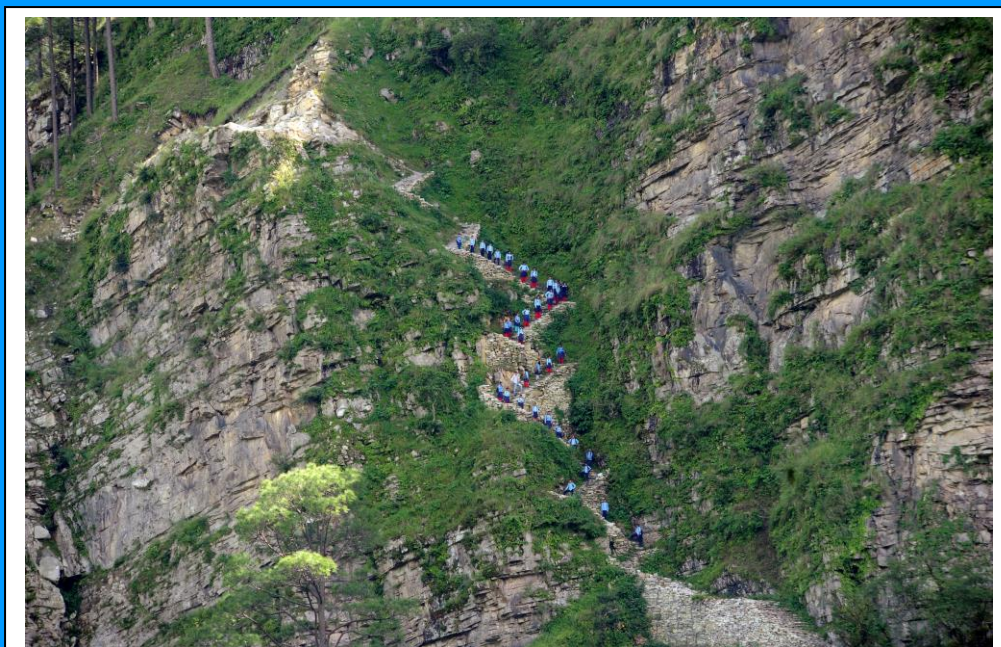


UNICEF Nepal

Education Sectoral Thematic Report

January – December 2018

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Children on their way to school, Bajura, Nepal.

Prepared by:
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Acronym Term	Definition
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSS	Comprehensive School Safety
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECED	Early Childhood Education and Development
EDCU	Education Development and Coordination Unit
EGL	Early Grade Learning
EiE	Education in Emergencies
ELDS	Early Learning Development Strategy
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GATE	Girls' Access to Education
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MOFAGA	Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
NEGRP	National Early Grade Reading Programme
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NPC	National Planning Commission
NQF	National Qualification Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMC	School Management Committee
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
SWAp	Sector-wide Approach
SZOP	Schools as Zones of Peace
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The major change in Nepal's education sector in 2018 was the new federal system and the transition of responsibilities to provincial and local governments. This change has affected the implementation of all of UNICEF's programme areas; nevertheless, UNICEF has been able to continue working with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) as well as take advantage of opportunities within federalism to reach more children.

UNICEF's education focus within the new Country Programme (2018 – 2022) continues strategic interventions in Early Childhood Development (ECD), early grade learning, out-of-school children, system-strengthening, and safe schools. Additional outputs in adolescence programming have been added, particularly life skills and participation. In all cases, successes and lessons learned in the previous country programmes are now being transitioned to the federal system and new levels of government.

Thematic funding filled funding gaps while developing new funding agreements. This is particularly important so that salaries are covered, as funders limit the amount of funding to be used for salaries. Another important area for thematic funding is to cover UNICEF's contribution to the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp), on-budget funding to the government, which allows UNICEF to engage with the Government of Nepal on all education policy, financial, and governance discussions. Finally, prepositioned materials purchased with thematic funds allows UNICEF to respond quickly to emergencies.

UNICEF has been a major advocate for **early learning** through advocacy for ECD in Nepal, working with the National Planning Commission to develop a new ECD strategy. With thematic funds, UNICEF supported the government to host the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Early Childhood in June 2018. Pre-primary education initiatives have included a stakeholders' workshop, materials on Early Childhood Education and Development, testing of a tool based on Early Learning Development Standards and expansion of the parenting education package to 700 communities.

Through support to the Government's Equity Strategy, UNICEF supports **equity** initiatives to reduce the number of out-of-school children. These initiatives include inclusive education, an equivalency framework, and non-formal classes to the most vulnerable children. Girls' Access to Education (GATE) classes were jointly conducted by UNICEF and 41 local governments, benefitting 12,243 girls who had never gone to school or had dropped out.

UNICEF supported the implementation of Early Grade **Learning** activities for 24,571 students (13,002 girls) in Grades 1 to 3 in 400 schools. Following the three-year intervention, the final report finds that 42.9 per cent of students in Grade 3 were meeting grade-level targets for reading fluency and comprehension, compared to the baseline of 15 per cent, an increase of 186 per cent. Sambhav, the afterschool programme for 93,000 students over the past three years, ended in December. Evaluations undertaken by the partner indicated that the biggest impact has been in relation to participation and awareness around harmful social practices, while improvement in learning outcomes was minimal. Key elements of the afterschool programmes are continuing in Province 2, focusing on enrolment, changing attitudes and negative behaviors.

In the areas of **Education in Emergencies, and DRR**, UNICEF supported the government's Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) Masterplan, co-led the education cluster coordination and flood response, and advocated for Schools as Zones of Peace to ensure that schools remain open during periods of instability or violence. Recovery efforts from the 2015 earthquake continued, with UNICEF building 165 Transitional Learning Centers, benefitting 7,761 children with a safe classroom, education materials, and improved disaster risk reduction.

Thematic funds have supported **system strengthening** as they have been instrumental in allowing UNICEF to engage as a Joint Financing Partner of the Nepal SWAp and contribute with other development partners to strengthening education sector planning and implementation, including joint reviews. UNICEF co-leads three of the eight joint thematic working groups (early childhood educational development, equity & inclusive education and school safety), supporting the government in the development of key strategies and implementation plans.

