



UNICEF, UNFPA and UNODC JOINT PROGRAMME

'INVESTING IN A RESILIENT FUTURE OF KARAKALPAKSTAN BY IMPROVING HEALTH, NUTRITION, WATER, SANITATION, HYGIENE AND WELL-BEING OF ADOLESCENTS AND BY HARNESSING THE TALENTS OF YOUTH DURING AND AFTER COVID-19'

MPTF office generic annual programme narrative progress report

Reporting period: 1 January – 31 December 2022



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OF KARAKALPAKSTAN BY IMPROVING
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MPTF OFFICE GENERIC ANNUAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2022

Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results ²
<p>Programme Title: Investing in a resilient future of Karakalpakstan by improving health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and wellbeing of adolescents and by harnessing the talents of youth during and after COVID-19</p> <p>Programme Number (if applicable) MPTF Office Project Reference Number³: 00125228</p>	<p>Country/Region: Uzbekistan/Karakalpakstan</p> <p>Priority area/ strategic results: UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (2021-2025):</p> <p>Outcome 1. By 2025 all people and groups in Uzbekistan, especially the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from enhanced accountable, transparent, inclusive and gender responsive governance systems and rule of law institutions for a life free from discrimination and violence.</p> <p>Outcome 3. By 2025, youth, women and vulnerable groups benefit from improved access to livelihoods, decent work and expanded opportunities generated by inclusive and equitable economic growth.</p> <p>Outcome 4. By 2025, the most vulnerable benefit from enhanced access to gender-sensitive quality health, education and social services.</p> <p>Outcome 5. By 2025, the most at-risk regions and communities of Uzbekistan are more resilient to climate change and disasters, and benefit from increasingly sustainable and gender-sensitive efficient management of natural resources and infrastructure, robust climate action, inclusive environmental governance and protection.</p>
Participating Organizations	Implementing Partners
<p>Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNODC</p>	<p>National counterparts (government, private, NGOs & others) and other International Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan The Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan The Youth Affairs Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan
Programme/Project Cost (US \$)	Programme Duration
<p>Total approved budget as per project document: MPTF / JP Contribution⁴:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by agency (if applicable) UNICEF: UNFPA: UNODC: 	<p>Overall Duration</p> <p>Start Date⁵</p> <p>Original End Date⁶</p> <p>Current End Date⁷</p>
<p>Agency Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF in kind contribution <p>Government Contribution</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors)</p>	<p>Programme Assessment/Review/ Mid-Term Evaluation</p> <p>Assessment/Review - if applicable please attach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p> <p>Mid-Term Evaluation – if applicable please attach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p>
TOTAL:	
Report Submitted By	
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- The term "programme" is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.
- Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;
- The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as the "Project ID" on the project's factsheet page on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY \(https://mptf.undp.org/\)](https://mptf.undp.org/)
- The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY \(https://mptf.undp.org/\)](https://mptf.undp.org/)
- The start date is the date of the first transfer of funds from the MPTF Office as the Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY \(https://mptf.undp.org/\)](https://mptf.undp.org/)
- As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.
- If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BLS	Basic life skills
GoU	Government of Uzbekistan
HCF	Health Care Facilities
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLS	Healthy Lifestyle
IICAS	International Innovation Center for the Aral Sea under the President of Uzbekistan
IoT	Internet of Good Things
IPC	Infection Prevention and Control
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCH	Maternal and child health
MoH	Ministry of Health
MPSE	Ministry of Preschool and School Education
MPHSTF	Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea region in Uzbekistan
OB/GYN	Obstetrics and Gynecology
PD	Presidential Decree
PHC	Primary Health Care
RoK	Republic of Karakalpakstan
RoU	Republic of Uzbekistan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SWASH	School water, sanitation and hygiene
TMA	Tashkent Medical Academy
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WASH	Water, sanitary and hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report summarises the key achievements of the Joint Programme 'Investing in a resilient future of Karakalpakstan by improving health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and wellbeing of adolescents and by harnessing the talents of youth during and after COVID-19', achieved throughout 2022. Implemented since December 2020 with a focus on the target districts of Muynak, Kungrad and Bozatau, this Joint Programme has sought to achieve interrelated objectives of strengthening the health and nutrition of adolescents, improving access to and quality of health care facilities, and empowering young people to be productive citizens and positive agents of change in both their communities and the broader region. The Programme works to assist the most vulnerable children, adolescents and young people within the three targeted districts.

This Programme has been implemented by joining the efforts of UNICEF, UNFPA and UNODC. Key national partners include the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Preschool and School Education, the International Innovation Center for the Aral Sea under the President of Uzbekistan, and the Agency for Innovative Development under the Ministry of Digital Technologies of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan. The following report details the positive impacts that the Joint Programme achieved in 2022. Additionally, it elaborates on the challenges faced during the project's implementation over the past year, best practices applied, and key lessons learned. Some of the project's major accomplishments to date include the following:

- - Over 700 teachers (100 per cent of target) and 27,000 school-aged children (100 per cent of target) benefited from a healthy and enabling education environment at 15 schools, receiving access to WASH services, which help them to apply healthy hygiene and sanitation practices, and thereby reduce water-borne and intestinal infections.
- - 131,000 adolescent girls aged 10-17 in all districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan received iron and folic acid supplementation (100 per cent coverage), which prevents anaemia amongst adolescent girls. Two rounds of a deworming campaign were organized covering 40,000 school children in five districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, which reduced the incidence rate of intestinal helminthiasis among children from 12.6 per cent to 1.7 per cent.
- - 1,076 school teachers, 832 parents, 1,050 school children and 123 community volunteers enhanced their capacity on health topics, including WASH, nutrition, reproductive health, healthy lifestyles, HIV and STI prevention, while in particular the 'Family UNited' programme worked with 1,600 families to enhance their basic life and family skills. School psychologists in all districts of Karakalpakstan have increased their capacities, and received teaching and learning materials, as needed to equip adolescents with socio-emotional skills so they can be more

resilient and effectively manage adverse life circumstances and events.

- 30,000 active users have been reached with local content on health topics developed for school children under the 'IoGT' (Internet of Good Things) platform. The website was launched on 28 September 2022.
- 90 young people aged 15-24 years old were equipped with social and entrepreneurship skills through the UPSHIFT programme. Eleven youth-led projects received mentoring and seed funding, and six youth-led projects have already been successfully launched and started bringing income to their founders.
- 10,000 health care workers and 130,000 people received access to improved WASH services, which have enhanced the overall health service delivery conditions in 20 health care facilities. By improving WASH services at these facilities, and enhancing health care waste management at three district hospitals, alongside establishing telecommunication and telemedicine services, the Programme raised the population's satisfaction with health care services from 41 per cent to 70 per cent. Likewise the referral rate to health care facilities increased to 20 per cent.
- 659 health care workers (621 women) improved their capacity on WASH in Health Care Facilities and Infection Prevention and Control topics. 99 doctors (76 women) and 370 visiting nurses enhanced

their knowledge of child health and home visiting topics, through 9 distance learning courses. The Knowledge Hub has been launched for the online education of health professionals.

- All 28 health care facilities have telecommunication equipment, binocular microscopes, and laboratory supplies. Three types of telemedicine equipment have been delivered and installed for two republic and three district hospitals, which created opportunities for local health professionals to conduct teleconsultations with specialists from regional medical centers.

The Joint Programme reached key milestones through 2022. UNICEF completed construction of WASH infrastructure at 15 schools and 20 health care facilities, and developed WASH Sustainability Plans at 20 health care facilities. The Joint Programme provided deworming medication and micronutrient supplementation to 40,000 children aged 7-14, and to 131,000 adolescent girls aged 10-17, respectively. The IoGT platform was launched, providing access to evidence-based knowledge on health and social topics for over 30,000 users. UNFPA trained 5,658 teachers and 123 volunteers on teaching on the topics of healthy lifestyles, reproductive health and related matters - all information was disseminated to 9,205 adolescents. Likewise, UNFPA developed and translated knowledge materials and programmes on peer education, making these available to schoolteachers, students and parents.

I. PURPOSE

The Government of Uzbekistan (GoU) has been improving adolescent/youth health in regions affected by environmental concerns, including Karakalpakstan, by addressing the population's immediate social and health security issues.

The overall goal of the Joint Programme (JP) is to address the immediate needs of vulnerable populations, including adolescents, in terms of safe and clean schools and health care facilities, and other health and nutrition needs, and to strengthen human capital and youth resilience through expanding opportunities for social innovation skills development in three districts (Muynak, Kungrad and Bozatau). The implementing UN agencies are taking a gender-sensitive, integrated and complementary approach, intended to cover multiple health and social security dimensions of adolescents and youth in target districts.

