

# **EVALUATION OF THE UNICEF BANGLADESH CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAMME 2012-2016**

**UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office**

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September 2016

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## ACRONYMS

AAO	Advanced Adolescent Organisation
BCO	UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office
BLAST	Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust
BNWLA	Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association
BRIS	Birth Registration Information System
BSST-PSST	Basic Social Services Training – Professional Social Services Training
CABA	Children Affected By Aids
CBCPC	Community Based Child Protection Committees
CCC	Core Corporate Commitments in Emergencies
CCL	Centralized Call Centre (for Child Helpline)
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CDC	Child Development Centre (KUK)
CDM	Child Development: A Child Rights Perspective training (Parenting Skills)
C4D	Communication for Development
CFS	Child Friendly Space
CHL	Child Helpline
CMES	Centre for Mass Education in Science
CPAP	
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPiE	Child Protection in Emergencies
CPIMS	Child Protection Information Management System
CPN	Child Protection Network
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSPB	Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh (MoSW)
CWB	Child Welfare Board
DSS	Department of Social Services (MoSW)
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EECR	Enabling Environment for Child Rights (MoWCA)
ECM	Ending Child Marriage
EOA	Empowerment of Adolescents
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIVDB	Friends in Village Development Bangladesh
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
ICDDR,B	International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh
ICDP	Integrated Community Development Programme
IPT	Interactive Popular Theatre
KUK	Kishore Unnayan Kendra (Child Development Centre)
LCBCE	Local Capacity Building for Community Empowerment
LSBE	Life Skills Based Education
L2M	Level 2 Monitoring (MoRES for inputs)

L3M	Level 3 Monitoring (MoRES for results)
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MoLJPA	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliament Affairs
MoRES	Monitoring Results for Equity System
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MSST	Management of Social Services Training
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSSA	National Social Service Academy
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
OCC	One Stop Crisis Centre
OR	Other Resources
RR	Regular Resources
RRRI	Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Integration
SPPME	Social Policy, Planning and Monitoring and Evaluation
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
ToC	Theory of Change
TPP	Technical Assistance Project Proforma / Proposal
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
USSO	Union Social Service Officer
VAC	Violence Against Children

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

Bangladesh was one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989. However, realisation of child rights for all children in Bangladesh is a challenge. It is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with about 150 million people, 40% of whom are children below 18 years of age<sup>1</sup>. Despite notable progress in poverty reduction, over 31 per cent of Bangladeshi households still live below the national poverty line<sup>2</sup> and rapid urbanization is resulting in an increase in underserved slum areas. Bangladesh is also one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, with 97.1 per cent of its area and 97.7 per cent of its population at risk of multiple hazards.

In this situation, the childhood of thousands of children ends prematurely with their entry into work or married life. Child labour is a coping strategy of families that are facing daily challenges for their survival. There is an increase in the numbers of child-headed households where children have no access to social security or land rights especially if their parents' deaths were not registered. Child marriage is justified by the willingness of parents to protect their daughters against sexual abuse or loss of honour due to sexual relations outside marriage, and to ensure their capacity to pay the dowry that increases with the age of their daughter.<sup>3</sup>

The UNICEF Child Protection Programme 2012-2016 was designed to address these issues by enhancing the protective environment for children and adolescents, particularly females, against violence, abuse and exploitation. The Strategy focuses on (a) defining and strengthening a child protection system through legal reform, capacity building and modelling of a package of services; (b) on promoting social norm change towards elimination of harmful practices against children through strengthening knowledge, life skills and parenting skills; and (c) gathering evidence to influence policy and leverage resources for scaling up services and expanding activities that promote adolescent empowerment and community action to improve the protection of children. The independent evaluation was designed to review achievements and constraints against the stated programme outcomes and outputs in order to inform the development of the next Child Protection component of the UNICEF Country Programme 2017-2021.

### Methodology

The evaluation was guided by key criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability using qualitative approaches, as well as, an analysis of existing quantitative data. Data collection was conducted at central level and during week long visits to each of the six UNICEF Field Offices (referred to as Zone Offices) and included a desk review; 108 key informant interviews with government counterparts, NGO partners and UNICEF staff; 19 Focus Group Discussions primarily with children in Adolescent Clubs and parents and community leaders of Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC); observation of or participation in 11 meetings including Child Welfare Boards (CWB), Social Work Case Conferences, Child Protection in Emergencies (CPIE) Clusters; 20 site visits to view supported activities; and 72 case interviews mostly of children receiving cash assistance. Ethical standards, in line with the Ethical Guidelines for UN Evaluations<sup>4</sup> were respected for all face to face interviews and especially for processes involving children.

Analysis involved triangulation of data obtain during the Zone visits, from key informants at central level and with the findings from the qualitative data analysis in relation to the evaluation questions. It is important to note that the subjectivity of the qualitative data was somewhat affected by the need to rely on language translation.

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Population and Housing Census 2011

<sup>2</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2010

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Theory of Change: Monitoring of Results for Equity System 2014-2016, 2014

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>

A Reference Group of stakeholders was established for the Evaluation. They were closely involved in the finalization of the TOR for the evaluation and reviewed and commented on the initial findings and the final report including the recommendations.

A major limitation of the evaluation was the few number of interviews with Government key informants from the primary counterpart Ministries for the Child Protection Programme, MoWCA and MoSW due to scheduling difficulties and of statutory committees met such as the Child Welfare Boards, Social Work Case Conferences and Adolescent Cluster due to difficulty harmonizing with their scheduled meetings within the allocated time period.

### **Key Findings**

Overall, there has been a significant amount of progress towards realization of children's rights to protection and gender equality in Bangladesh as a result of UNICEF Child Protection Programme supported activities during this programme cycle. Adoption of the Children Act 2013 has brought the Government of Bangladesh close to harmonisation of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), represents an important shift from a responsive and charity-oriented child protection approach to a more proactive, rights-oriented approach aimed at social development, and embeds in law the key components of the child protection system. The adolescent empowerment programme showed results in changing attitudes towards girls and daughters, increased freedom of movement and speech; and reduction in sexual harassment and child marriage.

Relevance: The 2012-2016 UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Programme strategy and components are aligned with the situation analysis, national development plans and legal frameworks related to child protection. It is also well aligned with the UNICEF Global Strategy for Child Protection (2008) that emphasises strengthening national protection systems; supporting social change; and promoting child protection during armed conflict and natural disasters. All of these were addressed in the supported programme activities. However, there were some activities that while relevant to protection of children, were not directly supporting system strengthening such as the expansion of Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) in non-emergency areas; support for the District Shishu Academies as children resource centres; and the support for swim safe.

A revised Child Protection Strategic Plan 2014-2017 was developed based on the Theory of Change (ToC) and Monitoring of Results for Equity System (MoRES) through a participatory process and includes tools for Level 2 and Level 3 monitoring. This brought increased clarity of programme results and supported improved capacities of government personnel and civil society partners at national and sub-national levels for monitoring and evaluation.

All key informants reported that UNICEF's Child Protection strategies and approaches were quite relevant and appropriate to the situation, as well as, to their needs as duty bearers. Addressing specific capacity gaps was prioritised in the strategy and training was reported to be among the top three areas where UNICEF support was most helpful. Implementation of the Children Act 2013 and strengthening the child protection system were also highlighted. (see Section 4.1.2)

Effectiveness: Many of the planned results for 2012-2016 have been achieved or partially achieved to varying degrees with some expected to be achieved by the end of 2016. The national capacity to legislate was strengthened with legislative reform activities resulting in adoption of the Children Act 2013 and the development of Children's Rules (still to be endorsed) as well as other relevant legislations. Professional capacities were strengthened especially in the area of justice professionals (e.g. judges for the children courts, child affairs police officers and probation officers) and with institutionalisation of social work training. An increase in the numbers of Adolescent Clubs and Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPCs) in

targeted areas and increase in the provision of the parenting skills training Child Development: A Child Rights Perspective (CDM) and the Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) training demonstrated that training was effective in promoting empowerment of adolescents and civil action to reduce harmful practices against children in their communities.

However, there are some major areas where results will not be fully met primarily related to leveraging resources, development of the Child Protection Management Information System (CPMIS). The lack of increased revenue budget allocation to implement the Children Act is a major constraint that hampers achievement of the programme results and taking interventions to scale. Weak accountability for monitoring and reporting and development of the CPIMS hinders the generation of evidence to support leveraging of budgets. These bottlenecks have impacted coverage of components of the minimum package of child protection services<sup>5</sup> not yet reaching the scale of the expected results and gaps between availability and accessibility and utilization for the CBCPCs and CDM and LSBE training.

#### Efficiency:

Considering the challenges of developing and strengthening a child protection system in Bangladesh both financial and human resources were needed to demonstrate and provide evidence for the importance and effectiveness of the various service components of the minimum package and capacity building required. In this context, most of the results justify the financial and human resource investments, especially following the changes made during the MTR reorganisation of the outputs and development of the Child Protection Theory of Change Strategy for 2015-2016.

- Investments in advocacy and technical assistance for legal reform combined with modelling of the minimum package of child protection services resulted in the adoption of the Children Act 2013 establishing in law the primary statutory responsibilities of the Government for a child protection system in line with international standards.
- Investments in capacity building were emphasised and resulted in institutionalisation of professional social work training and training for child protection in emergencies. Training on the Children Act for professionals such as law enforcement personnel and judges in child sensitive investigation techniques is creating demand for further training.
- Investments in capacity building for parents, community leaders and adolescents in CDM and LSBE demonstrated increased knowledge and skills, changed behaviours and mobilised civil action against harmful practices at the community level.

Key areas of concern where investment was not adequate to the need and results were not realised are primarily focused on capacity building of the lead Government Ministries. These include leveraging of adequate budget allocations, monitoring and generation of evidence to inform planning and budgeting, and accountability for their mandated responsibilities under the Children Act 2013 and other relevant legislation. Additionally, there was limited collaboration with other UN and development partners that could support leveraging of commitment and resources from government sectors as well as maximise synergies for programme activities.

#### Sustainability:

The programme has taken a number of steps to promote national ownership of child protection services and to build capacities for Government and NGOs to sustain programmes. For example:

- A number of national/subnational policies and strategies have been adopted and developed providing a legal and policy base for the components required for a child protection system including child justice procedures

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<sup>5</sup> Minimum package of child protection services includes birth registration; non-formal education; recreation, leisure and culture; life skills based education; parenting skills (CDM); stipend for adolescents; conditional cash transfers (CCT); emergency services (hotline, night mobile team, safe shelter); police station child friendly help desk; temporary safe accommodation.

and services for a continuum of care for children at risk of or suffering from neglect, all forms of abuse and exploitation.

- With technical assistance and advocacy from UNICEF, Social Work Training curricula (including case management training modules) has been institutionalised at the National Social Service Academy (NSSA) and diploma and master courses on Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) at Dhaka University Disaster Management Institute.
- With initial support and technical assistance, the Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) has moved to a more advanced infrastructure within the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD); the Child Helpline will soon be under full ownership of the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW) within the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) accelerated the appointment of police officers as Child Affairs Officers in 42 police stations with orientation training on the Children Act 2013 supported by UNICEF.
- Based on UNICEF modelling, key components of adolescents and community empowerment were replicated by 118 organizations extending the coverage from 561 communities to 10,336. The February 2016 L2M Report noted that only one fourth of Adolescents Clubs covered by the L2M monitoring are supported by UNICEF and direct implementing partners funded by UNICEF.
- A partnership was established with Telenor, a local subsidiary of Grameen Phone, for provision of the toll-free number for the Child Helpline and technical expertise in mobile phone-based technology for piloting the provision of CCTs directly to children through their mobile phone.

While there has been some progress towards leveraging partnerships and resources to contribute to sustainability it has been limited. The lack of adequate government resource allocation for implementation of the Children Act and related programmes to improve the protection of children has been identified as a major bottleneck in Bangladesh for sustainability of achievements. Opportunities to increase partnerships with other international development partners and with local civil society organisations and corporations also need to be explored to support sustainability.

## **Conclusions**

Overall, there has been a significant amount of progress towards realization of children’s rights to protection and gender equality in Bangladesh as a result of UNICEF supported activities during this programme cycle. Adoption of the Children Act 2013 has brought the Government of Bangladesh close to harmonisation of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and represents the beginning of a shift from a responsive and charity-oriented child protection approach to a more proactive, rights-oriented approach aimed at social development.

## **Key Achievements**

- A legal base and normative framework for a comprehensive child protection system has been established
- Capacity building initiatives for professionals, especially social workers have shown results in improved child sensitive service provision
- Modelling of the “minimum package of child protection services” has increased awareness of the need for a continuum of care and influenced components of the Children Act 2013
- Models for addressing social norm change to reduce harmful practices against children are showing positive results among parents, community leaders, adolescents and some service providers
- Improvement in evidence based monitoring and data collection following with restructuring the programme strategy based on the Theory of Change (ToC) and initiating MoRES L2 monitoring
- Cooperation with national NGOs as implementing partners helped to realise results for modelling is important for strengthening the child protection system and addressing social norm change

## Concerns and Weaknesses

- Coverage and efficiency in the target areas has not met the expected results: Some contributing factors seemed to be inadequate staff and financial resources as well as commitment on the part of key counterparts.
- Leveraging resources of Government and other partners has not reached expected results: Very few resources were leveraged from the government, there is no legal provision for funding enforcement of the Children Act, and very few partnerships were established with civil society groups.
- Limited progress was made on development of the Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS): Considering the need to show results of the various interventions modelled for leveraging budgets and increased commitment for child protection in Bangladesh, the very limited progress on development of the CPIMS is a concern.
- The Resource Pool of Trainers is not sustainable as it is currently designed: Institutionalization of the CDM and LSBE training is important for sustainability and will require careful consideration and re-thinking of the current model of Resource Pools of trainers.
- Inter-sectoral cooperation with UNICEF Health and Education Sectors has been too limited: Cross-sectoral cooperation between Child Protection and the Health and Education Sectors, critical to a functioning child protection system has been weak. Key areas in Health are birth registration and response to child victims of sexual abuse and in Education Second Chance Education and corporal punishment in schools.
- Not enough attention was given to sexual abuse and rape of children: Much of the focus of the CP Programme components have been related to ending child marriage, child trafficking and child labour and less on the more sensitive social issues of child sexual abuse and rape. This issue is included in initiatives by partners in the context of violence against women and children and there was little evidence that the specific needs of children were being addressed.
- Child poverty, one of the major underlying factors contributing to children being in need of special protection, is not adequately being addressed: There is an acute need for more cost effective, child-sensitive social protection that is transformative and contributes to both family poverty reduction and human development including enhancing human capital and income-earning capacities and reduction of harmful practices affecting children.
- Limited cooperation has been established with UN sister agencies and other development partners: Although information on cooperation with UN agencies and other development partners was limited during this evaluation, it appeared that cooperation was minimal and should be enhanced. This is especially noted in the areas of justice for children with UNDP and violence against children with UNFPA.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Continue to advocate and devote resources to further legal reform to bring Bangladesh in full compliance with the CRC**

The adoption of the Children Act 2013 represents a major step towards bringing Bangladesh close to compliance with the CRC. However, there remain a number of gaps to be addressed that were highlighted in the Committee on the Rights of the Child Concluding Observations<sup>6</sup> which need to be addressed.

### **2. Prioritise mobilisation of adequate resources to support the implementation of the Children Act 2013 and the Adolescent Strategy as a basis for strengthening of the child protection system(s) and promoting social norms change in the 2017-2021 country programme.**

The next country programme needs to move from modelling and demonstration projects to a focus on support for enforcement of the laws and implementation of related policies nationwide. A major challenge will be to

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<http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhsIfX7rWprMjlfvpLtNQOsgQIo8pRQ83suSziXopscKvIMVb7Ylq0kQ18iJt8MRshjEQcv0wpKKK%2bqQoduuNbtQGX8kqZTOtwy%2fgQIOPS%2b%2bo>

ensure adequate resourcing. Both the Act and the developing Adolescent Strategy are being costed and have major budgetary implications for various government departments in order to be fully enforced. This will require a concerted effort and a gradual process of joint funding between the Government, civil society and development partners.

### **3. Devote resources to strengthen the CPMIS including enhanced information collection and monitoring in the context of to better inform child protection programming**

Continuation and strengthening of results monitoring needs to be emphasized in the new country programme, especially to generate evidence for leveraging resources budgeting and planning towards enhancing the child protection system. It will be important to develop a plan with doable stages and also to consider collaboration with a university.

### **4. Continue to commit resources to support institutional and human resource capacity building required for strengthening the child protection system**

Ensuring adequate capacities at all levels is critical to strengthening child protection systems and to expanding activities that are proving to impact social norm change. Staffing concerns including lack of adequate staff, of supervision and monitoring was a key constraint noted in all Zones. A number of government ministries have legal obligations for enforcement of the Children Act that will require institutionalisation of training modules on the Children Act as part of their basic training. Capacity building also requires attention to human resource management. The 2017-2021 CP programme needs to build on the successes and lessons learned with a strong focus on accountability, on scaling up and on sustainability.

### **5. Strengthen and expand initiatives to address Violence Against Children in line with UNICEF's global initiative and guidelines and with a special focus on child sexual abuse.**

The Bangladesh Child Protection Programme is addressing the seven key strategies of INSPIRE<sup>7</sup> being promoted by UNICEF to prevent and respond to VAC. However, much of the focus in strengthening these activities has been on ending child marriage and corporal punishment and less on other forms of violence such as sexual abuse including rape of girls and boys that are more culturally sensitive in Bangladesh. Efforts are needed to address the social norms that keep this violence hidden and the barriers/gaps between implementation of the Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children Act 2000 and the Children Act 2013 to ensure that child sensitive procedures are met and appropriate services provided as outlined in the Children Act.

### **6: Continue to advocate for and support child sensitive and transformative models in the National Social Protection Strategy based on lessons learned during this programme cycle.**

Child poverty is one of the major underlying factors that contribute to children being in need of protection from harms such as child labour, child marriage, commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. The National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) is primarily based on a "safety net" model with specifically targeted diverse schemes that are responsive. There is a need for more cost effective, child-sensitive social protection that is transformative and contributes to both family poverty reduction, reduction of harmful practices affecting children and to breaking the inter-generational cycle of poverty. The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) initiative supported by UNICEF aims to provide a more transformative and cost effective model. Lessons learned from the programme need to be consolidated and used to advocate for child sensitive and transformative models of social protection.

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<sup>7</sup> INSPIRE strategies - implementation and enforcement of laws; norms and values; safe environments; parent and caregiver support; income and economic strengthening; response and support services; education and life skills

## **8. Strengthen inter-sectoral cooperation within UNICEF for Child Protection**

While progress has been made in the Bangladesh Country Office in the collaboration with some Sections, there were major gaps noted that will influence strengthening of the child protection system and implementation of the Children Act 2013. Key areas of collaboration that need strengthening are especially related to Health and Education and the SPPME Sectors which are all noted as key to a child protection system. These Sectors can be instrumental in advocating with their key government counterparts to understand and respect their responsibilities and/or supportive roles under the Children Act.

## **9. Continue to invest in support through technical assistance and monitoring to strengthen and expand birth registration**

It is important to continue the progress made towards universal birth registration in Bangladesh based on the UNICEF supported efforts in the six Zones for the development of Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) and for increasing birth registration within 45 days through cooperation with EPI activities. Limited financial resources should be allocated to leverage government resourcing and expansion of BRIS. The cooperation of health workers in registering births needs to be formalised within the Health Sector in order to obtain significant results. While the Child Protection Programme may not be the best position in the long run to support civil registration activities, continued support with established partners is necessary at this point to ensure continuity, as well as, to strengthen the use of birth certificates in relation to protection such as minimum age requirements, for child labour, child marriage and justice.

## **1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

The current Government of Bangladesh – UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation will end in 2016 and a new programme is under development. The Child Protection Programme, one of the components of UNICEF's five-year Country Programme (2012-16) has decided to do an independent evaluation to assess the extent to which results have been achieved, their relevance to institutional priorities and to national development goals; and to distil lessons learned throughout the five year programme cycle.

The Programme was designed to enhance the protective environment for children and adolescents, particularly females, against violence, abuse and exploitation. This is being done through strengthening equitable child protection systems, which encompass appropriate laws, policies, and services, and through social change. With a focus on prevention, interventions aim to promote an enabling environment and positive behaviours; to minimise vulnerability and address known risk factors, and to strengthen children and adolescents' own resilience.

This independent evaluation aims to review achievements and constraints against the stated programme outcomes and outputs in order to inform the development of the next Child Protection component of the UNICEF Country Programme.

### **1.1 Country Situation and Child Rights**

Bangladesh was one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)<sup>8</sup>. However, realisation of child rights for all children in Bangladesh is a challenge.

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<sup>8</sup> [https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=IV-11&chapter=4&clang=\\_en](https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&clang=_en)

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with about 150 million people, 61 million of whom are children below 18 years of age<sup>9</sup> or about 40% of the population. Despite notable progress in poverty reduction, over 31 per cent of Bangladeshi households still live below the national poverty line.<sup>10</sup> An analysis of child poverty reported that 46 per cent of children in the country live below the national poverty line; 23 per cent in extreme poverty.<sup>11</sup> These children are typically deprived of four out of seven of the following basic services: water, sanitation, nutrition, education, health, information and shelter.<sup>12</sup>

Bangladesh is also one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, with 97.1 per cent of its area and 97.7 per cent of its population at risk of multiple hazards. Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of these disasters. The impact of such hazards plays out in reduced food intake, reduced levels of sanitation and hygiene, limited health expenditures and withdrawal of children from school for work.<sup>13</sup>

Urbanization is straining the capacity of all service providers. Education, parenting support, health care, water and sanitation, and child protection services are severely limited for the urban poor, and vulnerability to eviction underlies and compounds the difficulties slum dwellers face.<sup>14</sup> In addition, an increase in child headed households has been reported<sup>15</sup> and many of these children have no access to social security or land rights, especially if their parent's deaths are not registered.

In this situation, the childhood of thousands of children ends prematurely with their entry into work or married life. Child labour is a coping strategy of families that are facing daily challenges for their survival. There is an increase in the numbers of child-headed households where children have no access to social security or land rights especially if their parents' deaths were not registered. Child marriage is justified by the willingness of parents to protect their daughters against sexual abuse or loss of honour due to sexual relations outside marriage, and to ensure their capacity to pay the dowry that increases with the age of their daughter.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.2 Key Child Protection Issues

Situation analyses have identified a number of factors that influence children's right to protection in Bangladesh. Immediate factors include the widespread acceptance in society of physical punishment of children, violence against women, child marriage, and child labour. Personal stress and family/social tensions as well as the extent to which laws and policies are enforced are also immediate factors. Underlying factors include the levels of knowledge and awareness about children's rights and the responsibilities of duty bearers, the legal and policy framework for child protection, and institutional capacities for their enforcement.<sup>17</sup>

Violence against children - As stated in a recent UNICEF report on Protecting Children from Violence in Bangladesh<sup>18</sup> some 90% of children in Bangladesh have been subjected to physical violence at least once in their lives. 75% of all children interviewed in a survey in 2009 reported that physical punishment of children occurred in their homes. For working children 25% reported that physical violence took place in their workplace. While there is no available data on sexual violence, including rape, against both boys and girls, anecdotal accounts

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<sup>9</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Population and Housing Census 2011

<sup>10</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2010

<sup>11</sup> MoSW, 2016, 2016, Technical Assistance Project Proforma/Proposal (TPP) with UNICEF

<sup>12</sup> Child Poverty and Disparities in Bangladesh, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> UNICEF, 2011, Bangladesh Country Programme Document 2012-2016

<sup>14</sup> MoSW, 2016, Technical Assistance Project Proforma/Proposal (TPP) with UNICEF

<sup>15</sup> ??? (need reference as the info came from the Reference Group)

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Theory of Change: Monitoring of Results for Equity System 2014-2016, 2014

<sup>17</sup> MoWCA 2016, Technical Assistance Project Proforma/Proposal (TPP) with UNICEF

<sup>18</sup> UNICEF, 2015, report on "Protecting Children from Violence: A Comprehensive Evaluation of UNICEF's Strategies and Programme Performance, Bangladesh Country Case Study"

indicate that it is prevalent yet not reported. On the other hand, sexual harassment, stalking and teasing are very common and frequently reported and concern is growing about the tendency of killing children as a soft target for different social or political issues.<sup>19</sup> Isn't self-inflicted violence also an issue e.g. suicide?

