

EVALUATION REPORT

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE UNICEF PROJECT FOR THE REINTEGRATION AND REHABILITATION OF CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT (CAAC) IN NEPAL



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LIST OF ACCRONYMS

BNA	Sundar Nepal Sanstha (Beautiful Nepal)
CAAC	Children Affected by Armed Conflict
CAAFAG	Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups
CCWB	Central Child Welfare Board
CDPS	Community Development Programme, Sindhuli
CDS	Child Development Society
CFLG	Child Friendly Local Governance
CI	Child Inspector
CP	Child Protection
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CPO	Child Protection Officer
CRO	Child Rights Officers
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTEVT	Council for Technical Training and Vocational Training
CWISH	Children and Women in Social Services and Human Rights
DCSI	Department of Cottage and Small Industries
DCWB	District Child Welfare Board
DDO	District Development Office
DEO	District Education Office
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DPHO	District Public Health Office
DWC	Department of Women and children
DWCO	District Women and Children Offices
ECARDS	Ecology, Agriculture and Rural Development Society
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer
IGA	Income Generating Activities
INGO	International non-government organisation
JJCC	Juvenile Justice Coordination Committee
LPC	Local Peace Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEDPA	Micro-Enterprise Development for Poverty Alleviation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoL	Ministry of Industry
MoPR	Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction
MWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NGO	Non-government organisation
NIM	National Implementation Modalities
NPA-CAAC	National Plan of Action for the Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Children Affected by Armed Conflict
NPAC-N	National Plan of Action for Children – Nepal
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPTF	Nepal Peace Trust Fund
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OVC	Other Vulnerable Children
PAG	Human Rights Network and Peace Action Group
PSS	Psychosocial Support

SZoP	School as Zone of Peace
TOC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Teachers
TPO Nepal	Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNMIN	United Nations Mission in Nepal
UNPF	United Nations Peace Fund
UNSPR	United Nations Security Council
UOSP	Urban Out of School Programme
USAVC	Unaccompanied, Separated and Vulnerable
VCPC	Village Child Protection Committee
VDC	Village Development Committee
VMLR	Vulnerable Minors and Late Recruits
VT	Vocational Training
WASH	Water and Sanitation for Health
WCO	Women and Children's Office
WDO	Women's Development Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project context

The conflict in Nepal from 1996 to 2006 claimed the lives of 15,000 people, displacing an estimated 100,000: among the people affected by the conflict, 52,000 to 57,000 are estimated to be children.¹ Children were also associated to the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (UCPN-M) that was consequently included in the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1612 list of perpetrators that recruit and use children in armed conflict in 2005 and a UNSCR 1612 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism was set up, co-chaired by UNICEF and OHCHR, to report on the six core violations under the UNSCR. Following the conflict in Nepal, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed on 21 November 2006, aimed to ensure the protection of children associated with armed forces and armed groups by committing to their immediate release and rehabilitation.

UNICEF has provided support to Children Affected by the Armed Conflict (CAAC) in Nepal through several projects, including the UNICEF Programme for the Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) in Nepal (March 2007 to February 2008), and the UN Interagency Rehabilitation Programme in Nepal for Verified Minors and Recruits (June 2010 to January 2013).

In December 2010, the Government of Nepal developed a ‘National Plan of Action for the Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Children Affected by Armed Conflict’ (NPA-CAAC) as a result of sustained advocacy and in line with international commitments. The implementation of this National Plan is expected to complete the reintegration of thousands of children and young people affected by conflict, leading to longer-term peace, security and development.

Project summary

In support of this, UNICEF designed a project to further support CAAC, but this time around the approach was changed to ensure more government ownership and child protection systems building, through the provision of support to fulfil the rights of CAAC to care, protection, participation, education and other developmental needs.

The project was implemented from 15 February 2013 to 15 December 2015, with a total budget of 1.7 million USD, of which 1.5 million came from the United Nations Peace Fund Nepal (UNPFN). The geographic scope of the project was nationwide, as it focused on child protection (CP) systems strengthening in all districts, and in addition had targeted interventions in selected districts. Key partners included the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR), the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW), the Central Child Welfare Board (CCWB) and the Nepal Police.

While the project had no explicit Theory of Change (TOC), the following TOC was developed, adapted and approved during the inception phase with the evaluation reference group:

¹ Government of Nepal. Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare. Central Child Welfare Board. 2015. Narrative Report on Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CAAC) in Residential Care (Child Care Homes & Shaheed Pratisthan) & Community Level (20 District- Baseline Survey in Coordination with MoPR).

If process, procedures and NPA-CAAC implementation guidelines are developed and implemented by relevant ministries and other child protection actors, **then** socio-reintegration support to children affected by conflict CAAC will be more holistic.

If the reintegration services provided effectively by the government and non-government organisations to CAAC, **then** this leads to a strengthened CP system to prevent and respond to risks of all children in the communities.

The focus of this project was thus to enhance the capacity of relevant government and non-government actors, to respond to protection and reintegration concerns of CAAC, through the child protection systems approach, and provide dividends to the community as a whole. The project, therefore, expected to strengthen existing structures and mechanisms in order to fulfil the rights of CAAC and other children, and to ensure that the benefits go beyond the project's lifetime.

The project had two intended outcomes:

Outcome 1: Government and non-governmental agencies to provide holistic socio-reintegration support to CAAC.

Outcome 2: Government and non-government agencies respond to protection concerns of CAAC, through the child protection systems approach, providing dividends to the community as a whole.

The evaluation

This end-of-project evaluation took place at the closure of the 2.5 years project. This evaluation assessed the progress made on the intended outputs and targets and the contribution of this project to the outcomes, based upon the indicators outlined in the original and revised project results framework. The specific objectives of this evaluation were to:

1. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and likely sustainability of the project interventions, particularly on overall child protection system strengthening in relation to children affected by armed conflict;
2. Assess the contribution towards broader peace building results, particularly the extent to which the programme contributed to the cross-cutting issues of gender, inclusion and conflict sensitivity;
3. Develop practical recommendations in collaboration with stakeholders, based on best practices and lessons learnt, to inform further strategies and programmes aimed at conflict prevention and child protection system strengthening in Nepal and beyond.

Based on these objectives, the UNPFN Project Final Evaluation Guidance Note² and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports³, the international evaluator developed a set of evaluation criteria, an evaluation framework and eight tools, which were presented and accepted during the inception phase. The following criteria were developed for

² UNPFN. Project Final Evaluation Guidance Note

³ UNEG. 2010. Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports

this evaluation, and presented and approved by the evaluation reference group during the inception phase:

- A. *Relevance*
- B. *Effectiveness*
- C. *Sustainability*
- D. *Inclusiveness and participation*
- E. *Gender responsiveness*
- F. *Conflict sensitivity*
- G. *Management and flexibility*
- H. *Value for money*

Under each criterion evaluation questions were designed, adapted and approved. Based on these questions, the tools were developed and it was against these criteria this evaluation reports.

Most important findings

Main achievements

- Government leadership and ownership increased compared to earlier CAAFAG and VMLR programming;
- Increased awareness on programming needs of CAAC among government actors at national and district levels;
- Essential CAAC and broader CP system guidelines produced in a participatory manner;
- Creation of additional Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs) at community level, which now receive government funding from Village Development Committees (VDCs). With this increase in CP system actors at village level, reach and referral can be improved;
- The creation of the more sustainable Child Protection Officers/Child Inspectors (PO/CI) posts in the Women and Children Offices (WCOs) gives room for more clarity on roles and responsibilities;
- Support to CCWB to obtain government funding for CAAC programming was successful;
- Contributions made to child friendly police and justice services, which are likely to increase children's access to justice and to be sustainable.

Main weaknesses

- The geographical coverage of the project was very wide and this made it difficult for the project to have significant impact;
- Weak design of results framework, baseline and overall weak Monitoring and Evaluation;
- While the project started off with the engagement of a broad range of stakeholders, loss of key-government partners happened later in the process and there was consequent disengagement by key line ministries who regarded this as a CCWB project;
- Weak coordination at district levels, and no evidence was found that this project contributed to improved coordination, although Child Rights Officers (CROs), partly paid through this project have been fostering coordination, but on ad-hoc basis;
- Singling out of CAAC in some activities leading to labelling which, in turn, led to challenges in their reintegration process, and there were no signs of corrective measures on this;
- Lack of broad dissemination and, therefore, little use of the NPA CAAC and case management guidelines produced at district and village/municipality levels;

- Insufficient internal collaboration between CP and education sections, such as on Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP) and existing government scholarships, and business start-up support programme for CAAC.
- Lack of strengthening of actual services for children, due to focus on guidelines and coordination only

Main challenges faced by the project

- The assumption that this project would be implemented in parallel to government programmes, funded through the NPTF, proved unrealistic, and therefore many targets were not reached. The dependence on external resources (over which UNICEF has no control) to reach the projects outputs was a design mistake;
- Practice of funding by UNICEF: providing non-earmarked funds from different grants to the same partners makes it difficult to measure outputs and outcomes per grant;
- Turnover of staff members in government, and the departure of the UNICEF programme manager;
- While the current narrative in Nepal is on transitional justice and reparation for conflict victims, the project focused on supporting CAAC in an integrated manner with Other Vulnerable Children (OVC), yet these children do not have access to transitional justice and reparations entitlements;
- The earthquake which struck in April 2015, delaying activities and priorities;
- On-going fuel crisis and political protests further complicating and delaying activities.

Main conclusions at outcome level

This section is summarising the conclusions on the extent to which this project has contributed to the outcomes, as presented in the results framework.

UNPBF result:

Youth, women and other marginalized members of conflict-affected communities act as catalyst to promote the peace process and early economic recovery.

Indicator:

a. Sustainable livelihood opportunities for conflict-affected children in conflict-affected communities.

The intended livelihood support has not happened as planned under this project, despite the solid expertise of the district Cottage and Small Scale Industry boards, a project partner. While it was explained by UNICEF that nothing has happened in this area due to the failure of the board to raise resources from the NPTF, this was a missed opportunity, as through referral, and even at no cost, CAAC and mothers of CAAC could have been referred to the Board, who have the same target group and is heavily supported by UNDP. This could have worked towards establishing a referral mechanism between Women Development Officers (WDOs), CROs and the district Cottage and Small Scale Industry boards. Also, training on labour market analyses was planned and budgeted for (USD 45,000), but did not take place. Therefore, it must be concluded that no evidence was found that this project made any contribution to this outcome.

UNPFN strategic outcome:

CAAC are effectively rehabilitated and reintegrated into communities in line with the NPA on CAAC.

Project peace building impact:

Relevant government agencies provide reintegration services to CAAC through existing government mechanisms, ensuring peace dividends to affected children.

Project peace building impact indicator(s):

a. *Process, procedures and NPA-CAAC implementation guideline developed, approved and implemented by relevant ministries.*

Awareness on, and approved guidelines for, the implementation of the NPA-CAAC was successfully achieved and can be fully attributed to the project.

b. *Verified Minors, included as a beneficiary group in the NPA-CAAC implementation guideline, to ensure their access to reintegration services through the NPA-CAAC implementation.*

The VMLR are included in the NPA-CAAC guidelines and therefore their access to CAAC-specific benefits and support in the future is ensured, which can be fully attributed to this project.

c. *CAAC are reintegrated through the government established identification, reporting and reintegration mechanism.*

The evaluation found little to no evidence of CAAC actually supported by this and therefore the contribution to the actual reintegration of CAAC seems extremely limited (only 22 CAAC confirmed to have been directly supported). The main reasons for this are:

- Many activities did not segregate CAAC among their beneficiaries, and it is therefore impossible to measure the number of CAAC actually reached by this project;
- The redirection of funds to non-CAAC activities (including the emergency earthquake response and the support to municipalities on child labour and Wash) and, therefore, very low delivery on some intended outputs such as to deinstitutionalise CAAC (only 22 out of 1695 targeted);
- The failure of government agencies to attract funding from the NPTF, which was the assumption of the project, so as to be able to provide direct support to CAAC.

Project level outcome 1:

Government and non-governmental agencies to provide holistic socio-reintegration support to CAAC.

Indicators:

a. *NPA implementation guideline and reintegration packages endorsed by government meet international standards and guideline.*

NPA guidelines were produced by this project. The evaluation could not verify if these guidelines are in line with international standards as the guidelines are only produced in Nepali. The evaluation found no evidence that reintegration packages are endorsed by the Nepal Government.

b. *Relevant ministries and their district line agencies (MWCSW, CCWB, Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Industry (Mol), and MoPR) have developed programmes and mobilised resources plan to provide reintegration services to CAACs.*

While this project supported proposal development of key-government agencies, finally, only the CCWB recently achieved approval for a CAAC programme for Rs. 99,955,500. Although very positive, the timing was disappointing, as the rationale of this project was to accompany government agencies in their implementation, which now cannot take place (under this project). The fact that proposals were approved late is beyond UNICEF's control, but points to problems in the results framework, where results are dependent on external funding. The evaluation further highlights that the required

interagency programming is getting lost and that CCWB should be encouraged to implement activities through the relevant line-ministries (Ministry of Health (MoH), MoE, MoI etc).

Project level outcome 2:

Government and non-governmental agencies respond to protection concerns of CAAC through the child protection systems approach, providing dividends to the community as a whole.

Indicators:

a. *Government developed and implemented standardised tools for identification, reporting, rescue and reintegration of CAAC through standardised process/tools, establishing a common case management system for other forms of vulnerable children too.*

A major achievement has been the development of the NPA-CAAC guidelines based on international standards, the contribution of the project to finalise and pilot the case management guidelines and the development of the alternative care guidelines (to be approved). The weak point is that these guidelines are insufficiently disseminated and, therefore, not used (yet) on the ground. The project made contributions to strengthen the Central and District Child Welfare Boards (DCWB), and the evaluation found evidence of the trickledown effect. DCWBs are regarded as inclusive and have broad participation of relevant line-ministries and the police. CROs are playing a key role, and those consulted were highly motivated. While at the central and district level the above-mentioned increase in capacities has been observed, and identified as a positive outcome by the stakeholders themselves, the project achieved very little at the village/municipality level, where actual support to CAAC is taking place (and several outputs are at service delivery level). While some new Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs) are set up, no evidence was found that they were trained, or that they were in the possession of any written guidelines.

On a positive note, the VCPCs are now receiving funding from the Village Development Committees (VDCs) and, therefore, steps to their sustainability are made. The positive dynamics above cannot be solely attributed to this project as building this system has been part of all UNICEFs programmes over the past years, and is also supported by other UNICEF grants, and in addition VCPCs are also supported other CP agencies. However, this project contributed to the systems building by supporting the payment of salaries of some CROs, who work with the VCPCs. The same applies for the activities funding and results from the Nepal Police and the Juvenile Justice Coordination Committee (JJCC).

The project contributed to the comprehensive identification of CAAC in 20 districts. However, the Local Peace Committees (LPCs) already have lists of CAAC that are used by the District Development Office (DDO). Overlap and non-confirmative identification can be observed. This is one illustration of how the project built capacities of the CCWB and its field structures, but was insufficiently aligned to other government actors, equally important in the CP system. Another sign of this is that CROs are not aware, and are, therefore, not referring CAAC and Other Vulnerable Children (OVCs) to existing government programmes for them (e.g. scholarships of Department of Education (DoEs)).

Several interventions, such as the JJCC trainings, the police support, VCPCs set-up and the case management guidelines are likely to benefit all children and ensure their rights and access to justice in the districts where these activities were implemented.

b. *Districts in the country have a functioning referral mechanism and a comprehensive CP database system for documentation, analysis and reporting of information related to CAAC and all forms of protection cases.*

Stakeholders in the districts and villages expressed concern that there is no functional formal referral system in place. While some coordination at higher levels, through DCWBs, is happening, all actors complained that referral is done in an ad-hoc manner, and highlighted the lack of actual referral system. Furthermore, the database has not been created, which is a major disappointment of this project. No evidence was found that work on the creation and instalment of such a database has been completed. According to UNICEF, the work is ongoing with UNICEF HQ on customising the global Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS based on Primero) for use by CCWB, but has not been finalised as planned. All stakeholders consulted at district levels complained about the lack of systematic sharing of information among the line-ministries.