The Programme interventions contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (2021-

2025) **Outcome 3**, and to the **SDGs 1 (End Poverty)**, **3 (Good Health and Wellbeing)**, **4 (Quality Education)** and **6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)**. This has been achieved through enhancing the capacity of health care and education professionals and equipping health facilities with medical and telemedicine equipment, conducting micro-nutrient supplementation programs, and improving WASH facilities at schools and health care facilities.

The expected outcomes of this Joint Programme include safe and clean schools and health facilities, improved accessibility and quality of health care systems in rural areas (through introducing telecommunication and telemedicine), promotion of gender-sensitive and inclusive healthy lifestyles, enhanced socio-emotional skills, and better human security of the Aral Sea region, with a particular emphasis on adolescents and youth. These outcomes align with the MPHSTF Results Framework **Outcome 4: Overall health of the local population is improved, and healthy lifestyle is promoted.**

II. RESULTS

i) NARRATIVE REPORTING ON RESULTS

OUTCOME 1. By 2022 adolescents (boys and girls) in three districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, especially those most vulnerable, have improved health and nutrition status

The Programme improved the health and nutrition of adolescents by constructing WASH facilities in 15 selected schools of three target districts (100 per cent of target). Iron and folic acid supplementation covered 131,000 adolescent girls in all districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan (100 per cent coverage).

The Programme reduced the incidence rate of intestinal helminthiasis among children from 12.6 per cent to 1.7 per cent, through two rounds of a deworming campaign which covered 40,000 school children in five districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Moreover, over 1,076 schoolteachers, 832 parents and 1,050 school children from all 82 schools (3.1 per cent) in the three target districts have improved knowledge on health topics, including WASH, nutrition, healthy lifestyle, reproductive health, HIV and STI, and 'Family UNited' programme topics.

OUTPUT 1.1. Adolescent in 15 in three target districts have sustainable access to water, sanitation, and hygiene services

To address challenges related to access to running water, indoor toilets and sewage systems at schools, UNICEF introduced the

Hand washing facilities,
School # 7,
Kungrad district





Sanitation facilities,
School # 7,
Kungrad district

water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programme at 15 public schools in the Bozatau, Muynak and Kungrad districts. Jointly with district representatives of the Ministry of Pre-school and Secondary Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the programme team assessed the current situation of WASH facilities in 82 schools of three target districts and selected the 15 most vulnerable schools requiring immediate action for construction and reconstruction works. With the intention of fostering an integrated area-based approach, all PUNOs have made their interventions in those selected schools.

The Programme improved WASH services benefiting over 700 school staff and 27,000 school children in 15 schools of three target districts, considering climate-resilient, gender and age sensitive, inclusive, accessible and innovative solutions. These solutions include the use of solar panels as alternative energy sources, the use of reverse-osmosis systems to purify underground water, and the creation of water reservoirs in rural areas with limited water supply. In addition, hygiene items including toilet paper, sanitary pads and

cleaning items have been delivered to all 15 schools.

OUTPUT 1.2. Local health care workers have enhanced capacity and resources for universal deworming treatment and micronutrient supplementation of school children in three districts

A final assessment of the prevalence of helminthiasis and micronutrient deficiencies was conducted among 2,191 school children (including 1,130 boys and 1,061 girls from grades 1-4), at 15 selected schools of the three target districts (100 per cent coverage of targeted age group). The assessment results showed that the average incidence of intestinal helminthiasis decreased from 12.6 per cent to 1.7 per cent due to the positive effect of UNICEF's support in organizing two rounds of a deworming campaign. The higher incidence observed in the Kungrad district (1.9 per cent compared to 15.6 per cent of the baseline study) and lower incidences in the districts of Muynak (1.5 per cent compared to 11.5 per cent of the baseline study) and Boza-

Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis assessment



tau (1.5 per cent compared to 5.5 per cent of the baseline study). Of 38 infected cases, 17 cases (44.7 per cent) were diagnosed as enterobiasis, and 21 cases (55.3 per cent) were hymenolepiasis. Based on assessment outcomes, health care workers from target districts have been instructed to undertake mass deworming among children of grades 1-4, and the diagnosis and treatment of contacts at home.

UNICEF delivered five million doses of iron and folic acid tablets and 80,000 doses of albendazole tablets to the MoH of Karakalpakstan, for further distribution among target beneficiaries, namely children and adolescent girls.

A core team of 48 trainers from five districts, including Muynak, Kungrad, Bozatau, Karaozek and Takhtakopir, have an improved capacity to implement mass deworming campaigns. The core team further disseminated their knowledge to 441 health care workers, 136 school deputy directors, 131 school nurses, and PHC visiting nurses in those five districts through two rounds (achieving 100

per cent coverage), all being staff directly engaged in the deworming process. UNICEF provided all trained health care workers with Deworming Implementation Manuals. The first deworming campaign undertaken in June 2022 covered 39,355 school children between the ages of 7 and 14 in the 5 selected districts, while the second campaign undertaken in November 2022 covered 39,370 school children.

The Programme reached 131,000 adolescent girls aged 10 to 17 years (100 per cent of the target) in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Through the iron and folic acid supplementation programme, a core team of 72 health care workers from Nukus City and 16 districts improved their capacities regarding the supplementation programme and proper nutrition topics in May 2022. Additional field trainings reached 226 health care workers (100 per cent of the target) in the Kungrad, Muynak and Bozatau districts. The programme developed and distributed 400 training manuals, 202,000 leaflets, and 400 posters in Karakalpak and Uzbek languages.



Supplementation campaign in Kungrad district, PHC Ornek

OUTPUT 1.3. *Adolescents in Karakalpakstan can access information on evidence-based health education information and practices in Karakalpak, Uzbek and Russian languages from an online web portal, social media and mobile app*

1,050 adolescents from 82 schools in three target districts (3.1 per cent) accessed information on evidence-informed health education and practices. Specifically, UNICEF jointly with the Regional Center on Advanced Training for Teachers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan developed training modules for teachers and parents in the Karakalpak language on WASH, Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis (STH) infections, and Anaemia Prevention. A core team of trainers further trained 1,076 teachers and 832 parents. All educational materials were uploaded to loGT, and made available to teachers and adolescents.

The Internet of Good Things (loGT) is a set of resources promoting better and healthier living. It is a UNICEF-led initiative undertaken in over 60 countries and territories worldwide,

helping bridge the digital divide and build knowledgeable societies.

loGT provides access to lifesaving and life-enhancing information, and has been made free to access in Uzbekistan by UCELL - at the <https://uz.iogt.site/>. To use the Internet of Good Things in Uzbekistan for free, one must have a UCELL SIM card.

Through information provided by the Internet of Good Things, young people, parents and caregivers, medical providers, teachers and communities can build skills, access emergency information, and be empowered to make more informed decisions around health, ending violence, HIV/AIDS prevention, safe internet skills, positive parenting, environmental protection and much more. The resources they can access through the loGT include videos, FAQs and COVID-19 information.

loGT also has relevant information that promotes living better and healthier – including skills building, emergency information, information on mental health, ending violence, health practices, and safe sexual health ad-

WASH trainings
for teachers
and parents in
Muynak district



vice. The IoGT web content is comprised of 2,250 pages of information, more than 500 articles divided into 16 categories, and 25 videos, all containing lifesaving, evidence-based information.

IoGT deployment started with multi-sector involvement. The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the Ministry of Preschool

and School Education, and the Association of Medical Students of the Youth Agency of Uzbekistan, developed a road map for members of the Inter-Agency Task Force to use.

A working group adapted and tested the Programme's materials, considering the region's traditions, customs, foundations, gender roles, languages and local culture. A group of

FAQs page on the
IoGT web portal,
27 January 2023



Eng ko'p so'raladigan savollar

Balog'at yoshi nima va bu
vaqtda bizning tanamizda
qanday o'zgarishlar ro'y
beradi?

#FAQs



A resource webpage template for teachers on reproductive health, family planning, healthy lifestyle, and HIV and STI prevention

translators assisted in translating, adapting and editing the content in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages.

The Inter-Agency Task Force developed gender-sensitive and age-appropriate content and video materials in local languages, following the IoGT promotion plan. The website launched on 28 September 2022, and has since then reached 30,000 active users.

To sustain and support teachers in conducting sessions for schoolchildren, the Center developed a special online platform that will provide gender-sensitive information and video materials for teachers and youth leaders about reproductive health, HLS and HIV/STI prevention. The platform is embedded in the website of the Republican Center of Advanced Training for Teachers under the Ministry of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. A digital forum, allowing for the submission of messages and raising questions, is included in the platform. Ob&Gyn experts, and specialists from the Reproductive Health Center and the Dermatological Center, are engaged in responding to these questions.