Child marriage is very common in Bangladesh and the country has one of the world's highest rates of adolescent motherhood. Child marriage is higher in Urban areas than in rural areas and especially in urban slums. Child marriage rates have been declining in Bangladesh, but at a slow pace. The latest UNICEF MICS 5 data indicates that from 2006 to 2012-2013, child marriage has decreased by 9.3 percentage points for girls and women aged 15-49 married before the age of 15 and by 7.6 percentage points for girls and women aged 15-19 years currently married. Child marriage has decreased faster among the younger age group (under 15). In fact, increased rate of girl retained in school system has a stronger impact in delaying child marriage for under 15 years. For adolescent over 15, there are other factors that are favouring marriage in particular the fear of loss of virginity. In addition, the Dowry system is reported to push families to married off the girls early as the payment amount increases for 'over aged' girls.

Child labour: National surveys indicate that 13 per cent of Bangladeshi children between the ages of 5 and 14 are working and that child labour is higher among children of the urban slums and tribal areas than any other groups surveyed. The National Child Labour Survey estimated that about 1.3 million children were engaged in hazardous labour. Many child workers, especially girls, are not paid regular wages, and they rarely have control over the use of their wages. Child domestic work is a sector of particular concern because of the large numbers of children involved and the risks associated with the work. Almost all child domestic workers live at their employers' homes and work seven days a week. They often face restrictions on their mobility and freedom of association. Their vulnerability to sexual abuse is widely recognized in Bangladeshi society and creates a stigma that can damage girls' reputations and marriage prospects.<sup>20</sup>

Trafficking of women and children: Trafficking in women, men, girls, and boys—internal and international—takes place in Bangladesh for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour. Some trafficked persons are physically coerced, while others are lured by promises of jobs or marriage. Some parents willingly send their children away to escape poverty, and some sell their children into bondage (usually domestic labour).<sup>21</sup> Recently there are significant concerns regarding the illegal migration of unaccompanied minors through the Bay of Bengal which has become another threat to address properly.

These and other harmful practices are reinforced by deeply rooted social norms and behaviours that do not view children in line with humanitarian standards. One anthropological study reported that the word "child" indicating a human being who is 0 to 18 years old simply does not exist. Instead, there are several words representing theoretical development stages of children. These stages taught through text books are not linked with children's ages but with what they understand/don't understand as well with gender roles. Indeed, other layers of Bengali culture were identified where stages of childhoods are made explicit in concrete situations and are not the object of elaborated abstract discourse but based on factual beliefs. "The child is said to be too small or old enough to undertake certain work or take up a certain responsibility. The child is described as old enough/too young, understanding/not understanding<sup>22</sup>."

The social norm that recognizes the responsibility of parents toward their young child's needs is not necessarily based on an understanding of child development or child rights. While there is an expectation of providing for

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<sup>19</sup> UNICEF Child Protection national officers

<sup>20</sup> UNICEF, 2015, report on "Protecting Children from Violence: A Comprehensive Evaluation of UNICEF's Strategies and Programme Performance, Bangladesh Country Case Study"

<sup>21</sup> MoWCA, 2016, Technical Assistance Project Proforma/Proposal (TPP) with UNICEF

<sup>22</sup> Thérèse Blanchet, 1996, Lost Innocence, Stolen Childhoods. The University Press Limited.

the basic needs of young children, parenting of middle age children and adolescents is often based more on traditional practices, survival needs and protecting family honour, especially for girls. A low level of respect for the rule of law, especially when it conflicts with other social norms, also contributes to rights violations.<sup>23</sup>

Children's ability to exercise their right to participation is limited. In Bangladesh, children rarely have opportunities to express themselves, and when they do, adults tend not to take them seriously. Social norms regarding childhood and low awareness of the developmental stages of childhood and adolescence obstruct child participation. The proportion of children who are able to raise their voices regarding public policy is very small.<sup>24</sup>

### **1.3 Child Protection Programme Strategy, Outcome and Outputs 2012-2016**

The Child Protection Programme 2012-2016 has designed a systematic approach to social and behaviour change simultaneously with on-going efforts focusing on the strengthening of a national child protection system(s). They state, "What is needed is a set of inter-locking and coordinated systems that feed into each other and focus on wide-ranging prevention and response activities as much as creating positive attitudes, beliefs and values towards children's human rights".<sup>25</sup> The overall results of the Child Protection Programme depends on establishment and enforcement of favourable child protection policies and the corresponding strengthening of child protection systems in terms of legal reform, capacity development, operationalization of a minimum package of services and monitoring and evaluation.

Based on evidence and lessons learnt from previous projects on adolescent empowerment aimed at reducing child marriage in Bangladesh, key areas where UNICEF and other organizations promoting child rights can effectively support Bangladesh's progress toward the realization of children's right to protection and prevention of child marriage were identified. These have formed the following four key programme strategies:

1. Empowering adolescent girls and boys with information, skills and support networks
2. Educating and mobilizing parents and community members.
3. Offering alternatives through child protection system minimum package of services for out of school children, child labourer, girls at risk of child marriage
4. Fostering an enabling legal and policy framework

As shown in the figure below, the Strategy focuses on (a) defining and strengthening child protection system(s) through legal reform, capacity building and modelling of a package of services; (b) on promoting social norm change towards elimination of harmful practices against children through strengthening knowledge, life skills and parenting skills; and (c) gathering evidence to influence policy and leverage resources for scaling up.

The Child Protection Programme aimed to cover the 20 UNDAF districts and city corporations, however, the provision of services based on a continuum of care provision has been limited to selected areas based on equity gaps (tea gardens, urban slums, stone crushing areas, hoars and disaster-prone areas).

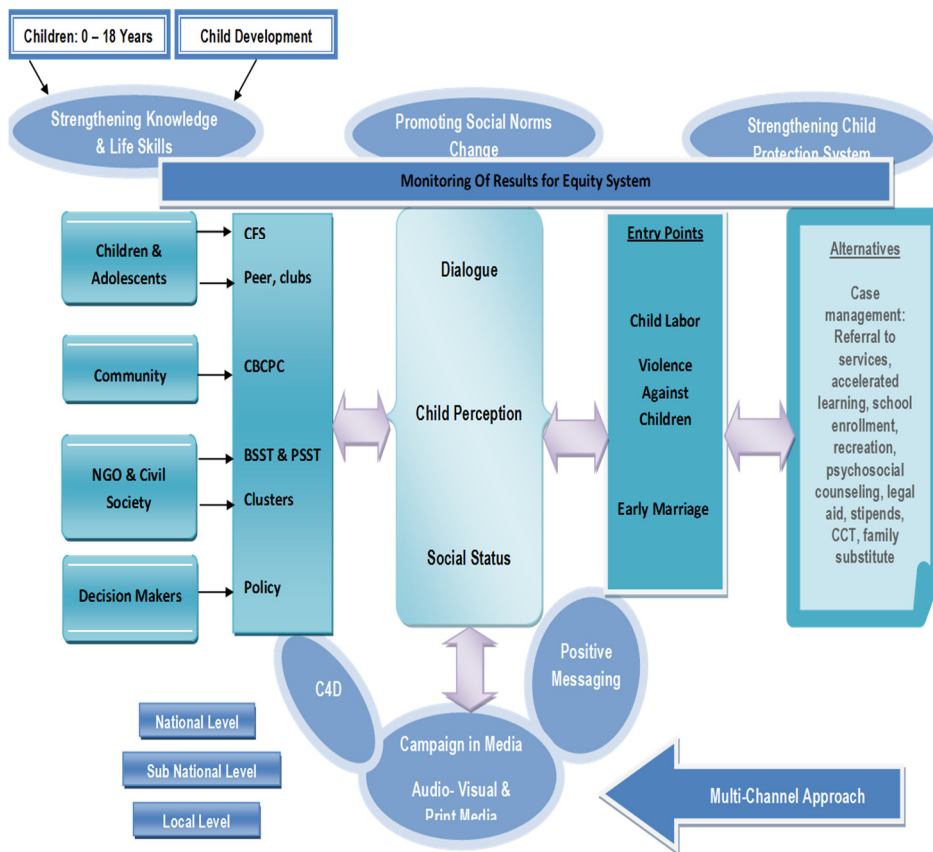
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<sup>23</sup> MoWCA, 2016, Technical Assistance Project Proforma/Proposal (TPP) with UNICEF

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> *Theory of Change: Monitoring Results for Equity System, UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Programme 2014-2016*

Visioning the strategy and interlink between harmful social norms change and child protection system strengthening



Source: UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Strategy 2012-2016, August 2011

The expected Child Protection Outcome 2012-2016 was that, “By the end of 2016, children, women and youth, especially those from the 20 selected districts, demand and benefit from effective social protection policies and improved services aimed at eliminating abuse, neglect, exploitation, and trafficking”.

In order to achieve this outcome, the Child Protection Programme defined four outputs at the beginning of the country programme. However, the Outputs were reduced to three following a recommendation from the Mid-Term Review in 2014 to mainstream the Justice for Children output. The current three outputs 2015-2016 are as follows:

Output 1. By 2016, strengthened political commitment, accountability and national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for scaling up interventions that prevent and respond to violence, abuse and exploitation

Output 2. By 2016, a modelled package of services ensuring continuum of care has generated new evidence to inform policy and advocacy to scale up the model for vulnerable women, children and young people to reduce equity gaps and disparities

Output 3. By 2016, adolescents and young people from selected communities act as agents of social change to enhance collective community actions to reduce child marriage, child labour, and violence while addressing gender inequality and discrimination

*Child Protection Services of the “minimum package”:*

- Birth registration
- Provision of non-formal education, accelerated learning
- Recreation, leisure and culture
- Life skills based education
- Parenting skills: Child Development Child Rights Perspective
- Stipend for adolescents
- Conditional Cash Transfer (parents or extended family, foster family)
- Hotline + Night mobile team + Safe home
- Police station child friendly help desk
- Temporary safe accommodation (Drop In Centre (DIC), emergency night shelter, group home, safe home, Child Development Centers (KUK))

The strategic partners identified to achieve the objectives are the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Ministry of Home Affairs and their affiliated departments. To achieve the goals, the programme also works with national and international NGOs (e.g. ARDRID, Aparajeyo Bangladesh, Ashar Alo Society, BRAC, COAST Trust, CMES, CODEC, FIVBD, JJS, Rupantar, FIDBV, TOYMU, Save the Children, Plan International)

## 2. PURPOSE, SCOPE and EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The purpose of this evaluation of the UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Programme is to critically assess the extent to which results have been achieved; their relevance to institutional priorities and to national development goals; and to distil lessons learned from 2012-2015. The evaluation is intended to be forward looking and to serve programme management and decision-making purposes. The findings, recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluation will be used to inform UNICEF’s strategies, programme approach, management structures, and monitoring frameworks of the Child Protection Programme for the next programme cycle due to begin in 2017.

To the extent possible, given the ongoing nature of these programs and that they are embedded within a broader context with multiple players, the evaluation sought to establish the contribution of the Child Protection Programme to improved national strategies and their implementation. (see Annex 1 – TORs)

### 2.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the Evaluation were to:

1. Assess the extent to which strategies and interventions implemented by UNICEF’s Child Protection Programme have achieved expected and unexpected results, identify indicative causes and analyse key dynamics that contributed to results achievement;
2. Assess the relevance and effectiveness of each of the components of the minimum package of child sensitive social protection services modelled in selected locations and their potential for scale up nation-wide;
3. Assess strengths and weaknesses of the programme and the appropriateness of monitoring systems put in place;

4. Assess synergies and inter-sectorial cooperation with other UNICEF programmes, in particular Communication for Development (C4D), Social Policy, Field Operation and Education; identify potential synergies that remain unrealized. In particular, assess the effectiveness of linkages between Child Protection interventions to address child marriage and other programme interventions that aim to accelerate ending of child marriage.
5. Provide recommendations for further programmatic strengthening of UNICEF's upstream and downstream work in Child Protection.

## **2.2 Evaluation Questions**

A set of 18 Evaluation Questions related to Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability was formulated by the UNICEF BCO Child Protection Section in collaboration with the Social Protection, Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Section and with key implementing partners to guide the evaluation process. Indicators and data collection methods were then developed for each of the questions. (See Annex 2 Data Collection Matrix)

While addressing the key evaluation questions, consideration was also given to five key implementation strategies employed by the Child Protection Programme as they have been emphasized as a particular focus of the evaluation. These include:

- Changing perceptions “of the child” and child development & childhood and realization of the CRC by individuals, communities and policy makers. Demonstrating that CRC pillars are anchored in child development steps.
- Empowering adolescent girls and boys as active agents of social norm change
- Mobilizing communities to promote child rights and enabling their role in facilitating access to services through Child Protection mechanisms
- Evidence building for policy influencing through modelling of a minimum package of CP services ensuring continuum of care
- Capacity development of the five key government partners

## 2.3 Scope

The evaluation examines strategies and interventions supported by UNICEF's Child Protection Programme, with a particular focus on the components of the minimum package of child-sensitive social protection services. Since considerations of equity and gender underpin the Child Protection Programme, the evaluation also examines to what extent these concepts have effectively been integrated into programming.

Given the complexity of the different interventions and the multiplicity of stakeholders in the Child Protection Programme, the evaluation did not seek to establish the impact of Child Protection interventions, did not include a full costing exercise and did not seek to assess the attribution of results to UNICEF support or programming. Nevertheless, where possible, the evaluation did assess the effectiveness of UNICEF programming in achieving planned results.

The evaluation was conducted both at the central level and with visits to each of the six UNICEF Zones. It included visits to 11 of the 20 UNDAF Districts, four non-UNDAF Districts and City Corporations where UNICEF Zonal Offices are supporting the implementation of the Child Protection Programme in the field.

The evaluation was guided primarily by key criteria of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency; and, as appropriate, scalability and sustainability. (See Annex 2 Data Collection Matrix)

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The overall methodological approach was based on Results Based Management principles and logical framework analysis. It takes into account the Summary Results Matrix of the Government of Bangladesh - UNICEF Country Programme, 2012 – 2016 as well as the revised indicators and expected results for Child Protection 2014-2016 based on the Theory of Change (ToC) and Monitoring of Results for Equity System (MoRES) being instituted by UNICEF.

Research methods included qualitative approaches as well as an analysis of existing quantitative data<sup>26</sup> – both that are complementary as it was important to not only document achievements, but also to understand the “why” and “how” changes are taking place. This was effective especially in relation to the measuring of how the key implementation strategies related to changing perceptions and behaviours have contributed to achievement of the proposed outcomes.

Purposive sampling was used, within a select number of the 20 UNDAF Districts of the six Zones. UNICEF Zonal Child Protection Officers identified the key informants and site visits and arranged the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and attendance at meetings within their respective Zones based on a guidance note prepared by the Section Chief. Initial drafts were reviewed by the Consultant with the Child Protection Section Chief and revised as needed. In Barisal City Corporation two additions to the programme were arranged during the data collection process at the request of the Consultant, both of which were related to response to sexual abuse of children (a visit to the One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) and a meeting with the UNFPA Officer).

A Reference Group of stakeholders was established for the Evaluation. They were closely involved in the finalization of the TOR for the evaluation and reviewed and commented on the initial findings and the final report including the recommendations.

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<sup>26</sup> Primarily the MoRES Level 2 Monitoring Report, Child Protection (February 2016), the Mid-Term Review (June 2014) and UNICEF Annual Reports

### 3.1 Data Collection

The evaluation relied on a combination of data collection modalities. Quantitative data was compiled primarily through an initial desk review of key documents provided prior to arrival in the country and a review of additional reports provided by UNICEF and key stakeholders during the in-country data collection process. These included (e.g. government national plans, legislation and CRC reports; and UNICEF situation analyses, programme planning documents, evaluations, monitoring reports and country office annual reports).

Qualitative data was collected in Dhaka and during week long visits to each of the six Zones (Barisal, Bogra, Chittagong, Khulna, Mymensingh and Sylhet) and covered 11 of the 20 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Districts plus four non-UNDAF districts and City Corporations. The team was comprised of one international consultant and one national interpreter. Methods included key informant interviews, FGDs, case interviews and observations during site visits and meetings resulting in an extremely large number of persons met and interviewed. The summary is presented in the Table below.

#### SUMMARY OF DATA SOURCES

108 Key informant interviews	<p><i>Sub-national level</i></p> <p>30 Government key informants in the field 5 NGO partners 3 UN Agencies 47 UNICEF Zonal Office staff in six group interviews</p> <p><i>National level</i></p> <p>3 Government counterparts 6 NGO partners 14 UNICEF staff at BCO primarily Section Chiefs</p>
19 FGDs	<p>8 Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPCs) 1 Mother's Group 8 Adolescent Clubs 2 Social Workers Groups</p>
11 Meetings	<p>2 Child Welfare Boards 3 Social Work Case Conferences 2 Resource Pool of Trainers 3 CPiE Clusters 1 Service Providers for Children with Disabilities</p>
20 Site Visits	<p>7 Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) &amp; Community Child Friendly Spaces (CCFS) 4 Child Care Institutions 3 Police Stations 1 Emergency Night Shelter 1 One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) Bangla Medical College Hospital, Barisal 1 Sani-Mart interventions – Domar Upazila, Nilphamari 1 Birth Registration Office, Dacope Union 1 IPT on Preventing Child Marriage, Sunamganj 1 Civic Engagement on Birth Registration and Child Marriage, Habiganj</p>
72 Case Interviews	<p>43 Recipients of CCTs with their mothers/guardians 21 Adolescent Stipend recipients with their mothers/guardians 8 Boys in conflict with the law (7 in diversion programme)</p>

For key informant interviews and FGDs a semi-structured approach was used guided by a list of both closed and opened ended questions that provided the opportunity to probe as needed and to evoke responses that were meaningful, culturally salient and explanatory in nature. (see Annex 3 - Question Guides). Discussions were held with UNICEF personnel during many of the long drives to the various locations and they would attend the interview or focus group when agreed with the International Consultant.

Ethical standards, in line with the Ethical Guidelines for UN Evaluations were respected for all face to face interviews and discussions and especially for processes involving children. This included informed consent, confidentiality and support for children as protection violations addressed by this programme can be sensitive. In most instances parents, as well as, national programme staff were present during the interviews and FGDs with children. For those in institutional care, both institution and UNICEF staff were present.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

Information from the field was first recorded for each Zone and sent to the Zonal Child Protection Officers to check for factual accuracy. The information was then summarized and analysed for each Zones based on different sources such as the Key informants, FGDs, Meetings, and Case Interviews. Observations from site visits and meetings were also summarized. Following this the data was analysed for each of the groups for all Zones (e.g. Government, NGO, UNICEF staff, CBCPC, Adolescent Clubs, Case Conferences, CWB, etc.). This data from the Zones was then triangulated with the observations and findings from the qualitative data analysis in relation to the evaluation questions. It is important to note that the qualitative data is indicative only as there was some subjectivity in the interpretation summaries of the responses from the various informants especially due to the reliance on language interpretation.

The findings were cross checked through a review of the draft report by UNICEF BCO and a Reference Group of selected key stakeholders.

### 3.3 Limitations

The limitations of the evaluation include:

- Limited number of interviews with key informants from the primary counterpart Ministries, MoWCA and MoSW due to scheduling difficulties;
- Limited number of statutory committees met such as the Child Welfare Boards, Social Work Case Conferences and Adolescent Cluster due to difficulty harmonizing with their scheduled meetings within the allocated time period;
- Inclusion of UNICEF Dhaka Urban Programme cancelled due to time constraints;
- A number of staff changes in the UNICEF Child Protection Section during the evaluation time-frame presented some difficulties in accessing and cross checking information;
- Time allocation for the evaluation that covered six Zones with one International Consultant was underestimated.

## 4. FINDINGS BASED ON EVALUATION QUESTIONS

### 4.1 Relevance

#### 4.1.1 To what extent is the programme relevant to child protection system strengthening?

**Strongly Complied:** The programme emphasises strengthening the child protection system in line with UNICEF global strategies and guidelines. Extensive advocacy and technical support from UNICEF resulted in the new

Children Act coming into force in 2013 which now provides a legal basis for the statutory responsibilities of the Government for a comprehensive child protection system and for the interconnectedness required for a continuum care for prevention, early intervention and reintegration. Most of the seemingly scattered components of the Child Protection Programme are now incorporated into the normative framework. In addition, the soon to be developed National Adolescent Strategy is expected to provide a policy base for the less formal components of the system that address underlying causes such as harmful social norms and poverty. Six of the formal statutory services and five components of the less formal system were strengthened with support from the UNICEF Child Protection Programme.

While some activities appear to be not directly or not specifically related to system strengthening, they are indirectly related. For example, the Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), an important component of the Core Corporate Commitments (CCCs) for Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) have been replicated in non-emergency areas where children are especially vulnerable. Support for the District level Shishu Academy under the MoWCA that has a focus on promoting cultural activities for children and identified to be centres for promotion of child rights, was perceived to be a location for some of the activities addressing social norm change but later viewed as not appropriate. The Safe Swim activities are not specific components of the child protection system but were rather supported in response to the critical issue of drowning being the major cause of death for young children.

**Indicator: Programme aligned with the 2008 UNICEF Global Strategy for Child Protection; and the 2010 UNICEF document “Adapting a Systems Approach Child Protection”**

The 2012-2016 UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Programme strategy and components are aligned with the UNICEF Global Strategy for Child Protection (2008)<sup>27</sup> and the 2010 UNICEF document “Adapting a Systems Approach Child Protection”<sup>28</sup>.

UNICEF’s Global Strategy for Child Protection focuses on enhancing the protective environment through a strategy with five principle approaches:

1. Strengthening national protection systems
2. Supporting social change
3. Promoting child protection in conflict and natural disasters

*Cross-cutting areas are:*

4. Evidence-building and knowledge management
5. Convening and catalysing agents of change

The BCO 2012-2016 strategy clearly reflects components of the global strategy.

“The Child Protection Programme aims to enhance the protective environment for children and adolescents, particularly females, against violence, abuse and exploitation through strengthening child protection systems which encompass appropriate laws, policies, and services, and through social change. With a focus on prevention, action will promote positive behaviours, minimize vulnerability, address known risk factors, and strengthen children and adolescents’ own resilience. Modelling will be used to build capacity; ensure quality services supported by legal processes; promote family-based care and gather evidence to influence policy”<sup>29</sup>.

In addition, there has been a focus on Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) in all of the disaster prone areas of the country as well as on advocacy with the Government to address the special needs of children in emergencies.

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<sup>27</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, *UNICEF Child Protection Strategy*, UNICEF, 2008

<sup>28</sup> Wulczyn, Fred, et al., *Adapting a Systems Approach to Child Protection: Key concepts and considerations*, UNICEF, New York, 2010.

<sup>29</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, tackling child labour, early marriage and violence by securing a better future to vulnerable children – A Funding Proposal, 2012

The UNICEF document on “Adapting a Systems Approach Child Protection”<sup>30</sup> further elaborates the Strategy by addressing the concepts of systems, and how this applies to child protection goals. For example, some of the points emphasised include:

- “The continuum of care delineates the specific ways in which the system responds to rights violations whereas the process of care specifies the procedures that are followed when the system engages children, families, and communities.”
- “The multi-sectoral nature of the social protection system means that structural relationships between component parts of the system have to be identified or established. The components, within the context of the community and the state, may include formal (e.g., NGOs) and less formal organizations (neighbourhood watch groups) dedicated to protecting children.”
- “As an organization, the child protection system has to maintain a level of capacity commensurate with what the system requires.”