In the area of **knowledge management**, UNICEF supported the Government's Data Must Speak initiative, contributing to a web-based EMIS portal, improving access to data within the new federal system. Over 90 per cent of community schools (33,000) have uploaded their data. **Innovative "Rupantaran"** classes on life skills were provided to 3,624 GATE graduates, adolescents who do not return to school. Methods to mainstream life skills into formal and non-formal curricula are being investigated.

A. STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF 2018

The major change in Nepal's education sector in 2018 was the new federal system and the transition of responsibilities to provincial and local governments. This change has affected the implementation of all of UNICEF's programme areas; nevertheless, UNICEF has been able to continue working with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) as well as take advantage of opportunities within federalism to reach more children.

UNICEF's education focus within the new Country Programme (2018 – 2022) continues strategic interventions in ECD, early grade learning, out-of-school children, system-strengthening, and safe schools. Additional outputs in adolescence have been added, particularly life skills and participation. In all cases, successes and lessons learned in the previous country programme are now being transitioned to the federal system and the new levels of government.

Following the 2017 elections for all three tiers of the state architecture defined by the new constitution, a new government, backed by a historic majority in Parliament, took up office on February 15, 2018. Nepal's federal restructuring process was initiated by the country's 2015 federal constitution, followed by the election of 753 municipal-level local government, seven provincial governments and a national/federal government. The 2017 Local Government Operations Act also placed responsibility for planning, monitoring and management and limited examination of basic and secondary schools under the jurisdiction of local governments. Based on this legal transition of mandates and functions, the institutional transition gained momentum in 2018, with budgets highly decentralized to the newly established local governments and major adjustment exercises of civil servants across public sectors initiated.

With the education sector funds, functions and functionaries having previously been centrally managed, a significant number of them were directly transferred to the provincial and local governments, mostly through discretionary grants. New legislation, institutions, and administrative procedures are being developed to facilitate this reorientation of government functions, functionaries and funding modalities. The decentralization of responsibilities and accountability is a genuine opportunity to overcome persistent barriers in translating previous progress on access into quality teaching-learning processes leading to learning outcomes. However, newly established governments having obtained the mandate and money, but not necessarily the means (capacity and or expertise) to undertake planning and budgeting poses a serious threat at the same time of fragmented approaches and disruptions in the sector.

This transition also had a major impact on UNICEF's work in Nepal, with reforms previously adapted and scaled up by the government regarding equitable access to quality education being at risk of being undone with local education management no longer being informed by institutional memory. Examples of this was the dissolution of the district education offices that were key in education planning and monitoring and the nation-wide retirement of thousands of resource persons that (especially in remote areas) were often the only resource for professional development and quality assurance of schools to draw upon. Furthermore, with many civil servants yet to be deployed at the local level in hardship areas (the mid- and far west and the central southern plains), these are at risk of further falling behind and thus disparities across the country increasing in the short term.

In response to needs and priorities, both pre-existing and those emerging from the transitional context, the Government developed the SSDP transitional plan and roadmap. This plan is to mitigate impact of the transition in service delivery and the Centre of Education and Human Resources under the MOEST launched induction on the implementation of the SSDP activities and on reporting and use of EMIS data in all seven provinces.

Despite the challenging context, Nepal continued to achieve impressive gains in access to basic education, which includes a minimum of one-year pre-primary education as per the constitution. The Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) gross enrolment rate (GER) has reached 84.1 per cent (girls: 83.7, boys: 84.5)¹, and the percentage of grade one entrants with ECED experience has increased to 66.3 per cent (girls: 65.9, boys: 66.6)². The enrolment of children from disadvantaged groups in basic levels has also increased from 18.3 percent in 2013 to 18.7 percent for Dalits; from 35.3 percent in 2013 to 38.1 percent for Janajati³. These increases have also included the share of children with disabilities, ending a decline over the past years, although their representation (less than 2 per cent) remains far below global average (10-15 per cent), with few schools equipped to cater to special/additional needs.

The annual welcome to school campaign gained further momentum under the Prime Minister's office. In Province 2, where a disproportionate percentage of all the remaining out of school children are located, the newly established provincial government launched the *Beti Bachau*,

¹ EMIS Flash – I, 2017/18, CEHRD, 2018

² EMIS Flash – I, 2017/18, CEHRD, 2018

³ EMIS Flash – I, 2017/18, CEHRD, 2018

Beti Padhau (Save a girl, educate a girl) campaign, with an aim to eliminate discrimination against girls, and to provide them equal opportunities. This campaign supported girls from Dalit and economically poor families through incentives (seed money, school bags, stationary, uniforms and bicycles) to ensure their access and retention.

As a result of the nation-wide Welcome to School campaign, 25 per cent (110,448) children aged 5-9 years-old that were previously out of school were enrolled in 2018, with this percentage being significantly higher (47per cent) in Province 2 indicating a strong increase in equitable access⁴. Despite the observed achievements in access, 328,593 children (176,106 girls/ 152,487 boys) aged 5-12 (7.7 per cent of their respective age group) remain out of school, faced with multiple barriers related to their socio-economic status, caste/ethnicity, gender, (dis)ability, and geographic location⁵.

Regarding the retention and completion of basic education, grade eight graduation rates have increased to 69.9 per cent (Girls: 70.2, Boys: 69.4)⁶. In the same period, the basic level repetition and drop-out rates have also continued to decline, with boys (5.7 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively) performing slightly less than girls (5.3 and 3.8 respectively)⁷. Increased basic education completion has also translated in increased transition, with the net enrolment rate at secondary level (grade 9-12) increased from 37.7 per cent in 2017 to 43.9 (Girls: 43.7, Boys: 44.1) in 2018⁸. The increase in access, retention and transition has yet to cause an increase in learning outcomes. Efforts to support this also need to take into account that the increase and retention will be expected to cause a decrease in average learning outcome, that is, children that were previously not accessing or dropping out will not be expected have high learning scores in the short term. This assumption is supported by the average learning outcomes at basic⁹ and secondary school level¹⁰ remained low and in the case of the prior even showed mild decline.