OUTPUT 1.4. The Ministry of Public Education in Karakalpakstan has an enhanced capacity to deliver a family skills training programme

1,600 families from 61 schools of the target districts have improved their skills in normalising and managing stress related to family and school problems, such as teenagers having difficulty with homework, conflicts with peers, lack of money, or disagreements between family members. They have also been supported in improving their mental health, making positive and healthy adjustments to peers, and improving communication and family relationships.

UNODC trained 60 facilitators (psychologists and teachers) through the family skills training programme 'Family UNited' in Nukus (Republic of Karakalpakstan), for further scaling up its implementation in three pilot districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan (Kungrad, Muynak and Bozatau). The participants have acquired skills and materials to implement the programme in their organizations and communities.

*"Family UNited"
Training for
facilitators*



The results of piloting the 'Family UNited' training programme pilot in three pilot districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan were presented at a national round table. National counterparts and partners discussed possible ways to ensure the program's sustainability in the region. Possible mechanisms for scaling up and ensuring the sustainability of the pro-

gramme's implementation in the Republic of Karakalpakstan were agreed upon.

105 copies of the training materials (training manual and supplementary materials) were provided by UNODC ROCA to the MPSE of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, to further scale up and ensure the Programme's sustainability in the region.

*UNODC/MPSE
RoK national
round table*



OUTPUT 1.5. *Secondary school staff (biology teachers, Adolescent Union leaders, etc.) and adolescents have increased capacity to develop and deliver life/transferrable, health and soft skills programmes*

One hundred schoolteachers have improved their knowledge and skills in teaching topics about reproductive health, HLS, HIV and STI prevention through three 5-day trainings organized by UNFPA. Over 700 teachers, parents and students improved their knowledge about reproductive health issues through cascade trainings conducted by trained teachers. To support the cascade trainings, trainers from the Center of Advanced Training for teachers conducted more than 25 monitoring visits to the pilot districts.

More than 3,229 teachers attended sessions on reproductive health, family planning, HIV/STI prevention, and healthy lifestyle, as part of the mandatory advanced training courses.

6,557 adolescents (3,924 girls) learned about these topics from youth leaders during peer-to-peer sessions conducted at three selected



Information session run by volunteer for school children



Information session run by trained teacher for school children



Information session run by volunteer in makhalla

districts. 123 volunteers, including youth leaders and school psychologists, have improved their knowledge and skills on how to share information on reproductive health, healthy lifestyles, prevention of HIV and STIs, family planning and other matters.

UNFPA supported development of a series of methodological and informative brochures in three languages for teachers, students and parents. The brochures are approved to be part of 'extra-curricular hour' topics supported by UNFPA. Video materials and guidelines were uploaded to tablets, and these were distributed among trained volunteers for conducting gender-sensitive information sessions for peers in schools.

OUTPUT 1.6. Adolescents/youth, specifically those most in need, are equipped with socio-emotional skills to manage life in a healthy and productive manner

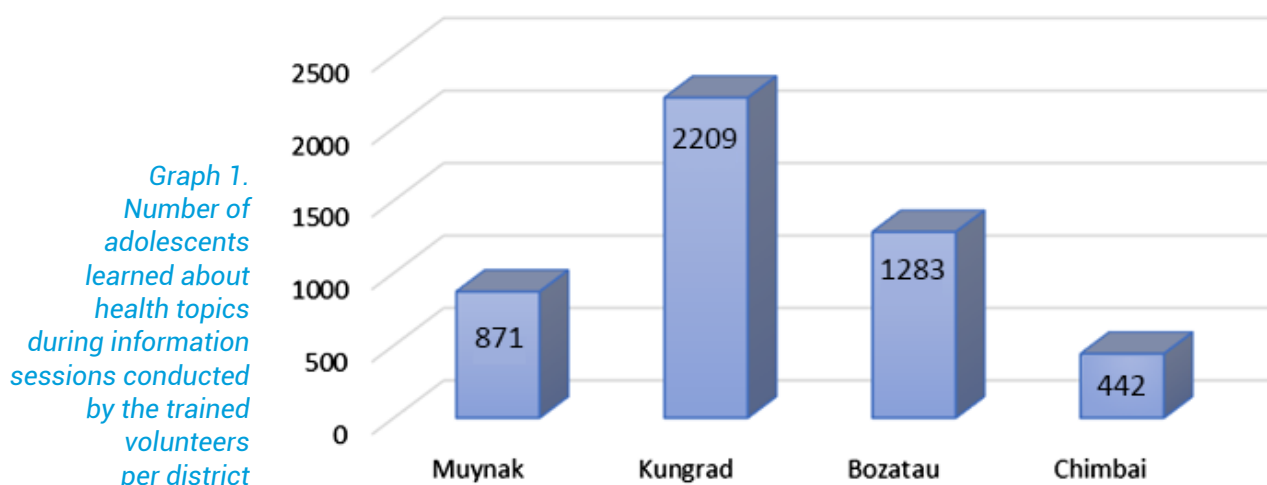
In partnership with the 'Tashxis' Republican Center, UNICEF adapted the lessons for a 45-minute class duration, aiming to further

integrate the programme into the school curriculum. In addition, 104 school psychologists from all districts of Karakalpakstan were trained to deliver the BLS programme. The Decree on integration of the Life Skills programme into school curricula is awaiting approval of the Minister of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

OUTCOME 2. By 2022 the population of selected districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, especially those most vulnerable, have improved access to and have received safe, quality health-care service

By improving WASH services in 20 health care facilities and health care waste management in 3 district hospitals, improving the telecommunication and telemedicine services, the programme improved the overall satisfaction of population from health services from 41 per cent to 70 per cent and referral rate to health care facilities has increased to 20% per cent.

Number of adolescents covered by volunteers through information sessions



OUTPUT 2.1. Health care facilities have improved water supply, sanitation, hygiene materials and appropriate waste segregation

Before the Joint Programme interventions, health care facilities in the three target districts lacked regular water supplies, sanitation and hygiene facilities inside buildings. Through the WASH programme, UNICEF improved access to a steady water supply within the selected health care facilities, benefiting 130,000 people. The improved water access was complemented by sanitation and hygiene supplies.

Jointly with representatives of District Medical Associations, the programme team studied the situation of health care facilities (HCFs) regarding access to WASH facilities, and selected 20 facilities for WASH facility construction and reconstruction works. The Programme conducted a baseline assessment of WASH facilities in all 28 health care facilities of the three target districts. As per assessment findings, 2 out of 3 HCFs

have limited water, sanitation and health care waste services, while 3 out of 3 HCFs have limited environmental cleaning and management services at the district level. At the Primary Health Clinics (PHC) level, more than 75 per cent of HCFs have limited sanitation, health care waste processing and hand hygiene services. All HCFs (100 per cent) have limited environmental cleaning and management services.

The Programme improved WASH services for 130,000 people in 20 health care facilities through climate-resilient, gender and age-sensitive, inclusive, accessible and innovative solutions. These solutions include using solar panels as alternative energy sources, using reverse-osmosis systems to purify underground water, and creating water reservoirs in rural areas with limited water supply. In addition, hygiene items, including toilet paper, sanitary pads and cleaning items were delivered to all 20 health care facilities. Moreover, three district hospitals were equipped with health care waste management facilities.



Sanitation facility in Rural Health Care Point Suwenli, Kungrad district

Health care waste management facility at the Kungrad District Medical Association



In collaboration with the Tashkent Medical Academy, the Joint Programme enhanced the capacity of 244 district and primary health care workers (232 women) on Infection Prevention and Control. The topics covered included internal infection control mechanisms, prevention of nosocomial infections, management of epidemiological situations with acute

intestinal infections including water-borne infections, diarrhoea, typhoid fever and shigellosis, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Practical sessions were also provided on properly wearing personal protective equipment, measuring body temperature, and disinfecting premises.

IPC training for HCWs from Muynak district



The Programme also developed 500 copies of WASH in HCFs training manuals, and enhanced the capacity of 415 (389 women) health care workers from the 3 target districts. All 3 district hospitals and 25 PHCs developed WASH Sustainability Plans. UNICEF conducted supportive supervision visits to four primary health care facilities in each district, to follow up on implementing the WASH Sustainability Plan and address issues related to the operationalisation of WASH FIT tools in health care facility settings.

OUTPUT 2.2. Telemedicine and distance learning system between primary, secondary and tertiary level facilities established

Thirty sets of distance learning equipment for district and rural HCFs have been delivered. In addition, three types of telemedicine equipment were delivered and installed for two republican and three district-level hospitals in Karakalpakstan. As a result, district and primary health care facilities conducted teleconsultations with specialists from regional medical centers, and organized distance learning courses.

UNICEF developed a knowledge hub (bilim.tma.uz), which will serve as a one-stop digital platform for communication, information sharing, and a repository for training materials and resources on health topics for the country's health care workers.

