

# RIGHTS, EDUCATION AND PROTECTION (REAP) AUSAID-UNICEF PARTNERSHIP ON DISABILITY

## First progress report

Reporting Period: April 2011 – December 2011

UNICEF New York



Credit: 2011/Ability Bhutan Society

The child in the photo has cerebral palsy with right sided hemiparesis. The photo was taken in the paediatric physiotherapy unit in Thimphu. Her parents are members of Ability Bhutan Society.

## Acknowledgements

UNICEF would like to express its gratefulness to AusAID for its support to the timely and crucial REAP partnership. This initiative is allowing UNICEF to build internal capacity, improve our ability to work and collaborate across sectors, regions and countries and enabling us to fulfil our mandate and become a leading UN agency on disability issues.

In recent years, Australia was the first government to invest in UNICEF's capacity to promote the rights of and address the issues related to the inclusion of children, adolescents and women with disabilities. By trusting UNICEF's commitment to all children, especially the most invisible and excluded, AusAID brought to the UNICEF team the sense of opportunity that the organisation was seeking, to start a project that can become more than just a series of punctual activities, but a demonstration that social change is possible.

The partnership with AusAID has been instrumental for the generation of processes that will bring children with disabilities and their families to the forefront of the equity agenda and will build the bases to maintain them in the centre of the new development framework, beyond 2015. Together REAP partners will demonstrate that no progress is possible when so many human beings are excluded and discriminated against. More importantly, we will learn from our work with children with disabilities how to promote inclusion with dignity for all.

Through the REAP partnership, UNICEF is being able to influence both the global child's agenda, as well as the disability agenda on the importance of the survival and full development of children with disabilities. At the same time, it is enabling us to act at regional and national levels for the fulfilment of the rights of children with disabilities, especially through the enhancement of education and child protection systems towards inclusion.

UNICEF also acknowledges the support of UN agencies, NGOs, academia, DPOs and CSOs and especially the Governments of Bhutan and Viet Nam, which have firmly engaged in the REAP project and in other local and global efforts for disability mainstreaming during 2011. UNICEF counts on their continued commitment and partnership in 2012 and beyond.

In this sense, UNICEF Bhutan acknowledges in particular two lead REAP implementing partners: the Ministry of Education and the National Commission for Women and Children, which have been providing unconditional support to the success of this initiative.

UNICEF Viet Nam highlights the importance of the mutual trust among local partners and especially recognises the commitment and the serious work on behalf of children with disability being developed by key counterparts: Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA).

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEE/CIS	Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
CFS	Child Friendly School
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Domestic Household Survey
DPO	Disabled People Organisations/Organisations of Persons with Disabilities
DPP	Division of Policy and Practice
DU	Disability Unit
DOLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
GA	General Assembly
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNH	Gross National Happiness
GPA	Global Partnership on Education
GPDD	Global Partnership for Disability and Development
GRaCE	Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement section
HQ	Headquarters
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
IDA	International Disability Alliance
ILO	International Labour Organization
INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO	International Non-governmental Organizations
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
NCAP	National Communication Action Plan
NCCD	National Coordinating Council on Disability
NPA	National Plan of Action
OED	Office of the Executive Director
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PARMO	Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office
PEPFAR	U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
REAP	Rights, Education, and Protection (Partnership and Project)
RNDA	Rapid Neurodevelopmental Assessment
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNPRPD	United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
WHO	World Health Organization

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Children with disabilities face significant challenges in their daily life, including stigma and discrimination and limited access to mainstream education and other public services. There is often lack of a clear understanding of CWDs' abilities and the bottlenecks and barriers that need to be removed to enable their integration and inclusion in society. Likewise, gaps in capacity at local to national levels and within countries' legal frameworks make implementation and enforcement of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) an ongoing challenge. Given this situation, the development of the AusAID/UNICEF Rights, Education and Protection (REAP) Partnership is timely and relevant. It strategically supports the fulfilment of the rights of children with disabilities through enhanced education and child protection systems that are more sensitive, responsive and inclusive.

The nine months of the first calendar year of the REAP partnership has resulted in 'preparing the ground' for project implementation. Tasks have included: selection of partnering countries; negotiation of work planning and budget allocations; country situation assessments; development of TORs for consultants; recruitment of a Disability Specialist; and the establishment of new partnerships.

A REAP project implementation team at UNICEF New York/Headquarters (NY/HQ), composed of staff from the Child Protection Section, the Education Section and the Disability Unit (DU) was formed. It has initiated effective processes and practices for project governance and management, including regular interactions with the two case study countries, Bhutan and Viet Nam. These two countries were selected because of their strong track record on disability programming supported through the Child Protection and Education Programmes; significant partnership with their respective Governments; and networks with other actors on disability.

The REAP AusAID / UNICEF partnership has proven to be catalytic for UNICEF support of children with disabilities. Initial concrete and tangible results of the REAP partnership are seen in the following examples of work undertaken by the Disability Unit with regard to integrating disability across the organisation:

- Internally, the successful collaboration between Programme Division and the Division of Policy and Practice, as well as with the organization's focal points who collaborate through the Inter-Divisional Working Group on Disability, has increased visibility and momentum for addressing disability across sectoral programmes and generating clear results.
- The final draft of UNICEF's Disability Principles and Framework was prepared and is in the process of being approved and adopted.
- A series of disability orientations have been offered to staff of Programme Division, Division of Policy and Strategy, Division of Communication and others, as well as the CEE/CIS Regional Office and Country Offices, including Azerbaijan and Turkey. An all-staff web-based disability training is in the process of being developed.
- In addition to the Emergency, Child Protection and Education Programmes, there has been investment in children with disabilities via Health, Nutrition, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), Early Child Development, Social Protection, Communication for Development (C4D) and HIV/AIDS Programmes – all in the context of equitable and inclusive development. In 2011, the majority of the UNICEF Programme Sections implemented concrete actions and/or developed specific guidance to mainstream disability issues.

- In collaboration with Child Protection and Education colleagues, both bilaterally and through the Inter-Divisional Working Group on Disability, various UNICEF Regional and Country Offices received technical support from the Disability Unit on mainstreaming disability.
- Following considerable negotiation and alignment with Education work and priorities, the groundwork has been laid for moving ahead with developing and strengthening the preparation of teachers and other educators on inclusive education for children with disabilities, using and enhancing the channels provided by the Child Friendly School Approach.
- Modelling and strengthening systems towards disability mainstreaming started at country level: UNICEF Bhutan implemented a Child Protection Mapping and Assessment, using an adaptation of the UNICEF/Child Protection Toolkit<sup>1</sup> and negotiated with the government to 'set the scene' for the work on the implementation of the CRPD. The agreement was that UNICEF Viet Nam would only start using the REAP funding in 2012, nevertheless the work to obtain agreement from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) on the REAP activities for 2012-2013, as part of a national plan for persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, is already underway.
- Globally, the establishment of new partnerships within the disability community have been forged with support from the Disability Unit in Headquarters. This has resulted in UNICEF initiating formal cooperation with the Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), NGOs and other agencies. Due to this improved cooperation, within a one-year period UNICEF is increasingly being viewed as a leading agency on disability issues.
- On UN coherence, UNICEF is playing a leadership role on disabilities with key UN partners. In 2011, in conjunction with UNDP, UNDESA, WHO, ILO and OHCHR, UNICEF launched the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) and its associated Multi-Donor Trust Fund, to which AusAID is a donor. Also, the organisation has initiated a Global Partnership on CWD and Development.

