacy towards a more comprehensive law on GBV which would address both harmful practices and other violence against children or women, as was in fact illustrated during the high level celebrations of the "International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM/C (6th February)" held on February 9th 2017. One trigger of this shift promoted by key government partners for Child Protection was a benchmark study on the analysis of influential factors for the abandonment of FGM/C in Mali (title in French: « Analyse critique des acteurs d'influence à l'accélération de l'abandon de la pratique des MGF/Excision au Mali »), which was completed by the National Programme on FGM/C with UNICEF support.

With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry MPFEF led two workshops in September and October 2016 to coordinate actors and advocacy efforts aimed at the adoption of a law prohibiting the practice of FGM/C and raising the age of marriage for girls. The types and forms of GBV not already taken into account by the Malian legislation were identified and agreed on by all stakeholders so that messages and advocacy efforts can be aligned and consistent. In addition, the workshops led to a proposal for a ministerial decree establishing a National Committee for the Follow-up of the Draft GBV Law – the decree was signed by the Minister in January 2017 and held its first meeting in February 2017. A roadmap was also developed to monitor the process of the adoption of the law and to provide a framework for stronger coordination and synergies between actors and interventions. In addition, in December 2016, four workshops were help with elected officials from the national and local levels (including the members of the national assembly) to raise their awareness on the issues and highlight their critical role in bringing the national legal framework in line with international commitments.

UNICEF support also helped to mobilize high-level engagement of the First Lady, specifically on the African Union campaign to end child marriage launched in 2015, that was demonstrated again in 2016 by her signature of an act of commitment called "Daughter not to marry: I am

committed to the abandonment of the child marriage”, during the International Day of the Girl Child in October 2016. The celebrations of this international day put ending child marriage at the centre of attention, while the earlier celebrations of the international of day of Zero Tolerance for FGM/C was marked by advocacy for a law banning FGM/C.

In addition, UNICEF supported the Government and civil society to engage in a significant revision of the bilateral agreement on child trafficking between Mali and Guinea Conakry. This translated into the agreement addressing the topics of FGM/C, child marriage and cross-border movement of children.

Significant progress has been made on advancing the policy environment for adoption of a National Strategy on Reform of the Civil Registration Sector, as well as regional capacity for birth registration. Progress is of particular importance as it relates to SDG 16 aiming to provide birth registration for all. On the basis of the results of the Report of the National Evaluation of the Civil Registration System (CRVS), the National Direction of Civil Registration, with UNICEF support, developed a National Strategy for Civil Registration and a Budgeted Action Plan that have been submitted to the Ministry of Territorial Administration for validation to ensure the reform of the civil registration system. These documents, drawn up in accordance with the standards laid down by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa [ECA], provide to the government and to all actors involved in the CRVS sector strategic and operational requirements for the modernization of the CRVS system in Mali.

Output 2 – Capacity building

Institutional and technical capacity of child protection actors and services at national and regional level to plan and provide quality service were strengthened in order to improve interventions for the prevention and response to children's vulnerabilities.

Recognizing the limited capacity of national and sub-national protection actors to plan and monitor activities, UNICEF supported government officials to methodically develop region-specific work plans, budgets, and detailed implementation plans. The National Direction for Children and Families (DNPEF), the National Programme on FGM/C (PNLE) and the National Direction of Civil Registry (Direction Nationale de l'Etat Civil [DNEC]), as well as nine decentralized public services at the regional level (DRPFEF), developed budgeted work plans with performance indicators aligned to the Government of Mali-UNICEF Rolling Work Plan with support from UNICEF.

As part of efforts to address FGM/C and child marriage, UNICEF continued to work on the response to GBV in the health district of Kayes in collaboration with a national NGO and long-time partner, the Association Malienne pour le Suivi et l'Orientation des Pratiques Traditionnelles [AMSOPT]. UNICEF strengthens partners' capacity to provide GBV services to survivors in line with international standards relating to confidentiality, respecting the wishes of the survivor, and acting in the best interests of a child. Quality of GBV services was strengthened with the training of 250 health care providers on FGM/C, child marriage and provision of quality medical care, as well as the training of 166 social workers (psychosocial agents, including teachers and students), in survivor-centered care and psychological first aid. The offer of services benefited 1,935 survivors of GBV in referrals to psychosocial, medical and legal care and support.