The Online Knowledge Hub for Health Care Workers is an initiative leveraging digital technologies for relevant professionals, to provide:

- Access to relevant continuous professional development opportunities, including online and blended-learning courses, conferences, face-to-face workshops and self-study resources, which meet specific needs.
- Up-to-date information and policies, including access to latest legislation, policies, guidelines, standard operating procedures, reference materials and best practices.

A web-based platform was developed, and UNICEF agreed with the Tashkent Medical Academy to host and maintain the platform in the future. In 2022 a team of faculty members and students developed online courses, wrote articles, and enhanced online courses.



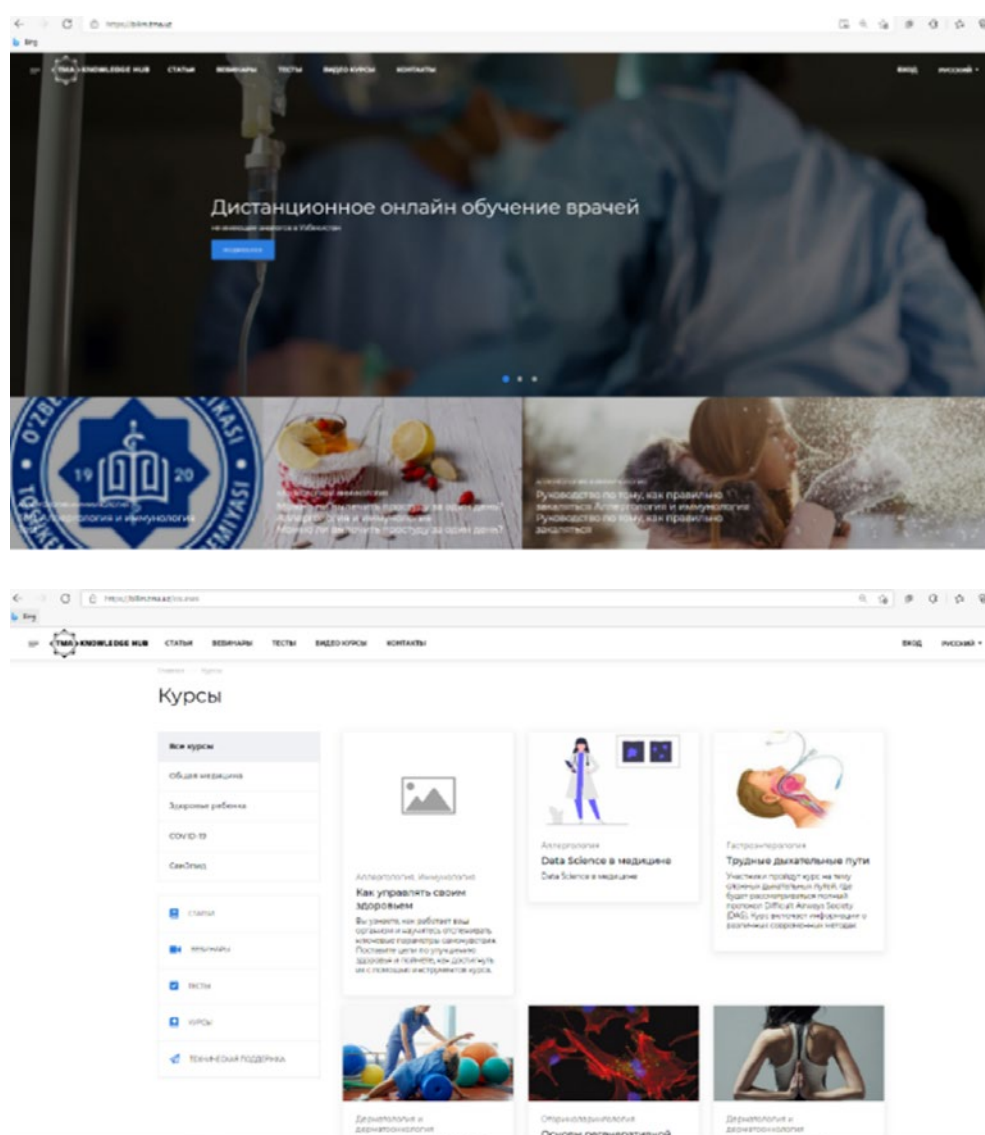
Telecommunication equipment in PHC Ali Awil, Muynak district

es with graphics and visual aids. All courses have been translated into Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages, to ensure equitable access for all the country's health care workers.

The course was administered at both pre-service and in-service levels, through which approximately 100 undergraduate students and 100 health care professionals have been trained. The major constraint for accessing this course has been the technical unavailability of free registration at the TMA's online platform. This platform is based on the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS), and is officially recommended for online edu-

cation by the MoH. This registration was accessible only to students currently enrolled in the school, faculty members, and health care workers of the TMA clinic. Everyone else outside of TMA had to obtain logins and passwords directly from IT administrators. Thus this course has been fully transferred to the online knowledge hub (bilim.tma.uz) in 2022.

In addition, 99 doctors (76 women) participated in four online courses on 'COVID-19 infection diagnostics, treatment and prevention amongst children', 'Counselling on breastfeeding', 'Growth and development of children under five', and 'Infants' and children's nutrition'.



Knowledge hub
based on the
Tashkent Medical
Academy's platform

These courses were developed jointly with the Tashkent Paediatric Medical Institute and the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center for Paediatrics. In addition, 370 visiting nurses enhanced their knowledge on providing primary health care services and home visiting by participating in 5 distance learning courses.

OUTPUT 2.3. *PHC facilities in three districts have improved diagnosis and treatment of intestinal infection*

130,000 people have access to improved diagnosis and treatment of intestinal infections. Specifically, UNICEF has provided 28 PHC and 3 District Laboratories of the Republican Center of Sanitary and Epidemiological Welfare with binocular microscopes for STH diagnostics. Additionally, laboratory consumables and reagents have been procured and delivered to all laboratories of the 28 health care facilities.

UNICEF organized a two-day training on 'Laboratory diagnostics of helminthiasis' for 18 laboratory technicians (all women) of the three target districts

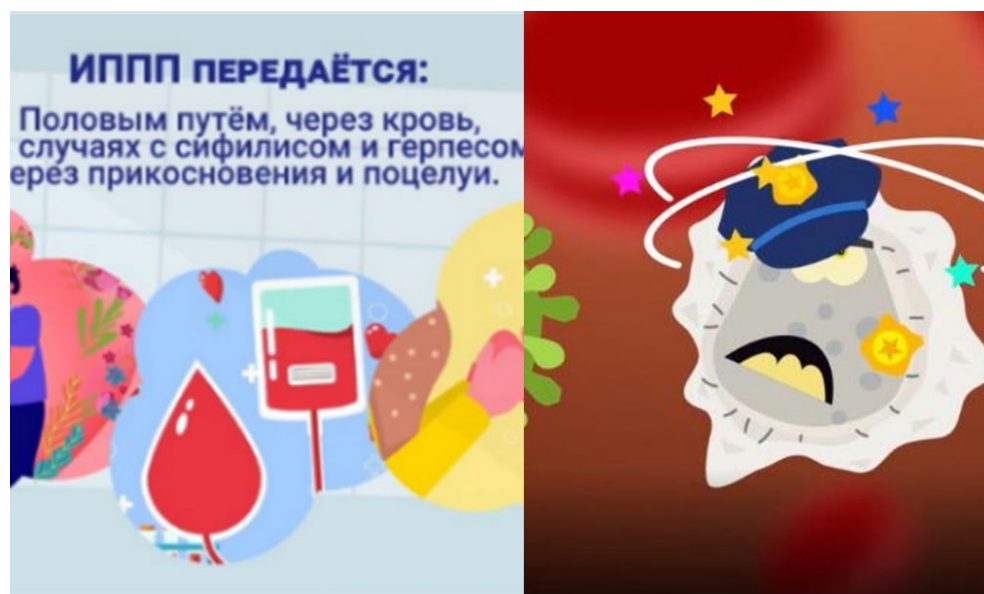
OUTCOME 3. *By 2022 the Government and the Youth Union in Karakalpakstan support, empower and engage young people, including the most vulnerable, as productive citizens and positive agents of change in their communities and the region*

The Programme supported 209 school children and youth by improving their basic life skills and empowering their potential as positive change agents of their communities, by organizing capacity building interventions and boot camps equipped with social and entrepreneurship skills and funded social start-up projects.



Telecommunication equipment in PHC Ali Awil, Muynak district

Video for children
on HIV and STI
prevention,
diagnostics
and treatment



Output 3.1. Equipping young people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, with social innovation and life skills, as well as social and entrepreneurship support

In 2022 the Programme developed 50 methodological guidelines for teachers in three languages, along with eight booklets and ten

brochures for parents and children on reproductive health, healthy lifestyles, family planning and HIV/STI prevention, in three languages. Six videos on HIV/STI prevention for children and youth were developed in two languages, and posted on UNFPA web and media sites. All materials were verified and checked by the Reproductive Health Specialist.