Main conclusions per criteria

a. *Relevance:* The project is highly relevant in the context of Nepal, as well as the change to more government ownership in the funding modalities. Initially, the project attracted the right partners but gradually their engagement was lost, with the exception of CCWB, who received direct funding through this project.

b. *Effectiveness:* The effectiveness of this project to achieve its intended outputs is relatively low, and/or insufficient information could be obtained to verify achievements. The main reasons for under delivery are: external constraints, including the earthquake in April 2015, fuel crisis and political protests in Terai; in the design of the project, where targets largely relied on approval of funds by the NPTF, yet it proved difficult for the government agencies to obtain these resources; management decisions to redirect funds to municipalities and earthquake response unaccompanied by a results framework revision; some outputs, such as on livelihoods, could have had higher delivery rates if project management would have been more creative to refer CAAC to existing services. However, the project did fully achieve some outputs, such as the production of three guidelines that, if rolled out effectively, could have a catalyst effect in the future, as well as the capacities developed within the police and justice structures.

c. *Sustainability:* The project allowed the Nepalese Government and other stakeholders to demonstrate high ownership of supported interventions and processes. However, representatives of government agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the districts visited mentioned that the lack of coordination between government agencies is still one of the major gaps in the existing child protection system. Strengthening of CCWB alone has further separated the agency from its partner line-ministries and reduced their coordination focus. On a positive note, the project has contributed to the initiation of more VCPCs, which in the districts visited, now receive up to 10% of the budgets of the VDCs. This is a major achievement in terms of sustainability, as initially VCPCs were regarded as “donor driven structures”. However, more work is required to ensure effective referral from VCPCs to other relevant district level line ministries’ services, not only to DCWB. The project could have focused more on developing local service capacity, at the district level, and especially at community level. Coordination is crucial but so is the building up of the actual referral services. The support to the police and JJCC are good examples of building up child friendly service delivery to agencies that have specific implementation mandates. A negative example is a lack of

focus on building capacity in the area of psycho-social support (PSS), one of the important areas where local capacity is crucially needed to strengthen the child protection system. From the information gathered, there was no evidence found that the project contributed to developing capacity in terms of psychosocial support to vulnerable children including CAAC.

d. Inclusiveness and participation: It has not been possible to detect any space or measures in which the right to participation by the children was taken into account, particularly in terms of getting their voices heard about this project, except in the set-up of the new VCPCs where there were child representatives, but not CAAC. The project started off with a broad range of stakeholders at Kathmandu level, including during the project's review process and the participatory nature of the drafting of the guidelines. The mapping of CAAC in 20 districts was equally done in a participatory manner. However, in the second part of this project, the level of participation reduced and several stakeholders disengaged completely.

e. Gender responsiveness: There are several indications that the project partners did implement the project in a gender sensitive fashion. However, no explicit reporting on gender results and no gender training, while planned for, took place. The support to the Police Women and Child Service Centres is likely to strengthen gender responsive support, as well as the work in the pilot districts of the case management guidelines, but the evaluation team had no means to verify this on the ground. The case management guidelines (to which this project contributed) are confirmed to be gender responsive.

f. Conflict sensitivity: The way the project singled out CAAC in communities after 10 years of armed conflict, is regarded by many stakeholders as problematic and not very conflict sensitive, as it creates division among children. The project did not do any conflict analyses or develop any Do No Harm (DNH) indicators, and thus, did not monitor the impact of the project's activities on conflict dynamics. There is equally no evidence that the project worked to reduce identified dividers and strengthen connectors.

g. Management and flexibility: The biggest problem of this project is the manner in which this project was managed. The project is referred to as a *grant*, and attribution of results and change are nearly impossible to establish as UNICEF used the UNPFN grant of 1.5 million, largely to support its ongoing efforts in strengthening the child protection systems approach. This, combined with a weak results framework, lack of baseline and SMART indicators, the (undocumented) redirection of funds to activities not reflected in the results framework, and the weak monitoring and the lack of availability of reliable, disaggregated data sources, leads to the conclusion that the management of this project was weak and chaotic, as also reflected in the manner this evaluation occurred (see below).

h. Value for money: It became difficult to establish whether this project has delivered value for money, or to assess the efficiency of the use of UNPF funding provided. The major challenge has been that UNICEF provided funding to the implementing partners from several grants, making it a challenge to trace exactly what was paid for by the UNPFN grant. As funding provided to, for example CCWB, was not earmarked for specific activities under this grant, stakeholders were equally not aware of the exact activities were funded under this specific project.

However, from the financial reporting which UNICEF shared with the evaluation team in the final stages of the evaluation, it is clear that 58% of the UNPFN funding was direct cash disbursement to UNICEF's implementing partners, including relevant government agencies to implement the project, while 42% of the budget was utilised by UNICEF on staffing, who (most likely) provided the technical support to implementing partners, helped with the development of proposals, conducted training on principles and standards on working with CAAC, assisted in developing, reviewing and finalisation of the different guidelines produced under this project, as well as for project monitoring and cross sectoral support. The task of establishing value for money would have benefitted from UNICEF's input to tool 2 on *expenditure per output*, comparing actual spending per output to the planned budget per output (as presented in the project document) which, despite several reminders, could not be completed (see Annex B).

Challenges and limitations to the evaluation

There have been enormous challenges to the evaluability of this project and the evaluation process. The TOR of this evaluation already stated that: "there are several limitations to the evaluability of the project". In this, it was highlighted that: 1) the evaluation was not pre-planned; 2) it will not be possible to employ experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design and generate rigorous direct (as opposed to circumstantial) evidence to establish the effectiveness of UNICEF's intervention; 3) the results and indicators of the results framework are not all SMART formulated; and 4) the lack of availability of reliable, disaggregated data sources will pose a challenge to the evaluation. In addition, the following challenges were encountered:

- Attribution of results and change to this project is complex, as UNICEF's support to strengthen the CP systems approach and capacity is an on-going process, stakeholders are not aware of the exact activities that took place under this specific project, and several other agencies have supported the same implementing partners and government agencies on the same outputs and outcomes;
- This evaluation was insufficiently pre-planned. In addition, while junior (and new) staff allocation was provided to the evaluation by UNICEF, insufficient high level support was provided, leading to last minute corrections and provision of crucial information only at the last stage of the evaluation;
- The evaluation team also lost time and energy reviewing many Project Cooperation Agreements (PCA), progress reports, visiting beneficiaries and interviewing NGOs in the field, which later (after inception and fieldwork) proved not relevant to the evaluation as these partners were paid under another grant. The end result of this, was that most of the actual activities that were implemented under this project were not visited by the evaluation team;
- The timeframe and resources for this evaluation were too limited to apply qualitative methods and ensure representativeness. However, to ensure maximum quality evaluation, the evaluators did consult with a maximum amount of stakeholders (106 - 38 female and 68 male). However, many consultations in the end proved irrelevant, as explained above.

These challenges, while mitigated as much as possible, have influenced the quality of the evaluation and the reliability of its findings.

Main lessons learned and recommendations

1) Un-earmarked funding support

As discussed with UNICEF, for future programmes and related evaluations this method of continuous non-earmarked programming and financial support in National Implementation Modalities (NIM) requires a new and agreed monitoring and evaluation approach (agreed between sections and the M&E unit, and the relevant donors). Alternatively, government agencies could receive earmarked funding and report back to them per grant, which CCWB is, for example, doing with Save the Children and UNDP in its partnerships with ministries.

2) Better results framework and M&E

In future, UNICEF should ensure the development of a solid M&E framework, with SMART indicators, realistic targets and solid baseline. Consolidated monitoring against the results framework should be ensured by UNICEF, and discussed with all stakeholders. Review processes need to be participatory and transparent with redirection of funds discussed and well documented. DNH indicators should be added, as well as specific gender indicators. Outputs should be within reach of the project budget and not dependent on external resources, over which UNICEF has no control. Evaluations need to be well prepared and require senior management engagement and quality control of the information provided to the evaluation team.

3) Need to invest in more and better services

While this project contributed to setting guidelines, raising awareness, improving coordination and referral mechanism, one of the main challenges, as highlighted by all stakeholders at district and village level, is the absence of actual referral opportunities. For example, there are hardly any PSS services available, which should be strengthened and based within the MoH for sustainability purposes. There is an urgent need for social workers, under the WDOs, and there is urgent need for youth detention centres. This will require investing in service delivery capacities of line-ministries, beyond CCWB, especially at district level.

4) Dissemination to local levels of guidelines

While one of the successes of this project was the development of the three sets of guidelines, there was no dissemination plan developed. Such a plan should have outlined how to disseminate these guidelines, including training on their use to the relevant agencies and organisations that actually work with the children, at district and villa/municipality level. This requires further resources and commitment. It is only when the guidelines are known and used by all actors in the CP system, that the outcomes and impact of these guidelines on the functioning of the CP systems approach can be seen and measured.

5) Need for a broader multi-sector approach and referral system

The inter-ministerial set-up was lost during the project period. One crucial lesson learned is that multi-sectoral approaches require extensive and on-going support to all actors, to ensure the different agencies start, but also continue, to work together. Further work on this is required,

especially at district level to ensure information sharing and referral actually takes place. A broader notion of the CP system and referral is required.

Follow-up support and evaluation

This evaluation should be further completed in nine months from now, updating the outcomes of this project when the NPTF project of CCWB and partners is well on its way. This is crucial because the project has overlapping outputs with the government project, which is only starting now. In addition, this evaluation could then also serve as a mid-term evaluation of the CCWB/CAAC project.

UNICEF is advised to organise a broad stakeholder workshop discussing the pertinent outcomes of this evaluation. This is particularly important as CCWB received funding to further support the same outcomes, and because UNICEF, through other sources, is also continuing supporting CP systems strengthening.

UNICEF is furthermore advised to design and implement a follow-up project to run in parallel with the CCWB/CAAC project, as was originally foreseen. The project could include the following priorities:

- Develop CP capacities at village/municipality level through training and provision of written materials. This could include a summary handbook with all relevant guidelines;
- Dissemination of the guidelines produced under this project, with training of broad range of actors at the district level;
- Through Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) and with the MoH, invest in building sustainable PSS capacities; especially at counsellor levels, so that PSS can become part of the referral system;
- Continue the development of a CP system database for broad based case management and referral, and extensive training of all relevant district level actors including DCWBs, WCOs, LPCs, DoEs, DoHs, District Small Cottage and Industry Boards, DDOs, VDCs, Child Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) etc;
- Monitor that the support to CAAC is provided in at least the one-plus-one modus.

1. INTRODUCTION

Conflict context

The conflict in Nepal from 1996 to 2006 claimed the lives of 15,000 people, displacing an estimated 100,000: among the people affected by the conflict, 52,000 to 57,000 are estimated to be children;⁴ many were killed, maimed, made orphans, and left with deep emotional scars. Thousands were associated with armed groups and used as spies, porters, and combatants. Girls faced additional risks, particularly suffering sexual violence and exploitation.

Comprehensive data on this, however, is still lacking. The Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (CPN-M) recruited and made use of children; United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) verified that 2,973 Maoist army members were below the age of 18 years⁵. Data from UNICEF and the CAAFAG Working Group shows that 40% of the CAAC/CAAFAG is female, while 64% belong to minority groups: Dalit (24%), Janajati (38%) and others (2%). Only 1% has completed higher secondary education⁶. According to the TOR, the majority of the children have been recruited for economic reasons, and an overall lack of awareness of protection risks among children and their caretakers.

Project background

This 2005 listing of the UCPN-M as a perpetrator of recruitment and use of children in armed conflict in their UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1612, resulted in various child protection and human rights organisations establishing CAAFAG Working Group, chaired by UNICEF and consisting of agencies specialising in reintegration programs with a network in around 50 districts, with the aim to develop and coordinate comprehensive and harmonised responses for the release, return and reintegration of CAAFAG and design common advocacy strategies with all relevant stakeholders.

In December 2010, the Government of Nepal developed the NPA-CAAC as a result of sustained advocacy and in line with international commitments. The implementation of this National Plan is expected to complete the reintegration of thousands of children and young people affected by conflict, leading to longer-term peace, security and development.

UNICEF has provided support to children affected by the armed conflict in Nepal through several projects, including the UNICEF Programme for the Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) implemented between March 2007 and February 2008; and the UN Interagency Rehabilitation Programme in Nepal for UNIRP, implemented between June 2010 and January 2013. Thereafter, UNICEF designed a project to further support CAAC, changing the approach to ensure more government ownership and child protection system building, through the provision of support to CAAC.

⁴ Government of Nepal. Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare. Central Child Welfare Board. 2015. Narrative Report on Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CAAC) in Residential Care (Child Care Homes & Shaheed Pratisthan) & Community Level (20 District- Baseline Survey in Coordination with MoPR).

⁵ Ibid

⁶ UNICEF. 2015. Terms of Reference, Project to be evaluated: Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Children Affected by Armed Conflict - 15/02/2013- 15/12/2015.

This end-of-project evaluation took place at the closure of the 2.5 year project. It assessed the progress made on the intended outputs and targets, and the contribution of this project to the outcomes, based upon the indicators outlined in the original and revised project results framework (see Annex A).

1.1 PROJECT SUMMARY

The project was implemented from 15 February 2013 to 15 December 2015, with a total budget of 1.7 million USD, of which 1.5 million came from the UNPFN. The geographic scope of the project was nationwide, as it focussed on child protection systems strengthening, but also supported targeted interventions in selected districts. Key partners of the projects included the MoPR, the MWCSW, the CCWB and the Nepal Police.

The focus of this project was to enhance the capacity of relevant government and non-government actors to provide integrated services to CAAC, and eventually to contribute towards the strengthening of the overall child protection systems. The project, therefore, expected to strengthen existing structures and mechanisms, so that the rights of CAAC, and other children, to receive care and protection are met, and these will go beyond the lifetime of the project. The project had two intended outcomes:

Outcome 1: Government and non-governmental agencies to provide holistic socio-reintegration support to CAAC.

Outcome 2: Government and non-governmental agencies respond to protection concerns of children affected by conflict through the child protection systems approach, providing dividends to the community as a whole.

Key activities within the project included:

- Support the development of NPA implementation guideline and reintegration packages, based on international standards and guidelines;
- Capacitate service providers for delivery of quality livelihood training and facilitate linkages with the labour market;
- Support relevant governmental agencies to develop and standardise tools and procedures for the identification and response to reintegration needs of CAAC, with special consideration to gender needs;
- Provide technical assistance to relevant agencies to engage young people in community based peace building and social activities, to promote positive values and social harmony;
- Support development of child sensitive processes and procedures to ensure children's participation in transitional justice processes;
- Support the implementation of SZOP guidelines for a secure, non-violent, non-discriminatory environment in schools, and to stop misuse of schools and children for political purposes;
- Technical assistance to enhance the government's child protection system to prevent and respond to protection rights of CAAC and other vulnerable children in the community;
- Capacitate relevant governmental agencies for deinstitutionalisation of CAAC in residential care (child care homes), with support for family reunion or placement in other, non-

institutional, alternative care arrangements (kinship, foster care, etc.).

1.2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND CRITERIA

1.2.1. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this summative evaluation was to assess progress towards the set results and targets, to strengthen UNICEF's child protection systems approach concerning CAAC, and to learn lessons for application of similar interventions in other post-conflict contexts. The specific objectives of this evaluation were the following:

- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and likely sustainability of the project interventions, particularly on overall child protection system strengthening, in relation to CAAC;
- Assess the contribution towards broader peace building results, particularly the extent to which the programme contributed to the cross-cutting issues of gender, inclusion and conflict sensitivity;
- Develop practical recommendations in collaboration with stakeholders, based on best practices and lessons learnt, to inform further strategies and programmes aimed at conflict prevention and child protection system strengthening in Nepal and beyond.

Based on these objectives, the UNPFN Project Final Evaluation Guidance Note⁷ and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports⁸, the international evaluator developed a set of evaluation criteria, an evaluation framework and eight tools that were presented and accepted during the inception phase. It is against these criteria that this evaluation reports.

This evaluation report will be shared with the UNPFN for accountability purposes, and to inform future programming. It will be shared with all project stakeholders to serve learning purposes, and will be used to strengthen future child protection systems support in Nepal. Finally, the evaluation will be shared with UNICEF HQ, development partners and government stakeholders facing similar post-conflict child protection demands in the future, to use as a reference document and to inform their own strategies.

1.2.2. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This evaluation assessed the complete UNICEF project, over the entire time frame from February 2013 to December 2015. The evaluation took place from December 2015 to February 2016.

The evaluation was limited in terms of time and resources: as defined in the TOR, the international evaluator had 45 working days, and the national consultant sixteen days.

The evaluation included extensive consultations in Kathmandu and field visits to two out of the 75 districts, namely Surkhet and Sindhuli (including selected villages). In total 106 (38 female and 68

⁷ UNPFN. 2014. Draft Project Final Evaluation Guidance Note

⁸ UNEG. 2010. Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports

male) people were consulted during this evaluation based on a list made with UNICEF and the Evaluation Reference Group of the main stakeholders (see Annex A). The evaluation, furthermore, included extensive literature research (see Annex G for sources consulted).

From the start the evaluation applied a participatory approach, combining self-reporting with external validations, Most Significant Change (MSC) and related discussions, and extensive discussions and feedback loops with the respondents, which included women, men, boys and girls. The stakeholders were informed from the beginning, and agreed to the fact, that due to the short timeframe and lack of consolidated monitoring data available (as already highlighted in the TOR for this evaluation), their commitment and inputs into this evaluation would be greatly needed.

The inception phase took two weeks, of which one week was in-country during which the evaluation team met with most of the stakeholders, and developed the evaluation framework (see Annex A). The inception report was summarised in a PPT, and presented and discussed in detail with the multi-stakeholder reference group. Comments were discussed and adaptations made. Part of the inception effort was the development and discussion of a TOC, which was not part of the project document.

The two districts chosen for fieldwork were discussed and finalised with the reference group, based on pre-set criteria developed by the evaluator, namely:

- Selected districts/regions are those in which larger parts of the budget were spent
- Presence of NGO partners funded under this project;
- Locations where the Case Management is piloted;
- Balanced representation of themes of intervention (e.g. reintegration assistance, district level case-management and referral system, presence of homes etc.);
- Security and accessibility considerations;
- Ethnic diversity;
- Maximum amount of stakeholders.

Based on these criteria, the following two locations were selected:

Surket – far West, with presence of NGO Beautiful Nepal
Sindhuli – Central, presence of NGO CDPS

As explained later in the report, due to misinformation to the evaluators and the reference group on which partners actually received funding from this UNPF grant, the two locations proved to be of little relevance.

The sampling strategy of this short evaluation was qualitative and purely purpose based, and targeted a small and unrepresentative sample of two out of 75 districts, due to time constraints. The evaluation reference group reviewed the original list of stakeholders to be consulted during the inception phase. All but one listed stakeholders were actually reached. See Annex A.

CAAC (girls and boys) consulted were identified through the NGOs and DCWB on the ground.

The evaluation was designed to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the project. Some additional evaluation criteria were developed during the inception phase, based on analyses of the project documentations, initial stakeholder consultations, the UNPFN Project Final

Evaluation Guidance Note⁹ and the UNEG guidelines. While the Terms of Reference (TOR) determined a limitation of focus on outcome two, after consultations it was agreed that would not be satisfactory or feasible, as the outcomes actually overlap.

The following criteria were developed for this evaluation:

- A. *Relevance*
- B. *Effectiveness*
- C. *Sustainability*
- D. *Inclusiveness and participation*
- E. *Gender responsiveness*
- F. *Conflict sensitivity*
- G. *Management and flexibility*
- H. *Value for money*

Under each criterion, evaluation questions were designed, adapted and approved by the project’s reference group (UNICEF and key government partners). Based on these research questions, the following tools were developed, as presented in Annex B.