In sum, during the first nine months of this three-year project, the main efforts focused on establishing administrative and support mechanisms and reaching agreements between AusAID, UNICEF Headquarters and Country Offices so REAP could effectively and efficiently start.

Although communities of practice on CWD issues are still limited, thanks to the REAP AusAid / UNICEF partnership, new knowledge sharing opportunities are emerging at global, regional and country levels. Moreso, through the implementation of the REAP project, UNICEF supported programming will be enabled to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of its multi-disciplinary approach to disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> The Child Protection Mapping and Assessment Toolkit can be accessed at [http://www.unicef.org/Protection/57929\\_58020.html](http://www.unicef.org/Protection/57929_58020.html).



**First Progress Report on Rights, Education and Protection (REAP)**  
**AusAID-UNICEF Partnership on Disability**  
**April 2011 - December 2011**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report constitutes the first progress report on the Rights, Education and Protection (REAP) project for children with disabilities (CWD) covering the implementation period from April to December, 2011. This is a three-year project (2011-2013) with funding from and strong collaboration between AusAid and UNICEF.

The report consists of a succinct overview on the steps that have been taken during 2011 through REAP to increase the momentum in favour of supporting children and persons with disabilities using a multi-disciplinary approach. It takes into account the groundwork that has been laid to ensure that the REAP project is successful in producing results that can generate evidence-based good practices and lessons learned to effectively inform policy and programming. In turn, it reveals efforts undertaken and planned efforts to change norms and behaviours that can, over the long-term, result in systematically and systemically mainstreaming children and persons with disabilities into services and systems across the sectors.

The report is structured as follows: **Part 1: Background, Purpose, Design and Objectives** provides a brief overview of attention to disability in UNICEF since the 1980s/90s to the current time, along with the purpose of and objectives for REAP framed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); **Part II: REAP Results** covers what has been achieved during the past nine months since the REAP project started; **Part III Constraints and Lessons Learned** are examined; **Part IV: Future Workplan** reviews the plans for this year into 2013; **Part V: Financial Situation** provides an overview of the use of AusAID and UNICEF resources in 2011 and refers to resource mobilization.

## **I. BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, DESIGN and OBJECTIVES**

### **1.1 Background**

#### **Brief overview of the history of disability mainstreaming at UNICEF**

The issue of disability is not new to UNICEF. In the 1970s and early 1980s, UNICEF supported childhood disabilities projects in many countries around the world. The projects focused on prevention, early detection and community-based rehabilitation. They were usually supported within the programme called *Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC)*.

By the mid-1990s, the UNICEF policy on child protection, including children with disabilities, was called *Children in Need of Special Protection (CNSP)*, which built on the CEDC programme and incorporated the human rights-based approach, especially framed and guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Over the years, the emphasis moved towards disability in the context of armed conflict, which was addressed through the Child Protection programme. Individual staff in the Education Programme sporadically gave attention to children with special needs in education systems.

In the 1980s, the UNICEF Disability Team at Headquarters consisted of a one-person Technical Support Group established in collaboration with Rehabilitation International and housed in the Child Protection Section. By 1996, this Technical Support Group was phased out. Thereon, the integration of disability in UNICEF's work relied primarily on a dispersed, but committed, set of individual staff members.

Following the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in December 2006, the issue of disability started to re-emerge. By September 2010, the Executive Director's call to sharpen UNICEF's focus on equity provided the ideal opportunity to strengthen advocacy efforts calling for support of disability mainstreaming and inclusive development to be placed at the front and centre of UNICEF's work.

In February 2011, with senior management commitment and support, the Division of Policy and Practice established the first-ever 'Senior Advisor on Disability' position in UNICEF. In order to facilitate disability mainstreaming in programming, the Programme Division established a focal point to work with the Senior Advisor. With the generous support of the governments of Australia (through REAP) and Denmark, two other posts for Disability Programme Specialists were established and filled. At the end of 2011/beginning of 2012, the UNICEF Disability Unit was fully operational.

Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), a draft framework on disability mainstreaming was prepared in 2011 by the UNICEF Disability Unit in collaboration with colleagues and partners. It provides fundamental guidance on creating more equitable policy and programmes that are framed by human rights and gender equality, which are inclusive of children, adolescents, women and all persons with disabilities. (See **Annex 1** - Draft Framework on Disability Mainstreaming.)

## 1.2 Purpose, Design and Objectives

The purpose of the Rights, Education, and Protection (REAP) partnership is to advance the fulfilment of the rights of children with disabilities through enhanced education and child protection systems which are more sensitive, responsive and inclusive of these children.

The REAP project is designed to enable UNICEF and its counterparts and partners to strengthen the equity approach through guidance and support on disability mainstreaming in policy and programming. Furthermore, it aims at strengthening country and regional capacity and implementation of innovative and strategic policy and programmatic responses for and with children and persons with disabilities in quality education settings and child protection systems.

Three main objectives are directing the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this project:

- to strengthen UNICEF capacities and provide coherence to its work on disability and inclusive development;
- to promote and support the implementation of the CRPD, with a particular focus on education and child protection;
- to develop and implement evidence-based good practice, policy guidance and tools in two countries

## II. REAP RESULTS

### 2.1 Management and governance structure

The REAP project management and governance structure is interconnected at the different levels of the UNICEF organization and in close collaboration with AusAID. (See **Figure #1** and **Annex 2** for a basic illustration of the structure.)

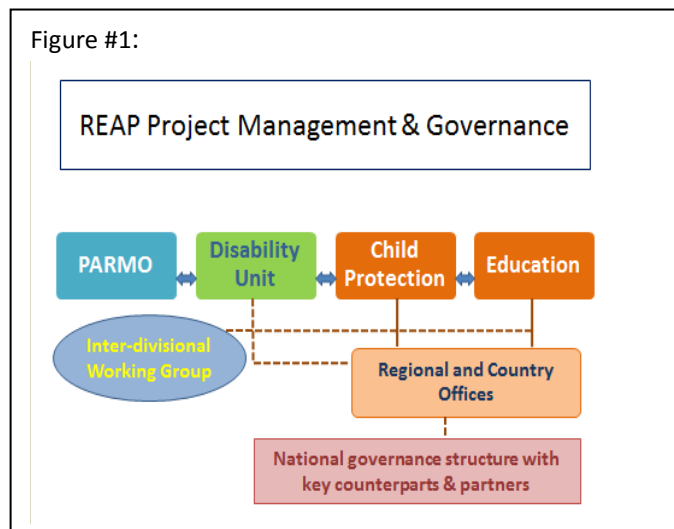
#### At the global level:

Project management, governance and coordination at UNICEF New York/HQ are shared through a cross-sectoral collaboration structure and process involving the Education and Child Protection Sections in the Programme Division (PD), the Disability Unit in GRaCE/PD<sup>2</sup> (previously in the Division of Policy and Practice (DPP)), and the Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office (PARMO).