Leaflet for school
students on
healthy nutrition





Team BJJ with their highly nutritious feed for poultry

Volunteers contributed a series of publications in local newspapers about the work they do in communities. Three types of posters, and a leaflet on HIV/STI prevention and healthy lifestyles, were printed in three languages and distributed to all schools nationwide. To sustain the results of the project's work, materials on reproductive health, healthy lifestyles, and family planning (including early pregnancy and contraception), were presented to the MPSE for inclusion in school curricula and textbooks.

UNICEF supported the International Innovation Center for the Aral Sea (IICAS) in conducting two boot camps on the social innovation and social entrepreneurship programme UPSHIFT (locally called 'ImkonLab') for young people from three target districts. In 2022 the team managed to engage young people with disabilities, youth not in education, employment or training (NEET), and other vulnerable groups. In 2022, 90 young people (48 girls and 42 boys) aged 15 to 24 years, were equipped with social and entrepreneurship skills. Eleven youth-led projects were supported through mentoring and seed-funding. Six youth-led



Artur Utegenov, inventor of a hybrid water pump, gives an interview for the Uzbekistan24 TV channel at the Youth Climate Forum

projects were successfully incubated and started bringing income to their founders, including the following:

- Recycling glass bottles into decorative tiles and souvenirs;
- Producing highly-nutritious feed for poultry;
- Teaching children with visual impairments to read and write in Braille;
- Producing souvenirs from plastic bottles;
- Producing silage for cattle;
- Water-saving installation.

Two other projects – a hybrid water pump and the production of pavement tiles from plastic bottles – received additional funding for acceleration from the Start-Up programme, specifically US\$ 3,000 and US\$ 2,000, respectively. Two teams participated in the global ‘Generation Unlimited’ youth innovation challenge, and one team – producing highly-nutritious feed for poultry – was selected as one of the top 30 teams among 71 teams from over 30 countries. Additionally, two UPSHIFT teams were invited to present their projects at the Youth Climate Forum in Tashkent, and three teams took part in InnoWeek in August 2022.

Challenges:

- Due to the limited capacity of qualified WASH construction project design companies in the region, the Programme could contract only two bidders for project design and estimation works for 35 WASH facilities. This delayed the launch of tendering processes for construction works. To mitigate the challenge, the Programme is adapting bidding for construction companies by dividing this into eight segments for 35 project sites in

the three districts, which has helped with finding and selecting more companies. In addition, JP staff have been able to disseminate bidding announcements more widely, and organize meetings with construction companies to explain policies and procedures for submitting bids.

Best practices:

- An integrated approach has been applied in selecting target schools and regional implementing partners to enhance local capacity from different angles of gender-sensitive health and education promotion. At the same time, PUNOs are organizing periodic joint planning meetings to avoid duplicating efforts, and to complement each-other’s programmatic interventions. Also, UNICEF is undertaking constant communications with UNDP-led joint programmes in planning social infrastructure projects, in order to not duplicate efforts regarding improving schools and health care facilities.
- Information and knowledge products on reproductive health, family planning, healthy lifestyle, and prevention of HIV and STIs, prepared for teachers and school students in the framework of this project, have been accepted enthusiastically by regional management and beneficiaries. As a result, additional learning hours on relevant topics have been included in the mandatory course by the Republican Center of Advanced Training for Teachers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. More than 2,400 female and male teachers have learned about issues of reproductive health, family planning, healthy lifestyles, and prevention of HIV and STI, while also gaining the skills needed to talk with school students about these matters.

- These project activities align with government priorities for the education sector, as identified during a meeting with the 'Tashkhis' Republican Center of Career-Guidance and Pedagogical-Psychological Diagnostics. A joint work plan has been implemented to encourage the use of developed methodologies and gender-sensitive, age-appropriate information materials by teachers and psychologists at a national level.
 - UNICEF is working to systematically engage all key stakeholders, including government partners and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). UNICEF signed an MoU with the 'Zamin Foundation' NGO to cooperate on updating WASH standards at schools. Another MoU has been signed with the Ministry of Innovative Development to ensure their support in accelerating more promising projects incubated within the framework of the UPSHIFT programme. Karakalpakstan has joined the international 'Generation Unlimited' Youth Innovation Challenge, so that Uzbekistan's youth can compete with peers from around the globe and receive additional funds from the UNICEF Innovation Fund.
 - Trained volunteers demonstrated significant potential in reaching community populations, and are very popular among school adolescents. Volunteers' work motivated several school children to bring creativeness to information activities, and to actively participate.
- tend their networks, start earning income, or mobilise additional resources. However, UNICEF needs to support young people further with legal consultations on registering their businesses as individual entrepreneurs.
- Social gender norms remain barriers to girls' self-realisation. It was observed that even successful girl-led projects stop functioning after girls get married. The Programme must be complemented by more robust communication campaigns targeting social behaviour change.
 - Social innovation projects developed by girls remain in traditional gender-specific fields, such as teaching, cooking and sewing. Additional efforts are required to equip girls with technical and digital skills, and to encourage girls-led tech-based solutions.
 - The Programme formulated Terms of Reference and bidding documents in seven lots for 35 project sites (15 schools and 20 health care facilities) to attract more construction companies and avoid possible delays in WASH construction works to increase the number of bidding project design and construction companies.
 - Trained teachers were inspired by new knowledge and skills after participating in training, and they engaged other teachers in their schools in information sessions on reproductive health, and taught them how to conduct these courses.

Lessons learned:

- The UPSHIFT programme brings a high return on investment – with enhanced skills and US\$ 1,000 of seed funding, young people become more confident, ex-
- Volunteers demonstrated a remarkable commitment towards informing children and the population about reproductive health issues, prevention of HIV and STI, family planning, gender violence and stigma.

ii) INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTCOME 1. By 2022 adolescents (boys and girls) in three districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, especially those most vulnerable, have improved health and nutrition status	Number of girls aged 10-17 provided with iron and folic acid supplements	0	2020	10,000	10,000	132,000		Project Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of schools providing evidence-based health and nutrition education as part of their curricula	0	2020	40	82	82		Project Report/ Semi-annually
OUTPUT 1.1. The Ministry of Public Education, and local school management teams, are supported to establish sustainable access to water, sanitation, and hygiene services (WASH)	Number of secondary schools with improved WASH facilities	0	2020	5	15	15	The costs of construction increased, and the programme budget was revised to reflect these changes in costs, which has been subsequently approved in the Project Board meeting minutes.	Project Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of schools with toilets that ensure privacy and safety that meet the needs of women and girls	0	2020	5	15	15		
	Number of WASH innovations implemented	0	2020	1	2	2		

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTPUT 1.1	Number of invest- ments in local infra- structure, with sup- port of the MPHSTF – US\$ million	TBD after UNDP/UNES- CO Project Re- port submis- sion for 2020	2020	\$0.30 (US\$ 300,000)	\$0.48 (US\$ 480,000)	\$0.689		
OUTPUT 1.2. Local health care workers have enhanced capac- ity and resources for universal deworming treatment and micronu- trient supplementation for school children in three districts	Percentage of school children who are STH infected	12.6 per cent (baseline is based on JP assessment in Dec 2021)	Dec 2021	12.6 per cent (baseline study, Dec 2021)	7 per cent (de- worming on STH by half)	1.7 per cent (fi- nal study, Nov 2022)		MoH stats/ Annually up- dated report on STH lab di- agnostics
	Number of children dewormed	0	2020	26,000	26,000	40,000	Deworming tab- lets were procured as per the planned budget and were sufficient to cov- er 40,000 school children from five districts. Thus, an additional two dis- tricts were includ- ed.	Project Report/ Semi-annu- ally
	Number of health and education work- ers trained to provide anaemia prevention, adolescent nutrition and counselling ser- vices	0	2020	100	300	2,534 (1,076 teachers, 832 par- ents, 626 HCWs)	The programme trained 300 core trainers, who fur- ther disseminated knowledge through cascade trainings in their schools.	Project Report/ Semi-annu- ally

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTPUT 1.3. Adolescents in Karakalpakstan can access information on evidence-based health education and its practices in Karakalpak, Uzbek, and Russian languages, from an online web portal, social media and mobile apps	Number of videos on health-related topics in Karakalpak, Uzbek and Russian languages for children and adolescents	0	2020	5	10	12		Project Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of health-related questions from the public answered by health experts, with responses posted online / Baseline: 0 / Planned Target: 150	0	2020	150	200	200		Project Report/ Semi-annually
	Availability of an online web-adapted teacher's manual on healthy lifestyles in Karakalpak language	0	2020	1	1	1		URL/A Semi-annually
	Number of teachers and community activists trained in SWASH, micronutrient supplementation, and deworming counselling	0	2020	200	400	1,908 (1,076 teachers, 832 parents)	The programme trained 400 core trainers, who further disseminated knowledge through cascade trainings in their schools.	Training Report/ Semi-annually