“Together with the normative framework, system capacity, the process of care, and system goals, there has to be an accountability mechanism that incorporates data collection, research and management analysis, and communication with stakeholders within and outside the formal system.”

*Child protection systems comprise the set of laws, policies, regulations and services needed across all social sectors — especially social welfare, education, health, security and justice — to support prevention and response to protection related risks. These systems are part of social protection, and extend beyond it. At the level of prevention, their aim includes supporting and strengthening families to reduce social exclusion, and to lower the risk of separation, violence and exploitation.<sup>31</sup>*

The Bangladesh CP Programme has focussed on all of these concepts through developing a Minimum Package of Services to model a continuum of care; strengthening assessment, monitoring, case planning and management; facilitating and supporting inter-sectoral and government-civil society connectivity; and contributing to building the required capacities including staff and infrastructure. Initial efforts have been made to strengthen accountability mechanisms, and data collection systems toward establishment of a solid Child Protection Management Information System (CPMIS).

#### **Indicator: Elements of the CP Programme that contribute to CP system strengthening**

The elements in the current country programme that contribute to strengthening the child protection system primarily include:

Formal system – Enhancing the statutory responsibilities of Government including setting policy and standards, monitoring and oversight, capacity development, child protective services, child care institutions:

- Legal reform (setting policy/legislative frameworks and standards)
- Establishing Child Helpline and Mobile Teams
- Improvement of temporary safe accommodations for children (Night shelters, Safe Homes, “Child Family Homes” and KUKs)
- Capacity building for Social Workers
- Training on child sensitive procedures for police and justice officials
- Support for Child Welfare Boards at District and Upazila levels
- Birth Registration

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<sup>30</sup> Wulczyn, Fred, et al., *Adapting a Systems Approach to Child Protection: Key concepts and considerations*, UNICEF, New York, 2010

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

- Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) and Adolescent Stipends piloted

Less formal system - Strengthening families and communities to reduce social exclusion, to lower the risk of separation, violence and exploitation, and to support early detection, referral and reintegration:

- Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC)
- Adolescent Clubs
- Training on parenting skills - Child Development: A Child Rights Based Approach (CDM)
- Training on Life Skills Based Education (LSBE)
- 

Some supported activities were less directly focused on system strengthening although they address protection of children and contribute to a comprehensive systems approach. These include:

- Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) initially established in areas affected by disaster and now being replicated in non-disaster areas to provide ability based learning and sports and recreation
- Safe Swim in response to drowning being the leading cause of death among children aged 1-4 years
- Support to the Bangladesh Shishu Academy<sup>32</sup> in each target District to promote child rights, especially support for the Child Parliament, for recreation and cultural activities and with expectation that they could support training activities.

#### **4.1.2 At the sub-national level, are the programme strategies, approaches and methods relevant and responsive to the local settings, population, circumstances and challenges?**

**Strongly Complied:** All key informants reported that UNICEF’s Child Protection strategies and approaches were quite relevant and appropriate to the situation, as well as, to their needs as duty bearers. The key programme components are aligned with national development plans and legal frameworks of Bangladesh relevant to protection of children and with specific capacity building needs for their implementation. “Capacity building for social work” was emphasized by Government key informants and “adolescent empowerment and clubs” emphasized by NGO key informants. Both groups noted that the parenting skills (child development: a rights based approach) training and the Life Skills Based Education training were very important to addressing social and cultural norms and behaviours. A key challenge that requires more attention at this stage is improving cooperation and coordination between various groups of duty bearers at all levels.

*“We advanced a decade with the Children Act 2013 and yes it is very relevant”*

*UNICEF National Officer*

**Indicator: Programme strategies, approaches and methods aligned with the Government. of Bangladesh Sixth Five Year Plan: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty 2011-2015; the Children Act 2013 and the UNICEF Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Bangladesh 2015 and other relevant situation analyses of children in Bangladesh**

The UNICEF strategies, approaches and methods are aligned with the Government of Bangladesh Sixth Five Year Plan: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty 2011-2015<sup>33</sup>. The Plan has a Section on “Children’s Advancement and Rights” with a Vision Statement to create ‘a world fit for children’. Out of the ten vision points, the Child Protection Programme is directly responding to six that are specifically relevant to protection

<sup>32</sup> Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA) is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs established by ordinance in 1976. The organization runs by a Board of Management. “The functions of the Academy shall be to make arrangements for production of children’s literature, promotion of cultural, scientific and recreational activities for children and for paintings and dramas by children”. Since 2006, BSA is supporting the Child Parliament secretariat at Central level and in the 64 district towns of the Country.

<sup>33</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Sixth Five Year Plan: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty 2011-2015

of children including:

- (i) ensuring children's rights and advancement through the implementation of government policies and legislations
- (iv) providing access to girls to education, training and development opportunities;
- (v) ensuring access to urban poor children to early childhood development, education, sports and cultural activities providing knowledge and life skill;
- (vi) protecting children from all forms of abuse, exploitation and violence;
- (viii) ensuring participation of children in defining their needs, developing programs, implementing interventions, and evaluating their success;
- (ix) ensuring support of duty bearer, parents and other care givers on whom children have to depend

The CP Programme strategies and approaches are also aligned with some of the Proposed Action areas of the Sixth Five Year Plan such as child empowerment, child protection, birth registration, child labour, child abuse and children with disability.

In addition, disaster prone communities and urban slum areas have been identified as key areas for modelling the continuum of care components of the programme identified as concerns for accelerated efforts by the Plan.

**Indicator: Perceptions of government and non-government partners as to the relevance and responsiveness of strategies and approaches**

All key informants reported that UNICEF's Child Protection strategies and approaches were relevant and appropriate to the situation in Bangladesh. Government key informants at all levels expressed appreciation for the support and felt it was helping them to move forward to better protect the children in Bangladesh. As noted in the summary table below of the highest ranked areas of support by Government respondents, based on the number of responses, was capacity building for social work; implementation of the Children Act; the CDM and LSBE training and CCTs. The NGO key informants, also emphasised implementation of the Children Act, especially improved justice for children and system strengthening; followed by improved government/NGO and inter-agency cooperation; CDM and LSBE training; and Adolescent empowerment and Clubs.

<b>Most helpful support from UNICEF</b> Percentage of responses (See Annexes 6 & 13)	<b>Government</b> DSS, DWA, Local Officials (% of 126 responses from 24 informants)	<b>NGOs</b> 9 +1 group (% of 48 responses from 10 informants)
Capacity building – Social Work (BSST, PSST, MSST, Case Conferences)	24%	
Support for the implementation of Children Act (CWB, training on CA & Child Helpline, Mobile Teams, coordination system strengthening)	20%	27%
Capacity building – CDM & LSBE	19%	19%
Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs)	12%	4%
CBCPCs & Adolescent Clubs	7%	17%
Ending Child Marriage	7%	4%
Improved cooperation (with local officials, CPIE Cluster, Adolescent Cluster, with Government, networking )	7%	17%
Support services for vulnerable children (Educ. scholarships, ability based learning, CwD, child labour, safe swim, child trafficking)	4%	12%

Some NGO key informants responded, “All activities are relevant - we developed them together”. This reinforces the importance of the collaborative process that has been a strong focus for the CP Programme. The Adolescent Clusters and CPIE Clusters at national and sub-national levels were emphasized as being very helpful for cooperating on advocacy, planning and monitoring. However, there were some concerns expressed that the Clusters were not always managed well and a bit dysfunctional, such as not meeting regularly. The recent agreement for Plan International to co-chair the CPIE Cluster was noted as a progressive step towards ensuring regular meetings.

#### **4.1.3 To what extent are programming and strategies informed by a solid understanding of an evidence-based Theory of Change?**

**Insufficient Evidence:** Specific information on the level of understanding of the Theory of Change (ToC) was assessed. However, in 2014 the Child Protection Programme was redesigned with development of a Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 based on the Theory of Change (ToC) and Monitoring of Results for Equity System (MoRES). Through this process the programme strategies and expected outputs were strengthened with respect to the situation analysis and identified key bottlenecks. Level 2 and Level 3 Monitoring templates were developed in line with the key components of MoRES and based on the expected results. Capacities for increased evidence based programming were strengthened through the participation of all UNICEF Child Protection staff in development of the Child Protection Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and Government counterparts, as well as, direct and strategic NGO partners in each Zone actively involved in data collection for the Level 2 and Level 3 monitoring exercises.

#### **Indicator: Programme strategies and monitoring mechanisms aligned with the Theory of Change (ToC)**

The development of the Child Protection Programme 2014-2017 ToC Strategic Plan based on MoRES brought the programme strategies and monitoring mechanisms in line with the TOC and more focused. Key bottlenecks were identified, the results framework was revised, and monitoring indicators and tools were developed for L2 and L3 Monitoring linked to results in the TOC. This also resulted in identifying a combination of strategies for each outcome.

1. Changing perceptions of the child and increased awareness of the CRC
2. Empowering adolescents as agents of social norm change
3. Mobilizing and enabling communities to promote child rights
4. Evidence building through modelling to influence policy
5. Capacity building of the 5 key government partners (MoWCA, MoSW, MoHA, MoLG, MoLJPA)

#### **Indicator: Level of understanding of the ToC by UNICEF child protection staff both in Dhaka and in the Zonal Offices**

The ToC was specifically discussed with UNICEF child protection staff and was not mentioned during key informant interviews. Therefore, it is not possible to evaluate the level of understanding. What was reported is that all UNICEF child protection staff participated in the development of the Child Protection 2014-2017 Strategic Plan based on the Theory of Change (TOC). This involved redesigning the results framework and developing indicators for L2 and L3 monitoring linked to the ToC. Following this process, the Child Protection Officers in the six Zones have been actively involved in data collection and entry for the Level 2 Monitoring based on the ToC since the first data collection from October to December 2014. They then participated in modifications of the tools and since then it was reported that MoRES summary reports were generated regularly to show the progress of coverage indicators for key interventions.

#### **Indicator: Level of understanding of the ToC by Government partners both in Dhaka and in the field.**

Although there was no discussion about the ToC during the Zone visits, Government counterparts and direct and strategic NGO partners in each Zone were reported to have been actively involved in data collection for the Level 2 Monitoring linked to the ToC results and MoRES Framework. This involvement has apparently begun to increase the understanding of ToC and strengthened capacities for more effective monitoring. However, it is at the beginning stages and will require more attention during the next country programme.

#### **4.1.4 To what extent do the implementation strategies address the institutional and individual capacity gaps at national and decentralised levels?**

**Complied:** Addressing capacity gaps for both government and civil society duty bearers has been a core component of the Child Protection Programme and recognized as critical to preventing harm against children and to strengthening a child protection system. Building Social Work capacity has progressed with accreditation and institutionalisation of the basic social work training curricula in the National Social Service Academy (NSSA) and with strengthening of case management including the initiation of online case management. Training on Child Sensitive Interviewing procedures was provided for specific groups such as for Child Affairs Police Officers and the border guards involved in prevention and response to trafficking of children. Continuous advocacy was undertaken to address the human resource issues of many post vacancies and the lack of retention of trained service providers and government officials due to mandatory transfers with limited effect to date.

Two training programmes designed to address strengthening understanding of child development and parenting skills from a child rights perspective (CDM) and Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) for adolescents were reported to be extremely effective in changing attitudes and behaviours towards children of duty bearers' including parents, community leaders, service providers such as police and judges and of adolescents as both rights holders and duty bearers. . Since 2012, both a diploma and a master course on Child Protection in Emergencies (CPIE) have been inserted in curriculum offered by Dhaka University Disaster Management Institute.

Since adoption of the Children Act, a comprehensive training package on the Act was developed with UNICEF support under the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA) for justice and a Training of Trainers was organized for senior government officials and relevant NGO/Individual professionals working in the justice sector with UNICEF support. Rolling out of the training has been started for 20 UNDAF districts and a few city corporation/metropolitan areas for police, probation officers, judges and lawyers who are statutorily charged with responsibilities to implement the Act.<sup>34</sup> Multi-disciplinary training on the Children Act is planned in 2016 and will need to be supported as a core component of the next programme. Most important will be to institutionalise the training modules in the professional training of the relevant sectors.

#### **Indicator: Implementation strategies response to the capacity gap analysis**

While there was not a specific standalone capacity gap analysis, capacities were assessed through the child protection situation analyses and mapping exercise undertaken in each Zone at the beginning of the country programme. These reports emphasised key bottlenecks as; (a) lack of awareness of child rights and child protection issues among the general population, institutions and service providers; (b) weak capacities and staffing of social services under DSS and Women's Affairs; and (c) the human resource issues of many post

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<sup>34</sup>Government of Bangladesh, The Children Act, 2013 Dhaka, June 20, 2013/06 Ashar 1420

vacancies and the lack of retention of trained service providers and government officials due to mandatory transfers.

UNICEF Child Protection strategies to address these gaps have been primarily through a number of training initiatives, as well as, by funding the salaries of a select number of social workers essential for implementation of key initiatives being modelled, specifically the Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) through the EECR Project at MoWCA that appears to be quite successful in keeping children in school and preventing child marriage (see Annex 9), and improvement of care in some government child care institutions including Safe Homes and Child Family Homes through the CSPB Project at MoSW with the initiation of individual case management including the development and monitoring of intervention plans.

#### **FROM THE ZONES - TRAINING**

Training was identified as the most helpful support from UNICEF by a number of key informants, especially government personnel. Among the 24 Government Key Informants representing Deputy Directors of the Department of Social Services (DSS) and District Women Affairs Officers in the field, all ranked training as very helpful. Out of a total of 126 responses to the question, 74 were related to capacity building. These included the following:

- 30 - Capacity building Social Work (BSST, PSST, MSST & Case Management)
- 25 - Implementation of Children Act (CWB, training on Children Act & Child Helpline)
- 19 - Capacity building (Child Development Module [CDM] & Life Skills Based Education [LSBE])

Among the 6 legal and security professionals interviewed, all (100%) said that training was the most helpful support from UNICEF for their work with children. The training mentioned included:

- In-Service Police Training Centre,
- Training to address trafficking, drugs, tourists,
- Child Development & CRC training
- Children Act
- Training for appointed Children's Court Judges on Children Act

Among six groups of social workers who were participants in FGDs, separately or during the Case Conference, all identified Social Work Training, Child Development & Child Rights (CDM), and Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) among the top three ways that UNICEF has been most helpful to their work.

The strong emphasis on capacity development aimed at improving social work skills showed visible effects in the Zones with an increase in number of trained social workers and increased attention to case management despite the fact that most social workers are overloaded with more than one job. Child sensitive procedures and training on the Children Act was beginning to show results among law enforcement and justice professionals in responsiveness to children (see Annex 5). The CDM and LSBE training had the strongest visible effect on raising awareness on child rights, child development, and harmful practices among adolescents, parents and community leaders, as well as, for some service professionals for promoting a changed perception of and relationship to children (see Annex 7 & 11).

#### **Indicator: Training initiatives undertaken and planned for government and non-government personnel**

The most comprehensive training initiatives undertaken for government and non-government personnel includes:

- Social Work Training (BSST, PSST, MSST, Case Management)
- Parenting Skills through Child Development a Child Rights Approach Training (CDM);
- Life Skills Based Education (LSBE)

In addition, there have been some trainings on the Children Act 2013; psychosocial counselling; child sensitive interviewing techniques with police, judges and law enforcement personnel and Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) master training.

### **Social Work Training**

Building social work capacity has been a major focus of the CP programme as a necessary component for strengthening the child protection system, supporting a continuum of care and provision and monitoring of Adolescent Stipends and CCTs. During the previous Country Programme 2007-2011 a four level training package was developed under the auspice of the MoSW with technical assistance and funding by UNICEF and with the ultimate goal that it would be institutionalized by the national Training Institute of DSS in MoSW and scaled up nationwide. The four levels include:

- Basic Social Service Training (BSST),
- Professional Social Service Training (PSST)
- Management of Social Services Training (MSST)
- Training of Trainers

In addition, some specialized training modules were developed for psychosocial support, new education, disaster risk reduction, and child care in institutions. It was proposed that during this country programme the specialized modules should be articulated into a set of Optional Social Service Training to be provided to the social workers to strengthen their professional practices in their specific areas of interventions. However, the Optional Training package has not yet been developed.

The BSST and PSST have now been institutionalised as part of the Government's basic social work training at the National Social Services Academy. According to data in the L2 Monitoring Report of February 2016<sup>35</sup>, close to 60% of social workers in the UNICEF targeted areas (76% MoSW, 21% NGO, 3% MoWCA) have completed the BSST and PSST that includes case management training. Progress can be seen in the increased numbers of cases being managed by social workers of children in sheltered care and receiving CCTs and Stipends. However, the data on completion of the various stages of case management remains weak although it is difficult to assess without a baseline. For example, among children in sheltered care<sup>36</sup> it was reported that only 11.5% had a completed intake form; 21.5% had initial screening; and 5.9% had an intervention plan.

### **Parenting Skills – Child Development: A Child Rights Perspective**

The training package "Child Development: A Child Rights Perspective" (CDM) is being provided as foundational training for the Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCP) with the aim to stimulate dialogue on harmful social norms and behaviours by providing information on child development, child rights and positive parenting through an interactive process that does not require literacy. It is focused on adolescent and pre-adolescent stages of development and includes models that address the consequences of child marriage, child labour and corporal punishment on the full acquisition of development capital for a bright future of the child. As noted in the Box above, the CDM training was noted to be having a very positive impact on attitudes and behaviours towards children. As reported in the L2 Monitoring Report, of the 50% of CBCPCs that received the CDM training nearly all developed a roadmap to end harmful practices against children in their community.

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<sup>35</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, *Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) Level 2 Monitoring Report*, February 2016

<sup>36</sup> Includes institutions where placement is by court order or police authority (Safe Homes and Child Development Centers [KUK]); child care centers (Group Homes and Orphanages); and emergency response shelters (Drop in Centers and Emergency Night Shelters)

### **FROM THE ZONES – CD and LSBE Training**

During the field interviews and focus group discussions there were a number of testimonies as to how the CDM and LSBE training has changed people’s attitudes and behaviours towards children.

#### CBCPCs (all Zones)

##### *New awareness about child rights and child development*

- We had no concept about children – now we know about their development and the problems they face. Now we talk with them and listen to them.
- We feel we have come out of darkness and into the light!
- Thank you to UNICEF, the picture of my village has changed
- We would be backward if we didn’t have this new knowledge and change in our children”

##### *Reduction of harmful practices*

- Before we didn’t know anything about the impact of child marriage and the harmful effects (CDM training)
- Before we used to beat our children – now we have stopped (CDM training)
- Teachers have stopped beating children after the child development training
- So much has changed - Before we used to beat our children but no more – now we talk with them
- Previously you couldn’t find a women finishing school – now they are staying in school.

##### *Opening communication between parents and children*

- We didn’t speak to our children – now we speak well together about so many things
- Our parents used to neglect us, marry us off and torture us – now it has changed.
- Sometimes we didn’t let our girls go out to play because we felt insecure – now we listen to them, respect them and trust them
- Now we can express ourselves - mothers and children can speak to each other about issues and can speak out to others.

#### Social Workers (Sylhet)

- We used to advocate and saw no change - Now after getting CDM and LSBE training, we go door to door, hold awareness rallies and provide shining examples
- Previously we thought of development only in terms of buildings. Now we know that it also means child development and building our society

#### USSO (Ukhiya Upazila)

We had hard feelings towards children before – after training our approach has totally changed in terms of how we speak to parents and children. Most important this is not only for me but for all who have received the training.

(See Annexes 7 & 8)

### **Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) Training**

LSBE has been a major training component for adolescent empowerment and is provided in the Adolescent Clubs. All Clubs are required to have an appropriate LSBE module that covers the standard eleven skills.

#### **LSBE 11 SKILLS**

1. Communication	5. Coping with mental pressure	9. Making relationships with peers
2. Mediation and negotiation	6. Coping with emotional pressure	10. Know yourself
3. Decision making	7. Deep analytical thoughts	11. Put yourself in another’s place
4. Conflict resolution	8. Innovation	

## SELECTED ADOLESCENTS RESPONSES ON THE VALUE OF THE LSBE:

### **“Now we can express ourselves”**

- Before we were shy, now we can speak out
- We wanted to express ourselves but didn't know how – now we have learned.
- We feared to speak now we can speak out with our parents and friends – parents are happy with the change
- Before we never talked – now we can talk with our Mothers – it is good.
- No chance to speak out before, very quiet – now we can speak with our parents and other adults
- Before we had shyness and couldn't speak – now we are active and speak out about our rights
- I couldn't speak to people before. I was too scared. After joining the Club and getting training I was given a stipend. I bought a sewing machine and got training. Now I am self-sufficient and can also help my family and I am a swimming instructor.

### **“Now I have new knowledge and skills”**

- I didn't know about myself before; I didn't know how to speak or make a plan. Now, after LSBE training, I can do everything and I am taking decisions. Also I learned how to think of myself in another's place.
- We were not advanced in our studies but now we are supported to study
- We can motivate our friends and peers about the issues that we have learnt, including child marriage, dowry, torture and repression, drugs, health etc.
- We can help the younger children to learn and develop in a healthy way

(See Annex 8)

Connection Modules, a training on reproductive health and sexuality for girls and mothers (boys and fathers), is a new component of LSBE that is being piloted in limited locations with a plan for further expansion.

### **Child Protection in Emergencies (CPIE) Training**

BCO received support from ROSA for development of training package to build capacity on CPIE issues including, DDR, response to protection needs during emergency, on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), monitoring and rapid assessment. Since then, 113 members of local CPIE working groups, now CPIE Clusters established in five of the six zones of the country programme, were trained and are implementing DRR activities and are ready to operate CCC in case of emergency.<sup>37</sup>

### **Children Act 2013**

A comprehensive training package on the Children Act was developed with UNICEF support under the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA) for justice and a Training of Trainers was organized for senior government officials and relevant NGO/Individual professionals working in the justice sector with UNICEF support. Rolling out of the training has been started for 20 UNDAF districts and a few city corporation/metropolitan areas for police, probation officers, judges and lawyers who are statutorily charged with responsibilities to implement the Act.<sup>38</sup> Multi-disciplinary training on the Children Act is planned in 2016 and will need to be supported as a core component of the next programme.

### **Child Sensitive Interviewing Procedures**

Training on Child Sensitive Interviewing procedures was provided for specific groups such as for Child Affairs Police Officers and the border guards involved in prevention and response to trafficking of children. This was initiated in response to a crisis event and seemed to be quite effective. It now needs to be integrated into the basic training for law enforcement professionals.