This group constitutes the REAP Implementation Team at UNICEF New York/Headquarters (HQ). Their main role and responsibilities have been to plan, support, monitor and report on the development and implementation of the REAP project, as well as develop project administration and facilitate coordination, coherence and communication with each other, the other sectors and partners involved in contributing to the overarching goal of mainstreaming disability throughout policy and programming.

In addition, the UNICEF Inter-Divisional Working Group on Disability, a UNICEF HQ structure in which all Programme Sections as well as the Communication and Policy Divisions are represented by focal points, has been regularly informed about the progress of REAP. The focal points have provided input and feedback on REAP and other programming efforts related to disability and are responsible for informing and mobilizing their colleagues and partners to support the integration of disability.

Figure #1:



#### At the regional and country levels:

In the two 'participating countries', Bhutan (South Asia) and Viet Nam (East Asia and Pacific), which have been selected to develop and implement evidence-based good practice, policy guidance and tools, the Education and Child Protection Regional Advisors and Country Office Chiefs and their staff, with backing from their respective Representative and Deputy Representative, are responsible for establishing good governance, management and communication mechanisms for the REAP project / partnership.

In particular, the Regional Advisors of Child Protection and Education are responsible for providing technical support to the Country Offices, sharing lessons learned throughout the region, and channelling

<sup>2</sup> Due to internal re-organization, the Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement (GRaCE) Section, in which the Disability Unit is positioned, was recently moved to the Programme Division (PD). At the same time, the Division of Policy and Practice (DPP) was re-structured and is now called the Division of Policy and Statistics (DPS).

information and promoting dialogue on mainstreaming disability across programmes, including using the REAP experience as an example.

The Chiefs of Child Protection and Education in collaboration with counterparts are responsible for all phases of REAP project development, implementation and follow through, which is channelled through the UNICEF Programme of Cooperation, including its management and programming structure and processes. As well, UNICEF's comparative advantage is exercised with regard to working closely with governmental and non-governmental counterparts, partners and networks.

Regarding the national REAP governance structure with UNICEF counterparts and partners, for example, in Viet Nam is worked collaboratively through the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), the Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and the Ministry of Health (MOH). As well, several partnerships and networks are linked to UNICEF and these different government structures, facilitating communication and coordination.

In Bhutan, the Ministry of Education and the National Commission for Women and Children are the two leading partners on the REAP project. The national governance structure will be more fully determined once the lead government partner for CRPD and REAP implementation is identified in the near future.

#### **With collaborative support from AusAID:**

Regular contact and collaboration with AusAID on progress was maintained throughout the year. For example, in June and

#### **Box #1: How the two selected countries complied with the country selection criteria**

*1. The countries are located in more than one UNICEF region, and one of the regions will be East Asia and Pacific. Viet Nam is situated in East Asia and Pacific. Bhutan is situated in South Asia.*

*2. The countries must be signatories to the CRPD. Viet Nam signed the CRPD in 2007. Bhutan signed the CRPD in 2010*

*3. The programme of the country must indicate that UNICEF is effectively positioned to work on disability issues.*

Both countries have a strong track record on disability programming in child protection and education. For example, Viet Nam passed the Law on Persons with Disabilities in 2010; has various sources data/information on children with disabilities; has a national communication plan on social inclusion of CWD – Bhutan has inclusive education initiatives and special education services; the Child Care and Protection Act was passed in 2011; it is in the process of mapping and assessing the child protection system; the second stage disability assessment is being finalized.

*5. There must be a clear comparative advantage for UNICEF to engage in disability issues in the country..., which includes ensuring harmonisation with other donors.* In both countries, the Country Offices have a long vested history and partnerships in disability programming which offer a clear comparative advantage and credibility to continue working on disability issues.

*6. The proposed activities are not duplicative of existing programs undertaken by other organisations (including multilaterals) in the country.* There are no activities similar to the REAP project in Viet Nam and Bhutan.

*7. The resources in the UNICEF Country Office are available to work on this project.* Both Offices indicated that the AusAID funding will be complemented by other sources of funds to accomplish the project objectives.

*8. Approval by the UNICEF office as well as by the government for the project implementation.* The activities to implement the project will be integrated into the annual work plan (AWP) in each country. This AWP is a plan that is signed and approved by government.

*9. The country has an active DPO network with the capacity to engage with/participate in the Implementation Project Team at a country level.* Viet Nam has a Disability Coordination Group composed of diverse stakeholders. In Bhutan, UNICEF is engaged in strategic partnerships with ministries and several other key partners.

September 2011, the AusAID's Disability Inclusive Director and Education Advisor met with UNICEF REAP partners in New York to review project progress and strategy. In October and November 2011, the AusAID Disability Inclusive Assistant Director joined the UNICEF selection panel to recruit the REAP funded Disability Specialist position (See **Annex 3**: CV of the selected candidate). In December 2011, the Child Protection Section at Headquarters facilitated an introductory meeting between AusAID and UNICEF Bhutan's Child Protection Specialist during her visit to Australia. The meeting discussions covered the implementation of the REAP project in Bhutan, including how the disability work links to the strengthening of child protection systems.

Throughout the project preparation and start-up, regular communication via email, telephone and conference calls, and meetings involving AusAid and the Programme Managers / Specialists at UNICEF Headquarters, Regional Offices and Country Offices has helped to ensure effective management of resource decisions and allocation, and the provision of technical and administrative support.

### **Country Selection and REAP Implementation Plan**

During the start-up of the REAP project, the REAP Implementation Project Team reviewed the criteria for the selection of the two 'participating countries'. Its members also developed a 'working' implementation and financial plan that covered the project strategies/activities and allocation of funds to the Country and Regional Offices as well as UNICEF Headquarters Sections.

#### ***Selection of the two 'participating countries' – Bhutan and Viet Nam***

During April-May 2011, the Child Protection Section/NY reviewed the Country Office Annual Reports to produce a 'short list' of potential countries that met the selection criteria to become one of the two countries where evidence-based good-practice, policy guidance and tools could be implemented under REAP. UNICEF HQ concurrently initiated discussions with the Regional Advisors for Child Protection and Education.

The initial suggestion was to include one country in the Central and Eastern European region (Montenegro) and another in the East Asia and Pacific region (Viet Nam), based on their pioneer work in programming for children with disabilities.

Following a meeting with the donor in June 2011, and to comply with AusAID's priority regions, Montenegro was dropped as one of the selected countries. UNICEF HQ re-initiated communication with the regions on country selection. After extensive consultations, Vietnam (East Asia and Pacific Region) and Bhutan (Region of South Asia) were selected and confirmed by AusAID on 11 July 2011.

*Box #1* indicates how the two selected countries complied with the country selection criteria in line with those detailed in the project proposal.

#### ***Development of the 'working' implementation and financial plan***

##### ***Education:***

Work planning and determining resource allocation for REAP Education activities took place with the Country and Regional Offices from June 2011 through September 2011 at the Regional Education Advisors (REA) annual meeting at UNICEF NY/HQ. During the meeting, the REAs participated in REAP project planning and dialogue on education for children with disabilities (CWD).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> At the REA annual meeting, some evidence of UNICEF's growing commitment at global, regional and country levels to work on the right to education of children with disabilities in line with the CRC and CRPD with equity:

- An external expert was invited to make a presentation on inclusive education for children with disabilities and contribute to the REAP planning discussion and overall dialogue on inclusive education for CWD.