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
Output 1.4. The Ministry of Public Education in Karakalpakstan has an enhanced capacity to deliver a family-skills training programme	Number of family members (adolescents and parents) covered by family-skills training programme	0	2020	60	1,500	1,660		Training Reports / Annually
	Number of trained facilitators	0	2020	30	70	92		Training Report/ Semi-annually
OUTPUT 1.5. Secondary school staff (biology teachers, Adolescent Union leaders, etc.) and adolescents have increased capacity to develop and deliver programmes in life-transferable, health and soft skills	Number of school-teachers and adolescent leaders trained to use a peer-to-peer methodology	0	2020	60	120	818		Training Report / Annually
	Number of peer educators trained	15	2020	80	160	123 (62 male and 61 female)	With four trainings planned, it was not possible to encompass 160 volunteers to ensure quality training.	Training Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of adolescents reached by peer educators over two years	0	2020	5,000	10,000	14,287 (8,167 girls) of grades 6-11		Project Report/ Semi-annually

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTPUT 1.6. Adolescents and youth, specifically those most in need, equipped with socio-emotional skills to manage life in a healthy and productive manner	Number of adolescent girls and boys, aged 15 to 24 years, having completed the socio-emotional skills development programme	0	2020	100 (at least 50 per cent girls and young women)	300 (at least 50 per cent girls and young women)	307 adolescents aged 15-18 (122 boys and 185 girls)	To ensure higher coverage and programme sustainability, a decision was made to work in schools with school psychologists. As such, the target audience was limited to children aged 15-18.	Field monitoring visits/ partner reports / Reports of the school psychologists, observation by the UNICEF national consultant
	Number of youth workers and psychologists trained to equip young people with socio-emotional skills	0	2020	20	30	119		Training reports/ Semi-annually / ToT report of the UNICEF national consultant
OUTCOME 2. By 2022, the population of selected districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, especially those most vulnerable, have improved access to and have received safe, quality health care service	Percentage of the population satisfied with WASH conditions in target health care facilities	0	2020	Satisfaction survey conducted in Nov 2021 identified a 41 per cent baseline.	Target for 2022 end – 60 per cent	41 per cent	70 per cent	Assessment Report/ Semi-annually

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTCOME 2	Percentage increase of inpatient visits to primary health care facilities	0	2020	100,000 visits in 2020 (ad- ministra- tive data provided by district health care authori- ties)	Increased by 10 per cent	100,000 visits (ad- ministra- tive data provided by dis- trict health care au- thorities)	120,000 visits (administrative data provided by district health care autho- rities)	Assessment and Project Reports/ Semi-annually
OUTPUT 2.1. Health care facilities have im- proved water supply, sanitation, hygiene ma- terials and appropriate waste segregation	Number of invest- ments in local health infrastructure with support of the MPH- STF - million US\$	0.25	2020 Project report by UNICEF/ UNFPA on the first- round project	\$0.25 (US\$ 250,000)	\$0.50 (US\$ 500,000)	\$0.897	The costs of con- struction in- creased, and the programme budget was revised to re- flect the changes in costs, which has been subsequently approved in the Project Board meeting minutes.	Project Report/ Semi- annually
	Number of medical institutions with im- proved WASH ser- vices	0	2020	10	20	20		
	Number of medical institutions with toi- lets ensuring privacy and safety meeting the needs of women and girls	0	2020	10	20	20		

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTPUT 2.1. Health care facilities have improved water supply, sanitation, hygiene materials and appropriate waste segregation	Number of stand-ards and policies for WASH in health care facilities developed and reviewed, and having specific gender markers	0	2020	2	3	3		Project Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of health care providers trained on WASH, IPC and WASH FIT (dis-aggregated by sex and residence)	0	2020	400	650	659		Training Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of WASH innovations imple-mented	0	2020	2	2	2		Project Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of support-ive supervision visits conducted to train health care providers	0	2020	At least 1	At least 2	2		Field visit Reports/ Semi-annually
OUTPUT 2.2. Telemedi-cine and distance learn-ing system between primary, secondary and tertiary level facilities has been established	Number of medi-cal institutions with functioning telecom-munication equip-ment Baseline: 0 / Planned Target: 10	0	2020	10	35	35		Project Re-port/Semi-an-nually

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTPUT 2.2. Telemedi- cine and distance learn- ing system between primary, secondary and tertiary level facilities has been established	Regulatory frame- work for telemedicine is developed and ap- proved	No	2020	Yes	Yes	Yes		Project Report/ Semi- annually
	Number of developed distance learning courses / Baseline: 0 / Planned Target: 2	0	2020	2	6	8		Training Report/ Semi- annually
	Number of health care professionals educated and re- trained through dis- tance learning (disag- gregated by gender and place of resi- dence)	0	2020	200	1300	1,589	Distance learn- ing course cov- ered both doctors and nurses, and is in line with the budget.	Training Report/ Semi- annually
Output 2.3. PHC facil- ities in three districts have improved diagno- sis and treatment of in- testinal infection	Number of health care providers trained on STH and infection control	0	2020	100	200	337	Two rounds of campaigning cov- ered more health care workers through cascade trainings.	Training Re- port/Semi-an- nually
	Number of updated clinical STH manage- ment standards at the PHC level	0	2020	1	1	1		Project Report/ Semi-annu- ally

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTPUT 2.3. PHC facilities in three districts have improved diagnosis and treatment of intestinal infection	Number of investments in local health infrastructure with support of the MPH-STF, in US\$	250,000	2020 Project report by UNICEF/ UNFPA	60,000	81,000	203,744	Microscopes and supplies for STH treatment procured and delivered.	Project Report/ Semi-annually
	Number of clinics equipped with STH equipment and testing systems	0	2020	20	20	31	Three District Sanitary Epidemiology Service Centers and 28 HCFs equipped.	Project Report/ Semi-annually
OUTCOME 3. By 2022, the Government and the Youth Union in Karakalpakstan support, empower and engage young people, including the most vulnerable, as productive citizens and positive agents of change in their communities and the region	Number of young people who participate in or lead civic engagement initiatives (disaggregated by gender and age)	28	2020	200	400	209 (110 males, 99 females)		Field monitoring, reporting by partners/ Annually
OUTPUT 3.1. Equipping young people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, with social innovation and life skills, as well as social and entrepreneurship support	Number of young people who completed the skills development programme (disaggregated by gender and age)	28	2020	60	120	209 young people aged 15-25, (110 males and 99 females)		Partner reports and monitoring field visits

Expected Results (outcomes & outputs)	Indicator Description	Baseline		Target		Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Vari- ance from Planned Target (if any)	Source of Veri- fication
		Value	Year	2021	2022			
OUTPUT 3.1. Equipping young people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, with social innovation and life skills, as well as social and entrepreneurship support	Number of projects initiated by participants of the programme, including social business and social initiatives (SCO)	5	2020	20	40	33	Three rounds of UPSHIFT have been conducted instead of the planned four. Thus 15 initiatives (5 projects x 3 rounds) were planned, and two additional, very promising ones, were supported.	Field monitoring, reporting by partners at every cycle
	Number of projects evolved into sustainable social business or social initiatives	0	2020	1	4	5	1. Production of bio-humus in the Bozatau district. 2. Women-led bakery and bakery learning courses for	Monitoring, reporting by partners at every cycle

iii) SPECIFIC STORIES

Water is the Source of Life

Vast area, fresh air. Yes, I live in a beautiful village with people, close to me. Autumn is especially beautiful here. At the sight of trees changing their foliage, you will fall in love with my village.

I study in the 11th grade of the secondary school No. 12, located on the territory of the 'Madeli' Village Council of Citizens of the Muynak district. Our school was built in 1975 and currently has 180 students. I like the subject of Karakalpak language and literature. In the future, I want to master the profession of a teacher, like my favorite teacher Gulimkhan apa Zhaksylykova.

Previously students often fell ill, with the reason for this being poor-quality drinking water. It was very dirty, unusable water, which created difficult conditions for people. It turns out that the water we drank every day was unhealthy and caused many diseases. There were no other sources of water.



To date, a water supply network has been built and we can use clean water. The people suffered a lot, but thanks to the project of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Human Security for the Aral Sea region, a new water supply network was installed and we got access to clean drinking water, which is the key to our life. Apart from the water supply, handwashing and sanitation facilities have also been constructed. We are now excited to apply

*School No 12,
'Madeli' Village
Council of Citizens,
Muynak district*



hand hygiene, menstrual health and hygiene practices. During our classes we also receive information about hand hygiene, sanitation, menstrual health and hygiene, nutrition and reproductive health topics.