Of the children that are in school, many of them do not learn or complete their basic education due to the lack of a minimum enabling learning environment, such as relevant learning materials, and teachers with pedagogic skills that are able to apply these in the classroom. Although nation-wide eight out of ten children have now access to pre-primary education, this is only the case for three out of ten children in Nepal's southern plains (central Terai)¹¹. Furthermore, the lack of overall development and school readiness for those children that do not benefit from Early Childhood Education (ECE) results in high drop-out rates (3.6 per cent) and repetition rates (13.9 per cent) at Grade one.¹² Nationally, the percentage of children who

⁴ Out-of-school children status report, CEHRD, 2019

⁵ Out-of-school children status report, CEHRD, 2019

⁶ EMIS Flash – I, 2017/18, CEHRD, 2018

⁷ EMIS Flash – I, 2017/18, CEHRD, 2018

⁸ SSDP Status Report, CEHRD, 2018

⁹ National Assessment of Student Achievement, Ministry of Education, 2018

¹⁰ 60 per cent of students secured scores of less than 40 per cent in Mathematics and Science in SEE exams of 2017

¹¹ EMIS Flash – I, 2017/18, CEHRD, 2018

¹² EMIS Flash – I, 2017/18, CEHRD, 2018

receive ECE that are on track is 28.8 per cent, but the richest 20 per cent of the population is 65.1 per cent and the poorest 20 per cent at only 12.3 per cent.¹³

With the country located in one of the world's most earthquake-prone areas and large areas of the country often affected by floods and landslides, schools continue to be at risk from national disasters. The education sector continues to recover from the 2015 earthquake that destroyed around 9,000 schools, and the flooding in 2017 which damaged 1,866 schools. Flooding in 2018 affected 125 families and one high school. Responsibilities for disaster management planning and response have not been fully realigned under the new federal structure.

B. RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THE SECTOR

1. Early Learning

UNICEF has been a major advocate for early learning through advocacy for ECD at federal, provincial, and local levels of government. Thematic funds provided support to the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Early Childhood in June 2018 that was hosted by Nepal. For the first time in history, the Development Problem Solution Committee, under the Prime Minister Office identified the lack of investment in Early Childhood Development (ECD) as one of the key barriers to ensure capable human resources required Nepal meeting its 2030 SDG commitments.

Accordingly, the Development Problem Solution Committee has directed the National Planning Commission (NPC) to come up with an effective ECD strategy, which could establish multi-sectoral coordination mechanism and define integrated services required for ECD. With support from UNICEF, NPC has led the ECD evaluation which analyzed implementation status of the previous ECD strategy. The evaluation has clarified achievements and challenges of ECD strategy and recommended the development new ECD strategy based on the learning from past strategy. Based on the evaluation, NPC has formed the coordination committee to develop the ECD strategy (2019-2030) to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nepal.

UNICEF is the co-lead with the Government in the Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) joint Thematic Working Group (TWG) under the SSDP. The newly established local levels still lack capacity and expertise on the implementation of ECD programmes. As co-lead, UNICEF supported development and publication of materials (guidebook and flyer) to sensitize newly elected local representatives and relevant stakeholders on ECD. These materials were jointly published with MOEST; Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MOFAGA) and distributed to all 753 local levels to raise awareness at local levels on ECD programmes. The dissemination was followed by a two-day training exercise on planning for integrating basic services required for children in their early childhood by MOFAGA with support from UNICEF. So far, 16 local governments have utilized the package to develop their integrated ECD plans,

¹³ MICS, CBS, 2014

which has supported them to integrate their basic services for ECD and led to increased investment in ECD.

To improve parenting knowledge and skills, the existing parenting education package was expanded to 700 communities, targeting 14,000 parents and caregivers. During the reporting period, 699 facilitators were trained for parenting education. An initial 7,615 (Female: 5,659; Male 1,956) parents and caregivers have registered in the parenting education programme. Further, Plan International has adopted the package to be utilized in their piloting for parenting education through the health platform.

In collaboration with MOEST, an Early Childhood Education and Development Sectoral analysis workshop was organized. The workshop supported the assessment of ECED/pre-primary sub-sector in Nepal and identify key strengths, challenges, and strategies across the sub-sector to improve equitable access, efficiency, and quality of pre-primary provision in Nepal.

Meanwhile, Education Review Office has developed a tool based on Early Learning Development Standards and tested 1,835 children in seven districts, 150 ECD centers. UNICEF has signed partnership with a local partner, to further simplify the tools for local levels and ECD centers.

2. Equity in Education

UNICEF supported the Government together with other Development Partners to implement the Consolidated Equity Strategy and targeted interventions (orientation of stakeholders on equity strategies with highest education disparities and inequity, school enrolment campaign, non-formal education for girls and mainstreaming into formal school after graduation) in 10 districts as having the highest disparities in education outcomes as measured through the Equity Index. As per the government administrative data (EMIS 2018), 212,949 children have been enrolled in basic education since the start of the SSDP in July 2016, which is a reduction of 39 per cent of out of school children aged 5-12 years against the 2015 baseline.

Due to the structural changes and transition to federalism, government decided to develop Equity Strategy Implementation Plan at local government level instead of district level. Support for local municipalities to develop their Equity Strategy Implementation Plans in selected equity focus districts is planned, that will lead to implementation of targeted interventions for addressing disparities in education.

In Nepal, the causes of children being out of school are multi-faceted and complex; many children especially adolescent girls drop out before achieving complete literacy or numeracy. These children are more vulnerable to the social, cultural and economic forces perpetuating harmful practices such as child marriage, gender differences, discriminations which are mostly visible among the lowest social groups. To address this, the Government is supporting the districts identified through the equity index with the highest disparities in access, participation and learning outcomes through targeted interventions and additional resources.