The following tools were developed for this evaluation:

Table 1: Tools

Tool 1. Consolidated output reporting tool (self-reporting)
Tool 2. Work plan reporting tool (self-reporting – not completed)
Tool 3. Expenditure reporting tool (self-reporting)
Tool 4. Questionnaire UNICEF staff
Tool 5. Key informant interview topic lists (for government staff working in the child protection system at national, district and village levels, and civil society members)
Tool 6. Partners questionnaire
Tool 7. Generic topics Focus Discussion Groups
Tool 8. Most significant change (also in online version)

However, post data collection, it proved that many of the partners and direct beneficiaries consulted were not funded under this project, and therefore, that a large part of the data was irrelevant to this evaluation. Also, the extensive MSC processes conducted and discussed proved biased as the introduction provided by the evaluators to the respondents on the activities of this project proved incorrect. Therefore, the MSC data has not been taken into account. This had a significant impact on the evidence base for this evaluation, as the majority of data collected could not be used, and instead the evaluation team relied more upon analysis of documents provided by UNICEF and interviews conducted in Kathmandu.

⁹ UNPFN. 2014. Draft Project Final Evaluation Guidance Note

1.2.3. DELIVERABLES

The evaluator produced the following three deliverables:

- Inception report and PPT;
- First draft of final evaluation report;
- Final evaluation report and PPT incorporating feedback.

1.3 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS TO THIS EVALUATION

The TOR of this evaluation already pointed to the potential challenges regarding this evaluation, stating “there are several **limitations to the evaluability** of the project”. In this, it was highlighted that: 1) the evaluation was not pre-planned; 2) it will not be possible to employ experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design and generate rigorous direct (as opposed to circumstantial) evidence to establish the effectiveness of UNICEF’s intervention; 3) the results and indicators of the results framework were not all SMART formulated; and 4) the lack of availability of reliable, disaggregated data sources will pose a challenge to the evaluation.

Indeed, in evaluating the quality and evaluability of the results framework during the inception phase, it became clear that there are serious structural flaws in the design. These flaws, including a lack of baseline, mixing of outputs and outcomes, non-SMART indicators and the **non-availability of consolidated monitoring data** against the project’s output indicators and targets, had a direct impact on the evaluability of the project.

Attribution of results and change to this project is complex, as UNICEF’s support in strengthening the child protection system approach and capacity is an on-going process, stakeholders are not aware of the exact activities that took place under this specific project, and several other agencies have supported the same actors, outputs and outcomes. The evaluation acknowledges that **this project is actually a phase in a continuum of support** to partners and to system strengthening. Where possible, the evaluation team tried to research (in the project documentation and stakeholder consultations), which activities, or which percentage of the activities, were actually funded through this project, but this proved extremely difficult, and in some cases impossible, such as with CCWB who received funding from several UNICEF project grants in the same period. Furthermore, consultations with other international CP actors clarified which activities can be attributed to this project, and to which results UNICEF contributed, together with others.

This evaluation was **insufficiently pre-planned**. During the inception phase challenges and mitigation measures were highlighted and discussed: these were also presented in the inception report. It was agreed that before the start of the data collection process, UNICEF would complete the three self-reporting tools, as developed by the evaluator (see Annex B). These tools were designed to report on actual results per output, timings and completion or non-completion of activities, and on actual expenditure per output, as compared to the intended budget per output as per project document. Until the end of this evaluation these tools have not been fully filled, despite many reminders. One of the biggest challenges UNICEF faced was the departure of the previous project manager, which led to the loss of institutional memory of this project.

The biggest challenge, however, was that **the evaluation team did not get correct information on implementing partners and the activities actually funded under this project**. For example, the

evaluation team was given the names, PCAs and progress reports of four NGOs said to have been contracted under this project to directly support CAAC. The team evaluated these NGOs in great detail, including visiting direct beneficiaries in isolated locations. It is only after the fieldwork, when the financial reporting was looked into in detail, that UNICEF found that these NGOs were not funded under this grant, but through a different UNPFN grant.

Subsequently, it was found that additional partners were paid under this grant, but this information was not provided to the evaluation team until after the data-collection period. Examples of this include the redirecting of funds to several NGOs in response to the earthquake, a large amount of funding provided to JJCC on juvenile justice, and funds provided to municipalities. The evaluation team had spent an enormous amount of time and energy evaluating activities that were not funded under this project, and hence, was not able to visit and evaluate activities that were actually funded by this grant. A last minute proposal to UNICEF was agreed upon (by senior management) to extend the contract of the national consultant to enable a visit to a district where these 'activities' did take place, and to provide an additional new contract to a second national consultant, but the agreement was not acted upon.

Furthermore, during the project implementation, **several revisions were made to the project** but there was no **process documentation** available and likewise no documentation of the argumentation to justify deletions and additions. The evaluation team analysed the different versions of the results framework and attempted to trace what the process and rationale for the changes had been. Further requests to UNICEF to trace the documentation of the review processes were made in vain. However, stakeholder consultations did make reference to one participatory review process, in which all key-stakeholders contributed. Documentation of this process was found later, provided by the UNPFN, did show a revision of some activities, but the revision of the results framework was not included. No evidence was found, either through project documentation or through consultations with the partners, on later decisions by UNICEF to provide funding to municipalities on Water and Sanitation for Health (WASH) and child labour activities, or to different NGOs for earthquake emergency support (which was not part of the results framework).

A good sampling strategy is important for ensuring representativeness in order to generalise findings. **Representativeness** refers to the extent that we can expect findings to be considered representative for all project beneficiaries. The timeframe and resources for this evaluation were too limited to apply quantitative methods and ensure representativeness. While the scope, duration and resources for this evaluation were unlikely to present representative results, especially at CAAC and community level, in order to ensure a maximum quality evaluation, the evaluators did consult with a maximum amount of stakeholders (106 - 38 female and 68 male) However, many consultations proved irrelevant (as explained above).

While junior (and new) staff allocation was provided to the evaluation by UNICEF, **insufficient high level support** was provided, meaning crucial information was not provided until the last moment, and many last minute corrections had to be made as large amounts of data and analyses proved irrelevant.

While highly participatory during inception and data-collection phases, the final presentation to the evaluation reference group was cancelled due to the confusion, and invalidity of data collected, due to the above mentioned confusion surrounding which activities were paid for under this grant. This

joint decision between UNICEF and the evaluators **compromised the ability and opportunity for stakeholders to comment to the report and to jointly formulate lessons learned**. In addition, the evaluation received no comments from CCWB or other stakeholders, so the impression is that the draft report has not been shared.

2. FINDINGS

2.1 SUMMERY FINDINGS PER CRITERIA

A. FINDINGS ON RELEVANCE

Overall, focusing on support to CAAC and, therefore, further building the CP systems approach can be regarded as relevant in the context of Nepal. The NPA CAAC¹⁰ guidelines produced under this project, as well as the contribution of this project to the development of the case management guidelines¹¹ and the alternative care guidelines¹², was regarded as relevant by most stakeholders and raised awareness and developed policy frameworks on CAAC, especially at the central level.

However, many stakeholders consulted questioned the relevance of collecting extensive information on CAAC and targeting of CAAC 10 years after the conflict ended. The guidelines on the implementation of the NAP on CAAC defines CAAC as children who were affected by conflict regardless of their current status, and children who were associated with armed groups in the past¹³. This definition of CAAC is innovative as it broadly includes CAAFAG and VMLRs, as well as other conflict-affected children. However, over the last ten years, there are other vulnerable children such as those affected by the earthquake, who require as much assistance and protection as CAAC. Most of the respondents in the districts stated that rather than singling out CAAC among other vulnerable children, it would be appropriate in the future to take a broader approach in selecting children as beneficiaries, by taking into consideration their current social, economic and psychosocial vulnerabilities and protection needs, rather than focusing on their status of having been victims or association with armed conflict (see also section F below on conflict sensitivity).

It is important to note that while the project did target CAAC (as the funding was primarily addressing the impact of the conflict), it also, in line with international standards, focused on other vulnerable children. Secondly, the project had a dual approach; simultaneously it addressed the impact of the conflict on children, and focused on the strengthening of the child protection system. CAAC were seen as the entry point to the strengthening of the child protection system, which would then have the ability and capacity to prevent and respond to child protection risks of children in general, regardless of whether this was during emergencies or in non-emergency settings. Once strengthened, the child protection system will be able to respond to present and future child protection risks, including those that had come up during and after the conflict, and those that will come up in the future.

The above dichotomy relates to two simultaneous processes in Nepal. On one hand there is a strong political process towards reparation, the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and, thereby, the identification of conflict-affected people, including children. In this, the MoWCSW-

¹⁰ N.D. CAAC NPA Implementation Guidelines (Nepali)

¹¹ CCWB. N.D.. Case Management Guideline – (Nepali)

¹² N.D. Alternative Care Guidelines - English Draft

CCWB, MoPR and the LPC play a crucial role in identifying and verifying those entitled to reparation support. For children this is reflected, for example, in the scholarship programme of the MoE for all conflict-affected children. On the other hand, agencies have moved from emergency and immediate post-conflict programming modes to more development oriented approaches. Also, in this project, where the approach was changed from direct and NGO implemented support to CAAC, to NIM support to relevant government agencies, with a focus on systems building. Both approaches, development and reparation, are relevant in the context of Nepal and this project was designed and implemented within this dichotomy.

In addition, this project was designed as a long-term development approach which was the strengthening of the CP system using CAAC as the entry point, but was then mixed with short-term humanitarian type of relief interventions as a response to the earthquake. It is noted that according to UNICEF, the guidelines and capacities that had been developed through the implementation of this project were used to respond to the earthquake. However, in the absence of a clear strategy to merge the two approaches in order to achieve the overall objectives of this project and the outputs set, the project eventually fostered limited outcomes in terms of consolidating peace, in the way it had been envisaged.

On the question if the project was sufficiently embedded in the context, results are mixed. The project did invest in an extensive CAAC assessment in 20 districts¹⁴ and a context analyses¹⁵. However, while the results framework shows some baseline, many indicators had no baseline. Furthermore, the project was heavily Kathmandu based and driven, and, therefore, did not always respond to relevant dynamics on the ground. For example, district level actors reported that singling out of CAAC is not only problematic but also harmful; however, no proof of action could be found to mitigate this (see also section F below on conflict sensitivity).

Furthermore, the intended direct support to CAAC was largely focused on meeting their rights to education. This was highly relevant for CAAC who are now over 18 years old, but providing CAAC under the age of 18 with education support through CCWB and WCO was irrelevant, as their names were on the list to be included in the on-going government programme of scholarships to CAAC under the age of 18 by the MoE. The lack of coordination of NGOs, including those supported by UNICEF under another VMLR/CAAC project, with the District Development Office (DEO), is an example of the lack of coordination and possible double dipping of CAAC in UNICEF-supported activities and on-going government programmes. Also, Child Rights Officers (CROs) are not referring CAAC to the MoE for scholarships and no systematic information sharing was found between WCOs/CROs/District Child Welfare Boards (DCWBs) and DoEs, except occasionally through the high level meetings. For example, in one location the Village Child Protection Committee (VCPC) expressed that their biggest concern is children with disabilities, who have no means to pay for schooling. They brought this up to the CRO who explained that the DCWB had no money for this,

¹⁴ Government of Nepal Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare Central Child Welfare Board. 2015. Narrative report on Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CAAC) in Residential Care (Child Care Homes & Shaheed Pratisthan) & Community Level (20 District- Baseline Survey in Coordination with MoPR)

¹⁵ UNICEF. 2014. Context Analysis. Workshop Report. May 19-20, 2014. Organised by UNICEF. Workshop Facilitated by Peacebuilding and Recovery Unit, UNDP

while the DEO in that same district had a scholarship programme for children with disabilities. When discussed with the CRO, she explained she was not aware of this.

This project also focused on CAAC's right to education, including those under 18, which is again another sign that the project was insufficiently embedded in the existing government structures, and intended to provide services that are already available, and which are not within the mandate of DCWBs nor the DWCOs. The same applies to the intended livelihood activities, which should be implemented by the DCSI, and not by DCWB with NGOs, as is currently planned.

Another finding is the concern that the focus was too much at the central level, and much less at the district and village level. For example in the Sindhuli district, a UNICEF partner organisation reported that it was involved in setting up 25 VCPCs under the CAAFAG project, but in the last two years there has actually been less coordination with government agencies. Civil society organisations are mostly engaged in service delivery rather than working with the government to strengthen CP systems. Both NGOs consulted highlighted that the CP system was functioning much better in the past, especially during the CAAFAG programming and that capacities built then have faded, due to the lack of continuous support as confirmed by several government actors. The project would have benefitted from an implementation process that could have created the environment for more interactions with CSOs, the government and VCPCs, which would have helped to address the gaps in the child protection system, and to maintain local capacities built in the past.

Finally, the evaluation team was only informed on the redirection of resources to the earthquake response (USD 84,246.19¹⁶) towards the end of the evaluation. The explanation (undocumented) provided by UNICEF was built on an assumption that children have critical needs and concerns at the time of emergency and, therefore, it could be an appropriate time to strengthen the CP system. However, the findings from Sindhuli district (earthquake affected) do not show that the child protection system was functioning better than in Surkhet; although resources of I/NGOs to address child protection issues increased. While coordination exists among INGOs (through the CP cluster), the lack of coordination with relevant government actors in the CP system was actually higher in Sindhuli than in Surkhet (which had no emergency support). However, with the lack of baseline on the functioning of the CP system per location previously, it is hard to compare the two. The two NGOs that were supported through this grant for the earthquake response, expressed in the interviews that the support provided were one-off payments to vulnerable children, and while information was shared with DCWB, no system building took place. The evaluation has insufficient evidence to conclude if the CP system was functioning better or not in response to the earthquake, due to this project.

B. FINDINGS ON EFFECTIVENESS

As outlined above, at the output level this evaluation reports to the extent possible on the targets reached, levels of achievement, timing and financing. Due to the fact that the evaluation team did the fieldwork in locations where the projects were not funded by the UNPFN funding meant that there is very little or no verification at district level could be done. Therefore, reporting against

¹⁶ UNICEF. 2015. DCT from grant SC130166.

outputs is largely based on self-reporting by UNICEF using tool 1, 2 and 3 (see Annex B). The achievements against the output indicators and targets of this project show mixed results. As stated earlier, due to the weak M&E system, and the lack of planning for, and commitment to this evaluation, many outputs might be under-reported. In addition, funds have been redirected to activities that were not part of the original activities designed to contribute to the intended outputs. These include the grants provided to JJCC, the funding provided to the municipalities and the topping up of NGO PCAs for the emergency response after the earthquake. UNICEF's response to inquiries on this has been that all of these activities contribute to the functioning of the CP systems approach, which might indeed be true, but the relation to peace building and the output and outcome indicators of this project are less evident. The table below summarises the level of effectiveness to achieve the outputs.

Table 2: Output indicators and targets

Output indicators and targets	Achievements	Level of achievement
Output 1.1 Relevant government agencies mobilised resources for the implementation of NPA-CAAC		
<p>Indicator 1.1.1. MoWCSW, CCWB, MoI, MoE secure funding from the NPTF.</p> <p>Target: CCWB, MoE, MoI have developed and submitted project proposals to NPTF.</p>	<p>In reporting to UNPFN, UNICEF stated that; on the basis of the implementation guideline, technical assistance was provided to relevant ministries (MWCSW/ CCWB; MoE, MoI) to develop project proposals, which were submitted to NPTF for the mobilisation of resources. The evaluation mission confirms that proposals were submitted. However, only the CCWB proposal was awarded a grant, at the closure of the UNICEF project. Therefore, the intended parallel implementation of the government and UNICEF projects did not occur. Evidence was found (confirmed by CCWB) that UNICEF supported the proposal development of CCWB, but according to the Small Scale Promotion Board, no technical support for proposal development was provided to MoI by UNICEF.</p> <p>The NPTF invited the Cottage and Small Industry Board (hence MoI), Centre for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) (hence MoE) and Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) to submit a joint project concept note for a project on CAAC. CTEVT was given the task of drafting the joint proposal, in which CTEVT itself proposed to carry out livelihood related activities, which is the expertise of Cottage and Small Industry Board. The proposal of the CTNET is currently waiting for funding from the NPTF.</p> <p>The evaluation found jealousy and disengagement by other agencies. For example, the MWCSW expressed that this project (and also the new project through NPTF), was mainly executed by CCWB, and that they received little information from CCWB. They therefore did not express ownership of this project. Another example is that in the interview with the Cottage and Small Industry Board it was explained that UNICEF and the Board had agreed to develop a concept note on the monitoring of the livelihood component of the CCWB funded project. However, according to them, this was not followed up by UNICEF, which further demotivated the Cottage and Small Industry Board to work proactively on CP. Based on this information, it can be concluded that the MoI, a crucial partner in supporting CAAC and their families, was lost in the process of the project. As a result, no further collaboration was fostered between MoI, MoE and MoWCSW, and this negatively affected the livelihood component of this project, even though stakeholders consulted in the field highlighted livelihood support as one of the most need for CAAC</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 33%.</p> <p>However, funding was obtained too late to realise the foreseen parallel implementation of the Government funded and the UNPFN funded projects. This was however not within the control of UNICEF.</p> <p>Unequal distribution of funds resulted in jealousy and disengagement of crucial actors initially on board in this project.</p>

	and their families.	
Output 1.2 Baseline information (at least 20 conflict districts) on CAAC available		
<p>Indicator 1.2.1. Relevant government agencies have baseline information of CAAC in minimum 20 districts.</p> <p>Target: # of CAAC in 20 districts known to government for referral to available services.</p>	<p>The evaluation mission verified that this baseline study in 20 districts was completed, and that it was referred to by many project stakeholders as one of the main achievements of this project. The CCWB baseline survey noted that 16906 CAAC in communities and in institutional care across 20 districts have been identified.</p> <p>However, the evaluation team also found confusion at the district level, where DCWB and the WCO use the list of CAAC compiled from this baseline study, while the LPCs have a separate list of CAAC, which is provided to the District Administrative Office, and consequently used by DoE for the CAAC scholarship programme and the Cottage and Small Industry board for the (UNDP supported) vocational training and business start-up programme. The LPC is the government-supported agency that is mandated to identify, list and verify conflict-affected people in the framework of the government’s reparation programmes. LPC membership is highly inclusive with elected members representing the different political parties at district level and their lists are generally used by the line ministries, as also confirmed by the TRC staff in Kathmandu.</p> <p>According to UNICEF, in commenting to the raft evaluation report, the baseline study undertaken by this project provides the only comprehensive and consolidated data of CAAC in the country, and the data on CAAC used by the different agencies is fragmented and maintained on ad-hoc basis. However, the evaluation found that the LPC lists are actually used and confirmed as accurate by a broad range of government actors. This is an indication that the project was insufficiently aligned, other than to CCWB, to government policy and programmes. There is thus overlap in efforts identifying CAAC and the use of different lists, which is not helpful from a CP systems approach. According to several stakeholders (DAO, TRC, DoE, MoI0, the baseline study done for this project was therefore, irrelevant, as data on CAAC already existed, and according to several respondents, the mapping happened solely so CCWB could establish itself and spend donor funding.</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 100%.</p> <p>However, the relevance of this study can be questioned as lists of CAAC were available already and used by other government agencies.</p>
Output 1.3 Vocational training service providers deliver quality livelihood trainings and link CAAC to labour market		
<p>Indicator 1.3.1. Relevant government ministries have developed project</p>	<p>UNICEF reported that livelihood training packages had been developed by the Cottage and Small Scale Industry Promotion Board (under the MoI), and were awaiting resources for implementation, through the proposal submitted to NPTF. In addition, UNICEF reports that the CTEVT, under the MoE, had also developed vocational</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 10%.</p>