<sup>37</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office Annual Report (COAR) 2014

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

### **Resource Pool of Trainers**

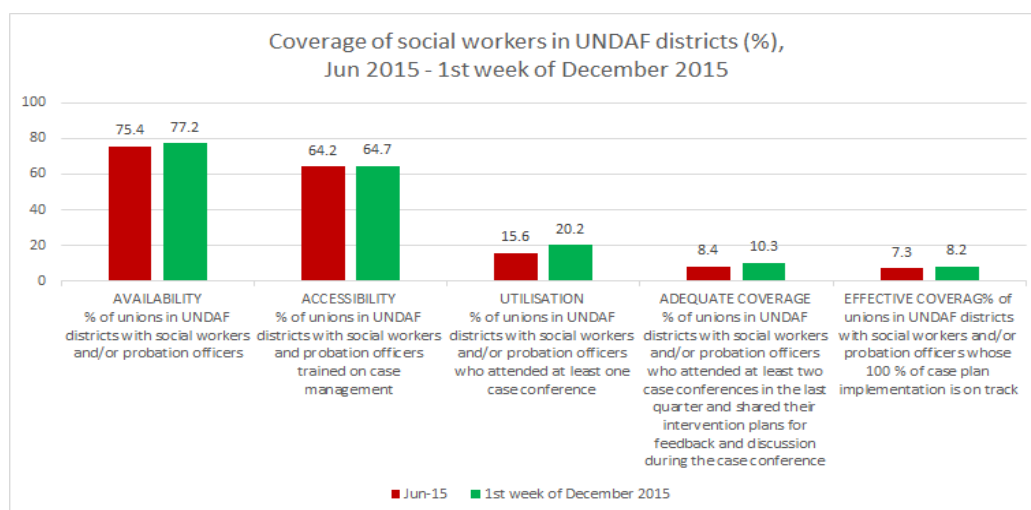
An important component related to these trainings has been the establishment of a Resource Pool of Trainers equipped with training materials at district level. According to the design the Resource Pool would include at least 10 expert trainers from government and NGOs who would conduct training for professionals and volunteers to increase qualified personnel at lower level, so that services can be accessible for people. As of the December 2015 there are 520 trainers with capacities to provide training for CDM for Community, CDM for Professionals, LSBE Module 1&2, Basic Social Service Training (BSST) & Professional Social Service Training (PSST), Connections for Girls and Mothers, Connections for Boys and Fathers, Case Management, Online Case Management, child-friendly interviews for police, and Multi-Disciplinary Professional Training on the Children Act 2013. While this design may have been effective initially and especially for CDM and LSBE, it not a manageable or sustainable training plan. (See findings and recommendations)

### **Indicator: # and types additional trained personnel working in target areas since 2012**

The majority of additional personnel related to child protection are primarily social workers. Union Social Workers are key actors in facilitating access to services for vulnerable children and continuum of care. As reported in the Mid-Term Review of the Child Protection Programme in 2014<sup>39</sup>, 400 social workers had been recruited in addition to the 2127 already deployed in the country. Almost all of these social workers had been trained on UNICEF-supported case management and basic and professional social services.

However, it also noted that there were almost 50% remaining unions in the targeted Districts that were still not provided with social workers and deployment priorities do not necessarily take disparities and vulnerabilities into consideration. Social workers are reluctant to be posted in remote areas and areas that are not well served by basic services.

According to the MoRES L2M Report of February 2016, more than 77% of unions in the 20 UNDAF districts have social workers as of December 2015. The coverage of social workers in the UNDAF Districts increased from 75.4 per cent in June 2015 to 77.2 per cent in December 2015. Sixty per cent of them had received BSST and over 58 per cent had received PSST.<sup>40</sup>



Source: UNICEF Child Protection Section, Bangladesh Country Office, Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) Level 2

<sup>39</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, Mid-Term Review Report: Child Protection Programme 2012-2016 (pg. 19)

<sup>40</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) Level 2 Monitoring Report, February 2016

In order to ensure proper implementation and modelling of activities in the EECR project, UNICEF supported the recruitment of 50 social workers and funded their salaries. Currently 48 social workers are functioning in their posts and 2 positions are vacant.

In addition to social workers, there have also been slow increases in the recruitment of probation officers under the Department of Social Services (DSS) as mandated in the Children Act. However, in many cases the responsibilities of the probation officer have been added to the existing duties of the Upazila Social Services Officer (USSO) which may cause some confusion in the numbers of personnel added.

**Indicator: # of Training curricula institutionalized**

Only the Social Work training and the Child Protection in Emergencies CPIE training curricula have been institutionalized at this point. Both the Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) and the Child Development: A Child Rights Approach (CDM) are expected to be included as components in the upcoming Adolescent Strategy under the MoWCA which will provide a policy foundation for discussion on how best to institutionalize the curricula especially for training of Master Trainers.

Social Work training: Two Social Work training packages have been accredited and institutionalized in the National Social Service Academy (NSSA) of the Department of Social Services (DSS) under the Ministry of Social Welfare. BSST and PSST have become part of the basic training packet for all Social Workers and the training is now being given in Dhaka and at the DSS Regional Training Centres. Social Workers in management position are being given the MSST. UNICEF is still printing materials and on occasion providing funding support for the trainer. All other costs are supported by the Government.

Child Protection in Emergencies (CPIE): Since 2012, both a diploma and a master course on CPIE have been inserted in curriculum offered by Dhaka University Disaster Management Institute with the technical support from UNICEF. The course content is in line with international standards set in the UN Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in humanitarian action. As of the mid-term review (MTR) in 2014, 270 students passed the diploma and 200 the master (diploma 6 batch with 45 students each and master 5 batch with 40 students each). This is a significant improvement for CPIE and will assist in highlighting its importance during disasters besides other live saving interventions.<sup>41</sup>

**4.1.5 To what extent are the Minimum Package of Social Protection Services and its components relevant to children's needs? How can it be taken to scale nation-wide?**

**Complied:** There is no question that the components of the Minimum Package of Social Protection Services are relevant to children's protection needs and aligned with the situation analyses related to child protection issues in Bangladesh. It addresses the underlying factors of poverty and deeply embedded cultural norms and practices that contribute to the priority violations of children's protection rights including child marriage, child labour and corporal punishment. The UNICEF supported modelling of the continuum of care was reported to have a positive influence on the Ministries of Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs contributing to their strong advocacy for adoption of the Children Act 2013. As noted below, the statutory responsibilities, or "formal components", of the package are now embedded in the law and the CBCPCs have been included in the draft Children's Rules and therefore need to be enforced nation-wide. What remains are the less formal components of the continuum of care such as the CDM and LSBE trainings, recreation and culture and the accelerated learning programmes. The trainings are expected to be included in the draft Adolescent Strategy. Some of these components, such as ability based learning and birth registration should be transferred to other sectors.

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<sup>41</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, Mid-Term Review Report: Child Protection Programme 2012-2016

While the concept of a continuum of care and package of social protection services remains valid, it is no longer relevant as a standalone service package and taking the components of the Minimum Package of Social Protection Services to scale will now require support for implementation of the law and policies.

Considering the key bottlenecks experienced during this programme cycle, especially related to capacity issues of the MoSW and MoWCA, it will be important to inform and mobilise local government officials and relevant professionals to support enforcement and to become advocates for development of services. For the social service responsibilities UNICEF could support development of a staged implementation plan with clear indicators and expected results.

**Indicator: Alignment of the Minimum Package of Social Protection Services with the Children Act 2013, national plans and situation analyses related to child protection issues in Bangladesh**

**Strongly Complied:** The Minimum package of Child Protection Services was developed based on national plans and situation analyses for Bangladesh in line with international guidelines and standards. It is not only aligned but also the modelling of a continuum of care was reported to have had a positive influence on the Ministries of Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs which contributed to their being strong advocates for adoption of the Children Act.<sup>42</sup> The statutory responsibilities, or Formal components, of the package are now embedded in the Law such as, the “Police station child friendly help desk” and the “Temporary safe accommodation”. What remains are the less formal components of a protection system that are equally important to the continuum of care. Most of these less formal components are now included in the draft Children’s Rules and in the developing Adolescent Strategy.

**Child Protection Services of the Minimum Package: Legal & Policy Base**

Birth & Death Registration Act 2013

1. Birth Registration

Children Act 2013

2. Police station child friendly help desk
3. Hotline + Night mobile team + Safe home
4. Temporary safe accommodation (Drop in Centre (DIC), emergency night shelter, group home, safe home, KUK)

Adolescent Strategy (expected)

5. Life skills based education
6. Parenting skills: Child Development Child Rights Perspective
7. Stipend for adolescents
8. Conditional Cash Transfer (parents or extended family, foster family)
9. Provision of non-formal education, accelerated learning
10. Recreation, leisure and culture

**Indicator: Factors that would contribute to taking the Minimum Package to scale nation-wide.**

The most important factor is that components of the package be embedded in laws and policies. Having a legal and policy base was reported by local government key informants as a major factor that supports taking services to scale in Bangladesh noting that local officials respect the law. Increased awareness and understanding of the Children Act 2013 was seen as a priority as it can motivate action especially at subnational levels including allocation of budget.

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<sup>42</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Theory of Change: Monitoring of Results for Equity System 2014-2016, 2014

Considering the key bottlenecks experienced during this programme cycle, especially related to capacity strengthening issues within the MoSW and MoWCA, it will be important to inform and mobilise local government officials and relevant professionals, including justice and law enforcement officials, health and education, to not only support enforcement but also to become advocates for development of services. For the social service responsibilities UNICEF could support development of a staged implementation plan with clear indicators and expected results.

Some NGOs also referred to the importance of working with existing structures as only the Government can ensure full expansion and coverage. They also emphasised the need to show results to influence national policy and budgets. As stated in the ToC for Child Protection, “if MoRES is implemented to improve the quality of monitoring practice and to demonstrate results, then evidence based advocacy can be conducted and national capacity to plan and budget strengthened and reflected in increased allocation of revenue budget for implementation of Children Act 2013”.<sup>43</sup>

A few NGOs (BLAST & BRAC) spoke about factors they felt contributed to the positive changes for improved protection of children and to bringing adolescents higher on the agenda. All of the activities mentioned are part of the CP Programme including: a) Strong advocacy from various organizations; b) Capacity building for all actors; c) NGO Programme focus; d) Monitoring; Networking activities with civil society networks and alliances for child rights; and e) Supporting visits of decision makers to the field.

In the context and experience of Bangladesh, it will clearly take time and continued support from the government, development partners and NGOs, as well as, advocacy to take all of the services to scale nationwide. Throughout the field visits it became apparent that with training and initial support people in Bangladesh can be mobilized to take action for the improvement of their children and their communities.

## 4.2 Effectiveness

### 4.2.1 To what extent have planned results of the programme been achieved?

**Complied:** Many planned results for 2012-2016 have been achieved or partially achieved to varying degrees with many expected to be achieved by the end of 2016.

Output 1 - Support for strengthening national capacities was successful in the relation to legislation, planning and coordination. The areas of low results achievement include leveraging of revenue budget to support implementation of the Children Act and the Child Wing of the MoWCA and increased accountability. These are critical to scaling up and sustainability of the child protection system.

Output 2 - The modelled package of child protection services was scaled up, targeted in selected areas of special vulnerability and influential in the development of the Children Act supporting a child protection system. Capacities for essential professionals were strengthened especially for social work and child justice with institutionalisation of professional social work training. However, achievements have not yet reached the scale of the expected results.

Output 3 – A change in harmful social norms was supported with the establishment and/or expansion of Adolescent Clubs and Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPCs) and the provision of CDM and LSBE training. L2M data from 2014 and 2015 indicates that the training is effective in promoting social norm change in the family and the community, as well as, increasing civic action.

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<sup>43</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Theory of Change: Monitoring of Results for Equity System 2014-2016, 2014

### SUMMARY KEY ACHIEVEMENTS NOTED BY UNICEF STAFF

Top 7 ranked based on number of responses

#### Zone Office Staff (47 staff respondents in 6 Zonal groups)

- Birth registration – more awareness of under 45 days
- Adolescent Empowerment and Adolescent Clubs
- Reduction of Child Marriage
- Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT)
- Child friendly Spaces (CFS & CCFS)
- System Development and strengthening
- Case Management

#### BCO staff (14 staff, 9 Chiefs of Section in individual interviews)

- Child Protection Systems development and strengthening
- Children Act 2013
- Adolescent Empowerment Programme (LSBE – agents of change)
- Capacity building - Social Workers (BSST, PSST & Case Management training and strengthening)
- Ending Child Marriage initiatives
- Birth Registration (online system)
- CCTs & Adolescent Stipends

(see Annex 12)

### **Indicator: # of planned results achieved**

This evaluation was not expected to measure impact. Therefore, the assessment of planned results achieved is based on a review of available data related to the inputs versus the impact. The following table summarises achievement status based on the expected outputs from the revised Child Protection Programme's Strategy 2014- 2016<sup>44</sup> that reduced the four original outputs to 3 and in the context of the Theory of Change<sup>45</sup>. All data in the table below is from the L2 Monitoring report of February 2016.<sup>46</sup>

#### **Output 1 - By 2016, capacity of relevant government bodies, enhanced in the area of child protection IMS, monitoring of social services, monitoring and reporting on CRC, rules/regulations/policies, human resources development related to child protection**

**Partially Met** – In each expected result area there have been some significant achievements notably related to legal reform, development of policy and action frameworks, and integration of training. However, major gaps in reaching the expected results exist especially in the inter-related areas of budgeting and development of the CPMIS for monitoring, reporting and generation of evidence. A major bottleneck seems to be government will and commitment to resource and activate a dedicated Children's Department in the MoWCA that can advocate for and monitor child rights.

TOC Expected Results	Achievement Status
National capacity to legislate strengthened	Significant achievement evidenced by the Adoption of the Children Act 2013 and Revised Birth and Death Registration Act 2013 and drafting of Child Marriage Restraint Act (Amendment) 2015, the

<sup>44</sup> Government of Bangladesh and UNICEF Bangladesh, Mid-Term Review Report: Child Protection Programme 2012-2016

<sup>45</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Theory of Change: Monitoring of Results for Equity System 2014-2016, 2014

<sup>46</sup> UNICEF Child Protection Section, Bangladesh Country Office, Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) Level 2 Monitoring Report, February 2016

	Children’s Rules and the Rules for the 2012 Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act
National capacity for monitoring and reporting on the CRC	<p>There was some evidence that the capacity of the GoB as State Party to the CRC is increasing their capacity related to their reporting obligations. The 5<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report of the GoB on the CRC was submitted to the Committee on the CRC and the MoWCA coordinated a high level inter-agency delegation for the review process at the end of 2015, however, there is still reliance on technical support from UNICEF and other partners.</p> <p>MoCWA, with the National Children Task Force, established District Child Rights Monitoring Committees (DCRMC) in each district, however it was reported in NGO Alternative Reports to UNCRC that these were not functioning effectively.<sup>47</sup></p>
National capacity to plan and budget strengthened and reflected in increased allocation of revenue budget for implementation of Children Act 2013	While there was some evidence of increased capacity to plan especially with the development of the Children Rules and costing for the Children Act 2013, this has not resulted in increased revenue budget allocation to implement and to expand coverage. The capacities of MoSW and MoWCA to leverage budget from the Ministry of Finance remain weak.
National capacity to coordinate strengthened and reflected in resources leveraging for coverage expansion	<p>Capacity to coordinate was strengthened through management of the Adolescent and CPiE Clusters at national level and creation of subnational clusters. The establishment of sub-national bodies such as the Child Welfare Boards in the UNICEF target areas are in various stages of development.</p> <p>However, there was limited evidence of capacity to leverage resources for expanded coverage. The exception was in the area of adolescent empowerment where revenue budget was allocated for expansion of Adolescent Clubs.</p>
Strengthened accountability	The expected result that DSS, MoSW maintain the CPMIS and publish a yearly statistical report generated by a set of child protection indicators has not been met and accountability remains weak. It was not clear to what extent case management data and more recently data from the Online Case Management system is being used.
Enhanced human resource development for child protection	Significant steps have been made towards development of social work capacities especially institutionalizing basic training modules and supporting case management. However, MoSW and MoWCA still rely on UNICEF financial support for ensuring adequate trained staff in the targeted programme areas and social work staff are not being deployed to the Districts with an average of 50% of positions not filled.

<sup>47</sup> Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh, An Alternative Report to the Fifth State Party Periodic Report to the UNCRC, October 2014; and Manusher Jonno Foundation, Bangladesh’s Alternative UNCRC Report 2014

	Other relevant Ministries have also started to integrate training on the CRC, the Children Act 2013 and child sensitive procedures. For example, the Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) under MoLPA is training justice and law enforcement professionals; the MoHA has incorporated training under the Police Reform Project and the MoPME is reported to have taken an initiative to integrate the CRC into the school curriculum.
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**Output 2: By 2016, children and youth from vulnerable families including those affected by disaster and climate change have access to a minimum package of child sensitive social protection services to ensure continuum of care for prevention and response to abuse, exploitation and violence.**

**Partially Met:** Although access to the full continuum of care package for vulnerable children and families has not reached the expected result, design of the services appears to be appropriate and according to the L2 monitoring the number of children and families reached continues to increase. The major bottleneck affecting coverage was noted to be the lack of or weakness of human resources (especially social workers and probation officers) that are essential to ensuring the linkages between services, referral and follow up. In addition, UNICEF projected funds for child protection programming 2012-2016 were not realised.

TOC Expected Results	Achievement Status
Scaling up of modelled package of child protection services through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children Act 2013 enforcement</li> <li>• Increased access to services of vulnerable children and families</li> <li>• Increased number of qualified professionals on the employment market</li> </ul>	<p>Functioning components of the package of child protection services were evident in all targeted UNDAF Districts, to varying degrees, where it was being modelled and after 2013 this contributed to enforcement of the Children Act, (e.g. birth registration, Child Affairs Police Officers, Child Helpline and Mobile teams for response, CBCPCs with CDM training, CCTs and Stipends, capacity and quality of child care institutions and safe shelter).</p> <p>The increase in trained professionals, especially social workers, is contributing to increased identification of vulnerable children and support for accessing available response services through referrals and case management. Capacities of professionals in the justice sector (e.g. judges, law enforcement) are improving child sensitive procedures.</p> <p>Modelling of the package has strengthened (and even created) mechanisms for increased linkage and cooperation between service providers to support continuum of care. For example, according to the L2 monitoring as of December 2015,<sup>48</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 41,624 children from especially vulnerable areas (e.g. slums, tea gardens and disaster prone areas) had received social protection services and increase from 36,800 in 2014.</li> <li>• The total number of CCT beneficiaries reported is 13,174 (girls 58%) of which more than 92 percent are active and more than 72% are respecting all conditions.</li> </ul> <p>Expected results related to children benefiting from the RRRI system for trafficked children and the implementation of the CCCs through the CPiE Cluster in emergencies were reported to be on track.</p>

<sup>48</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, *Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) Level 2 Monitoring Report*, February 2016

	The key outstanding issue is that achievements have not yet reached the scale of the expected results. Geographical coverage remains too limited even in the target areas.
Extended access to services of vulnerable people and equity gap mitigated	Efforts were made to address equity gaps primarily through targeting especially vulnerable communities for modelling (tea gardens, urban slums, stone crushing areas, hoar and disaster prone areas); raising awareness and promoting increased inclusion of children with disabilities; and provision of CCTs to reduce poverty as a risk factor.

<b>Output 4:</b> By 2016, Adolescents & Youth from selected communities act as agents of social change to enhance and facilitate collective action within communities to reduce child labour, early marriage and violence while addressing gender equity.	
<b>Partially Met</b> – The effectiveness of the strategies in promoting adolescents and communities as social change agents has been very successful, however, the expected coverage was not realised.	
<b>TOC Expected Results</b>	<b>Achievement Status</b>
Social norm changes  (including specific 2012-2016 results for Adolescent Strategy; GoB; Resource Pool of Trainers; CBCPCs; Adolescent Clubs; community based communication network)	<p>The Adolescent Strategy is in process and expected to be adopted in 2016 providing a policy base for key activities.</p> <p>The numbers of Adolescent Clubs and CBCPCs have expanded in all Districts with signs of civic action to reduce harms such as child marriage, child labour, all forms of abuse and/or to increase birth registration. The Government is now supporting the concept with inclusion of CBCPCs in the Children’s Rules and through dedication of revenue budget for Adolescent Clubs. As of December 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 130,000 adolescents are enrolled in Adolescent Clubs of which over 60% are girls, in 23 Districts (18 UNDAF)</li> <li>• Baseline and end line surveys on adolescent clubs supported by UNICEF revealed that the proportion of adolescents surveyed who reported they had taken action to prevent child marriage is much more in intervention sites than that in control sites.</li> <li>• Close to 95% of the target communities had formed CBCPCs, of which over 50% received CDM training and nearly all had developed a roadmap to end harmful practices against children.</li> </ul> <p>Key outstanding issues are the small numbers of communities reached especially in the context of District wide coverage. There are also some issues with the gap between availability and accessibility and utilization for the CBCPCs. L2M data indicated that there may be reduced numbers receiving the CDM foundation training. The Resource Pool of Trainers model to support training in the Districts is not adequate or sustainable.</p>

#### 4.2.2 What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the results?

**Rating N/A:** Advocacy, technical assistance and funding from UNICEF for legal reform, modelling of a continuum of care for child protection, professional capacity development and empowering adolescents and communities for social norm change have influenced the achievement of results. In addition, the collaboration with NGOs as implementing partners has both supported achievement and is leveraging support for replication and sustainability.

Limited political will and the lack of government resource allocation to child rights and child protection through MoWCA and MoSW has been a major factor that has hindered achievement during this programme cycle. This is reflected in the slow progress on accountability, strengthening of the data collection and monitoring, and the inadequate staffing at sub-national level.

**Indicator: Factors contributing to achievement**

- A significant amount of advocacy and technical assistance from UNICEF as well as support for participatory processes contributed to the major achievements made in legal reform. The adoption of the Children Act 2013 provided a legal base for system building and is beginning to mobilise some professional support and resources from relevant Government officials at all levels.
- Funding and technical support for modelling of the minimum package of child protection services influenced components included in the Children Act supporting the child protection system and demonstrated the linkages required to ensure early detection, response and reintegration for children experiencing abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Support for national NGOs as implementing partners has been important for promoting successful models and for leveraging continued commitment and resources for expanding the child protection system. Their familiarity with the culture and social norms has facilitated significant progress in community and adolescent empowerment and creation of demand, increased involvement of local government, improved justice procedures for children and to reaching the most vulnerable and at-risk children with services
- Technical assistance and support for professional capacity building, especially for social work and child justice is not only increasing child sensitive approaches but also mobilising support for implementation of the Children Act and thus strengthening the child protection system.
- Technical assistance and support for provision of the CDM and LSBE training is proving to be affective in changing harmful social norms and improved protection of children and is being duplicated by NGOs who are not implementing partners.
- UNICEF comparative advantage in bringing different groups together, such as government from various ministries, NGOs and development partners was noted as resulting in improved coordination effective planning, prevention of duplication of services, and multi-disciplinary involvement.

**Indicator: Factors/bottlenecks that hindered achievement**

Government will and financing – Despite the progress made in legal reform, there is no legal provision for allocation of national revenue and budget by the Ministry of Finance to implement the legislation. The lack of budget for enforcement of legislation and policy related to realisation of child rights and especially child protection was noted in the NGO Alternative Reports to the UNCRC<sup>49</sup> as being a major problem. Additionally, the key ministries (MOWCA, MOSW) did not have a strong evidence base to leverage budget and revenue. This affects budget allocations needed for MoWCA to fulfil their mandate on child rights and for taking Adolescent Clubs and CBCPCs to scale and in MoSW for adequate staffing to implement the Children Act.

Inadequate staffing of services – While the key Ministries are convinced about the effectiveness and efficiency of the package of child protection services as a result of the modelling, MoWCA does not have staff at the grass root level while the MoSW structure provides for staff at union level. Moreover, there is a huge number of vacant positions. Government practices tend to add responsibilities to posted civil servants rather than to recruit. This results in multiple mandates and difficulties in adequately carrying out responsibilities required to take services to scale. For example, although the number of trained social workers is according to UNICEF's

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<sup>49</sup> Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh, An Alternative Report to the Fifth State Party Periodic Report to the UNCRC, October 2014; and Manusher Jonno Foundation, Bangladesh's Alternative UNCRC Report 2014

plan in UNDAF districts, due to delay on institutional strengthening, MoSW did not increase the number as expected to the level needed to impact the gap in planned numbers of CCT. The scale up of the minimum package of services was put on hold in 2014 to ensure that the line ministries be held accountable for the provision of quality services, including recruitment of vacant positions and equitable deployment of trained social workers.

Lack of capacity for coordination – The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is in charge of inter-ministerial coordination to ensure implementation of the CRC, however, the structure which is supposed to fully implement its mandate related to children is too limited and unbalanced compared to the one for women’s rights. This results in scattered resources and low quality of services and hinders mobilization of other Ministries with responsibility for implementation of the Children Act and strengthening the child protection system. Birth registration availability has increased but utilization remains low. For example, increased commitment is needed between MoHFW and MoE to enforce the 2008 MOU on birth registration within in 45 days and with MoMPE for second chance education and addressing corporal punishment in schools.