With Province 2 having the highest prevalence (number of out of school children) and severity in education outcome-related disparities, UNICEF supported Girls' Access to Education (GATE) programme through partnerships with 41 local governments. UNICEF supported the capacity

building for local governments to conduct 500 non-formal classes which benefitted 12,243 girls from disadvantaged communities who had never been to school or who had dropped out. Out of those enrolled 11,679 (95 per cent) completed the full cycle and 10,736 (88 per cent) were mainstreamed into formal education.

UNICEF continues supporting the flexible alternative learning model “Kheldai Sikne Kendra” (KSK) in partnership with the local governments, benefitting 309 children (53 percent girls, 47 per cent boys) in five locations. This partnership targets the urban working children from economically disadvantaged communities who cannot attend formal schools due to engagement in different types of work for their livelihood. UNICEF supported the Government to scale up the same learning modality to 50 Alternative Learning Centers across the country reaching more marginalized groups of out-of-school children. The support included capacity building trainings for facilitators and provision of education materials while the operational costs were covered by the Government. Planning with four local governments has been completed for mainstreaming KSK in their upcoming annual plans for which UNICEF will continue to provide technical support.

Although non-formal education has contributed to enrolling children back to school, there are multiple barriers to accessing education. More flexible approaches and learning opportunities in the non-formal sector which ensure formal recognition to corresponding grades in school is required. Government has drafted the National Qualification Framework (NQF) based on which UNICEF supported the Government to draft an equivalency framework which is a mechanism to formally recognize and certify the learning outcomes of those who completed non-formal education. The NQF is awaiting formal endorsement after which the equivalency framework will be taken forward under the leadership of the Government and in partnership with UNESCO.

3. Learning

In 2018, UNICEF continued to support the MOEST with the implementation of Early Grade Learning (EGL) activities in 400 schools of four districts in Provinces 6 and 7 with partners World Education and Humanity and Inclusion. The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) was conducted among 2,500 students in four districts to determine the endline results of the three-year intervention. The impact on learning outcomes was significant; the final assessment found that 42.9 per cent of students in Grade 3 were meeting grade-level targets for reading fluency and comprehension, compared to the baseline of 15 per cent (a significant increase of 186 per cent).

Tying in with the interventions on Early Grade Reading, UNICEF’s participation as co-lead of the EGR technical working group (TWG) with the government helped meet commitments in the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP), and further supported the elaboration of the EGR minimum package to be used by the government and implementing partners.

Among the 400 Early Grade Learning targeted schools, 40 were piloted for Inclusive Education. An assessment/evaluation carried out by the implementing partner documented the evidence on outcomes/impact of the programme, lessons learned, and challenges faced and recommendations for future programming. Findings from the assessment show that the programme was effective in terms of improving teaching-learning of children with functional

limitations, teachers' capacity on inclusiveness in the classroom with adequate participation of children with disabilities and functional limitations and ensuring that those children could learn. Consequently, Inclusive Education gained traction and MOEST started implementing inclusive education with financial support from USAID in NEGRP schools. Findings will also inform UNICEF's activities on Inclusive Education.

Increased focus on children with disabilities by the government, UNICEF, and partners across the sector led to the drafting of an Inclusive Education Master Plan by the government. The draft was shared with working group members for review by focal points, experts, and persons with disabilities representatives. UNICEF is co-leading the Inclusive Education sub-working group and will support strengthening the plan.

UNICEF finalized its three-year partnership with CSO partner -Restless Development on the afterschool programme known as Sambhav in 400 schools in 10 districts; Evaluations carried out by the partner indicated that the biggest impact was reflected in participation and awareness around harmful social practices – from a baseline of 35 per cent to endline of 81 per cent (131 per cent increase), while evidence of improvement in learning outcomes was less significant (the Maths scores 46 per cent baseline increased to 51 per cent end-line; English scores from 51 to 55 percent; and Science from 52 to 55 per cent). Moving forward, key elements of the Sambhav programme will be carried forward in Province 2, focusing on enrolment and addressing and changing negative attitudes and behaviors to reduce the risk of child marriage in the Terai region.

Preparatory works on 'medium of instruction' (MOI) and the support to small schools are underway; a Community of Practice with the National Language Commission and other stakeholders was established, and mapping of EGL schools in terms of MOI and small schools was undertaken in 2018. This will lead to transition of EGL programme schools to increase the focus on MOI and to provide support to small schools with the components of inclusive education-related activities in targeted schools in provinces 2, 6, and 7.

4. Education in Emergencies, DRR and education and peace-building

UNICEF supported strengthening the capacity of education stakeholders on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency preparedness at schools and governments. 98,547 students (48 per cent girls), 5,457 teachers and School Management Committee (SMC) members, and 92 local government officials participated in the DRR training and widened their understanding of their DRR contexts, planning and resource allocation. Following the training sessions, 581 schools have developed their disaster risk management (DRM) plans, while 19 local governments from five districts have started adding Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) components in their planning and allocation of resources.

The national cluster mechanism is fully operational, but local cluster mechanisms and Standard Operating Procedures for emergency response are being established as per new federal mechanism. Nevertheless, the local bodies with DRM plans are expected to greatly increase from 2019 along with the CSS Minimum Package, which was developed by the government through a consultative process with education stakeholders. As a development partner focal point and Technical Working Group co-lead, UNICEF provided technical support for

operationalizing the CSS Minimum Package, through a CSS Implementation Guideline and a CSS Communication and Dissemination Strategy. The organization also supported the roll-out of CSS messages, reaching 137 local government representatives and 75 journalists.

UNICEF contributed to systemizing emergency preparedness and response for education as well. In particular, it supported the government on contingency planning and coordinating emergency response. Up until 2018, the education sector was not a part of the Monsoon Contingency Plan of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), hence funds for education response had not been available through the Central Emergency Response Fund proposal. UNICEF, as the Education cluster co-lead, advocated for the inclusion of education in the list of priority sectors in national contingency planning, which led the HCT Monsoon Contingency Plan 2018 to include the education sector. This allowed generation and allocation of resources for education in future response. In the end, emergency preparedness has become institutionalized by the government, and the amount of US\$ 700,000 were allocated for all seven provinces as emergency funds.