Water is a source of energy, but water is also considered the source of life for all living things. This is a source that needs to be protected.

Water is life. Everyone needs it. We must use water rationally to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Currently school attendance has improved, now that students rarely get sick. I rush to class every day. Seeing the eyes of my classmates burning with happiness, I am overwhelmed with emotions.

If you live a healthy lifestyle, you will never get sick.

Muslim BAZARBAYEVA,
Student of the 11th grade of comprehensive school No. 12 of the Muynak district.

Volunteering Connects Hearts. **A story about volunteerism that brought together two young teachers**

Dilfuza Djolgashova

On the first day of spring, Dilfuza Djolgashova (25-year-old), together with her fourth-grade students, rejoices in the warm sun and exposes her bright, smiling face to it.

Since childhood, having a great love for children and learning, Dilfuza entered the Pedagogical University of Karakalpakstan in the city of Nukus in the direction of primary education. After graduating from university, she returned to her hometown Kungrad and began teaching at school number 6. Now she has 17 students in her class. As part of the joint project 'Investing in a resilient future of Karakalpakstan by improving health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and wellbeing of





adolescents and by harnessing the talents of youth during and after COVID-19', funded by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Human Security for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan, Difuza has been invited to participate at the training for volunteers. The training aimed to strengthen the human capital and resilience of youth through empowerment, by developing social innovation skills in three districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan (Muynak, Kungrad and Bozatau).

Difuza rejoices, remembering the first day she met Azizbek. It was in November 2021 when they were called to participate in a training for volunteers organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The road was long and Difuza was late for the training. She blushed terribly when all the faces of the participants sitting at the training turned to look at her. Shy and timid by nature, Difuza was at first afraid to even ask questions when she had them.

Difuza went to the training in Nukus with fear, because for her, who had just recently graduated from university and started her professional career, everything was new. "At the very first session, trainer the Salamat Otepov asked everyone who came to the training against their own will to leave the conference room, and to stay only those who really want to gain new knowledge. I stayed," Difuza shared about the first day of the training.

"In general, after five days of training by the UNFPA trainers Damira Tokhtasinova and Salamat Otepov, they were able to unite us, completely unfamiliar people, into one team – turn us into a family. We received a lot of knowledge on reproductive health, family planning and healthy lifestyles, using the peer-to-peer methodology.

At the end of the training we were sad to leave. Also, the most active participants were given tablets so that in the future we could apply information received in our work to educate young people. All the necessary information was loaded into these tablets in an accessible form."

Difuza also spoke about how she met her future fiancé Azizbek, a teacher from the Bozatau district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan,



at the training: “As I already said, I was late for the training and at that moment, as it turned out, my fiancé paid attention to me. He was the first to show signs of attraction. Azizbek, teaches junior classes at school, had a lot in common with me and therefore we quickly became friends. We met in November, and at the end of May, his relatives already came to us to woo. It seems to me that every girl has her own image of an ideal life partner, and Azizbek turned out to be just that for me. Even more gratifying is the fact that he also went through these trainings and knows a lot about gender equality, healthy lifestyles, reproductive health, and fully supports my career aspirations. We are already thinking about our children, about the need to plan a family, instil in children from childhood the habits of proper and healthy nutrition, and protect them from various infections.”

Azizbek Toreambetov

27-year-old Azizbek Toreambetov works at school number 7 in Bozatau district as both a primary school teacher and a youth leader.

“By participating in the training, first of all I received very useful knowledge and learned how to properly convey this knowledge to the audience. But I’m even more glad that thanks to this project I found my happiness. My life has completely changed, I can say that for sure.”

Through the project, UNFPA trained 123 active youth volunteers, teachers and psychologists. Trained volunteers held information sessions for their peers and schoolchildren on issues related to reproductive health, family planning, healthy lifestyles, and HIV/STI prevention. More than 14,000 teenagers have been reached by such sessions.

“I would like to emphasise that during the training we were able to reveal our potential, get motivated, learn how to speak confidently in front of an audience, and expand our net-

work. The format was very interesting – the energy of the training, and the fascinating form of presenting information about seemingly sensitive topics. I am absolutely sure that the training helped me and all other participants begin to realise our potential.

After the training, we were all actively involved in the process of teaching our peers and students in schools. With the help of the peer-to-peer method, we can convey information about rather complicated health issues in a form accessible to young people. After all, not everyone can easily accept information about sexually transmitted infections from a teacher, agree? But young people need to be trained, now that there is a lot of harmful information on the Internet, and they need to be taught how to filter it.

I myself come from a family of teachers, with my parents having worked as teachers all their lives. I have three sisters; we lost our father quite early. So, I am now the head of the family. At the same time I am very close to my sisters – they trust me, and I know their interests. My parents gave everyone in my family a higher education. I have plans to continue my studies, get a master’s degree and open my



own learning center. I do not have ambitions to become a minister. I am not after high-ranking positions. I just want to be useful to my country, strengthening the role of men in the field of primary education, which is quite difficult and at the same time very important for development.

In my future family, of course, I also plan to give my children a higher education. For this it is simply necessary that my wife also realises herself as a specialist, and does not limit her life to everyday tasks. I believe that achieving gender equality is a necessary condition for development, and I want to prove through the example of my family that this is achievable."

The 'Family UNited' Programme's Roll-out

Within the framework of joint UNODC/ UNICEF/UNFPA programme 'Investing in a resilient future of Karakalpakstan by improving health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene and wellbeing of adolescents and by harnessing the talents of youth during and after COVID-19', as financed by UN MPHSTF Aral Sea, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Office for Central Asia (UNODC ROCA), successfully piloted and further scaled-up the 'Family UNited' family skills training programme jointly with the Ministry of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. This piloted programme was implemented in selected schools of three pilot districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

During the project 92 specialists (psychologists) of the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan passed trainings on the 'Family UNited' programme for further scaling it up for more than 1,600 families in three pilot districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan (Kungrad, Muynak and Bozatau).

Both the psychologists and programme beneficiaries spoke positively about the Programme, as well as sharing their success stories and positive changes they saw in their families. One of the Programme's beneficiaries has shared her story, as follows:

"Now I am in my second marriage, and from the first marriage I have a son. My son is a year older than my stepdaughter.

In my first marriage, I spoiled my son, but after I got married, I stopped spoiling him, and didn't pay enough attention to my stepdaughter, even though she tried to get close to me.

You know, since my child has been spoiled a lot in the past, he still seeks this care from me. He wants to hug and kiss me. However, I could not show such concern for my son, as I felt that my stepdaughter might be offended. I was worried that my older brother-in-law would be offended if I hugged the girl or showed her love, because before I came to this family, he raised her and was engaged in educating her. He seemed to be offended, saying: 'Why did she take it from me?' Thus, I could neither hug nor kiss her. However, I felt that she loved me. After the training, I went home and cried. I realised that the girl loves me, and I was a witness to this. Before, I did not know how to express my love to her. Then I asked myself: 'Why should I separate my stepdaughter and son? Since I accept them both as my children, why can't I pamper them both?'

Before, my children would come home and shout: 'Mom, I have fives today,' and instead of praising them, I would say: 'So what? Quickly go to your room and change.' After another training session, I went up to my stepdaughter and told her, 'Come here, dear.

What subject did you get an A in? Who did you do your homework with? What changes have taken place in your school?' She was so happy, her face lit up. Until that moment, there was sadness in her eyes. Now, after we went through this training, I can say that the sadness in her eyes has disappeared. The girl who used to be afraid to hug me now hugs me every hour. After the training, she became

more talkative. She began to share everything that happens to her at school: with whom she quarrelled, what grades she received in subjects. I am so proud of myself that I was able to make her happy.

I can say that there was a wall between us, and now it has disappeared."

III. OTHER ASSESSMENTS OR EVALUATIONS

The Programme conducted a Final Assessment of the UN Joint Programme. The draft report was submitted and is currently under revision, as per the provided comments. Below are the key findings of the Final Assessment Report.

RELEVANCE

The Programme's interventions were aligned with the policies and strategies of the Government of Uzbekistan on addressing the Aral Sea crises, including the Government Strategy on Five Priority Directions of Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021, the State Programme on Development of the Aral Sea Region for 2017-2021, Law no. ZRU-406 of 14 September 2016 on State Adolescent Policy, and the recently adopted Comprehensive Development Programme for Karakalpakstan for 2020-2023.

EFFECTIVENESS

The UN JP improved WASH facilities at 15 schools and 20 health care facilities in the Bozatau, Muynak and Kungrad districts, through introduction of the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme where privacy and safety were provided to better meet the needs of women and girls. Construction works considered climate-resilient, gender and age sen-

sitive, inclusive, accessible and innovative solutions.