Lack of sustainability of training on CDM and LSBE - At local level there are no institutions providing regular capacity building on CDM and LSE for communities and professionals. Many trainers in the Resource Pools do not have training as part of their formal duties and are often carrying responsibilities for multiple posts.

Persistence of harmful social norms - Deeply rooted cultural beliefs and traditional practices about children is delaying further legal reform required to bring Bangladesh in line with international child and human rights standards. In addition, this affects progress on efforts to end child marriage, ban corporal punishment of children and promote inclusion of especially vulnerable groups such as children with disabilities, children affected by AIDS, and refugee children.

#### **4.2.3 To what extent has the programme contributed to the establishment and implementation of policies in child protection, including policies aimed at supporting pro-active social work and the establishment of a continuum of care in the country?**

**Complied:** High level advocacy and technical assistance provided by the UNICEF Child Protection Section resulted in a major step forward in legal and policy reform towards embedding components of the child protection system in law and in bringing Bangladesh in line with international standards. Support for modelling the continuum of care demonstrated the key components of early detection, response and reintegration of special protection programmes; and support for the institutionalisation of social work training, including case management, is beginning to support pro-active social work. Basically, progress was made in establishment of policies, yet challenges remain in terms of their implementation. Expected results related to government commitment and allocation of funds were not fully realized.

#### **Indicator: Actions taken to promote development, adoption and implementation of child protection related policies**

During the country programme cycle, the UNICEF Child Protection Section has worked extensively on Legal Reform to bring national legislation in line with the CRC and with other international human rights standards. There has also been significant support for development of strategies, national plans of action and agreements to support of improved prevention, protection and reintegration of children.

High level advocacy with the Government was undertaken by UNICEF to promote and draft new legislation through provision of technical assistance. UNICEF also played an important role in convening and facilitating coordination with NGO and development partners, as well as, with Government and non-government groups to facilitate a participatory process.

The major achievement was adoption of the Children Act 2013. After a number of years of advocacy and technical assistance on the part of many actors, the Act was approved by the Government, vetted by the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliament Affairs (MoLJPA) and enacted by the Parliament in 2013. The Act establishes in law the primary statutory responsibilities of the Government of Bangladesh, in line with their obligations as State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols including for a comprehensive child protection system.

**Indicator: Number of policies in child protection adopted that strengthen child protection prevention and response services**

The Children Act 2013 has been the most important policy to affect child protection prevent and response as it establishes most components of the child protection system in law. It introduces major changes, among them, recognising those up to 18 years old as children and moving from a responsive and charity-oriented child protection approach to a more proactive, rights-oriented approach aimed at social development. It includes making provisions for special treatment of children in the justice system, introducing mandatory individual case management based on the best interest of the child and promoting family and community based alternatives of care. The full implementation of the changes prescribed in the Act has major implications on the budget and structure of various government departments.

*“I have worked with many organizations on child protection issues and often the approach to system strengthening was piecemeal. UNICEF’s approach is trying to bring it all together into a cohesive system that addresses prevention, intervention and response.”*

*UNICEF National Officer*

Other legislative reform activities include:

1. Birth and Death Act - amended to establish Registrar in Ministry – Adopted
2. Child Marriage Restraint Act (to replace the one of 1929) – Drafted currently being reviewed
3. Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (currently 9 years) - not yet successful

In addition, UNICEF was actively involved and supportive in the development of some strategies, standards, rules and agreements towards improving child protection prevention and response in Bangladesh. These include:

1. The Children Rules 2015 (Rules for the Children Act) –drafted and being reviewed
2. Adolescent Strategy – in process with MoCWA
3. National Plan of Action to End Child Marriage - in process with MoCWA
4. Bilateral arrangement and MoU between India and Bangladesh to prevent child trafficking
5. A National Plan of Action for the prevention of human trafficking has been adopted and implemented; and a review of the Action Plan conducted. (ensuring that child trafficking is recognized)
6. Rules for the 2012 Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act drafted and under vetting.
7. Standards of Conditional Cash Transfers (2013) adopted in 2013 - Joint Guideline of MOWCA and MoSW
8. The Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) Cluster became officially recognized in 2014 as part of the UN-Government humanitarian action coordination network with the Department of Disaster Management, Ministry of Food and Disaster

**4.2.4 To what extent have cross-cutting issues of gender and equity been mainstreamed into the Child Protection programme?**

**Strongly Complied:** Overall, the CP programme has addressed mainstreaming of equity and gender in both the design of activities and of monitoring frameworks. For example, the promotion of gender equality is a core

component of activities related to adolescent empowerment and all monitoring data is disaggregated by gender. Promotion of equity was mainstreamed by targeting vulnerable groups for modelling of the minimum package of child protection services (tea gardens, areas affected by HIV/AIDS, urban slums, and stone crushing and disaster prone areas); bringing attention to children with disability through support for a situation analysis, development of a module on children with disabilities for the CDM training and advocacy for inclusion; and reduction of poverty is being addressed through piloting of the conditional cash transfer programme.

***Indicator: Programme results that support equity and gender mainstreaming***

Support for equity and non-discrimination are at the core of child protection programming that addresses at risk and vulnerable children and all data is disaggregated by gender. As stated in the Theory of Change (TOC) Child Protection Strategy for 2014-2016, there are a number of programme results that support equity and gender mainstreaming.

Expected results that support gender mainstreaming included:

- Adoption of the National Adolescent Strategy for adolescent empowerment that focuses on changing traditional attitudes about girls
- Adolescent girls and boys participate meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives including education, livelihood strategies and age of their marriage, they have increased capacity to protect themselves from abuse and exploitation
- Empowered adolescent girls act as agents of changes
- Empowered adolescent boys abandon harmful practices like sexual harassment, adopt positive ones and join the girls as active agents of social norm change

Expected results that support equity included:

- Targeting of the modelling of the minimum package of child protection services to the most vulnerable children such as those in tea gardens, areas affected by HIV/AIDS, urban slums, stone crushing areas, hoar and disaster prone areas
- Number of published evidence and papers on child protection related deprivation and models of CP Services. The Situation Analysis of Children with Disabilities was published.

***Indicator: Measures taken to mainstream equity and gender in the programme.***

Upstream advocacy and support from the CP Section for gender mainstreaming has included the provision of technical support for development of the Adolescent Strategy with an emphasis empowering girls, and advocacy and support for expansion of Adolescent Clubs funded through the revenue budget. Support for development of a TOC to End Child Marriage and extensive cooperation on the National Plan of Action for Ending Child Marriage contributes to reducing one of the harmful practices that in most cases prevents girls from being educated and developing to their full potential.

In the area of adolescent empowerment, a number of measures have been taken to support gender equity and mainstreaming. For example:

- Adolescent Clubs that were initially only for girls now include both genders in many areas with a ceiling of 30% boys. Girls are reporting a reduction in sexual harassment as the boys in the club are now their friends and even protect them from other boys in the community.
- LSBE is promoting skills for self-expression, meaningful dialogue and respect for human rights.
- Sports activities, including Sports for Development that has promoted acceptance of girls interacting with boys in sport events.

- Menstrual hygiene has been introduced in cooperation with WASH including provision of information, slowly increasing numbers of school wash blocks with separate facilities for girls, and production of affordable sanitary napkins by girls in Adolescent Clubs (Sani-Mart).
- Gender sensitivity during Emergencies to their needs for privacy and special protection has been promoted by the CP Section.

#### SELECTED RESPONSES FROM FGDS WITH ADOLESCENT CLUBS

##### Behaviours have changed

- Because of sports training I can now join in with the boys. I saw the older boys in my community playing and gently told them that they were not holding the bat correctly. First they teased me, but when I showed them they were surprised. Now they invite me to play with them.
- Boys no longer eve tease – now we can talk with each other and are friends in the Club
- Previously we couldn't play like boys. Now we can play football, cricket, chess, etc.
- The community is becoming more aware of child rights
- Not allowed to play sports or games before – now we can – we even won a sports award

Measures taken to promote equity have addressed poverty alleviation, as well as discrimination of especially vulnerable groups, were primarily addressed in Output 2. These include:

- Targeting of the modelling of the minimum package of child protection services in tea gardens, areas affected by HIV/AIDS, urban slums, stone crushing areas, hoar and disaster prone areas.
- Vulnerable family support through provision of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) and Adolescent Stipends. CCTs and adolescent stipends have been prioritised to target adolescent girls at risk of being married with two of the conditions being no child marriage before 18 years of age and regular school attendance ( As of December 2015 the total number of CCT beneficiaries was reported as 13,174 (girls 58.2%) and Adolescent stipends beneficiaries 1,875 (girls 71%).<sup>50</sup>
- Strengthening the Child Protection Mechanism (CBCPC, Social workers, CWB) including support for training, monthly case management conferencing and early identification and monitoring of vulnerable children under case management by CBCPC.
- Publication and distribution of a Situation Analysis on Children with Disabilities based on the 2007 UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and advocacy for the inclusion of children with disabilities in all supported activities and services (Almost 50 per cent of children with disabilities under case management were referred by CBCPCs and 32% by social workers that may indicate increased awareness and inclusion).<sup>51</sup>

#### 4.2.5 On upstream work, have efforts in policy advocacy been effective in leveraging support for children's rights and how has this been reflected in national policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, institutional setup and budget allocations?

**Slightly Complied:** Upstream work during the country programme cycle resulted in major successes in the development of solid national policy, legal and regulatory frameworks to support realisation of children's rights and to special protection measures. However, in the area of functioning institutional bodies and budget allocations to support implementation of the policy and legislation many expected results were not realized. For example, coordination mechanisms for the CRC and a Children Department within MoCWA have been

<sup>50</sup> L2M Case Management Database, Dec 2015

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

established yet they have not been funded and are close to dysfunctional. Very limited budget allocations have been made by government in the area of child protection and there is no legal provision for revenue budget to enforce the Children Act 2013. It must be noted that leveraging political will and budgets can be difficult and a significant number of efforts were made by UNICEF Child Protection Section and in cooperation with top management during the programme cycle.

***Indicator: Degree to which national legislation, policy and regulatory frameworks have been brought into compliance with the CRC & UNICEF's role towards achievements.***

The Children Act 2013 represents a major step towards bringing Bangladesh's national legislation in line with the CRC. It establishes the age of a child as 0-18 years; makes provisions for special treatment of children in the justice system, including child victims and witnesses; reforms the administration of juvenile justice setting the upper age limit as 18 years and provides a legal basis for alternative sentencing and diversion options; abolishes the death sentence and life imprisonment for children; introduces mandatory individual case management based on the best interest of the child; and promotes family and community based alternatives of care. In addition, it establishes in law the primary statutory responsibilities of the Government of Bangladesh that are key components of a child protection system. However, some of the existing national laws do not conform to the CRC and in certain cases contradict each other. These include:

Legal Age for Child Marriage

The 1929 Child Marriage Restraint Act that sets the marriageable ages for men at 21 years and for women at 18 years. A new Act has been drafted and is currently being reviewed and discussed between the MoWCA and the Ministry of Law. However, there are other existing Laws<sup>52</sup> that set different marriageable ages; some even allowing the marriage of children under 18 years.

Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility

The minimum age of criminal responsibility as stated in the Penal Code is nine years old. The Committee on the Rights of the Child in their Recommendations of October 2015 urged the State Party to "Raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to an internationally acceptable standard." The current acceptable standard is no younger than 12 years old.

Minimum Ages for Employment

In current law, the minimum age is set at 14 for employment, 12 for light work and 18 for hazardous work. This needs to be reviewed against international labour standards for children.

Provision of primary education

The draft Education Act 2013, if adopted, will reiterate the provision of compulsory primary education and basic education for all citizens; calling upon all national duty bearers to uphold their obligation or face sanctions. However, the process has been delayed.

UNICEF has played a key role in providing advocacy, technical assistance and support for the Government of Bangladesh to bring legislation, policy and regulatory frameworks in line with the CRC. During this country programme, a Gap Analysis to reviewing different laws with the CRC and Children Act 2013 was supported and technical assistance was provided for drafting the:

- Children Act 2013;
- Birth and Death Registration Act 2013 (Amended)
- Draft Rules for the Children Act (reinforces the regulatory framework);

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<sup>52</sup> The 1872 Christian Marriage Act (16 for boys, 13 for girls); the 1872 Special Marriage Act (18 for boys, 14 for girls); and the 2012 Hindu Marriage Registration Act (21 for men, 18 for women)

- Draft new Child Marriage Restraint Act (to replace that on 1929)
- Draft Adolescent Strategy
- Rules for the 2012 Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act

Support was also provided to the Government for preparation of their fifth periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child through a participatory process. In 2014, UNICEF prepared a confidential written submission for the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The report was prepared in consultation with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UN Women and the UN Resident Coordinator's office and highlights priority issues and recommendations to the Government of Bangladesh in relation to child rights. In February 2015, UNICEF participated in a pre-session working group meeting and then joined the Government for their dialogue with the Committee in September 2015.

Following receipt of the Concluding Observations and Recommendations of the Committee on the fifth periodic report of Bangladesh, the Child Protection Section gave a presentation on the key points and recommendations for all BCO staff and staff in Zone Offices. In addition, dissemination meetings were organised with key ministries and stakeholders in Dhaka and zone level with support from MOWCA and Divisional Commissioner's offices.

***Indicator: Degree to which the Coordination mechanisms for Child Rights have clearly defined leadership, clarified responsibilities, and adequate funding to be functional***

Overall, the coordination mechanisms have been established and responsibilities are well defined, however, none of these have been funded making them close to dysfunctional.

The leadership responsibility for coordination of mechanisms for Child Rights is clearly stated in the Government of Bangladesh Sixth Five Year Plan: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty 2011-2015 stating, "The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs will conduct public advocacy and coordinate interventions for children's well-being and rights. An inter-ministerial coordination committee consisting of government ministries with children's portfolios and organizations representing children's mandate will be chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and will coordinate the implementation of CRC, CEDAW, and the World Fit for Children Plan of Action."<sup>53</sup>

However, MoWCA has not been sufficiently resourced to fully implement its coordinating and monitoring role. For example, a District Child Rights Monitoring Committee was established in all districts yet MoWCA does not have the human and financial resources to sustain such a mechanism. A Children's Department was established within the Ministry however it has not become functional. With advocacy from UNICEF MOWCA decided to establish a Department of Children Affairs to enhance their capacity to fulfil their mandate for children from central to the decentralised level and to increase opportunities to leverage resources. UNICEF has been named as a member of the working committee for providing technical support in its design and development. Again this process has been long delayed by the government and not resourced.<sup>54</sup>

In February 2009, the National Council for Women and Children Development (NCWCD) was formed as a high level policy and oversight body by merging the National Women Development Council and National Children Council headed by the Prime Minister to enhance coordination and increase effective use of limited resources. While the Government's intention is commendable, this has had an unexpected negative effect: merging the two Councils has placed children's issues in the shadow of women's issues.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Sixth Five Year Plan: Accelerating Growth and Reducing Poverty 2011-2015

<sup>54</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, Confidential Submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Bangladesh's Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, December 2014

<sup>55</sup> Ibid

The 2011 National Children Policy calls for the establishment of an Ombudsman for Children<sup>56</sup>. However, in lieu of an Ombudsman, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has established a Child Rights Committee led by a full time commissioner who has a good knowledge of child rights. The NHRC is mandated to receive and investigate complaints on human rights violations. The NHRC developed draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to guide its personnel in handling complaints made by children and/ or adults on their behalf. However, the NHRC is also constrained by insufficient human resources to monitor and address violations of child rights.<sup>57</sup>

#### **4.2.6 How effectively have the synergies between Child Protection and other programmes been fostered and how can opportunities for greater synergistic effects be established?**

**Slightly Complied:** While there have been a number of efforts made by the Child Protection Programme to establish and reinforce synergies between sectors they seem to have various levels of effectiveness. Overall, both within government and within UNICEF synergies resulting from these efforts were stronger at sub-national levels. For example, while it is difficult to build cooperation between relevant ministries at central level, during this evaluation it was noted that representatives of education, health and police participated in all of the Child Welfare Board (CWB) and CBCPC meetings visited. In addition to be less formal and closer to the problem, these meetings were chaired by local officials, such as the UNO and District Commissioner (DC) who often command more authority than social welfare and women affairs sectors.

Within UNICEF, while some degree of collaboration was fostered with all sectors, in the key areas of health and education the synergies remain weak. A number of UNICEF key informants in Zone Offices expressed that while collaboration has been generated between sectors at the sub-national level, these remain less formal and therefore not consistent or sustainable. This is especially noted with education (e.g. violence in schools) and health (e.g. birth registration and response services for child victims of sexual abuse) where more formal cooperation both within UNICEF and between the respective government ministries is needed. This is also the case for cooperation with Planning and Monitoring to promote inclusion of child protection concerns into national and decentralised planning processes and social protection strategies.

**Indicator: Degree to which coordination mechanisms include the relevant sectors/actors for child protection.**

The key coordinating mechanisms for child protection are those embedded in law by the Children Act 2013 and in the draft Rules for the Act currently vetted and soon to be adopted. These mechanisms include all of the relevant actors for child protection and in time, should contribute to increased synergy between sectors.

Child Welfare Board (CWB)<sup>58</sup> (National, District & Upazila levels) - As per regulations stated in the Children Act 2013, the CWB is chaired by the Minister in charge of Social Welfare at national level, the Deputy Commissioner at district level and the Upazila Nirbahi Officer at Upazila level. Mandated members at national level include a Representative of the Prime Minister's Office, two female members of Parliament (one from the Treasury bench and one from the Opposition), President of the Supreme Court or Representative of the Bar Association, representatives from Home Affairs, Local Government, Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs, Law and Justice, Labour and Employment, Information and Disaster Management, Inspector General of Prisons, Managing Director of the National Foundation for Development of the Disabled, Director of the Bangladesh Shishu Academy. Other mandated members in both Boards represent, Police, Legal Aid services, Health and Family

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<sup>56</sup> Section 10.3 of Bangladesh Children Policy, 2011

<sup>57</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, Confidential Submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Bangladesh's Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, December 2014

<sup>58</sup> Government of Bangladesh, The Children Act, 2013 (Act No. XXIV of 2013)

Welfare, Education, Law and Justice, Probation, Information, and selected members of civil society. Through cooperation on drafting the Children Act and its Rules UNICEF CP helped to advocate for the membership.

Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC)<sup>59</sup> (Ward level) - Composition of the CBCPCs as stated in the draft Rules for the Children Act is also cross-sectoral. The concerned Ward Counsellor will act as president, the Female Ward Counsellor/or reserve member will act as Vice President and a Social Worker of the Union/or Municipality will act as Member Secretary. Other designated members include, 1 Health worker from the Union or Municipality nominated by the Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, 1 female Anser or VDP commander nominated by the Anser-VDP Chief of the district or Upazila. The other members are persons nominated by the Upazila Child Welfare Board or the Urban Committee for Child Protection and the Municipal Committee for Child Protection including: 2 teachers (1 female, 1 male), a Retired Government Official/staff, a Religious person, 1 young girl and 1 young boy (minimum age 14 years), 2 local distinguished persons, 1 NGO representative, 1 disabled person, 1 representative of the disabled person.

Local government coordination mechanisms - In some locations child protection actors are participating in local government planning and coordination mechanisms and this is expected to increase with dissemination of the Children Act and the Rules. For example, the Department of Women's Affairs & Department of Social Services participate in District, Upazila and Union Development Committees and it is being proposed by UNICEF Zone staff that social workers and NGO staffs participate in Union & Upazila Parishad review meetings and that children participate in the Union Council planning process and Ward level planning and then in monitoring.

***Indicator: Degree to which synergies at national and decentralized levels have been generated and used with other sectors (e.g. health, education...)***

The Child Protection Programme is multi-sectoral in design and has TPPs with four Government Ministries including MoWCA, MoSW, MoLGRD, MoHA and MoLJPA. Each TPP stipulates the need for inter-sectoral cooperation between each other and with other sectors such as health and education as required. This is designed to facilitate cooperation between these sectors though progress is slow. Key coordinating mechanisms generated with the support of UNICEF CP Section that are supporting synergy at national and decentralized levels include:

#### Adolescent Cluster

UNICEF supported the establishment of the Adolescent Cluster chaired by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) that provides coordination among organisations working on adolescent issues. Through this cluster, Government, UN agencies and civil society organisations are involved in standard setting and development and sharing of best practices. In 2013, MoWCA and UNICEF organized a Consultation towards the development of a National Adolescent Strategy that included participation from Government (representing Women and Children Affairs, Social Welfare, Health and Family Welfare, Primary and Mass Education, Finance, Cultural Affairs and Labour and Employment) UN agencies (WHO, UNAIDS, UNFPA) and civil society organisations. The multi-sectoral Strategy, with a costed framework is currently under development. The positive effects of the Adolescent Cluster at national level and the need for a better connection with the local level activities resulted in the establishment of Sub-Clusters at the district level. There are now Adolescent Clusters in each UNICEF target district that are active and supporting increased inter-sectoral cooperation.

#### Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) Cluster

MoWCA is the co-lead of the Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) Cluster with ? that functions at national and sub-national levels and is composed primarily of NGOs and UN partners. The majority of the key NGO member organisations have long standing cooperation with the GoB in a number of sectors which helps to facilitate

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<sup>59</sup> Government of Bangladesh, Draft Children's Rules 2015

linkages. For example, BRAC, a member of both Clusters also has education, public health and development programmes and Caritas has 25 programmes of which eight directly address child protection. As a result of UNICEF's coordinated advocacy with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and MoWCA, in June 2014, the CPIE Cluster officially became part of the UN-Government humanitarian action coordination network, and therefore better positioned to facilitate cross-sectional cooperation and respond in emergencies.

Some concern was expressed by NGO and INGO key informants that the Clusters need to be strengthened and more functional at the national level. When support for organizing meetings depends on UNICEF as Co-Chair, they are often postponed because UNICEF staff are not available. Identification of Plan International as the Co-Chair of the CPIE Cluster was said to have improved the situation.

**Indicator: Degree to which Child Protection programme has coordinated with other sectoral programmes in UNICEF and used opportunities for convergence/common entry points**

A number of initiatives have been taken to enhance coordination with other sectors in UNICEF at the central level.

- An Adolescent Task Force was established within UNICEF that developed an Adolescent Programming Framework to set out the key justification for UNICEF investment targeted at adolescents and the strategic approach for the office towards adolescents. The framework also sets key entry points to inform strategic engagement of the country office in the realization of the rights of adolescents in Bangladesh, especially the most vulnerable through a multi-sector approach.
- Activities and coordination related to ending child marriage were initiated and an Integrated Results and Resource Framework on Reducing Child Marriage was developed.<sup>60</sup> This was later moved to the Gender and Development Specialist in the Office of the Deputy Representative.
- All Sectors are being mobilised for development of a UNICEF BCO Strategy Note on Children Living with Disability

UNICEF key informants from BCO and the Zones reported on areas of cross-sectoral cooperation during this country programme and made recommendations for improved cooperation (see Annex 12). Overall, there have been varying degrees of cooperation with all sectors and many are not formalised. Areas where cooperation is formalised include:

- Nutrition – a common PCA for adolescent nutrition for distribution of Iron Folic Acid to adolescents through Adolescent Clubs
  - WASH - Cooperation on development of menstrual hygiene training and menstrual hygiene management at Adolescent Clubs; and provision of water & sanitation facilities in Child Friendly Spaces (CFS)
  - C4D - Adolescent Listeners Group; Addressing Violence against Children in schools; and Awards for Upazila's and Unions with 100% Birth Registration within 45 days
  - Communication - Engaging the Private sector on Child Rights and messages for external and donor relations
- Informal cooperation that depends on individual and or Zone Office initiative are happening such as:
- Health – Initiatives to support birth registration within the first 45 days linked to EPI and provision of health information to Adolescents through Clubs
  - Education – initiatives to support ending violence in schools with the directive from MoE on banning corporal punishment
  - Planning and Monitoring – raising child protection issues for discussion in the LCBCCE meetings and at the District Convergence Coordination Committees (DCCC), and supporting participation of DSS and DWS at District, Upazila and Union Development Committees.