<p>document for delivery of skills training.</p> <p>Target: Types of vocational and skills training for CAACs and delivery mechanism specified in Government project document.</p>	<p>training packages. It is confirmed that the Cottage and Small Scale Industry Promotion Board developed a project proposal for the NPTF to secure funds for delivery of skills training, targeted to CAAC, so that the DCSI in districts could roll-out skills training and business start-up. In principal this was good, as this could sustain the project in the future, as the Cottage and Small Scale Promotion Board in districts have their own government supported project targeted at conflict victims, and also the Micro-Enterprise Development for Poverty Alleviation (MEDPA) project supported by UNDP. However, since the Cottage and Small Scale Promotion Board’s proposal was unsuccessful, delivery of skills training to CAAC under this project did not happen, and is unlikely to happen in the future. There are no indications that the CCWB will adopt this well-designed Vocational Training (VT) and business set-up approach, as they intend to only undertake very small scale income generating activities (IGA), through direct implementation.</p> <p>The CTEVT packages were not provided to the evaluators. Stakeholders confirmed that the CTEVT have little field presence and mainly concentrate on in-centre formal training and VT certification, which is less relevant for CAAC programming.</p>	<p>The Cottage and Small Scale Promotion Board did not confirm that this project provided support to the development of these packages, which are being used for years already, and no funding was obtained for VT.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.3.2. # of government officials trained on labour market analysis.</p> <p>Target: Key government staff, relevant to designing vocational skills training package, have received labour market analysis training.</p>	<p>According to interviews with stakeholders in Kathmandu, Surkhet and Sindhuli districts, training for government officials on labour market analysis did not happen under this project. In addition, UNICEF provided no proof of such trainings to the evaluating team.</p>	<p>The target was not achieved.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.3.3. % of conflict-affected and vulnerable children linked to employment opportunity and other reintegration support (gender and inclusion) by MoI.</p>	<p>There is no evidence that this project contributed to CAAC being linked to employment opportunities or other reintegration support. The main reasons this did not happen was due to the Cottage and Small Scale Industry Promotion Board not receiving funding from the NPTF, and as no referral took place from the DCWBs to this on-going programme, which could have absorbed CAAC above 15.</p> <p>UNICEF reported (annual report to UNPFN) that the mapping of financial institutions and livelihood training, in 15</p>	<p>The target was not achieved.</p> <p>Cottage and Small Scale Industry Promotion Board did not receive</p>

<p>Target: 40% of identified CAAC receive reintegration support.</p>	<p>districts, was expected to ensure linkages of CAAC with market opportunities and other related training, to advance their skills for the market. However, no evidence that the mapping of financial institutions occurred was provided to the evaluation team.</p>	<p>funding and this project did not invest in livelihood support.</p>
<p>Output 1.4 Government and non-government agencies respond to reintegration needs of children affected by armed conflict with special consideration to gender needs, using standardised tools and procedures</p>		
<p>Indicator 1.4.1. MWCSW/DWC/CCWBMoPR finalised and endorsed tools for identification and referral of CAAC and other children in need of protection. Target: Tools and process for identification and referral of CAAC are endorsed by relevant agencies.</p>	<p>The completed and endorsed NPA-CAAC implementation guidelines lists the sources and processes for identification of CAAC, and provides registration and assessment tools. It is verified that the NPA-CAAC guidelines were developed through a participatory consultative processes, involving key stakeholders from districts. The development of these guidelines can be fully attributed to this project. UNICEF reported to PBF that the NPA CAAC implementation guideline, approved in 2013, was disseminated to all stakeholders in 2014, however, the evaluating team found no evidence that these were shared or rolled out to the district level stakeholders. Lack of knowledge about the guidelines, especially the NPA-CAAC (which define CAAC), among the partners also means that different practices still exist in selecting beneficiaries, negating any benefit from having produced them. Thus, the utilisation of the NPA-CAAC was found to be minimal at the district level, as concerned stakeholders such as DEO, DDC, DCSIO, CPIs, managers of children’s homes, etc., do not have the guidelines. One example comes from Panch Tara Surkhet, which provided support to CAAC identified by their field staff and schoolteachers, who have no idea about the CAAC guidelines, including how CAAC are defined. The team found no dissemination plan for any of the guidelines produced. After a debriefing of the evaluation team, CCWB confirmed that they quickly responded and distributed the guidelines to all DCWBs when the evaluation was going on. It is therefore not verified that data collection was based on this tool, as the tool was not available or known to most stakeholders consulted.</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 60%. Tools and process for identification and referral of CAAC are produced (100%) but not known to the all relevant agencies on the ground (20%).</p>
<p>Indicator 1.4.2. Referral and coordination system developed and strengthened with government and non-government actors to address gender specific issues (legal aid, health support etc.). Target:</p>	<p>UNICEF self-reported (tool 1) that the guidelines produced define the referral system for physical rehabilitation, health services, psycho-social support, and education services for CAAC, however, this self-reporting provides no information on gender. However, the evaluation confirms that the case management guidelines are gender responsive and clearly spell out referral in relation to gender specific issues. For instance, section 5.3.6 of the guidelines has made a provision for gender specific support for CAAC. In future, implementation could therefore lead to better referral and coordination systems to address gender specific issues. No explicit evidence can be found on increased coordination or a formal referral system set up in the area of gender, due to this project. The evaluation found, confirmed by district level stakeholders, that the referral system in both districts visited is</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 70%. Case management guidelines are gender responsive, Police and Justice trainings</p>

<p>Formal referral system exists for referral of gender issues for services.</p>	<p>functioning in a rather ad-hoc manner, as inter-agency coordination and information sharing is very weak and irregular, and no formal procedures or mechanism are in place. However, the referrals to the hospital from the police and DCWB do take place, including on cases of post gender based violence (GBV) support.</p> <p>Additionally, this project supported the strengthening of the Women and Child Service Centres. However, it has not been possible measure the contribution of this project to increased referral (to or from these centres to additional services), as UNICEF is currently, and has been, supporting these centres for a long time through different sources and grants. In addition, in both districts the centres' staff stated that they did not receive any support from UNICEF over the past two years.</p> <p>Finally, the training of child psychologists and social workers in the Juvenile Justice Bench might lead to better access to legal aid for boys and girls in the 17 districts where the project is implemented. However, no field visits took place to verify the gender responsiveness of this service.</p>	<p>increase gender responsiveness. However, the planned gender trainings under this project did not take place and referral mechanism of gender issues are there but not yet formalised.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.4.3. Standardisation of psychosocial training modules for para-psychosocial counsellors and social workers. Target: Relevant government agency standardize curriculum for para-psychosocial counsellors and social workers bringing in <i>(words missing in results framework)</i>.</p>	<p>UNICEF reported in the annual progress report to UNPFN that following a series of formal discussions with Tribhuvan University on the standardisation of curriculum for para-psychosocial counsellors and social workers, the review of the original curricula was initiated. JJCC confirmed that a curriculum on child psychology training was developed, with involvement of experts from the university. According to the project manager from JJCC, UNICEF provided support to strengthen the Children Friendly Juvenile Justice Bench in district courts in 17 districts. As part of this programme, it provided 3 months training to child psychologists from each district and one month training to social workers. However, its usage is limited within the works of JJCC and not usable for wider government and non-government actors. Moreover, the curriculum was on child psychology in regard to juvenile justice, and, therefore, does not cover broader psycho-social counselling (while demand for this was confirmed as high in the districts). Furthermore, the evaluation team was not provided with any information on the grant to JJCC before deploying to the field, and could, therefore, not verify the results.</p> <p>NGOs who received support from UNICEF under the earlier CAAFAG and VMLR projects reported that PSS capacity built in the past is actually fading away. The evaluation mission also confirms that the project has not provided any training on psycho-social support in the two districts visited. The District Public Health Office (DPHO) in Surkhet and DHO in Sindhuili confirmed the government has no capacity in the districts at present to deal with psycho-social support cases and that no referral services exist. The only available minimum capacity remains with the civil</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 20%.</p> <p>Only one agency was supported and this curriculum work was specifically on PSS for children in conflict with the law, these modules cannot be regarded as standardize curriculum for para-psychosocial counsellors and social workers.</p>

	society (hence NGOs), especially TPO. The WCOs and CROs consulted confirm the complete lack of referral opportunities for PSS.	
<p>Indicator 1.4.4. # of districts with updated directory of accredited service providers.</p> <p>Target: Women Children Office/DCWB have referral system with services providers identified.</p>	<p>UNICEF self-reported that the Implementation Procedures list the service providers and outline the referral system for physical rehabilitation, health services, psycho-social support, and education services for CAAC. The Child Protection Mapping and Assessment Summary Report presents the information on different service providers, structures, their mandates and functions. The Annex of the NPA - CAAC guidelines has a matrix of a referral system, showing the list of accredited service providers. These include line agencies working on education, psycho-social counselling, WCO, Police, IGA and VT service providers. However, no evidence of the directory or updated and accredited service providers was found at district level. CROs confirm there is no systematic and formal referral system in place. The police confirm having no access to referral services for children.</p> <p>CCWB reports that in the 8 districts where the case management is piloted, 800 USD (so 100 USD per district) was spent on services mapping; this amount seems extremely low for solid mapping in all villages and municipalities of the 8 districts.</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 10%.</p> <p>No evidence could be found that DCWBs and WCOs have and use a detailed updated directory of accredited services and the referral system is referred to by CROs as informal and ad-hoc.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.4.5. # of government and non-government officials trained on gender needs assessment.</p> <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government and non-government officials have skills and tools to identify gender needs among CAAC beneficiaries to be addressed by the programme. - Information to facilitate access to services for victims of GBV, reviewed and 	<p>UNICEF self-reported that the partners used the gender assessment tools, developed in 2013, for the assessment of gender specific issues of CAAC, and responded accordingly. The Nepal Police report does reference a library established for women and children’s issues. However, there is no indication of any gender needs assessment training conducted for government and non-government officials, which were planned for. However, the project did support the strengthening of the Women and Child Service Centres, which have an important role in assisting GBV victims. According to UNICEF, capacity-building trainings for the police (which include components on GBV) have been supported by UNICEF, and the information management system of the police has incorporated components of GBV. As in other contributions, supporting these centres is a long-standing process from UNICEF, and it is not possible to trace which exact activities were funded through this grant. In the two districts visited, the Women and Child Service Centres of the police did not confirm receipt of any support in the past two years. Also, the grant to the police was not known to the team until the end of the evaluation and, therefore, there was no targeting of field visits to districts where this might have happened.</p>	<p>This evaluation has not been able to verify any of the activities under this indicator and cannot report on the level of achievement.</p>

disseminated to stakeholders.		
<p>Indicator 1.4.6. # of government and non-government service providers trained on conflict sensitive tools.</p> <p>Target: Government and non-government officials use conflict sensitive tools to mitigate conflict during the implementation of NPA-CAAC.</p>	<p>There is no indication of any training conducted for government and non-government service providers on conflict sensitive tools. Staff of CCWB consulted also confirmed that they were not provided training or tools on conflict sensitivity in past two years. The singling out of CAAC was referred to, by many people consulted, as harmful and not conflict sensitive, 10 years after the conflict (as further outlined below in findings per criteria). There was no indication that project partners were equipped to address this concern, nor was this brought up during the review process.</p>	<p>This target was not achieved as there is no indication of any training provided to government and non-government officials on conflict mitigation.</p>
<p>Output 1.5 Young people including CAACs are engaged in the enhancement of social and political harmony through the promotion of non-violent and conflict sensitive means (peace building and social activities)</p>		
<p>Indicator 1.5.1. Training curriculum for training of teachers (TOT) on community mobilisation, conflict analysis, negotiation and leadership skills for young people developed.</p> <p>Target: Training manual available for use by government and non-government stakeholders to engage young people in peace building activities.</p>	<p>UNICEF did not report on this component (tool 1). The evaluation team found no evidence that a training manual was available for use by government and non-government stakeholders to engage young people in peace building activities.</p> <p>In comments to this report UNICEF states, “The peace ambassadors program of Nepal police also addresses the issue of community mobilization and leadership of young people”, and can be seen in the report from the Police to UNICEF that 464 students (247 male and 217 Female) were trained as Peace Ambassadors. However, no judgement can be made on the content, quality or structure of this training, as the peace ambassadors training manual was not provided.</p>	<p>There was no evidence to suggest that this target was achieved.</p> <p>No meetings have been set-up and no training manual was seen.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.5.2. Conflict Affected</p>	<p>UNICEF self-reported that the Peace Angels Training Manual was developed by the Women and Children Service Directorate, under the Crime Investigation Department of Nepal Police. More than 400 young people are said to</p>	<p>It is difficult to determine the level of</p>

<p>Children/young people trained (TOT) on community mobilisation, conflict analysis, negotiation and leadership skills.</p> <p>Target: # young people (% female, socially disadvantaged groups), government TOT on mobilising children/youth groups for community based reconciliation activities.</p>	<p>have been trained by Nepal Police as ‘Peace Angels’ to engage them in crime prevention initiatives. Interviews with police revealed that this project supported the development of a training curriculum on Juvenile Justice and Child Delinquency, under the Peace Angels Programme of Nepal Police. The manual was targeted to provide a 3-day training to schoolchildren, with an aim to improve children's perception towards the police. According to the police, 464 children were reached through the funding of this project, out of the targeted 600. In addition, these Peace Angels trained 23 classes in schools: thereby 1285 children were reached. There is no data available on the number of CAAC among them. In addition, 30 police officers were trained on the concept of Peace Angels from six districts. The evaluation team did not visit this project and therefore cannot assess the quality, perception and impact of these trainings. While a presentation by the police on this project was organised by UNICEF, the activities of the Peace Angels are not geared towards this target, neither in the people reached, neither in topics covered.</p>	<p>achievement of the target as the evaluation team did not visit this project and neither did the police presentation to the evaluation team bring out the activities of the Peace Angels. It appeared that the Peace Angels were not geared towards this target.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.5.3. CAACs and other vulnerable children are engaged in promoting enrolment of conflict affected children in children/youth’s clubs.</p> <p>Target: # of children/youth clubs promoting peace building activities with the engagement of CAAC.</p>	<p>CCWB reported 19,454 child clubs formed in 75 districts, with 433,891 children affiliated¹⁷, however, no data was provided on the level of engagement with CAAC in these clubs and no evidence on the creation of new children’s or youth clubs in the districts visited, except of one football team created and funded by one VCPC. The evaluation team furthermore also found no evidence of CAACs and other vulnerable children engaged in promoting enrolment of conflict-affected children in children/youth’s clubs. Similarly, no evidence was found that children or youth clubs were promoting peace building activities.</p>	<p>It is difficult to determine the level of achievement of the target here as there was no evidence that children or youth were promoting peace building activities.</p>
<p>Output 1.6 Child sensitive processes and procedures for children’s participation in Transitional Justice are implemented effectively</p>		

¹⁷ CCWB. 2015. Narrative Report on (Strengthening Sustainable State Structure for Promotion & Protection of Child Rights) (Progress Report covering from July 2014- July 2015).