The national level evaluation of the civil registration and vital statistics system highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the different actors involved in offering services for registration of key events, including birth registration (declarations' officers, civil registration officers, agents from territorial administration and justice). Based on the results of the evaluation, the National Direction of Civil Registry (DNEC), with UNICEF technical and financial support, trained 834 actors and equipped 150 civil registration centres with declaration kits including

typewriters. In the localities of Bandiagara and Bougouni respectively in Mopti and Sikasso regions, birth registration service provision improved as a result of UNICEF-supported capacity building on improving provider knowledge and competencies. The 150 centers are now operational and able to provide birth certificates to parents in a more timely and appropriate manner.

At the national level, training materials used by the multiple civil society and government actors on civil registration were harmonized with UNICEF support to bring them in line with national legal provisions. An analysis of the specific capacity-building needs of the actors involved in the civil registration system is also available. The use of the revised materials in 2017 will help strengthen knowledge of the actors on civil registration procedures and will contribute to an appropriate management of civil registration and vital statistics, including birth registration.

Furthermore, in order to reinforce interoperability between health and civil registration services, activities emphasized the capture of vital events occurring at community level (approximately half of birth in Mali occurs at home) by assigning a new role to Community Health Workers [CHW] in addition to health promotion and integrated case management; such new role includes birth and death notification, dissemination of information on the importance of birth and death registrations as well as process and steps towards birth certification.

Output 3 – Positive social change

In intervention areas, UNICEF continued to support associations and community-based actors to raise awareness and challenge social norms that support gender inequality and violence against women and girls.

In the health district of Kayes, to advance efforts to address harmful social norms such as FGM/C and child marriage, UNICEF's efforts on community mobilization with the national NGO AMSOPT, continued to advance during this period.

Communities in 102 villages were mobilized and have a better knowledge of the consequences of FGM/C and child marriage as well as the services available. More than 417,000 people (417,490 people: 269,592 women, 47,418 men, 52,160 girls, and 48,320 boys) received messages disseminated through traditional and modern channels, with the support from AMSOPT and UNICEF.

In addition, community-based referral mechanisms were strengthened through the training of 368 community focal points, who reached out to members of their communities on messages of FGM/C abandonment, ending child marriage and referring of survivors to GBV services.

In December 2016, 42 villages held ceremonies with Public Declarations of FGM/C abandonment, bringing the total number of villages having declared FGM/C abandonment to 138 (96 have abandoned in previous years).

In the regions of Kayes, Koulikoro, Segou, and Sikasso and in the 6 districts of Bamako, 3,338 community leaders (local administration, religious leaders, women's associations etc.), local media and traditional communicators increased their knowledge regarding FGM/C and child marriage as well as on services available. Of the 3,338 people trained on GBV, 1,442 individual community members were identified to promote and accompany change in their peers' behaviours in favour of the abandonment of practices such as FGM/C, child marriage and other forms of GBV.

Relating to birth registration, the national CRVS evaluation highlighted the lack of knowledge and awareness of stakeholders regarding the birth registration process. To face this crucial issue, UNICEF provided technical and financial support to the Government in organising two public debates in Mopti and Sikasso. Furthermore, UNICEF Communication for Development [C4D] elaborated communication supports for proximity campaign of information's on CRVS in the country.

Output 4 – Emergencies

Despite limited availability of funds in support of Child Protection in Emergencies and persisting insecurity in the north of the country, UNICEF ensured minimal programming and coordination of child protection interventions for crisis-affected children in Mali.

In response to the crisis in the North, UNICEF continued to support national coordination of the government co-led Child Protection Sub-Cluster, as well as sub-national Child Protection and GBV coordination mechanisms in Mopti and Gao. This allowed UNICEF to regularly monitor and analyse children and women's vulnerabilities to changing humanitarian circumstances and ensure coordinated action of protection actors to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse of children. Unfortunately, insecurity in the Centre and North of the country (Gao, Timbuktu, Kidal, etc.) continued to impact the presence of basic social services and provide limited access to humanitarian services for the numerous children requiring special protection measures.