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<sup>60</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office Annual Report 2014

Overall, there is room for much more cross-sectoral cooperation within UNICEF that would strengthen child protection programmes. For example, the Health Section needs to be more involved in enforcing a 2008 MOU between the MoHFW and the MoLGRD on cooperation for birth registration and in cooperation on response to child victims of sexual abuse in the context of the Women Friendly Hospitals Project. While initiatives have been taken with the Education Section to combine Second Chance Education and Ability Based Learning results seem limited. In addition, INGO and NGO key informants expressed concern that UNICEF was not involved in supporting enforcement of the circular from the MoE banning on corporal punishment in schools. Synergy is especially important in these areas where government directives have been issued.

UNICEF key informants from Zone Offices noted that cooperation between sectors within UNICEF needed to be improved and suggested that cooperation should be articulated within the Programme design with cross-sectoral indicators

### 4.3 Efficiency

#### 4.3.1 Do the programme results justify the investments (financial and human resources) made?

**Insufficient evidence:** Overall, the results seem to justify the financial and human resources although there was insufficient data available to give a definitive assessment. Considering the challenges of developing and strengthening a child protection system in Bangladesh both financial and human resources were needed to demonstrate and provide evidence for the importance and effectiveness of the various components and capacity building required. For example, the investments in BRIS, building social work capacity and adolescent empowerment have generated expenditure of the revenue budget and in the case of BRIS and social work training, full government ownership. Investments in the modelling of the minimum package of services developed evidence that influenced key Government partners to become strong advocates for the importance of a child protection system.

While allocation of significant funding through government projects including EECR at MoWCA and CSPB at MoSW was necessary at this stage of development and did result in leveraging government resources, there were also problems with management of funds and concern that the projects are seen as “UNICEF projects” with limited government ownership.

#### **Indicator: Degree to which investments (financial and HR) in the different programme results or components are matched by actual achievement of results**

As noted during the MTR<sup>61</sup>, the largest part of funds 49.1% are disbursed through DCT or Reimbursement to GoB partners reflecting the importance given to promoting Government partners in lead and coordination roles to ensure their ownership. This ownership is key in adoption of policy in line with the model developed by the programme and in ensuring its sustainability through government adoption. It was also noted that PCAs represent 36.6 % of the programme allocation reflecting the importance of partnership with NGOs for the implementation of services and for promoting their continued commitment to the models above and beyond UNICEF support.

Most notable are the investments in BRIS and adolescent empowerment both of which have generated expenditure of the revenue budget and in the case of BRIS, full government ownership. In addition, investment

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<sup>61</sup> Government of Bangladesh and UNICEF Bangladesh, Mid-Term Review Report: Child Protection Programme 2012-2016

in building social work capacity, essential for a functional child protection system, has resulted in accreditation and institutionalization of the training models as basic social work training in the NSSA and is being used in their regional training centres with visible improvement in the field.

Investments in the modelling of services, including CCTs, CCFs and even Adolescent Clubs are developing evidence and leveraging support. The key Government partners are becoming convinced about the strategies even though they have not yet been able to generate budgets to expand them. At the end of 2013, key components from adolescents and community empowerment were replicated by 118 organizations and of the adolescent clubs covered in the L2M report of February 2016 only 25% were supported by UNICEF or direct partners.

While allocation of significant funding through government projects including EECR at MoWCA and CSPB at MoSW was necessary at this stage of development and did result in leveraging government resources, there were also problems with management of funds and concern that the projects are seen as “UNICEF projects” with limited government ownership.

There is also a question as to whether the funds used to support improved care for children in institutions, including custodial care institutions has achieved expected results. While there was definitely some improvement in infrastructure and care standards, it is not clear to what extent this changed the situation for resident children.

#### **4.3.2 Have funds allocated been adequately distributed among the different programme such that efficiencies were gained?**

**Insufficient evidence:** Overall, the funds seemed to be adequately distributed, however, perhaps more should have been allocated in Output 1 to further strengthen evidence building through more robust data collection and strengthening the CPMIS and to provide technical assistance for MoSW and MoWCA to advocate with the Ministry of Finance to have the required budget as per the MTR recommendations.

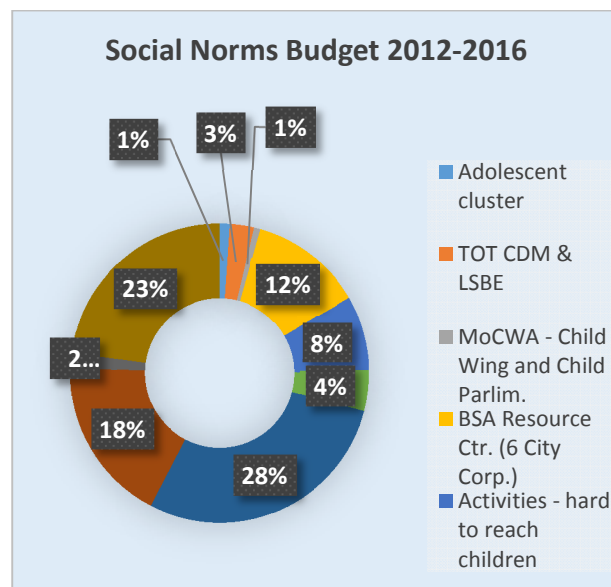
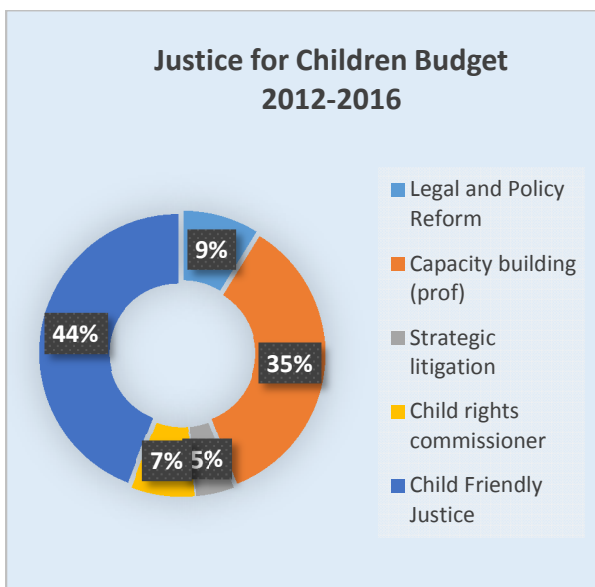
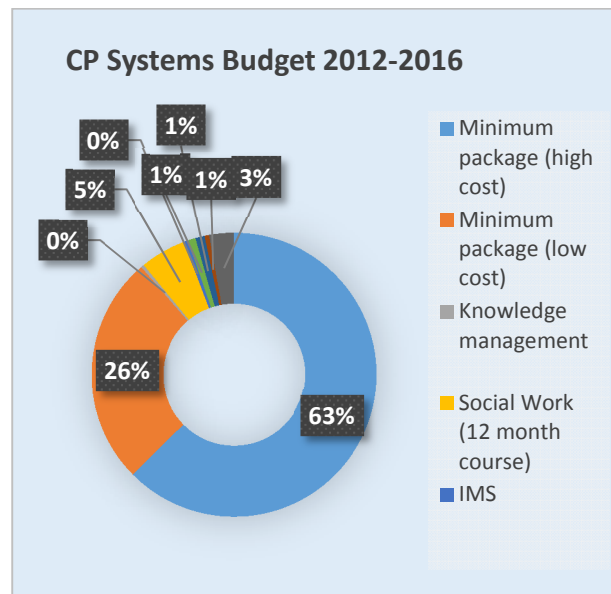
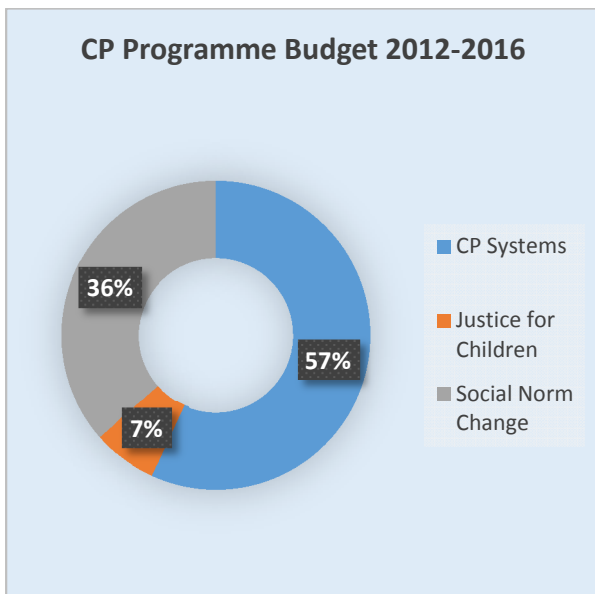
The initial country programme budget allocations 2012-2016 were primarily for child protection systems building (57%) and social norm change (36%). While the general allocations seem to be appropriate, specific budget allocations in each of these areas becomes quite complex and difficult to assess in terms of efficiency of utilization. For example, the minimum package of services representing 89% of the child protection systems budget line included numerous key activities ranging from development and strengthening of birth registration and BRIS to the development of case management, child helplines and CFSs. Following the MTR reorganisation of the outputs and development of the Child Protection Theory of Change strategy, the estimated budget for 2015-2016 is now annualized at a little over USD 9 million. The allocations are clearer in terms of the components being covered which is also a result of the adoption of the Children Act 2013 and related laws that clarify key components of the child protection system to be supported for implementation and enforcement of the law.

Based on information from key informants and observations of the Consultant in the targeted zonal areas, among the most cost effective activities are the Child Helpline and Mobile Teams, social work strengthening and case conferencing, strengthening justice for children systems and capacities, establishing CBCPC's and support for coordination meetings.

#### **Indicator: Proportion of funds allocated to the different components of the programme**

As per the Country Programme Document (CPD), the Child Protection Programme component had an annual indicative budget of a little over USD 11 million. However, actual funded allocations for 2012-2014 totalled USD 21.9 million and were 34 % short of the planned budget of USD 33.2 million up to December 2014. The initial

country programme budget allocations as shown in the charts below were primarily for child protection systems building (57%) and social norm change (36%). Within the systems building budget the high versus low cost minimum package of social protection services represents the inclusion or non-inclusion of CCTs and emergency shelters. While the general allocations seem to be appropriate, specific budget allocations in each of these areas becomes quite complex and difficult to assess in terms of efficiency of utilization. For example, the minimum package includes numerous key activities ranging from development and strengthening of birth registration and BRIS to the development of case management, Child Helplines and CFSs.



Following the MTR reorganisation of the outputs and development of the Child Protection Theory of Change strategy, the breakdown of allocations is clearer in terms of the components being covered.

The estimated budget for 2015-2016 is now annualized at a little over USD 9 million. Of these funds, the allocations for the three Outputs are:

<i>Output 1: Strengthening national capacity to legislate, plan, budget</i>	USD 0.86 million ( 9%)
<i>Output 2: Minimum package of services / reduce equity gaps</i>	USD 6.2 million (69%)
<i>Output 3: Social norm change / adolescent empowerment</i>	USD 2 million (22%)

The largest portion of the 2015-2016 budget is again appropriately allocated to Output 2 (USD 6.2 million) to cover modelling of the minimum package of services which include CCTs that represent 50% of the allocation. The expenditures for services in the package not only include the need for resources in all six Zones and Urban Dhaka but also address emergency preparedness and response, including establishing and supporting CCFs.

The proportion allocated for Output 3 (USD 2 million) addressing social norms change is also appropriate as this includes important activities that carry costs both at central level and in all of the Zones. Expansion of Adolescent Clubs represents 30% of the allocation, TOTs and trainings for CDM, LSBE and IPT represent 27% and adolescent stipends represent 13%.

The 9% allocated for Output 1 (USD .86 million) strengthening national capacities includes costs related to support for legal reform, monitoring, CPMIS, birth registration and CRC monitoring. With the exception of management costs of the project offices in Ministries (40% of the allocation) these are for technical assistance and coordination meetings. More could have been allocated to this area to further strengthen evidence building through MoRES, demonstrate and document results and cooperate with MoSW and MoWCA to advocate with the Ministry of Finance to have the required budget.

Based on information from key informants and observations of the Consultant in the targeted zonal areas, among the most cost effective activities are the Child Helpline and Mobile Teams, social work strengthening and case conferencing, strengthening justice for children through training, CBCPC's and support for coordination meetings. There are some expenditures that are one time investments such as renovations at child care institutions and initial costs of CFS/CCFs and children's resource centres that were also effective. Although investment in the CDM and LSBE training has been effective, the current usage of resources for the Resource Pool of Trainers and trainings raises concerns as the outputs do not match the funds allocated in 2015.

UNICEF staffing at 9.8% of the budget has been reasonable at both central and zone levels although there have been some vacancies that delayed implementation and thus utilization of funds.

***Indicator: Synergies arising from the way resources have been distributed among different programmes (i.e. have resources been strategically allocated in ways to create synergies with other components of the CP programme)***

There have been some synergies created within the programme related to the way resources were allocated. For example, investments in the CDM and LSBE training have also contributed to capacity building of social workers, probation officers and other relevant service providers and to raising awareness of the CRC and the Children Act. CBCPC members have also benefitted from some of the funding for adolescent empowerment interventions.

The piloted diversion programme in Khulna linked with the Adolescent Clubs and made attendance one of the requirements for diversion. According to some of the young offenders met during this evaluation, the Adolescent Clubs have made a significant impact on changing their behaviour.

Resources for CFS/CCFSs, Adolescent Clubs and CBCPCs were especially targeted to disaster prone communities and became part of the CPIE emergency preparedness and response activities, as well as, to reaching disadvantaged groups such as children in communities affected by HIV/AIDS, and those in the tea gardens. Higher funding was allocated to these areas.

An innovative approach within the CCT programme that shows synergies involved matching the cash transfer amount to the cost that would have been incurred, per month per child, in an institution or orphanage, thus demonstrating the affordability and cost effectiveness of community based versus institutional based care. The amount of 12,000 taka for six months was harmonized with the Government allocation of 2,000 taka per month for each child in the institutions to generate evidence about transformative versus responsive social protection and to show that community based care would be more cost effective than institutional care.

#### **4.3.3 To what extent are programmes generating solid evidence from monitoring and evaluation in order to inform policy/advocacy and improved programming?**

***Slightly Complied:*** Considering the number of pilots and modelling approaches being supported in the Child Protection Programme with the objective to have them replicated nationwide, there was a lack of investment in the strategy for rigorous evidence generation including the use of baselines for impact evaluations to demonstrate the effectiveness of the approaches being developed and to influence government policy makers. However, during the last two years the Child Protection Programme has made significant progress in MoRES implementation. It was strengthened in 2014 when the ToC was developed and has generated L2 and L3 monitoring for 2014-2016 to monitor the level of inputs and activities and to assess intermediate results. Although, results of the L2 and L3 monitoring are too new to show significant use of the data in informing policy and programme development, there are signs that evidence generated to date has been used to influence legal reform. For example, it was reported that results of indicators for modelling the Minimum Package as a of a continuum of care had a positive influence on the Ministries of Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs which contributed to their being strong advocates for adoption of the Children Act.<sup>62</sup>

Overall, increased attention is needed to strengthen monitoring and the use of data for child protection. While the CPMIS has reportedly been developed and is based in the Department of Social Services, MoSW it is not yet active. Data input has only just begun with data on case management. There are a number of data sub systems collecting information that are being used to enumerate some CPMIS indicators, however, not all of these sub-systems are ICT based or nation-wide but rather in process. It was also reported that UNICEF has provided technical assistance to ensure that data can be cross referenced between the various systems. These are first steps that can provide lessons learned for improvement during the next programme cycle.

#### ***Indicator: Data collection mechanisms in place and functioning (including BRIS & CPMIS) and # of indicators for which data is available and inputted into CPMIS***

The CPMIS has been developed, based in the Department of Social Services, MoSW, however, data input has only begun with data on case management. There are a number of data sub systems collecting information that is being used to enumerate some CPMIS indicators. Not all of these sub-systems are automated nation-wide but they are in process. While this data has not been inputted into the CPMIS, UNICEF has provided technical assistance to ensure that data can be cross referenced between the various systems. In addition, data on many of the indicators related to the minimum

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<sup>62</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Theory of Change: Monitoring of Results for Equity System 2014-2016, 2014

package of services and social norm change will be collected through the MoRES L3M currently being undertaken.

While the indicators for the L2 and L3 monitoring may have been appropriate to the current programme activities and a first step, they definitely need to be assessed and strengthened. Not all are providing the most useful information. For example, monitoring the “proportion of children at risk or in need of protection sheltered in temporary safe accommodations in the target area whose case plan has been reviewed at least every 6 months” does not make a distinction between children in custody or non-custody facilities and does not provide information on the results of case plans. Also the indicator “% of unions in UNDAF districts with social workers and/or probation officers whose 100 % of cases plan implementation is on track” needs to be understood in the context of the low number of unions that are appropriately staffed which has been raised as a major issue. It is recommended that a limited number of key monitoring indicators be developed in the context of the Children Act 2013.

### Data systems for child protection indicators

<p>Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) MoLG Nation-wide</p>	<p><u>2 indicators</u> 1.5 % of children under 5 whose birth is registered 1.6 % of new-borns registered within 45 days of birth in UNDAF districts</p>
<p>Case Management data base Department of Social Services, MoSW Being developed</p>	<p><u>3 Indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of unions implementing case management by skilled social workers and probation officers</li> <li>• Proportion of children at risk or in need of protection sheltered in temporary safe accommodations in the target area whose case plan has been reviewed at least every 6 months</li> <li>• % of unions in UNDAF districts with social workers and/or probation officers whose 100 % of cases plan implementation is on track</li> </ul>
<p>Juvenile Justice Indicator Measurement (MoLJPA and police) Being strengthened based on Children Act</p>	<p><u>2 indicators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of children in Youth Development Centre (KUK) whose trial is completed within one year</li> <li>• Proportion of children in conflict with the law, victims or witness whose case plan has been fully implemented</li> </ul>
<p>L3 Monitoring (UNICEF &amp; MoWCA) In process – UNDAF Districts L2 Monitoring in UNDAF Districts on going</p>	<p><u>14 Indicators related to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC)</li> <li>• Provision of non-formal education, accelerated learning (CFS)</li> <li>• Recreation, leisure and culture (CFS)</li> <li>• Life skills based education (LSBE)</li> <li>• Parenting skills: Child Development Child Rights Perspective (CDM)</li> <li>• Stipends for adolescents</li> <li>• Conditional Cash Transfer (parents or extended family, foster family)</li> <li>• Child Helpline</li> <li>• Case conferences by social workers</li> <li>• Emergency Response</li> <li>• Resource Pool of Trainers</li> </ul>

Other systems that collect data relevant to child protection outcomes include:

- Child Labour Monitoring Information System - Ministry of Labour
- CDMS (Criminal Data Management System)
- Trafficking of Children database - Police Monitoring Cell for Trafficking, MoHA - Nation-wide - updated weekly

**Indicator: Degree to which data has been used as evidence to inform policy and programme development.**

The L2 monitoring results were the only ones available for this consultancy and they are still too new to show significant use of the data in informing policy and programme development. However, these results have helped to do some evidence-based advocacy with the Government to leverage national revenue in scaling up services like the modelled Conditional Cash Transfers as an integral part of the implementation of the Children Act. Also data generated showing the positive results of adolescent empowerment interventions influenced MoWCA to develop their own implementation plan to pilot adolescent clubs using Government revenue budget. They established 359 adolescent clubs in 7 districts (only 2 UNDAF districts)<sup>63</sup> with support from UNICEF and NGOs. Building on the positive results from this pilot, MoWCA prioritized Adolescents Empowerment intervention in the 2015-2016 budget. However, funds to cover all Adolescent Clubs in all 64 districts was not allocated by Ministry of Finance.<sup>64</sup> It was also reported that results of the Minimum Package as a modelling of a continuum of care had a positive influence on the Ministries of Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs which contributed to their being strong advocates for adoption of the Children Act.<sup>65</sup>

The data from the MoRES L3 Monitoring currently being generated will help to inform the development of the UNICEF CP strategy for the next 5-year programme of cooperation with the Government and provide more data for evidence based advocacy during this process. Most importantly, it will help to identify the gaps between availability and accessibility and the bottlenecks that affect quality and equity of service.

#### **4.3.4 To what extent were the implementing strategies appropriate for achieving results**

**Strongly Complied:** The implementing strategies as outlined in the strategic plan 2012-2016 were quite appropriate. This included investment in legal reform, modelling of a minimum package of child protection services to generate evidence for replication nationwide and empowerment of adolescents and communities for social norm change. The strategy to employ NGOs as implementing partners was also important to support strengthening components of the models and of social work capacities. However, in view of the unforeseen resistance of the Government to allocate budget and the difficulties with accountability, strategies to strengthen institutional capacities of the MoWCA and the MoSW should have been strengthened following the MTR.

Key informants representing both Government and NGO implementing partners seemed to find the UNICEF strategies as very much contributing to improved protection of children. The highest ranked areas of support by Government respondents, based on the number of responses, was capacity building for social work; implementation of the Children Act; the CDM and LSBE training and CCTs. (see Annex 6). The NGO Key Informants, also emphasised implementation of the Children Act, especially improved justice for children and system strengthening; followed by improved cooperation; CDM and LSBE training; and Adolescent

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<sup>63</sup> It was agreed that since UNICEF was already supporting clubs in 28 districts, the revenue budget would be used for other districts that were not receiving support. This is also a policy of Government to encourage services in districts that have fewer resources.

<sup>64</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office Annual Report (COAR) 2015

<sup>65</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Child Protection Section, Theory of Change: Monitoring of Results for Equity System 2014-2016, 2014

empowerment and Clubs (see Annex 13). These strategies also correspond to the most significant achievements noted in relation to legal reform, capacity building and mobilisation to reduce harmful practices against children.

***Indicator: Implementing strategies aligned with UNICEF global and country level strategies***

The five Strategic Actions for Supporting National Child Protection Systems outlined in the UNICEF Global Strategy are being implemented to varying degrees as per the following:

- (1) Incorporate child protection into national and decentralized planning processes, including social protection strategies (advocating for a minimum package of child protection services and strengthening attention to protection of particularly vulnerable children, including children with disabilities, orphans, ethnic minorities and indigenous groups, children affected by AIDS.)

The modelling of a minimum package of child sensitive social protection services in selected locations in the most deprived districts has been a core component of the programme. The availability of the minimum package of social protection services, however, remains very limited as funding shortfalls did not allow the scaling up of social protection services as planned. A number of activities have been undertaken to promote inclusion of especially vulnerable groups such as children with disabilities, orphans and children affected by AIDS.

- (2) Ensure that social protection reform contributes to the achievement of child protection outcomes (including: Support the incorporation of child protection outcomes, and the underlying system-strengthening measures, in all social protection strategies and Support increased coverage of social protection, including social welfare services, to reach the most vulnerable children as a priority.)

While child sensitive social protection is not yet fully incorporated in the National Social Protection Plan, a number of activities have focused on social protection and increasing coverage to reach the most vulnerable children. These include the Conditional Cash Transfer project and the Adolescent Stipends with MoWCA.