<p>Indicator 1.6.1. Technical note prepared through consultative process (government, civil society, children/young people) and submitted to TRC drafting committee to include child-friendly provisions the TRC Bill.</p> <p>Target: Guideline for children’s participation in TRC process presented to TRC.</p>	<p>UNICEF did not self-report on any achievements in relation to this indicator. However, in their response to the first evaluation draft UNICEF explained that some inputs were provided to the TRC Bill, inputs that were compiled from the past. However, no evidence was found of the technical note prepared through consultative processes (government, civil society, and children/young people). None of the government line agencies and CSOs consulted in the districts were aware of any guideline for children’s participation in the TRC process. The TRC representative consulted did not confirm any UNICEF support to the TRC or the TRC Bill. It can therefore be concluded that the guideline for children’s participation in TRC process presented to TRC was not produced.</p>	<p>This target was not achieved as the guidelines for children’s participation in the TRC was not produced.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.6.2. Guideline for children’s participation in TRC process developed and disseminated.</p> <p>Target: # of documented cases of gross violation cases (CAAFAG/CAAC) to be presented for TRC process.</p>	<p>UNICEF did not report any progress on this indicator. No evidence is found regarding the preparation and submission of guidelines for children's participation in the TRC process, and the under-secretary of MoPR confirmed this. People contacted in CCWB and JJCC also confirmed they were not aware of any activity regarding the submission of guidelines to TRC.</p>	<p>This target was not achieved as there is no evidence of documented cases of gross violations cases (CAAFAG/CAAC) that were presented to the TRC.</p>
<p>Indicator 1.6.3 Guideline for legal documentation of cases developed and implemented.</p> <p>Target: Government train relevant stakeholders on TRC process and children from at least 30</p>	<p>UNICEF did not self-report any progress on this indicator. Indeed, no evidence was found or provided. In reaction to the draft evaluation report UNICEF stated a proposal had been jointly developed with Advocacy Forum by UNICEF on the legal documentation of cases. The partnership review process in UNICEF suggested risk mitigation measures for partnership with Advocacy Forum, as identified during the internal review of Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). While this process was on-going, the earthquake occurred, changing the immediate priorities of UNICEF to respond to the emergency. The cancelation of this crucial activity, foreseen in this results framework, therefore challenges the communication provided to UNPFN, that for the redirection of the earthquake response “we do not need to re-program the funding to divert to other activities as we are confident</p>	<p>This target was not achieved as no evidence of the government training stakeholders including on the TRC process in 30 districts was found.</p>

(most conflict affected) districts.	we will be able to utilize the funds according to planned” ¹⁸ .	
<p>Indicator 1.6.4. # of child victims of gross violations referred for medical, psychosocial and legal support.</p> <p>Target: # of children (victims of gross violations) provided with legal, health and psychosocial support).</p>	<p>Legal support is mainly provided by Advocacy Forum which is not part of this project. JJCC has received a grant from UNICEF as an extension of their on-going partnership to create child friendly juvenile benches in 75 district courts, composed of a judge, a social worker and a child psychologist, as explained during consultations with JJCC. According to their report to UNICEF, JJCC trained all three of these actors in 17 districts with funding from UNICEF and 75 children were supported through this. It is likely that this project, thereby, contributed to better access to child friendly legal support. The evaluation team was not informed about any funding transferred to JJCC until two days before the departure of the evaluation consultant from Nepal and therefore, while an ad-hoc meeting took place in Juba with JJCC, the team has not been able to undertake any verification of these activities, and their effects in the field. Also, surprisingly no reporting by UNICEF to UNPFN can be found on JJCC. Also, as far as could be confirmed, no child victims of gross violations were provided with support, only perpetrators.</p>	<p>The target was not achieved as there is no evidence to suggest that child victims of gross violations were provided with legal, health and psychosocial support.</p> <p>Note that the 75 children reached were perpetrators and not victims.</p>
Output 1.7 Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP) guideline for a secure, non-violent, non-discriminatory environment in schools is implemented		
<p>Indicator 1.7.1. # of (major) political parties sensitized on SZOP and express commitment to stop misuse of children and schools for political purpose.</p> <p>Target: Political parties are sensitized and compliance to provision in the SZOP guideline (misuse of</p>	<p>UNICEF self-reported that the National Human Rights Commission, CCWB and other agencies were engaged to raise awareness among political parties and civil society, and to monitor the implementation of the election code of conduct in 75 districts, to prevent children's involvement in the election process, as well as misuse of schools. CCWB reported interaction at district level occurred in relation to the SZOP framework and implementation guideline with political parties, journalists and civil society, and at national level a review meeting on the initiative on SZOP was carried out in coordination with DoE, CZOP and Civil Societies. CCWB also reported Coordination with DoE to finalise the SZOP action Plan. However, it is unclear if CCWB is reporting against this grant or other UNICEF resources. Also, the evaluation mission discussed the SZOP activities implemented under this project twice with UNICEF's education department (host of the SZOP project), and it was confirmed that no activities on SZOP actually materialised under this project. There furthermore was no proof provided that this project</p>	<p>This target was not achieved as informed gathered indicate that these activities were not supported by this grant, as confirmed by the UNICEF staff from the education section responsible for SZOP.</p>

¹⁸ UNICEF. 2015. 15 06 23 UNPFN Project NCE justifications collated

<p>schools and children) monitored and reported to pressurise violators of SZOP guideline.</p>	<p>monitored and reported upon the compliance to provision in the SZOP guideline (misuse of schools and children) to pressurise violators of SZOP guideline.</p>	
<p>Indicator 1.7.2. Informal system to document and report on incidence of attack/closure of schools, including misuse of children for violent political and armed activities, established. Target: Incidences of attack and closure of schools, including re-recruitment and misuse of children for violent political and armed activities documented and reported regularly.</p>	<p>UNICEF reported to UNPFN that monitoring reports, compiled from 70 districts, reported 441 incidents of child rights violations during the election, where 12,429 children were found to be used by political parties. An election monitoring report was shared with major political parties, who accepted the violations and pledged to protect and prevent misuse of children and schools in the future. However, no election monitoring reports were provided and the evaluation team is unclear if these activities, if they did take place, were funded through this grant.</p> <p>UNICEF self-reported (tool 1) under this output that training of police officers and young people (students) from six pilot districts was conducted in February 2015 (under the Peace Angel Programme). While Peace Angels trainings are confirmed, and reported on above, there is no direct link between the Peace Angels trainings in the 6 districts supported by this project, and the target of this indicator.</p> <p>No reference of these activities was made by the stakeholders contacted and no reports/documentation were provided by UNICEF on incidences of attack and closure of schools, including re-recruitment and misuse of children for violent political and armed activities.</p>	<p>Information gathered indicates that this target was not achieved. However UNICEF insists that monitoring reports, compiled from 70 districts, reported 441 incidents of child rights violations during the election, where 12,429 children were found to be used by political parties and that an election monitoring report was shared with major political parties. However, no such reports were provided to the evaluators.</p>
<p>Output 2.1 Government and non-government agencies prevent and respond to the core violations against the rights of the children affected by armed conflict and other vulnerable children through an integrated Child Protection systems approach (using government standardised process, procedures and tools for identification, rescue, and reintegration and monitoring of children at risk)</p>		
<p>Indicator 2.1.1. Database and users guidelines for comprehensive CP/CAAC</p>	<p>UNICEF self-reported (tool 1) that the government has constituted a working team, led by CCWB, to coordinate activities related to the development of a comprehensive CP Information System, which will also host information on CAAC. UNICEF, furthermore, reported to UNPFN that “UNICEF has been supporting MoWCSW and CCWB in the</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 10% as</p>

<p>database developed and rolled out by 2014.</p> <p>Target: Database and guidelines developed based on government documentation and reporting needs.</p>	<p>development of a comprehensive Child Protection Information Management System (CP-IMS), which is also expected to be used to manage information related to conflict affected children. Currently UNICEF HQ is customising the CP-IMS for the context of Nepal. The working version of the system is expected to be available by the end of 2015". No proof the database is completed was provided or found. The evaluation team did not visit any of the eight pilot districts. UNICEF explained that, by the end of this project, UNICEF Nepal was still working on the database with UNICEF HQ. Consultations with UNICEF furthermore confirm the database currently under development is mainly for the case management within WCOs and DCWBs, and will not include data of other line ministries such as MoE, MoH and other agencies that provide services to children. This raises the question how comprehensive the database will be.</p>	<p>no data-base is in place but UNICEF is working with HQ on its development and started work on the CP-IMS.</p>
<p>Indicator 2.1.2. MWCSW/CCWB/DWC including district line agencies (WCO) roll out Comprehensive CP/CAAC database in 75 districts.</p> <p>Target: Database used in all districts with central level compilation and analysis.</p>	<p>Currently, no proof is provided or found that points to a database used in all districts with central level compilation and analysis. In the districts visited the WCO had no database but keeps information partially on paper and in Word documents. Sharing of information among other actors, including NGOs and other line ministries working with CAAC, is minimal to non-existent, possibly leading to double dipping and lack of appropriate support at the same time (e.g. social support to beneficiaries of the DoE scholarship through the list of LPC).</p>	<p>This target was not achieved as the database is yet to be developed.</p>
<p>Indicator 2.1.3. Gender sensitive procedures for case management (identification, referral, rescue and follow-up_ developed and endorsed by the Government.</p> <p>Target: Relevant government authorities in all 75 districts trained on cases management process/procedures and tools.</p>	<p>This project also <u>contributed</u> to the development of the case management guidelines, as did other CP agencies (and possibly other UNICEF projects). The guidelines are regarded as high quality and very helpful by all stakeholders consulted in Kathmandu. UNICEF, furthermore, reported to UNPFN that the government trained government, municipal and NGOs officials from 75 districts, and that the case management guideline was printed and disseminated in all districts. However, the evaluation found evidence that the guidelines were not widely available and thus not used in the districts visited, except by the CROs. The evaluation team noted, for example, that the now six months in place CPI of the WCO, was not provided a copy of these guidelines, while in the same district the CRO was using them. The evaluation team found that the rolling out of the case management tools was not done to other relevant government authorities, possibly with the exception of the 8 pilot districts where the guidelines are being piloted. However the team did not visit these districts. In addition, in the earthquake affected district visited, the NGO that is part of DCWB and the CP cluster did not have the guidelines.</p>	<p>The target has been reached by approximately 50%.</p> <p>Only CROs have been trained and provided with the case management process/procedures and tools, and the piloting is only taking</p>

	Similarly, this project contributed to the development of the alternative care guidelines, which are waiting approval and are, therefore, not yet endorsed by the cabinet.	place in 8 districts.
Output 2.2 CAAC residing in residential care (Child care homes) are removed from the institutions and reunited with their family members or placed in other, non-institutional, alternative care arrangements (kinship, foster care, etc. if they cannot be reunited with their biological parents, until a permanent solution has been found – adoption or independent living).		
Indicator 2.2.1. # of CAAC residing in institutions (residential care facilities) identified. Target: All CAAC currently residing in institutions (residential care facilities) documented.	UNICEF self-reported that 331 CAAC (83%) are residing in child care home and 1364 CAAC in Martyrs’ Foundation are documented. CCWB, furthermore, stated, in the Narrative Report on Strengthening Sustainable State Structure for Promotion and Protection of Child Rights (July 2014 - July 2015), assessment of CAAC in institutional care was conducted in all 75 districts, out of which child care institutions were found only in 48 districts. The evaluation found sufficient evidence that this mapping was completed.	The target has been reached by approximately 100%.
Indicator 2.2.2. Guideline for deinstitutionalisation and alternative care developed and finalised by MWCSW and CCWB. Target: Procedures for alternative care meet international standards.	The Alternative Care Procedural Rules were adopted by the Steering Committee in December 2015 but are waiting Parliament approval. UNICEF, furthermore, reported to UNPFN: “UNICEF has been providing technical assistance to MWCSW to develop the Regulation on Alternative Care for children without parental care. The final draft has been produced and the Steering Committee is expected to endorse the document by the end of 2015 or beginning of 2016”. Several stakeholders, under the CP international working group, confirm that the guidelines were prepared and accepted by the technical steering committee, but not yet endorsed by the Cabinet. International CP agencies confirm that UNICEF contributed along with other agencies, to the development of these guidelines.	The target has been reached by approximately 90%.
Indicator 2.2.3. # of CAAC de-institutionalized (removed from residential care centres and reunited with family or placed under alternate care). Target: # of CAAC identified in residential	UNICEF self-reported that detailed assessment of the cases was carried out by the CROs, which was not verified in the fieldwork by the evaluation team. The government is working on per child cost for alternative care. Although mapping was completed, the process intended to follow up each case in order to prepare for deinstitutionalisation, which has not taken place. CCWB reported that only 22 children (urgent cases) have been removed so far. According to the CCWB person responsible for institutional care activities, the deinstitutionalisation budget was cancelled and redirected to earthquake response by UNICEF, without consultation. The final amount spent by CCWB on deinstitutionalisation was USD 8,105; no figures were provided	The target has been reached by approximately 1,3 % (22 out of 1695). Budget for this was redirected to earthquake response.

<p>care facilities are either united with parents (where possible) or placed under other alternative care forms.</p>	<p>for the initial budget for this activity. The total budget redirected by UNICEF to earthquake related activities was USD 119,873.19; however, no breakdown was provided to show exactly from where this was redirected.</p> <p>In reaction to this report UNICEF explains that this work was not suspended completely as UNICEF’s on-going support to CCWB covers the deinstitutionalisation program from the systems approach to child protection. However, under this project the target has not been reached. The cancelation of this crucial activity in this results framework is thereby not in line with the communication provided to UNPFN that for the redirection of funds for the earthquake response: “We do not need to re-program the funding to divert to other activities as we are confident we will be able to utilize the funds according to planned”¹⁹.</p>	
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¹⁹ UNICEF. 2015. 15 06 23 UNPFN Project NCE justifications collated

C. FINDINGS ON SUSTAINABILITY

The evaluation has found that at the central level progress has been made; especially in the initial stages; through bringing relevant agencies together, completing a comprehensive mapping of CAAC in 20 districts and drafting several guidelines. However, all line-ministries involved complained about the lack of information sharing by the CCWB, and some line-ministries even dropped out of the project, such as the MoI (as explained above). There is, therefore, no evidence that at central level coordination mechanisms have been strengthened. On the contrary, there are signs that by providing CCWB financial support, the CCWB became more focused on building the implementation capacity of the board itself rather than on coordination, which is in fact their core mandate. The CCWB coordination function needs further emphasis and strengthening, and the extensive financial support to CCWB by UNICEF and other CP agencies (and not the implementing line ministries) seems to have negative effects on the CP systems approach. Furthermore, funding needs to be provided to build up the services by the relevant line ministries and NGOs, where the DCWBs can refer cases.

An immediate effect of the shift from the UNICEF and NGO joint implementation model to the NIM modality is that the position of donor-funded posts of CROs are phasing out. Although phasing out the CRO position is likely to negatively impact the capacity of DCWB, the recent creation of the new Child Protection/Inspectors (CPI) positions within WCOs by the Nepalese Government is likely to generate and sustain expertise and capacity in the CP system in the long run. This can, therefore, be considered an appropriate shift in policy from a sustainability point of view. However, the success of this model and its sustainability largely depends on future arrangements, especially if CPOs and CPIs are transferred within WCOs, so that their expertise remains within the CP system across the country, and will not be transferred to other ministries. While some CPO/CPIs are in place, the evaluation team found that no capacity development support was geared towards them under this project. The CPI in Sindhuli, for example, explained he had not received any of the guidelines, although he had been in this position for six months already.

Following the earthquake, NGOs received resources to not only collect data on Unaccompanied, Separated and Vulnerable Children (USAVC) but also for providing child protection services. CDS Bhaktapur identified 2,100 needy USAVC, and provided emergency support to 38²⁰. Similarly, another partner, Children and Women in Social Services and Human Rights (CWISH) from Lalitpur district, provided NRs 5000 per child as emergency support to 60 needy children in the district²¹. While the emergency support can be applauded as it provided immediate relief to the children, the partners staff interviewed admitted that such one-time investment is unsustainable if it is not combined with long-term livelihood programming, which was not initiated under this programme. Therefore, also in the earthquake response, no evidence on sustainability can be found.

Also, evidence shows little to no PSS services are available on the ground. While many people refer to PSS training in the past (especially under the earlier CAAFAG project), this was no longer happening. According to TPO in Singula “In the past, with support of UNICEF, TPO had trained many counsellors and community PSS workers, but most have moved on the other jobs as this project had

²⁰ CDS. 2015 Ramechhap - Narrative Report - Jul - Dec 2015

²¹ CWISH. 2015. Progress Report of Emergency Project

no funding to keep them". TPO, and other actors, have no contact with those previously trained and no roster is in place. Therefore, there is limited referral opportunities for PSS, and this was confirmed as a major problem by most actors, both government and non-government, in the CP system.

However, other activities, such as the support to the police in strengthening the Women and Child Service Centres, including their role in supporting GBV victims will likely have longer-term impact. By strengthening structures already in place, it allows a much higher chance of sustainable change. Similarly, JJCC's creation of child friendly juvenile benches across 46 districts (to which this project contributed) has the potential to create real positive and lasting impact in the juvenile justice system.

D. FINDINGS ON INCLUSIVENESS AND PARTICIPATION

Child participation has been observed in the children's representatives in the newly set-up VCPCs, that were initiated by the CROs, which were partly paid for by this project. As outlined, it is unclear how big the contribution of this project is to this achievement as other CP agencies invested heavily in VCPC capacity development, paying CROs salaries and so on. Furthermore, it has not been possible to trace which of the on-going UNICEF projects paid which part of the 22/26 salaries of CROs in the past two years.

Besides the VCPCs, no other evidence of children's right to participation has been observed. Also, no efforts were made to include CAAC representatives in the VCPCs and, therefore, no avenues were found that would have allowed CAAC to provide feedback on the project, or otherwise influence how and what the project was delivering.

The development of the NPA - CAAC guidelines²², case management guidelines²³ and alternative care guidelines²⁴ involved participatory processes at central and district level, with consultations held in districts. However, the project could have ensured more participation from the community level, such as members from VCPCs, child and youth clubs, and CFLGs, in collecting their voices in developing and disseminating the manuals.

District level stakeholders expressed their satisfaction with participation in the project review process and the development of the guidelines, which occurred in the first period of the project. Complaints were many; that since then they have heard nothing, did not receive the guidelines and that no monitoring visits took place during the last year of the project. This is most likely due, at least in part, to the departure of the programme manager (who was not replaced), and to the fact that within UNICEF this project was managed from Kathmandu level and not from the UNICEF field offices (see management).

22 N.D. NPA- CAAC NPA Implementation Guidelines

23 CCWB. N.D. NPA - CAAC Case Management Guideline

24 NPA – CAAC. 2014. Alternative Care for Children (Procedure) Regulation, 2071

As outlined above, the project focused on CAAC policies, awareness and guidelines, and in this, no inclusion of other vulnerable children was observed. However, the support to the police, the JJCC and also the broader case management guidelines are likely to benefit all vulnerable children.