Planning focused on resources and steps to take to develop teacher capacity on inclusive education for children with disabilities in relation to Child Friendly Schools (training-of-trainers, training materials and toolkit) and promote and put into practice the CPRD with children, women and other key partners.

The majority of funds for the REAP project under the Education component, particularly in relation to the CPRD and Child Friendly School related activities, are being managed by the Education Section at UNICEF NY/HQ in collaboration with the REAP Implementation Team and Regional and Country Offices.

#### ***Child Protection:***

In August 2011, the REAP partners agreed that, based on the needs of the countries and the regions, the Child Protection component of the REAP project would focus implementation efforts and resources on the following:

- Developing the training on the CPRD and the follow up activities; this would be divided between both countries.
- Developing and undertaking the Child Protection Systems Mapping and Assessment in Bhutan, which would also provide technical support to on-going child protection systems efforts, with an explicit focus on children and women with disabilities. This also includes support to the South Asia Regional Office (ROSA) to conduct a region-wide training on the Child Protection Systems Mapping and Assessment approach and tools, drawing on the experience of Bhutan.
- Promoting birth registration in Viet Nam to support the improvement and implementation of national policies related to birth registration of vulnerable groups of children, especially children with disabilities. A study on birth registration with links to disability and education would also be carried out at the global level.

#### ***Formal Care Information Systems:***

There was a discussion as to whether the funds for the regional training on the formal care indicators to support the development of formal care information systems should be used for:

- implementing a regional workshop in South Asia or
- supporting the implementation process of the formal care indicators in Viet Nam.

AusAID approved in September both options as acceptable and in line with the project proposal. Upon further discussion with the South Asia Regional Office, it was decided that the funds would be fully allocated to Viet Nam, considering that South Asia would be focusing its efforts on the training related to the Child Protection Systems Mapping and Assessment.

## **2.2 Disability Mainstreaming through Partnerships**

The REAP project has strengthened ongoing and enabled the development of new partnerships / cooperation, networking and the involvement of diverse technical partners at all levels in initiatives of

- 
- REAs requested that UNICEF New York/HQ provide support to regional and country level planning on inclusive education for CWD; and the development of a global roster of experts in this area of education.
  - UNICEF's Regional Education Advisor for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) reported on: noteworthy progress in countries within that region on education for children with disabilities; shared a position paper and a strategy on education for CWD that can be adapted and taken to scale by other countries/regions; and invited other UNICEF regions to learn from the CEE/CIS experiences at its Symposium on Inclusive Education, which was hosted in Russia in September 2011.



planning, implementation, advocacy, communication, monitoring and evaluation of the rights, education and protection of children with disabilities.

### Partnerships at the global level

At the global level, the Disability Unit has established and coordinated strategic partnerships through the Inter-Divisional Working Group and via the REAP Implementation Team, which is leading to producing results in each of the thematic areas in favour of disability mainstreaming.

For example, UNICEF has signed a three-year Project Cooperation Agreement with Leonard Cheshire Disability (UK)<sup>4</sup>, a leading organisation working on research related to disability and development. Through periodic bilateral meetings, the Disability Unit has also developed a close collaboration with the International Disability Alliance (IDA)<sup>5</sup>, a network of global and regional organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs), which promote the effective implementation of the CRPD. The Child Protection Section through its work on alternative care, including spearheading the preparation of Alternative Care Guidelines, has a strong partnership with the Better Care Network<sup>6</sup>. This partnership supports the work under the REAP project on formal care indicators for improving formal care information systems, as well as links with broader partnerships on issues concerning quality alternative care.

Specific partnering and coordination on disabled children is currently on-going or being worked on with partner agencies and organizations, including UNESCO, WHO, World Bank, INEE (International Network on Education and Emergencies), Save the Children, Global Partnership for Education, etc. For example, in the area of education, partnering on the development and strengthening of capacities to create inclusive educational settings (formal and non-formal) are aiming to improve access, performance and retention of children with disabilities and support educators, families and communities to better support these children. With the focus on equity, particular attention is being given to vulnerable children, including children with disabilities and their families, who are facing and/or affected by situations caused by disaster, violence, conflict or post conflict or living in other deprived and disadvantaged contexts.

#### **Box#2: Sampling of global partnerships working on the rights of children and persons with disabilities**

- UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) and its associated Multi-Donor Trust Fund
- Inter-Agency Support Group for the CRPD
- International Disability Alliance (IDA)
- Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD)
- UN Human Resources Network on Persons with Disabilities
- Bilateral organizations (e.g. AusAID; Commonwealth Secretariat on Inclusive Education) and multilateral organizations (e.g. UNESCO EFA Flagship Partnership)
- International non-governmental organizations (e.g. Save the Children)
- Sectoral partnerships, such as the Better Care Network (e.g. alternative care for disabled children) and the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) (e.g. data / indicators on children with disabilities)
- Leonard Cheshire Disability (UK)
- Various Disability Activists and Experts

In general, UNICEF is increasingly being recognized as a leading UN Agency and key partner on disability issues, resulting in UNICEF strengthening its position on the rights of children and persons with disabilities in the UN System. Notably, the REAP project has helped to provide the human resources and means within the Disability Unit to advocate for and propose steps to create a Global Partnership on

<sup>4</sup> For more information on Leonard Cheshire Disability UK see <http://www.lcdisability.org/>

<sup>5</sup> For more information on the International Disability Alliance, see: [www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org)

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.crin.org/bcn/toolkit/index.asp>

Children with Disabilities and Development. It is currently consulting with Governments, UN agencies, NGOs, CSOs, DPOs and academia.

In partnering with well recognized activists and experts in the field, UNICEF is also actively promoting persons with disabilities to apply for vacancies or DPOs to bid on consultancies. For example, this resulted in a cooperation agreement with the disability activist Victor Pineda who is now working on the disability induction course for UNICEF staff and partners.

### **Partnerships at country level**

In **Bhutan**, UNICEF recognises the importance of involving civil society organisations (CSOs) even though the civil society is in its early stage of development. Currently, the newly emerging CSO, Ability Bhutan Society (See **Annex 4** - human interest story related to the CSO), is the only CSO focussing on children with disabilities. In 2011, it was consulted on and provided valuable input on the development of the childhood disability survey and assessment. Their cooperation will also be sought in 2012 on the Child Protection System Mapping and Assessment and the training-of-trainers. This kind of collaboration is setting the stage for building other partnerships with CSOs in the future. In addition, it continuously maintains and strengthens its key partnerships for children with disabilities, especially with the Ministry of Education and the National Commission for Women and Children.

In **Viet Nam**, regular partnership meetings of key organisations working in the field of children with disabilities, initiated by UNICEF and partners, have improved cross-sectoral collaboration, coordination and information sharing, resulting in better services for children with disabilities and their families in the different provinces and, especially, in Da Nang province. (See **Annex 4** - human interest story related to education.) At national level, UNICEF initiated and shared results of a mapping exercise listing all known disability stakeholders to facilitate partnering and networking. During 2011, partnerships for children with disabilities were further strengthened with key actors, including the national level stakeholders - MOLISA, MOH and MOET - and international partners, such as the ILO, the World Bank, East Meets West Foundation, Viet Nam Veterans of America Foundation, Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped and Save the Children.

