unicef

for every child

Final Evaluation of the Programme **'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia'**

Evaluation Management team (UNICEF)

Beth Plowman	Oversight
Eduard Bonet Porqueras	Management
Mariel Kislig	Management support
Keitaro Hara	Management support

Evaluation team (IOD Parc)

Nur Abdelkhaliq Zamora	Team Leader
Olga Schetinina	Senior-Level Expert
Ima Bishop	Mid-Level Expert
Christina Torsein	Child Protection Technical Advisor
James Gomez	Regional Expert, Asia Centre
Nick York	quality control
Diksha Mahara	back-office support
Pragya Pokharel	back-office support
Vittoria Moresco	back-office support
Scott Cameron	back-office support

Evaluation In-country consultant Team

Malaysia	Dr Robin Ramcharan, Asia Centre
Myanmar	Dr James Gomez, Asia Centre
Thailand	Korbkusol Neelapaichit (Lek), Asia Centre
Bangladesh	Sharmin Begum
Kazakhstan	Albina Tortbayeva
Kyrgyzstan	Kulnara Djamankulova
Tajikistan	Boimourod Bobodjanov
Uzbekistan	Dr. Bakhrom Radjabov

Evaluation Reference Group

Alice Frigato	Programme manager, European Union
Nicola Brandt/ Severine Jacomy Vite	Programme coordinator, East Asia Pacific Regional Office
Koorosh Raffii/ Jane Mwangi	Regional adviser Evaluation, East Asia Pacific Regional Office
Danzhen You	Senior Adviser Statistics and Monitoring, Migration, Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, New York
Guzal Kamalova	Child Protection, Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
Jamila Akhter	Child Protection, Bangladesh
Aislu Bekmussa	Child Protection, Kazakhstan
Su-Anne Lee/Saskia Blume	Child Protection, Malaysia
Innocent Kaba	Child Protection – Migration, New York

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Boxes

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACWC	ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATD	Alternatives To Detention
CAM	Children Affected by Migration
CCCs	Core Commitments to Children in Humanitarian Action
CO	Country Office
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPSS	Child Protection Systems Strengthening
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DoA	Description of Action
EAPR(O)	East Asia and Pacific Region(al Office), UNICEF
ECAR(O)	East and Central Asia Region(al Office), UNICEF
ENOC	European Network of Children's Ombudspersons
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
GCR	Global Compact for Refugees
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HQ	Headquarters
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
KII	Key Informant Interview
LRRM	Local Referral and Response Mechanism, Tajikistan
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLD	National League for Democracy, Myanmar
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
RO	Regional Office
ROSA	Regional Office of South Asia, UNICEF
RPA	Regional Action Plan
RRRI	Rescue, Repatriation, Rehabilitation and Integration
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Southeast Asia
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SSEA	South and Southeast Asia
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UASC	Unaccompanied and Separated Children
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Glossary of Terms

Asylum-Seeker: "An individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum-seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which the claim is submitted. Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee was initially an asylum-seeker."[1]

Children Affected by Migration: The umbrella term for children who fall within the target groups of the UNICEF programme "Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia", which includes children affected by labour migration, trafficked children, refugee and asylum-seeking children, separated and unaccompanied children, documented and undocumented migrant children, internally displaced children and stateless children. Definitions for these categories are provided in this glossary of terms.

Children Affected by Labour Migration: Child migrant workers and children whose parents or primary caregivers have migrated as migrant workers. Children whose parents or primary care givers have migrated for work can also be referred to as 'children left behind' but this phrase can be controversial as it suggests children have been abandoned or neglected when in fact labour migration is a necessity. UNICEF has recently begun using the term 'children remaining behind' instead. Given the sensitives surrounding this phrase, the evaluation will adopt the term 'children affected by labour migration'.[2]

Children on the Move: "Children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers, and whose movement while it may open opportunities might also place them at risk (or increased risk) of economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence".[3]

Human Trafficking and Trafficked Children: "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation." Concerning children under the age of 18, the issue of consent is irrelevant as outlined in paragraph (c), "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered 'trafficking in persons' even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article".[4]

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): "Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular because of or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border".[5]

Mixed Migration Flows: Flows of people who are on the move for different reasons but make use of the same routes and means of transport to reach an overseas destination. Mixed flows can include refugees, asylum-seekers, trafficked persons, stateless persons, populations affected by humanitarian crises, unaccompanied or separated children, as well as other irregular migrants, and they will have varying needs and profiles. These groups are not mutually

1   UNHCR (2022) Master Glossary of Terms
2   UNICEF (2022) Definitions Related to Children on the Move
3   Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move (2013) The UN High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development 2013: Why Children Matter – Background Paper
4   OHCHR (2000) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime
5   OHCHR (1998) Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

exclusive as people often have more than one reason for leaving home.[6]

Refugee: "The 1951 Refugee Convention determines that a refugee is someone who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."[7]

Returnee: Refugees who have returned to their country or community of origin.[8] This term also applies to labour migrants who go back to their countries of origin.

Separated Children: "Children who have been separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may include children accompanied by other adult family members."[9]

Stateless Person: "A person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law, either because they never had a nationality, or because they lost it without acquiring a new one".[10]

Unaccompanied Children: "Children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so."[11] Sometimes this category of children is combined with separated children and referred to as unaccompanied and separated children (UASC).

A note on intersecting vulnerabilities: The UNICEF programme "Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia" targets a particular vulnerable group, namely, children affected by migration. Children affected by migration, and those in each subcategory (refugees and asylum-seekers, trafficked children, stateless children, children affected by labour migration) are at risk of economic and/or sexual exploitation, neglect, abuse and violence. This vulnerability intersects with other cross-cutting vulnerabilities that may place certain children affected by migration at even greater risk. These vulnerabilities include those relating to gender, legal status, disability, or belonging to a minority ethnic group, among others. Through this report, we refer to 'intersecting vulnerabilities' to understand the multiple layers of vulnerability and risk faced by children affected by migration.

---

6   UNHCR (2016) The 10-Point Plan in Action, 2016 - Glossary, December 2016, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/59e99eb94.html [accessed 28 April 2022]
7   UNHCR (2022) Master Glossary of Terms
8   UNHCR (2022) Master Glossary of Terms
9   OHCHR (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child
10   UNHCR (2022) Master Glossary of Terms
11   UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2005) General Comment No. 6

Executive Summary

This report presents the results of the final evaluation of the UNICEF programme Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia.

Implemented from 2018–2022, the programme covered eight countries (Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Tajikistan, Thailand and Uzbekistan) spanning three UNICEF regions, under the overall coordination of the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO). It was the first cross-regional programme implemented by UNICEF to support children affected by migration (CAM).

The CAM programme included countries of origin, transit and destination and incorporated all categories of children affected by migration, with the goal of ensuring that "children affected by migration are effectively protected and their rights are being progressively realized". This overall objective was approached from the angle of systems strengthening across the programme countries, and was structured around three outcomes:

▶ **Outcome 1:** Child protection systems, including alternatives to (immigration) detention, are inclusive of children affected by migration, including those trafficked.

▶ **Outcome 2:** Children affected by migration, including those trafficked, benefit from an enhanced enabling environment (policies and procedures) that provide better access to child protection systems.

▶ **Outcome 3:** Relevant international, regional, and national bodies recognize the rights of children affected by migration, including those trafficked.

The evaluation applied a theory-based approach, which supports the exploration of causal pathways between what achievements were made, as well as how and why they happened. Evaluation questions were structured around the core criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, gender equality and human rights.

Outcome harvesting allowed the team to identify what each UNICEF regional and country office considered to be the outcomes of the programme, to probe these outcomes through other data-collection methods, and to revisit the programme theory of change (ToC) based on these evidence streams as well as the final programme workplan.

Data collection was conducted between May and August 2022 using a mixed methods approach including document review, outcome harvesting workshops, key informant interviews and electronic surveys.

Overview of conclusions

Conclusion 1:

The programme was broadly relevant to the needs and priorities of regional and national partners in relation to CAM, and succeeded in raising the profile of CAM in policy agendas.

The implementation of the UNICEF CAM programme coincided with important developments on migration and displacement issues. Regional impetus was particularly notable in the South and Southeast Asia (SSEA) component of the programme, where the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration was a driving force for related processes in the region as well as at the level of national governments. While regional collaboration was not as prominent in Central Asia, the programme was successful in identifying issues of relevance for CAM that had not previously been prioritized in national agendas.

Alignment with national priorities was achieved in both regions, although the degree of alignment varied depending on individual contexts. Evidence generation was a particularly effective tool for identifying and assessing needs, and in ensuring the relevance of the programme's interventions.

Conclusion 2:

The choice to target all children affected by migration under a single category was helpful in some respects, but limited the programme's ability to identify and respond to specific needs and intersecting vulnerabilities.

On the one hand, the decision to target CAM as a whole allowed the programme to secure government buy-in and achieve results even in areas that were politically sensitive. It also allowed the two regions, and the countries within them, some degree of flexibility in targeting the sub-categories of CAM that were most pertinent in their contexts. On the other hand, the use of a single overarching category limited the programme's ability to identify and respond to the specificities of each category of CAM, as well as in its ability to systematically integrate intersecting vulnerabilities. Further disaggregation of CAM into sub-categories, as well as taking into account other intersecting vulnerabilities, would have allowed for a more tailored approach relevant to the needs of the most vulnerable CAM, as well as supporting the collection of monitoring data for measuring results and for learning.

Conclusion 3:

The programme was successful in adapting to changing context and situations, most notably the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

In response to the pandemic, the programme shifted to remote modalities, while the military coup in Myanmar required a shift from upstream to downstream activities. In response to these and other changes in context, the programme was able to pivot and continue delivery.

Conclusion 4:

The CAM programme met or exceeded many of its targets, and registered a number of significant achievements.

However, limitations in the monitoring framework constrain the programme's ability to accurately measure progress toward outcomes and impact. In SSEA, significant achievements were registered in the areas of alternatives to detention, children benefitting from formal care, and children being provided with child protection case management, as well as in regional support to the ASEAN Declaration and the development of the Regional Programme of Action. In Central Asia, achievements focused on alternatives to detention, children benefitting from formal kinship care in line with international standards, children provided with child protection case management services, and in regard to international declarations by Central Asian governments recognizing the needs of CAM. However, the evaluation identified challenges in measuring progress at a higher level of results stemming from weaknesses of the causal linkages devised in the programme's ToC and indicators, as they were not always appropriate for capturing the positive trajectory of the programme towards outcomes and impact.

Conclusion 5:

Overall, the programme took important steps to strengthen elements of the child protection systems in programme countries to better incorporate CAM.

However, comprehensive systems strengthening will require more time and continued investment. The approach taken by the programme is consistent with the overall UNICEF approach to child protection systems strengthening (CPSS) and has successfully drawn upon the agency's existing expertise in this area. While this bodes well for the prospect of continued work, comprehensive systems strengthening commensurate with the ambition of the programme's ToC will require longer to reach maturity.

Conclusion 6:

The evaluation found that UNICEF was in a strong position to advance the needs of CAM and to engage with relevant stakeholders at regional and national levels, supporting both efficiency and effectiveness.

UNICEF was well placed to catalyse its networks and connections with decision-makers, including across sectors such as health and education. Enabling factors supporting the effectiveness of the CAM programme were found to include UNICEF credibility as a United Nations agency as well as its technical expertise on child protection and systems strengthening.

Conclusion 7:

The programme successfully leveraged existing UNICEF programmes and structures. Overall, however, resources allocated were not commensurate with the programme's ambitions.

The programme was designed in a cost-aware manner and was not intended to be resource-heavy. In both regions, it successfully leveraged existing UNICEF approaches and structures. However, financial resources were often insufficient to meet the needs or comprehensively strengthen systems. Human resources, especially, were insufficient across the board, limiting results and placing undue burden on staff.

Conclusion 8:

The evaluation found limited evidence that the programme's monitoring systems were interoperable with government systems, and data sharing with government was limited. Reliability of data was also a challenge.

The evaluation found limited evidence of data sharing with government or other partners, which limits the potential for relevant programming, measuring of the impact of interventions, or understanding the needs of CAM in a comprehensive manner.

Conclusion 9:

In general, the CAM programme complemented and aligned strongly with the activities of partners.

However, it was implemented for too short a duration to achieve fully sustainable results. Within UNICEF, the programme influenced country office thinking on migration issues and their intersection with child protection and systems strengthening more broadly. The CAM programme was also found to complement the activities of partners from various stakeholder categories, which can create a multiplier effect as well as contributing to sustainability. Nonetheless, there is a risk that progress made under the CAM programme will not be sustained.

Recommendations

The evaluation offers ten recommendations building on efforts made to date by UNICEF country offices, regional offices, government partners and implementing partners to ensure that children affected by migration are effectively protected and their rights are being progressively realized.

Recommendation 1:
To more effectively build CP systems inclusive of CAM, UNICEF COs should continue to engage across government sectors and respective national migration groups to incorporate the following actions:

▶ Promote legislative and policy reform for children affected by migration, including ATD (working towards no child immigration detention); promote further partnerships between ministries of social affairs, justice and migration to provide concrete services to children in immigration detention/ children in detention; promote further partnerships between social affairs, justice and migration actors to encourage systems-strengthening initiatives.

▶ Promote standardized case management (with the use of PRIMERO where possible/desirable) focused on the best interests of the child, including guidance on cross-border coordination.

▶ Building on developments at national level, feed into regional and global processes with the support of UNICEF ROs and in collaboration with relevant international/regional entities.

Recommendation 2:
Promote standardized curricula for pre- and in-service training, including specific elements on CAM, so that these elements are fully integrated into social service workforce strengthening more generally (training for social workers, para-professionals, immigration officials, allied workers, community-child protection actors, including community child protection networks):

▶ Facilitate opportunities for universities and training centres in each country to receive further funding to carry out substantive, systemic trainings (in-person or remotely) with a focus on curricula development/ reform and standardization.

▶ In Central Asia, UNICEF COs and government partners should work with academic institutions to promote the dissemination and use of (relevant elements of) Columbia University's Department of Social Work module on CAM (being prepared for dissemination via Agora) for use by para-professionals, social workers and others.

▶ In Southeast Asia, utilize the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare to assist universities and training centres with curriculum reform and training of social workers and para-professionals in the region.

Recommendation 3:
Ensure that future country and regional studies on CAM incorporate research designs that allow for examining needs and/or differential impacts of interventions by category of CAM and accounting for intersecting vulnerabilities (e.g., gender, disability, ethnic background) and incorporating the voices of children affected by migration and their parents/ caregivers.

▶ Use the findings from these studies to adapt UNICEF CAM programming and monitoring practices to better capture the needs of CAM.

▶ Share findings with UNICEF migration networks and employ for advocacy at national and regional levels.

▶ Capitalize on participation in the Asia and Pacific Regional Reviews of GCM implementation for regional advocacy on CAM.

Recommendation 4:
Work in partnership with education, health and social policy teams in regional offices to promote an inter-sectoral approach to supporting CAM and their families.

▶ In Southeast Asia region, work with ASEAN to promote this inter-sectoral approach with member state governments.

Recommendation 5:
Incorporate activity lines specific to CAM within CPDs and annual work plans, building on areas of focus of this programme (alternatives to detention, case management mechanisms, social service workforce strengthening, kinship/guardianship practices, access to national child protection systems).

▶ Work in partnership with government (with a whole-of-government approach), United Nations agencies and civil society to promote these areas of focus.

Recommendation 6:
Establish data partnerships with other key stakeholders (e.g., UNHCR, IOM, Mixed Migration Centre) to better understand and address needs and data gaps relating to CAM.

Recommendation 7:
Provide technical guidance to COs/ ROs on CAM definitions, data disaggregation, and guidance on collecting, analysing and using (interoperable) data on CAM, including intersecting vulnerabilities.

Recommendation 8:
As part of overall child protection systems strengthening, encourage governments to undertake timely collection and appropriate disaggregation of data on children, including children affected by migration and intersecting vulnerabilities. This might be done in multiple ways, for example, by improving the functioning of existing systems (EMIS, HMIS, etc.).

Recommendation 9:
Develop guidance for cross-border information-sharing and case management, including family tracing and reunification (where it does not currently exist).

Recommendation 10:
Continue to seek out multi-year funding from the EU, international financial institutions and other relevant donors for child protection systems-strengthening initiatives with a focus on the inclusion of CAM in all relevant areas of UNICEF programming.

Introduction

This report presents the results of the final evaluation of the UNICEF programme *Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia* (henceforth referred to as the CAM programme), which was implemented from 2018–202 with co-funding from the European Union (EU) and UNICEF totalling EUR 12,720,827.[12] The programme covered eight countries (Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Tajikistan, Thailand and Uzbekistan) spanning three UNICEF regions, under the overall coordination of the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), and was the first cross-regional programme implemented by UNICEF to support children affected by migration (CAM).

The report begins by outlining the evaluation objectives and scope as well as the programmatic and normative frameworks that guided programme design and implementation. It then provides details of the evaluation framework and methodology, including limitations and mitigation measures adopted by the evaluation team, as well as normative and ethical considerations. Findings are presented separately for Southeast and South Asia and for Central Asia, organized according to the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC), namely: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability. Gender and human rights concerns are mainstreamed as appropriate. The report closes with conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.

---

12   EU contribution was EUR 10,973,891.85. UNICEF (2022) Annex III: Total Budget for the Action MIGR/2017/392-759 – Addendum n. 3, Amendment no. 4, 11 May 2022.

Objectives and scope of the evaluation

2.1 Overview of the programme

The CAM programme included countries of origin, transit and destination, and incorporated all categories of children affected by migration, including those who are on the move because of trafficking, children affected by labour migration and stateless children.

The programme sought to ensure "that children affected by migration are effectively protected and their rights are being progressively realized".[13] This overall objective was approached from the angle of systems strengthening across the programme countries, and was structured around three outcomes:

▶ **Outcome 1:** Child protection systems, including alternatives to (immigration) detention, are inclusive of children affected by migration, including those trafficked.

▶ **Outcome 2:** Children affected by migration, including those trafficked, benefit from an enhanced enabling environment (policies and procedures) that provide better access to child protection systems.

▶ **Outcome 3:** Relevant international, regional, and national bodies recognize the rights of children affected by migration, including those trafficked.

The theory of change (ToC) for the programme (see annex 3) was revised and refined as part of the evaluability assessment completed in 2020. The evaluability assessment noted that whilst the programme description of action did not have an explicit ToC, it clearly identified the programme's desired impact, outcomes and objectives. [14] The ToC was developed based on the programme log frame; and it maps out the outcomes listed above against outputs and activities. The programme ToC is designed to test variances in how the programme was implemented and adapted to each country context.

The ToC places strong emphasis on systems strengthening, notably through building the capacity of national authorities that encounter or provide services to CAM as well as strengthening policies and procedures at country level to ensure CAM can access quality child protection services. Additionally, there was a regional dimension that aimed to secure the commitment of national and regional bodies with respect to CAM.

The programme was aligned with UNICEF programmatic and normative frameworks including its Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, six-point policy agenda on migration and Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move, and is consistent with the spirit of the EU Communication on the Protection

13   UNICEF (2017) Annex 1: Description of Action, MIGR/2017/392-759, "Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia"
14   Apland, K. and C. Hamilton (2020) Evaluability Assessment of the "Protecting children affected by migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia" Programme, full draft report

of Children in Migration.[15] The programme proposal was framed considering the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants of 2016 and the UNICEF Global Framework on Children on the Move.[16]

For many years UNICEF has promoted a system-strengthening approach to child protection. Its recently released child protection strategy, 2021–2030 makes specific reference to CAM as well as to the prevention of childhood statelessness and the linkages with forced displacement, right to nationality and birth registration.[17] Within the child protection systems approach, "UNICEF has prioritized the planning, development and support of the social service workforce to prevent and respond to the exploitation and abuse of all children at the national level, including children on the move."[18]

The focus on strengthening national child protection systems promotes a continuity of care for children throughout their migration journey, including in the country of origin, transit and destination. Key to this approach – in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UNICEF Core Commitments to Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) – is a focus on working towards high quality, universal service provision. Technical support and advocacy with government authorities and service providers to address the needs of CAM is key, including enabling access to quality services, independent of migration/citizenship status.

2.2 Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation covers the full programme cycle and was undertaken between January 2022 and February 2023, having overlapped with the final 12 months of the programme. The programme was initially expected to run until June 2022, but an extension was granted for implementation to 18 December 2022 – in particular to account for the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.[19]

The evaluation assessed programme implementation in each of the eight programme countries as well as at regional level in South and Southeast Asia (SSEA) and the Europe and Central Asia region (ECAR). Given the broad focus of the programme on all categories of CAM, the evaluation examined how these categories were addressed by the programme, in addition to taking gender, inclusion and intersectionality considerations into account.

All stakeholder groups relevant to programme implementation were engaged during the evaluation. These included UNICEF staff at country, regional and headquarters (HQ) levels, implementing partners, government counterparts, other United Nations agencies and regional actors (where relevant) and frontline and social workers. As agreed during the inception phase, the evaluation did not include the participation of children affected by migration or their parents/carers. This decision was based on the predominant focus of the programme on systems change, as well as ethical considerations related to the overall vulnerability of CAM.

---

15   European Commission (2017) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The Protection of Children, Brussels 12.4.2017, COM (2017) 211 final

16   Further details on programmatic and normative frameworks are provided in Annex 2: Programme Background and Context

17   UNICEF (2021) Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030, p. 38.

18   Ibid, p.40.

19   UNICEF (2022) Flash Update #8: Highlights 19 December – 3 June 2022 (MIGR/2017/392-759)

Evaluation framework and methodology

The framework for the evaluation is set out in the evaluation matrix (see annex 4), which maps the evaluation questions against criteria, indicators, data sources and data collection methods. The matrix also served as the basis for the design of the data collection tools (see annex 8) and for the coding structure used for data triangulation and analysis. See table 1 below for the evaluation questions.

This approach allowed the team to triangulate between these evidence streams, and to ensure a consistent approach to data collection and analysis across programme countries and regions. This in turn allowed the team to establish a clear evidence chain for the findings.

3.1 Methodological design

The evaluation applied a theory-based approach, which supports the exploration of causal pathways between what achievements were made, as well as how and why they happened.

The CAM programme had a strong focus on activities related to capacity-building and technical assistance to support systems strengthening, as well as related work on influencing and advocacy. These types of interventions often require extended timeframes to be fully realized and rely on step changes; for example, the introduction of new legislation will need time to translate into results. As such, a theory-based approach is particularly well-suited for this

type of programme because it allows for documenting progress towards programme objectives that may not be fully realized but for which necessary building blocks have been put in place. This approach also helps to understand reasons for delayed or limited results, and aspects that may be specific to each context (e.g., the February 2021 military coup in Myanmar). This is particularly important in the context of COVID-19, since the pandemic posed significant challenges and constraints.

To support the revisiting of the ToC, the evaluation team applied an outcome harvesting approach at the outset of the data-collection process (see below for detail on methods). Outcome harvesting is helpful in collecting evidence of changes that happened during programme implementation, and to retrospectively assess how the programme contributed to these changes. Outcomes identified through this process may or may not correspond with the outcomes that are embodied in a programme's ToC and/or results framework, which is helpful in documenting achievements that would otherwise not be captured.

Outcome harvesting allowed the team to identify what each UNICEF regional and country office considered to be the outcomes of the programme, to probe these outcomes through other data-collection methods and to revisit the ToC based on these evidence streams as well as the final programme workplan.

Table 1: Evaluation criteria and questions

Evaluation Criterion	Evaluation Question
Relevance	**Q1** To what extent was the programme aligned with regional and country-level needs and priorities?
	Q2 To what extent and in what manner did the programme prioritize equity and the needs of the most vulnerable groups?
	Q3 During implementation, what efforts were taken to ensure that the programme remained relevant to/adapted as needed to the needs of rights-holders?
	Q4 To what extent was the evidence generation component pertinent and added value to existing research pieces? How did it inform programming?
Effectiveness	**Q5** To what extent and how did the programme components achieve expected progress within the expected timeframe?
	Q6 To what degree has the programme contributed to / strengthened the capacity of national child protection systems to protect children affected by migration effectively?
	Q7 How did the monitoring system across countries contribute to effectiveness? Is it built with / interoperable with government systems or is it standalone?
	Q8 What have been the main factors that facilitated or hindered the programme?
Efficiency	**Q9** To what extent has UNICEF applied a cost-effective approach when implementing programme activities?
	Q10 To what extent and how has the availability and use of resources facilitated or affected the implementation of interventions?
Coherence	**Q11** How did interventions draw from, expand on and complement existing programmes and partnerships?
	Q12 To what extent was the programme aligned with activities, approaches and responses of partners at the regional and country levels?
	Q13 What role and position has UNICEF played at regional and country levels on protecting children affected by migration and how well aligned were these to the organization's comparative advantage?
	Q14 How well have vulnerabilities of relevance to this programme (categories of children affected by migration, gender and disability) been integrated into the programme implementation?
Sustainability	**Q15** To what extent has the programme succeeded in placing the rights of children affected by migration on the agenda of national governments and regional governance bodies?
	Q16 To what extent are the results of the programme, and of the systems-strengthening work, sustainable and resilient to risk?
Gender Equality	How were the differential needs of boys and girls affected by migration considered in the analysis, planning and implementation of the programmatic interventions?
Human Rights	In what way did the action contribute to UNICEF efforts to ensure that all States meet their obligations to monitor and implement children's rights?

3.1.1 Gender, equity and human rights-based approach

The three regions and eight countries covered by the programme experience diverse mixed migration flows and a varying focus on the needs of different categories of CAM depending on country context and priorities.

As outlined below, the evaluation team engaged with targeted stakeholder groups in each country and region, as well as others who were relevant to the work on migration and child protection at national, regional and international levels. Data collection tools were adapted to be relevant to each stakeholder type in terms of scope and focus. The tools were also made available in Bangla, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Malay, Myanmar language, Tajik, Thai, Russian and Uzbek.

Gender, intersecting vulnerabilities and human rights considerations were mainstreamed in the evaluation matrix, data collection tools and in coding and analysis templates, and these considerations are also highlighted in the findings presented throughout this report. In addition to triangulating data from various data sources against the gender and human rights questions contained in the evaluation matrix, the evaluation team examined the extent to which gender-disaggregated results were available, and additionally explored the differential impact of the programme's interventions on boys and girls as well as on different categories of CAM.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

3.2.1 Data collection methods

Data collection was conducted between May and August 2022. The team applied a mixed methods approach to collecting and triangulating qualitative and quantitative data from a range of sources. Data collection methods included:

Document review. Conducted in three phases: an initial review of programme documents during the design of the evaluation; an in-depth review of regional- and country-level data during the data collection phase; and a final batch during the revision of the draft evaluation report. Annex 7 presents a list of documents consulted and coded, as well as those that were used as references in the report.

Outcome harvesting workshops. Carried out with staff who were closest to programme implementation in each UNICEF country and regional programme office. A total of 10 workshops with 31 UNICEF staff were conducted.

Key informant interviews (KIIs): KIIs were the main tool used for primary qualitative data collection, and were conducted both in person and remotely. A total of 151 KIIs were conducted with stakeholders ranging from UNICEF country and regional office staff (as well as a small number of HQ staff), government counterparts, implementing partners, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations and regional organizations, the European Union, and frontline workers. Annex 6 provides details of KII participants who consented to their names being listed in the evaluation report. KIIs were conducted in English and in the local languages of each country as appropriate.

