Rooted in national principles and priorities

UNICEF’s new country programme 2018-2022 for Myanmar will be implemented during a period of significant political, economic and social transition, providing unprecedented opportunities and risks for the realization of child rights in country. UNICEF’s programme is rooted in the four goals established by the Government, including national reconciliation; internal peace; transformation to a democratic federal union and; raising the quality of life for the majority of people. The New Vision, New Results for Children conference in October 2016 also set out the policy priorities in key sectors to support progress for children. During the coming years UNICEF will strive to support these core principles and priorities.

Lessons from the previous country programme, 2013-2017- point to the need to holistically address children’s and adolescents’ development following a life-cycle approach, addressing social norms and parental practices, focused on the most disadvantaged children and adolescents including those in protracted and diverse forms of displacement.

Children in need

Myanmar remains a poor country. Despite gross domestic product (GDP) growth of over 8 per cent in the last two years, close to one in four households – mainly located in rural and ethnic areas – live below the $1.25 poverty line. Half of all households live on or just above the poverty line, with 55 per cent of all children in Myanmar living in income poverty.

- The under-five mortality rate of 50 per 1,000 live births is high with half occurring among new-borns. Seven out of 15 State/regions contribute to 75 per cent of under-five deaths; with the highest numbers in Chin and Shan.
- In 2016 29.2 per cent of children under five were stunted with wasting at 7 per cent.
- Five million children lack access to an improved water supply and 1.4 million children lack access to toilet facilities.
- More than one million children aged 0 to 5 still remain unregistered, despite improvements in birth registration coverage to almost 80 per cent in 2014.
- More than two million children aged 5 to 17 years remain out-of-school, and an estimated number of 232,000 children with disabilities - two thirds - do not attend school.
- An estimated 20% of children and adolescents work, with half under the minimum working age and with the highest prevalence in Shan State.
- Over 200,000 children (mostly adolescents) live in religious institutions away from their parents and nearly 700,000 children are cared for by extended family and non-relative family care.

Programme focus

UNICEF will implement the new country programme through six interrelated outcomes that reflect national priorities and align with the UNICEF Global Strategy, 2018-2021. The prioritization of geographical locations varies between programme components and progress against development indicators. All components foresee supporting children affected by conflict, displacement and other humanitarian situations, notably in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states.

In Health and Nutrition, UNICEF will contribute to ensuring more children under five and women of reproductive age, including adolescent girls, have equitable access to and utilize evidence-based health, immunization, HIV and nutrition interventions. This will contribute to ending preventable maternal, new-born and child deaths.

In Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), UNICEF will contribute to ensuring that families and key institutions like schools have equitable access to and utilize safe, affordable, adequate WASH services across the lifecycle. In turn this will contribute to reducing neonatal, under-five and maternal mortality, communicable diseases, undernutrition and stunting; increasing school attendance and protecting girls and boys from violence in schools.

In Education, UNICEF will contribute to ensuring all children and adolescents, especially the most disadvantaged, acquire knowledge and skills in an inclusive, safe, quality learning environment to complete pre-primary, primary, transit to secondary and lower secondary education. Interventions will help the Ministry of Education boost the quality of preschools and kindergartens; increase the number of girls and boys (including those with disabilities) that complete primary and lower secondary education and provide out-of-school adolescents with alternative education. In conflict-affected areas and during emergencies, institutions will be fit to provide children with continuous learning.

In child protection, UNICEF will contribute to ensuring that all boys and girls in Myanmar are covered by a child protection system that fosters prevention and recovery from violence, exploitation and separation from family. This programme component builds on the ongoing establishment of social work case management in the Department of Social Welfare and its connectivity to relevant justice, education and health responses.

In social policy and child rights monitoring, UNICEF will continue to further strengthen government systems and financing in areas that help to reduce child and adolescent poverty and deprivations. The Government’s capacity to develop, manage and use data, monitoring and evaluation systems to address the situation of children especially the most excluded will be enhanced.

UNICEF’s Programme effectiveness will ensure that the country programme is efficiently designed, monitored, managed, evaluated and supported to meet quality programming standards in achieving results.

Summary budget table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme component</th>
<th>(In thousands of United States dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regular resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and nutrition</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Child protection</td>
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<td>Social policy and child rights monitoring</td>
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<td>Programme effectiveness</td>
<td>21 159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tbody>
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