As co-lead with MINUSMA of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) of Grave Violations against children, UNICEF made significant contributions to the Secretary General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, as well as the four periodic Global Horizontal Notes as the co-drafter of the reports. In addition, the Country Task Force on the MRM [CTFMR] held a high level meeting, supported by the work of the MRM Technical working group, and trained 22 Child Protection actors in Gao Region who gained the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the monitoring and reporting on cases of grave violations of children's rights.

In addition, working with the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] and Handicap International, more than 98,448 people in Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu were reached with sensitization messages on mine risk education and 796 children affected by the conflict were provided psychosocial support or other specialized services, including the following: UNICEF and its partners assisted nine children formerly associated with armed groups who benefited from multi-sectoral assistance and who were handed over to UNICEF as per the Protocol signed on 1 July 2013 between the Government of Mali and the United Nations on the transfer of children associated with forces and armed groups.

UNICEF co-led the National Child Protection Sub-Cluster with the National Direction for Children and Families (DNPEF) during 2016, holding monthly meetings for coordination of Child Protection in Emergencies, ensuring information-sharing and joint analysis of emerging child protection issues, as well as sub-national coordination in Mopti and Gao Regions. The information and analyses provided by the national and sub-national coordination efforts were important contributions to the Humanitarian Response Plan.

A document for Strategic Orientation on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of Children Associated with Armed Groups and Armed Forces in Mali was technically validated at the national level in December 2016. Working with the Child Protection Sub-Cluster and under the lead of the DNPEF, UNICEF provided technical and financial support to the elaboration of the document and to the validation workshop. This key document is a preliminary step towards the development of a National Strategy on Child DDR and provides Child Protection actors with national level guidance on the release, care and community and socioeconomic reinsertion of children associated with armed groups in Mali. As a response to UNICEF and the CTFMR's consistent call for the integration of the specific needs of children into the DDR process, a senior Defence official, expert on women and children issues, was appointed in December 2016 within the newly established National DDR Commission. Furthermore, an action plan to stop child recruitment and use, sexual violence and other grave violations was developed in June by the CTFMR with the CMA and the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad [MNLA] (an armed group part of the CMA listed in the annexes

of the Secretary General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict for recruitment and use and sexual violence against children). Discussions were underway for its signature throughout 2016 and the Action Plan was finally endorsed by CMA in March 2017.

In Gao and Asongo areas of Gao Region, UNICEF worked with Save the Children to strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms by supporting eight child-friendly spaces and eight local protection committees, which benefited 866 children (427 boys and 399 girls) at risk of violence, exploitation or abuse, and the referral of 100 child victims to specialized services and case management. 225 children (115 girls and 110 boys) also have increased knowledge and skills to prevent violence as they participate in a local Children's Club. Similarly, in Mopti Region, UNICEF supported a local organization to set up and run four child-friendly spaces to enhance community-based child protection, resulting in the referral of approximately 100 children affected by the conflict. UNICEF also worked with Danish Refugee Council in Timbuktu region to train 115 local administrative authorities in Gossi and N'Tillit areas as well as 30 child protection authorities, eight child-friendly space volunteers and 14 child protection service providers on child protection concepts, community-based protection monitoring and reporting on the six grave violations of children's rights in conflict situations.