Electronic surveys: Two electronic surveys were used to gather quantitative data to supplement other evaluation data streams. The first was aimed at programme implementing partners and the second was administered to frontline and social workers who benefitted from training conducted under the CAM programme. The electronic surveys were made available in ten languages: Bangla, English, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Malay, Myanmar language, Tajik, Thai, Russian and Uzbek. For further details on survey questions and response rates, refer to annex 8.

Table 2: Overview of data collection methods and coverage

	Interviews and consultations								Online survey			FGD/workshops
	151 Kits with UNICEF staff and external stakeholders								2 survey tools, 87 respondents (50 frontline and social workers) (37 implementing partner staff)			31 outcome harvesting workshops with UNICEF staff
	FSW	Gov	UN/EDU	CSOs	Regionals	IPs	UNICEF		FSW	IPs		
Bangladesh	0	4	0	0	0	4	4	**12**	9	9	**17**	3
Kazakhstan	3	5	3	0	0	5	2	**18**	2	3	**5**	3
Kyrgykistan	5	5	2	0	0	5	3	**20**	1	2	**3**	4
Malaysia	0	2	1	0	0	5	4	**12**	8	3	**11**	3
Myanmar	2	0	2	0	0	8	3	**15**	8	8	**16**	4
Tajikistan	0	6	3	0	0	8	4	**21**	4	2	**6**	3
Thailand	0	5	1	0	0	9	3	**18**	7	7	**14**	4
Uzbekistan	1	4	0	0	0	2	5	**12**	11	3	**14**	4
EAPRO	0	4	5	3	1	0	4	**17**				1
ECARO	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	**3**				2
Global	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	**6**				0
	11	**35**	**17**	**3**	**4**	**46**	**38**					

Data analysis and triangulation were undertaken between September and December 2022. To ensure data analysis consistency across the team, the team developed a dedicated coding tree to organize and systematize data sources for the findings.

3.2.2 Methodological limitations

KIIs and surveys. The evaluation was heavily reliant on UNICEF counterparts to secure access to stakeholders. The sampling for KIIs was drawn from stakeholder lists provided by UNICEF, and in some countries, the evaluation was dependent on country offices (COs) to advise on the stakeholders the evaluation team could engage given various sensitivities. While the evaluation team was able to reach out directly to most implementing partners to solicit their participation in KIIs, others could only be reached through UNICEF as an intermediary. This arrangement meant that the evaluation team had less engagement with some stakeholders. There was limited participation in the process of reaching out to stakeholders, with greatest impact on the two electronic surveys. Most implementing partners

were contacted directly to ask for participation, with a few instances where COs were the conduit for inviting IPs to participate. For the Frontline and Social Workers Survey, however, in three countries, the survey was either sent by UNICEF COs (Myanmar) or through UNICEF COs to government counterparts (Thailand and Tajikistan). For these countries, as well as for Kyrgyzstan (where the organizations that provided the training to frontline workers were asked to distribute the surveys), the evaluation team did not receive information on how many people the survey was sent to – and hence could not estimate response rates for these countries.

In addition, the evaluation did not secure the participation of all relevant stakeholders in some countries. For example, no frontline workers participated in KIIs in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Tajikistan or Thailand; no United Nations agencies were interviewed in Bangladesh or Uzbekistan; and mixed participation of government counterparts and implementing partners was achieved in the programme countries. Reasons for these gaps included reluctance to participate given sensitivities related to CAM issues, non-response or refusal to participate in data

collection, and the list of stakeholders provided to the evaluation team, which did not contain consistent categories across countries. Even though some element of variation is expected depending on programme design in each country, this variation resulted in uneven coverage of stakeholder groups. Nonetheless, triangulation on the existing sources of evidence (in-method and across-method) mitigated the impact of this limitation and no substantial gaps were identified in stakeholder coverage.

Following interviews, some participating stakeholders in Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand expressed a desire to ensure that their views had been appropriately understood and considered. Notes from these interviews were therefore shared with and reviewed by stakeholders, which in some cases resulted in the removal of sensitive information as well as withdrawing consent to include their names in the list of interviewees in annex 6 of the report.

Document review. There was a multi-stage process for the selection of documentation for this evaluation, which resulted in the late identification of additional documents that had not been available to the evaluation team at the time of evaluation design, or data coding and analysis. Documents were shared by CAM programme counterparts with the UNICEF Evaluation Office, which in turn sifted and selected documentation to provide to the evaluation team in coordination with the CAM programme manager. During the revision of the draft report, an additional batch of key documents was identified and shared with the evaluation team. This meant that an added process of selection of relevant documents was undertaken prior to finalising the Evaluation Report, which resulted in the need to incorporate further analysis and triangulation alongside making revisions. These added time to the completion of the evaluation though ultimately led it to draw on a more comprehensive evidence base.

Institutional memory and availability of UNICEF staff. There were some instances where staff turnover, both within UNICEF and in government counterparts and IP organizations, meant that there was limited institutional memory on the CAM programme. This limitation was mitigated where possible by engaging with stakeholders who could be reached and were willing to participate.

In the East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) and the Region of South Asia office (ROSA), the evaluation encountered challenges related to lack of availability of staff and reluctance to participate due to a lack of knowledge about the programme. However, in collaboration with the programme coordinator, the evaluation team was able to ensure a robust sample that provided adequate and complementary insight into the programme, despite not securing the engagement of all KII stakeholders. In ECAR, the KII sample was smaller due to the Ukraine response, which meant some key stakeholders were unavailable to participate. While the evaluation did gather good quality data on the ECAR elements, the relatively small sample remains a limitation.

Additional issues. The theory-based approach adopted for this evaluation and commitment to a participatory approach meant that the team drew on UNICEF programme staff for their inputs at several stages of the evaluation process, engaging with them twice and in some cases three times. Even though this approach is conducive to a robust design and possibility for triangulation and validation, it also means that the evaluation places a higher burden on respondents and must be implemented over a longer timeframe to ensure the iterative reflection on inputs at various stages.

In some countries, permissions were required from government to launch data collection and to engage with government counterparts. This process resulted in some degree of delay to launching data collection with stakeholders external to UNICEF, which was mitigated with the staged approach of conducting outcome harvesting workshops in the first instance with UNICEF staff in lieu of permissions being secured.

3.2.3 Norms and standards

The evaluation was informed by the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis and in accordance with the UNICEF Strategic Guidance Note on Institutionalizing Ethical Practice for UNICEF Research, the UNICEF Policy on Conduct Promoting the Protection and Safeguarding of Children, and the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). In addition, IOD PARC has its own code of conduct (see annex 11) that all team members abided by during the evaluation process.

The evaluation methodology was reviewed and approved by an institutional review board; see annex 10 for further details.

The overall approach was grounded on the principles of impartiality, credibility, responsibility, honesty and integrity in order to foster an independent evaluation of the highest quality standards. Table 4 outlines how ethical considerations were integrated in the evaluation.

Table 3: Ethical considerations

Approach	Obligation to participants as per UNEG guidelines
Adherence to international guidelines and standards: The evaluation team and evaluation manager agreed that the evaluation would not engage with children and would only engage with adult stakeholders, in-person as far as possible. This approach varied by country depending on each country's COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines and the preferences of participants. In addition, we provided information in consent forms for all data collection methods for participants to raise sensitive issues to UNICEF.	▶ Compliance with codes for vulnerable groups ▶ Avoidance of harm
Ethical approval: The evaluation methodology was approved by an external independent institutional review board during the inception phase.	▶ Compliance with codes for vulnerable groups ▶ Respect for dignity and diversity
Privacy and confidentiality: All evaluation participants were assured that their confidentiality would be protected, and information fully kept private as allowable by law.	▶ Confidentiality ▶ Avoidance of harm ▶ Fair representation
Anonymity: The names and other identifiable features of any person involved with the evaluation process are not referenced or attributed in the main evaluation report and all participants were made aware of this in advance of their participation. A list of persons interviewed is included in annex 6 (provided consent was given for names to be included).	▶ Confidentiality ▶ Avoidance of harm
Consent: All participants were provided with clear information about the evaluation process in their local language. Verbal consent was sought regarding their participation and their right to withdraw at any time.	▶ Respect for dignity and diversity ▶ Fair representation
Compensation: Participants were not provided with financial compensation but were made aware of the uses of the evaluation prior to the data collection and are given acknowledgement (by stakeholder group) in this report, as well as having access to the final report once it is made publicly available by UNICEF.	▶ Redress
Referral process and post interview support: The consent forms employed for the evaluation included information on predetermined referral processes, which were agreed with the UNICEF evaluation manager during the inception phase.	▶ Avoidance of harm ▶ Confidentiality

Findings

The evaluation findings are presented in line with the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability. Information is grouped thematically according to the evaluation questions, beginning with Southeast and South Asia and followed by Central Asia.

4.1 Southeast and South Asia

4.1.1 Relevance

This section addresses the extent to which the programme was found to be relevant to country and regional priorities, the individual needs of the most vulnerable children, and changes in context and needs. Under this criterion, the evaluation also assessed the extent to which the generation of new evidence was pertinent and added value to existing research.

Q1 | To what extent was the programme aligned with regional and country-level needs and priorities?

Finding 1:
Although the programme was overall well aligned to national and regional priorities, changes in the implementation context in Malaysia and Myanmar caused the degree of relevance to fluctuate at the national level.

The UNICEF CAM programme was implemented at a time of significant shifts at global, regional and national levels with regard to migration and displacement issues, notably in relation to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact on Migration (GCM). The programme has strong alignment with the GCM in particular, to which all programme countries in SSEA have committed. Both Thailand and Bangladesh are GCM Champion Countries. At the regional level, the programme supported Thailand as chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2019. UNICEF provided technical support to the drafting and adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration (ASEAN Declaration) and its associated Regional Plan of Action on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration (RPA). In this regard, the programme aligned with Thailand's decision to introduce a strong focus on CAM during its tenure as ASEAN chair and successfully raised the profile of the protection needs of CAM across the region.

The degree of programme alignment at country level is nuanced and must be considered on a case-by-case basis given the unique migration contexts and political sensitivities of each programme country. In Thailand and Bangladesh, the programme demonstrated very strong alignment with government objectives, while alignment fluctuated to a greater degree in Malaysia and Myanmar.

Thailand is a major country of transit and destination for migrant workers and refugees. In Thailand, KIIs and documents reviewed illustrated that government stakeholders were highly supportive of the programme,[20] reflecting Thailand's positioning as a regional champion on the issue of CAM. A strong majority (79 per cent) of implementing partner (IP) survey respondents in Thailand agreed that the programme "fully/completely" aligned with government priorities.

Even before the programme, the Government of Thailand took important steps to strengthen the protection of CAM. UNICEF staff and IPs highlighted the efforts of the Ministry of Education and the Office of Basic Education Commission to guarantee the access of CAM to education opportunities through universal access to the primary education system, self-reliance skills and vocational training for all children regardless of their status. Outcome harvesting and KIIs illustrated that the CAM programme supported the Thai government in operationalizing these policy commitments by helping children of migrant workers and stateless children to access formal education. In 2016, Thailand committed to ending child immigration detention. The CAM programme built upon this agenda, supporting the Government of Thailand in the development, implementation and monitoring of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to end the detention of refugee and migrant children.

Bangladesh is a source country for labour migration and experiences high levels of human trafficking. Climate change has also resulted in internal and external displacement and a large number of internal migrant children. Cross-border trafficking is a particular concern of the government and children living in street situations (many of whom are internal migrant children) are a priority of the prime minister.[21] The CAM programme strongly aligned with these priorities through: capacity-building of frontline workers and border guards who encounter trafficked children; strengthening of the rescue, repatriation, rehabilitation and integration

(RRRI) taskforce and case management system for trafficked children; and through the provision of service hubs for children living in street situations. Indeed, the document review and KIIs demonstrated that the Government of Bangladesh was highly supportive of the programme,[22] and 72 per cent of IPs surveyed agreed that the programme "fully/completely" aligned with the government's priorities on migration.

Myanmar is primarily a source country for migration and experiences high levels of labour migration, trafficking, and latterly, internal as well as forced displacement. In Myanmar, the extent of programme alignment with national priorities was acutely affected by the military coup in February 2021 (see Box 1),[23] which saw a change in leadership from a civilian government to a de facto authority led by the military.

Prior to the coup, CAM were not historically a government priority. However, as a result of UNICEF advocacy during the preparation of the programme,

---

Box 1: Note on Myanmar military coup

On 1 February 2021, the Myanmar military staged a coup d'état. The country is now experiencing a deep humanitarian, political and economic crisis. As a result of the ongoing conflict, around 1.5 million people have been displaced and thousands of people, including children, have been jailed, tortured and killed.

The United Nations follows a policy of non-engagement with de facto authorities and does not recognize Myanmar's military government as a legitimate authority. Consequently, upstream activities, including advocacy and government capacity-building, were suspended.

---

20   UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment: Thailand Country Report

21   UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment: Bangladesh Country Report

22   Ibid

23   Box 1 source: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) Second Anniversary of the Myanmar Coup: Foreign Minister's Joint Statement.

the National League for Democracy (NLD) government demonstrated a willingness to work with UNICEF on issues affecting CAM.[24] This commitment was demonstrated in the first two years of the programme, during which senior officials were involved in a variety of programme interventions such as a MoU between Thailand and Myanmar on strengthening cooperation on the protection of CAM,[25] the drafting of the Child Rights Law,[26] and the regulation of a formal foster care system with the potential to benefit unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). The programme supported strong working relationships between the government and United Nations agencies through anti-trafficking focus groups and advocacy efforts with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Settlement.

Following the coup in 2021, UNICEF no longer engages with the de facto authorities in Myanmar, and the programme's upstream activities were suspended. Given the lack of government legitimacy (see Box 1), UNICEF and the programme do not seek to align with government priorities. Reflecting this, survey data show that 28 per cent of IP respondents 'did not know' if the programme aligned with the government's priorities. Notable examples of non-alignment include reporting by external (non-UNICEF) stakeholders that the military government has stopped engaging with its Thai counterpart on cross-border trafficking agreed under the MOU.

For example, following the coup, the military government reimposed the policy of prosecuting the Rohingya under the country's immigration law, overturning the April 2020 moratorium and the Child Rights Law, the development of which the CAM programme had supported. IPs working with Rohingya communities expressed particular concern for their beneficiaries. UNICEF support to internally displaced people (IDPs) and children in conflict with the law runs counter to these approaches.

Similarly, the programme's degree of alignment in Malaysia is nuanced as a result of government positioning on issues related to migration (see Box 2). Sixty-six per cent of respondents in the IP survey stated that the programme was "partially" aligned with government priorities, while 33 per cent stated it was "not aligned". KII data from external stakeholders corroborate this.

Nonetheless, as supported by UNICEF staff KIIs and programme documents, there are some areas of alignment with government priorities. The programme was well aligned in relation to child protection, child marriage and disability, which are concerns that intersect with CAM issues. For example, the programme's mapping of the social service workforce in relation to child protection[27] aligns with the government's focus on strengthening the social

24   UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment: Myanmar Country Report
25   The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2020) Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on Strengthening the Cooperation to Protection Children Affected by Migration
26   Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2019) The Child Rights Law Unofficial Translation
27   UNICEF and Child Frontiers (2021) Social Service Workforce Strengthening: Mapping and Review of the Social Service Workforce in Malaysia Inception Report

service workforce, including for child protection and anti-trafficking. There are evident synergies for particular groups of CAM, such as trafficked children and children in immigration detention. On anti-trafficking, UNICEF supported the government in the development of national guidelines on human trafficking indicators and provided input for the National Action Plan on Anti-Trafficking in Persons (2021–2025).[28] This process resulted in the National Action Plan being more inclusive of the needs of children, and included for the first time a specific strategic goal and programme area on combatting child trafficking, with provisions on eradicating child labour and activities relating to children affected by migration.[29] The programme also aligned with and supported the government's commitment to implement an alternative to detention (ATD) pilot for unaccompanied children in immigration detention, which forms part of its pledge as a Human Rights Council member and is outlined in the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development's strategic plan, 2021–2025. Under the programme, UNICEF conducted a mapping exercise of children in immigration detention centres and shelters for trafficked children.[30] Overall, this shows that despite a lack of political 'buy-in' in certain areas, the programme has identified important entry points to strengthen the protection of certain categories of CAM.

Box 2: Note on Malaysia's Political Context

Migration is a highly sensitive issue in Malaysia. The country is not a signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol and does not have a legal or administrative framework to manage refugees. Migrant, refugee, stateless and undocumented children, including those whose births are not registered, are largely excluded from access to government services. Throughout the programme there have been frequent immigration raids by the government. Malaysia has been in a period of political upheaval throughout the duration of programme; the government has changed four times over the implementation period. These shifts have caused delays to programming, as UNICEF had to establish relationships with new counterparts and secure political buy-in from each administration. The programme's commencement was initially delayed because the government declined to participate in the programme in 2018. The subsequent Pakatan Harapan government reversed this decision, allowing implementation to move forward in 2019. However, the change in government in 2020, and again in 2021, resulted in changes in government counterparts, policies and priorities with each new administration.

---

28   Government of Malaysia (2021) National Action Plan on Anti-Trafficking in Persons (2021-2025)
29   UNICEF (2022) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia 4th Interim Report
30   UNICEF (2022) Supporting National Systems and Building Partnerships and Capacity for the Protection of Children Affected by Migration: Establishing Alternatives to Child Immigration Detention

Q2 | To what extent and in what manner did the programme prioritize equity and the needs of the most vulnerable groups?

Finding 2:

In each country in SSEA, the programme was well targeted to the needs of the most pertinent groups of CAM. However, analysis and prioritization of intersecting vulnerabilities was weaker.

The programme used "children affected by migration" as a broad umbrella term to refer to all children on the move, children affected by labour migration and stateless children (see Glossary of Terms). As illustrated through programme documents[31] and KIIs, this approach was selected so that the programme could address all the ways in which children are affected by migration across the region. The approach aimed to ensure that the programme could be tailored to the needs of the most pertinent sub-groups of CAM in each programme country, and in some cases secure political buy-in where there may be sensitivity to specific CAM groups.

Overall, this approach was successful, allowing UNICEF COs to identify and tailor interventions to the most vulnerable CAM within their local contexts. As countries of destination and transit, Thailand and Malaysia have been able to include a strong focus on refugee and asylum-seeking children, migrant children, trafficked children, and undocumented and stateless children who experience marginalization and barriers to accessing national services as a result of their status.[32] Bangladesh was able to concentrate efforts on supporting children living in street situations, many of whom are internal migrant children who do not have access to services in Dhaka.[33] This focus also allowed Bangladesh to take a more regional approach to cross-border trafficking with

India, to which children living in cities and border regions are vulnerable. In Myanmar, the programme was able to support children involved in cross-border migration to Thailand, and latterly to internally displaced children in conflict with the law, whose needs and vulnerability increased because of the military coup. Both internal and external stakeholders believed that the programme had adequately identified the most vulnerable groups of CAM in each country context. However, in Myanmar both UNICEF staff and IPs consistently noted that the programme would have benefitted from a focus on children affected by labour migration. Given Myanmar's status as a country of origin, this is a clear gap in programme design.

The CAM target groups and their needs were identified through evidence generation activities and needs assessments undertaken in Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Bangladesh. This helped to address gaps in data on CAM and a lack of evidence on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of sub-groups at the start of the programme.[34] Research and needs assessments assisted UNICEF in further tailoring programme activities to the protection needs of the most vulnerable groups.

For example, in parallel to the establishment of a children's activity centre in Sabah, Malaysia, UNICEF undertook a needs assessment of children living in street situations who would be supported by the centre,[35] with a view to ensuring that the needs of stateless and migrant children accessing the centre were adequately accommodated. In Bangladesh, the programme initially proposed targeting the influx of Rohingya children displaced from Myanmar to Cox's Bazaar, but the focus was later shifted to the national level at the request of the EU (see efficiency). Although Bangladesh CO did not originally include formal evidence generation activities in its

---

31   UNICEF (2017) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Annex 1 – Description of Action; UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment

32   UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment Annex 3 Country Reports

33   Bangladesh is also a country of destination and the host of a Rohingya refugee population in Cox's Bazaar. However, this was not part of the CAM programme.

34   UNICEF (2017) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Annex 1 – Description of Action

35   University of Malaysia (2021) Contract Research on the Needs Assessment Study for the Setting up of an Activity Centre for Children in Street Situations in Kota Kinabalu

programme design, UNICEF staff and IPs praised the use of needs assessments to understand how programme funds could best be applied following the change of programming from Cox's Bazaar to the national level.

Across all four countries, IPs reported that they had additionally applied their own existing knowledge and needs assessments to identify programme beneficiaries and shared this information with UNICEF. Many IPs undertook their own vulnerability analyses to help target services to the most vulnerable beneficiaries. Nationality and economic status were the most frequently cited determinants of the level of support that CAM required. Ongoing identification of needs was supported through the project advisory committee (PAC) in each country. The PAC provided a forum for all stakeholders working with CAM to share information and adjust project activities to emerging needs (see under 'effectiveness').

The programme's conceptualization of CAM as an overarching category of vulnerable children also had drawbacks. Notably, it meant the programme was weaker in identifying and prioritizing intersecting vulnerabilities such as gender and disability and analysing how these may result in some CAM being more vulnerable than others. (Although all evidence generation activities included some degree of gender analysis, the evaluation did not find clear evidence of how this analysis was translated into programme implementation.) For example, potential considerations could have included the ways in which child marriage impacts girls affected by migration, the fact that boys may be more likely to miss out on educational opportunities than girls, or that children living with disabilities face additional barriers accessing services.

There are some examples of individual IPs having considered intersecting vulnerabilities. For example, one IP in Thailand highlighted that gender, economic status and ethnicity are all considerations for their programme design in the education sector. However, the evaluation did not find evidence of a systematic approach being applied across SSEA programme countries.

The exception to this trend is Malaysia, where UNICEF staff demonstrated a clear commitment to mainstreaming gender and disability considerations across programme implementation. For example, there were notable efforts to translate gender dimensions from evidence generation activities into the design of programme activities as well as policy advocacy, engagement and development, and the children's activity centre in Sabah was designed to be accessible to children with disabilities.

Q3 | During implementation, what efforts were taken to ensure that the programme remained relevant to/adapted as needed to the needs of rights-holders?

Finding 3:

The programme demonstrated strong adaptive programming, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the military coup in Myanmar. However, reaching the most marginalized rights-holders was a challenge.

In SSEA, the programme experienced two major events that directly impacted programming: the COVID-19 pandemic and the military coup in Myanmar in February 2021. In response to both of these events, UNICEF adapted to ensure that interventions remained responsive to the emerging needs of rights-holders.

The COVID-19 pandemic was cited as a major challenge by all stakeholder groups encountered by the evaluation. The pandemic increased the needs of rights-holders because the shift of many services, such as education and healthcare, to remote modalities increased barriers to access. Meanwhile, the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic, such as loss of income-generating opportunities, increased the marginalization of already vulnerable communities. This particularly affected children of migrant workers and children affected by labour migration.

As a result of the pandemic, UNICEF COs adapted by addressing the need for delivering immediate and vital services. Services such as children's education were provided remotely. IPs with research-based activities or legal aid organizations were also able to divert some funds to provide for more immediate supplies to those infected or isolated.[36]

Although remote engagement with rights-holders did allow the continuation of programme activities, it should be noted that this modality brings a host of ethical issues. For instance, online engagement is not a suitable forum for discussing sensitive topics, as the safeguarding of participants cannot be guaranteed. Additionally, members of marginalized communities or those in remote areas may not be able to access the internet. A clear theme emerging from IP interviews and programme documentation suggests that remote modalities made it more complicated for IPs to reach the most vulnerable rights-holders. For example, in Sabah, online education activities proved a challenge as children experienced connectivity issues and families could not always access data or devices for their children to attend lessons.[37] Although IPs were able to mitigate this by organizing online group sessions for participants near their communities, this was further complicated by the risk of infection due to COVID-19. As such, while remote activities were appropriate for research and training activities (see 4.1.2.3), they were not aways suitable for service delivery to vulnerable populations.

In Myanmar, the programme now focuses on downstream service provision to rights-holders, as discussed above. This shift was highly appropriate since the coup and resulting conflict has significantly increased the numbers and needs of vulnerable rights-holders. IPs responded by increasing the provision of food, medical supplies and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), as well as livelihoods support and vocational training.

UNICEF Myanmar was prompt in identifying emerging needs and flexibly adapting programme activities to respond. For example, as outlined above, Rohingya children have an increased need for legal assistance; the programme responded by funding IPs to provide legal support to children in conflict with the law. In 2021, 938 children (478 boys and 460 girls) including 360 Rohingya children received legal assistance through IP lawyers.[38] Overall, these adaptions have been successful. However, there remains an ongoing challenge in ensuring resources are sufficient to address increased needs, which were not forecast in the programme's original planning.

---

36   Further discussion on changes in response to COVID-19 that did not directly impact rights-holders is discussed under effectiveness.

37   Global Shepherds (2022) A Project by Global Shepherds – Strengthening Community-Based Protection Mechanisms for Undocumented and Migrant Children in Sabah

38   UNICEF (2022) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Project Steering Committee March 2022 Presentation

Q4 | To what extent was the evidence generation component pertinent and added value to existing research pieces? How did it inform programming?

Finding 4:

Evidence generation activities have helped to address data gaps and provided a deeper understanding of the protection needs of CAM, creating a rich body of evidence to inform activity design, implementation and advocacy.

The evidence generation component was one of the most successful aspects of the programme in SSEA.

At the outset of the programme, a lack of data on different CAM groups was a challenge. UNICEF staff at various levels highlighted that a lack of clear understanding of the target population was an impediment to programme design. In some instances, this was because data on different groups of CAM was kept by different government ministries. In other instances, as is typical with data on migration flows, children affected by migration avoid being counted or may be hidden within the population due to fears of persecution or deportation. An additional challenge is that some key organizations, including governments and international actors, do not have a child-sensitive approach to collecting data.

In an effort to address data gaps, the programme's design in Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand began with a series of evidence generation activities (see table 5). These can be categorized into two main areas of focus: (i) identifying the needs of the different groups of CAM targeted in each country; and (ii) mapping and understanding the state of the national child protection system in relation to services and policies relating to CAM, including birth registration, alternative care facilities, immigration detention, the juvenile justice system and the social service workforce.

In Bangladesh, evidence generation activities were not part of the programme's original design. Nonetheless, UNICEF Bangladesh took the initiative to conduct research to inform the design of activities. For example, the CO has begun a study on children living in street situations with a view to better targeting UNICEF activities to support the wellbeing of this group of children (see table 5).

Overall, the evaluation found the evidence outputs to be robust and insightful, providing a clearer picture of the situation of CAM in each country and highlighting gaps in child protection systems that may lead to their exclusion. UNICEF stakeholders highlighted in KIIs that evidence generation activities were critical to the programme's success, offering a solid foundation for evidence-based programming tailored to the specific needs in each country context. Research outputs were especially useful during times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, when immediate and informed action was essential. Furthermore, specific research pieces on the impact of COVID-19 provided UNICEF with reliable data on how children's needs changed over the course of the programme.