Based on the lessons learned from the major flood in 2017, UNICEF increased its prepositioning stock of education materials. The Thematic Fund was utilized for supplying education materials; 183 ECD Kits, 5,000 Basic Student Kits (Grade 1-5), and 4,000 Adolescent Kits (Grade 6) were purchased and distributed in accordance with education needs in emergencies. This enabled greater preparedness and rapid response to a large-scale emergency. During the localized flood in Saptari in 2018, UNICEF coordinated with field office and local government to respond quickly and provide education supplies to affected children, helping 485 (59 per cent girls) children to resume their education.

Furthermore, as part of recovery efforts of the 2015 Earthquake, in 2018 UNICEF has built 165 Transitional Learning Centres (TLCs). More than 7,761 children have benefitted from the TLCs that were built where schools have been damaged. In the earthquake-affected districts, 233 teachers and 120 government officials received training on DRR, while 124 schools received education materials. These materials were supplied from prepositioned stocks.

UNICEF's advocacy for school peace-building continued throughout the year based on the SZOP framework, which is to ensure schools remain open during periods of instability or violence. The orientation on SZOP, held by UNICEF, was delivered to 18 local government representatives and 18 journalists in Province 2. Consequently, 79 per cent of primary schools in the province remained open over the course of 223 days in 2018. Even though opening days are achieved, the teaching-learning days need improvement: national average is 189 days while Province 2 average is 185 days on teaching-learning. Local government has low capacity on information management, indicating an opportunity to engage with them to improve monitoring of school opening days. This is one bottleneck UNICEF needs to go through further discussion with local governments and schools in the future.

UNICEF's activities of providing guidelines for building capacity of key duty bearers of school safety, e.g. local governments and SMCs, to ensure implementation of school safety will continue in 2019, strengthening resilience at school level and capacity of the local government to prepare for and respond to emergencies in the education sector.

5. System Strengthening and Capacity Development

UNICEF served as the focal point for the Local Education Development Partner Group (LEDPG) representing multi-laterals, bi-laterals and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) till July 2018 and then continued as an active member of LEDPG within the Nepal Education Sector Wide Approach (SWAp). Thematic funds have been instrumental in meeting obligations of UNICEF as a Joint Financing Partner of Nepal SWAp in Education and to continue supporting government together with other development partners in strengthening education planning and implementation, including joint review that resulted into achievement of 69.5 per cent of the key performance indicator targets of enrolment, retention, and learning outcomes by government, despite the post disaster and new federal context. Additionally, UNICEF continues to co-lead three of the eight joint thematic working groups (early childhood educational development, equity & inclusive education and school safety). Through this, UNICEF has supported the Government in the development of key strategies and plans, such as the Transitional Plan and Roadmap for the SSDP, the Comprehensive School Safety Master Plan and the Inclusive Education Master Plan.

While transitioning to the new federal system, there is a potential for achieving greater results for children while working with the new local governments; however, it is constrained currently due to the limited capacity in the local government. All positions for the Education Officers at the local government yet to be completely fulfilled. Other issues related to lack of clarity on processes, and poor communication and coordination between levels of government requiring increased technical support for education planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and reporting as well as lack of technical backstopping by the local governments to the schools. As a joint financing partner, UNICEF continued to play a key role in providing technical assistance to the government to meet RBF targets in equity and quality.

6. Knowledge management, research and innovations.

UNICEF's knowledge management intervention was through the government's Data Must Speak initiative. UNICEF contributed to the development and start-up of a web-based Education Management Information System (EMIS) portal within the new federal context. With this development, all the local governments and schools can access and analyse the data in comparison with Municipal, Provincial and National averages. The access to school and municipal education profile cards will inform budgeting, planning and monitoring and improve the quality of EMIS data. Over 90 per cent of the community schools (33,000) have uploaded their data into the web-based platform.

Under the new Country Programme, UNICEF includes an adolescent lifeskills intervention in education. Initial work will be determining the effectiveness and efficiency of an innovative social and financial skills package, "Rupantaran". In 2018, UNICEF supported "Rupantaran" sessions through which 3,624 GATE graduates in three districts of Province 2 benefitted. Analysis of pre- and post-test questionnaires shows an increase of 18.43 percentage points (from 53.3 per cent to 71.73 per cent) in knowledge. The current decentralization of the

country's institutional arrangements and restructuring of the education system provides multiple platforms for promoting life skills in education. Advocacy has been initiated with local governments in Province 2 for mainstreaming the "Rupantaran" programme in line with their "Save daughters, educate daughters" campaign. Advocacy will also be initiated at the federal level for mainstreaming modules from "Rupantaran" within the formal and non-formal curricula under the recently endorsed National Curriculum Framework.

C. RESULTS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

No.	Outcome Indicators	Baseline		Target		2018 Status
		Year	Value	Year	Value	(Value)
1	Survival/retention rate in lower secondary education	2017	Total: 76.6%; Girls: 77.4%; Boys: 75.9%	2022	Total: 92.0%; Girls: 93.0%; Boys: 91.2%	T: 77.4, B: 77.1, G: 77.7
2	Average learning outcome results in core subjects	2017	Grade 3-Reading fluency and comprehension: 12.85% (T), 14% (G), 12% (B); Grade 5-Nepali: 47% (T), 48% (G), 46% (B); Maths: 49% (T), 48% (G), 50% (B); Grade 8-Nepali: 48% (T), 48% (G), 48% (B); Maths: 35% (T), 33% (G), 38% (B)	2022	Grade 3: 16% (T), 17% (G), 14% (B); Grade 5-Nepali: 59% (T), 59% (G), 59% (B); Maths: 56% (T), 56% (G); 56% (B); Grade 8 - Nepali: 56% (T), 56% (G); 56% (B); Maths: 54% (T), 52% (G), 55% (B)	Grade 3: Words per minute: T:27.3 Grade 5: Nepali: T: 46.0, Math: T: 49.0 Grade 8: Nepali: T: 48.0 Math: T: 35.0
3	Number of out-of-school children enrolled in basic education (Grade 1-8)	2017	0	2022	500000 (total), 300000 (girls)	Total: 212949 Girls: 89025 Boys: 123924