- (3) Promote justice for children within the Rule of Law agenda (including: (Promote a common United Nations approach and tools for justice for children; Improve and disseminate knowledge on issues relating to children in State and non-State justice systems, including diversion and child-sensitive procedures; Promote the legal empowerment of children, women and excluded families, and civil society)

The major activity and achievement has been the passing of the Children Act 2013 that brings justice procedures for children in line with international and UN standards. Support has been provided for piloting diversion programmes, training police and judicial officials on child sensitive procedures and support case management for follow-up. Education on the law is also included in some of the training modules for adolescents and for parents and other influential persons. In 2015, UNICEF supported a Bangladesh inter-ministerial visit to Indonesia to study its approach to, and implementation of juvenile justice towards strengthening the link between the justice and social welfare sectors. Following UNICEF advocacy, MOHA accelerated the appointment of a child affairs police officer in 42 police stations, which were additionally oriented on the provisions of the 2013 Children Act.

- (4) Strengthen coordination amongst child protection system actors (Increase attention to the protection roles and mandates of professionals within the work of UNICEF sectors of education, child survival and HIV; Strengthen inter-sectoral work among the justice, security and social sectors; Promote better inter-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination and operational work flows focused on child protection outcomes)

UNICEF Child Protection Programme has played a central role in supporting the Cluster Approach to facilitate improved coordination among key actors. These including the Adolescent Cluster and sub-Clusters established at district levels with MoCWA and the CPIE Clusters at district level. There has also been progress through the efforts of the CP Section to facilitate cooperation between the justice, security and social sectors through the justice for children pilot activities and support for implementation of the Children Act. These were recognised by key informants at central and local levels as helpful supports from UNICEF. While efforts were made to

improve coordination with the health, education and social protection sectors, the inter-institutional coordination remains limited.

(5) Support birth registration: Birth registration is included in the Minimum Package of services.

These strategies are also aligned with the strategies of the country programme and UNDAF. The Country Programme Document for 2012-2016<sup>66</sup> emphasised modelling a strong and child-sensitive social protection system with a minimum package of multi-sector services for different age groups in the most deprived and vulnerable rural and urban settings. In response to lessons learned emphasis was also placed on policy and legislative reform; strengthening government ownership; major investments in capacity development; and working closely with NGOs who are most effective at the community level to enhance knowledge, change behaviour and social norms, and to improve demand for and access to services.

**Indicator: Degree to which implementing partners recognize strategies as appropriate and contributing to results.**

**SELECTED RESPONSES FROM KEY INFORMANTS regarding most helpful support from UNICEF**

**Government key informants**

- Influenced changes and improvements in top tier management, within and between Ministries
- Facilitating inter-sectoral meetings among Ministries involved
- Bringing different groups to the table on issues such as Government, INGOs, NGOs, etc.
- Support for coordination – Monthly meetings of DSS, USSO and probation Officers to discuss cases and share experiences
- Facilitation for cooperation between key partners – for example before I could not go to the Judge – now I have access to all relevant partners.
- Improved cooperation between the police, probation officer and judge
- Cluster Approach – supports expansion and sustainability

**NGO key informants**

- Initiated the Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) Cluster – now recognized in the field
- Networking through the Adolescent Cluster
- Initiated engagement with MoWCA and supported visits
- FIVBD now organizes quarterly review meetings with Govt. counterparts - Divisional, District and Upazila level where the Divisional Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and the UNO chaired the meetings respectively. We discussed issues and try to arrange visits to project sites.

*( See Annexes 6 & 13)*

Key informants representing both Government and NGO implementing partners seemed to find the UNICEF strategies as very much contributing to improved protection of children. They identified the various types of capacity building as being very important to changing attitudes and behaviours of parents and adolescents, as well as, for service providers towards increased attention to child rights. Training for strengthening social work skills and for empowerment of adolescents were also seen as very effective.

They recognised and appreciated the importance of legal reform and especially the positive impact that the Children Act was beginning to have in mobilising local officials and concerned professionals to recognise and act on their duties to protect the rights of children. They noted that the Act was promoting a much needed systems approach and continuum of care including improved child justice procedures and emergency response services

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<sup>66</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Country Programme Document 2012-2016

such as the Child Helpline, Mobile Teams and Emergency shelters. Support services for vulnerable and at-risk children were also mentioned.

## 4.4 Sustainability

### 4.4.1 Has the programme systematically promoted national ownership, capacity-building and skills transfer to national and decentralized levels of government in order for the Government to be able to sustain programmes?

**Slightly Complied** The programme has taken a number of steps to promote national ownership and build capacities for Government to sustain programmes. For example, with technical support from UNICEF social work training has been accredited and institutionalised resulting in increased numbers of trained social workers especially at sub-national level; diploma and masters courses on Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) have been inserted in curriculum offered by Dhaka University Disaster Management Institute since 2012. Technical support and modelling resulted in full government ownership of the Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) within the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD) and the Child Helpline will soon be under full ownership of the MoSW within the Department of Social Services (DSS) and partial ownership has been taken by MoWCA for the Adolescent Empowerment component and revenue budget was invested to establish 359 adolescent clubs in 7 districts.

Despite these successes, there are a number of areas where government ownership and sustainability have not yet been achieved and where increased support will be required. The two projects, Enabling Environment for Child Rights (EECR) at MoWCA and the Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh (CSPB) at MoSW continue to be seen as “UNICEF programmes” with national and sub-national staff and activities fully funded by UNICEF. Sustainability of many of the important capacity building initiatives including, development and institutionalisation of training modules on the Children Act 2013 and the Children’s Rules; the training for parenting skills, Child Development: A Child Rights Perspective, and for adolescent empowerment, Life Skills Based Education cannot be assured at this point without continued support from UNICEF. Considering the positive results of these initiatives demonstrated during this programme cycle, the focus for the future can now address government ownership and sustainability more strongly.

#### **Indicator: Programme components with full or partial Government ownership.**

Only one programme component now has full Government ownership. After a few years of provision of technical support and equipment, the Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) has moved to a more advanced infrastructure fully owned by the Government.

The Government is close to taking full ownership of the Social Work Training components of BSST and PSST, which includes case management training. They have now been accredited and are institutionalised in the National Social Service Training Academy (NSSA) and the training is taking place at the central level and in their Regional Training Centres. UNICEF is still printing some materials and for the last major training session provided only financial support for the trainer. All other costs and arrangements are being assumed by the Ministry.

Partial ownership is being taken by MoWCA for the Adolescent Empowerment component including Adolescent Clubs and the LSBE and CDM training. Based on evidence of the positive results in adolescent empowerment, MoWCA invested revenue budget to establish 359 adolescent clubs in seven districts with support for training from UNICEF and NGOs. Only Sirajgonj (9 clubs) and Rangamatti (10) are UNDAF districts. It was decided that the revenue budget would be used for other districts that were not receiving support as it is a policy of

Government to encourage services in districts that have fewer resources. In addition, government staff are among those being trained as trainers that form the Resource Pools.

It is expected that the Child Helpline (1098) will be under full ownership of the MoSW within the Department of Social Services (DSS) in the near future. A Centralized Call Centre (CCL) to operate the 24/7 Child Helpline (CHL) for children in need of assistance was established in 2015 within the DSS has expanded from the piloted locations in Dhaka to reach countrywide coverage. The CHL can receive calls from all part of the country, through landline or mobile phones. To ensure the appropriate and timely response to the callers the CCL/ CHL is closely linked to the nationwide referral network of social service officers in over 540 Upazilas. This initial scaling-up phase saw extensive local government and grass root level mobilization in 17 Upazilas and two city corporations Dhaka and Khulna to inform children about the CHL.

Following UNICEF advocacy, MOHA accelerated the appointment of a child affairs police officer in 42 police stations, which were additionally oriented on the provisions of the 2013 Children Act. A multidisciplinary training on the Children Act is planned for 2016 in 20 UNDAF districts.

***Indicator: Training initiatives undertaken and planned for government personnel at national and sub-national levels***

As noted in section 1.4 of this report, capacity building and training has been a major component of the Child Protection Programme with an emphasis on government personnel.

As reported in the Mid-Term Review of the Child Protection Programme in 2014<sup>67</sup>, 400 social workers had been recruited in addition to the 2127 already deployed in the country. Almost all of these social workers had been trained on basic and professional social services and case management. As of December 2015, 60% of social workers in the UNICEF target areas had received BSST, 58.6% had received PSST training. In addition, the Management of Social Services Training (MSST) module was developed and 22 out of 30 trainees graduated.

Following adoption of the Children Act in 2013, an initial group of 197 professionals, including police, probation officers, judges and lawyers who are statutorily charged with responsibilities to implement the Act were provided training with UNICEF support.<sup>68</sup> Multi-disciplinary training on the Children Act is also planned in 2016.

Other training was provided for specific groups such as Child Sensitive Interviewing procedures for Child Affairs Police Officers as well as, border guards involved in prevention and response to trafficking of children.

***Indicator: # of Training curricula institutionalized***

As noted above, two training curricula have been institutionalised. For social work, the Basic Social Work Training (BSST) and Professional Social Work Training (PSST) curricula, have been accredited and institutionalised in the National Social Service Academy (NSSA) of the Department of Social Services (DSS) under the Ministry of Social Welfare. BSST and PSST have become part of the basic training packet for all Social Workers and the training is now being given in Dhaka and at the DSS Regional Training Centres with limited support from UNICEF. The MSST and the Optional Social Service training modules have not yet been institutionalised but are planned.

For child protection in emergencies, a diploma and a master course on Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) have been inserted in curriculum offered by Dhaka University Disaster Management Institute with the technical support from UNICEF.

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<sup>67</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, Mid-Term Review Report: Child Protection Programme 2012-2016

<sup>68</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office Annual Report (COAR) 2014

#### **4.4.2 To what extent has the programme contributed to institutionalizing national /sub-national policies and strategies in child protection to ensure sustainability of strategies and approaches of the programme?**

**Strongly Complied:** Exceptional efforts have been made during this programme cycle towards institutionalising national/subnational policies and strategies in child protection that can now be built on towards strengthening the child protection system and addressing social norm change. Both the Children Act 2013 and the draft Children’s Rules provide a legal base and directives for the components required for a continuum of care for children at risk of or suffering from neglect, all forms of abuse and exploitation; for child justice procedures in line with international standards; and for child sensitive social protection measures for vulnerable groups. The soon to be adopted Adolescent Strategy is expected to provide a “policy base” for the successful activities that have mobilised adolescents, parents and communities to address harmful social norms and behaviours.

Contributions have also been made by the programme related to policies and directives specific to marginalised and at risk groups including the Trafficking Act and Plan of Action; the draft Child Marriage Restraint Act and National Plan of Action for Ending Child Marriage; the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013 and support for the Situation Analysis on Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh 2014 as a foundation for policy development.

The challenge now is to support progressive enforcement of the legislation and polices, including through replicating and improving the strategies that have been modelled. Sustainability will depend on government will and commitment as much as on the direction of UNICEF support.

#### **Indicator: Components of the Child Protection programme institutionalized in the 2013 Children Act**

The following components of the Child Protection programme are institutionalised in the Children Act 2013:

- Child Welfare Boards at National, District, and Upazila levels (used to be Child Protection Networks [CPN] with less authority)
- Justice for children – including:
  - Child Affairs Police Officers,
  - Child Friendly Courts & Children’s Court Judges,
  - Legal Aid
  - Alternatives to detention (e.g. Restorative justice, Diversion, etc.)
  - Measures for detention
  - Special measures for children in contact with the law (child victims)
  - Child Development Centres – KUKS (Minimum Standards of Care)
- Alternative Care facilities and measures (Government Children Homes; Baby Home; Training and Rehabilitation Centre for the Destitute Children; Government Shelter Home)
- Care of Disadvantaged Children

In addition, the Draft Rules for the Children Act or Children’s Rules 2015, have been vetted and are soon to be adopted. These Rules incorporate other components including:

- Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC)
- Professional Development for Social Workers, Probation Officers and other relevant social service staff (BSST, PSST)
- Case management
- Birth registration for children in institutions
- Minimum standard of care in alternative care institutions

- Procedure of alternative care

***Indicator: Components of the Child Protection Programme reflected in new policies at national and sub-national levels***

in addition to the Children Act, components of the Child Protection Programme are reflected in the other relatively new policies that include but may not be exclusive to the following:

Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013, that addresses specific rights of children living with disabilities and builds on the Primary Education Development Plan II (PEDP-II) 2004-2011 initiated efforts to address some of the barriers faced by children with disabilities.

- UNICEF supported a Situation Analysis on Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh that was published and disseminated in 2014.
- Advocacy and support for inclusion in services of the minimum package and in activities related to adolescent empowerment.

The Birth and Death Registration Act amended in 2013 provides provisions for punishment for falsification of information on birth certificates often related to a child marriage. Both parents/caregivers and civil servants, who knowingly process the form, can be charged.

- Advocated for and supported drafting of the amendment with emphasis on the relationship to ending child marriage.
- Information on provisions in the amended Act is being provided to both professionals and members of Adolescent Clubs and CBCPCs in the target Districts.

The Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012 contains specific references to child victims and witnesses noting the best interest of the child and prioritisation of the case.

A National Plan of Action for the prevention of human trafficking has been adopted and implemented; and a review of the Action Plan conducted. (ensuring that child trafficking is recognized)

- Participated in the drafting of the 2012 Act and in drafting of the Rules with a focus on ensuring the appropriate recognition of children in line with international standards
- Facilitated the Government of Bangladesh and the Government of India to develop an MOU on cross bordering trafficking
- Supported the Rescue Recovery Repatriation and Integration (RRRI) of a number of children according to the guidelines and through components of the minimum package of services.

Circular and Guidelines for the prohibition of corporal and mental punishment of students in educational institutions 2011”, issued by the Ministry of Education following a Supreme Court judgment of January 2011 which stated that it violated the Constitutional prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment. The circular states that corporal punishment is prohibited in all schools, including madrassas, that it constitutes misconduct and that measures will be taken against perpetrators under the Penal Code, the Children Act and through departmental action.

- The CDM training addresses the adverse consequences of corporal punishment of children’s development and positive parenting. This has not only affected a change in behaviours at home but also mobilized members of the CBCPCs and Adolescent Clubs to advocate for the ban on corporal punishment in schools. (Note: teachers are members of the CBCPCs and in some locations have requested CDM training for their fellow teachers)

The “National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010” articulates the goal of eliminating child labour and the National Plan of Action (NPA) that provides guidelines for implementation as well as for mainstreaming the elimination of child labour into other sectoral plans and strategies.

- Modelling in the Zones of the CCTs, adolescent stipends and ability based learning have all contributed indirectly to the actions outlined in the policy.

#### 4.4.3 To what extent has the programme been able to leverage other partners', including Government resources, to contribute to sustainability of the programme?

**Slightly complied:** Progress on leveraging resources and commitment for child protection programmes has been limited. Lack of allocation of adequate resources for implementation of the Children Act and related programmes to improve the protection of children has been identified as a major bottleneck in Bangladesh. However, there have been a few areas where the Child Protection Section has been able to leverage resources from the Government and civil society partners. Within government for example, Basic Social Work training is close to being fully managed and funded by the MoSW; revenue budget was invested by MoWCA to establish 359 Adolescent Clubs in 7 districts; and it was noted during the evaluation that local government in some target areas were becoming more pro-active in relation to child protection activities and even with small allocation of funds or materials. In the non-government sectors, Telenor (local subsidiary Grameen Phone) provided the toll free number for the Child Helpline and expertise for piloting the provision of CCTs directly to 500 children through their mobile phone and key components from adolescents and community empowerment were replicated by 118 organizations extending the coverage from 561 communities to 10,336. Plans to establish social funds for child protection at local levels was not successful.

#### **Indicator: Amounts of financial resources leveraged for child protection programming.**

Lack of allocation of adequate resources for implementation of the Children Act and related programmes to improve the protection of children has been identified as a major bottleneck towards achieving results in Bangladesh. However, there have been a few areas where the Child Protection Section has been able to leverage resources from the Government.

- The Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) is now fully funded by the Government.
- Basic Social Work training is close to being fully funded by the MoSW.
- Revenue budget was invested by MoWCA to establish 359 Adolescent Clubs in 7 Districts and building on the positive results they prioritised Adolescents Empowerment intervention in the 2015-2016 budget. However, funds to cover all 64 districts with Adolescent Clubs was not allocated by Ministry of Finance which will hamper the extent of community work for social norm change.<sup>69</sup>

Though small, there are also clear examples of local government beginning to contribute to child protection with financial assistance or in kind. Financial assistance has been leveraged through the local government grants and contributions in kind have been the allocation of space (building or rooms) for Adolescent Clubs and CBCPCs to meet. In one instance, in Barisal City Corporation, the Mayor has provided an annual allocation of BDT 360,000 (30,000 taka per month x 12) to cover the rent of the Emergency Shelter space and distributed 50 Blankets to the children last winter. He says he is committed to work for the street children.<sup>70</sup> Some NGO key informants noted that we need better assessment of local resources and skills of Local government at every level as they have resources for women and children's development that is sometimes returned unspent because they don't know how to use them.

<sup>69</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office Annual Report 2015

<sup>70</sup> Key informant interview with Ms. Ferdousi Sultana, Project Coordinator, Aparajeyo Bangladesh – Barisal

**Indicator: Number of partnerships leveraged who have increased their engagement with child protection issues**

NGOs - Adolescent Empowerment

Partnership with NGOs were increased and supported by the Adolescent Clusters As reported in the 2013 annual report, key components from adolescents and community empowerment (e.g. Adolescent Clubs, LSBE and CDM training) were replicated by 118 organizations extending the coverage from 561 communities to 10,336. The February 2016 L2M Report noted that only one fourth of Adolescents Clubs covered by the L2M monitoring are supported by UNICEF and direct partners.

Telenor (local subsidiary Grameen Phone)

A partnership with Telenor resulted in their providing a toll-free number for the Child Helpline that can now receive calls nationwide through landline or mobile phones; and providing expertise in mobile phone-based technology in piloting the provision of CCTs directly to 500 children through their mobile phone.

CBCPCs/NGOs - Community Child Friendly Spaces (CCFS)

Though small at this point, community supported child friendly spaces were beginning to emerge in target areas supported by CBCPCs and local NGOs. This is a result of the modelling done during this programme cycle that demonstrated the benefits for children. During the field visit two CCFS were visited where members of the community provided the simple structure that served as the Adolescent Club, meeting site for the CBCPC and as the CCFS (including ability based learning, pre-school activities and safe child care). A multi-functional centre may be considered as a future and more realistic model for some cross sectoral child protection activities. Currently, they are seen as a focal point for health and nutrition messages and distributions; C4D activities and for ability based or second chance education.

**FROM KEY INFORMANTS**

The three most critical factors that contribute to replicability and sustainability identified by the 24 key informants from Government in the Zones were reported as:

- Training is most important (26 references)
- Technical support and funding will still be needed for a while (13 references)
- Need to convince decision makers about the success of the activities (10 references)

The most critical factors for taking the model to scale identified by the 10 NGO key informants were slightly different as follows:

- Need adequate funding (5 references)
- (difficult to get investment from Govt. or communities, reduction in Clubs, leverage Union funding – 20% of Local Block Grant allocated for children)
- Mass awareness raising and training on the Children Act 2013 (5 references)
- (Local Government would be more active, local justice professionals)
- Increased cooperation and coordination (3 references)

*(See Annexes 6 & 13)*

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, there has been a significant amount of progress towards realization of children's rights to protection and gender equality in Bangladesh as a result of UNICEF supported activities during this programme cycle. Adoption of the Children Act 2013 has brought the Government of Bangladesh close to harmonisation of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and represents the beginning of a shift

from a responsive and charity-oriented child protection approach to a more proactive, rights-oriented approach aimed at social development.

The programme strategy and activities were appropriately designed to address a number of factors that influence children's right to protection in Bangladesh such as the widespread acceptance in society of physical punishment of children, violence against women, child marriage, and child labour and the levels of knowledge and awareness about children's rights and the responsibilities of duty bearers. The lack of comprehensive legal and policy framework for a child protection system in line with the CRC and limited institutional capacities for enforcement and implementation. Achievements were noted in each of the four strategic areas

1. Empowering adolescent girls and boys with information, skills and support networks
2. Educating and mobilizing parents and community members.
3. Offering alternatives through child protection system minimum package of services for out of school children, child labourer, girls at risk of child marriage
4. Fostering an enabling legal and policy framework

Despite notable progress during the programme cycle, these are clearly first steps and significant challenges remain. The vast majority of children who suffer from neglect, all forms of abuse (sexual, physical and emotional) and/or exploitation in Bangladesh are not yet being reached. Findings of this evaluation help to identify the strengths and weaknesses to contribute to building a more expansive and sustainable child protection system.

## **5.1 Key Achievements**

### **A legal base and framework for a comprehensive child protection system is established**

The commitment to a systems strengthening approach and support for legal reform has resulted in adoption of a normative legal and policy framework, that is rights based and establishes structures at both national and sub-national levels for a comprehensive child welfare and protection system. Adoption of the Children Act 2013 and the draft Children Rules for its implementation is a major achievement. The key statutory responsibilities of the government, as per global strategies for child protection systems, are clearly outlined and structures defined for various government sectors. Many key informants of this evaluation noted this as an important step that has already shown impact in mobilising a number of local government officials to uphold their obligations as duty bearers for the protection of children.

### **Capacity building initiatives for professionals, especially social workers, have shown results**

Accreditation and institutionalization of social work training in the National Social Service Academy (NSSA) is a major step. Social workers are critical to support strengthening of a child protection system.

There has been a slow increase in the number of trained social work professionals employed at sub-national level and a strengthening of their case management capacities in the target areas. Case management seemed to be a relatively new concept for many social workers in the field and the recently initiated on-line case management system should provide an opportunity to strengthen their capacity and to monitor progress. Multi-disciplinary training on the Children Act and child friendly procedures for judicial and law enforcement professionals was noted by key informants as being very helpful and having influence in their work.

### **Modelling of the "minimum package of child protection services" has increased awareness of the need for a continuum of care**

Modelling of the minimum package of services has demonstrated and increased awareness of the systems and services needed for a continuum of care for children in need of special protection that includes early detection and intervention, response and reintegration. It also influenced policy development with the inclusion of components in the Children Act and Children's Rules and is beginning to leverage some local funding. In

targeted areas some of the components, such as emergency response systems (e.g. Child Helpline and Mobile Teams) are creating demand for services from government officials.

### **Models for addressing social norm change to reduce harmful practices against children are showing positive results**

Community Based Child Protection Programmes (CBCPC) and Adolescent Clubs are proving to be effective in empowering adolescents as agents of social change and mobilising parents and community leaders to reduce harmful practices against children in the targeted areas. The impact of the parenting skills training Child Development: A Child Rights Perspective (CDM) and the Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) was observed to be notable during the evaluation in bringing about a paradigm shift by changing perceptions of the child and parent child relationships, and in mobilising civic action to increase birth registration and to reduce harmful practices, especially child marriage, corporal punishment and child labour. In addition, a number of professionals and other service providers, notably social workers and police, who joined in the training reported that it has had a major impact on how they viewed and related to children and made them more proactive and responsive.

### **Improvement in evidence based monitoring and data collection systems**

Revision of the programme strategy 2015-2016 based on the Theory of Change supported improved evidence based monitoring with the initiation of the MoRES L2 and L3 monitoring processes. Development of the Birth Registration Information System (BRIS) in target areas was a major achievement that has led to BRIS being successfully transferred to a more advanced infrastructure fully owned by the Government.

The on-line case management system being established is expected to facilitate more efficient data collection and monitoring at DSS.

### **Cooperation with national NGOs as implementing partners helped to realise results for modelling is important for strengthening the child protection system and addressing social norm change.**

During this programme cycle with the employment of national NGOs as implementing partners has been important for promoting successful models and for leveraging continued commitment and resources for expanding the child protection system. Their familiarity with the culture and social norms has facilitated significant progress in community and adolescent empowerment and creation of demand, increased involvement of local government, improved justice procedures for children and to reaching the most vulnerable and at-risk children with services.