In addition to forming an evidence base to support programme design, the research outputs have ongoing utility. For example, at regional level, the UNICEF EAPRO Regional Situational Analysis of Children Affected by Migration in the ASEAN region will directly support Focus Area 4 of the RPA, which aims to support the generation of reliable and accurate data on children in the context of migration and provide a foundation for evidence-based policies

Table 4: South and Southeast Asia evidence generation outputs

UNICEF CO/ RO	Evidence and research generated through the CAM programme
EAPRO	▶ Regional Situational Analysis of Children Affected by Migration in the ASEAN region (not yet published)
Malaysia	▶ The Impact of COVID-19 on Access to Healthcare for Refugee Children in Peninsular Malaysia ▶ Strengthening Alternatives to Immigration Detention for Children: Mapping and assessment of residential care centres in peninsular Malaysia ▶ Birth Registration: A study to understand the gaps and challenges to birth registration for children affected by migration – A desk review of peninsular Malaysia and Sabah ▶ Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerable Children and Families in Malaysia: Social service workers share their experience, perspectives and recommendations for the future ▶ Social Service Workforce Strengthening: Mapping and review of the social service workforce in Malaysia ▶ Supporting National Systems and Building Partnerships and Capacity for the Protection of Children Affected by Migration
Myanmar	▶ Legal Analysis of the Rights and Protections for Children in Conflict with the Law in Myanmar ▶ Juvenile Justice System Assessment: Myanmar ▶ Analysis of Protection Frameworks, Referral Pathways and Service Availability for Myanmar Migrant Children
Thailand	▶ Holistic Review of Alternative Care Provision in an area of Thailand with a High Number of Migrant Children: The border district of Sangklaburi ▶ Ending and Protecting Child Statelessness in Thailand: Developing an accelerated nationality review model ▶ An Assessment of Access to Birth Registration among Migrant Children: The quantitative study ▶ Assessment of Child Protection Services for Migrant Children in Thailand ▶ Education Knows No Border: A collection of good practices and lessons learned on migrant education in Thailand ▶ Child Protection Measures in Immigration Enforcement Policies, Regulations, Procedures and Practices through Assessment, Protocol Development and Capacity-Building of Immigration Personnel
Bangladesh	▶ Review of International and National Legal Framework, Policies, Training Curriculum and Job Description of Relevant Service Providers to the Protection of Children Affected by Migration, including Trafficking ▶ Study on Children Living in Street Situations

and programming.[39] Furthermore, the programme's evidence outputs are key advocacy tools with which UNICEF can highlight the protection needs of CAM with national and regional counterparts.

The evaluation did, however, find some limitations with regard to the programme's evidence generation activities. First, the evaluation found little evidence that IPs and other external stakeholders in the four programme countries were aware of the programme's evidence generation activities or had used the programme's research outputs to inform their activities.

Second, the lack of comprehensive data on CAM remains an obstacle. There is no comprehensive dataset covering CAM as a whole, much less disaggregated data on the various groups of CAM covered in the programme. This challenge was raised by multiple UNICEF stakeholders, who suggested that a future CAM programme should include a defined component on quantitative data. In addition to the lack of point-in-time data, the absence of reliable systems for gathering these data on an ongoing basis poses challenges for the sustainability of programme activities, particularly given the fast-changing nature of migration contexts.

4.1.2 Effectiveness

This section explores the extent to which the programme achieved its intended results within the expected timeframe. Significant achievements, identified by each CO in outcome harvesting workshops, are presented in relation to these results.[40] The section also explores the factors that have facilitated or hindered the programme and the extent to which monitoring has supported the programme's effectiveness.

Q5 | To what extent and how did the programme components achieve expected progress within the expected timeframe?

Finding 5:
The programme has made significant achievements within its implementation timeframe, notably in relation to children placed in alternatives to detention, children benefitting from formal care, and case management. However, accurately measuring progress against planned results is a challenge.

The majority of UNICEF staff and external stakeholders (IPs, frontline workers, government counterparts and sister United Nations agencies) who took part in interviews and outcome harvesting spoke positively about the progress made by the programme. This was corroborated by programme documentation. Most achievements were noted at the activity and output levels, which over time are expected to contribute to achieving intended outcome-level results.

---

39   ASEAN (2021) Regional Plan of Action on Implementing the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration

40   The achievements of this programme are extensive. Consequently, the evaluation team chose to present illustrative examples in this report as opposed to a comprehensive overview of achievements against each outcome.

Outcome 1:

Child protection systems, including alternatives to [immigration] detention, are inclusive of children affected by migration, including those trafficked

In outcome harvesting and interviews, stakeholders identified UNICEF Thailand's work in supporting the Government of Thailand with the adoption and subsequent implementation of an MoU on alternatives to detention as a notable achievement of the programme. This included building the capacity of the Department of Children and Youth to implement the MoU as well as providing support on monitoring achievements. In Malaysia, the programme supported the government in mapping children affected by migration in immigration detention and trafficked children shelters,[41] as well as supporting implementation of a government-led pilot to establish ATD. The latter is a particularly important achievement, as it aligns with the government's broader commitment to de-institutionalizing children in Malaysia. Progress in ATD is particularly notable because (a) ATD is considered a politically sensitive area and (b) these changes set a trajectory towards long-term systems strengthening.

Outcome 2:

Children affected by migration, including those trafficked, benefit from an enhanced enabling environment (policies and procedures) that provide better access to child protection systems

Programme documentation, KIIs and outcome harvesting show clear evidence of progress at the activity and output levels that contributes towards Outcome 2.

For instance, cross-border commitments to protecting and managing CAM cases have improved. The MoU between Thailand and Myanmar on strengthening cooperation to protect CAM was widely recognized by stakeholders as a key achievement of the programme (see Box 3). While implementation was delayed due to the military coup in Myanmar and COVID-19, obtaining high-level political buy-in and

---

Box 3: Significant Achievement: Thailand-Myanmar MoU to protect children affected by migration

UNICEF staff stated that the programme's greatest achievement was the MoU between Myanmar and Thailand on cross-border protection for children affected by migration, as well as research generated on the issue prior to the discussion. UNICEF COs supported initial discussions between the two countries in the margins of regional consultations on the ASEAN Declaration in summer 2019, after which they provided technical expertise as part of the negotiation process at the technical level. A significant result of this MoU was that it drew attention to the disparity between boys and girls within these movements. Although the MoU was suspended following the coup in Myanmar, this is a key example of how the programme's activities at regional level have been effective in influencing the strengthening of national-level child protection systems.

---

support for cross-border management is an achievement in itself.

In Bangladesh, UNICEF supported the strengthening of the RRRI taskforce under the Ministry of Home Affairs and assisted the coordination of the taskforces between the governments of Bangladesh and India. This promoted cross-border cooperation on anti-trafficking and facilitated more effective information-sharing on the repatriation of trafficked children to Bangladesh. Stakeholders in UNICEF, IPs, and the government reported that the programme has contributed to national efforts to combat the trafficking of children.

As is reflected in the programme's regional and country logframes, a large number of children have also benefitted directly from the programme. While the evaluation did not assess the quality or effectiveness of the discrete services provided under the programme, UNICEF staff and external stakeholders asserted that the inclusion of CAM in national

---

41   UNICEF (2022) Supporting National Systems and Building Partnerships and Capacity for the Protection of Children Affected by Migration: Establishing Alternatives to Child Immigration Detention

Box 4: Significant Achievement: Sustainable services for children living in street situations in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, an IP established child protection service hubs for children living in the streets in Dhaka. These hubs proved essential in providing shelter, food, psychosocial support, case management and identification services for 20,656 children living in street situations, who are now better able to meet their daily needs and access protection assistance. The Department of Social Services has fully taken over management of the hubs, representing the integration of services for CAM into the national child protection system. These achievements were widely recognized by stakeholders as a key achievement of the programme.

services supported their protection needs and strengthened the realization of their rights.

For example, in Bangladesh, support for children living in street situations was identified as a key achievement of the programme (see Box 4). In Sabah (Malaysia), the programme used community-based protection mechanisms to raise awareness of child rights and child protection issues related to CAM through alternative learning centres and community learning centres.[42]

In Thailand, the programme made strides in including undocumented children in the national education system. Migrant children living on plantations and in construction sites have been assisted by IPs and local authorities with the transition from early childhood development learning centres into local schools. This has particularly helped migrant boys, who were more likely to be missing education than migrant girls (see Box 5).[43]

Box 5: Significant Achievement: Support for undocumented and stateless children in Thailand

Through IPs, the programme has facilitated the registration of undocumented children, working via schools to assist them and their families. Over 1,000 children and parents received Thai nationality and are now registered in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, and Mae Hong Son public schools. Support with documentation helps children to access their basic rights including education, health, freedom of movement, and specifically in relation to the regularisation of undocumented children who are not naturalized, right to temporary stay in Thailand.

As a result of advocacy and campaigning, UNICEF staff and IPs observed a greater awareness and more understanding towards stateless children, as well as an increase in parents' awareness of the importance of education. UNICEF staff reported that the 'Lives Untold: Invisible No More' campaign resulted in more children approaching UNICEF for assistance in applying for nationality, which in turn facilitated their access to and knowledge of national services available to them.

Following the suspension of upstream work in Myanmar, UNICEF pivoted activities to focus on downstream support, including the provision of legal aid. In the context of the CAM programme, legal aid in Myanmar mainly includes representing Rohingya children in courts on charges related to irregular migration.[44] IPs have also delivered child protection kits, life skills training and vocational training to IDP children and youth.

---

42   Global Shepherds (2022) A Project by Global Shepherds – Strengthening Community-Based Protection Mechanisms for Undocumented and Migrant Children in Sabah

43   UNICEF Thailand (2021) Lives Untold: Invisible No More Post Campaign Report; UNICEF (2022) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia 4th Interim Report

44   UNICEF (2022) PSC March 2022 Presentation Slides

Outcome 3:

Relevant international, regional and national bodies recognize the rights of children affected by migration, including those trafficked

Notable progress has also been achieved towards Outcome 3. Outcome harvesting and interviews highlighted that one of the most significant achievements of the programme was the support provided by EAPRO to ASEAN in developing and adopting the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration and subsequent regional plan of action for its implementation (see Box 6). The Government of Thailand will integrate the RPA into its new child protection strategy, and UNICEF Malaysia staff stated that the RPA will be influential in supporting their work on CAM.

UNICEF EAPRO is also providing support to the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Welfare and Social Work to develop an e-learning course on protecting children in the context of migration, which is linked to the RPA.[45] Multiple external stakeholders highlighted this initiative as being of particular importance for advancing the commitments made in ASEAN.

In Malaysia, the programme enabled UNICEF to develop new relationships with government around the protection of CAM (see Box 7).

Box 6: Significant Achievement: Development and adoption of the ASEAN Declaration and RPA

Outcome harvesting and interviews highlighted that one of the most significant achievements of the programme was the support provided by EAPRO to ASEAN in developing and adopting the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration and subsequent regional plan of action for its implementation, establishing a regional framework of cooperation around CAM in the region. The Declaration placed the issue of CAM on the regional agenda. External stakeholders at both the regional and national level credited this success to UNICEF's coordination and technical support. The process of developing and adopting the Declaration and RPA opened a space for further policy dialogues and is a good practice example of collaboration between the UN and national governments. Crucially, thanks to UNICEF, the development process included and (crucially) represented the voices of young people affected by migration in the policy dialogue, meaning that the Declaration and RPA could be attuned to the protection needs of CAM and policymakers were provided with first-hand knowledge of the challenges CAM face in the region.

Box 7: Significant Achievement: Partnership development in Malaysia

In KIIs and outcome harvesting, UNICEF and external stakeholders emphasized the significance of successfully securing government buy-in for the CAM programme, given sensitivities around the issue. The programme has strengthened relationships with government departments including the Department of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, and the Ministry of Home Affairs, opening up areas of collaboration in relation to CAM that were previously too sensitive to address.

There are some exceptions where the programme's intended results will not be achieved within the programme's timeframe. In Malaysia, the programme experienced delays at the beginning of implementation (see Box 2 for context). This initial delay was compounded by further delays resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and it meant that the programme had a shorter implementation timeframe compared to other programme countries. For example, only the mapping of social workforce and the report on 'Supporting National Systems and Building Partnerships and Capacity for the Protection of Children Affected by Migration' will be completed,

---

and there is not enough time to deliver the accompanying training activities within the programme's remaining timeframe. The programme's monitoring framework supports these accounts of significant progress, showing that the programme has met or exceeded targets against most indicators and is on a positive trajectory in others.

Table 5: Outcome-level[46] Planned and Achieved Results in Southeast and South Asia[47]

Objective	Indicator	December 2022 (cumulative)	Target by End of Project
Impact (Overall Objective)[48]	Number of children (disaggregated by age/sex) apprehended for migration-related reasons and placed in alternatives to detention that adhere to international standards.	966	340
	Number of children affected by migration (disaggregated by age/sex) benefitting from formal care that adhere to international standards	25,545	3,115
Outcome 1	1B. Number of children affected by migration provided with child protection case management services (in line with international practice).	8,102	2,615
	1D. Number of registered unaccompanied and separated children in cross-border situations who have benefitted from a formal UNICEF-supported BIA/BID process and/or are in appropriate and protective care arrangements that are in accordance with international standards.	0	15
	1E. Number of countries offering alternatives to detention for girls and boys affected by migration in adherence with international minimum standards.	1	3
Outcome 2	2A. Number of countries that have mechanisms in place advocated by UNICEF for cross-border information sharing, including family tracing and reunification.	1	3
Outcome 3	3A. Number of international or regional bodies issuing specific recommendations on the rights of children affected by migration in the programme countries.	3	3
	3B. Regional child protection network on case management and cross border collaboration on children affected by migration established	In progress	Established

46   The programme logframe refers to an "overall objective", which is the programme's impact, and three "specific objectives", which equate to the programme's outcomes. These are hereafter referred to as impact and outcomes, respectively.

47   UNICEF (2023) Southeast and South Asia Logframe 5th Interim Report

48   Impact: Children affected by migration are effectively protected and their rights are being progressively realized

The programme has made less progress against indicators 1D, 1E, 2A and 3B, which pertain to strengthening the legislative and policy environments of national child protection systems and encouraging cross-border and regional-level cooperation to protect CAM. However, it should be recognized that results in these areas take longer to realize. Although these targets had not been met by December 2022, the programme had completed significant work in these areas at country level (see boxes above) and clear plans were put in place to reach these targets by the end of the programme.[49]

At the same time, the evaluation also noted weaknesses in the programme's monitoring framework that limit the extent to which progress can be accurately measured. This observation is not new: the evaluability assessment critiqued the programme's outcome-level indicators, stating that "as they are currently framed, the indicators do not sufficiently capture the change the Action has been designed to achieve".[50] The evaluation team agrees with this assessment. While there is a clear causal chain between the outcomes and the impact level, the programme indicators do not measure key components that are necessary to demonstrate and drive this change.

One key problem is that the programme's targets are formulated as an absolute number as opposed to proportional targets. To understand the programme's contribution in a more meaningful way, it would have been useful to identify the children eligible for services or support and then proportionally measure how many of these children benefitted. As it stands, although the programme has far exceeded many of its targets, this could reflect an increase in the number of children who are eligible for services rather than an increase in the proportion of these children who can access services or are included in national systems. Furthermore, the systemic and behaviour change framed by the programme outcomes is difficult to measure in a quantitative manner. For example, understanding whether strengthened national child protection systems meet international standards is best observed through a more nuanced

qualitative analysis. Other critical factors, such as attitudinal change, quality of services and the experiences of children who benefit from the programme are also not captured. Indeed, 'access to services' is not a strong enough measure of progress in and of itself if services are not assessed for quality. As such, using the programme's logical framework and quantitative results alone, it is difficult to concretely define the extent to which the programme has achieved progress towards its desired impact.

Q5 | To what degree has the programme contributed to / strengthened the capacity of national child protection systems to protect children affected by migration effectively?

Finding 6:
Despite its limited timeframe, the programme has contributed to enhancing child protection systems through capacity-building and legal and policy reform.

Systems enhancement
The programme was designed before UNICEF published its 2021 "Child Protection Systems Strengthening Approach, Benchmarks, Interventions",[51] and whilst this framework was not explicitly used as a reference for this assessment, it is useful in framing the extent to which the programme strengthened national child protection systems to better protect CAM. Broadly, the programme's interventions fall within the "system enhancement" stage as described in the framework, meaning that the programme built upon pre-existing child protection systems to strengthen their responsiveness to and inclusion of CAM. In Malaysia and Myanmar, some activities were more characteristic of a "system-building" approach, as pre-existing services and legislation to support the protection of CAM was nascent.

The programme has made important *contributions* in strengthening systems and the enabling environment for child protection in areas including

---

49   UNICEF (2022) Consolidated Work Plans Amendment No. 5
50   UNICEF (2020) Evaluability Assessment of the 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia' Programme, p.22
51   UNICEF (2021) Child Protection Systems Strengthening Approach, Benchmarks, Interventions

capacity-building of frontline workers, the establishment and enhancements of case management systems and services, and legal reform and policies. However, strengthening the national child protection systems to reach full maturity would require a longer timeframe and larger investment of resources than was available under the CAM programme.

In Myanmar, Thailand and Bangladesh, the programme strongly focused on strengthening the capacity of frontline workers to address CAM's protection needs. This work was particularly targeted at introducing child-friendly procedures for trafficked children and unaccompanied and separated children. In Bangladesh, the programme updated the training curriculum for national service providers and provided training of trainers. This included a training manual for law enforcement agents on child rights and protection for trafficking and cross-border migration. Some 3,400 frontline workers also received training under the programme including police, social workers, probation officers and Border Guard Bangladesh.[52]

In pre-coup Myanmar, UNICEF stakeholders reported that the programme had contributed to strengthening the capacity of government social workers. UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Social Welfare to develop toolkits for integrating the child protection services of government and civil society organizations (CSOs). In Thailand, social workers benefitted from the development of guidance around protection of migrant children. The social workers trained under the programme have been placed in Mae Sot Immigration Detention Centre and DCY in Bangkok to provide child protection services and oversee repatriation of children to Myanmar, including case management for unaccompanied and separated children.[53]

The effects of these capacity-building interventions can be clearly observed. According to KIIs with external stakeholders, the capacity building efforts have enhanced individual and institutional capacities to work with CAM, in particular trafficked children and unaccompanied and separated children on the move. This evidence is supported by the results of the survey completed by frontline workers. Although

the survey sample was not representative, most participants indicated that their institution was more responsive to the needs of CAM, had acted through policy work to better protect CAM, and had positively changed its attitude towards CAM (see figure 1). On the individual level, most frontline workers surveyed reported that they either had "a little better" or a "much better" understanding of the challenges faced by CAM. The biggest improvements were shown with regard to trafficked children, refugee and asylum-seeking children, and IDP children, reflecting the programme's target groups in SSEA (see figure 2).

These results are important because they represent evidence of participants' self-reported attitudinal and behaviour change as a result of programme activities, demonstrating the effectiveness of the programme's capacity-building interventions. These changes support overall systems strengthening because while they have been reported at the individual level, the knowledge and capacity gained has potential to remain within the wider child protection system, provided appropriate measures are put in place to maintain/refresh skills and knowledge as needed over time.

---

52   Ibid
53   UNICEF (2022) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia 4th Interim Report

Final Evaluation of the Programme 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia'
FINDINGS

42

Figure 1: Southeast and South Asia frontline workers' perception of systems change

Do you feel that because of the UNICEF work on children affected by migration ...
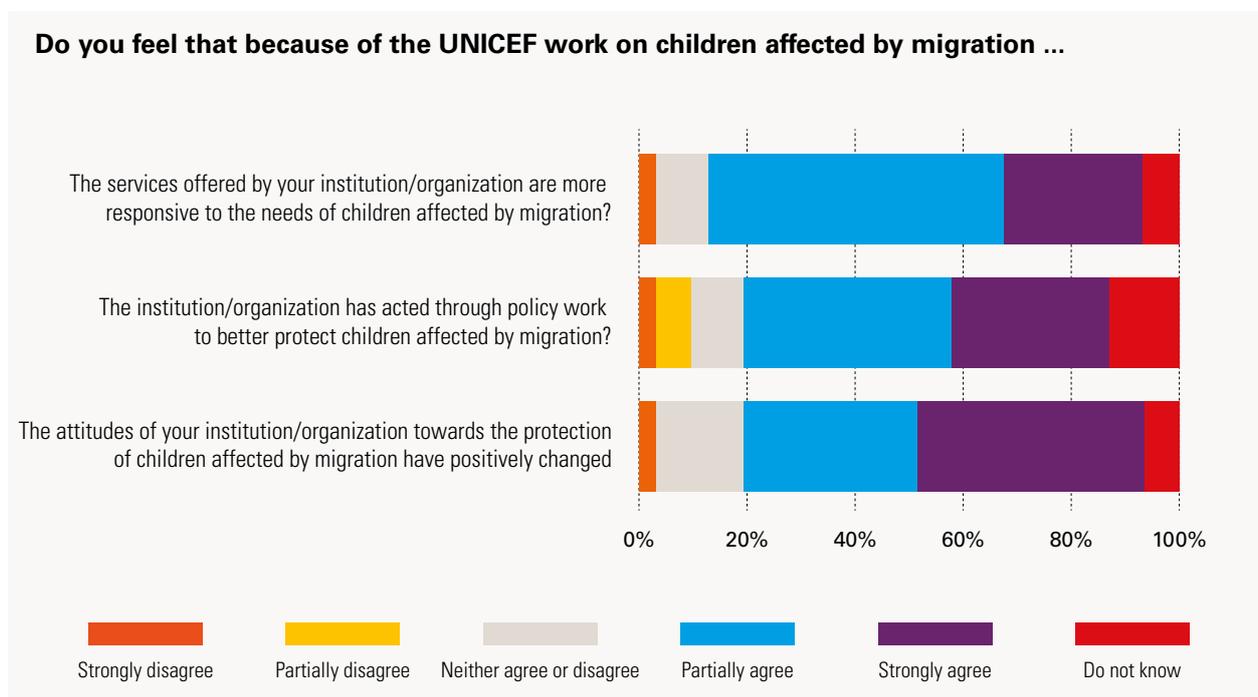
Figure 2: Self-reported improvements in Southeast and South Asia frontline workers' knowledge and understanding of CAM

As a result of collaboration with UNICEF, do you feel you have a better understanding of the challenges faced by the following categories of children?
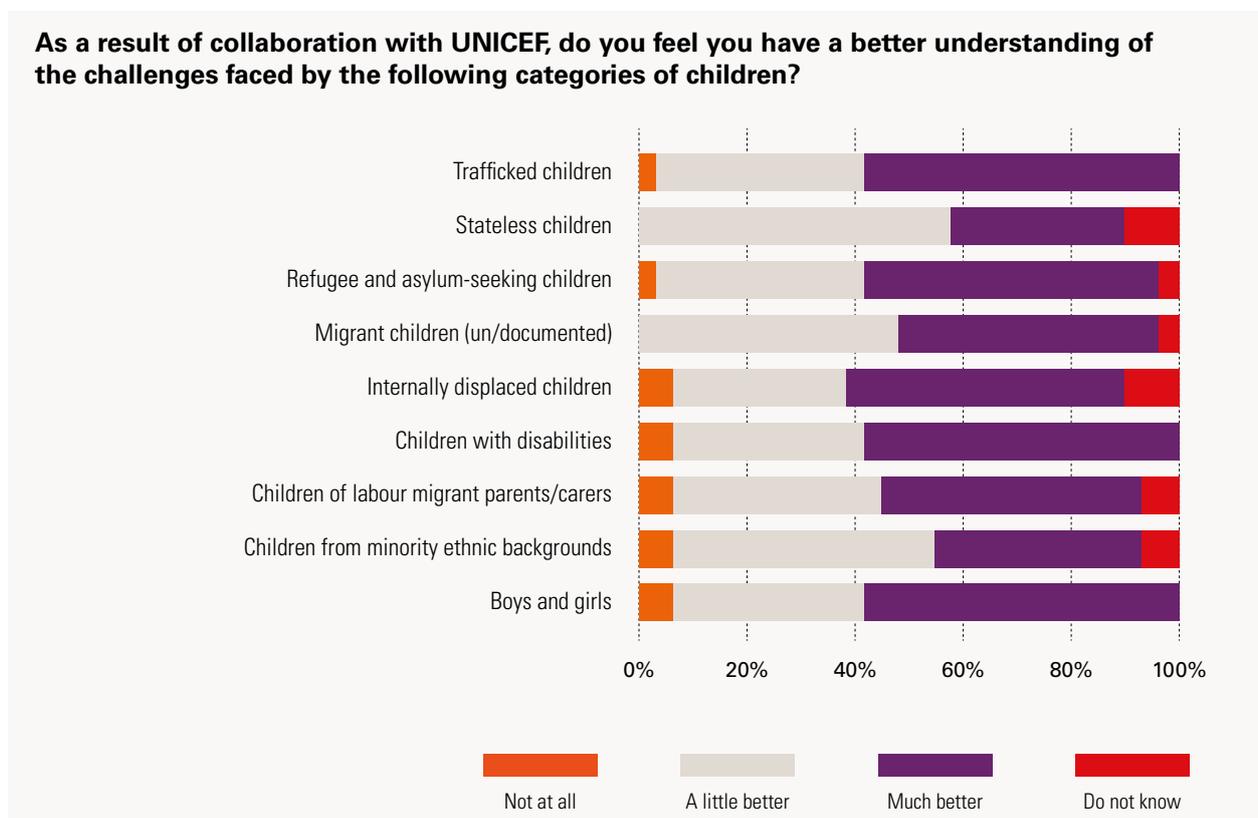
The programme has strengthened policies, case management systems and standard operating procedures (SOP) for the protection of CAM, in particular for children in immigration detention and trafficked children. Indeed, many of these system-strengthening examples were highlighted as significant achievements during outcome harvesting workshops and KIIs.

For example, in Thailand, UNICEF built the capacity of the Department of Children and Youth to implement the MoU on ATD (e.g., by helping develop the SOPs and supporting training activities) as well as providing support to the monitoring of achievements. Additionally, thanks to the programme, immigration officers now have SOPs to help them engage with children on the move. In Myanmar, UNICEF supported the Department of Social Services to develop SOPs for a child protection case management system. In Bangladesh, the work to strengthen the RRRI and case management system for trafficked children constitutes some of the programme's core achievements.

Finally, UNICEF advocacy on CAM has driven changes to the enabling environment for child protection systems. For example, in Malaysia, the enabling environment for the protection of CAM was strengthened through the 2021 National Action Plan on Anti-Trafficking in Persons 3.0, which includes a strategic goal addressing child trafficking and child labour. With UNICEF support, a child-focused approach was embedded within the action plan.[54] Before the coup in Myanmar, UNICEF provided technical expertise to support the law-making and policy-making processes to further the protection of CAM. The enabling environment for CAM protection was strengthened through the Child Rights Law in 2019. UNICEF also provided technical support to the Department of Rehabilitation for a technical review of the draft revised Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law. All these initiatives serve to illustrate the holistic approach that UNICEF took to strengthening child protection systems themselves and the wider enabling environment.

Limitations

Finding 7:

In some contexts, governments were more willing to work on certain sub-groups of CAM than others, with the result that systems were not strengthened to be equally inclusive of, or tailored for, all sub-groups of CAM.