No.	Output Indicators	Baseline		Target		2018 Status
		Year	Value	Year	Value	(Value)
1) Early Learning						
1	Number of children benefiting from early childhood education through non-school based programmes with support from UNICEF (e.g. parenting education and home-based education among others)	2017	13,353 (whose parents received parental education G: 6643, B: 6710 Disabled 30)	2018	9000	7615
2	Number of local bodies with Integrated ECD plans	2016	0 plans (2016: 25 districts in previous structure)	2018	10	16
3	ELDS are used and monitored by the government	2017	ELDS developed	2018	10	0
2) Equity in Education						
1	NER in secondary education (Grade: 9-12)	2017	Total: 37.7%, B:37.8%, G:37.6%	2018	40.3%	T: 43.9% G: 43.7% B: 44.1%
	Number of local governments with implementation plans for the National Equity Strategy	2017	0	2018	40	0
3) Learning (including assessment, teacher education, standards, quality assurance, school governance, etc.)						
1	Number of schools with UNICEF support using materials that support the inclusion of children with disabilities	2017	0	2018	40	40
4) Education in Emergencies, DRR and education and peace-building						
1	Number of schools supported by UNICEF to develop Disaster Risk Management Plans	2017	141	2018	570	581

2	Number of primary schools in UNICEF target provinces with at least 200 school days per academic year	2017	70% of 175 project schools open at least 200 school days (this is 8 % schools of five districts)	2018	10%	79%
5) System Strengthening and Capacity Development						
1	Percentage of targets of the School Sector Development Plan Programme Results Framework reached on an annual basis	2017	SSDP result framework based on access, participation and learning outcome indicators approved	2018	70%	69.5%
6) Knowledge management, research and innovations						
1	School Profile Cards from EMIS used in social audits to improve school performance	2017	0	2018	50	0

D. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

With the transition to the new Country Programme (2018 – 2022), funding for new initiatives (adolescents, small schools, mother tongue, inclusive education) have not been secured. In addition, the demise of the National Committee Toolkit reduced Natcom funding from US\$ 2,000,000 per year to less than US\$ 400,000. Under the new format, Nepal Country Office is developing donor specific proposals with the Natcoms, resulting in less flexible funding, with more focus on service delivery rather than advocacy, evidence generation, and system strengthening.

Thematic funding has allowed the Nepal Country Office to transition to the new Country Programme, maintaining partnerships and momentum in order to reach greater results. Staffing costs were covered, allowing the continued efforts to mainstream programmes such as non-formal classes, DRR, and EMIS strengthening. UNICEF's staff support has been critical for the transition to the federal system, supporting the new local governments, and maintaining knowledge during the re-deployment of government staff. Thematic funding used to preposition emergency materials allows UNICEF to immediately respond to emergencies.

A major support to Nepal has been the availability of thematic funds for our SWAp contribution and our status as a Joint Financing Partner. Without this funding, UNICEF could not serve as focal point for the development partners or as Coordinating Agency for the Global Partnership for Education. As a Joint Financing Partner, UNICEF plays a key role in advising and monitoring the Education Sector. We are able to bring UNICEF's key messages of equity to the discussions on budgeting and implementation.

The new CPD Outputs do not match directly to the global results areas. Early Learning is aligned with Output 3.1 ECD and Learning is aligned with Output 3.2 Basic Education. However, Equity in Education includes the out-of-school children work in Output 3.3 and the equity strategy work within Output 3.4. Knowledge Management is included in Output 3.4 in the work with strengthening the EMIS system, while Innovative work on life skills is included in Output 3.3 Adolescents.

Table 1: Planned Budget for 2018 (in US Dollar)

Intermediate Results	Funding Type	Planned Budget	Funded Budget	Shortfall
Output 3.1 ECD (Early Learning)	RR	60,000	60,000	-
	ORR	820,000	553,000	(267,000)
Output 3.2 Basic Education (Learning)	RR	30,000	30,000	-
	ORR	2,023,000	792,280	(1,230,720)
Output 3.3 Adolescents (Equity in Education and Innovations)	RR	110,000	110,000	-
	ORR	2,025,000	742,360	(1,282,640)
Output 3.4 System Strengthening and Safe Schools (System Strengthening and Capacity Development, Education in Emergencies/DRR and Knowledge Management)	RR	440,000	440,000	-
	ORR/ORE	3,252,000	2,650,000	(602,000)
Sub-Total Regular Resources		640,000	640,000	-
Sub-Total Other Resources - Regular & Emg		8,120,000	4,737,640	(3,382,360)
Total For 2018		8,760,000	5,377,640	3,382,360)

Table 2: Country-level Thematic contributions to thematic pool received in 2018

German Committee for UNICEF	
SC1804050001	1,473,999
SC1804050002	119,363
Norway	
SC180976	1,112,282
USA USAID	
SC150547	825,370
Swedish Committee for UNICEF	
SC180069	500,000
Swiss Committee for UNICEF	
SC180095	341,884
United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF	
SC180759	256,019
European Commission/EC	
SC150757	233,874
Hong Kong Committee for UNICEF	
SC180625	199,199
Finnish Committee for UNICEF	
SC180577	196,236

Table 3: Expenditures in the thematic sector by results area

Labels	Expense
Other Resources - Emergency	3,699,269
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	3,331,692
22-02 Learning outcomes	379,889
22-03 Skills development	-12,312
Other Resources - Regular	4,872,738
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	3,340,714
22-02 Learning outcomes	1,280,197
22-03 Skills development	251,827
Regular Resources	1,718,218
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	1,257,819
22-02 Learning outcomes	452,770
22-03 Skills development	7,629
Grand Total	10,290,225