In **other countries**, partnerships have been key to increase awareness and mobilize support for the rights of children women and persons with disabilities. The following provides a sampling of partnership results, which also contribute to regional and global advocacy, dialogue and sharing of experiences that relate to promoting and putting into action the CRPD:

- **Azerbaijan**: UNICEF partnered with the Special Olympics of Azerbaijan and the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan to integrate children with mental disabilities into mainstream society and promote girls' participation, including disabled girls, in sports.
- **Croatia**: To increase access to service delivery for children with disabilities, the UNICEF Croatia Country Office partnered with the leading car dealership and long-term corporate partner, AutoZubak, and the NGO for children with disabilities, 'Angels', to ensure the availability and use of vehicles to transport children with disabilities from the remote areas of the Split-Dalmatia County to rehabilitation services.
- **Kazakhstan**: Ernst and Young and Eventica partnered with UNICEF in developing models for inclusive pre-schooling and fighting stigma directed towards children with disabilities in Kazakhstan.



- **South Africa:** The South Africa Country Office supported the leveraging of resources from the private sector towards the Techno Girls programme, a public-private partnership between the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Department of Basic Education, and the private sector.

## 2.3 Strengthening UNICEF Capacities and Providing Coherence to Work on Disability and Inclusive Development

### The Disability Unit

Although the majority of the work undertaken under the REAP project in 2011 can be considered as 'groundwork', the REAP project funds have already supported UNICEF in scaling up efforts to integrate disability across the organization.

Early in 2011, the Disability Unit (DU) was established in the Gender, Rights and Civic Engagement Section of the Division of Policy and Practice (DPP) and the Senior Advisor on Children with Disabilities was appointed. Throughout the year, the DU focused its efforts on enhancing knowledge and understanding among staff on disability mainstreaming and developing key policies and guidelines aimed at increasing the organisation's capacity to achieve results for children with disabilities.

(See **Annex 5:** Overall Goals Guiding the Disability Unit with Partners to Support Disability Mainstreaming; and **Annex 6:** Enhancing disability mainstreaming in practice - to obtain details on how the DU worked on raising the profile of children and staff with disabilities, providing orientation to staff in Headquarters on disability issues, and advocating for support in mainstreaming disability across UNICEF policies and programmes.)

### Working with Child Protection

Throughout 2011, the Child Protection Section in the Programme Division (PD) at UNICEF NY/HQ actively worked consistently with the Disability Unit on both the development of the Disability Unit and the overall work of UNICEF on children with disabilities and inclusive development in protective environments.

The Child Protection Section also provided extensive input to the 2011 UN General Assembly (GA) Resolution on the Rights of the Child <sup>7</sup>, focusing on the rights of children with disabilities (66th session of the GA); the High Commissioner on Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities; and internal publications, such as the Early Childhood Development and Disability paper.

Recognising that the concerns of children and persons with disabilities cut across all contexts and being a member of the Child Protection Working Group, the Child Protection staff in the Emergencies Unit led the development of training-of-trainers on Child Protection in Emergencies. As part of this training, it took the initiative to develop a stand-alone module on children with disabilities in emergencies, which integrated input from the Disability Unit, further contributing to and ensuring coherence on disability mainstreaming.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/467/10/PDF/N1146710.pdf?OpenElement>

### **Working with Education**

During this first year of REAP implementation, there was constant collaboration between the Disability Unit and the Education Section in PD and with Regional and Country Offices on promoting the integration of disability in programming and moving forward with preparations for implementing the education component of the REAP project, particularly using and enhancing the Child Friendly School Approach. This included laying the groundwork for improved preparation/training of teachers and other educators to support the education of children with disabilities.

Various opportunities made it possible to raise the profile of and develop capacity and ensure a coherent approach to disability mainstreaming in education within and beyond UNICEF. For example, the Education REAP Manager participated in a consortium on Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Children with Disabilities. The consortium was hosted by UNICEF's Division of Policy and Practice (DPP) in September 2011. It resulted in providing space for dialogue and valuable input on inclusive education in relation to UNICEF's global upstream and local planning work on child friendly education, including attention to CWD.

Another example involved country demands for support from the Education Section at UNICEF NY/HQ, with input from the Disability Unit. For example, the Education Section was invited by Yemen to present its work on applying Child Friendly Schools (CFS) principles (child-centered, inclusive, democratic and protective) and promoting CFS standards (including those to accommodate children with disabilities) in the construction of schools.

In global emergency education programming, normative work on education and children with disabilities was conducted primarily through the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Task Team on Inclusive Education and Disability, in which UNICEF is an active member. For example, international guidance and standards for children with disabilities were developed, including the publication of the INEE Pocket Guide to Supporting Learners with Disabilities.

## **2.4 Promoting and Supporting the Implementation of the CRPD, with a Particular Focus on Education and Child Protection**

### **Creation of new cooperation on Children and Persons with Disabilities and the CRPD**

During the past year UNICEF was a leader and major contributor at the inter-agency level on children with disabilities in relation to the CRPD, thanks to support from the REAP partnership and project. Together with UNDP, UNDESA, WHO, ILO and OHCHR, UNICEF founded and launched the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) and its associated Multi-Donor Trust Fund, to which AusAID is a donor. Furthermore, it was agreed that in 2012 UNICEF would co-chair the Inter-Agency Support Group for the CRPD with UNDESA and the OHCHR.

The UNICEF Disability Unit and the Division of Human Resources have also been active members of the Human Resources Network on Persons with Disabilities. The Disability Unit played a central role in supporting the 2011 UN Secretary General Report and the Omnibus Resolution on the Rights of the Child, which focused on children with disabilities in line with the CRPD and CRC.

### **It's about Rights, Education and Protection**

#### **Education:**

The REAP UNICEF/AusAID partnership on disability has been instrumental for enabling the new work focus on children with disabilities in the *2012 Education and Equity Work Plan* that is in line with the

CPRD. (See **Annex 7**.) The partnership has been especially significant for providing critical financial and motivational support for jumpstarting and linking global work planning processes to UNICEF's ongoing regional and national work on educating children with disabilities. (For example, see **Annex 8** on the work and collaboration supported by the UNICEF Regional Office in CEE/CIS.)

Notably, the REAP project has enabled the Education Section to engage with new partner networks and CPRD processes, DPOs and technical partners around Child Friendly Education (CFE) approaches. For example, collaboration and knowledge networking is strengthened with the UNESCO EFA Flagship partnership, the Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD) network, the Commonwealth Secretariat on Inclusive Education, and UNESCO units working on education for children with disabilities. Over the past year, spurred by the REAP project, the Education Section began to actively share information with the GPDD network. It is also working with the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) on the issue of data collection and developing indicators for children with disabilities that contributes to monitoring implementation of the CPRD.

In May 2011, partners of the UNESCO-led EFA Flagship partnership discussed ways to maintain the partnerships for 'the right to education of persons with disabilities, towards inclusion' and intensify global efforts of realizing the right to education for children with disabilities in line with the CPRD and CRC. It requested that UNICEF take the lead in this area, with UNESCO continuing to actively contribute to partnership efforts. In September 2011, UNICEF Education hosted at UNICEF HQ a UNESCO Flagship partnership network meeting with UNICEF's Senior Advisor on Disabilities, which took place during the CPRD annual meeting, reinforcing its promotion and spreading understanding of its content.