For instance, in Malaysia and Myanmar, there are multiple examples where systems are now more inclusive of trafficked children, but remain less inclusive of refugee and asylum-seeking children or stateless children.

In addition, the relatively short duration of the programme, as well as the limited funding, challenged national-level systemic change. For instance, in Malaysia, the programme established a solid foundation and understanding of the situation of CAM that can be built upon. However, momentum on these activities must be continued in order for "systems enhancement" to be fully realized. Similar observations can be applied across SSEA programme countries.

Q6 | What have been the main factors that facilitated or hindered the programme?

Finding 8:
UNICEF networks and technical expertise were critical drivers of the programme and were most effective when coupled with a conducive implementation context.

Finding 9:
COVID-19 and a lack of political will from government counterparts for certain interventions were the programme's greatest challenges.

Enabling factors

At both regional and country levels, outcome harvesting and KII participants reported common enabling factors, including UNICEF networks and connections, the organization's technical expertise and a conducive enabling environment.

The most frequently cited enabling factor was UNICEF networks and connections with decision-makers. In relation to the work on the ASEAN Declaration, regional stakeholders recognized the organization's status as a major partner of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women (ACWC) and strong relationship with the Government of Thailand as key drivers of success. In Thailand, UNICEF leveraged its networks and convening power to support interaction between NGOs and the government, cementing trust for future interactions. In all four programme countries, IPs and government counterparts stated that the organization's strong positioning as a child rights organization enabled programme interventions to be delivered. To particularly note the Thai case, where UNICEF came to bridge the existing gap between the government and NGOs. UNICEF leveraged its networks and convening power to support interaction between NGOs and the government, in turn cementing trust for future interactions.

UNICEF technical expertise was also cited by IPs, government stakeholders and regional actors as essential in enabling programme delivery. At a regional level, UNICEF's technical assistance in drafting the ASEAN Declaration and coordinating external stakeholders together was said to be critically important. In each country, IPs stated that they benefitted from UNICEF guidance in delivering services and conducting research. Regional actors also commended the organization's understanding of local contexts and its physical presence at both regional and national level. This allowed for regional-level commitments to be operationalized at the national level.

The programme had its greatest successes in countries where there was strong political will to increase the protection of CAM, notably in Thailand and Bangladesh. Malaysia also illustrates how political buy-in has enabled (or the lack of it hindered) progress in specific areas (see below). Anti-trafficking work has made significant progress in Malaysia, as this is the area in which the government has been open to cooperation. Malaysia remains in Tier 3 in the United States Government's Trafficking in Persons Report, meaning that there is international pressure, and domestic political will, to address the issue. This has provided UNICEF with an important opportunity to continue collaboration with government.

At the regional level, UNICEF has successfully leveraged international milestones to support its advocacy on CAM rights. For example, the 30th anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child in 2019 served as a useful platform for UNICEF advocacy and ultimately supported the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration. Additionally, the first Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration provided UNICEF with an opportunity to advocate for child rights and child-sensitivity within migration policy and processes.[55]

---

55   Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (2021) Review of Progress and Challenges with Regard to Implementing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Asia and the Pacific, Including the Implications of the Coronavirus Disease Pandemic

Weaknesses and constraining factors

The most commonly cited challenges across programme documentation and KIIs were the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (including a rise in xenophobia) and a lack of political will. In addition, Bangladesh experienced some unique challenges pertaining to programme design, which are outlined in Box 8.

Box 8: Inclusion of Bangladesh and changes in programme scope

---

A major constraint facing the Bangladesh programme was the lack of a South Asia regional dimension. Under the original programme design, the Bangladesh component would have linked with the Myanmar component through a focus on the Rohingya population in Cox's Bazaar. However, since this element of the programme was removed (see below), the Bangladesh component of the programme became isolated from other programme countries. Although Bangladesh CO received some technical oversight from ROSA, the latter was not funded by the programme, and as such the regional office was limited in the amount of support it could provide.

In addition, while the programme has helped to strengthen the RRRI taskforce in collaboration with the Government of India, UNICEF stakeholders reported that this work would have benefitted from an investment of resources on the Indian side, including the direct involvement of UNICEF India, allowing for a more holistic approach to ensuring the cross-border protection of trafficked children.

The evaluation notes that the change in programme focus in Bangladesh was a donor-led decision. This is regrettable and constitutes a missed opportunity for advancing regional-level protection of CAM.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused delays across several programme activities, many of which had to be suspended or switched to a remote modality.[56] In addition, many stakeholders (both UNICEF and IPs) reported that COVID-19 led to a rise in xenophobia. Anecdotal evidence suggests that as host communities began to feel the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19, they were less supportive of the inclusion of migrants in services. This challenge has the potential to linger, affecting the openness of governments to engage in the protection of CAM now and in future.

Lack of political will was also a significant challenge in some contexts, especially Malaysia and post-coup Myanmar. As noted elsewhere in this report, Malaysia experienced ongoing political uncertainty and four changes in government over the duration of the programme, leading to an increasingly hard-line stance on immigration and emphasis on national sovereignty (see Box 2 for context), and it meant that UNICEF had to regularly rebuild relationships with new government counterparts – as well as adapting to these governments' different agendas. In Myanmar, the coup similarly undermined progress, with the military authorities taking an increasingly hard-line stance on the Rohingya, as well as reneging on legal reforms achieved in the first part of the programme.

Q7 | How did the monitoring system contribute to effectiveness? Is it built with/interoperable with government systems, or is it standalone?

Finding 10:
There are notable weaknesses in the programme's monitoring data, including data reliability, inconsistencies in information collected and a strong reliance on data from IPs.

Finding 11:
There was limited sharing of data with government counterparts, with PACs providing the primary forum for exchange.

---

56   The evaluation recognizes that in most instances this has, however, not had a major impact of the programme's progress and achievements.

Monitoring systems

Monitoring information was collected by IPs on a monthly and quarterly basis and reported to UNICEF. IP data is largely quantitative, although (where COVID-19 has allowed) UNICEF has also conducted field visits to monitor results. This was corroborated by both UNICEF and IPs during interviews and in the programme's Evaluability Assessment. These monitoring data have been used for programme management and information sharing. However, there are limitations in the extent to which these data have contributed to effectiveness, which stem from weaknesses in the programme's monitoring system and data validity.

The programme has reported against the indicators included in the global, regional and country-level logical frameworks. However, gathering reliable data has been a challenge, and the programme has relied heavily on data from IPs. Stakeholders reported that government counterpart data were not complete or not accessible – an issue that was also raised in the programme's evaluability assessment. This makes it harder to situate progress within the wider context.

One significant issue with the programme's monitoring system was the inconsistent approach to reporting on gender, age, disability and other intersecting vulnerabilities. Most IPs did disaggregate the data by age and gender, but other relevant indicators were not consistently monitored. For example, only some IPs included information about CAM that reflected their contexts and personal situations (e.g., place of origin, destination, whether they were accompanied by parents or other older relatives, needs, etc.). Some IPs in Myanmar and Thailand stated that they collected data on disability, while others did not.

Due to these inconsistencies, there is little evidence of how UNICEF has gained an understanding of gender-, age- and disability-related needs through the programme. Indeed, due to the approach that the programme took of treating CAM as an umbrella group, the evaluation found little evidence of disaggregated data being used to provide targeted services for those experiencing cross-cutting vulnerabilities, such as children with disabilities or girls who are disproportionately affected by trafficking. Indeed, one UNICEF interviewee stated that the lack of disaggregation for factors such as disability leads to these issues being 'hidden' and not catered

for. While it was a deliberate design choice for COs to focus on certain groups of CAM as a whole e.g. trafficked children, children in street situations, asylum-seeking and refugee children, hence why reporting on gender, age, disability and other intersecting vulnerabilities is inconsistent, it means that programme monitoring data has been less effective in drawing out and responding to the emerging needs of CAM sub-groups (e.g. boys and girls, children with disabilities).

There is also a concern about the completeness and quality of data that were collected by IPs. In Malaysia, Myanmar and Bangladesh, IPs and UNICEF staff reported that the shift to remote modalities during COVID-19 made data collection harder. Throughout the programme, it has been difficult to collect data from communities in hard-to-reach areas and – as is typical when collecting data on migration flows – not all rights-holders wish to be counted. This is particularly the case when CAM are in conflict with the law or live in conflict areas , or are at risk of deportation . There are also challenges with counting children who may wish to disguise their age, or those who may be more hidden within migration flows. As such, it is not possible for the evaluation to judge the completeness of monitoring data collected under the programme.

Despite these weaknesses, IP monitoring data do appear to have been useful for coordination purposes and enhanced programme effectiveness at activity level. IPs across all four programme countries stated that UNICEF had provided them with feedback based on monitoring reports and site visits, which enabled them to improve their services.

Data sharing and interoperability with government systems

Across the programme, the PAC was the primary forum for data sharing with the government, providing a forum for joint review and course correction between UNICEF, government counterparts and other stakeholders. In addition to enabling collaborative adaptation of programmes, the PACs had the benefit of providing a shared understanding among key stakeholders on the situation and needs of CAM.

Beyond this, the extent to which data were shared with governments varied by country. In Bangladesh and Myanmar, UNICEF and IPs reported that they used a shared case management database to oversee the protection services provided to CAM. In pre-coup Myanmar, UNICEF also shared data with the human trafficking working group through the PRIMERO system. However, in Thailand and Malaysia, there has not been formal data sharing with the government, as government systems that include data on CAM are not inter-connected and government data in this area are weak. In Bangladesh, UNICEF staff reported that it has been difficult to obtain raw disaggregated data on CAM from the government that can be used for analysis. This means that UNICEF has not been able to conduct its own analysis on the effectiveness of activities and explore the nuances of those children reached by the programme. Once again, the lack of data from government sources has made it harder to assess the programme's effects beyond activity-level reporting.

4.1.3 Efficiency

This section examines the programme's efficiency in the use of resources, both financial and human, and the extent to which the programme has demonstrated a cost-aware approach.

Q8 | To what extent and how has the availability and use of resources facilitated or affected the implementation of interventions?

Finding 12:
Overall, the programme received adequate financial resources to enable a systems-strengthening approach. However, changes in programme design and implementation context meant that resources in Myanmar and Bangladesh were tighter than in other programme contexts.

Finding 13:
The programme did not have sufficient human resources due to the constraints placed on human resource budgets.

Financial resources

Table 6: SSEA programme expenditure by December 18, 2022[57]

UNICEF Office	Total Programme Costs (Euro)
East Asia and Pacific Regional Office	1,600,280.95
Malaysia Country Office	1,505,850.18
Myanmar Country Office	1,614,203.57
Thailand Country Office	2,278,744.54
Bangladesh Country Office	703,100.96

The extent to which financial resources were adequate to support programme implementation varied. At EAPRO level and in Thailand and Malaysia, financial resources were adequate for planned activities. Staff and IPs in Malaysia, Thailand and EAPRO all reported satisfaction with the funds they had received – reflecting, perhaps, the fact that these offices received the largest programme budgets. In Thailand, the funds enabled a cross-sectoral approach to supporting the needs of CAM in those provinces with the highest concentration of CAM. In Malaysia, UNICEF interviewees stated that programme funds laid the foundation for a dedicated workstream on migration and provided the impetus for migration to be integrated as a cross-cutting priority in the 2022–2025 country programme document (CPD). IPs in Thailand and Malaysia also praised UNICEF budgetary flexibility towards how resources were spent, specifically in relation to the adaption to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While it is not officially a programme country, Cambodia received a small portion of funds from the EAPRO budget to support cross-border activities with Thailand. Whilst the allocation to Cambodia CO was small, UNICEF stakeholders there believed the funds had enabled them to engage in targeted cooperation and capacity-building with the government about CAM protection, particularly in the areas of cross-border collaboration and strengthening case management for trafficked children. This has paved the way for future cooperation on CAM protection and illustrates how UNICEF used programme funds to expand the programme's reach and complement UNICEF work beyond the CAM programme.

However, where there were changes to the programme's design or implementation context, financial resources were no longer adequate for intended activities, as observed in Bangladesh and Myanmar.

In Myanmar, lessons can be drawn about the adaptability of resources in response to a significant change in the implementing context (see Box 9). Bangladesh, meanwhile, raises questions around the process and criteria behind funding decisions, and how resources are targeted when the scope of work changes (see Box 10).

Box 9: Bangladesh - Financial resources and programme design

In the original programme design, the intended focus in Bangladesh was around refugee and asylum-seeking children in Cox's Bazaar. However, due to a duplication of EU activities in the area, the donor revised the scope of work to focus on child protection systems strengthening at the national level. The reasoning behind this decision notwithstanding, the small budget (635,497 euros) was not commensurate with a national-scale programme. To compensate, Bangladesh CO focused implementation on Dhaka City Cooperation and fifteen locations in border areas where the most vulnerable children were identified. Credit must be given to UNICEF for its adaption and the way in which learning from the evaluability assessment was incorporated to help Bangladesh CO achieve its targets within a relatively modest budget. For example, the CO was no longer required to report against several output-, outcome- and impact-level indicators in 2020, following the recommendations of the evaluability assessment. This helped to manage expectations around what the programme could achieve with limited financial resources. UNICEF also increased its own contribution to the budget, incrementally increasing the funding allocated to Bangladesh CO.

Despite these successful adaptations, it is worth reflecting on the relative utility of funding smaller-scale interventions in a single country versus redirecting funds elsewhere in the regional programme (or, alternatively, expanding the funds available when the programme scope changes).

Box 10: Myanmar – Financial resources and changing contexts

The case of Myanmar illustrates how a significant shift in programme context can raise challenges for existing funding commitments. As described elsewhere, the coup necessitated a major change in programming, resulting in a reduction in spending on activities marked as 'systems strengthening' and a substantial increase in spending on activities marked as 'community engagement and social behaviour change'. Interviewees reported that funds were no longer adequate, since (a) the change in activities required greater resource investment by IPs and (b) the number of vulnerable CAM, including Rohingya children and other children in conflict with the law, increased in the wake of the coup. The evaluation recognizes the strong efforts of UNICEF Myanmar to respond to changes in context. However, this is an important learning about the importance of flexibility of resources when working in unpredictable contexts.

Human resources

Across SSEA, full-time CAM programme staff, whose positions were funded by programme resources, proved beneficial; the complexity and ambition of the programme necessitated a dedicated focus. At the regional level, the programme had a dedicated, full-time programme manager based in EAPRO, whose role was widely recognized by both internal and external stakeholders as a key driver of the programme's successes. Overall, however, stakeholders agreed that the allocated human resources were insufficient in relation to the scope and scale of the programme – a constraint arising from the limited budget for human resources permitted under EU procurement regulations.

Bangladesh felt human resource constraints most acutely. Due to its small budget (both in comparison to other countries and in relation to the scale of activities), Bangladesh lacked dedicated staff to manage the project. This led to a very heavy workload for the staff member who oversaw the programme in addition to other responsibilities. In Malaysia, a considerable investment of time was needed to develop relationships with government counterparts on migration, and the ratio of staff to expected results proved challenging. Finally, while the evaluation found the role of the programme manager to be highly successful, it would have further benefitted from dedicated administrative support, given the complexity of the programme and its heavy reporting requirements.

A common theme across the SSEA region – and indeed the programme as a whole – was that UNICEF found it necessary to invest resources (staff time and expertise) beyond those allocated in the programme budget. This affected every CO in the region and made it harder to achieve the programme's intended results. The evaluation recognizes that drawing on expertise beyond the programme is common practice in UNICEF; indeed, it brings the benefit of ensuring that programming more strongly aligns with other UNICEF interventions and country office priorities and approaches. However, this meant that human resources investments varied by country. For example, staff in Thailand reported the highest satisfaction with staffing, having dedicated resources in these respects, while in Bangladesh and Myanmar, staffing was reportedly more constrained. Uneven

resourcing increases the risk of uneven achievement of results across programme countries.

A further challenge affecting the adequacy of human resourcing was the high turnover of UNICEF programme staff. The turnover rate, although not unusual in the sector, slowed the progress of activities. This was felt strongly in Myanmar, where there was high turnover of international staff intended to oversee the programme, and lengthy recruitment processes to replace them. In addition to delays in programme implementation, this resulted in increased strain on national staff overseeing the day-to-day implementation of the programme.

Already limited human resources were placed under further strain with the arrival of COVID-19. The pandemic added to staff workloads, as UNICEF COs and IPs had to respond to the wider public health emergency in addition to implementing the CAM programme. Similarly, following the military coup in Myanmar, workloads and pressures on staff increased substantially. IPs reported that UNICEF was slower to respond to requests as a result. They also noted that with the shift in programme focus following the coup, it would have been beneficial to have more UNICEF technical support for legal aid activities.

In sum, although it is recognized that budget lines for human resources were contractually constrained, it is clear that the pressures of under-resourcing were felt. Whilst this did not significantly impact overall implementation, it has placed strain on UNICEF staff.[58]

Q9 | To what extent has UNICEF applied a cost-effective approach when implementing programme activities?

Finding 14:

The programme was not intended to be resource-heavy, instead leveraging existing UNICEF capacities. The organization demonstrated a cost-aware approach by using funds to augment existing child protection systems strengthening efforts in each country.

Cost-awareness

UNICEF showed strong cost-awareness in its approaches to programme design, management, coordination and adaptability.

The systems-strengthening approach built upon existing UNICEF capacities and activities in child protection systems strengthening (CPSS), allowing the programme to access guidance and technical support from HQ and ROs, and to leverage established relationships with implementing partners and government counterparts. In addition, the six-month inception phase supported efficient implementation as it enabled UNICEF to find appropriate entry points – although this lengthy lead time was time- and resource-intensive for IPs.[59] Efficiency was also enhanced through coordination by a dedicated, full-time programme manager.

IPs in all four programme countries stated that UNICEF had made good use of resources and had taken a flexible approach to resource management that allowed IPs to adapt their activities to changes in context. However, one frequent critique from IPs was the heavy administrative load associated with the programme, which diverted time and resources that would otherwise have been devoted to delivering activities.

As discussed under 'effectiveness', a key limitation for the CAM programme was the challenge of achieving an ambitious outcome-level agenda within the programme's timeframe and budget. Thus, while UNICEF has demonstrated a cost-sensitive approach in implementation at the activity and output level,

---

58   UNICEF (2020) Evaluability Assessment of the 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia' Programme

59   UNICEF (2020) Evaluability Assessment of the 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia' Programme

the programme has not been cost-sensitive from an outcome and impact perspective, as the allocated resources were insufficient to achieve results at the outcome level. This gap relates back to the ambition of the ToC for the programme, as discussed earlier in the report.

4.1.4 Coherence

Q10 | What role has UNICEF played at the regional and country levels on protecting children affected by migration and how well aligned were these to the organization's comparative advantage?

Finding 15:
UNICEF acted as a coordinator, facilitator and manager of the programme, building on its comparative advantages including its international reputation, technical expertise and trusted relationships with key stakeholders.

UNICEF played similar roles at regional and national levels, which was central in coordinating and driving the programme. Based on the programme's work plans, the organization's role throughout the programme can be broadly grouped into the following areas of activity: managing programme implementation, overseeing the development of evidence-generating activities, conducting advocacy on CAM protection issues, partnering with government counterparts and IPs to deliver programme activities, providing technical advice and support to these partners, and facilitating coordination between stakeholders involved in the protection of CAM, including government counterparts, IPs and other United Nations agencies at national and regional levels.[60]

Coordination was primarily achieved through the PAC in each country, while at regional level inter-agency coordination revolved around the United Nations inter-agency migration network and was primarily focused on the process of negotiating the ASEAN Declaration and RPA. The clear role played by UNICEF in these areas was strongly supported by outcome harvesting data. The evaluation found

unanimous agreement at regional and country levels that the organization's core contributions were in the areas of providing technical advice to government counterparts at national level and within ASEAN, conducting advocacy on the rights of CAM, coordinating national stakeholders, and building the capacity of government counterparts and IPs.

This role strongly aligns with the organization's perceived added value, as identified by stakeholders in outcome harvesting and KIIs. The most cited advantages were the organization's **'brand' as the leading international expert in child protection,** as well as its **technical expertise, convening power, and relationship of trust** with national governments. It is worth nothing that these strongly align with the commonly identified enabling factors that have driven the success of the programme. Throughout the programme, UNICEF has played a well-defined role that leverages the organization's strengths.

Stakeholders – particularly government counterparts and IPs – appreciated UNICEF expertise in child protection and the organization's ability to distil international standards and global best practice into actionable interventions at the country level. For example, this aspect was highly significant in Myanmar, as staff consistently stated that it was only because of UNICEF advocacy and encouragement of best practices that the civilian government committed to developing a national standardized child protection system.

Stakeholders across SSEA consistently referred to the knowledge, specialization, credibility and reliability of UNICEF at national and international levels, resulting in the ability to influence different audiences. One stakeholder in Thailand stated that what makes UNICEF particularly valuable is its cross-sectorial expertise, which allows it to provide holistic technical support to counterparts.

With regard to coordination and facilitation, stakeholders recognized that UNICEF was uniquely positioned to convene partnerships within the programme given its extensive networks at regional and country levels. UNICEF was recognized as a trusted partner by government counterparts in

60   UNICEF EAPRO (2021) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia – Duration and Action Plan; UNICEF EAPRO (2022) Consolidated Work Plans Amendment No. 5 Final for Submission

Thailand and Malaysia, and strong pre-existing relationships were instrumental in advancing the programme. Multiple stakeholders suggested that the UNICEF mandate to protect children is key, as child protection is a unifying factor amongst stakeholders, and less politically sensitive than other migration-related issues. UNICEF networks and convening power also enabled the voices of children and youth to be engaged in consultations on the National Plan of Action on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration in Thailand. UNICEF convened 175 children and youth, including children of migrant workers, asylum-seekers, refugee and stateless children to share their experiences, [61] which was critical in supporting the Government of Thailand strengthen the representation of children in the National Plan of Action.

Q11 | How well have vulnerabilities of relevance to the programme (categories of children affected by migration, gender and disability) been integrated into programme implementation?

Finding 16:
Vulnerabilities of relevance have been integrated into the programme to varying degrees. There was stronger integration of vulnerabilities relating to sub-categories of children affected by migration, compared with intersecting vulnerabilities such as gender, age and disability.

The needs of different groups of CAM were well-integrated into the programme. This integration was supported by the programme's design, which enabled UNICEF country offices to target the most vulnerable sub-groups of CAM according to context. Programme documentation and KIIs show that in the SSEA region, these groups were primarily trafficked children (Malaysia, Myanmar, Bangladesh), internal migrant children (Bangladesh), children of migrant parents (Malaysia, Thailand), children affected by labour migration (Myanmar), internally displaced children (Myanmar), children living in street situations (Bangladesh, Malaysia), refugee and asylum seeking-children (Thailand, Malaysia) and undocumented children (Thailand, Malaysia).

The one key factor that supported the integration of CAM sub-categories was the programme's evidence generation component, which enabled UNICEF to obtain a clear understanding of the specific vulnerabilities and protection concerns of these groups. Furthermore, the programme allocated funding to IPs for projects pertaining specifically to the needs of these groups in each country, drawing upon existing knowledge and expertise of IPs. In all four countries, UNICEF staff and IPs reported that their work was sensitive to the needs of these groups. This finding is supported by IP survey data, which show that the majority of respondents believed their work was sensitive to the needs of different CAM groups (figure 3).

There were minimal weaknesses identified in this area in the evaluation. However, one key recurring critique pertained to the inclusion of IDPs, in particular Rohingya children, in Myanmar. External stakeholders noted that UNICEF could have paid more attention to the language and religious practices of Rohingya children and should have allocated appropriate frontline workers who were aware of these children's needs. The evaluation did not find conclusive evidence as to why this gap was observed by stakeholders. However, one possible explanation could be the fact that due to the sudden change in programming in Myanmar, there was insufficient time to do a needs assessment for the increased number of Rohingya children assisted through the programme.

Figure 3: Do you think the implementation of the CAM programme/UNICEF work on children affected by migration has been sensitive to the needs of different categories of children affected by migration in your country context?
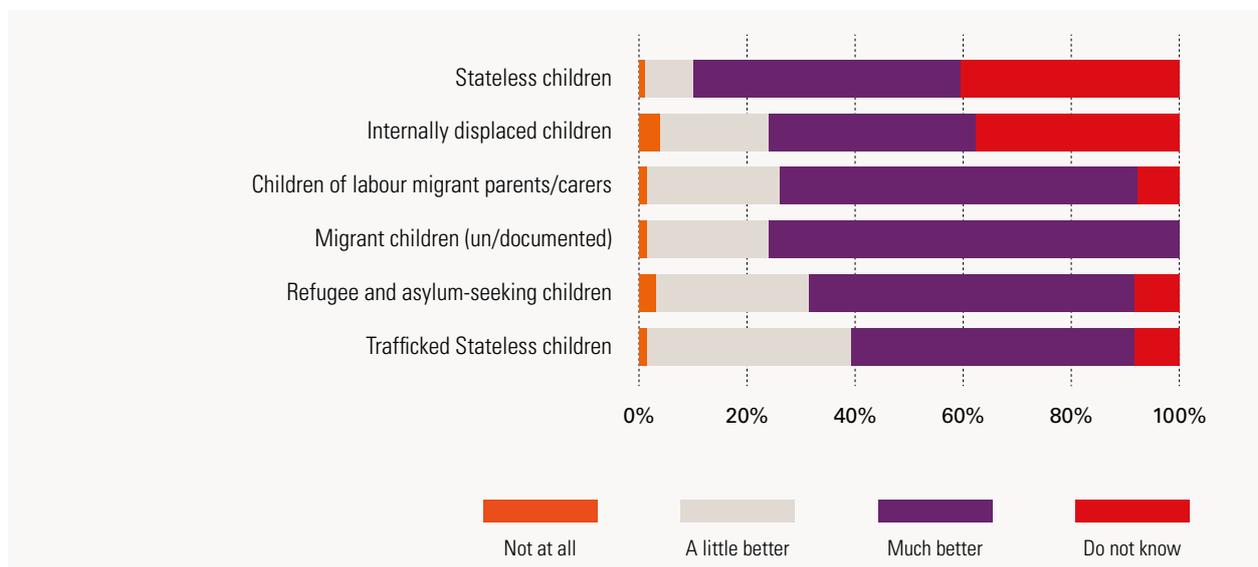
The extent to which gender, age, disability and other intersecting vulnerabilities were integrated into the programme is less clear-cut. As set out in the Description of Action, the programme intended to integrate gender equality (boys and girls); age-sensitive approaches (e.g., early years, primary-age children and youth); and vulnerable and marginalized groups (e.g., children living with disabilities, ethnic minorities, children experiencing risk of statelessness). In some respects, these vulnerabilities have been integrated. For example, the needs of stateless children are well-considered in the programme. In Thailand, there was substantial work on statelessness through the "Lives Untold" campaign, as well as work on birth registration through primary schools, and in Malaysia, UNICEF commissioned a study on birth registration.[62]

The programme also reflected gender awareness. Studies conducted as part of the programme applied a gender lens, and monitoring data reviewed by the evaluation team are disaggregated by gender. The majority of IPs surveyed also reported that the CAM programme was sensitive to the different needs of boys and girls. However, the evaluation found little evidence of how these sensitivities were applied in practice, or how gender-disaggregated monitoring data were used to tailor programming to the different needs of boys and girls. KIIs suggested that programme staff considered children's vulnerabilities primarily in relation to migration, without detailed analysis of, or response to, protection needs resulting from intersecting gender-related concerns such as child labour, early marriage or the gender dimensions of migration flows.