Table 4: Thematic expenses by results area

Row Labels	Expense
Other Resources - Emergency	1,316,293
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	1,026,434
22-02 Learning outcomes	289,859
Other Resources - Regular	1,121,193
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	613,343
22-02 Learning outcomes	507,804
22-03 Skills development	47
Grand Total	2,437,486

Table 5: Expenses by Specific Intervention Codes

Row Labels	Expense
22-01-01 Provision of (formal and non-formal) early learning / pre-primary education (including in temporary learning spaces)	76,774
22-01-02 Provision of parental education for school readiness (including in temporary learning spaces)	-5,461
22-01-05 Provision of (formal and non-formal) multiple-levels or alternative pathways of education (including in temporary learning spaces)	4,328,499
22-01-06 System strengthening - inclusive education for children with disabilities	908,451
22-01-08 System strengthening - risk informed programming, including climate, resilience, disaster, conflict, and emergency preparedness	1,061,385
22-01-14 Education Management Information System (EMIS) (excluding learning assessment systems)	17,104
22-01-15 Education sector planning including coordinating role, SDG 4, etc.	159,877
22-01-99 Technical assistance - Equitable access to quality education	546,166

22-02-01 Provision or procurement of early learning / pre-primary education learning materials	8,758
22-02-07 Provision of early learning / pre-primary education teacher training	18,833
22-02-14 System strengthening - early learning / pre-primary policy, leadership, and budget	69,408
22-02-15 System strengthening - early learning / pre-primary standards and governance	38,561
22-02-16 System strengthening - early learning / pre-primary teaching and learning environment (including curriculum and material design)	33,826
22-02-19 System strengthening - mother tongue / multilingual education	260,538
22-02-99 Technical assistance - Learning outcomes	1,319,619
22-03-02 Provision of skills development for adolescents (10-19 year-olds) (including in temporary learning spaces)	206,644
22-03-07 System strengthening - life skills (for personal empowerment, active citizenship, etc.)	22,501
26-01-01 Country programme process (including UNDAF planning and CCA)	12,656
26-01-02 Programme reviews (Annual, UNDAF, MTR, etc.)	204,601
26-01-03 Humanitarian planning and review activities (HRP, RRP, UNICEF HAC)	4,671
26-02-01 Situation Analysis or Update on women and children	46
26-02-08 Programme monitoring	50,401
26-03-02 Capacity and skills development for social behaviour change	15,645
26-03-03 Children, adolescent and youth engagement and participation	67,964
26-03-04 Community engagement, participation and accountability	92,865
26-03-06 Research, monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management for C4D	5,735
26-03-07 Strengthening C4D in Government systems including preparedness for humanitarian action	2,302
26-03-99 Technical assistance - Cross - sectoral communication for development	87,675
26-05-01 Building evaluation capacity in UNICEF and the UN system	13,361
26-06-01 Parliamentary engagement for policy advocacy	39,767
26-06-08 Emergency preparedness (cross-sectoral)	66,099
26-07-01 Operations support to programme delivery	715,255
27-01-06 HQ and RO technical support to multiple Goal Areas	83,944
27-01-15 CO programme coordination	1,488
27-01-16 CO advocacy and communication	24,030
28-07-04 Management and Operations support at CO	-288,783
Unknown	19,021
Grand Total	10,290,225

Table 6: Planned Budget for 2019(in US Dollar)

Intermediate Results	Funding Type	Planned Budget	Funded Budget	Shortfall
Early Learning	RR	60,000	60,000	-
	ORR	820,000	1,013,865	193,865
Learning (including assessment, teacher education, standards, quality assurance, school governance, etc.)	RR	30,000	30,000	-
	ORR	2,023,000	1,834,965	(188,035)
Equity in Education	RR	110,000	110,000	-
	ORR	2,025,000	1,071,025	(953,975)
Education in Emergencies, DRR and education and peace-building System Strengthening and Capacity Development	RR	595,609	595,609	-
	ORR	924,595	1,347,868	423,273
Sub-Total Regular Resources		795,609	795,609	-
Sub-Total Other Resources (Regular)		5,792,595	5,267,723	(524,872)
Total For 2019		6,588,204	6,063,332	(524,872)

E. FUTURE WORK PLAN

As indicated in the discussion of results, work will continue in all areas: Access, Equity, Learning, EiE/DRR, System Strengthening, and Knowledge Management. Thematic funds allow continuation of interventions in areas for which there are gaps in funding, particularly EiE/DRR, System Strengthening, and new evidence on Skills for Adolescents.

Improving ECD, the holistic development of all children, will help ensure full access to the education system. Policy dialogue and advocacy with the National Planning Commission, ECD caucus, and ECD network will support the finalization of a new ECD strategy. Capacity development of communities to plan, budget, and implement school-based ECD will continue. Evidence generation regarding parental education will continue and evidence generation in the areas of alternative, non-school based ECD will begin. Capacity development is also being provided to the government to develop an equivalency framework which will align non-formal classes with the formal education system, allowing more access for out-of-school children.

Support to the Government for the implementation of the Equity Strategy will continue. Capacity development will continue to local levels of government for the use of data from the Equity Index to plan, budget, and implement to better target support to the most vulnerable children to reduce disparities in enrolment, participation, and learning outcomes. Service delivery through non-formal, Girls Access to Education (GATE) classes will start in new communities while there will be capacity development of communities to continue their own GATE classes.

To support the improvement of learning outcomes, evidence generated on language of instruction and inclusive education will be used for policy dialogue, advocacy and capacity development of teachers and Ministry staff. Innovative approaches for teaching in multilingual classrooms and in small, remote schools will be developed. Cross-sectoral linkages with child-protection to address child labour, child marriage, and gender-based violence will be strengthened. Some service delivery through teacher

training and provision of teaching and learning materials will continue in order to provide demonstration models of quality education.