On the question of whether there is evidence that the project advanced any key national human rights or inclusion policies, it can be concluded that, indeed, the NPA-CAAC guidelines made a contribution to the recognition and the right for compensation of CAAC. However, the level of contribution is hard to measure, as government policy on conflict-affected people, and government programmes for CAAC are taking place, in isolation of this project.

At the initial stages of the project a broad range of central level ministries and government agencies were involved, which was still the case at the review process in January 2015. However, in the later stages of the project this broader participation was lost, and the project became focused on CCWB and its field structures only.

As stated in the management section, this project's M&E strategy and practise was very weak. Also, there is no trace of any measures to ensure participatory monitoring of the project, except during the review process where a broader range of stakeholders contributed.

E. FINDINGS ON GENDER RESPONSIVENESS

Due to the limited opportunity to verify on the ground those activities which had actually been funded by this project, the evaluating team was unable to fully determine how gender responsive this programme was, and therefore cannot answer the question if there were any gender transformative results achieved through the project. The following observations can be made, however:

Overall, the key document created by this project, the NPA-CAAC²⁵ guideline, is only available in Nepali and, therefore, could not be assessed by the international evaluator on gender responsiveness. The case management guidelines²⁶ are clearly gender-responsive. UNICEF also self-reported that "UNICEF partners used the gender assessment tools, developed in 2013, for assessment of gender specific issues of CAAC"²⁷.

The planned trainings on gender needs assessments did not take place, and all stakeholders consulted confirmed that no gender training occurred during the past two years. It was noted that stakeholders, including UNICEF staff, referred to gender as women and children's issues only, and seemed to have little understanding about broader gender issues and related programming. Therefore, gender trainings would have been relevant.

Furthermore, the support to the Police Women and Child Service Centres is likely to strengthen gender response services to promote children's access to justice and the right to legal protection, as well as the work in the pilot districts of the case-management guidelines. However, the evaluation

²⁵ N.D. CAAC NPA Implementation Guidelines

²⁶ CCWB. N.D NPA - CAAC Case Management Guideline - Nepali - CCWB

²⁷ UNICEF. 2015. Evaluation Tool 1 – Results Overview, draft 30.12.15

team did not visit the locations where this took place to verify the gender responsiveness. The two new VCPCs visited had both female and male members and a boy and a girl child representative. Finally, the Peace Angels project successfully reached an explicit gender balance in its beneficiaries.

On the question to what extent appropriate budgeting on gender was applied the evaluation cannot respond as UNICEF did not fill the efficiency tool (Annex B) and therefore no analyses on this can be made. However, the impression is that indeed the minimum standard, that at least 15% of disbursed UNPFN funds allocated was addressed to women/girls' specific needs.

On the question to what extent gender responsiveness was monitored, it must be concluded that this is impossible to measure too, as overall monitoring of the project had been weak. There are mixed results regarding gender segregated data from the partner organisations, with some clearly disaggregating by gender (such as the Peace Angels), with others presenting no reporting by gender, with just total numbers of people reached, such as CDS, and Karuna.

F. FINDINGS ON CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

The evaluation team found little evidence that this project took conflict sensitivity into consideration in its design, with no development and monitoring of DNH indicators, distribution of funds or training. For example, cash transfers were used in Lalitpur district as part of emergency support to the most needy and vulnerable children. However, according to the two NGO partners consulted, the selection criteria for the emergency support was not very clear and it did not apply any specific conflict sensitivity criteria when transferring cash in resource-scarce post-disaster environments. None of the partners were provided with any awareness about conflict sensitivity although, according to those interviewed, it was indeed necessary. Furthermore, according to the partners the limited numbers of children provided with services and support may have actually caused additional conflict, as it created resentment in those not eligible.

The appropriateness of CAAC programming ten years after the conflict has been questioned by several stakeholders. Singling out CAAC, and former CAAC (youth) and supporting them based on their category related to 10 years ago, can be regarded as bad practice. Indeed, several stakeholders highlighted the tensions the project created in trying to identify CAAC, among many vulnerable children, and single them out for assistance. The failure of the project to not apply the one-plus-one modality²⁸ was a design fault and also shows lack of either monitoring, or flexibility, to change this exclusive targeting approach during implementation.

Therefore, responding to the question of how CAAC were identified and selected, and if this created any conflict or concerns at the community level, the answer to that is yes, it did create tensions and no measures were taken to change the approach. For example, in identifying CAAC in institutional care, the team actually went in these mixed homes and reached for the one or two children that were orphaned by conflict, singling them out among the other children. The CRO in Surkhet expressed concern, and when she was given money by an NGO through another UNICEF supported

²⁸ In the CAAFAG project for example, CAAC were selected to mix with CAAFAG to avoid singling them out, as well as similar projects in other countries, in line with the Paris principles. If the NPA CAAC guidelines are in line with international standards, this should be an essential element of the guidance.

project to assist CAAC, she decided to go against the guidance and gave the money to the children's home to serve all children. While these stories were known, no action was taken to correct this approach.

Possibly this is partly due to the narrative of reparations (see relevance section), that war-affected children have rights and entitlement that other children did not have. Therefore, mixing them with other vulnerable children is not obvious following this reparation narrative, but UNICEF and partners need to find a way to address this pertinent concern.

Finally, on the question of whether the project affected power relations in the community and, if so, what specific strategies/actions were used to address these, and how the project helped to forge new partnerships between actors in the child protection system not previously working together; the following can be noted. By strengthening the CCWB's (and thereby DCWBs) implementation capacity, and by only providing funding to them (and not to relevant line ministries) UNICEF has in fact contributed to jealousy and competition among actors in the CP system. For instance, some stakeholders said that CCWB had become more of an empire, and that it also started implementing activities that were not in their mandate, simply because they had received the money. This affected the CCWB core function, which is coordination.

G. FINDINGS ON MANAGEMENT AND FLEXIBILITY

From the consultations with the stakeholders and the assessment of the process documentation such as the first review meeting, the evaluation team has a strong impression that in the first half of the project, support was good and effective. However, with the departure of the project manager, the project management weakened. While CP staff followed the project, there was insufficient hands-on support to the project. This also clearly shows in the weak monitoring of the project and the unpreparedness of UNICEF for this evaluation.

UNICEF has for many years worked with relevant government and civil society actors on child protection and children's rights. CCWB and their government structures project had extensive experience in earlier VMLR and CAAFAG programming. In all previous UNICEF projects, as well as those ongoing, there is an element of CP systems strengthening. With this UNICEF indeed had great comparative advantage working on this project. Previous UNICEF projects on CAAFAG were backstopped by the local UNICEF offices and, therefore, received more regular monitoring and adaptation to local realities. UNICEF should have built more on their comparative advantage, having field presence throughout the country, with staff that knew the strengths and weaknesses of the stakeholders supported under this project.

The project had two moments of revision. It is noted that the revision processes were not well documented and information on the approved revisions was not available within UNICEF, so the evaluation team were only able to obtain some information directly from the UNPFN. The revision of July 2014 was referred to by many stakeholders, and has thereby proven, to be inclusive. On the contrary, the redirection of resources to the earthquake response (USD 84,246.19²⁹) looked like a

²⁹ UNICEF. 2015. DCT from grant SC130166.

unilateral decision by UNICEF, and the main government counterpart, CCWB, expressed frustration over the decision to cancel foreseen activities under this project, such as the work on the deinstitutionalisation of CAAC. According to CCWB, they were just informed that the funds reserved for this would not be released due to the earthquake response.

In response to the question, on how changes in project plans were communicated to beneficiaries and stakeholders, it was found that stakeholders and partners, both government and CSO in the districts and villages/municipalities, did not have any information about the project. Staff of implementing partners from the district also did not know about the overall goals and the big picture of the project. As a result, those who were heavily involved in local level implementation were not able to communicate with other stakeholders and beneficiaries about the intended change that the project aimed to bring about, and at the same, lack of comprehensive information about the project also resulted in limited ownership by partners and stakeholders at the local level.

The move to government (budget) support and ownership is relevant and appropriate. The PBF annual report ³⁰ cited the following: “The project embraced two strategies (i) ensure government ownership (ii) ensure wider impact of the project by supporting strengthening of CP components”. Implementation of NPA-CAAC is envisioned through government mechanisms to ensure ownership and sustainability. The initial phase of this project, therefore, focused on mobilising concerned ministries to ensure their engagement in the project. As some ministries, with implementation responsibility in the NPA-CAAC, had no prior experience working with and for children (e.g. MoPR, MoI), extra effort was required to familiarise and sensitise them on issues related to CAAC. As a result of persistent coordination, advocacy and technical assistance, the ministries have expressed their commitment and developed project document of the implementation of the NPA-CAAC. However, towards the end of this project this commitment faded, and the evaluation team observed strong disengagement with the project and CCWB, as these ministries felt excluded from the project and as they had received no support.

On the question of whether there were any changes made in the project, regarding the approach, partnerships, beneficiaries, and targets and how these affected the project results, the following can be reported: the evaluation team observed that the project was already too broad in its design and scattered to produce the intended results. Furthermore, in 2014, UNICEF stated that: “In order to widen its impact, the project is designed to support the strengthening of overall CP system, while supporting the implementation of NPA-CAAC. This required widening partnerships with multiple actors, with apparent roles in the functioning of CP system. For effective advocacy and coordination, UNICEF worked closely with other international child rights agencies to support the government. As a result, the scope of the project was widened to enhance various components of CP, through activities such as the development of the case management guideline, establishment of information system and deinstitutionalisation process etc.”³¹

The manner in which this grant was managed further diluted the focus. Many ad-hoc and last minute decisions were made to reallocate resources to other on-going activities, without documented

³⁰ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). 2014. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2014

³¹ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). 2014. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2014

justification and without the participation of the main stakeholders. For example, in response to the earthquake, emergency support was provided (top-ups to existing PCAs with NGOs) and resulted in developing new sets of activities with assumptions that they would still be relevant to achieve the objectives of this project. From the programming and flexibility point of view, this could have been good practice, but from the monitoring and evaluation point of view it became more complicated, as it diluted the projects underlying TOC and peace building objectives. Also, the output indicators were not revised to keep them consistent with revised activities.

From the available information provided, the evaluation team understood there were five NGOs supported under this project, for the earthquake for emergency response; CDPS, CDS, CWISH, Ecology, Agriculture and Rural Development Society (ECARDS) and Karuna. Funding was mainly used to top-up existing PCAs. The UNPFN was informed about this and it was agreed that there was no need for a programme re-plan, as the funds would be utilised according to the planned activities.³² The communication to UNPFN states that “due to the earthquake, UNICEF CP has been focusing on providing emergency response to the affected districts, which has delayed the implementation of the regular program. We do not need to re-program the funding to divert to other activities as we are confident we will be able to utilize the funds according to planned”³³. However, the evaluation team questions to what level the funds diverted were utilised as according to the planned activities:

As outlined in the output reporting above, some core activities of this project, especially on the deinstitutionalisation of CAAC and work with the TRC, were cancelled in order to free resources for the earthquake response;

Although the children identified are in need of assistance, they were not CAAC so this cannot be defined as contributing to the peace building objectives of this project;

According to UNICEF, the case management guidelines and its tools were used during post-earthquake response by CCWB and in the district (by District Child Welfare Board) for the documentation of hundreds of cases on separated and rescued children, assessment and referral of children in the most affected 14 districts. The use of some of the guidelines that were produced as part of the project demonstrates how the CP system, when strengthened, can respond to child protection risks/needs in emergency and non-emergency settings. During interviews with two of these NGOs it was confirmed that with this earthquake support from UNICEF, the partners in Lalitpur and Bhaktapur collected data to identify USAVC. For instance, CDS in Bhaktapur provided information of USAVC to DCWB, which then provided the data of the neediest children to NGOs, who were able to support the children. However, the initial interviews with the relevant NGOs, without field visits to these areas, gave the impression that these activities did not really contribute to the strengthening of the CP system, as it mainly concerned data collection and one-off payments, without any follow-up. This perhaps indicates different understanding of what the CP system is and what it can do. The task for UNICEF was to ensure that all partners have a deepened understanding of the child protection system, what it consists of and how it functions. The activities that the NGOs are not

³² UNICEF. 2015. UNPFN: Collation of the Justifications for Project No-Cost Extensions. 25 June 2015

³³ UNICEF.2015. 15 06 23 UNPFN Project NCE justifications collated.docx

taking as part of the CP system are in fact part of the system. It seems that there was some inconsistency in the use of the guidelines mentioned earlier, for instance in Sindhuli, where one NGO was working on this emergency response, the evaluation team confirmed they did not have, and therefore did not use, the case management guidelines, although according to UNICEF, in response to the draft evaluation report: *the tools and procedures for emergency response were the extracts from case management guideline*. This could however not be verified by the evaluation team and no documentation on this was provided.

Most importantly, it was observed that UNICEF lost track of what was, and what was not funded by the UNPFN grant. As explained in detail in chapter 1, even for this evaluation, the team did not get correct information on partners and activities actually funded under this project. For example, the evaluation team was given the names, PCAs and progress reports of four NGOs that were said to have been contracted under this project to directly support CAAC, but, only after the fieldwork, when the financial reporting was looked into in detail, did UNICEF find out that these NGOs were not funded through this grant, but rather under another UNPFN grant. In addition, other partners were found to have been paid under this grant, of which no information was provided to the evaluation team during the inception phase.

Consequently, reporting to UNPFN was also unsatisfactory. The project, for example, seems to have redirected resources to JJCC and a number of municipalities in ad-hoc manner, and there is no evidence of these funded activities in the annual reporting to UNPFN. Furthermore, UNICEF reported to the UNPFN that the project has adapted the gender assessment tool, initially developed and used by the CAAFAG programme. Using the assessment tools, partner agencies have identified gender specific issues among CAAFAG/VMLRs cases, and are currently implementing the response plan developed as per the assessment findings. This reporting to the donor further illustrates the confusion within UNICEF on which activities were actually funded through this grant, as the NGOs that assisted VMLR/CAAFAG were actually not funded under this project.

H. FINDINGS ON VALUE FOR MONEY

This evaluation intended to assess the extent to which the project delivered value for money. It sought to determine if the money was allocated in an appropriate manner, to the right partners, to deliver against the project intended results and if the distribution of spending was in line with the achieved results.

It was only at the final stages of this evaluation that financial reporting was provided (see Annex C). In addition, tool 2 on *expenditure per output*, comparing actual spending per output to the planned budget per output (as presented in the project document) was not filled by UNICEF and yet, this was supposed to be the main tool for the value for money assessment. This made it very difficult to do the assessment on the project's value for money. For example, under several outputs, with intended budget for this output, no activities took place, while UNICEF could not report where this money was diverted to and why.

Another major challenge for the assessment on this project's value for money is the complexity of attributing results, as outlined in the introduction and in the section above. UNICEF's support to

strengthen the CP systems approach is an on-going process, and secondly, stakeholders are not aware of which activities were funded under this specific project.

For example, for funds transferred to CCWB, the complication is that the funding provided was not earmarked for specific activities, and was, in fact, an additional input into ongoing support to CCWB. CCWB, in their annual reporting to UNICEF, did not report per project. For example, this project has contributed to the salaries of CROs. However, during the same periods other UNICEF projects (such as the DFID funded project on GBV), also contributed to the salaries of the same CROs. In addition, other agencies such as World Vision, Save the Children, Terres Des Hommes and Plan International also provided funding to CCWB, into the same basket fund for CRO salaries. Therefore, financial attribution of CRO activities to this project becomes impossible.

This problem was also found in the reporting by NGOs and other partners such as JJCC, as all of them reported to UNICEF on all activities funded by UNICEF and not specifically on activities funded under this grant. When assessing the actual funds transferred under the grant SC130166, it became clear that only a small proportion of the activities and outputs completed by the NGO could be attributed to this project. For example, the ECARDS report³⁴ stated a contribution of USD 122,437 from UNICEF, however; only USD 652³⁵ was transferred to ECARDS under this grant, making the value for money assessment, and the achievements of ECARDS very hard to attribute to this project.

In addition, value for money of the project with regard to the USD 84,246.19³⁶ on post-earthquake activities is extremely difficult to track, because, in Lalipur and Bhaktapur districts, it is found that the partners have again received funds from a multiple partners.

Finally, 42% of the budget was utilised by UNICEF including on staffing that most likely provided the technical support to implementing partners, helped with the development of proposals, conducted trainings on principles and standards on working with CAAC, assistance in developing, reviewing and finalisation of the different guidelines produced under this project as well as for project monitoring and cross sectoral support (15%). While there is evidence that the project manager did provide technical support to the implementing partners, including government, it was not possible for the evaluating team to segregate how much time, and thus money, was spent by UNICEF itself on the activities/outputs, and how much cost went into programme management and administration – the cross-sectoral support. While requested with several reminders, UNICEF did not provide the evaluators with a clear overview on activities paid for by this part of the funding, and neither filled the agreed self-reporting tool on efficiency, reporting expenditure estimates per output.

Further, the team was informed, as confirmed by the overview of DCT payment to the Partners from Grant SC 130166 (see Annex C), that in 2013 and 2015 funding was provided to several municipalities to work on child labour, Urban Out-of-School Programme (UOSP) and WASH. The evaluation team was provided this information at the end of this evaluation and did not have the opportunity to verify

³⁴ ECARDS. 2015. Progress Report - Jul - Sep 2015 - Sindhupalchok

³⁵ UNICEF.2015. DCT from grant SC130166

³⁶ UNICEF. 2015.DCT from grant SC130166

any of these activities. However, WASH and child labour activities are not part of the foreseen activities and intended outputs in the original results matrix.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 CONCLUSIONS ON DESIGN ISSUES

The design of this project foresaw that the resources from the UNPFN grant would be complemented by resources that relevant line ministries and the CCWB would mobilise from the NPTF, in the form of subsequent proposals. Capacity development activities to support project proposal development for submission to the UNPFN were foreseen and provided by UNICEF. This design must be applauded and had it materialised, strong contribution to the outcomes to assist CACC, and through that, to strengthen the CP system and systems approach as a whole, would most likely have been achieved.