---

62   Anthrologica and UNICEF (2021) Birth Registration: A Study to Understand the Gaps and Challenges to Birth Registration for Children Affected by Migration: A Desk Review of Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah

Figure 4: Do you think that the implementation of the CAM programme/UNICEF work on children affected by migration has been sensitive to the needs of boys and girls and children living with disabilities

Do you think that the implementation of the CAM programme/UNICEF work on children affected by migration has been sensitive to...

... the needs of children with disabilities?

... the different needs of boys and girls and related protection concerns (e.g., child labour, early marriage)?

Legend: Not at all | Partially | Fully/Completely | Do not know
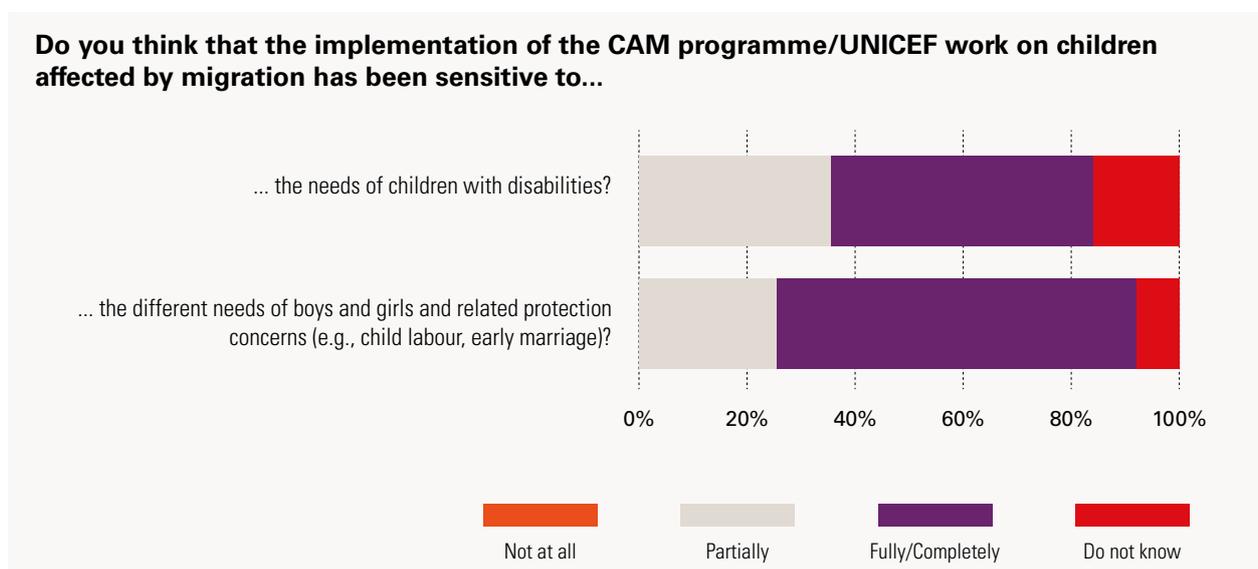
Nearly half of IP respondents to the survey (48 per cent) stated that the CAM programme was sensitive to the needs of children living with disabilities. However, monitoring data are not disaggregated to reflect children living with disabilities and the evaluation found little evidence across the region on how programming has been tailored to address CAM living with disabilities, suggesting that disability was not sufficiently considered by the programme. The notable exception to this was Malaysia, where strong efforts were made to include the needs of CAM living with disabilities. For example, a disability lens was applied to evidence-generation activities, and in the design and renovation of the children's activity centre in Sabah to ensure accessibility for children living with disabilities.

The evaluation recognizes that considering children's vulnerabilities primarily in relation to their belonging to specific sub-groups of CAM was a deliberate design choice, but it nevertheless constitutes a weakness of the programme. While all CAM are undoubtedly vulnerable, others may face heightened vulnerability from protection concerns relating to intersectional factors, and programming should be adapted to provide intersectional support to these children in a transformative manner.

Q12 | How did interventions draw from, expand on and complement existing programmes and partnerships?

Finding 17:
The CAM programme has expanded on existing UNICEF CPSS programming at country level and has augmented and enhanced the organization's pre-existing migration programming at regional and global levels.

Following the development of the Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move in 2017,[63] child migration has been a priority area for UNICEF. The CAM programme allowed UNICEF to further its work on the first four policy 'asks' of the Global Programme Framework and address gaps in wider UNICEF programming in relation to these areas at the regional and national levels in SSEA.

At the national level, the CAM programme used a CPSS approach and, as discussed under 'efficiency', was not resource-heavy. Instead, the programme design integrated targeted CAM groups into existing approaches.

63   UNICEF (2017) Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move

In Bangladesh and Thailand in particular, UNICEF built upon existing work with government counterparts and IPs. For instance, staff in Bangladesh reported significant investments aimed at strengthening existing child protection systems through relevant policy, as well as collaborations with law enforcement agents aimed at building their capacity for implementation. Additionally, the work of the RRRI taskforce aligned with work under another programme to strengthen the RRRI database, illustrating how UNICEF has capitalized on synergies between programmes to strengthen the overall anti-trafficking system. Similarly, UNICEF Thailand continued working on alternatives to detention, legal status of children, ensuring protection and building the capacity of frontline workers. It also continues to cooperate with the Department of Children and Youth and the Ministry of Education to provide access to education and specialized services.

In Myanmar, UNICEF was able to respond to the change in context by leveraging its existing networks of IPs. For instance, in the case of legal aid provision, several were already associated with UNICEF to provide legal support for other children (who do not fit the criteria of CAM). With UNICEF support, some created new dedicated 'desks' to look after CAM-related cases. As previously discussed, in Malaysia the programme presented an important opportunity to develop new relationships with government stakeholders to address the protection needs of CAM and to develop new community-based protection mechanisms.

Q13 | To what extent was the programme aligned with activities, approaches and responses of partners at the regional and country levels?

Finding 18:
The programme complemented and aligned strongly with the activities of partners, although this varied depending on the country and type of partner.

The evaluation found strong alignment among the activities, approaches and responses of IPs and UNICEF at the country level. UNICEF has clearly selected IPs with strong track records in advocating for, and providing protective services to, CAM.

The evaluation also found strong alignment with the activities of other United Nations organizations. Specifically in the field of migration, the programme complements existing collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). For example, in parallel to the programme's implementation, UNICEF and IOM launched a global strategic collaboration framework. At the country level, too, existing partnerships with IOM proved useful. In Bangladesh, this supported the programme's work to combat trafficking, while in Myanmar, both organizations provided technical support to the government on combatting trafficking (before the coup). Meanwhile, UNICEF and UNHCR have an existing track record of joint work on statelessness.[64] At the regional level, UNICEF actively participated in the regional United Nations Network for Asia Pacific. In particular, it was involved in the workstream on the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration, co-led the advocacy and communications workstream (with the International Labour Organization, IOM and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) and co-led the work on ATD.[65] KIIs with United Nations partners suggested that UNICEF work on CAM in these forums was well aligned with their own work on migration, and that UNICEF added value by introducing a child-sensitive perspective to workstreams.

64   UNICEF and UNHCR (date unknown) Coalition on Every Child's Right to a Nationality
65   UNICEF (2022) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia 4th Interim Report

4.1.5 Sustainability

Q14 | To what extent has the programme succeeded in placing the rights of children affected by migration on the agenda of national governments and regional governance bodies?

Finding 19:

The programme has contributed to a positive trajectory in fostering supportive attitudes towards CAM, and has raised the profile of CAM on policy-making agendas. However, the extent to which this trajectory has advanced varies by country.

The success of the programme in placing the rights of CAM on the agendas of national governments and regional governance bodies was confirmed by the majority of key informants. Furthermore, survey results reflect a positive picture of attitudinal change, policy change and the potential for government-led services that are responsive to the needs of CAM. As illustrated in figure 5, the majority of IP respondents either "partially agreed" or "fully agreed" that the programme had driven improvements in these areas.

The programme has been particularly successful in advancing political agendas that are reflective of the rights of CAM in countries that already demonstrated an open approach to their inclusion. Thailand is a key example of this openness, where there were pre-existing laws and policies to support the rights of CAM and include CAM in the national system. For instance, all children were already able to access the national Thai education system, regardless of their migration status, and in 2018, the Thai government committed to ending child detention. Evidence from outcome harvesting workshops and KIIs with UNICEF staff and IPs shows that the programme reinforced this existing trend, with duty-bearers – in particular the government and private sector – becoming more cognizant of the protection risks faced by CAM. Duty-bearers reported in KIIs that they felt better able to provide access to education, health care and birth registration and were more able to implement services inclusive of CAM. This was corroborated by UNICEF staff. In this instance, the programme was not responsible for *establishing* a place for CAM rights on the national agenda, but has instead been instrumental in the *operationalization* of laws and policies by strengthening the knowledge and capacity of the government to implement these.

Figure 5: Extent to which the CAM programme has affected government approaches in SSEA

Do you feel that because of the CAM programme/UNICEF work on children affected by migration:

The attitudes of government partners towards the protection of children affected by migration have positively changed?

The government's services are more responsive to the needs of children affected by migration?

The government has acted through policy work to better protect children affected by migration?

Fully disagree Partially disagree Neither agree nor disagree Partially agree Strongly agree Do not know

In Bangladesh, UNICEF also built upon existing political will towards CAM. The programme's success in promoting the rights of CAM and in changing government attitudes rests on the fact it has successfully identified and capitalized on the areas in which the government was most open to working with CAM (namely, anti-trafficking and children in street situations). For example, the programme has aligned with the Prime Minister's declaration on urban and slum-dwelling children. Stakeholders suggested that although the government was not hostile to CAM before the programme, CAM were not high on the political agenda. Now there is an increased focus among government officials on driving results for trafficked children and children in street situations. In outcome harvesting and KIIs with UNICEF staff and IPs, stakeholders reported that there was a significant improvement in government attitudes as a result of programme activities. This included a more sensitive approach by frontline workers towards trafficked children.

Even in contexts where the political climate is highly sensitive towards migration, the programme has been successful in placing CAM on political agendas. One clear illustration of this is the ASEAN Declaration and RPA. Evidence from outcome harvesting and KIIs with UNICEF and external organizations suggest that there was previously a blindness to the situation of children in migration contexts. The fact that UNICEF has supported the negotiation of the ASEAN Declaration and RPA within this highly sensitive context is a significant achievement of the programme that supports sustainability.

There are, however, limits to this openness: although five states in Southeast Asia, including Thailand, are 'champion countries' for the Global Compact for Migration, several types of migration, such as refugees and asylum-seekers, remain highly sensitive amongst ASEAN members.

Malaysia, in particular, presented a sensitive operating context. Here, the inclusion of CAM in national systems was dependent on government openness to engage on particular categories of CAM. As in Bangladesh, UNICEF Malaysia successfully identified areas in which there was pre-existing political buy-in, including in areas such as anti-trafficking and ATD. In these areas, the programme succeeded in increasing the visibility of CAM and understanding of the issues affecting them. However, the programme has made less progress in advocating for the rights of refugee and asylum-seeking children, due to the higher sensitivity of these issues.

Q15 │ To what extent are the results of the programme, and of the systems-strengthening work, sustainable and resilient to risk?

Finding 20:
The programme was implemented for too short a duration to achieve fully sustainable results. However, there are indications that progress can be sustained beyond the programme with adequate financial support and political will.

Sustainability

Overall, the SSEA programme did not achieve sustainability of results. Indeed, the programme operated for too short a timeframe to achieve sustainable system strengthening, which is widely recognized to be a long-term process.[66] Even so, the evaluation found some encouraging examples which, if built upon, can contribute to the programme's sustainability. This assessment is supported by the IP survey, in which the majority of respondents reported that

it was "likely" or "highly likely" that progress would be maintained in the areas of government capacity-building, political buy-in and dedicated resources for protecting CAM. However, as shown in figure 6, there remains a degree of uncertainty, and the maintenance of programme activities is challenged by ongoing issues including lack of resources and political will and the increasing number of CAM.[67]

Across the South and Southeast Asia programme countries, capacity-building and evidence-generation interventions conducted under the programme are likely to contribute to the sustainability of results. The skills and knowledge frontline workers and IPs gained through the programme are transferable to other parts of national systems and can help to institutionalize learning. For example, the majority of frontline workers who participated in the survey stated that they felt their organization would be able to support trafficked children, stateless children, refugee and asylum-seeking children and migrant children the future, either fully or partially.[68]

Figure 6: Potential for sustainability in the SSEA region

How likely is that progress made by the 'CAM programme'/UNICEF work on children affected by migration will be maintained in the following areas following the conclusion of the programme:

Legend: Highly unlikely | Unlikely | Likely | Highly likely | Do not know

---
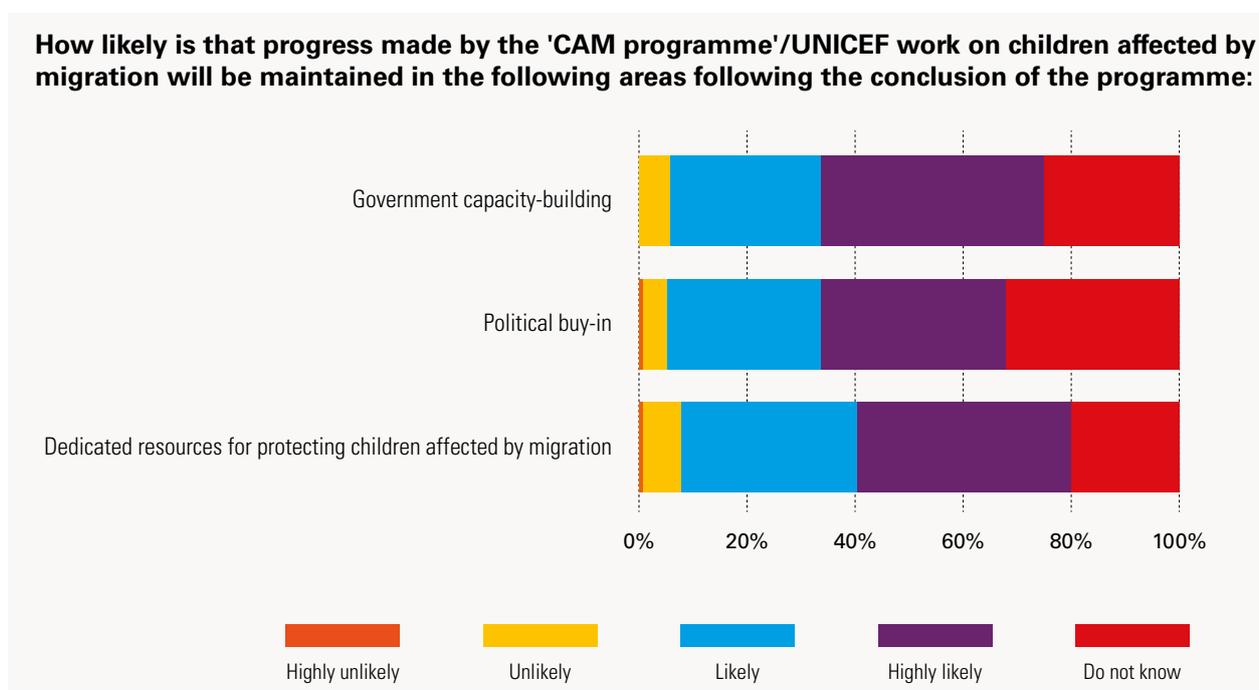
66   UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment

67   At the country level, the extent to which programme results are sustainable varies according to context, the type of activity and the group of CAM targeted by the programme. Country-level details are elaborated in Annex 4.

68   The more negative response towards support for IDP and children of labour migrant parents/carers reflects that these groups of children were not targeted in the SSEA programme.

Final Evaluation of the Programme 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia'
FINDINGS

59

Figure 7: Improved understanding of challenges faced by CAM

As a result of collaboration with UNICEF, do you feel you have a better understanding of the challenges faced by the following categories of children?

	Not at all	A little better	Much better	Do not know
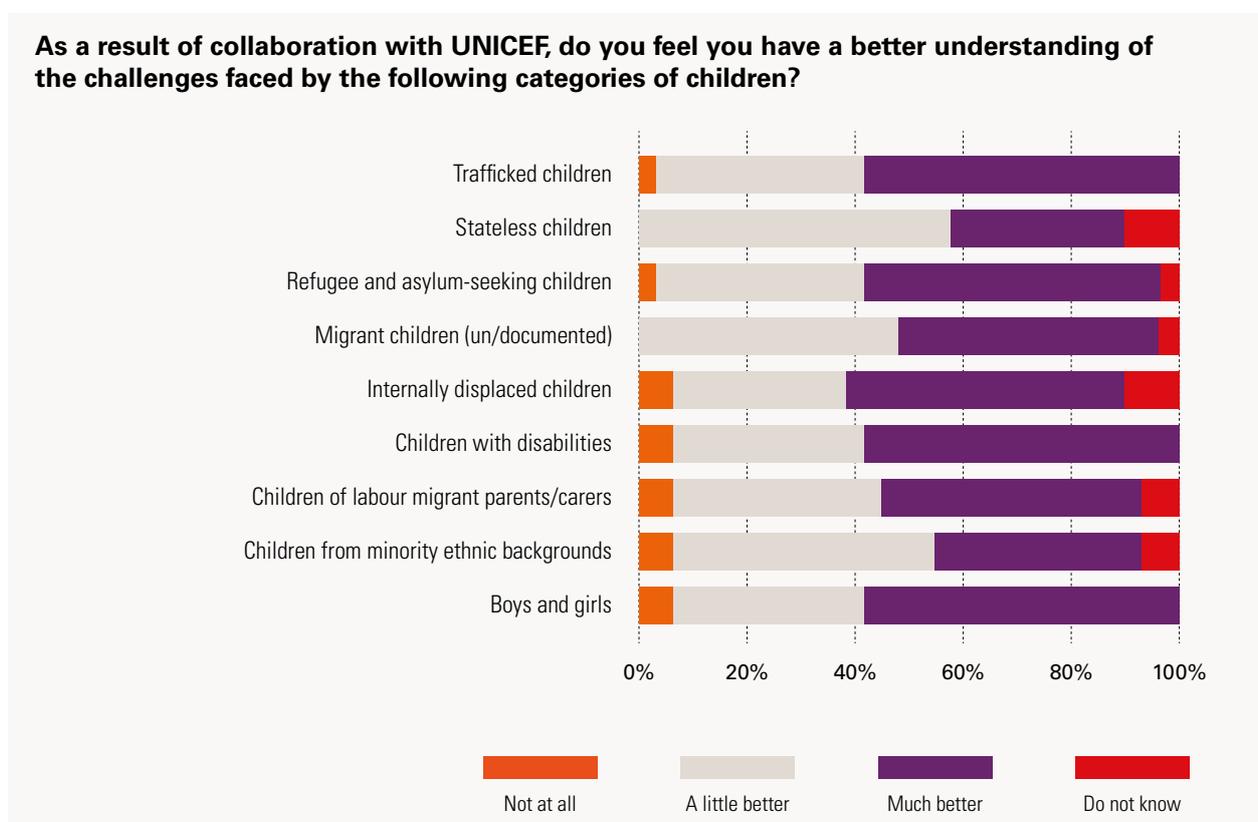
However, to guarantee continuity of the programme's results, it would be important to ensure that appropriate curricula are put in place and endorsed within government institutions and at regional level (e.g., drawing on the ASEAN Social Work Training Centre) going forward. One example of how UNICEF intends to augment progress in this area is in Bangladesh, where the CO will continue with slow but steady work on scaling up the results of the CAM programme to the national level through another EU-funded project.

The programme's evidence products are important tools for future programming, advocacy and the improvement of services to support CAM and their rights. To sustain these areas of work, it is important that UNICEF maintains a focus on CAM within its advocacy. There are already encouraging examples in this respect. For example, Malaysia CO has included a focus on CAM in its new CPD, and dedicated migration-focused staff will be retained. In Thailand, the issue of statelessness is aligned with CO priorities, and staff reported that the programme has provided a solid foundation on which to continue

work with government counterparts on migration beyond the CAM programme.

Despite these positive indications, it should be strongly emphasized that the programme's achievements require ongoing financial and human resources to make them sustainable. Several stakeholders at the regional level stated that to translate the ASEAN Declaration and RPA into national action plans, ongoing financial support and capacity-building for national governments will be required. While the Government of Bangladesh has taken over the child protection service hubs established under the programme, there is little evidence elsewhere that country programme governments have the financial resources or technical capacity to take over service provision from IPs.

Sustained political will is of course essential to consolidating and building upon the systems strengthening achieved under the programme. In Thailand and Bangladesh, IPs reported that supportive attitudes towards CAM were present at a high level, but did not translate into local-level commitments. This is problematic because the programme

can only achieve lasting effects for rights-holders if national-level commitments are operationalized at the frontline. In Malaysia, although the programme has made some improvements for trafficked children, there is a danger that the needs of other groups of CAM covered by the programme will continue to be difficult to pursue.

Finally, it should be restated that the programme's implementation environments are rapidly changing. Changing contexts have affected the programme's effectiveness and efficiency and will also be felt in the sustainability of results. Notably, there is an increase in the number of vulnerable CAM across the region. In South Asia, climate-induced migration is likely to increase in coming years. In turn, the numbers of CAM in need of protection are likely to increase, placing increased pressure on services and systems. As such, it will be difficult to maintain the programme's results without ongoing advocacy and continued investment from UNICEF. It is essential that there is a clear plan for scaling up and adapting services once they are transferred to government counterparts.

Resilience

The evaluation found little evidence that programme results are resilient to risk. Many of those interviewed stated that the programme had not contributed to resilience-building and indeed this was not a focus of programme activities. As discussed under 'relevance', the programme was able to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic and UNICEF, IPs and governments worked together during this time. Some established ways of working may support the continuity of results should there be a future external shock.

4.2 Central Asia

4.2.1 Relevance

This section addresses the extent to which the programme was found to be relevant to country and regional priorities, to individual needs of the most vulnerable children, and to changes in contexts and the shifting needs of rights-holders within the Central Asia component of the CAM programme. Under this criterion, the evaluation also assess the extent to which the generation of new evidence was pertinent and added value to existing research.

Q1 | To what extent was the programme aligned with regional and country-level needs and priorities?[69]

Finding 21:
The CAM programme did not directly address national and regional priorities in Central Asia as these did not, at the time of programme design, identify CAM as a priority group. Nonetheless, the programme was successful in drawing political attention to CAM, particularly in relation to children affected by labour migration and stateless children.

Labour migration is a significant feature across the Central Asian countries covered by the programme. Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are sources of large volumes of labour migrants to Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. Remittances represent a large proportion of each country's gross domestic product, accounting for over 25 per cent in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and over 10 per cent in Uzbekistan.[70] Kazakhstan is both a receiving country and a transit country for migration flows to the Russian Federation.

The programme in Central Asia mainly addressed children affected by labour migration (i.e., children remaining behind when parents / carers migrate) and stateless children. Data from outcome harvesting workshops and interviews suggest that although

---

69   This section examines programme country governments' needs and priorities. The needs of rights-holders are discussed in 5.2.1.2.

70   World Bank (2020) Personal Remittances Received % GDP – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. Available at: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=7E-KZ-KG-TJ-UZ

Final Evaluation of the Programme 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia'
FINDINGS

61

labour migration is prioritized by governments across Central Asia, children affected by labour migration were not a core focus for programme country governments. UNICEF, government and civil society stakeholders all agreed that prior to the implementation of the programme, children affected by migration were not identified as a distinct group of vulnerable children. As such, their specific needs were often overlooked within national service provision.

In this sense, the programme was not aligned with government priorities, as Central Asian countries did not identify CAM as a priority group. Nonetheless, the programme did align with existing needs at national and regional levels, and was successful in drawing political attention to CAM and in highlighting national and regional needs in this respect. The programme identified CAM as a distinct group of rights-holders within the broader context of labour migration, as well as working with relevant stakeholders on statelessness. UNICEF staff and IPs reported that UNICEF targeting of CAM was well received by government counterparts across the four Central Asian countries.

The identification of children affected by labour migration and stateless children as priority groups paved the way for bringing issues of relevance into political agendas through evidence-based advocacy and policy dialogue. The situation analysis conducted by UNICEF, published in 2021,[71] presented an entry point for exploring issues related to CAM with stakeholders in each of the programme countries.

Triangulated data highlighted that case management was used as an entry point for UNICEF to identify and tackle the needs of CAM. In Kazakhstan, this approach was applied through social service workforce strengthening, and in Kyrgyzstan, led to improved case management processes and collaboration between different government departments. In Uzbekistan, this angle was helpful in supporting social workers to identify needs of children affected by migration, in addition to work related to defining guardianship responsibilities. In Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, UNICEF also supported the development of training curricula for the social service workforce.

Another entry point was birth registration, which is key in ensuring that children have access to services. UNICEF worked jointly with UNHCR in the four Central Asian programme countries to secure government engagement and political buy-in to tackle statelessness.[72] For example, in Kazakhstan, UNICEF supported the government in drafting and discussing legislation to prevent statelessness.[73] In parallel, the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Kazakhstan ran an initiative to identify undocumented people in the country.[74] Kyrgyzstan eradicated statelessness in 2019; there, UNICEF and UNHCR supported government efforts to facilitate access to registration services for families.[75] In Tajikistan, UNICEF supported IPs to facilitate the birth registration of children and provide legal and financial support (e.g., for the issuance of identification documents). IPs noted the usefulness of UNICEF work in identifying the needs of undocumented people.

71   UNICEF (2021) Situation Analysis on Children Affected by Migration in Central Asia Final Report
72   UNICEF (2022) 4th Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia
73   UNICEF (2020) 2nd Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia
74   UNICEF (2022) 4th Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia
75   UNICEF (2020) 2nd Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia

At the regional level, there were limited priorities with which to align, since regional collaboration around CAM is nascent. The inclusion of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in the programme was in part based on the potential role they could play in fostering regional collaboration. Kazakhstan, in addition to being a receiving country, plays a leadership role in the region, and at the suggestion of the EU, Uzbekistan[76] was incorporated given its political will to engage in regional issues. Nonetheless, there is no sub-regional organization in Central Asia that plays a role equivalent to that of ASEAN in Southeast Asia. Documents reviewed by the evaluation suggest that in the early stages of the programme, the Almaty Process was proposed in discussions between stakeholders as a potential platform for discussion of CAM-related issues. However, the evaluation did not find evidence that this suggestion was taken forward.

According to UNICEF stakeholders, at regional level, the focus was on fostering dialogue between countries on cross-border collaboration and inter-sectorial stakeholder exchanges on potential improvements in service delivery for CAM in each country. The Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO) supported the establishment of regional platforms for dialogue and in facilitating the participation of key stakeholders from Central Asian programme countries in regional, cross-regional and global meetings, where best practices could be exchanged. For example, in 2018, the Regional Conference on the Right to Legal Identity and Prevention of Statelessness ("Leaving No One Behind at Birth") was held in Almaty, resulting in the issuance of joint conclusions on preventing statelessness through birth registration in Central Asian countries.[77]

Overall, however, migration remains a sensitive issue in Central Asia. UNICEF staff interviewed suggested that children left behind were selected as a target category because it was recognized that this was more likely than other categories of CAM to garner political support. These other categories, as highlighted by outcome harvesting and KIIs, include unaccompanied children (e.g., children crossing borders to seek employment), internally displaced children, and child migrants who travel to destination countries with their parents / carers and who do not have access to services in these countries (e.g., in Russia).