Results Assessment Framework

Outcome : PROTECTION			
Outcome Indicators	Baseline e (2014-15)	Target (2019)	Progress (2016)
Percentage of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone FGM/C	88,5 %	86%	According to MICS 2015, amongst women and girls between the ages of 15 and 49, 83% have experienced one form of FGM/C (female genital mutilation and cutting)
Percentage of girls and women aged 15-49 years married before age 18	49% (20-49 yrs)	44%	According to MICS 2015, amongst women and girls between the ages of 15 and 49, 16% are married before the age of 15 years old and 49% before 18 years old
Percentage of children registered at birth	81%	90%	According to MICS 2015, 87% of children 0-5 years of age had their births registered
Output 1: By 2019, the policy and legislative framework for the child protection sector is harmonized and its institutional and budgetary components are reformed			
Output Indicators	Baseline e (2014-15)	Target (2016)	Progress (2016)
Number of national policy documents developed and adopted by institutional bodies	2	1	National Strategy for the Reform and Modernization of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System in Mali finalized and submitted for technical validation in December 2016
Number of Revised Acts and Regulations	1	1 (2019)	N/A
Number of Acts and Regulations Adopted	0	1 (2019)	Significant progress was made in advancing towards a national GBV Law that takes into account FGM/C and Child Marriage
Number of sectoral plans revised and incorporating CP issues	N/A	55	No progress to report in 2016 as the process is largely determined at the local level outside of the control of Child Protection actors
Number of sectoral policies revised incorporating CP issues	N/A	0	N/A
% Of State budget allocated to MPFEF	0.01	0.02	No information available for 2016, but this will be assessed in the 2017 National Mapping
Ability to analyse the amount of financial resources allocated to CP interventions	No	No	No progress to report in 2016, but this will be assessed and addressed through the 2017 National Mapping of Child Protection Systems
Number of locations that hold coordination meetings on CP interventions	02	02	In 2016, 3 locations held Sub-cluster meetings (Mopti, Gao and Bamako).

			UNICEF also supported locations hold meeting as part of the coordination of interventions on harmful practices (PNLE and national, regional and local institutional committees for the abandonment of harmful practices)
Output 2: By 2019, the capacity of institutional and informal actors at the national, regional and local level is strengthened in terms of planning, implementing and monitoring interventions for the prevention and response to children's vulnerabilities			
Output Indicators	Baseline e (2014)	Target (2016)	Progress (2016)
Mapping of stakeholders with the capacity to positively influence the debate on FGM / C in Mali available	N/A	Yes	Study on Motivations to Abandon FGM/C in Mali completed during the first trimester of 2016
Number of governmental and non-governmental actors at national, regional and local level who are familiar with basic concepts, planning tools and techniques	0	80	28 actors concerned by the end of 2016. However, more than 80 Child Protection and GBV actors were trained on child protection case management through a project with the International Rescue Committee and the Working Group on Case Management and UNICEF-supported training in Kayes Region
Number of Work Plans available at national, regional and local level	0	10	UNICEF worked with national (3) and regional partners (8) to develop microplanning work plans for each institution in 2016
Number of governmental and non-governmental actors at national, regional and local level who are familiar with the basic concepts and approaches to child protection	0	500	Information not available for 2016
Number of governmental and non-governmental actors at the national, regional and local levels who use child protection tools and techniques	0	500	Information not available for 2016
Number of central and regional services using the data collection and analysis system	0	3	A detailed concept note was developed in 2016 for a National Information Management System for Child Protection. Other existing systems that were reinforced in 2016 through capacity building of partners include GBVIMS and Di-monitoring (used for FGM/C related interventions).
Output 3: By 2019, communities in priority intervention areas adopt behaviours and practices that promote positive social norms against violence, abuse and exploitation towards children			
Output Indicators	Baseline e (2014)	Target (2016)	Progress (2016)
Communities that have participated in a public declaration of support for the abandonment of FGM/C	N/A	36	In 2016, as part of UNICEF supported activities, 42 new villages in the Kayes region declared commitment to abandoning FGM/C, bringing the total number to 138 villages that have declared and maintained their abandonment status (96 had abandoned in 2011-2014)