However, only one of the four proposals (MoWCSW-CCWB³⁷) received any funding, granted whilst the project was closing. Therefore, the reality became that first the UNICEF project was implemented, and that only after the closure of this project the additional government funded activities started. For some activities, such as the completed guidelines, this is not problematic, but it is unfortunate that this project will not be running parallel in support of the government project. It must, thus, be concluded that the assumption that the relevant stakeholders would obtain funding through the NPTF proved unrealistic, which is the main reason for the under delivery of this project against its intended outputs.

In relation to this, design mistakes were made in the results framework of the UNPFN project, as the delivery of the outputs needed to be within the reach of the project, and cannot be dependent on external resources coming in. Those so-called outputs in this results framework should have been moved to outcome level, to which this project would contribute. As it is often the case with NIM type of projects, there is a mix of outputs that are for UNICEF, such as capacity development of line ministries to draft proposals for the NPRF, and the actual delivery of services of these ministries with their own funding, which are not UNICEF outputs as they are not under UNICEF control. In future, in these case two separate results frameworks are required, one outlining UNICEF's support project and one government results framework.

The evaluation has many challenges in terms of its evaluability, as already extensively outlined in the TOR and this report. Overlapping results and indicators, non-SMART indicators and lack of baseline were design faults which seriously reduced the M&E of this project. Furthermore, the indicators are mostly gender blind and no conflict indicators (DNH) were designed.

3.2 CONCLUSIONS BY CRITERIA

A. CONCLUSIONS ON RELEVANCE

On the question to what extent the project was relevant in addressing the major gaps that exist in the CP system in Nepal, particularly in relation to CAAC and other vulnerable children, it can be concluded that the programme was indeed relevant, especially in its design, as it focused on the

³⁷ MoWCSW-CCWB. 2014. AW Reviewed final MoWCSW-CCWB NPTF Proposal for NPA-CAAC 10 Jan 2014-2

main gaps as identified in the CP system mapping. During implementation, however, some decisions were made to redirect funds to less related interventions, reducing the relevance of the programme.

Concerning the validity and relevance of underlying assumptions and the TOC of the project, it can be concluded that UNICEF made an appropriate shift from direct implementation modalities through NGOs (DIM) to larger government ownership, moving to more national execution modalities (NIM). Overall, stakeholders at central levels, and some at district levels, expressed their appreciation for the project and regarded the project as highly relevant in the context of Nepal. Most of all, the shift from the previous interagency donor driven VMLR programme, which was largely implemented in isolation of the government, to more government-owned and driven programming is applauded. However, the complete exclusion of NGOs in this project might have been too drastic, losing earlier built NGO capacity. One example is in the area of PSS, where government agencies in districts have no capacity in providing PSS, and whatever limited capacity existed remains with civil society, which was not strengthened under this project.

The underlying assumption that the relevant government bodies would attract resources through the NPTF proved unrealistic, and has seriously affected the performance of this project. The underlying TOC that the CP system as a whole would improve through the assistance to CAAC would have been valid if the government agencies were able to attract major resources, which they did not. In reality, therefore, very small numbers of CAAC were reached under this project, and the limited capacity of development activities at district level has not led to major changes in the CP system. However, the guidelines produced could, if rolled out more effectively (including to the district and village levels), contribute to the further strengthening of the CP system.

In addition, the project found itself in between two policies and priorities: on the one hand Nepal is moving to a more development oriented approach, 10 years after the conflict ended, in which targeting and singling out of CAAC became less appropriate; on the other hand, the Government of Nepal is investing in TRC and related reparation, which requires singling out conflict-affected people for their entitlements, including CAAC. The evaluation concludes that, in line with the overall opinion of stakeholders in the districts and villages, focusing on CAAC only, and singling them out, is not appropriate and even harmful. It would have been more appropriate to take a broader approach in selecting children as beneficiaries, by taking into consideration their current social, economic and psycho-social vulnerabilities and protection needs, rather than based on them having been affected by armed conflict.

The project was insufficiently embedded in the district and local contexts, as it was too much policy and Kathmandu level focused, both within government agencies and within UNICEF. Little trickle-down effect was therefore found at the VCPC level, where CAAC are actually living.

Also, while the project and its activities are largely regarded as relevant, as well as the increased collaboration with the CCWC, MoPR and the MoWC, the project was still insufficiently linked to other relevant actors. For example, CAAC chosen for direct support were selected by the DCWCs under this project, while both the DoE and the Cottage and Small Industry Board use the DAOs lists put together by the district and village LPCs to support CAAC. Especially at the district level too many

parallel processes are in place, even for CAAC, and this project did not reduce, and possibly even increased this, by focusing too much on the strengthening of CCWB/DCWBs only.

Related to the above, while the project tried to address the main gaps in the CP system, including moving towards better referral mechanisms and guidelines, the view of this referral system is, however, too small. For example, the DoEs and the Cottage and Small Industry boards have on-going scholarships and programmes to support CAAC. However, no referral to these programmes took place and DCWBs (and thereby VCPCs) were not informed on this.

UNICEF re-directed funds to emergency support. While the activities funded were found to be relevant from a CP systems strengthening point of view, the changes were not adopted in the results framework and, therefore, the project experienced a major deviation in its focus, without providing adequate explanations. This has weakened the project's intended outcomes, especially from a peace building point of view. The same applies for the undocumented decision to support municipalities in issues regarding WASH and child labour, which are neither part of the TOR, nor the results framework.

B. CONCLUSIONS ON EFFECTIVENESS

As reported in the findings section above, the effectiveness in actually achieving the intended outputs and targets show mixed results, and for many outputs, evidence is not available. As was already indicated in the TOR of this evaluation, data was not systematically available and, therefore, the evaluation method included the design of three tools for UNICEF self-reporting, which were then to be verified by the evaluators. In the inception report the filling of this information was even put as a precondition: "Strong commitment and time investment by UNICEF staff to present information in consolidated manner (tool 1,2,3 and uploading of all relevant documentation) is a precondition for the successful completion of this evaluation".³⁸ The self-reporting on the tools by UNICEF (see Annex B), was extremely slow, it took over 6 weeks, and went on even after the data-collection (and thus verification) period. In the end only 2 of the 3 tools were filled. From the information gathered it became clear that there was no consolidated output monitoring information collected, which is an indication of ineffective monitoring.

In analysing the reasons for under delivery, the following observations are made:

- The evaluation team acknowledges external constraints or factors impacting the delivery of this project, including the earthquake in April 2015, fuel crisis and political protests in Terai;
- Furthermore, as noted in the PBF annual report³⁹, "utilisation rate of funds disbursed to government agencies, through the government red book system, is slow due to lack of human resources in the concerned government agencies, both at national and district level". The report also states "in addition, high turnover of the high-level government officials responsible for Child Protection and prioritisation of the Constitution making process over any other legal reform initiative has further delayed policy level decision-making process

³⁸ TI. 2015. Revised_Final Inception Report_UNICEF_CAAC_TI

³⁹ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). 2015. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2015

related to the child protection”⁴⁰;

- Additionally, while the design of the project largely relied on approval of funds by the NPTF, no resources were obtained by the relevant government agencies – although one of the four submitted proposals was awarded funding in September 2015, at the project’s closure. The PBF annual report⁴¹ noted, “due to limited (regular) resources available for implementation of NPA-CAAC, MWCSW/CCWB, MoE, and MoI have developed and submitted project proposal to Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) in order to mobilize resource for implementation of NPA-CAAC. The proposals, have, however, been put on hold as NPTF is currently developing a new strategy to identify priority areas to be considered during NPTF second phase”⁴²;
- Also, under-delivery on some of the intended outputs and targets was further caused by management decisions to redirect funds to municipalities and the earthquake response, unaccompanied by a results framework revision and proper documentation of the reasons behind these decisions;
- Finally, some outputs, such as on livelihoods, could have had higher delivery rates if project management could have been more creative to refer CAAC to existing services, such as the UNDP project in support of the Cottage and small Industry Board. Similarly, referral to DoEs on CAAC scholarships, and scholarships to PWDs would have increased the effectiveness of this project.

The major output of the project was the development of the three guidelines on NPA-CAAC, case management, and alternative care. Stakeholders and partners (both government and non-government) confirmed that they participated in consultation meetings that were held in the process of developing the three guidelines. Also, the project development with CCWB on CAAC, which now received funding from the NPTF, is a significant achievement. This needs to be cascaded to the districts, sub-districts, villages and communities where children and families are, and where implementation of projects on CP and child rights takes place. The evaluation confirms, thereby, the contribution this project made to raising awareness and promoting national level policy development on CAAC. However, in the field there is very little evidence found to demonstrate if, and how, the guidelines have been implemented or adopted by all levels of stakeholders.

C. CONCLUSIONS ON SUSTAINABILITY

The project allowed the government and other stakeholders to demonstrate high levels of ownership of supported interventions and processes. However, representatives of government agencies in the districts visited (DEO, DWCO, DCWB, DPHO, LPC, and DCSI) and NGOs mentioned that the lack of coordination between government agencies and NGOs is still one of the major gaps in the existing CP system. In this, at district level, no evidence could be found that this project has caused significant change to this major gap in the CP system. The biggest gap was, and remains, that there are only ad-hoc, and no formalised, referral mechanisms in place for children in need of special care.

⁴⁰ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). 2015. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2015

⁴¹ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). 2014. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2014

⁴² Ibid.

As expressed by multiple stakeholders, strengthening of CCWB alone has further separated the agency from its partner line-ministries and reduced their coordination focus. Empire building of CCWB, jealousy and competition over resources (with line-ministries) have increased, while CCWB and related DCWBs and VCWBs are not implementation, but only coordination mechanism. The successful attraction of funding from the NPTF of CCWB, with the assistance of UNICEF, is likely to further strengthen the agency's position. According to the evaluation team, based on wide consultations, UNICEF should have spread resources, not only in support of coordination, but also in the actual building up of service delivery from the relevant line ministries and their departments. All stakeholders in the districts consulted highlight that it is not the coordination but the absence of referral services that is the biggest problem. The exceptions to this are the investments made to the police (Women and Child Service Centres) and the JJCC.

On a positive note, the project, by contributing to the salaries of CROs, has contributed to the initiation of more VCPCs which are a very important component of the child protection system. These structures were established by CROs and further supported by other CP agencies. In the two districts visited it was confirmed that these VCPCs now receive 10% of the budget of the VDCs. This is a major achievement in terms of sustainability, as initially VCPCs were regarded as 'donor driven structures'. However, more work is required to ensure effective referral from VCPCs to other relevant district level line ministries' services, and not only to DCWB.

The project could have focused more on developing local service capacity, at the district level, and especially at community level. Coordination is crucial but so is also building up the actual referral services. The support to the police and JJCC are good examples of building up child friendly service delivery to agencies that have specific implementation mandates. A negative example is in the area of PSS, one of the important areas where local capacity is crucially needed to strengthen the CP system. The project did not contribute to developing capacity in terms of providing psycho-social support to vulnerable children including CAAC. The DPHO in Surkhet confirmed that there is no capacity with the government in the district to provide PSS, and similar opinions were expressed by the DHO in Sindhuli. According to most stakeholders consulted, including TPO and other NGOs, the police and CROs, PSS capacity has actually decreased in the past two years and this project did not continue its previous support, through TPO, to strengthen this services. PSS strengthening is required at relevant ministry levels, especially the MoH. This project did not invest in this, and so previous UNICEF supported capacities are fading away.

Overall, whilst small pockets of change can be observed, which can partly be attributed to this project, overall the project's funding has been too small and spread too scattered (75 districts and many different areas of intervention) to bring any significant change in addressing the complex and big gaps in the CP system in the 75 districts and related villages and municipalities.

Finally, on the question if the project has an effective exit strategy, it must be noted that this is not the case, but possibly also less relevant, because the UNPFN's grant was mainly used as an input into continuous support to strengthening the CP system in Nepal, which will continue from other sources.

D. CONCLUSIONS ON INCLUSIVENESS AND PARTICIPATION

As the project actually delivered little to the CAAC themselves, it has not been possible to detect any space or measures to ensure that CAAC's right to participation, especially in terms of having their voices heard on this project. However, in the set-up of the new VCPCs child representatives were found, but these were not CAAC.

The project started off with a broad range of stakeholders at Kathmandu level, including during the project's review process and the participatory nature of the drafting of the guidelines. The mapping of CAAC in 20 districts was equally done in a participatory manner. However, in the second part of this project, the participatory nature got lost, with several stakeholders disengaging completely. This is most likely partly caused by the departure of the project manager and consequent lack of support and monitoring.

E. CONCLUSIONS ON GENDER RESPONSIVENESS

Due to the limited opportunity to verify activities on the ground actually funded by this project, the evaluating team was unable to fully determine how gender responsive this programme had been and, therefore, cannot answer the question if there were any gender transformative results achieved through the project. However, as presented in the findings, there are several indications that the project partners did implement the project in a gender sensitive and responsive fashion. However, no explicit reporting on gender results and no gender training (while planned for) took place. The support to the Police Women and Child Service Centres is likely to strengthen gender responsive support, as is the work in the pilot districts on the case management guidelines, but the evaluation team had no means to verify this on the ground.

F. CONCLUSIONS ON CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

The way the project singled out CAAC in communities after 10 years of armed conflict, is regarded by many stakeholders as problematic and not very conflict sensitive, as it creates division among the children. Children's past associations with armed conflict, and the identity of CAAC and VMLR carries stigma in Nepali society. In this context, exclusively focusing on CAAC reinforces both social stigma and social division.

Conflict sensitivity should not just be a one off activity, but it should be taken as an approach to development that proves beneficial to avoid potential harm of any intervention in a socially and economically divided society like Nepal. Adopting this approach in CP system requires several rounds of capacity building and trainings in all elements of the CP system, coupled with regular follow ups, which were lacking mainly at the district level in the last two years.

The project did not do any conflict analyses, nor did it develop any DNH indicators, and, thus, did not monitor the impact of the project's activities on conflict dynamics. There is equally no evidence that the project worked to reduce identified dividers and to strengthen connectors.

Finally, it must be concluded that by strengthening the CCWB only, the project contributed to jealousy and competition among actors, leading to disengagement of key actors in the CP system.

G. CONCLUSIONS ON MANAGEMENT AND FLEXIBILITY

The biggest problem of this project is the manner in which this project was managed. Indeed in conversations with UNICEF the project is referred to as a *grant*. Attribution of results and change are nearly impossible to establish as UNICEF used the UNPFN grant of 1.5 million to largely support its on-going efforts to strengthen the CP systems approach. Capacity development is an on-going process, stakeholders are not aware of the exact activities that took place under this specific project, and several other agencies have supported the same actors, outputs and outcomes. Where possible, the evaluation team tried to research (in the project documentation and in stakeholder consultations), which activities, or which % of the activities, were actually funded through this project, but this proved extremely difficult and in some cases, such as with CCWB who received funding from different UNICEF project grants in the same period, impossible.

The above, combined with a weak results framework, lack of baseline and SMART indicators, the (undocumented) redirection of funds to activities not reflected in the results framework, the weak monitoring and the lack of availability of reliable, disaggregated data sources leads to the conclusion that the management of this project was generally weak. Up until the very end of drafting this report, new PCAs were uploaded and confusion on what was, and what was, not paid for by this grant continued.

H. CONCLUSIONS ON VALUE FOR MONEY

Overall, it has proven impossible to establish if this project has delivered value for money, or to assess the efficiency of the use of UNPFN funding. The major challenge for an assessment on this project's value for money is that the attribution of results and change to this project is complex, as outlined in the introduction and in the section above. UNICEF's support to strengthen the CP protection systems approach and capacity is an on-going process, and in addition, stakeholders are not aware of the exact activities that were funded under this specific project.

Furthermore, it was only at the final stages of this evaluation that financial reporting was provided (see Annex C). In addition, tool 2 on *expenditure per output*, comparing actual spending per output to the planned budget per output (as presented in the project document) was not be filled by UNICEF, and yet this was supposed to be the main tool for the value for money assessment.

3.3 CONCLUSION ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUTCOMES AND THEORY OF CHANGE

This section is summarising the conclusions on the extent to which this project has contributed to the outcomes, as presented in the results framework.

UNPBF result:

Youth, women and other marginalised members of conflict- affected communities act as catalyst to promote the peace process and early economic recovery.

Indicator:

Sustainable livelihood opportunities for conflict affected children in conflict affected communities.

The intended livelihood support has not happened under this project, despite the solid expertise of the district Cottage and Small Scale Industry boards, which have on-going activities for conflict-affected people, including youth, based on solid market assessment, 3 months vocational training, tools provision against 50% discount, group and individual business set-up, training and business plan development, and the crucial follow up by qualified business advisors. Also, in terms of funding, the above package is high value for money, costing only 130 USD per person, and a more elaborated package of 230 USD is available through the UNDP programme. While it was explained by UNICEF that nothing has happened in this area due to the failure of the board to raise resources from the NPTF, through referral, and even at no costs, CAAC and mothers of CAAC could have been referred to the Board who have the same target group, and which is heavily supported by UNDP. This is a real missed opportunity of this project, which could have worked on establishing referral mechanism between WDOs, CROs and the district Cottage and Small Scale Industry boards.

Therefore, it must be concluded that the project made no significant contribution to this outcome. The main reason is that the assumption was that the Cottage and Small Industry Board would get the expected funding from the NPTF, which did not materialise. Furthermore, the project missed opportunities to refer CAAC to existing livelihood programmes, and planned activities, such as labour market trainings, did not happen.

UNPFN strategic outcome:

Children affected by armed conflict are effectively rehabilitated and reintegrated into communities in line with the National Plan of Action on Children Affected by Armed Conflict.