Q2 | To what extent and in what manner did the programme prioritize equity and the needs of the most vulnerable groups?

Finding 22:

In Central Asia, the programme was well targeted to the needs of groups of CAM that were identified as most relevant to the region, namely children affected by labour migration and stateless children. There is limited evidence, however, of systematic integration of intersecting vulnerabilities in programme prioritization decisions.

In Central Asia, UNICEF played a catalytic role in placing CAM issues on the political agendas of programme countries, most notably in relation to children affected by labour migration and stateless children. For children affected by labour migration, UNICEF stakeholders noted that this category is one that the agency had not previously focused on as much as other CAM categories, which was a clear success of the programme in terms of highlighting their needs in a region where labour migration is commonplace. The needs of vulnerable groups were prioritized through evidence generation, capacity building, policy advocacy, livelihood interventions, and psychosocial counselling needs.

The needs of vulnerable groups were identified and prioritized through evidence generation and needs assessments. For example, needs assessments in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan revealed that migration of parents had a severe impact on the psychosocial status of the children.[78] As a result, the programme in all four countries incorporated capacity-building of service providers on psychosocial support and

76   UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment

77   Regional Conference on the Right to Legal Identity and Prevention of Statelessness "Leaving No One Behind at Birth": Joint Conclusions to Prevent Statelessness by Birth Registration of All Children Born in Countries of Central Asia, 7-8 June 2018, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

78   UNICEF (2020) 2nd Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia

Final Evaluation of the Programme 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia'
FINDINGS

63

access of CAM and families to psychosocial counsellors. In this regard, for example, in KIIs it was reported that social workers in Uzbekistan came up with an individual development plan for families by creating monitoring indicators and monitoring the family and children on monthly basis.

In Tajikistan, the programme identified that the economic and livelihood status of mothers whose male family members or spouses migrated for work was very poor, as they largely relied on traditional farm work. Since this situation has a direct impact on the well-being of their children, the programme provided skills/vocational training to them. In addition to the trainings, the programme provided sewing machines and seed money as loans to start up businesses.[79] This initiative was beyond the original scope of the programme, and is a positive example of the application of a gender lens and incorporation of intersecting vulnerabilities.

In most countries, however, gender was the only component of intersectionality that was incorporated; overall, equity and inclusion were inconsistently taken into account. For example, UNICEF Tajikistan applied a gender equality approach in targeting, and UNICEF Uzbekistan took disability and gender into consideration on a case-by-case basis. Similarly, it was reported that even though UNICEF Kazakhstan was considerate of intersectionality in relation to targeted CAM groups, there was a lesser focus on children with disabilities compared with gender.

Overall, the evaluation found that consideration of intersectionality was not systematically applied across programme countries. This finding is acknowledged at a corporate level in UNICEF, with HQ interviewees recognizing that there was limited focus on disability at the outset of the programme, and that attention to gender took time to improve. Whilst it is acknowledged that this reflects a deliberate programme design choice to frame all CAM as being vulnerable, limited attention to intersectionality is a missed opportunity for more tailored targeting and delivery, as well as for the collection of data to inform and improve interventions.

The exception in this respect is Kyrgyzstan, where according to UNICEF stakeholders, programme design took into account intersectional considerations, and a database that includes the recording of intersectional vulnerabilities was produced. This database is a clear achievement of the programme and a valuable step forward in understanding how the needs of CAM differ in relation to intersecting vulnerabilities.

Q3 | During implementation, what efforts were taken to ensure that the programme remained relevant to/adapted as needed to the needs of rights-holders?

Finding 23:
The CAM programme in Central Asia demonstrated adaptability, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in relation to the repercussions of political instability in Afghanistan and Syria.

79   UNICEF (2022) 4th Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia

A major component of the programme in the four countries focused on capacity-building of primary service providers. However, due to COVID-19 lockdowns and travel restrictions, these trainings could not be delivered as originally envisaged. As a result, COs opted for remote modalities for training delivery. In addition, key informants reported that in Uzbekistan, the programme supported social workers by providing them with cell phones to connect with families and CAM who needed psychosocial support and counselling, as well as to facilitate access to education and health services. Psychosocial support was also offered under the programme in Tajikistan, targeting parents and carers who had to return to their country of origin due to the pandemic. The focus on psychosocial support was highlighted by UNICEF stakeholders as an adaptation in response to an identified need.

Adaptations to COVID-19 were also incorporated in Kazakhstan, for instance in relation to supporting IPs in the provision of training to social workers. Additionally, in summer 2020, the programme supported labour migrant women and children who arrived at the Zhibek Zholy border post in hopes of returning to Uzbekistan or Tajikistan following the outbreak of the pandemic. Using CAM programme funds, UNICEF delivered sanitary kits for women and children while they awaited permission to return home.[80] In Kyrgyzstan, COVID-19 adaptions included supporting referrals of CAM to relevant health and education services.

Political instability in neighbouring countries also had an impact on the programme. Following the crisis in Afghanistan, national governments, development partners and other relevant organizations involved in the programme quickly became absorbed in addressing emergency needs or preparing for the potential crisis across the border.[81] For example, in Uzbekistan, social workers trained under the CAM programme provided outreach activities to vulnerable populations, including children and families repatriated from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

In Kazakhstan, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Security Committee in the identification and return of Kazakhstani citizens, including minors (526 children), from combat zones in Syria.[82]

Another adaptation was found in Kyrgyzstan, where the male-to-female out-migration ratio is almost equal and there are numerous children left in the care of extended family or neighbours. With the identification of this country-specific issue, UNICEF and partners successfully advocated for a law stating that children can only be left after assigning a legal guardian.[83] Similar efforts were invested in Uzbekistan to establish appropriate guardianship procedures.

Q4 | To what extent was the evidence generation component pertinent and added value to existing research pieces? How did it inform programming?

Finding 24:
Evidence generation was key to the programme's success in placing issues related to CAM on national and regional political agendas in Central Asia. It also informed the identification of the most relevant categories of CAM to be targeted under the programme.

Prior to the programme, there was little existing research on the status of undocumented children and children affected by labour migration in the Central Asian programme countries. KIIs with UNICEF staff and external stakeholders in the region reported that there was no clear recognition of the specific needs and vulnerabilities of CAM. The first stage of the programme in Central Asia thus consisted of conducting studies and generating evidence on the needs and challenges facing CAM.

---

80   UNICEF (2021) Children in Migration: The Realities of the Pandemic – Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic to Children's Migration
81   UNICEF (2022) 4th Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia
82   EU and UNICEF Joint Programme, Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia, Minutes of the Third Project Advisory Committee Meeting , 1st July 2019, Nur-Sultan; data on returnees provided by the Child Rights Protection Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science in the Republic of Kazakhstan
83   UNICEF (2022) 4th Interim Report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia

Table 7: Central Asia evidence generation outputs

UNICEF CO/ RO	Evidence and research generated through the CAM programme
ECARO	▶ Situation Analysis of Children Affected by Migration in Central Asia ▶ Regional Assessment of the Impacts of COVID-19 on the Rights of CAM in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
Kazakhstan	▶ Review of the National Legislative Framework on Children Affected by Migration, in Partnership with Human Rights Ombudsperson (resource not publicly available) ▶ Report and Framework for the Development of Protective Mechanisms and Services for Children Affected by Migration in Kazakhstan ▶ Mapping the Capacity of Kazakhstan's National System to Responding to the Needs of Children Affected by Migration, with a Focus on Unaccompanied and Separated Children
Kyrgyzstan	▶ Children of Migrants Left without Parental Care in Kyrgyzstan: Multi-indicator cluster survey ▶ Analysis of Gaps in Access to Basic Services for Children Affected by Migration in Kyrgyzstan ▶ Overview and Recommendations on the Implementation of Existing Progressive Practices in Birth Registration ▶ Analysis of Law Enforcement Practice and Legislation in the Field of Formal Guardianship by Relatives/Guardian of Migrant Children ▶ Assessment of Holding Facilities and Practices of Holding Children in the Kyrgyz Republic ▶ Situation Analysis on Adolescent and Youth Suicides and Attempted Suicides in Kyrgyzstan ▶ Analysis of the Gaps and Opportunities for Child Protection in Cross-Border Information Exchange and Case Management between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (in partnership with UNICEF Kyrgyzstan)
Tajikistan	▶ Baseline study on CAM in Kulob and Levakant ▶ Endline study on CAM in Kulob and Levakant
Uzbekistan	▶ Study Report on the Effects of Migration on Children of Uzbekistan

The evaluation found that evidence generation had three key uses: (a) shedding light on the number and situation of children affected by migration in the region, (b) identifying gaps in the existing child protection system to inform service provision, policymaking and legislative reform and (c) providing information on the needs and challenges of CAM in order to provide a basis for programming and advocacy. Most key informants, including implementing partners, government representatives and representatives of other United Nations agencies, felt that evidence generation was a crucial first step in establishing the programme. IPs in programme countries confirmed that they drew on evidence produced by UNICEF in their case management work for CAM, and on birth registration information to address the needs of stateless children.

At the regional level, ECARO conducted the Situation Analysis of Children Affected by Migration in Central Asia, which helped identify issues related to child protection, access to health, early childhood development, education and protection of migrant workers in host countries.[84]

Several studies conducted at the national level, meanwhile, provided data that directly supported other programme interventions and boosted national government capacity and ownership on CAM. For example, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan partnered with the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic to conducted a multi-indicator cluster survey, which later served as a pioneering document for identifying children affected by labour migration.[85] The partnership between UNICEF and the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic also served to bolster government ownership over the findings. The findings of the "Analysis of Gaps in Access to Basic Services for Children Affected by Migration in Kyrgyzstan" outlined the challenges faced by the children of internal migrant workers, and contributed to the introduction of social protection measures and social services in the Child Code.

Similarly, in Uzbekistan, a major output of the programme was a study on the "Effects of Migration on Children Left Behind", which focused on living conditions, health, education and the psychological well-being of children. The findings revealed the psychological impact of migration on children, and highlighted the strong need for psychosocial support services. The research also noted the lack of referral mechanisms to provide support to families and children affected by migration. As a result, the programme supported the establishment of referral mechanisms in four regions, and the government has committed to scale this up nationally.

In Tajikistan, a baseline study on CAM was conducted in two districts, with the objective of identifying the challenges along with the needs of CAM and their families.[86] According to key informants, the findings suggested that 90 per cent of the women surveyed were not aware of their rights and entitlements. Accordingly, several information-dissemination and awareness-raising sessions were conducted throughout the programme, and by the time the endline study was conducted, it was reported that there was a felt change in the attitudes of women towards access to services.

Evidence generation was also a major component in Kazakhstan. UNICEF Kazakhstan, jointly with the Human Rights Ombudsperson, commissioned a review of the national legislative framework on children affected by migration.[87] The programme also supported a mapping of Kazakhstan's national systems to assess their capacity to respond to the needs of children affected by migration, with a focus on unaccompanied and separated children. Additionally, Kazakhstan CO partnered with its counterpart in Kyrgyzstan to conduct an "Analysis of the Gaps and Opportunities for Child Protection in Cross-Border Information Exchange and Case Management between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan". The findings were widely distributed among national stakeholders and presented in a cross-border workshop, which was attended by more than 50 government and civil society partners.[88]

84   UNICEF (2021) Situation Analysis on Children Affected by Migration in Central Asia Final Report
85   UNICEF (2022) 4th Interim report: Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia
86   UNICEF(2022) 4th Interim Report Protection of Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia
87   UNICEF (2020) 2nd Interim Report Protection of Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia
88   UNICEF (2022) 4th Interim report Protection of Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia

The programme's evidence generation component has also facilitated programme adaptation in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. In partnership with the European Network of Children's Ombudspersons (ENOC), UNICEF conducted a regional assessment of the impacts of COVID-19 on the rights of CAM in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which was used as a reference for governments and UNICEF COs to identify the immediate needs of CAM during the pandemic, as well as to define appropriate ways to address them.

Box 11: Significant Achievement : Strengthening of case management capacity in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan was among the countries selected to pilot the training courses for strengthening the capacity of the social service workforce (developed by ECARO in partnership with Columbia University). Based on the Columbia module, a course was created to train social service employees on the protection and rights of CAM. By the end of the programme, 377 social workers and 350 students of social services had been trained on non-discrimination, case management, alternative care, communication and interaction with the public.

Significant progress was made in the country to introduce a case management approach in its three regions. First explored in a training module, this approach has been integrated into case management protocols. By the end of 2021, UNICEF Kazakhstan finalized testing child protection services and case management for CAM in partnership with three NGOs and three Centres for Adaptation of Minors in Nur-Sultan, Almaty and Shymkent and Turkestan Oblast.

To date, due to the successful implementation of protective services within the programme, relevant amendments have been made to the Order No. 595 of the Ministry of Education of the RK "On approval of the Standard Rules for the Activities of Educational Organizations of the Respective Types". The proposed amendments to the Order were presented by the Ministry of Education on the Open Government Portal for public discussion, after which the Government's conclusion on them will be received. While work on updating this Order is ongoing, it is expected that with the adoption of these amendments, case management for CAM will become mandatory in the work of all Children's Support Centres.

4.2.2 Effectiveness

Q5 | To what extent and how did the programme components achieve expected progress within the expected timeframe?

Finding 25:
The programme in Central Asia made significant achievements within its implementation period, particularly in the areas of alternatives to detention, children benefitting from formal kinship care in line with international standards, parenting services and support, case management, and policy advocacy. However, results achieved may not translate into impact, which reflects challenges in realizing the causal linkages assumed in the programme's logframe.

The CAM programme in Central Asia achieved significant results in providing continued protection and access to services for children affected by migration, building on momentum and government support gained in the beginning of the programme. The programme also made significant contributions to the development of national and local protection mechanisms for children affected by migration and has continued to generate knowledge about the risks and vulnerabilities these children face.

Outcome 1:
Child protection systems, including alternatives to (immigration) detention, are inclusive of children affected by migration, including those trafficked

Through UNICEF support in Kazakhstan, 1,273 children received child protection services (social, legal and psychosocial services) provided by the state-run child support/adaptation centers and NGOs.[89] In Uzbekistan, 403 children received psychosocial assistance through a UNICEF-supported case-management approach, and a further 700 children and their families increased their awareness about social services available to them.[90] In Tajikistan, 614 children received access to child protection through case management services.[91]

A case management approach to addressing the needs of children affected by migration was also introduced in Kyrgyzstan, where 322 service providers, including 54 border guards, completed UNICEF-supported pre- or in-service training curricula, including a focus on children affected by migration.[92] IP and government stakeholders noted that

> **Box 12: Significant Achievement: Policy development in Uzbekistan**
>
> In Uzbekistan, the CAM programme supported the government to develop and review a number of policies related to social and child protection reforms, notably a by-law on inter-agency cooperation in case management and a resolution on establishing a new structure on social work and social services. These are significant advances in child protection, including for CAM, since once adopted, relevant professionals will have access to clear guidance on how to assess the needs of vulnerable children and families, including children affected by migration, and refer them to the appropriate social services.

89   UNICEF (2023) Updated Global Logical Framework Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia: 5th Interim Report
90   UNICEF (2023) Uzbekistan Country Programme Logframe 5th Interim Report
91   UNICEF (2023) Tajikistan Country Programme Logframe 5th Interim Report
92   UNICEF (2023) Kyrgyzstan Country Programme Logframe 5th Interim Report

---

Box 13: Significant Achievement: Development of Kyrgyzstan's Child Code

In Kyrgyzstan, the programme's most significant achievement was support for the development of a new Child Code, which provides a stronger legal framework for the protection of children and the realization of their rights. In the new Child Code, UNICEF support resulted in the inclusion of new provisions for children remaining behind, including identification of a guardian for a child before parents leave the country, and ensuring that a case management approach is applied. Under the new code, legal guardians of children affected by labour migration will be given power of attorney, giving them the right to represent the interests of the child. The bill has been approved by parliament and is awaiting signature by the President.

---

civil servants and social workers have become more aware of children remaining behind when their parents/carers migrate, and government institutions such as the Department of Migration are working to delineate roles and responsibilities of different organizations (social services, education departments, employment agencies, etc.) to ensure that comprehensive support is provided to these children and their families. Case management standards were also developed by UNICEF in Uzbekistan under the CAM programme, which have been submitted to the newly-established Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support as well as to the State Committee of Family and Women's Affairs for approval.

Outcome 2:

Children affected by migration, including those trafficked, benefit from an enhanced enabling environment (policies and procedures) that provide better access to child protection systems

The programme has contributed to the development of legislation and policy documents to enshrine the rights of CAM. In Kyrgyzstan, a Child Code was developed, and in Uzbekistan, UNICEF supported the development of a new law on social work (see Boxes 13 and 14 below). In Kazakhstan, amendments were introduced to Order no. 595 "On approval of the Standard Rules for the activities of educational organizations of the respective types".[93] These pieces of legislation are currently under review by the respective authorities.

In Tajikistan, UNICEF advocacy resulted in the development of key policy documents, including the State Programme on Development of Workforce of Social Protection Sector to 2030, State Programme on Developing Social Protection System to 2030 and a migration strategy that is inclusive of families remaining behind, all of which were submitted to the Government of Tajikistan for endorsement. In 2021, according to the President's Resolution no. 300, the Government of Uzbekistan launched a state programme on integrated services establishing nationwide case management processes and tools, including an e-module mandatory for community workers of the State Committee of Family and Women's Affairs.

In Kazakhstan, legislation aimed at ensuring the right of the child to birth registration has been significantly strengthened. In 2019, in consultation with UNICEF and UNHCR, the country made important amendments to the Marriage and the Family Code, which allowed the registration of children born from mothers that did not have documents. As a result, 1,500 children born in medical institutions received birth certificates.

---

93   Kazakhstan has also adopted the Concept of Migration Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2027, and a draft law on combating trafficking in human beings is currently being discussed and revised. These are being catalysed by the efforts of experts, civil society, officials and international organizations. Even though the implementation of the UNICEF CAM programme has not directly influenced the adoption of the concept and the revision of the law, it did contribute to a more conducive context for recognizing and addressing the needs of CAM.

Outcome 3:
Relevant international, regional and national bodies recognize the rights of children affected by migration, including those trafficked

The target for indicator 3A – "number of international or regional bodies making a public statement recognising the rights of children affected by migration" – was that at least one substantial statement or report on a programme country was made by a regional or international body; four such statements were achieved under the programme (see table 9 below). These include: the statement of the official delegation of Kazakhstan at the Marrakesh GCM Conference in 2018; Concluding Observations on the 2nd Periodic Report of Tajikistan of the United Nations Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child Committee Concluding Observations on the 5th and 6th Periodic Report of Uzbekistan.[94] In addition, the MoU signed between Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation is significant (noting that while the latter is not a programme country, it is an important destination for labour migrants from Central Asia).

Outcome 3B, concerning the establishment of a regional child protection network and cross-border collaboration on CAM, will not be achieved. However, it is acknowledged that Central Asian programme countries did establish bilateral cross-border collaboration networks on CAM.

Overall, the CAM programme has reached, and in some cases exceeded, targets at the output level, as well as most outcome- and impact-level targets, as illustrated in table 9.

As noted for the SSEA region, however, a key constraint for measuring results relates to the formulation of the programme's targets, which do not allow for exploring the programme's contribution to change in a meaningful manner (see 4.1.2.1). Progress made so far is appropriate for contributing to the outcome-level ambition of the programme. However, as noted in the evaluability assessment, the framing of the outcome indicators does not capture the change the programme aims to achieve.

As illustrated in this section, the programme has made significant achievements in relation to its planned results. However, the significant achievements highlighted in boxes throughout this section illustrate that the causal linkages between the programme's Outputs, Outcomes and Impact do not capture progress made along results chain. The evaluation's primary data collected through Outcome Harvesting workshops and interviews with UNICEF and external stakeholders suggests important achievements have been made in having secured engagement from regional governments on CAM issues, in strengthening case management and social service workforce capacity, and in efforts related to legislative and policy changes (see Annex 5 for more details).

Table 8: Outcome-level Planned and Achieved Results in Central Asia[95]

Objective	Indicator	December 2022 (cumulative)	Target by End of Project
Impact (Overall Objective)	Number of children (disaggregated by age/sex) apprehended for migration-related reasons and placed in alternatives to detention that adhere to international standards.	919	233
	Number of children affected by migration (disaggregated by age/sex) benefiting from formal care that adheres to international standards	1,844	3,713
	Number of children affected by migration (disaggregated by age/sex) benefitting from (supported) formalized kinship care that adheres to international standards	1,438	1,225
Outcome 1	1A. Number of families who received parenting services/support through UNICEF-supported programmes	1,164	900
	1B. Number of children left behind in Central Asian countries provided with child protection case management services in line with international standards	3,161	1,794
	1C. Number of countries with guardianship practice for children affected by migration in line with international standards	1	3
	1D. Number of registered unaccompanied and separated children in cross-border situations who have benefitted from a formal UNICEF-supported BIA/BID process and/or are in appropriate and protective care arrangements that are in accordance with international standards	317	230
	1E. Number of countries offering alternatives to detention for girls and boys affected by migration in adherence with international minimum standards	0	1
Outcome 2	2A. Number of countries that have mechanisms in place advocated by UNICEF for cross-border information-sharing, including family tracing and reunification.	0	3
Outcome 3	3A. Number of international or regional bodies making a public statement recognizing the rights of children affected by migration	4	At least one substantial statement or report per country with UNICEF input
	3B. Regional child protection network on case management and cross border collaboration on children affected by migration established	Bilateral networks established; regional network not achieved	Established and operational

95   UNICEF (2023) Updated Global Logical Framework, 5th Interim Report Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia

Q6 | To what degree has the programme contributed to/strengthened the capacity of national child protection systems to protect children affected by migration effectively?

Finding 26:
The CAM programme has enhanced child protection systems in Central Asia through a focus on capacity-building, strengthening of case management and support to legal and policy reform. However, sustained efforts are required to maintain and build upon this progress.

Systems enhancement
In line with the assessment provided in the SSEA section, the evaluation found that the programme's interventions in Central Asia correspond with the "system-building" and "system-enhancement" stages of the UNICEF CPSS approach. The programme has contributed to strengthening systems in the areas of capacity-building of frontline workers, establishment and enhancement of case management systems and services, and legal reform and policies.

Progress in building the capacity of service providers and integrating children affected by migration into the legal system – as well as the degree of government engagement – varied across Central Asian countries. One area of particular focus was the strengthening of case management systems.

In Kazakhstan, a case management framework and protective services for children affected by migration were developed and jointly tested with the child protection committee of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Human Rights Ombudsperson in three regions of Kazakhstan (see Box 12 above). NGOs played a significant role in facilitating the reunification of undocumented parents with children placed in government institutions (e.g., the Centre for the Adaptation of Minors and the Centre for Support for Children in Difficult Life Situations) because of lack of documents and/or lack of evidence of parent-child relationship.

In Uzbekistan, case management standards were developed, and the programme supported the government in the development of a Law on Social Work, as well as a number of other policies related to social and child protection reforms (see Box 14 above).

The provision of training was a significant component for all countries in the region, and contributes to the achievement of Outcomes 1 and 2 (see table 9).

In Kyrgyzstan, the programme trained master trainers from the Border Security Training Centre in Osh City on child-friendly procedures. Border guards were trained on how to interact with children, and special interview rooms were set up for children and families with children, making the process faster and more child-friendly. Guards are now more likely to recognize children who are victims of human trafficking and/or unaccompanied and separated children, with IPs reporting that border crossings are safer for children as a result.

In Tajikistan, training for para-social workers from Centres for Social Service Provision was ongoing at the time of data collection. Para-social workers, child rights units and law enforcement agencies nationwide underwent intensive five-day regional in-service training sessions on topics including referral mechanisms, existing services, providing services, gatekeeping approaches to prevent child institutionalization, social reintegration of children in conflict with the law, and social protection of families affected by migration. In Tajikistan, the programme also ran parenting and psychosocial support workshops and training sessions for nurses, teachers,

---

Box 14: Significant Achievement: Tajikistan local referral and response mechanism

The CAM programme in Tajikistan developed a local referral and response mechanism (LRRM) to protect rights and ensure access of children and women affected by migration to existing services. This establishment of the LRRM was a significant development for the protection of CAM, as this resulted in support to families seeking issuance of identity documents: 1,246 children remaining behind received birth certificates and 258 were issued national passports, increasing the access of vulnerable CAMs to key services.

community heads and family members that were held in Kulob and Levakant. Five hundred and eighty-six people were trained in case management and 513 in parenting, while 244 completed vocational training.

Fifty-two staff members, including 14 directors from social support (transit centres) across Uzbekistan were trained in Tashkent. These specialists worked with children affected by labour migration who did not have guardianship/support structures that provided adequate protection. These centres now provide services that are fairly integrated into the national system. As the centres are funded by the state, this is an important illustration of the programme's sustainability.

Frontline workers in Central Asia were generally positive about the changes the CAM programme brought to their institutions. Most respondents "partially" or "strongly" agreed that the services, policy base and attitudes of their organization towards CAM had improved because of UNICEF work (see figure 8 below). Although the survey of frontline workers was not representative, it supports the impression conveyed in KIIs and outcome harvesting.

Figure 8: Central Asia frontline workers' views on impact of CAM programme on government attitudes, policies and service responsiveness

Do you feel that because of the UNICEF work on children affected by migration...
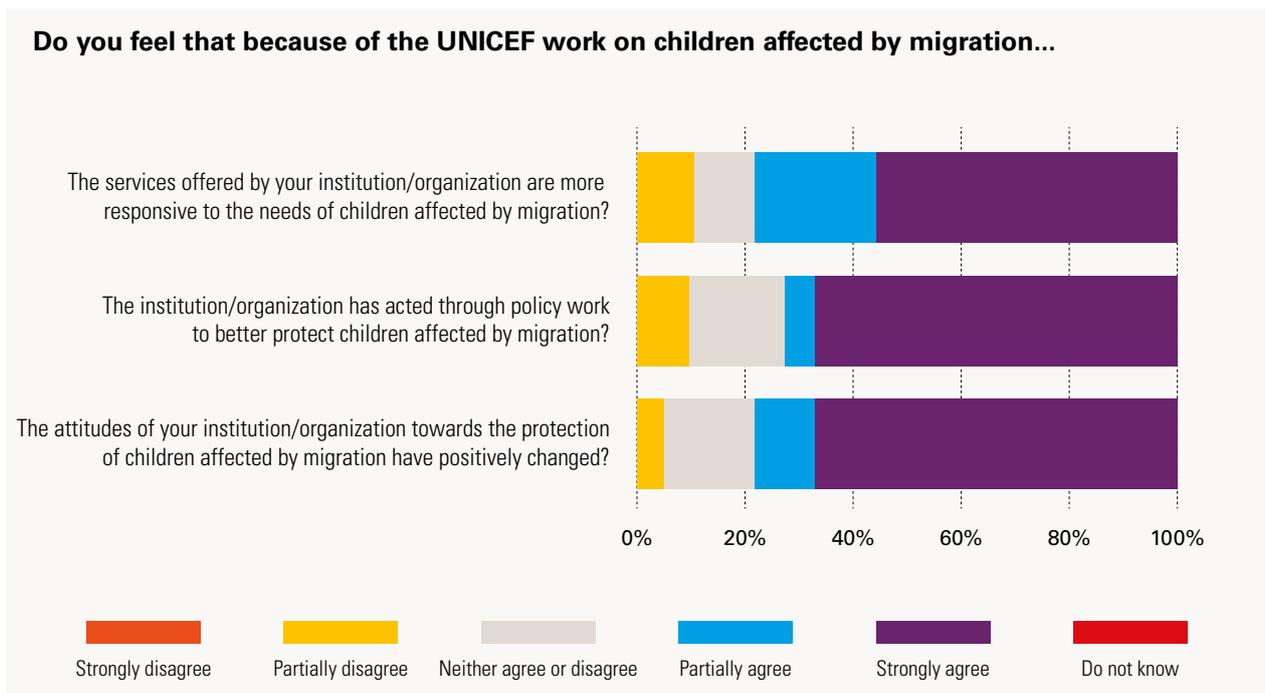
Despite this progress, concerns were expressed by internal and external stakeholders during the data collection process with regard to the sustainability of achievements under the CAM programme. Some of these concerns are rooted in the scope and reach of the programme, which is discussed in more detail under efficiency. For example, in Uzbekistan, which received the smallest budget envelope, initiatives had to be prioritized. In addition, the programme faced frequent changes in interlocutors. This lack of continuity in the structures that the programme has engaged with raises questions around the sustainability of the programme there.