As part of the micronutrient supplementation campaign, the UN JP provided 131,000 adolescent girls across the Republic of Karakalpakstan (aged 10-17 years old) with iron and folic acid supplements, and in particular 8,765 adolescent girls (87.7 per cent of target population) in three pilot districts of Karakalpakstan. Overall 307 health care workers were trained on micronutrient supplementation, provided with 400 training manuals, 202,000 leaflets and 400 posters in Karakalpak and Uzbek languages.

The UN JP's deworming treatment significantly contributed to decreasing the prevalence of STH among school children. In general, data shows that the prevalence of STH decreased from 12.6 per cent (the baseline) to 1.7 per cent.

The UN JP contributed to providing health-related information to young people, parents and caregivers, medical providers, teachers and communities, through the Internet of Good Things. During the UN JP's implementation period, the website reached 30,000 active users.

The UN JP disseminated knowledge on healthy lifestyles and positive parenting in three districts of Karakalpakstan, to prevent substance abuse, support the development of life skills needed to prevent anti-social and risky behaviour, and improve family outcomes and mental health during and after COVID-19

through introducing the 'Family UNited' family skills training programme.

The UN JP improved the knowledge and skills of 100 schoolteachers on teaching topics about reproductive health, HLS, HIV and STI prevention. These teachers in turn raised the level of knowledge of more than 700 teachers, parents and students on reproductive health issues through cascade trainings.

The UN JP in partnership with the 'Tashxis' Republican Center introduced a Life Skills programme into the curricula of 15 pilot schools, equipping 307 school children (185 girls) with socio-emotional skills needed to manage life in a healthy and productive manner. A decree on integration of the Life Skills programme into school curricula was approved by the Minister of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Programme has implemented the WASH programme in 20 selected health care facilities, to improve access to a regular supply of water, complemented with sanitation and hygiene supplies. During the assessment visit conducted in February 2023 a number of WASH innovations, namely solar panels as alternative energy sources, reverse-osmosis systems to purify underground water, and water reservoirs, were all implemented in two visited health care facilities (in the Bozatau and Kungrad districts). Hygiene items including toilet paper, sanitary pads and cleaning items have been purchased, and are planned to be delivered to all 20 health care facilities at the moment of the assessment visit. Moreover, health care waste management facilities have been constructed, equipped with autoclaves and shredders, at all 3 visited district hospitals.

The UN JP enhanced the knowledge of 659 district and primary health care facilities' staff (622 women) on internal infection control

mechanisms, prevention of nosocomial infections, management of epidemiological situations with acute intestinal infections including water-borne infections, diarrhoea, typhoid fever and shigellosis, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. All pilot health care facilities have developed WASH Sustainability Plans.

30 sets of distance learning equipment for district and rural HCFs were delivered through the UN JP. In addition, three types of telemedicine equipment were delivered and installed for 2 national and 3 district level hospitals of Karakalpakstan. As a result, district and primary health care facilities were able to conduct teleconsultations with specialists from regional medical centers and organize distance learning courses. The online Knowledge Hub (www.bilim.tma.uz) was created with the support of the UN JP to leverage digital technologies for health care workers, accessed by 700 users.

The JP has provided 31 health care facilities, including 28 PHC and 3 District Laboratories of the Republican Center of Sanitary and Epidemiological Welfare, with binocular microscopes for STH diagnostics. Additionally a set of laboratory consumables and reagents have been procured and delivered to all laboratories of the 28 health care facilities.

Within the UN JP, IICAS conducted two bootcamps of the social innovation and social entrepreneurship programme UPSHIFT for 178 young people aged 15 to 25 years old (93 females and 85 males) from the three pilot districts, including vulnerable persons, with 10-day trainings on social innovation and social entrepreneurship being conducted between August and October 2021. A total of 56 youth-led projects, including social business and social initiatives, were supported through mentoring and seed-funding. One project producing sawdust briquettes for heating has

received an additional US\$ 20,000 for its acceleration from the Ministry of Innovative Development of Uzbekistan.

EFFICIENCY

Delays in recruiting JP staff has resulted in shifting the realisation of programme activities, according to the UN JP Results Framework. Additionally the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions to conducting public activities, field visits and assessments, resulted in a delay in the workplan's implementation and the achievement of target indicators.

The new wave of COVID-19 in the summer of 2021 temporarily postponed face-to-face training for volunteers, and further peer-to-peer information sessions conducted by trained volunteers among adolescents in schools. The summer vacation for teachers, and mandatory learning courses in August, also influenced training activities for teachers intended to prepare them for the fall season. Due to the movement restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the supply and delivery of items from abroad was delayed, including deliveries of supplements and medical equipment.

Due to the limited capacity of the region's qualified WASH construction project companies, the Programme could contract only two bidders for project design and estimation works for 35 WASH facilities. This delayed the launch of tendering processes for construction works.

The shifting of Youth Leader positions from schools to communities limited youth leaders' time for these activities, due to high workloads at a community level.

SUSTAINABILITY

Information and knowledge products prepared for teachers and school students in the framework of this project on reproductive health, family planning, healthy lifestyle, and prevention of HIV and STIs, have been accepted enthusiastically by regional management and beneficiaries. As a result additional learning hours on relevant topics have been included in mandatory courses by the Republican Center of Advanced Training for Teachers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. More than 2,400 teachers, both female and male, have learned about issues of reproductive health, family planning, healthy lifestyle, prevention of HIV and STI, and the skills needed to talk with school students about these matters.

The project activities are in line with government priorities for the education sector, as identified during a meeting with the 'Tashkhis' Republican Center of Career-Guidance and Pedagogical-Psychological Diagnostics. A joint work plan has been implemented to encourage use of developed methodologies and gender-sensitive, age-appropriate information materials by teachers and psychologists at a national level.

IMPACT

According to statistical data of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the prevalence of diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs and certain disorders involving the immune mechanism among children (aged 0-14 years old) in Karakalpakstan, decreased by an average 440 cases per 100,000 members of the population in 2020 and 2021. On the other hand, among adolescents aged 15 to 17 years old, this indicator

was high on average at 747 per 100,000 population for the same period.

The UN JP's deworming treatment significantly contributed to the decreased prevalence of STH among school children. The results of lab tests conducted after treatment with albendazole among children aged 7 to 14 years old in 2022 showed that the prevalence

of STH decreased 83.3 per cent for the three pilot districts. Particularly, the prevalence of STH among school children in the Bozatau, Kungrad and Muynak districts decreased by at 83.3 per cent, 85.3 per cent and 50.0 per cent, respectively. In general the data shows that the prevalence of STH decreased from 12.6 per cent (as a baseline) to 1.7 per cent.

IV. PROGRAMMATIC REVISIONS

The Programme made the following budget adjustments in the Project Document through conducting the Project Board meeting. UNICEF mobilised additional resources in the amount of US\$ 150,000, for procuring medical waste management equipment for hospitals in the three target districts. The Programme's total budget increased from US\$ 3,550,273 (MPHSTF allocation – US\$ 3,498,784; UNICEF contribution – US\$ 51,489) to US\$ 3,700,273 (MPHSTF allocation – US\$ 3,498,784; UNICEF contribution – US\$ 201,489). Due to significant increases in prices for construction materials, fuel and lubricants, and for essential WASH and medical waste management equipment, the budget category under construction works increased up to US\$ 112,330, by allocating secured funds from other categories. As per the request of MoH Karakalpakstan it was agreed to cover all 131,000 adolescent girls of 10-17 years old of the Republic of Karakalpakstan (compared to the initial 10,000 from 3 districts), through the iron and folic acid supplementation campaign. It was also agreed to include the Karaozek and Takhtakopir districts, alongside the three target districts, in the deworming campaign for school children aged 7 to 14 years to cover 40,000 children (compared to the initial tar-

get of 26,000). As for the 'Social Skills Programme', its total budget increased from US\$ 65,300 to US\$ 78,500 with the aim of integrating the Programme into the school curriculum starting from the 2022-2023 academic year, which required additional trainings for school psychologists. The increased portion was covered by funds secured from the UPSHIFT programme. The adjustments in budget categories under the UNICEF component did not affect the overall planned budget. The target for the indicator on the number of schools covered by health education sessions in the Results Matrix has decreased from 108 to 82, based on the actual number of schools in the three target districts.

Under UNFPA's interventions, the total cost for Activity 1.5.3 increased from US\$ 33,500 to US\$ 41,560. The increased amount of US\$ 8,060 has been covered from secured funds under another budget category, not affecting the overall UNFPA budget.

All the targets indicated in the Results Framework have been achieved, and some targets have been overachieved.



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