Project peace-building impact:

Relevant government agencies provide reintegration services to children affected by conflict, through existing government mechanism, ensuring peace dividends to affected children.

Project peace building Impact Indicator(s):

a. Process, procedures and NPA-CAAC implementation guideline developed and approved and implemented by relevant ministries.

Awareness on, and approved guidelines for, the implementation of the NPA-CAAC were successfully achieved and can be fully attributed to the project (this indicator would have benefitted from stating that the guidelines are being used, which they are not, as they are not distributed to the field).

b. Verified Minors, included as beneficiary group in the NPA-CAAC implementation guideline, to ensure their access to reintegration services through NPA-CAAC implementation.

The VMLR are included in the NPA-CAAC guidelines and, therefore, their access to CAAC-specific benefits and support in the future is ensured, which can be fully attributed to this project.

c. Children affected by armed conflict are reintegrated through the government established identification, reporting and reintegration mechanism.

The project reached very few CAAC and, therefore, the contribution to the actual reintegration of CAAC is extremely limited. According to the PBF report Jan – Dec 2015⁴³, 37 CAAC received emergency support, which includes immediate health and psychosocial support, education and small scale family income generating support. Out of the 37 children supported, 22 CAAC were rescued by Central Child Welfare Board from a child care home in Kathmandu that was damaged by the earthquake (baseline data identified 14,114 from 20 districts).⁴⁴ However, it must be noted that the progress reports from the partners to UNICEF do not disaggregate their data by CAAC, meaning the evaluating team could not quantify these numbers.

The main reasons for this low delivery are the redirection of funds to non-CAAC activities (and therefore no delivery on the intended output to deinstitutionalize CAAC) and the failure to attract funding from the NPTF to actually provide support. Furthermore, some activities, such as the Police Peace Angels project, the NGO emergency support and the JJCC have not, and were not asked to, segregate CAAC among their beneficiaries. Therefore, it is impossible to measure the number of CAAC actually reached by this project.

Project level outcome 1: Government and non-governmental agencies to provide holistic socio-reintegration support to children affected by conflict.

Indicators:

a. NPA implementation guideline and reintegration packages endorsed by government meet international standards and guideline.

NPA guidelines are produced. The evaluation could not verify if these guidelines are in line with international standards as the guidelines are only produced in Nepali. The evaluation found no evidence that reintegration packages are endorsed by the Nepal Government.

b. Relevant ministries and their district line agencies (MWCSW, CCWB, MoE, MoI, and MoPR) have developed programmes and mobilised resources plan to provide reintegration services to CAACs.

⁴³ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). 2015. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2015

⁴⁴ Ibid.

While several attempts were made, finally, only the CCWB recently got approval for a CAAC programme of Rs. 99,955,500. While very positive, the timing is disappointing as the rationale of this project was to accompany government agencies in their implementation, which now cannot take place (under this project). Furthermore, the evaluation highlights that the required interagency programming is getting lost and that CCWB should really be encouraged to implement livelihood activities through district Cottage and Small Scale Industry boards, and the education support through the DoEs.

Project level outcome 2: Government and non-government agencies respond to protection concerns of children affected by conflict through the child protection systems approach, providing dividends to the community as a whole.

Indicators:

a. Government developed and implemented standardised tools for identification, reporting, rescue and reintegration of CAAC through standardised process/tools, establishing a common case management system for other forms of vulnerable children too.

A major achievement has been the development of the NPA-CAAC guidelines, the contribution of the project to finalise the case management guidelines, the contribution of the project to the salaries of CROs, and the piloting of the case management guidelines. The weaker point is that the guidelines are insufficiently disseminated and, therefore, not used (yet) on the ground. According to the PBF report Jan – Dec 2015⁴⁵, “Workflow and guidelines for process/procedures for identification and referral of cases (case management guidelines), developed in 2013, were printed and disseminated in all 75 districts.”⁴⁶ However, the distribution has only been done to a limited scope of CP actors, mainly the CROs.

The project made contributions to strengthen the Central and District Child Welfare Boards, and the evaluation found evidence of a trickle down effect, where, during the project period, more VCPCs were set-up and functioning. The DCWB is regarded as inclusive and has broad participation of relevant line-ministries and the police. CROs are definitely playing a key role, and those consulted in the two districts visited were highly motivated. Attribution of these positive dynamics cannot be attributed to this project, as building this system has been part of all UNICEF’s programmes over the past years, but the evaluation found that also this project contributed to this. The same applies for the activities funded for the police and the JJCC.

While at the central and district level the above-mentioned increase in capacities have been observed, and identified as a positive outcome by the stakeholders themselves, the project did very little at the village/municipality level. While some new VCPCs are set up, no evidence was found that they were trained or supported, or that they are in the possession of any written guidelines.

The project made significant contribution with the comprehensive identification of CAAC in 20 districts. However, the LPCs already have lists of CAAC that are used by the DDO. Overlap and non-confirmative identification can be observed. This is one example how the project did build capacities

⁴⁵ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). 2015. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2015

⁴⁶ Ibid.

of the CCWB and its field structures, but was insufficiently aligned to other government actors, equally important in the CP system. Another sign of this is that CROs are not aware, and are therefore not referring, CAAC to existing government programmes for them.

Several interventions, such as the JJCC trainings, the police support and others will be of benefit to all children of the communities, in those districts where these activities were implemented.

b. Districts in the country have a functioning referral mechanism and a comprehensive CP database system for documentation, analysis and reporting of information related to CAAC and all forms of protection cases.

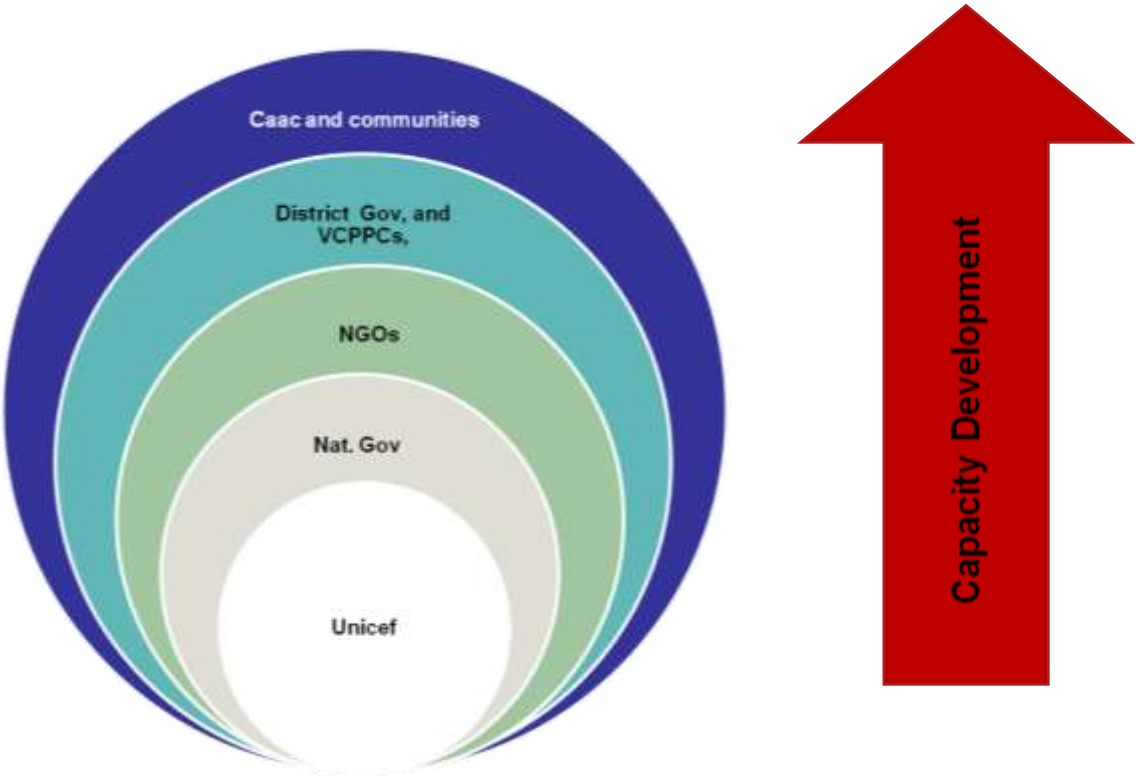
The database has not been created which is a major disappointment of this project. The DCWDs are the appropriate actor in the CP system to host and maintain the database but no evidence has been found that work on the creation and instalment of such a database has started. All stakeholders consulted at district level complained about the lack of systematic sharing of information among the line ministries. Future programmes should prioritise this.

Conclusions on Theory of Change

While this project did not develop an explicit TOC, the evaluator has summarised (presented and adapted in the inception phase) the main TOC of this project as follows:

If process, procedures and NPA-CAAC implementation guidelines are developed and implemented by relevant ministries and other CP actors, then socio-reintegration support to CAAC will be more holistic.

If the reintegration services provided effectively by the government and nongovernment organisations to CAAC, **then** this leads to strengthened CP system to prevent and respond to risks of all children in the communities.



The conclusions on this TOC, based on the information available, are that only the initial steps are completed. The NPA-CAAC guidelines are indeed successfully developed by this project, but not yet distributed and implemented, other processes and procedures are outlined in the case-management guidelines, but only piloted in 10 locations. Furthermore, as there has been hardly any reintegration services delivered by the government and nongovernment organisations to CAAC reintegration by this project, it cannot be assumed that this has strengthened the CP system to prevent and respond to risks of all children in the communities. While initial steps have been made, this TOC can only be verified once the actual service delivery will start to take place.

4. KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Lesson 1: Evaluation of un-earmarked funding support

This evaluation was designed in line with the UNEG guidelines, and reviewed and examined by an external agency, which cannot be applied to this type of un-earmarked funding mechanism. More flexible financial support to government requires more flexible evaluation methods and principles.

Recommendation 1:

As discussed with UNICEF, for future programmes and related evaluations this method of continuous non-earmarked programming and financial support in NIM implementation modalities requires a new and agreed monitoring and evaluation approach (agreed between sections and the M&E unit, and the relevant donors).

Alternatively, government agencies should receive earmarked funding and report back to them, based on an agreed results framework, as is done by UNDP in Nepal. Also, Save the Children requests project based reporting back from CCWB, which they do. According to CCWB there is no problem to do the same for UNICEF, if requested.

Lesson 2: Better results framework and M&E

Evaluations need to be well prepared and require senior management engagement and quality control of the information provided to the evaluation team. Consolidated reporting on targets reached with documentation should be provided to the evaluation team and should be collected, and systematically documented throughout the project period.

Recommendation 2:

In future, UNICEF should ensure the development of a solid M&E framework, with SMART indicators, realistic targets and solid baseline. Consolidated monitoring against the results framework should be ensured by UNICEF, and discussed with all stakeholders. Review processes need to be participatory and transparent and redirection of funds should be discussed and well documented. DNH indicators should be added, as well as specific gender indicators.

Lesson 3: Need for more and better referral services

While this project invested heavily in improving coordination and referral mechanisms, there are actually too little services available to refer to, and some but too little investments were made into improving quantity of services. All local stakeholders highlighted not so much the coordination as problematic, but the actual referral opportunities. For example, the project's support to the JJCC is an example of an investment made leading to better legal services to children. One (among others) outstanding needs is PSS. While serious investments have been made in developing the PSS capacities over the past seven years, little lasting capacity can be found at district and village/municipality levels. PSS remains in the hands of TPO, a strong national NGO, but it is fully dependent on donor funding. On the ground, few or no counsellors are available.

Recommendation 3:

CP systems strengthening in Nepal, and in many other post-conflict settings, will benefit most from investments in more and better services for children. UNICEF is advised to assist in building-up, for example, PSS capacity, either within the DHOs or the WCOs. Developing PSS capacities within line ministries might lead to higher sustainability. Furthermore, services need to become available at the village level. According to TPO the previous CPSWs could be upgraded to counsellor level (six month training) to become real certified counsellors. The DoH or WCO could have, in addition to their core staff, a roster of these counsellors, which all actors in the CP system could draw upon. In addition, advocacy at national level is required to have one dedicated PSS counsellor and coordinator at district level. Other referral services equally need attention, such as youth detention centres, as the police is fully aware about the standards and guidelines, but have nowhere to refer children to while waiting for trial. Two cases were found where children actually slept in the room with the police officers.

Lesson 4: Dissemination of the guidelines to local levels

While one of the successes of this project was the development of the three sets of guidelines, the dissemination has not taken place across the board, including in villages and municipalities. This is greatly needed, for it is only when the guidelines are known, and used by all actors in the CP system, that their outcomes and impact on the functioning of the CP systems approach can be seen and measured. More importantly, this is when the guidelines will effectively contribute to the wellbeing of children as their protection and rights will have been enhanced.

Recommendation 4:

There is a need here to develop implementation plans for these guidelines, which will outline how to disseminate these guidelines, including training on their use to the relevant agencies and organisations that actually work with the children, at district and village/municipality level. This requires resources and commitment.

Lesson 5: A broader multi-sector approach and referral system

UNICEF report in 2014 that three key ministries have developed project proposals and submitted them to the NPFN for resource mobilisation, and that to advocate for sectorial budget commitment the project has been facilitating dialogue between the Nepalese Government and NPFN. Subsequently, the government has formed an inter-ministerial team to respond to the issues raised and to expedite NPA-CAAC implementation.⁴⁷ However, the inter-ministerial set-up was partly lost during the project period, with the only project which attracted funding being a CCCWB project, in which education and livelihood activities are also foreseen. One crucial lesson learned is that multi-sectoral approaches require extensive and on-going support to all actors, to ensure the different agencies start, but also continue, to work together.

A broader notion of the CP system and broader referral is also required. For example, providing CAAC under-18s with education support is irrelevant because their names are on the list to be included in

⁴⁷ Peace building Fund (PBF). 2014. Annual Project Progress Report, Nepal, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 2014

the years old government programme of scholarships to CAAC, under 18. The complete lack of coordination of NGO with the DEOs, as confirmed in two of the three locations where NGOs operated under this project, is a further sign that this project was insufficiently embedded in the existing government structures, and provided services that were thereby irrelevant. Similarly, as in the past, the results of handout oriented IGAs are likely to be low. It is confirmed, that at district level, if CAAC could be referred to the Cottage and Small Scale Promotion Board, they could even top-up the amount DCWB has for CAAC, as they have the same target beneficiaries, with CAAC above 16, and women being the main target.

On a similar note, unless PSS will be embedded in government line ministries, PSS capacities remain donor dependent and as this project has not invested in this, the previous capacities have indeed weakened instead of strengthened. The MoH should remain a key partner in CP systems strengthening.

Finally, the CCWB should work closely with the LPC in the identification of CAAC as this organisation is mandated for data-collection on conflict-affected people and have solid data, which is even published. Other government agencies, such as the MoE and Small Cottage and Industry Board are provided with data from the LPC.

Recommendation 5:

Enlarge the stakeholders to work towards a truly multi-sectoral CP systems approach, which should include at district levels actual referral to line-ministries that have the core mandates to provide certain services. CCWB and DCWB should be strengthened only in their coordination role, referring children to the WCO, DEO, Small Cottage and Industry Board etc. The services of these line-ministries should be strengthened and they should be trained on child friendly service delivery.

In future, livelihood and economic strengthening of adolescents and families is best done through the district level Cottage and Small Industry Boards (of MOI). They have a good and solid model, expertise and business development counsellors available. They deliver much better business start-up packages than the NGOs so far, and are higher value for money. Furthermore, they are strongly supported by UNDP and therefore need little oversight from UNICEF.

It is recommended to make the district LPCs part of the DCWBs. They are elected members, representing all political parties, and are mandated to collect and monitor all data on CAAC. They will make DCWBs more inclusive, and can flag potential overlap as they provide, for example, the list of verified CAAC (and youth) to the MoE for the CAAC scholarship project. Similarly, they refer CAAC and youth to the district level Cottage and Small Industry Boards for vocational training and business start-up (UNDP funded).

4.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP

A follow-up evaluation should be undertaken nine months from now to update the outcomes of this project, when the UNPFN project of CCWB and partners is well on its way. This is crucial because, as outlined above, the project has overlapping outputs with the government project, which is only

starting now. In addition, the follow-up evaluation could then also serve as a mid-term evaluation of the CCWB/CAAC project. The next evaluation should be better prepared for, and better resourced, than this one.

UNICEF is advised to organise a broad stakeholder workshop discussing the pertinent outcomes of this evaluation. This is particularly relevant as CCWB received funding to further support the same outcomes, and because UNICEF, through other sources, is also continuing supporting CP systems strengthening.

UNICEF is furthermore advised to design and implement a follow-up project to run in parallel with the CCWB/CAAC project, as was originally foreseen. The project should include the following priorities:

- Develop CP capacities at village/municipality levels through training and provision of written materials. This could include a summary handbook with all relevant guidelines, as local actors have no documentation available and the number of guidelines causes confusion;
- Disseminate the three guidelines produced under this project, with training for a broad range of actors at the district level, as this will help in the use/application of the guidelines;
- Through TPO and with the MoH invest in building sustainable PSS capacities; especially at counsellor level so that PSS can become part of the referral system;
- Develop a CP system database for case management, possibly best hosted in the WCOs (for sustainability purpose) and extensive training of all relevant district level actors on format and provision of data including with DCWB, WCO, LPC, MoE, MoH, Small Cottage and Industry board, DDO, VDC, CFLGs etc.;
- Advocacy for, and monitoring off, supporting CAAC in at least the one-plus-one modus.

ANNEXES

See separate document

ANNEX A.	METHODOLOGY
ANNEX B.	EVALUATION TOOLS
ANNEX C.	UNICEF FINANCIAL REPORTING TO UNPFN
ANNEX D.	CONSENT FORM
ANNEX E.	PROJECT'S RESULTS FRAMEWORK
ANNEX F.	EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE
ANNEX G.	SOURCES