Continued partnership with the Education cluster will continue in order to respond to Education in Emergencies, especially flooding which happens annually in Nepal. Emergency response will include intersectoral interventions with WASH, Health, and Child Protection sectors. The partnership with the Children as Zones of Peace Consortium will continue so as to develop the capacity of the new local government bodies to promote and implement Schools as Zones of Peace. Capacity development of all three tiers of government and schools to implement the new Comprehensive Safe Schools plan and DRR training will continue. In the 2015 earthquake affected districts, service delivery of 250 Transitional Learning Centres with WASH and DRR training will conclude in 2019.

Thematic Funds will allow UNICEF to continue as a Joint Financial Partner, participating in joint monitoring reviews with other development partners and the government. This is particularly important as the government starts its Mid-term Review of the SSDP in 2019. In particular, UNICEF will be filling information gaps through thematic studies on strengthening quality and learning outcomes. Leadership to the Thematic Working Groups in ECD, Equity and Inclusion, and Safe Schools will continue.

An important area of knowledge management which will continue is the strengthening of the government's EMIS system as well as the increased use of EMIS data for government planning and budgeting at all levels. Piloting of school report cards will be continued in order to provide information to schools and local governments. Evidence generation on the effectiveness and efficiency of "Rupantaran", life skills package will be continued as well as determining the most effective ways of implementing the package through formal and informal education programs. As adolescent life skills are a new area in the education programme strategy, thematic funds provide the seed money for the programme until funding is secured.

F. EXPRESSION OF THANKS

UNICEF Nepal Country Office is grateful for the thematic funding in Education. This flexible funding is an important contribution that enabled UNICEF to improve the education for children in Nepal through implementation of programmes at the school level as well as policy development at the national level and look forward to continued support to advance results for children in Nepal.

G. DONOR REPORT FEEDBACK

In UNICEF Nepal, we are working to improve the quality of our reports and would highly appreciate your feedback. Kindly answer the questions in the form at the link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/H5Q3GPB>

H. CONTACTS

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I. ANNEX: HUMAN INTEREST STORIES

A boy's knowledge saves lives in his community

In Nepal, an 11-year-old boy puts into practice what he learned about preparing for disasters to save lives

Bajura, Nepal – Neither of Mohan Pari's parents can read or write. Never having had the opportunity themselves to go to school, the couple from Bajura District in Nepal's far-west had been keen to send their son to school.

In August 2018, the true significance of that decision became apparent.

Mohan goes to the Kudikot Lower Secondary School, a short distance from his home in Kudi village in the Budhiganga Municipality. One day, the third-grader had arrived at school to find all the students out of their classrooms, listening to someone speaking. "At first, I didn't catch what he was saying," Mohan said. "But the longer I listened, I realized he was talking about disasters and how we could better prepare and respond to them. I grew interested."

The event was part of UNICEF's school-based Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) drive being run in two districts with the generous support of the [MAC Foundation](#) and UNICEF's Education thematic [donors](#). Encompassing 240 schools in Bajura and Achham Districts, the programme – implemented by UNICEF's partner organization MISS Bajura – aims to build awareness among students about hazards, risks and disasters as well as teach them how to be better prepared for disasters and respond to them. The orientation also includes evacuation drills and simulations, information on first aid and formation of Child Safety Clubs within schools, among other components.

Ever the enthusiastic learner, Mohan absorbed it all. But little did he realize how soon he would be putting that knowledge to the test.



MOHAN PARI, 11, FROM BUDHIGANGA MUNICIPALITY IN BAJURA DISTRICT. WHEN A LANDSLIDE HIT HIS VILLAGE DURING THE 2018 MONSOON, MOHAN USED WHAT HE HAD LEARNED AT HIS SCHOOL'S DRR DRIVE TO ALERT FIVE OTHER FAMILIES BESIDES HIS OWN AND LEAD THEM TO SAFETY.

A few months later, the monsoon had begun and Budhiganga was soon awash in heavy rainfall. For an entire week in August, the rain was particularly persistent, and everyone had started to worry. Rivers and streams were already flowing strong, threatening to flood whatever was in its way, roads were disrupted, phone lines were down and schools were closed. It was as if the whole village was holding its breath for a disaster to happen.

On the 17th of August, Mohan was home, looking out his window at the rain. Just then, there was a sudden loud noise and he could see a small landslide had occurred close by. It was in that moment that everything he had learned at school kicked in. “I called out to my parents and told them we needed to alert the neighbours and move to a safer place,” Mohan says. “I remembered the field officer at the programme had said that when there was the possibility of a disaster, you need to immediately go somewhere open and safe.”

Mohan went around, calling as many people out of their homes as he could. On his instructions, five families followed him to the school, the only open space in the area. Almost as soon as they had moved some distance, the house in front of Mohan’s collapsed. It had been a very close call.

In all, Mohan saved the lives of 13 people thanks to his quick thinking. However, not everyone was so lucky. Mohan’s own aunt, 45-year-old Kala Pari, sadly, could not get out of her house before it was buried by the landslide. Tragically, a seven-year-old boy from another village is still missing.

Over 200 households in the Budhiganga and Badhimalika Municipalities in Bajura were affected by the August 2018 floods and landslides. This wasn't the first time the area had faced such a disaster. Budhiganga and nearby areas are vulnerable to the threat of landslide every year during the monsoon. In 2013, two houses had been swept away by a landslide, an incident that took the lives of five locals.

Despite the regularity of the disaster, the level of preparedness in both municipalities is still very low. The majority of residents belong to the marginalized and poverty-stricken Dalit community, and most adults are uneducated, much like Mohan's parents. Misconceptions therefore abound about the causes and appropriate responses to disasters. To address this critical issue, UNICEF aimed to bridge the gap in knowledge amongst the community, including its youngest members, so that all are aware of the ways to better prepare for disasters. UNICEF has also been working to reduce the risks of such disasters.

Mohan is just glad he was able to help. "Preparedness – that's the main lesson we learned at the programme," he said. "It was because I was mentally prepared that I was able to act so quickly."

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