## **5.2 Concerns and Weaknesses**

### **Coverage and efficiency in the target areas has not met the expected results**

A major concern is the low level of coverage of the programme components and expected activities in the target areas. For example, according to the L2M report of February 2016, only 24.7% of the 760 targeted communities have established CBCPCs; only 40% of Adolescent Clubs are providing CDM training for parents; and while 77% of Unions are reported to have social workers only 20% have attended at least 2 case conferences and only 8% have their case plan on track. The primary reasons for this shortfall need to be assessed further as this evaluation did not provide the opportunity for in depth evaluation. However, some contributing factors seemed to be inadequate staff and financial resources as well as commitment on the part of key counterparts.

### **Leveraging resources of Government and other partners has not reached expected results**

During the programme cycle very few resources were leveraged from the government and programmes also suffered from mismanagement of funds. Full enforcement and implementation of the Children Act 2013 has major implications for the budget and structure of various government departments. There is no legal provision for allocation of national revenue by the Ministry of Finance to implement the legislation and the

limited capacities of the key ministries (MOWCA, MOSW) to leverage budget and revenue, including from other relevant Ministries, is a major concern. Efforts to increase funding through generation and use of more robust evidence, strengthening capacities to leverage revenue and other budgets, and close monitoring of expenditure must be a priority. Increased efforts to develop partnerships with civil society organisations is also important.

### **Limited progress was made on the Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS)**

One of the key cross-cutting areas of the global UNICEF Child Protection Strategy (2008) is evidence building and knowledge management. Considering the need to show results of the various interventions modelled for leveraging budgets and increased commitment for child protection in Bangladesh, the very limited progress on development of the CPIMS is a concern. The data available during this evaluation was primarily from the L2 monitoring supported by UNICEF and focused on assessing programme inputs. With the development of a comprehensive legal framework for a child protection system and recognising that components are spread across government ministries, local authorities, non-government providers and community groups, a coordinated information system is critical. An effective CPIMS needs to include four kinds of data; 1) Prevalence of risk factors (root causes of protection vulnerability); 2) Prevalence of cases (magnitude of a given protection problem); Case Management and Coverage (detailed information on children in the system, and percentage of all children in need of protection or prevention services that have entered the system); and 4) Evaluation (effectiveness evidence based on outcome and/or impact assessments). While all of these are being addressed to a degree, the system seems to be embryonic and not well coordinated.

**The Resource Pool of Trainers is not sustainable as it is currently designed.** Institutionalization of the CDM and LSBE training is important for sustainability and will require careful consideration and re-thinking of the current model of Resource Pools of trainers. Based on data from the L2 Monitoring report, the current plan to maintain a group of at least 10 “expert trainers” in each district who are then responsible for training other trainer facilitators who train personnel and volunteers is not effective or sustainable. As of December 2015, 520 Expert Trainers had been trained yet only 154 trainings were conducted. Cascade training doesn’t work unless training is recognised in job descriptions and supported with follow-up and supervision. Most of the Expert trainers and training facilitators have one or more full time jobs with other responsibilities.

### **Inter-sectoral cooperation with UNICEF Health and Education Sectors has been too limited**

Cross-sectoral cooperation between Child Protection and the Health and Education sectors is critical to a functioning child protection system. However, collaboration during this programme cycle appeared to be quite weak. In Health cooperation needs to be strengthened for birth registration and response to child victims of sexual abuse. For example, a MOU was signed in 2008 between the MoHFW and MoLGRD for cooperation on birth registration but has not been enforced; and the Health Section has been involved with a Women Friendly Hospitals Project funded by Spain to address victims of violence and yet there was no indication of cooperation with Child Protection to ensure appropriate procedures for children nor of interest in the issue. In Education, while efforts have been made to integrate ability based learning into the Second Chance Education Programme progress is slow and stronger collaboration is needed on space and teachers. In addition, UNICEF was not seen by NGOs (e.g. Save the Children and BLAST) as a key player in supporting the MoE 2011 directive banning corporal punishment in all schools<sup>71</sup>.

**Not enough attention was given to sexual abuse and rape of children.** Concern about the largely neglected issue of sexual abuse of both girls and boys was noted in the 2015 Situation Analysis<sup>72</sup> and in the 2015 Violence

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<sup>71</sup> MoE Circular and Guidelines for the prohibition of corporal and mental punishment of students in educational institutions 2011

<sup>72</sup> Government of Bangladesh and UNICEF Bangladesh, Analysis of the Situation of Children and Women in Bangladesh 2015

against Children Case Report<sup>73</sup>. One issue is that actions to address child sexual abuse and rape have been primarily addressed in the context of violence against women and children and in relation to the Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children Act 2000. There was little evidence that the special needs of children the overlap with the Children act 2013 are being addressed. Much of the focus on models for the continuum of care have been related to ending child marriage, child trafficking and labour and less on the more sensitive social issues of child sexual abuse and rape. Increased cooperation is needed with the key actors involved in violence against women and children including UNFPA, UNDP, MoHFW and the NGOs BLAST and BNWLA to ensure that services address the specific needs of children and are linked to the child protection system.

**Child poverty, one of the major underlying factors contributing to children being in need of special protection, is not adequately being addressed.**

The approach to social protection in Bangladesh has been responsive and based on a “safety net” model with limited reach and impact on long term poverty reduction. There is an acute need for more cost effective, child-sensitive social protection that is transformative and contributes to both family poverty reduction and human development including enhancing human capital and income-earning capacities and reduction of harmful practices affecting children. A system is needed that lasts long beyond childhood, increasing adult productivity, decreasing human development losses and contributing to breaking the inter-generational cycle of poverty.<sup>74</sup> More cooperation is needed between the UNICEF Child Protection Section and the Social Protection, Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation Section to ensure that the many state of the art models of social protection and results of the CCT pilot are shared with government counterparts.

**Limited cooperation has been established with UN sister agencies and other development partners**

Although information on cooperation with UN agencies and other development partners was limited during this evaluation, it appeared that cooperation was minimal and should be enhanced. This was noted in relation to justice for children in contact with the law where UNDP is supporting strengthening of law enforcement including establishing model Victim Support Units at Police stations and local government capacities; and UNFPA is supporting development of services to address violence against women and children including One Stop Crisis Centres in all of the District Medical Hospitals. Key informants from INGOs (Save the Children and Plan International) expressed concern that there was not enough cooperation on addressing violence against children and especially corporal punishment in schools. Increased cooperation on Justice for Children (as victims, witnesses and alleged offenders) and on violence against children with these partners in the context of enforcement of the Children Act would be beneficial to strengthen support and to avoid duplication.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the conclusions and lessons learned from this evaluation. They were drafted by the Consultant and then revised based on review and feedback by a select number of stakeholders including the Reference Group and key UNICEF staff. While they are prioritised, all are important to maximise progress on the results achieved.

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<sup>73</sup> UNICEF, Protecting Children from Violence: Bangladesh Case Study Report, May 2015

<sup>74</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, Confidential Submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Bangladesh's Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, December 2014

**RECOMMENDATION 1 – Continue to advocate and devote resources to further legal reform to bring Bangladesh in full compliance with the CRC** *(BCO staff, including top management, and the CP Section)*

The adoption of the Children Act 2013 represents a major step towards bringing Bangladesh close to compliance with the CRC. However, there remain a number of gaps to be addressed. In the recent Concluding Observations and Recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child for the Government of Bangladesh (October 2015)<sup>75</sup> the Committee expressed concern about the need to withdraw the outstanding reservations to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (article 14, paragraph 1) and on adoption (article 21) and urged the State party to expedite this process. Concern was also raised about the lack of effective coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the rights of the child under the Convention as the newly established Children’s Wing in the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs is not yet functioning. The State Party was urged to substantially increase budget allocations to all social sectors, in particular, education, health and child protection. Other key outstanding concerns were noted including the new draft Child Marriage Restraint Act that grants judges authority discretion to marry children below the age of 18 and without specifying the minimum age and the lack of a law to prohibit corporal punishment of children in all educational institutions and workplaces despite the directive of the Supreme Court. In addition, concerns were raised by key informants during this evaluation about revisions that need to be made to the Children Act to bring conformity with a number of other national laws, as well as, to clarify some procedures.

***Specific Recommendations:***

- Continue advocacy with the Government of Bangladesh to withdraw the outstanding reservations to the CRC.
- Continue advocacy and technical support for legal and policy review and reform to align legislation related to all relevant Sectors with the Children Act and the CRC
- Provide technical assistance and support for further review and revision of the Children Act to address outstanding issues within the Act
- Strengthen high level advocacy for the Children’s Wing at the MoWCA to be resourced and provide technical assistance to strengthen its capacity

**RECOMMENDATION 2 – Prioritise mobilisation of adequate resources to support implementation of the Children Act 2013 and the developing Adolescent Strategy as a basis for strengthening of the child protection system and promoting social norm change in the 2017-2021 country programme.** *(Child Protection Section with SPPME primarily and the C4D, Education and Health Sections where relevant)*

Adoption of the Children Act 2013 has established a legal basis for the statutory responsibilities of the Government essential to a comprehensive child protection system and for the interconnectedness required for a continuum care for prevention, early intervention and reintegration. The developing Adolescent Strategy is expected to compliment the Children Act and to provide a policy base for components specifically related to promoting social change. Therefore, the next country programme needs to move from modelling and demonstration projects to a focus on support for enforcement of the law and implementation of the policy nationwide. A major challenge will be to ensure adequate resourcing. Both the Act and the Strategy are being costed and have major budgetary implications for various government departments in order to be fully enforced country-wide. This will understandably require a gradual process of joint funding between the Government, civil society and development partners.

Leveraging of resources for child protection can no longer be project based with small funding allocations. Strategic programme design and budgeting needs to focus on implementation of the Children Act with well-defined components or “sub-systems” that are attractive to donors such as Justice for Children (law enforcement, judges, children courts, etc.), Protection and Response to Violence against Children (to

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<sup>75</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations on the fifth periodic report of Bangladesh, October 2015

strengthen child protection services), Adolescent Empowerment for Social Norm Change, and Child Sensitive Social Protection. For example, the European Union supports programmes for Justice for Children in many countries, but in Bangladesh only supports a small coalition of local NGOs based on a proposal. A “Sector-Wide Approach” to maximise bilateral partnerships and to consolidate resources to support the GoB for implementation of the Children Act should be considered for one or more of these “sub-systems” and coordinated efforts of all actors is needed to capitalise on funding opportunities both internal and external.

***Specific Recommendations:***

- Provide technical support to MoWCA and MoSW to strengthen evidence-based leveraging of budget and revenue from the Ministry of Finance
- Provide technical assistance to conduct a mapping of existing financial and human resources for enforcement of the Children Act using tools being developed by UNICEF Child Protection globally such as the Financial Benchmarking tool.
- Support wide dissemination of the Children Act, including the development of “user friendly materials”, to gain support for implementation and for resource allocations from the various Ministries, local government and civil society.
- Maximise UNICEF’s comparative advantage in bring various partners together to explore options and develop plans to leverage funding for implementation of the Children Act and Adolescent Strategy including consideration for a Sector Wide Approach.

**RECOMMENDATION 3 - Devote resources to strengthen the CPIMS including enhanced information collection and monitoring to better inform child protection programming** (*Child Protection Section with SPPME and other Sections such as Education & Health as relevant*)

Continuation and strengthening of results monitoring needs to be emphasized in the new country programme, especially to generate evidence for leveraging resources budgeting and planning towards enhancing the child protection system. This includes a review of the L2 and L3 monitoring that is primarily for monitoring UNICEF programming inputs and results and learning lessons for development of the CPIMS for Bangladesh. Evidence building and knowledge management is one of the key crosscutting areas of UNICEF’s global Child Protection Strategy and a number of initiatives have been taken by UNICEF country offices and headquarters to support this process .<sup>76</sup> Child Protection systems are complex and involve a number components spread across government ministries, local authorities, non-government providers and community groups where data is collected. It is advised that the Child Protection Section review the assessments and tools being developed by UNICEF Child Protection Division in headquarters to guide the process. Considering the limited capacities of key government partners it will be important to develop a plan with doable stages and also to consider collaboration with a university.

***Specific recommendations:***

- Support an evaluation of all data collection and monitoring initiatives currently being piloted for child protection to assess their relevance and efficacy including the MoRES monitoring
- Provide technical assistance to MoSW for strengthening the CPIMS using the global UNICEF “CPIMS data handling guidelines” and clarify linkages with the data collection sub-systems.

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<sup>76</sup> Examples for guidance - United Nations Children’s Fund, Measuring and Monitoring Child Protection Systems: Proposed Core Indicators for the East Asia and Pacific Region, Strengthening Child Protection Series No. 3., UNICEF EAPRO, Bangkok, 2012; UNICEF Indonesia, Child Protection Information Management Mapping: Towards a Data Surveillance System in Indonesia (2009)

- Develop a Theory of Change Strategy for the 2017-2021 CP Child Protection in consultation with all key partners
- Support development of a Strategic Plan to strengthen capacities for more robust data collection and monitoring among key institutions with responsibility for implementing the Children Act 2013.

**RECOMMENDATION 4: Continue to commit resources to support institutional and human resource capacity building required for strengthening the child protection system** (*Child Protection Section with support from the Health and Education Sections*)

Ensuring adequate capacities at all levels is critical to strengthening child protection systems. A number of government ministries have legal obligations for enforcement of the Children Act including; MoSW, MoWCA, MoJPA, MoHA, MoLG, MoHFW, MoE and MoMPE. Each of these ministries need to include the module on the Children Act in their professional training curricula. During this programme cycle progress was made especially in the development and piloting of training packages and modules for awareness of the Children Act, professional development, adolescent empowerment and parenting skills. Only two training programmes have been institutionalised and even those may need support to ensure sustainability. Institutional capacity building with key government counterparts has shown some limited results and will require significant support for scaling up. Despite the limitations, the impact of the trainings is beginning to show positive results. In the target areas of UNICEF Zones visited during this evaluation, social workers are gradually becoming more proficient and active, some local government officials and law enforcement officers were becoming mobilised for child protection and adolescents and communities were taking civil action to improve protection of children.

Capacity building also requires attention to human resource management. Staffing concerns including lack of adequate staff, of supervision and monitoring was a key constraint noted in all Zones. The 2017-2021 CP programme needs to build on the successes and lessons learned with a strong focus on accountability, on scaling up and on sustainability.

***Specific recommendations:***

- Support the government to conduct a comprehensive capacity gap analysis for the Children Act with the involvement of all relevant sectors and to develop a plan for capacity building
- Provide technical assistance to the NSSA and DSS (MoSW) to continue and strengthen professional social work training, online case management and to develop plans for supervision and monitoring of performance.
- Continue to provide technical assistance and support for multi-disciplinary training on the Children Act including the development of materials and support for training as a priority and promote the institutionalization of training modules in professional training curricula of relevant ministries and institutions.
- Support an evaluation of the Resource Pool of Trainers model for the CDM and LSBE training and based on the findings and lessons learned develop an effective and sustainable model. (These trainings, have proven to be effective as key components of the child protection system and need to be continued)

**RECOMMENDATION 5. Strengthen and expand initiatives to address Violence Against Children in line with UNICEF’s global initiative and guidelines and with a special focus on child sexual abuse.** (*Child Protection Section with Health and Education and C4D Sections*)

The need to strengthen attention to protecting children from violence in Bangladesh was raised in a recent UNICEF report on Protecting Children from Violence in Bangladesh<sup>77</sup> and by many key informants during this evaluation. The Bangladesh Child Protection Programme is addressing the six key strategies of INSPIRE<sup>78</sup> developed by an inter-agency group led by the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to prevent and respond to violence against children: 1) Supporting parents, caregivers and families; 2) Helping children and adolescents manage risks and challenges; 3) Changing attitudes and social norms that encourage violence and discrimination; 4) Promoting and providing support services for children; 5) Implementing laws and policies that protect children; 6) Carrying out data collection and research. However, much of the focus in strengthening these activities has been on ending child marriage and corporal punishment and less on other forms of violence such as sexual abuse including rape of girls and boys.

A key obstacle is that in Bangladesh actions to address these violations against children have been primarily addressed in the context of violence against women and children and in relation to the Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children Act 2000. While the Children Act 2013 provides a comprehensive and holistic legal framework for prevention and response to abuse, violence and exploitation as well as justice for children, it does not clarify the relationship between the two Acts including the establishment of separate procedures in court. In this situation there is a danger of child victims facing barriers to access appropriate child sensitive services as outlined in the Children Act. For example, it is not clear whether child sensitive procedures are understood or being used in the different response services developed to address violence against women and children together.

A number of initiatives are being supported that address child and women victims of violence. UNDP is supporting Victim Support Centres and UNFPA is the primary focal point for prevention and protection related to gender based violence and supports One Stop Crisis Centres (OCCs) in 43 Districts Medical College Hospitals through a multi-sectoral collaboration between MoWCA, MoSW, Health, Home Affairs, and Police. These Centres provide medical and forensic examinations, psycho-social counselling, and legal aid in a safe and confidential environment and support reintegration. NGOs including BLAST and BNWLA, are providing legal aid for victims, including for children. The UNICEF Health Section supported the MoHFW Women Friendly Hospital Initiative in 25 public hospitals specifically addressing response to women survivors of violence. However, there has been limited cooperation with the Child Protection Section and it is not clear to what extent these have incorporated special procedures for children. Both Acts are within the mandate of the MoWCA and should be coordinated to ensure the best interests of the child. Yet this is another example of how children get side-lined with the absence of a dedicated Children Wing in the Ministry.

#### ***Specific Recommendations:***

- Support an assessment in collaboration with government, UNFPA, and NGOs of all data and services related to violence against women and children under the Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children Act 2000 to determine the numbers of child victims of abuse and rape (under 18 years) cases; the types and quality of services; and the specific support needs for children;
- Provide technical assistance for a review of the Children Act 2013 and the Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children Act 2000 to determine overlaps and support clarification and revision as required.
- Support MoSW to organise a workshop with the District Deputy Directors of Social Services on Child Abuse to better understand the situation, the key bottlenecks and to discuss ideas for intervention.

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<sup>77</sup> UNICEF, 2015, report on “Protecting Children from Violence: A Comprehensive Evaluation of UNICEF’s Strategies and Programme Performance, Bangladesh Country Case Study”

<sup>78</sup> INSPIRE\_report\_8\_Jul\_2016\_WEB.pdf

**RECOMMENDATION 6: Continue to advocate for and support child sensitive and transformative models in the National Social Protection Strategy** (*Child Protection Section with SPPME and top management*)

Child poverty is one of the major underlying factors that contribute to children being in need of protection from harms such as child labour, child marriage, commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. Institutionalisation has been the prevailing approach for the protection of orphans and vulnerable children in the country versus promotion of alternative family based care as per recommended provisions of the CRC. There is an acute need for more cost effective, child-sensitive social protection that is transformative and contributes to both family poverty reduction and human development including enhancing human capital and income-earning capacities and reduction of harmful practices affecting children. A system is needed that lasts long beyond childhood, increasing adult productivity, decreasing human development losses and contributing to breaking the inter-generational cycle of poverty.<sup>79</sup>

The National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) is primarily based on a “safety net” model with specifically targeted diverse schemes that are responsive versus transformative. Budget allocations for these safety nets showed a decreasing trend from 16 per cent of the national budget in 2010-2011 to 12 per cent of in 2012-13.<sup>80</sup> The UNICEF Child Protection programme pilot of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) that provides three tranches of a lump sum of about 12,000 taka (USD 250) each in six month intervals has had positive results with about 48 per cent of families graduating out of extreme poverty within only 18 months of support and 96 per cent within an average of 24 months, achieving a monthly income of more than 5,000 BDT (US\$67).<sup>81</sup> It has also encouraged family and community-based care solutions that provide positive outcomes for children in a short span of time.

A particular factor within the programme that offers great potential during scaling up has involved matching the cash transfer amount to the cost that would have been incurred, per month per child, in an institution or orphanage, thus demonstrating the affordability and cost effectiveness of community based versus institutional based care. The amount of 12,000 taka for six months was harmonized with the Government allocation of 2,000 taka per month for each child in the institutions to generate evidence.

***Specific Recommendations:***

- Support MoSW for continued piloting of the CCTs with rigorous monitoring and evaluation
- Continue advocacy with the Government to promote transformative social protection using evidence from the CCT model
- Increase cooperation between the UNICEF Child Protection and SPPME Sections to consolidate and maximise evidence generation and advocacy efforts

**RECOMMENDATION 7: Strengthen inter-sectoral cooperation within UNICEF for Child Protection** (*Deputy Representative, Child Protection and all Sections*)

Inter-sectoral cooperation on child protection is an ongoing issue in UNICEF although it has improved over the years, especially with the establishment of Child Protection as a Programme Division. While progress has been made in the Bangladesh Country Office in the collaboration with some Sections, there were major gaps noted that will influence strengthening of the child protection system and implementation of the Children Act 2013. For example, during the evaluation 13 key informant interviews in BCO and six Zone meetings with a total of 47 UNICEF staff were held. Among the 50 non-child protection staff, only 6 had read the CRC Concluding Observations for the GOB; only 3 staff in BCO were very familiar with the Child Protection Programme and

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<sup>79</sup> UNICEF Bangladesh, Confidential Submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Bangladesh’s Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, December 2014

<sup>80</sup> Finance Division, Ministry of Finance, *Safety net budget*, (UNICEF CRC Report)

<sup>81</sup> UNICEF. *Amader Shishu Project Analysis*. Dhaka, 2012.

strategies; and only 1 staff was very familiar with the Children's Act 2013 while 37 were somewhat familiar. (see Annex 12) This Act has implications for a number of sectors, is a major component of the national legislation in relation to harmonisation with the CRC and should be understood to support cross-sectoral cooperation. In all countries child protection is a sensitive area for governments and UNICEF Offices as a whole need to advocate to keep the issues on the agenda as part of the corporate mandate to support realisation of child rights.

Key areas of collaboration that need strengthening in Bangladesh are especially related to Health and Education and the SPPME Sectors which are all noted as key to a child protection system. These Sectors can be instrumental in advocating with their key government counterparts to understand and respect their responsibilities and/or supportive roles under the Children Act.

Improved collaboration needs to be clarified in programme strategies in order to be sustainable and not dependent on an individual interest or commitment. This means that the cooperation needs to be integrated into programme strategies with clear indicators.

*Specific recommendations:*

- Organise an all office seminar on the Children Act 2013 led by the Deputy Representative and supported by the Child Protection Section to educate staff on the Act and to identify key areas where Sectors need to collaborate to support its enforcement.
- Conduct a review of the proposed new country programme to identify areas where cross-sectoral cooperation has been included and to note any critical gaps.

**RECOMMENDATION 8: Continue to invest in support through technical assistance and monitoring to strengthen and expand birth registration**

It is important to continue the progress made towards universal birth registration in Bangladesh based on the UNICEF supported efforts in the six Zones for the development of Birth Registration Information System (BRIS), including provision of equipment, where an increase in registered births has been noted. With the amendment of the Birth and Death Registration Act 2013 establishing the Office of the Registrar General as a permanent government structure to oversee birth and death registration activities (resourced through revenue budget) and the transfer of BRIS to a more advanced infrastructure within the MoLGRD, attention and technical support will be needed to promote expansion, accountability and sustainability. Limited financial resources should be allocated to leverage government ownership. It is also important to build on the success noted in some locations where birth registration was linked to EPI with health workers and volunteers providing assistance to fill out forms and support for processing birth certificates within 45 days of birth. In these locations concern was expressed by UNICEF key informants that the cooperation was still informal and needed to be formalised.

While the Child Protection Programme may not be the best position in the long run to support civil registration activities, continued support with established partners is necessary at this point to ensure continuity, as well as, to strengthen the use of birth certificates in relation to protection such as minimum age requirements, for child labour, child marriage and justice.

***Specific Recommendations:***

- Provide technical assistance and monitoring to support continued strengthening of the birth registration process and maintenance of BRIS.
- Advocate for and support a formal cooperation between the MoHFW and the Birth Registrar towards a clear directive on linking birth registration to EPI services.
- Advocate for and support the increased use of birth certificates by marriage registrars to determine minimum age for marriage and with probation officers and judges in the justice system.