Number of community leaders in targeted areas of intervention who actively support advocacy for abandonment of FGM / C.	N/A	30	In 2016, 368 community focal points were sensitized and began actively advocating on FGM/C abandonment
Number of community leaders in targeted areas of intervention who actively support advocacy for abandonment of early marriages.	N/A	30	In 2016, 368 community focal points were sensitized and began actively advocating for ending child marriage
Number of people affected by information, mass awareness and outreach messages on the consequences of FGM / C and child marriage, birth registration process and available services	278,282	700,000	In 2016, a total of 467,521 individuals were reached with messages on FGM/C abandonment, ending child marriage, promotion of birth registration and available services (more specifically, 417,490 people were reached on FGM/C and child marriage)
Number of influential people who have acquired knowledge and skills to influence behaviour change within their communities	1,045	3,135	In 2016, 3,338 influential people were sensitized on FGM/C abandonment and ending child marriage, and 1,442 influential people trained on GBV became community-based models (positive deviants) who promote and accompany change in their peers' behaviors in favor of the abandonment of practices such as FGM/C, child marriage and other forms of GBV.
Output 4	At least 50% of children affected by humanitarian emergencies benefit from protection and reintegration measures		
Output Indicators	Baseline (2014)	Target (2016)	Progress (2016)
UNICEF-targeted children released from armed forces and groups who were reintegrated	14	100	In 2016, 9 children associated with armed groups received care and support for their reintegration into their families and communities. The DDR process did not commence until December 2016.
UNICEF-targeted children in humanitarian situations benefiting from psychosocial support	1,325	2,000	In 2016 7,837 children accessed psychosocial support
Number of competent and operational regional and local teams to prevent risks and respond to emergencies	N/A	16 (3 regional and 13 local) (2015)	In 2016, 14 local child protection in emergencies committees were put in place by partner NGOs in the North of Mali
Number of regional contingency plans updated and validated	0	09	No progress in 2016, activity not yet realised by Government implementing partner
Number of GBV survivors who received holistic care	0	250	In 2016, GBV services were provided as part of development programming, child protection in emergencies efforts were focused on children associated with armed groups.
Number of official reports produced on MRM and Children in Armed Conflicts	4	09	In 2016, 5 reports including one annual report and four global horizontal notes

Financial Analysis

Table 1: Planned budget by Outcome Area

Intermediate Results	Funding Type	Planned Budget
OUTPUT 1 [POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAME]	RR	476,000
	ORR	232,500
OUTPUT 2 [CAPACITY BUILDING]	RR	658,000
	ORR	418,500
OUTPUT 3 [POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE]	RR	182,000
	ORR	869,550
OUTPUT 4 [CHILD PROTECTION IN EMERGENCY]	RR	84,000
	ORR	710,520
Total Budget		3,631,070

The above table details the 2016 planning amounts. Actually, Regular Resources (RR, or non-grant) were mostly used on the national level advocacy and accomplishments relating to the policy and legislative framework, while funds from donors were more significantly directed to capacity building and services, community level work and the response to the situation in the North.

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

Donors	Grant Number*	Contribution Amount	Programmable Amount
SIDA - Sweden	SC1499060094	1,415,544	1,322,938
Total		1,415,544	1,322,938

The Government of Sweden has been a consistent and highly engaged partner for Child Protection in Mali over the years. The funds received in 2016 helped to fill a critical gap in the sector at a time when few donors are focused on responding to protection needs in the development context given the protracted humanitarian situation and post-conflict transition.

Table 3: Expenditures in the Outcome Area

Organizational Targets	Expenditure Amount*			
	Other Resources – Emergency (ORE)	Other Resources – Regular (ORR)	Regular Resources (RR)	All Programme Accounts
06-02 Child Protection systems	444	246,739	360,390	607,574
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	-15,684	251,590	320,970	556,876
06-05 Birth registration	374	246,449	208,450	455,273
06-06 Child Protection and emergencies	806,067	129,790	316,764	1,252,620
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen families and communities	459	348,456	224,704	573,619
06-08 Child Protection # General	861	314,311	948,575	1,263,747
Total	792,521	1,537,335	2,379,853	4,709,709

Total expenditures for 2016 were nearly \$5 Million USD (\$4,709,709), with roughly equal amounts spent in Child Protection in Emergencies, General Child Protection, and addressing specific Child Protection development priorities.

Other Regular Resources for Child Protection in Emergencies was mostly funded through the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to provide direct support to partners in the North of the country on Mine Risk Education, Community-Based Child Protection mechanisms, coordination, and Case Management for children who have been victims of exploitation, abuse, or violence. Additional Funds from the Belgian Government supported work on the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism of Grave Violations of Children's Rights and prevention and response to the recruitment and use of children associated with armed groups.

In addition to funds from the Government of Sweden, Other Regular Resources included specific funds from the Multi-Country Joint Programme to End FGM/C, as well as funds from the Canadian Government for the Birth Registration for Maternal and Child Health in Africa Programme.

Regular Resources were used to cover the cost various gaps and core human resources within the Child Protection Section.