The REAP project strategically prioritizes education actions on addressing the gap in teacher education with regard to including and mainstreaming children with disabilities in education. It underscores that a teacher's knowledge and ability is instrumental in realising inclusive education and is, thus, a key group to work with in order to ensure children with disabilities are appropriately supported in diverse education settings and processes per the CPRD.

The bulk of REAP funds totalling \$900,000 is targeted to strengthen capacity and develop guidance on teacher education for children with disabilities. This is considered the 'flagship' work of the REAP partnership. It is expected to enable governments to overcome the many bottlenecks and barriers related to educating children with disabilities by supporting teachers to more effectively include and teach children with disabilities in an inclusive education setting. At the same time, the focus on developing teacher capacity will contribute to countries' adherence to the principles of the CPRD.

The remaining funds are projected to help support enabling activities, such as establishing the baseline and scope of children with disabilities and raising awareness, understanding and advocating for contextualized innovations and strategies for inclusive education. The funds are also supporting direct education change interventions in the two 'participating' country contexts. Much of the groundwork was laid in 2011 to make it possible to follow through with these programme plans.

In 2011, in support of instituting relevant teacher education on inclusive education for children with disabilities, the Education Section at UNICEF NY/HQ negotiated with the Regional Education Advisors and disability focal points, the REAP project Terms of Reference (ToR) to undertake a first time mapping exercise to determine baselines and scope of the situation of teacher education for children with disabilities and distil best practices from the regions. (See **Annex 9**.)

Preparing the ToR in a participatory fashion was considered a critical step that will lead to developing relevant global and regional strategies that support programme guidance and capacity strengthening on teacher education for disabled children. The ToR calls for the preparation of guidance on initial teacher training, in-service training for current teachers, and advanced training and leadership training for principals and school leaders, as well as teacher trainers themselves. It will also cover mainstream experts as well as special educators. The design of the ToR requires that the guidance will be grounded on evidence-based theories and existing knowledge and good practices on teacher education for children with disabilities. This guidance is expected to lead to the development of globally relevant training-of-trainers on education for children with disabilities, focussed on teacher education and all in line with the CPRD.

### **Child Protection:**

In addition to providing input on the rights of children with disabilities to many meetings, review processes, and in different fora, etc. in which the CRPD was used as the main guide, Child Protection, with support from Education and the Disability Unit via the new REAP management and governance structure, urged Country Offices to advocate for the ratification and implementation of the CRPD and related national plans of action for children and persons with disabilities. In particular, Country Offices were encouraged to use and sustain use of the UNICEF child-friendly publication in support of the CRPD entitled 'It's about Ability' and the accompanying Learning Guide to support awareness-raising campaigns. The materials are available in 16 languages, including in Braille and an audio version, and are being used in over 50 countries.

A specific example of REAP project support under Child Protection included making it possible for the Senior Advisor of Social Welfare & Justice Systems to participate in and present at the Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD)<sup>8</sup> Meeting in September 2011 in Argentina. This Meeting provided the important venue for holding the Third Conference on Monitoring and Dissemination of the CRPD and the Third Forum on Disability and Development. It constituted the 51st Ordinary Meeting of the Disability Federal Council of Argentina. The GPDD promotes the CRPD ratification and implementation, and inclusive development by facilitating capacity building, supporting knowledge sharing and creation, and building platforms for multi-stakeholder networking. UNICEF specifically shared some of its experiences on applying the Child Protection Strategy, including its concrete results for children with disabilities.

### **Bhutan and the CRPD:**

The REAP project is providing a strategic entry point to advocate for implementation of the CRPD in Bhutan. Although Bhutan signed this Convention in 2010, a national-level consultation has yet been undertaken to identify the lead Government agency to coordinate the obligations under the Convention.

UNICEF's initial consultations with the Government to confirm partnerships for the implementation of the REAP project identified this gap as a barrier and an obstacle in advancing the rights of children with disabilities. It has, therefore, been agreed that UNICEF will convene a meeting in 2012 with key Government ministries to determine which one will take the lead in implementing the training and other activities on the rights of children with disabilities under REAP and overseeing Bhutan's obligations under the Convention. Importantly, this clarification of governance and accountabilities is expected to

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<sup>8</sup> See [http://www.gpdd-online.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.gpdd-online.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1) for further information on this initiative.

help strengthen the integration of disability programming in the Royal Government of Bhutan's 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, which will be developed during 2012.

It is important to note that UNICEF Bhutan achieved several CRPD-related key results in 2011 through other funding sources that will, in turn, support achieving results under REAP in 2012 and beyond. For example:

- **'It's about Ability' Campaign:** As part of an 'It's About Ability' campaign, innovative communication materials were developed on early child care and development for children, caregivers and policy makers through a public/private partnership. Among others, participants included representatives from a vocational institute for people living with disabilities, and individuals with visual, hearing and speech impairments. A range of materials were developed, including on special educational needs and the ability of visually impaired persons.
- **Implementation of the Child Friendly School Teacher Training Module:** a teacher training module on *Educating for Gross National Happiness* (GNH) was developed with UNICEF support, integrating the five dimensions of the UNICEF supported Child Friendly Schools approach, including inclusive education. To date, 250 teachers in two districts have been trained. The module will be used for training all school teachers in the remaining 18 districts in 2012 and 2013. Extensive negotiations with the Government are helping to ensure the quality of the framework for Educating for GNH and its training materials are in line with the CRC and CRPD.

#### **Vietnam and the CRPD:**

In 2011, Viet Nam, using funds from other sources, such as the US Fund for UNICEF, focused planning and actions on children and persons with disability, which contributed to establishing the base upon which to support the REAP partnership and project implementation. The following is a summary of CRPD-related key results that represent 'ground work' in preparation for use of REAP funds in 2012:

- **Development of a TOT:** Two groups of managers and key staff members of the Department of Labour, Invalid and Social Affairs (DOLISA) at the provincial and district levels in Dong Nai and Da Nang provinces enhanced their knowledge and skills on the CRPD (with the main focus on *children with disabilities*), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and case management and intervention for vulnerable groups of children, including children with disabilities. These two provinces are known to be hotspots for Agent Orange and the prevalence of children with moderate and severe disabilities is significant.
- **Promotion of the rights of children with disabilities:** The National Communication Action Plan (NCAP) for Children with Disabilities was developed for the period 2011-2015; it promotes social inclusion for children with disabilities.
- **Improved policy and legal/regulatory framework:** UNICEF contributed to the development of decrees and circulars to guide the implementation of the National Law for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) as well as the new National Action Plan (NAP) on Persons with Disabilities (including CWD). Already three provinces have coordinated support in support of persons with disability, thanks to being guided by UNICEF's contribution in elaborating the provincial plan of action for children with disabilities.
- **Enhanced Child Protection Systems:** UNICEF collaborated successfully with the Government on the first ever National Programme on Child Protection, 2011-2015 that provides an overall direction to promote a systems-building approach to child protection.