In addition to concerns around scope and reach, concerns were raised by IPs that the interventions supported by the programme had not sufficiently matured to strengthen national child protection systems. Some external stakeholders (IPs and government stakeholders) also expressed concern about the extent to which the assistance provided to CAM was timely and sufficient, since the needs of children were diverse and sometimes went beyond the remit of their organizations. They noted that for institutional change to occur in their organizations, more time should be devoted to the practice of case management, and the specialists in related fields in education, health care and registration authorities should also be trained in dealing with CAM. These observations suggest that a whole-of-system approach has yet to be achieved.

Q7 | What have been the main factors that facilitated or hindered the programme?

Finding 27:
The reputation and technical expertise of UNICEF facilitated programme implementation and the establishment of cross-sectorial exchanges and collaboration.

Finding 28:
Constraints imposed on the CAM programme included shifts in state structures and turnover of interlocutors in partner institutions, political change, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Enabling factors

Most participants in the evaluation reckoned that the main factor contributing to the effectiveness of the programme was the reputation of UNICEF as a long-standing actor in Central Asian countries. The recognition of its staff as highly qualified specialists, as well as their relationships with a range of relevant stakeholders, were considered key enabling factors in garnering political will in Central Asian governments and fostering an enabling environment to address issues related to CAM.

The agency's convening power, which is discussed in more detail under coherence, is also considered to be an enabling factor. The establishment of PACs is an illustration of this convening capacity; these are a valuable platform for bringing together stakeholders from various sectors that can collaborate to address the needs of CAM more effectively.

Finally, the UNICEF systems strengthening-approach has enabled effective implementation. The CAM programme supported children and their families at the micro level, community services at the middle level, and government at the national level, as well as collaborating with other partners such as NGOs, IOM and UNHCR at the macro level. Such wide-ranging engagement is key to the success of systems-strengthening interventions.

Weaknesses and constraining factors

Respondents cited high staff turnover among implementing institutions as one of the factors hindering implementation of the programme. Frequent changes in state personnel and regular changes in government structures were experienced in all four participating countries of Central Asia.

Other important factors impacting on implementation were the COVID-19 pandemic as well as political changes in Central Asian countries.

Other bottlenecks noted by UNICEF staff included the weak system of cooperation between key state and non-governmental stakeholders involved in providing services to migrant workers and their families (Uzbekistan); the lack of a systematic identification mechanism and targeted response to the needs of children affected by migration (Tajikistan); and the absence of a mechanism for family tracing and reunification across borders (Kyrgyzstan).

Q8 | How did the monitoring system across countries contribute to effectiveness? Is it built with/interoperable with government systems or is it standalone?

Finding 29:
The CAM programme's monitoring system for Central Asia exhibits weaknesses in relation to data access and reliability and inconsistencies in reporting on intersecting vulnerabilities.

Finding 30:
The evaluation found limited evidence that the programme's monitoring systems are interoperable with government systems, and data sharing with government is limited to specific platforms such as the PACs.

UNICEF COs collect data together with IPs and report either monthly or quarterly against the indicators contained in the logframes. As highlighted in SSEA section 4.1.2.6, data collected by IPs are mostly quantitative, and where possible UNICEF conducts field visits as part of its monitoring processes. IP reporting made available to the evaluation suggests inconsistent reporting on intersecting vulnerabilities, with indicators being disaggregated only by gender, while age and disability are included in narrative form. Data provided by IPs did not

contain information on the categories of CAM that were reached. In addition, IPs reported challenges in reaching rights-holders, in the willingness of the latter to share information, and in limited access to reliable internet connectivity.

The level of accuracy of data collected by governments was also highlighted as an issue in KIIs conducted with UNICEF and external stakeholders, as well as in the evaluability assessment. Most respondents interviewed during this evaluation noted that government systems for monitoring the situation of CAM children affected by migration are inadequate, as is the overall system for collecting state statistics in Central Asia – in addition to migration-related data being considered sensitive. The lack of data on children affected by migration has prevented governments from fully understanding the problem and its magnitude. This was partly addressed by UNICEF evidence generation activities under the programme, but gaps remain.

The primary platform for the exchange of information with governments is the PAC, which meets every six months. In Kazakhstan, UNICEF was the main source of data related to CAM in these meetings. In Uzbekistan, regular meetings with the PAC made it possible to discuss immediate services gaps and ways to improve the situation with social protection system and services stakeholders.

Kyrgyzstan is a positive example where data-sharing and interoperability was somewhat effective. With the support of the CAM programme, in parallel with the module for registering returned migrants, a module for registering CAM under the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Migration was developed, and this module was linked to the Tunduk National Database. This programme achievement is significant, as linking the database to the state system ensures the availability of data and allows all interested parties to use the data to track the situation CAM. However, different agencies have their own monitoring systems and data in Kyrgyzstan. Another monitoring system is administered by the Office of the Ombudsman and the Ministry of Social Affairs. They conduct follow-up visits for case management and referrals. UNICEF also has its own database. It was reported that sometimes the data in different databases do not match; the evaluation was not able to ascertain why this is the case.

4.2.3 Efficiency

Q9 | To what extent and how has the availability and use of resources facilitated or affected the implementation of interventions?

Finding 31:
Overall, the programme in Central Asia used available resources efficiently, but funds were not sufficient to comprehensively tackle needs identified in the region.

Finding 32:
The programme capitalized on existing UNICEF programming and expertise, given limited human resources allocated to the CAM programme under EU contracting procedures.

Financial resources

The financial resources allocated to support programme implementation in Central Asia were overall not appropriate for responding to the extent of needs identified in each country. In part, this was rooted in the fact that needs were higher than expected, as reported by UNICEF and IP stakeholders. In addition, the requirements for effectively implementing a systems-strengthening approach were noted by stakeholders as being higher than what was anticipated under the programme.

The funding allocated to Central Asia was substantially lower than that of SSEA, with Uzbekistan's funding being the lowest in the programme (see table 10). At the level of ECARO, stakeholders highlighted that resourcing was not sufficient on two levels: in relation to the actual level of effort needed for securing political will to engage on CAM issues, and in relation to the timeframe required to achieve results. It was felt by UNICEF stakeholders that the expectations in terms of results were demanding in view of the resourcing allocated to the regional office.

Table 9: Central Asia Programme Expenditure as of December 18, 2022[96]

UNICEF Office	Total Programme Costs in Euro
Europe and Central Asia Regional Office	609,024.44
Kazakhstan Country Office	853,011.72
Kyrgyzstan Country Office	918,304.33
Tajikistan Country Office	982,651.78
Uzbekistan Country Office	548,531.58

UNICEF country offices expressed the same sentiment in relation to budget allocations being insufficient in relation to the aspirations of the programme. UNICEF staff and IPs did report instances where the programme benefitted from in-kind contributions from other stakeholders (e.g., government contributions in Uzbekistan to hold events and in Kyrgyzstan to cover travel expenses for staff attending training events). Even so, in some cases, the budget available was not sufficient, for example to cover IP costs for conducting fieldwork for case management (e.g., in Tajikistan), and the costs associated with some of the services covered by the programme (e.g., the increase in the costs of birth certificates in Tajikistan).[97] These shortfalls strained programme implementation.

Despite these constraints, the evaluation found that available resources were used efficiently. The choices made for prioritization and focus of interventions effectively capitalized on the comparative advantages of stakeholders – UNICEF, primarily, but also IPs and government counterparts in some instances. As detailed in the effectiveness section, for some output indicators, partner results were triple the original targets, such as in the number of children receiving support, by attracting other resources.

96   UNICEF (2023) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia 5th Interim Financial Report.
97   UNICEF (2020) Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia Evaluability Assessment, Annex 3.

As noted in the evaluability assessment, the programme was designed to be integrated into, and capitalize on, existing programmes. The evaluation found that programme implementation did indeed complement existing child protection strengthening work, supporting the argument that funds were used efficiently. However, leveraging what already exists does not obviate the need for overall resources to be commensurate with the ambitions of the programme, and this was not the case in Central Asia. As a result, the scope and scale of systems-strengthening work was constrained, which has implications for sustainability as well as placing undue burden on staff (see below).

Human resources

At regional and country level, UNICEF staff conveyed that the human resources allocated for programme implementation were insufficient in relation to the results intended. IP stakeholders echoed this argument. Whilst the evaluation acknowledges that the programme's human resourcing was constrained by EU procurement regulations, there was an adverse impact on workload and staff turnover, particularly at the level of IPs.

In Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, there was one UNICEF staff member dedicated to the CAM programme. In Kazakhstan, staff engaged in the programme at 30-50 per cent job-share with other responsibilities. Stakeholders from these COs conveyed that there was an underestimation of staff time that would be required to implement the programme. Interviewees additionally reported that there were administrative and logistical support needs that had to be covered from CO resources, and technical expertise from colleagues in country offices was also drawn on as needed. In addition, there is a recognition that the tasks expected in terms of programme management and monitoring were demanding and would have benefitted from additional human resourcing. Similar challenges were reported at ECARO level, including in relation to reporting periods falling outside programme implementation timeframes where it was necessary to draw from UNICEF regional office resources.

IPs also noted that budget allocation placed constraints on recruitment and impacted on staff retention. For example, in Uzbekistan, some IPs were unable to recruit the number of social workers they needed in Surkhandarya. As a result, each social worker was expected to cover 11 families, which placed constraints on the support they could provide to these families. In Tajikistan, the salaries being offered to social workers were not competitive and as a result IPs experienced difficulties in the recruitment and retention of qualified staff. Some IPs also reported drawing on the expertise and time of their staff to appropriately fulfil the requirements of programme implementation.

Q10 | To what extent has UNICEF applied a cost-effective approach when implementing programme activities?

Finding 33:

UNICEF demonstrated a cost-aware approach in its use of programme funds by leveraging existing UNICEF activities and structures, with variable impact on results across the region.

Cost-awareness

UNICEF COs in the Central Asia region have used the funds in a timely manner to complement ongoing child protection efforts with initiatives targeting children affected by migration. As discussed above, while this is an efficient model, the extent to which resources were found to be adequate in relation to expected results varied.

In Kazakhstan, the programme managed to achieve tangible results within the available funding. Case management tools were developed and integrated into the national system, services were tested and provided, and changes were made to relevant legislation. In addition, the CO leveraged additional funding from ECARO during the COVID-19 pandemic, which complemented work undertaken by the CAM programme. This funding was channeled through IPs the programme was already working with and benefitted rights-holders identified by the CAM programme.

In Kyrgyzstan, the development of a digital/electronic case management system contributed to efficiency, as it saves time for specialists from different government agencies and NGOs who deal with CAM. It also improves cooperation between stakeholders. Overall, however, resources were insufficient, requiring some products associated with the renovation of the Child Support Centre to be co-financed by partner organizations such as IOM, UNHCR and the United Nations Population Fund in order to remain within the budget.

In Tajikistan, the programme successfully advocated for the Ministry of Justice to lower the cost of birth certificates and was thus able to reach more children with services. In some cases, children were referred to other donors/ organizations, where they were eligible to receive support. UNICEF worked with the ministry to ensure that children and/or their parents were not fined for missing the deadline for getting documents.

Interviews with UNICEF staff in Uzbekistan suggest that programme funds were used in a way that catalyzed the improvement of the child protection system overall (beyond those systems directly concerned with children affected by migration). For its part, the government made in-kind contributions to facilitate implementation, for example through the provision of office space, as well as through the provision of cash and medicines to programme beneficiaries. The Kyrgyz government is also noted having contributed funds to increase the number of children reached by the programme. These examples suggest that it may not have been possible to deliver some of the activities without external support that was not planned for.

Overall, the evaluation found that UNICEF demonstrated a cost-sensitive approach and it has efficiently leveraged its broader resources, as well as those of IPs and government counterparts. As noted under effectiveness, however, the limited budget has affected programme implementation.

4.2.4 Coherence

Q11 | What role has UNICEF played at the regional and country levels on protecting children affected by migration and how well aligned were these to the organization's comparative advantage?

Finding 34:

UNICEF has demonstrated clear added value through its provision of technical expertise to support national and regional processes, its convening power to bring relevant stakeholders together, and its capacity to leverage its mandate to address CAM issues.

As in SSEA, UNICEF has demonstrated the clear added value of its role in addressing CAM issues in Central Asia. Key informants across the four countries and at regional and international levels stated that the UNICEF footprint in the region, its expertise in child protection and existing partnerships with governments facilitated the agency's role in addressing CAM issues. UNICEF was also able to leverage its partnerships with sister United Nations agencies such as IOM and UNHCR, whose experience and expertise in migration and displacement are also widely recognized. For example, UNICEF signed a regional MoU with IOM setting out priorities for collaboration,[98] and worked in close collaboration with UNHCR on statelessness.

At the regional level, as suggested by outcome harvesting data and programme reporting, UNICEF was successful in capitalizing on its access to different platforms to advocate for the importance of CAM issues in Central Asia (see annex 5 for outcome harvesting visualisations). UNICEF also facilitated cross-border collaboration and played a key role in raising political awareness of CAM, as outlined under the section on relevance.

In addition to its technical contributions, UNICEF and external stakeholders highlighted that the agency's involvement across service sectors (notably education, health and protection) is particularly valuable in comprehensively addressing CAM issues.

The organization's mandate for children has acted as a gateway for interactions with host governments on CAM. Stakeholders at regional and national levels highlighted that there is a certain reticence to engage on migration-related issues with agencies such as IOM and UNHCR, which seems to be less pronounced in the case of UNICEF.

Implementing partners in Kyrgyzstan stated that UNICEF expertise in international child protection norms and standards helped set a benchmark which national governments could work towards. Similarly, implementing partners from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan reported that the culture of evidence generation in UNICEF supported advocacy work by strengthening their case to government representatives. Implementing partners from all four countries reported that the openness of UNICEF to exchanging knowledge and providing technical and financial support, as well as its ability to influence government stakeholders, added value to the programme.

Q12 | How well have vulnerabilities of relevance to the programme (categories of children affected by migration, gender and disability) been integrated into the programme implementation?

Finding 35:

The programme has integrated vulnerabilities of relevance to the Central Asia region to varying degrees. There was stronger integration of vulnerabilities related to children affected by labour migration and statelessness, compared with other categories of CAM and with intersecting vulnerabilities such as gender and disability.

As discussed under relevance, the programme made a deliberate design choice to classify CAM as a whole as a vulnerable group, and to include various categories of children under this umbrella term to allow for tailoring to context. In Central Asia, there was a high degree of homogeneity in the groups of CAM that were targeted, with the most significant needs identified for children affected by labour migration and stateless children.

Stakeholders reported that the programme adopted a unified approach, meaning that CAM were supported equally regardless of their status and intersecting vulnerabilities. Due to the programme's short

timeframe, narrow scope, relatively small population pool, and the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme could not adopt a holistic approach that integrated all intersecting vulnerabilities of CAM groups.

The evidence generation component of the programme in Central Asia was essential for the successful identification of focus categories of CAM and their vulnerabilities, e.g., the impact of lack of kinship/guardianship procedures on access to services for children remaining behind, or the constraints faced by stateless children as a result of lacking birth registration and identification documentation. UNICEF supported work at legislative, capacity-building, awareness-raising and legal aid levels that suggest successful integration of considerations to address vulnerabilities specific to the region. UNICEF stakeholders and IPs who participated in the evaluation reported that they had been sensitive to the needs of different groups of CAM. This finding is supported by data from the IP survey, which that show that most respondents believed their work in relation to children of labour migrant parents was "fully/completely" sensitive to their needs. Similarly high self-reported scores for complete or partial sensitivity to needs was also reported for internally displaced children and stateless children (see figure 9 below).

Figure 9: Do you think the implementation of the CAM programme/UNICEF work on children affected by migration has been sensitive to the needs of different categories of children affected by migration in your country context?
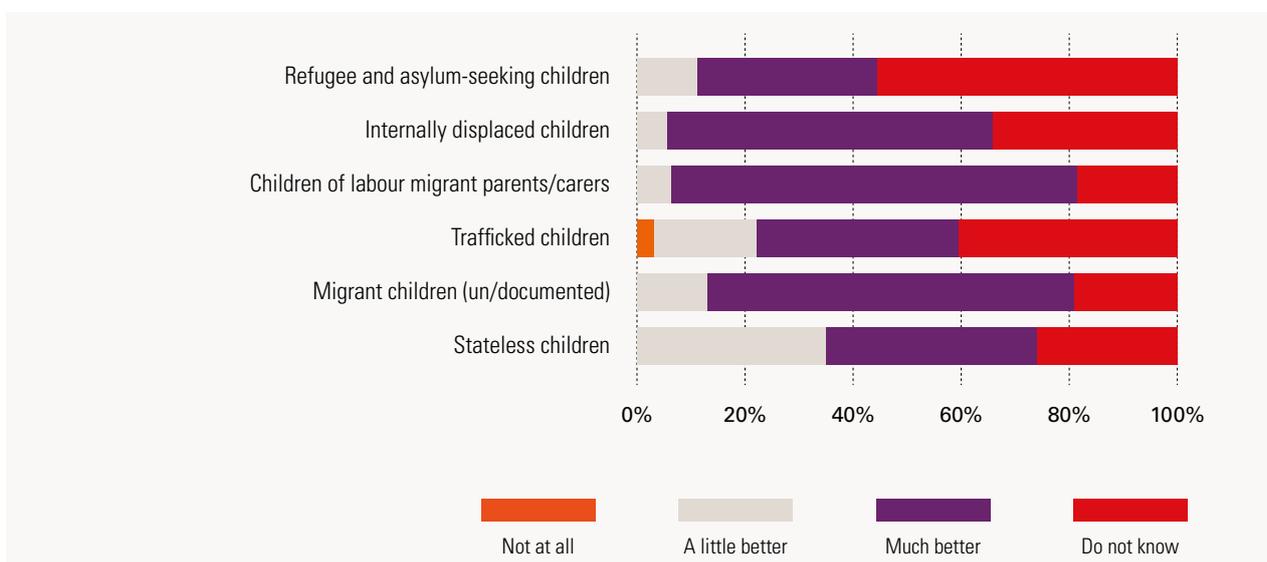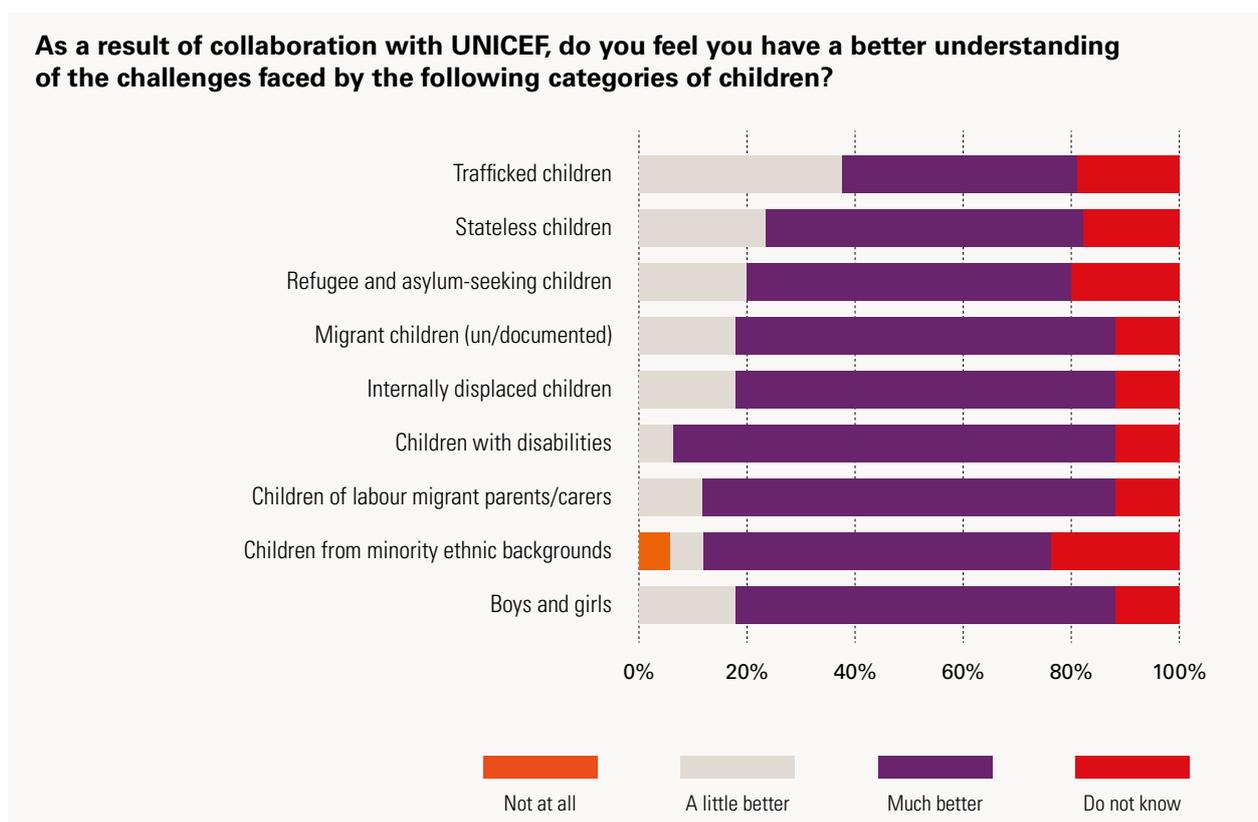
IPs and frontline workers reported that children with multiple vulnerabilities were identified and supported on a case-by-case basis. If the programme encountered persons with special needs, they were prioritized (as discussed, for example, in the cases of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in the relevance section). Likewise, some unintended positive results of the interventions were reported regarding integration of vulnerable groups. For instance, in Kazakhstan, as a result of the programme, the overall child protection system was improved through a child protection case management tool that is not only used for migrant children, but also for child victims of violence, homeless children and orphans in need of protection.

In addition, results from the survey of frontline workers suggests that collaboration with UNICEF has improved self-reported understanding not only of challenges faced by different categories of CAM but also children with disabilities, boys and girls, and children from minority backgrounds.

Figure 10: Self-reported awareness of vulnerabilities by frontline workers

As a result of collaboration with UNICEF, do you feel you have a better understanding of the challenges faced by the following categories of children?

Q13 | How did interventions draw from, expand on, and complement existing programmes and partnerships?

Finding 36:

The CAM programme has capitalized on existing UNICEF approaches consistent with CPSS programming, as well as drawing on strategic partnerships with government stakeholders and IPs.

In Central Asian programme countries, CAM were included in CPDs before the advent of the CAM programme. However, given the politically sensitive nature of migration, it had not previously been possible to work explicitly on CAM as a distinct group in the region before this programme came into place.

As discussed under efficiency, the programme was designed to capitalize on the organization's existing experience in systems-strengthening work. By identifying the needs of CAM categories of relevance to Central Asia and framing their inclusion into existing child protection and other services, UNICEF was successful in complementing existing programmes. The programme also drew on the agency's existing understanding of child poverty and children in institutional care, two issues which have a strong overlap with children affected by labour migration.

The evaluation also found that the programme ensured internal coherence by strategically partnering with governments and implementing partners with whom UNICEF had pre-existing relationships. These pre-existing relationships allowed UNICEF to target its support toward issues it knew would have traction with the government – namely, children affected by labour migration. The programme also drew on UNICEF's existing understanding of child poverty and children in institutional care, two issues which have a strong overlap with children affected by labour migration.

Q14 | To what extent was the programme aligned with activities, approaches and responses of partners at the regional and country levels?

Finding 37:

The CAM programme supported the development of approaches and responses of IPs and government counterparts to CAM, as well as complementing the advocacy efforts of other United Nations agencies. Fruitful partnerships were also identified in relation to evidence-generation activities.

The evidence generation component of the programme in Central Asia led to fruitful partnerships between stakeholder groups. For example, at the regional level, ECARO partnered with the ENOC on the impact assessment of COVID-19 on child rights in the region. Similarly, UNICEF engaged in cross-border work on unaccompanied and separated children between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in partnership with the Human Rights Commission, UNHCR and other partners.

The PACs also supported coherence among partners. For example, in Uzbekistan, the PAC included representatives from different ministries, who met with each other quarterly to discuss progress and mitigation measures to address constraints faced on the ground. In Kyrgyzstan, in addition to the PAC, UNICEF held regular meetings with partners, state counterparts and other United Nations agencies, where complementarity among interventions was discussed. UNICEF convening power was highlighted by external stakeholders in all countries as having supported alignment and whole-of-system approaches to addressing CAM.