Table 4: Thematic expenses by programme area

Other Resources - Regular	Expenses
06-02 Child Protection systems	197,572
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	1,815
06-05 Birth registration	1,087
06-06 Child Protection and emergencies	-3,337
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen families and communities	234,637
06-08 Child Protection # General	296,203
Grand Total	727,978

It is important to note that funds from the Government of Sweden were only used for development work (mainly on harmful practices including child marriage and child protection systems), while child protection in emergencies work was funded by other resources. This explains why in the above table Thematic expenses did not cover Output 4 for Child Protection in Emergencies.

Table 5: Expenses by Specific Intervention Codes

Intervention	Expense
06-02 Child Protection systems	607,574
06-03 Violence, exploitation and abuse	556,876
06-05 Birth registration	455,273
06-06 Child Protection and emergencies	1,252,620
06-07 Child Protection # strengthen families and communities	573,619
06-08 Child Protection # General	1,263,747
Grand Total	4,709,709

Table 6: Planned budget for 2016**Planned Budget and Available Resources for 2016**

Intermediate Result	Funding Type	Planned Budget	Funded Budget	Shortfall
OUTPUT 1 [POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAME]	RR	2,380,000	913,289	1,466,711
	ORR	1,162,500	342,439	820,061
OUTPUT 2 [CAPACITY BUILDING]	RR	3,290,000	503,262	2,786,738
	ORR	2,092,500	820,151	1,272,349
OUTPUT 3 [POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE]	RR	910,000	515715	394,285
	ORR	4,347,750	1,131,611	3,216,139
OUTPUT 4 [CHILD PROTECTION IN EMERGENCY]	RR	420,000	135,281	284,719
	ORR	3,552,600	555,777	2,996,823
Sub-total Regular Resources		7,000,000	2,067,547	4,932,453
Sub-total Other Resources - Regular		11,155,350	2,849,978	8,305,372
Total for 2016		18,155,350	4,917,525	13,237,825

Future Work Plan

Child Protection programming in Mali in 2017 and 2018 will further anchor the efforts to end harmful traditional practices of child marriage and FGM/C and to move closer towards universal coverage of birth registration in the Child Protection Systems approach. The principal activity support this approach will be the National Mapping of the Child Protection System, which will focus on budget allocations and information to advocate for policy and institutional changes in order to create a more favourable environment for the protection of child rights in Mali. Furthermore, the results of the Mapping will provide critical information on the legal and normative framework to help identify key actions for advocacy with policy makers and to help to strengthen the Ministry MPFEF's capacity to establish coordination mechanisms at central and regional level around issues of violence, exploitation and abuse of children.

At the same time, UNICEF will continue its support to coordinate actors and advocacy efforts aiming at the adoption of a law prohibiting the practice of FGM/C and raising the age of marriage for girls, potentially through a comprehensive law on GBV. The most strategic GBV-focused approach will also be the basis for advancing on National GBV Strategy, reviewing and revising GBV training curriculum, and developing a new GBV Communications Plan. Child Protection programming will also further prevention of and response to child marriage, FGM/C, and other forms of GBV by strengthening the referral pathway for GBV services, risk reduction programming targeting adolescent girls, and the capacity of communities to challenge and transform harmful social and gender norms that stigmatize survivors of GBV, discriminate against women and girls, and promote harmful traditional practices.

In the birth registration sector, UNICEF will focus on harnessing the positive gains made in 2016 in the reform and modernization of the CRVS system in Mali. This will include using the harmonized and revised training materials for the multiple civil society and government actors on civil registration accomplished in 2016 to help strengthen knowledge of the actors on civil registration procedures and will contribute to an appropriate management of civil registration and vital statistics, including birth registration in 2017. In addition, the use of mobile technology to facilitate communication and the interoperability between the health and civil registration sectors will be a major focus in 2017. Thematic funds will also be used in 2017 to expand coverage of birth registration services in pockets of the North of the country.

In addition, child protection in emergencies programming will continue at the national level and in the North of the country. The presence of children among armed groups remains an issue of great concern in Mali. With the on-going DDR process, UNICEF will continue its efforts to ensure that children who are in armed groups are identified during the screening of combatants, separated and handed over to child protection partners. Beside, as part of continued efforts to prevent and end the recruitment, use and association of all children under 18 as well as actions to prevent rape, other forms of sexual violence and all other grave violations against children, the United Nations will be involved in providing technical assistance to the CMA which in March 2017 signed an Action plan.