- **Implementation of a Child Friendly School Teacher Training Module:** An agreement was reached with the MOET, as part of the MOET-UNICEF work plan for 2012-2013, to develop early diagnostic and assessment tools for early education interventions and provide training for education managers and teachers on the tools. For its preparation, a review of the UNICEF-supported training modules for primary education is underway, including inclusive education for children with disabilities. Likewise the findings from the ongoing UNICEF supported capacity assessment of the education system on children with disabilities conducted in Da Nang, An Giang and Dong Nai will be incorporated and taken into account in the REAP-funded activities.

## 2.5 Developing and Implementing Evidence-based Good Practice, Policy Guidance and Tools in Two Countries

The REAP partnership is focused on systemic changes in favour of the rights, education and protection of children with disabilities, including disability mainstreaming at country level as an important expected outcome. Strengthening disability mainstreaming at the country level with REAP support focuses on producing a compilation of adaptive strategies and innovations, including targeting the development of teacher education resources, capacity strengthening and development through various teacher training entry points, improvement of local child protection systems, etc. These are being designed to encourage and guide country specific, systemic interventions and innovations. For example, putting into practice the norms and principles of the CFS approach, which includes support of inclusive education for children with disabilities, helps countries to embark on an agenda of transformative change in the education sector. Developing child protection systems ensures that children with disabilities and other vulnerable children will receive a holistic approach to address their special needs, vulnerabilities and strengths.

To ensure that REAP is able to effectively manage for equitable and transformative results and the achievement of desired policy and programme outcomes for the rights, education and protection of children with disabilities, it has been and will continue to be necessary to focus on developing solid planning, monitoring and evaluative processes. (See **Annex 10: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**.) These should result in producing credible and usable evidence for timely and relevant adjustments / corrections in policy and programming from a rights-based and equity perspective. In turn, the evidence can be analysed and interpreted to allow for the dissemination of good practice and lessons learned.

*In relation to Bhutan*, the Child Protection Section at UNICEF NY/HQ provided technical support to UNICEF Bhutan for the Child Protection Systems Mapping and Assessment work. After the initial introduction and review of the different tools available for this exercise, the Country Team decided to use and adapt a global toolkit that had been developed by UNICEF and launched in 2010<sup>9</sup>.

This toolkit provides a practical and user-friendly method to enable participants in the child protection mapping process to identify their country's main child protection risks within a framework based on child rights. It allows for examining the scope and capacity of the existing child protection system (ranging from formal to informal) as well as assessing accountability mechanisms and resource mobilization approaches.

The ultimate objective of the mapping exercise is to support the development of a national, comprehensive child protection system that is appropriately structured for that country's context and resources. The toolkit assists in identifying and prioritising actions that contribute to building an

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<sup>9</sup> Links to the UNICEF Child Protection Mapping and Assessment Toolkit which includes User's guide [[English](#)] [[Spanish](#)] [[French](#)], Core toolkit [[English](#)] [[Spanish](#)], Comprehensive toolkit [[English](#)] [[Spanish](#)] [[French](#)].

integrated and strengthened child protection system that is inclusive of those children who may historically have had limited access and/or support.

UNICEF assistance was provided in developing the plan for the implementation of the toolkit, and the identification of an external consultant (who had had experience in guiding the implementation of the toolkit in Malawi) to support the country in this activity. Connections were also made between Bhutan and Pakistan, since Pakistan was, at the same time, engaged in mapping its child protection system.

Bhutan's mapping and assessment is currently in progress, with data collection and validation underway. Partners have come together to develop localized definitions of what is meant by a child protection system in the Bhutan context and what it does; they have developed a definition of what is 'a protected child' in Bhutan. These definitions reflect the outcome of a process to achieve consensus among partners of a 'shared vision' of a Bhutan national child protection system.

The final report on the exercise, expected in the first half of 2012, will inform several strategic outputs in favour of paving the way for evidence-based, systemic good practices, for example: the first-ever national child protection policy for Bhutan; a costed child protection sector plan and costed agency-specific submissions for inclusion in the upcoming Royal Government of Bhutan's 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan; UNICEF has provided intensive direct support to these processes and will assist with the drafting of the final report at the request of Government.

The work on the child protection system in Bhutan is linked to the upcoming global conference on Child Protection Systems to be held in India at the end of 2012. This conference will be co-hosted by UNICEF, UNHCR, World Vision and Save the Children.<sup>10</sup> It is expected that a representation from Bhutan, including UNICEF and governmental partners, will attend the conference and bring the experiences of the REAP project to the conference.

Using other funding resources, it is important to highlight some important 'ground work' that the Bhutan Country Office undertook in 2011 with regard to establishing baselines - UNICEF collaborated with the Ministry of Health and the National Statistics Bureau to conduct the first in the world second stage childhood disability assessment of 2-9 year olds that follows up on the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010<sup>11</sup>. The report on the findings will be published and disseminated in 2012. It is expected to identify children with disabilities and inform equity-focused policy development, strategies and interventions in relation to inclusive education, health and child protection.<sup>12</sup> This evidence will be of significant use for ensuring the relevance of the REAP project.

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<sup>10</sup> At this global conference on Child Protection Systems in India, approximately 150 policy makers and academics from around the world will meet for four days to review and consolidate what has been learned so far about child protection systems and outline an agenda for the way forward. The conference will be a global stocktaking on the results and approaches to child protection systems and will explore:

- the concept of child protection systems and its practical operationalisation;
- the relationship of specific sub-systems to the overall child protection system (for example, those sub-systems dealing with refugee and asylum seeking children, child labour, and alternative care); and
- strategies for system strengthening in different contexts.

<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.childinfo.org/mics4.html> for more information on the MICS round 4.

<sup>12</sup> The assessment was undertaken in two stages:

- Stage one screened disability prevalence during the Bhutan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2010 using the Ten Questions Module in a sample size of 15,000 households (as per MICS 4); and
- Stage two confirmed prevalence using standardized tools like the Rapid Neurodevelopmental Assessment tool (RNDA). The RNDA reconfirmed suspected disability cases for children aged 2-9 years.



In particular, the Rapid Neurodevelopmental Assessment (RNDA) and Rapid Functional Assessment (RFA) tools used in the surveys for the assessment helped to determine the functional status of those children at higher risk of having a disability across eight functional domains. Fifty teachers and fifty health workers were trained to administer the assessment tools and some of them are now using these tools for the early detection of disabilities in eight integrated schools, twenty community-based ECCD centres, and the paediatric unit of the National Referral Hospital for the early detection of disabilities. During 2012, these tools will be placed in thirty community-based ECCD centres and Outreach Clinics (ORCs) in remote areas after training the facilitators and health workers.

*In relation to Viet Nam* and as preparation to support the REAP project activities, UNICEF and MOET reached an agreement on activities to be implemented with REAP funding as part of the MOET-UNICEF work plan for 2012-2013. An important planned activity that will contribute to up-to-date evidence and assessment, along with establishing baselines for facilitating REAP monitoring and evaluation is the *Education Situation Analysis of Children with Disabilities* that will begin mid-2012 by MOET with UNICEF support.