The programme also worked effectively with national government departments. For example, in Tajikistan, UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment for overall coordination on programme implementation; the Ministry of Health and Social Protection to strengthen the social service workforce; the Ministry of Justice for joint advocacy on child statelessness; and the Ministry of Education and Science for social reintegration of children released from immigration detention centres.[99]
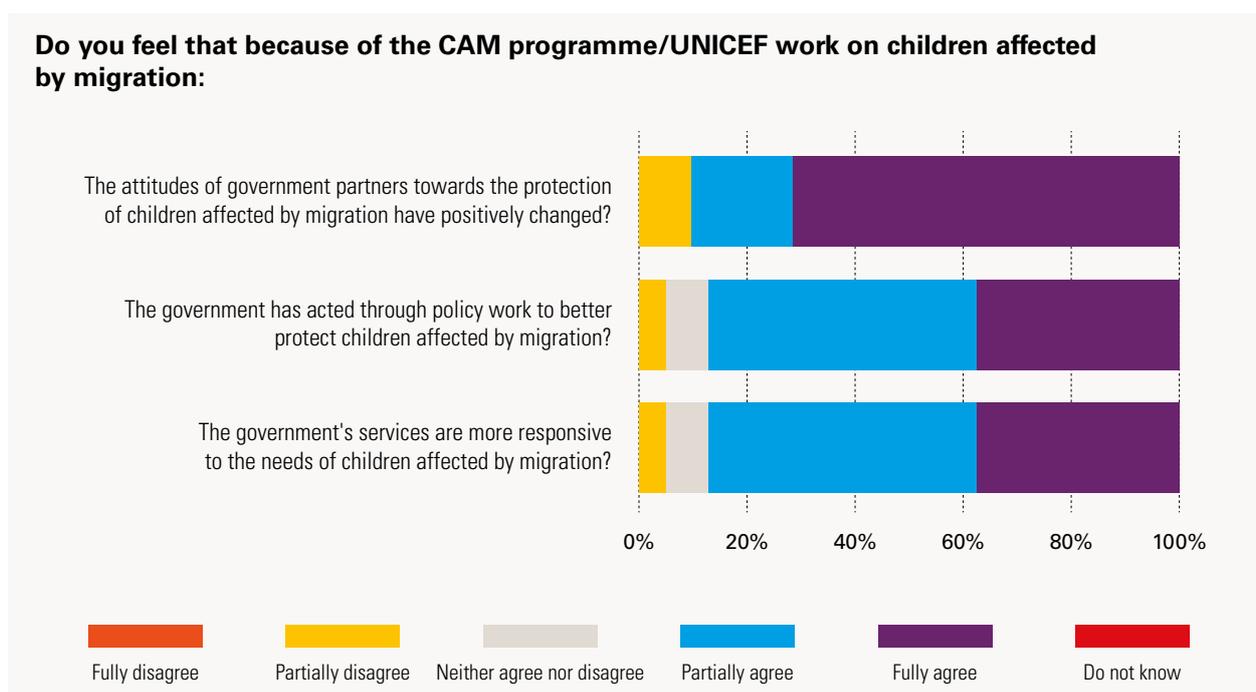
4.2.5 Sustainability

Q15 | To what extent has the programme succeeded in placing the rights of children affected by migration on the agenda of national governments and regional governance bodies?

Finding 38:
As a result of the programme, CAM are now on the agenda of all four Central Asian countries. At the regional level, cross-border collaboration and exchange platforms have been established, although there are limited regional-level governance structures for CAM issues to be incorporated into.

According to both UNICEF and external stakeholders who participated in the evaluation, the programme has succeeded in raising awareness on CAM in Central Asia, and in placing the needs of CAM on the political agendas of national governments. As outlined in earlier sections of the report, UNICEF contributed to creating a platform for the four programme countries to act on issues including statelessness and birth registration, and to supporting the strengthening of case management to identify and address the needs of CAM. This finding is corroborated by results to the IP survey (see figure 11 below), in which most respondents noted a positive change in government attitudes towards CAM (either "partially" or "fully/completely").

Figure 11: Extent to which CAM programme has affected government approaches in Central Asia

Do you feel that because of the CAM programme/UNICEF work on children affected by migration:

Legend: Fully disagree | Partially disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Partially agree | Fully agree | Do not know

The extent to which the programme was successful varies by country. As in SSEA, political will was an important factor, as well as the scale of implementation. In Kyrgyzstan, for instance, according to outcome harvesting and KIIs with UNICEF stakeholders, even though the Child Code developed with the support of the programme has passed three parliamentary hearings, it is yet to be signed by the president. In Uzbekistan, there have been some early achievements in terms of engagement of government at

high level, and indications that the country aspires to be a leader in the region to work on CAM issues. In Tajikistan, key policies developed through the programme (see 4.2.2.1) demonstrate that political and policy space has been created to address issues relating to CAM, and in Kazakhstan, the case management framework piloted in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Human Rights Ombudsperson is a positive example of government commitment translating into action.

At the regional level, there are limited structures with which to work; Central Asia lacks a regional forum equivalent to ASEAN. Accordingly, the focus at regional level has been on evidence generation, and on fostering collaboration on cross-border (mostly bilateral) approaches and exchange of best practices.

Q16 | To what extent are the results of the programme, and of the systems-strengthening work, sustainable and resilient to risk?

Finding 39:

The programme has taken important steps to progress its systems-strengthening approach. Even though there is potential for sustainability, it will be dependent on continued efforts and the availability of resources.

Despite progress made in placing CAM on national agendas in Central Asia, the results achieved are not necessarily sustainable. Even though national social and child protection systems in the programme countries have taken important steps towards systems strengthening, they have not yet built the capacity needed to comprehensively identify, monitor and address the needs of CAM. This assessment is not unexpected, as the programme has not operated for long enough to achieve sustainable systems strengthening, as noted in the programme evaluability assessment.

Insufficient capacity to provide services to children affected by migration can jeopardize programme achievements, especially over time and if there are no mechanisms in place to sustain knowledge and skills. Some services for children affected by migration continue to be provided through the case management mechanism launched by the CAM programme, for example in relation to the issuance of birth certificates. However, continued provision of services depends either on the availability of trained staff (who could potentially move to other positions) and/or the availability of state or donor funding to sustain training and skills needs. No country in Central Asia has been able to achieve full sustainability of programme outcomes.
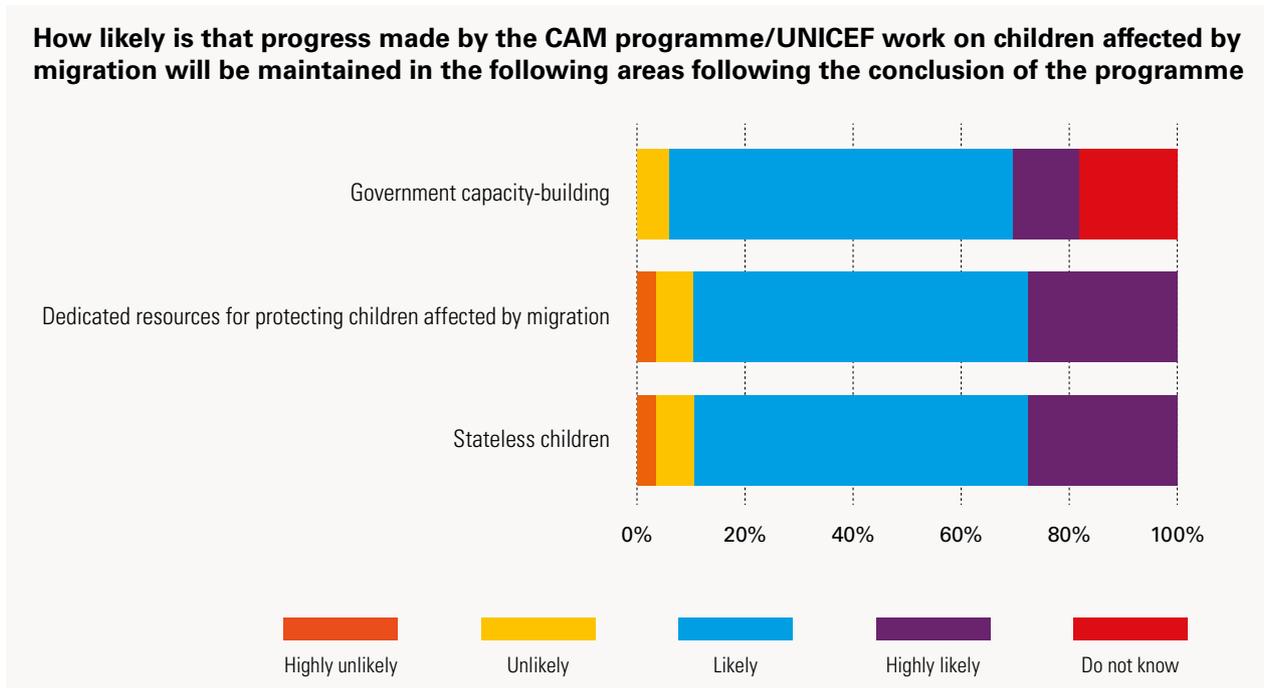
Nonetheless, the results of the survey rolled out to IPs for this evaluation suggest that most respondents consider it "likely" that government capacity will be maintained following conclusion of the programme, and that dedicated resources for CAM will continue. In addition, UNICEF and external stakeholders noted that because the programme has built on established approaches to systems strengthening, UNICEF can continue to build on results achieved in its future CAM programming, thereby increasing the likelihood of sustaining progress.

In terms of the outlook in each of the programme countries, it is important to acknowledge encouraging examples, which, if built upon, will be more likely to result in sustainability. Migrant children remain a priority in Kazakhstan, which continues to address CAM issues in line with the SDGs and the GCM. CAM services have been successfully tested in child support centres and centres of adaptation of minors. Government and IP stakeholders noted their commitment to building on achievements made with programme support and noted that they need continued funding to do so. At the same time, while Ips have become more skilled in case management, this approach is still in the early stages of implementation.

Figure 12: Likelihood of CAM programme progress being maintained in Central Asia

How likely is that progress made by the CAM programme/UNICEF work on children affected by migration will be maintained in the following areas following the conclusion of the programme

Once the Child Code is signed by the President of Kyrgyzstan, it will provide for stricter guardianship provisions, which is a significant achievement. In addition, the Kyrgyzstan Juvenile Centre that was renovated by the programme will continue operating under the Ministry of Internal Affairs; programme stakeholders expressed the hope that the centre will be appropriately maintained and that staff trained will continue their work with CAM. Advocacy, staff training and support for the implementation of new procedures such as case management were identified as needing to continue.

In Tajikistan, the sustainability of results requires continued support from donors and political will from the government, as well as appropriate investment in social services. In addition, high turnover of staff both at government level as well as in UNICEF is considered to be a constraining factor.

In Uzbekistan, frequent government reforms have resulted in the creation of new structures that are not yet well established (and have continued to change after the programme ended), such as the newly-created Children's Commission. The Office of the Ombudsperson is also relatively new and has limited staff. Even though there may be a need for further support to these structures and functions, and dedicated funding for CAM, these reforms nonetheless have potential to strengthen child protection systems going forward.

Resilience

It is unclear from the available evidence whether progress is resilient to risk. National child protection systems in Central Asia were in place before the CAM programme, and UNICEF was able to work with key partners, including governments, for the inclusion of CAM in these systems. As discussed under relevance, the programme in Central Asia successfully adapted to the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which suggests that there is potential for resilience. Other risk factors that could have an impact on the resilience of programme results include changing governments and turnover of staff, fluctuations in political will to engage with CAM issues, and availability of funding to sustain achievements made. Given the early stages of systems change that the CAM programme has covered, there is likely to be limited resilience to shocks, as suggested in the findings related to SSEA.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1:

The CAM programme was broadly relevant to the needs and priorities of regional and national partners in relation to CAM, and succeeded in raising the profile of CAM in policy agendas. (Findings 1, 4, 21, 24) The implementation of the UNICEF CAM programme coincided with important developments on migration and displacement issues. The GCR and the GCM catalysed international, regional and national processes. Regional impetus was particularly notable in the SSEA component of the programme, where the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration was a driving force for related processes in the region as well as at the level of national governments. While regional collaboration was not as prominent in Central Asia, the programme was successful in identifying issues of relevance to CAM that had not previously been prioritized in national agendas.

Alignment with national priorities was achieved in both regions, although the degree of alignment varied depending on individual contexts. The programme offered ample opportunity for addressing priorities most relevant to each country and region. In this respect, evidence generation was a particularly effective tool for identifying and assessing needs, and in ensuring the relevance of the programme's interventions.

Conclusion 2:

The choice to target all children affected by migration under a single category was helpful in some respects, but limited the programme's ability to identify and respond to specific needs and intersecting vulnerabilities. (Findings 2, 10, 16, 22, 29, 35). On the one hand, the decision to target CAM as a whole allowed the programme to secure government buy-in and achieve results even in areas that were politically sensitive. It also allowed the two regions, and the countries within them, some degree of flexibility in targeting the sub-categories of CAM that were most pertinent in their contexts. On the other hand, the use of a single overarching category limited the programme's ability to identify and respond to the specificities of each category of CAM, as well as in its ability to systematically integrate intersecting vulnerabilities. Further disaggregation of CAM into sub-categories, as well as taking into account other intersecting vulnerabilities, would have allowed for a more tailored approach relevant to the needs of the most vulnerable CAM, as well as supporting the collection of monitoring data for measuring results and for learning.

Conclusion 3:

The programme was successful in adapting to changing context and situations, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic. (Findings 3, 23) In response to the pandemic, the programme shifted to remote modalities, while the military coup in Myanmar required a shift from upstream to downstream activities. In response to these and other changes in context, the programme was able to pivot and continue delivery.

Conclusion 4:

The CAM programme met or exceeded many of its targets, and registered a number of significant achievements. However, limitations in the monitoring framework constrain the programme's ability to accurately measure progress toward outcomes and impact. (Findings 5, 25) In SSEA, significant achievements were registered in the areas of alternatives to detention, children benefitting from formal care, and children being provided with child protection case management, as well as in regional support to the ASEAN Declaration and the development of the RPA. In Central Asia, achievements focused on alternatives to detention, children benefitting from formal kinship care in line with international standards, children provided with child protection case management services, and in regard to international declarations by Central Asian governments recognizing the needs of CAM. However, the evaluation identified challenges in measuring progress at a higher level of results stemming from weaknesses of the causal linkages devised in the programme's ToC and indicators, as these were not always appropriate for capturing the positive trajectory of the programme towards outcomes and impact.

Conclusion 5:

Overall, the programme took important steps to strengthen elements of the child protection systems in programme countries to better incorporate CAM. However, comprehensive systems strengthening will require more time and continued investment. (Findings 6, 17, 26, 36, 38) The approach taken by the programme is consistent with the overall UNICEF approach to CPSS and has successfully drawn upon the agency's existing expertise in this area. While this bodes well for the prospect of continued work, comprehensive systems strengthening commensurate with the ambition of the programme's ToC will require longer to reach maturity. It will also require further investment, including advocacy for systems strengthening to be inclusive of all categories of CAM.

Conclusion 6:

The evaluation found that UNICEF was in a strong position to advance the needs of CAM and to engage with relevant stakeholders at regional and national levels, supporting both efficiency and effectiveness. (Findings 8, 15, 19, 27, 32, 34) UNICEF was well placed to catalyse its networks and connections with decision-makers, including across sectors such as health and education. Enabling factors supporting the effectiveness of the CAM programme were found to include UNICEF credibility as a United Nations agency as well as its technical expertise on child protection and systems strengthening. UNICEF was also successful in employing its position and expertise to support the development of case management mechanisms, SoPs, legislation and policy and capacity-building. These interventions were key in contributing to more supportive attitudes to addressing the needs of CAM.

Conclusion 7:

The programme successfully leveraged existing UNICEF programmes and structures. Overall, however, resources allocated were not commensurate with the programme's ambitions. (Finding 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 31, 32, 33) The programme was designed in a cost-aware manner and was not intended to be resource-heavy. In both regions, it successfully leveraged existing UNICEF approaches and structures. However, financial resources were often insufficient to meet the needs or comprehensively strengthen systems. Human resources, especially, were insufficient across the board, limiting results and placing undue burden on staff.

Conclusion 8:

The evaluation found limited evidence that the programme's monitoring systems were interoperable with government systems, and data sharing with government was limited to specific platforms such as the PACs. Reliability of data was also a challenge. (Findings 11, 29, 30) The evaluation found limited evidence of data sharing with government or other partners, which limits the potential for relevant programming, measuring of the impact of interventions, or understanding the needs of CAM in a comprehensive manner. Weaknesses were also found in the consistency of monitoring data collected, and the extent to which it is analysed and used.

Conclusion 9:

In general, the CAM programme complemented and aligned strongly with the activities of partners. However, it was implemented for too short a duration to achieve fully sustainable results. (Findings 18, 20, 37, 39) Within UNICEF, the programme influenced country office thinking on migration issues and their intersection with child protection and CPSS more broadly. The CAM programme was also found to complement the activities of partners from various stakeholder categories, which can create a multiplier effect as well as contributing to sustainability. Nonetheless, there is a risk that progress made under the CAM programme will not be sustained. By its nature, systems strengthening requires a longer timeframe and sustained investment of time and resources. At present, however, it is not clear that the financial support and/or political will exists for the results of the programme to be sustained.

Lessons learned

The evaluation found several valuable initiatives under the CAM programme that are worth highlighting in their own right, two of which are the subject of dedicated learning briefs. The first examines the relevance of the UNICEF systems-strengthening approach in addressing the needs of CAM, and the second highlights the importance of data for understanding and working on issues related to CAM.

In addition, the evaluation highlighted several lessons of relevance to UNICEF and partner programming more broadly.

Lesson 1:

Evidence generation is a crucial first step.

The evaluation found that evidence generation had three key uses: (a) shedding light on the number and situation of children affected by migration in the region, (b) identifying gaps in the existing child protection system to inform service provision, policymaking and legislative reform and (c) supporting evidence-based advocacy. Most key informants felt that evidence generation was a crucial first step, offering a solid foundation for evidence-based programming tailored to the specific needs in each country context. Research outputs were especially useful during times of crisis, when immediate and informed action was essential. The programme's evidence outputs also served as key advocacy tools and served to boost national government capacity and ownership on CAM. At the same time, the evaluation noted that the sharing and use of evidence generated through the programme was variable: while IPs in Central Asia confirmed that they drew on UNICEF evidence in their work, the evaluation found little evidence that IPs and other external stakeholders in SSEA were aware of the programme's evidence generation activities or had used the programme's research outputs to inform their activities. This represents a missed opportunity to achieve a multiplier effect among partners and highlights the importance of incorporating dissemination and communication strategies into evidence-generation activities from the outset.

Final Evaluation of the Programme 'Protecting Children Affected by Migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia'
CONCLUSIONS

89

Lesson 2:

Political will is key to success.

UNICEF did well to identify entry points and opportunities to engage with governments on issues related to CAM, navigating around political sensitivities where these existed. For example, UNICEF Malaysia successfully identified areas such as anti-trafficking and ATD as ripe for collaboration, and the programme succeeded in increasing the visibility of CAM and understanding of the issues affecting them. In Thailand, UNICEF capitalized on government leadership and political will during Thailand's chairmanship of ASEAN to support the development of the ASEAN Declaration and RPA, which was a significant achievement. UNICEF knowledge of, and sensitivity to, political context allowed the programme to log key successes for some categories of CAM even in regions where migration is considered highly sensitive.

Lesson 3:

While there are benefits to aggregating vulnerable groups beneath a single conceptual umbrella, this may come at the expense of providing more relevant and targeted support.

The decision to treat CAM as a single, overarching vulnerable group had several benefits. On the one hand, it allowed COs a useful degree of flexibility in identifying the sub-categories of CAM that were most relevant in their contexts. It may also have facilitated government buy-in in some cases, allowing the programme to support categories of children that are politically sensitive in some contexts, such as refugees and asylum-seekers. On the other hand, this broad-brush approach made it more difficult for the programme to identify and respond to the differential needs of girls and boys, ethnic minorities, children living with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Some COs were able to partially address this challenge by incorporating gender and other intersectional considerations into needs assessments, evidence generation and data-gathering. A more systematic approach in this regard would have allowed the programme to be more effective in addressing the specific needs of vulnerable groups. This lesson is particularly relevant for regional and global programmes, where outcomes and target populations tend to be more broadly defined.

Lesson 4:

In addition to the need for robust theories of change, monitoring frameworks for programmes that aim at systems-level outcomes need to include monitoring frameworks capable of measuring change at that level, including in areas such as social and behaviour change, quality of services and capacity-building.

The systemic change required to achieve the CAM programme outcomes is difficult to measure in a quantitative manner. For example, understanding whether strengthened national child protection systems meet international standards is best observed through a more nuanced qualitative analysis. Other critical factors, such as attitudinal change, quality of services and the experiences of children who benefit from the programme, are also not easily captured quantitatively. Monitoring systems must include indicators capable of capturing the changes the programme aims to achieve. In some cases, this will require qualitative means of verification at key points in the results chain.

Lesson 5:

The convening power and credibility of UNICEF are key enabling factors.

In several programme countries and at regional level, there was consensus that UNICEF constructively employed its convening power to bring together stakeholders from different government departments as well as from various sectors, which is essential for the success of systems-strengthening approaches. The project advisory committees were found to be a good model, facilitating exchanges across sectors and stakeholders that may not otherwise have occurred.

Lesson 6:

The availability of high quality, disaggregated data is key to relevant and effective programming that targets the differential needs of specific groups

Where such data are lacking or difficult to access, a dedicated data strategy may be necessary. In some cases, relevant data on CAM were available through national systems but difficult for UNICEF and partners to access, for example where they were deemed politically sensitive. In other cases, the data were not readily available through national systems, nor were they captured through UNICEF monitoring systems. it is unknown what is available and what is missing, and the steps to address gaps (for example through advocacy with national partners, systems strengthening and capacity-building, and strengthening of internal monitoring frameworks). This could help orient UNICEF efforts to improve access to timely, accurate, disaggregated data on all groups of CAM, for the benefit of its own programmes as well as those of partners.

Lesson 7:

Strong coordination with other stakeholders can magnify the impact of interventions and strengthen sustainability.

There are positive examples across the programme of collaboration among key stakeholders leading to further efforts for the benefit of CAM. These include collaboration between UNHCR and UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan, joint efforts led by the ombudsperson in Kazakhstan to carry out an analysis of gaps and opportunities in cross-border information exchange and case management between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and collaboration at ASEAN level, which was widely recognized as having catalysed processes at national level.

Recommendations

These recommendations build on efforts made to date by UNICEF COs, ROs, government partners and implementing partners to ensure that children affected by migration are effectively protected and their rights are being progressively realized.

#	Recommendation	Responsible	Timeline	Relates to Evaluation Conclusions and Lessons Learned
1	**Recommendation 1:** To more effectively build CP systems inclusive of CAM, UNICEF COs should continue to engage across government sectors and respective national migration groups to incorporate the following actions:	COs ROs (in supportive role)	Annually, utilizing relevant work plans	
	▶ Promote legislative and policy reform for children affected by migration, including ATD (working towards no child immigration detention); promote further partnerships between ministries of social affairs, justice and migration to provide concrete services to children in immigration detention/ children in detention; promote further partnerships between social affairs, justice and migration actors to encourage systems-strengthening initiatives.			C5
	▶ Promote standardized case management (with the use of PRIMERO where possible/ desirable) focused on the best interests of the child, including guidance on cross-border coordination.			C6 C9 L2
	▶ Building on developments at national level, feed into regional and global processes with the support of UNICEF ROs and in collaboration with relevant international/ regional entities:			L5 L7
	▷ Specific to southeast Asia: Support ASEAN and its member states to promote implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Implementing the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration.			
	▷ In Southeast, South and Central Asia, continue building on partnerships with IOM, UNHCR, the International Detention Coalition and other relevant actors as appropriate.			

#	Recommendation	Responsible	Timeline	Relates to Evaluation Conclusions and Lessons Learned
2	**Recommendation 2:** Promote standardized curricula for pre- and in-service training, including specific elements on CAM, so that these elements are fully integrated into social service workforce strengthening more generally (training for social workers, para-professionals, immigration officials, allied workers, community-child protection actors, including community child protection networks): ▶ Facilitate opportunities for universities and training centres in each country to receive further funding to carry out substantive, systemic trainings (in-person or remotely) with a focus on curricula development/ reform and standardization. ▶ In Central Asia, UNICEF COs and government partners should work with academic institutions to promote the dissemination and use of (relevant elements of) Columbia University's Department of Social Work module on CAM (being prepared for dissemination via Agora) for use by para-professionals, social workers and others.[100] ▶ In Southeast Asia, utilize the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare to assist universities and training centres with curriculum reform and training of social workers and para-professionals in the region.	COs ROs (supporting role)	Annually, utilizing relevant work plans	C5 C9 L5

---

100   See, for example, Global Social Service Workforce Alliance and UNICEF. The Social Service Workforce in the East Asia and Pacific Region: Multi-Country Review. October 2019, which outlines a number of universities that provide social work training.

#	Recommendation	Responsible	Timeline	Relates to Evaluation Conclusions and Lessons Learned
3	**Recommendation 3:** Ensure that future country and regional studies on CAM incorporate research designs that allow for examining needs and/or differential impacts of interventions by category of CAM and accounting for intersecting vulnerabilities (e.g., gender, disability, ethnic background) and incorporating the voices of children affected by migration and their parents/caregivers. ▶ Use the findings from these studies to adapt UNICEF CAM programming and monitoring practices to better capture the needs of CAM. ▶ Share findings with UNICEF migration networks and employ for advocacy at national and regional levels. ▶ Capitalize on participation in the Asia and Pacific Regional Reviews of GCM implementation for regional advocacy on CAM.	ROs COs	Start now. To be ongoing	C1 C2 C4 C8 L1 L3
4	**Recommendation 4:** Work in partnership with education, health, and social policy teams in regional offices to promote an inter-sectoral approach to supporting CAM and their families. ▶ In Southeast Asia region, work with ASEAN to promote this inter-sectoral approach with member state governments.	ROs COs (supporting role)	Start now. To be ongoing	C5 L5 L7
5	**Recommendation 5:** Incorporate activity lines specific to CAM within CPDs and annual work plans, building on areas of focus of this programme (alternatives to detention, case management mechanisms, social service workforce strengthening, kinship/guardianship practices, access to national child protection systems). [101] ▶ Work in partnership with government (with a whole-of-government approach), United Nations agencies and civil society to promote these areas of focus.	COs	Integrate in AWP/RWP and CPDs	C5 C7 C9 L5 L7

---

101   For example, using the United Nations Children's Fund Checklist for Integrating Children on the Move in Country Programme Documents and National Committee Domestic Programming Strategies.

#	Recommendation	Responsible	Timeline	Relates to Evaluation Conclusions and Lessons Learned
6	**Recommendation 6:** Establish data partnerships with other key stakeholders (e.g., UNHCR, IOM, Mixed Migration Centre) to better understand and address needs and data gaps relating to CAM	UNICEF migration team (HQ)	Within 12 months	C6 C8 L6 L7
7	**Recommendation 7:** Provide technical guidance to COs/ ROs on CAM definitions, data disaggregation, and guidance on collecting, analysing and using (interoperable) data on CAM, including intersecting vulnerabilities.	UNICEF migration team (HQ)	Within 12 months	C2 C8 L3 L6
8	**Recommendation 8:** As part of overall child protection systems strengthening, encourage governments to undertake timely collection and appropriate disaggregation of data on children, including children affected by migration and intersecting vulnerabilities. This might be done in multiple ways, for example, by improving the functioning of existing systems (EMIS, HMIS, etc.).	COs	AWPs/ RWPs	C6 C7 C8 L3 L6
9	**Recommendation 9:** Develop guidance for cross-border information-sharing and case management, including family tracing and reunification (where it does not currently exist).	Joint/ bilateral UNICEF CO responsibility	AWPs/ RWPs	C5 C6
10	**Recommendation 10:** Continue to seek out multi-year funding from the EU, international financial institutions and other relevant donors for child protection systems-strengthening initiatives with a focus on the inclusion of CAM in all relevant areas of UNICEF programming.	UNICEF migration team (HQ) ROs COs	Start now. To be ongoing	C6 C7 C9

unicef ✿

for every child

For further information, please contact:

UNICEF
Evaluation Office
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA

www.unicef.org/evaluation

UNICEF-Evaluation

evalhelp@unicef.org