Expression of Thanks

Results for children have been achieved because of the will and contributions of a number of actors committed to prevent and protect children from violence.

UNICEF Mali would like to particularly thank all donors that through thematic funds support programming in Mali. Such funding provide UNICEF with a valuable flexibility in shaping its strategies and work to advance child protection in collaboration with governmental and civil society partners. We would like to express our most sincere appreciation to the Government of Sweden for its continued support and close in-country collaboration to improve child protection systems, prevent children's rights violations and protect children from harmful practices.

UNICEF would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work accomplished by the Government of Mali, as well as fruitful collaborations with NGOs, UN Agencies and other technical and financial partners. We also greatly thank leaders and influencers who at the local levels give a voice to child protection within their communities.

Annex 1: Human Interest Story:

Harmful practices abandonment



Girl in a school in Sabouciré n'di, on the board: "No excision and child marriage in our village"

In the Kayes health district of Mali, with the support of UNICEF, the national NGO Association Malienne pour le Suivi et l'Orientation des Pratiques Traditionnelles (AMSOPT) has been working since 2008. AMSOPT's activities are structured around three pillars. First, to provide quality services to survivors of gender based violence; second, to raise awareness and mobilize communities for the elimination of harmful practices; third, to strengthen monitoring and coordination of interventions at the local level.

The latest partnership started in September 2015 and ended with the celebrations of abandonment of harmful practices in December 2016 (a new partnership subsequently started). It was funded through thematic funding as well as by the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) currently operational in 17 countries.

Djibril Sidibé, Sabouciré N'Di village's Imam, is surrounded by children learning the Coran. According to him: "*Religion has shown that FGM/C is not mandatory. There is evidence in the Quran that proves it. The hadiths also did not demonstrate it. So Islam forbids any act that can hurt a person's physical integrity.*" "*I make children understand the negative consequences of practicing FGM/C and early marriage so that they can sensitize their parents at home. Thanks to the NGO AMSOPT's awareness raising work, religious leaders have understood the message and the negative consequences of FGM/C and child marriage.*"



As part of community mobilization efforts, years of engagement with communities and particularly with their leaders and influential members result in villages committing to the abandonment of harmful practices, celebrating and signing conventions. On December 3rd 2016, 42 villages held ceremonies with public declarations of abandonment of FGM/C and

child marriage, bringing the total number of villages having committed to ending harmful practices to 138 out of the 152 villages where AMSOPT is working (96 have abandoned in previous years).

More than 800 participants from the 152 villages gathered to celebrate, with representative from national, regional and local institutions, as well as media and civil society organizations working on gender based violence and child protection.

Such publicly held celebrations create an accountability for villages to honor their commitments and represent an opportunity to demonstrate that a positive change of social norms is possible, resonating beyond the concerned villages.



(Left) Oumou Dianga, former exciser. *"I was a former circumciser but today I've stopped doing it. After the death of my husband, I practiced to feed my family. Since I learned about the harmful consequences, I decided to give up. Before, we did not know the consequences, but now I have stopped the practice completely. I ask everyone to ban excision."*



(Right) Short theatre to raise awareness against FGM/C during the abandonment celebrations in Sabouciré n'di.

The festive day addressed the issues through speeches, theatre, poetry, testimonies by a former-exciser, a religious leader, the family of a victim and migrants. It ended with the village chiefs and the mayor of Sabouciré N'di village signing abandonment conventions which are then handed over to the representative of the Ministry of Promotion of Women, Children and Families (Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme, de l'Enfant et de la Famille).



Sabouciré n'di's head of village signing the abandonment of FGM/C and child marriage commitment, during the abandonment ceremonies.

Photos ©UNICEF /Balanzan Pixel, December 2016

Annex 2: Report Feedback Form

PBA No. : SC149906

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 and return to our office as indicated below. Thank you!

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

Alessandra Dentice, Deputy Representative
E-mail: adentice@unicef.org

SCORING: 5 indicates “highest level of satisfaction” while

0 indicates “complete dissatisfaction”

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

5	4	3	2	1	0

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0

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

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

5	4	3	2	1	0

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

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

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