The MOET's engagement is considered key in this evidence producing process to increase ownership and ensure sustainability in following through with support and development of programming for children with disabilities. Currently, in support of the upcoming Situation Analysis, UNICEF and MOET are undertaking a review of existing research studies. As the technical expertise and capacity within the MOET to conduct this analysis is somewhat limited, external technical assistance to support the MOET is being sought. In undertaking this foundational activity, it is expected to significantly contribute to enable the REAP project to measure and track changes in practices and behaviours related to the rights, education and protection of children with disabilities.

See **Annex 11** for detailed descriptions of the situations in Bhutan and Viet Nam related to the rights of persons and children with disabilities, and a selection of interventions supported by UNICEF and partners.

### **III. CONSTRAINTS EXPERIENCED and LESSONS LEARNED**

#### **3.1 Constraints**

A number of constraints were attributed to the late start of the implementation of the REAP partnership in 2011. While the REAP partnership was initiated in April, the formal approval of the two 'participating countries' was only agreed upon in July. Funds for the first year were subsequently allocated to all involved Sections and one of the Country Offices in July/August 2011, following AusAID's approval of the two selected countries, Bhutan and Vietnam. This coincided with the time period in which UNICEF was preparing its staff for the transition to VISION, the new global programme and financial management

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Preliminary findings from the two stages of disability assessment indicate that the overall prevalence of any disability among children aged 2-9 years is 21.3%, with mild disability prevalence at 18.6% and moderate or severe disability prevalence at 2.8%. Cognition was the most commonly identified domain of disability at 15.1%. The prevalence of children living with a single disability is almost twice that of children living with multiple disabilities. The prevalence of any disability among younger children aged 2-5 years is 26.8% compared to 15.3% for older children aged 5-9 years. The rates for boys and for girls are both around 20% and not statistically different.



system. This required extensive capacity building of all staff in the Country Offices, resulting in limiting staff availability to initially move ahead with REAP plans.

During 2011, the management of the REAP partnership was ensured by the REAP Implementation Team under the leadership of the Head of the Disability Unit. The approved REAP project budget provided funds for a Programme Specialist on children with disabilities to work in the Disability Unit. The post was advertised August 2011 and recruitment was completed mid-December 2011, resulting in the new Programme Specialist starting in the beginning of 2012. With the continuing leadership of the Head of the Disability Unit for the REAP Implementation Team, the new Programme Specialist has assumed the coordinating responsibilities for the REAP project in the Disability Unit in collaboration with the REAP Implementation Team.

Another constraint was related to planning and scheduling. The Programme Specialist responsible for the Education component of REAP was unable to move ahead with REAP planning and activities until the Regional Meeting of UNICEF Regional Education Advisors took place in September 2011. The planning of the education-related REAP activities occurred at this time with regard to capacity strengthening and effective knowledge sharing. The time provided in the REA meeting allowed for engaging and motivating face-to-face the Regional Advisors to become active partners in the REAP process, given their responsibility to take this project forward at both regional and country levels.

### 3.2 Lessons Learned

Some constraints encountered during project implementation as well as positive interventions have led to important lessons learned at global and country levels. They include, for example:

- **Disability mainstreaming goes beyond one sector (a multi-disciplinary approach).**

A multi-disciplinary approach to disability involving relevant sectors and all phases of project / programme development is essential. There has been significant improvement made in strengthening inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial dialogue and collaboration. This has been evident in terms of greater information-sharing and advocacy among concerned agencies, strengthened cross-sectoral policies and services. There has been more communication and joint work on children with disabilities issues among concerned agencies, e.g. during the important phase of development of inter-ministerial decrees and circulars to guide the Law on Persons with Disabilities in Viet Nam. However, at national and sub-national levels challenges still remain in removing sectoral bottlenecks and barriers to effectively implement cross-sectoral approaches.

- **Start with shared understanding of disability concepts and terms.**

Experience in the field of childhood disability is still limited within UNICEF and among partners. Especially understanding of the internationally accepted human rights-based approach, definition and classification of disability, as well as the notion of equity and equal opportunities requires substantial and repeated efforts to clarify the concepts and terms and how they are put into practice. In particular, introduction of methodologies for classification of disability that are in line with international standards requires developing the capacity of the people involved in assessments or surveys.

- **Mainstreaming disability in policy and programming needs constant attention and support at all levels to get it high on the Government's agenda and sustain it.**

Despite the ratification of the CRPD by 112 countries and the issuance of National Laws on Persons with Disabilities (including Children with Disabilities) at country level, in a country like Viet Nam, related ministries/sectors have not allocated sufficient resources for disability interventions. Hence, it is still difficult to strengthen capacity and systems, and improve comprehensive packaging of services for children and adults with disabilities. Likewise, if the Government has not assigned a lead Government agency (e.g. Bhutan) or does not equip this agency with sufficient authority and resources (e.g. the National Coordinating Council on Disability (NCCD) in Viet Nam), continuous advocacy and lobbying at all levels is essential to ensure that the issues of children with disabilities are emphasized and get prioritized on the Government's national and sub-national agendas.

- **The Inter-Divisional Working Group on Disability has key coordination and mobilization roles to play in gaining support for the overarching goal of disability mainstreaming; there is a need to enforce these active roles by all members of the working group.**

While these are exciting times for disability mainstreaming, the increase in demand for technical support on disability from the Disability Unit and other Implementation Team members highlights the need for well-coordinated cross-sectoral support and mobilization of all sectors in adopting responsibility for addressing disability in their programmatic areas. PD colleagues can provide support directly to Headquarters, Regional and Country Offices in regard to their different programme areas and also through the Inter-Divisional Working Group on Disability. The REAP Implementation Team has emphasized the need to maintain and increase regular communication and collaboration with and among Regional and Country Offices and ensure knowledge sharing on disability issues.

- **Knowledge networking helps opportunities to emerge that can improve the community of practice on children with disabilities.**

The existing community of practice on children with disabilities remains limited. The REAP partnership is providing catalytic and timely funding and support to coordinate, strategize, share experiences, network and engage in strategic partnerships and link transformative efforts around UNICEF Child Protection and Child Friendly Education approaches in countries. The Country Teams for REAP will share experiences with their country counterparts and partners within their own countries and with other countries through communities of practice as REAP activities are developed, implemented and assessed. Knowledge networking opportunities also emerge through other sectoral areas. Overall, there is an important research gap to fill. As one of the first steps, the REAP Implementation Project Team is working with the UNICEF NY/HQ Statistics Division on the development of new tools to survey impairment and disability among children in light of the social model on disability. UNICEF is also dedicating the 2013 State of the World's Children Report, the UNICEF flagship publication, to children with disabilities and discussing with partners a joint research agenda to ensure the availability of reliable / credible data and evidence to inform and guide the work going forward.

#### **IV. FUTURE WORKPLAN**

While collaboration between the Disability Unit and the programmatic areas in the Programme Division in 2011 was intense, as of the second quarter in 2012 the entire GRaCE Section moved from DPP to PD

and now works under one structure and one coherent work plan (as noted earlier in the report). The Disability Unit - which has now expanded to four professional positions, with one being fully funded through the REAP partnership - will continue to provide guidance on disability mainstreaming in programmatic and organisational practices.

The following workplan for 2012 focuses on the following in response to the REAP objectives:

- In support of the rights of children with disabilities, strengthen UNICEF capacities and provide coherence to its work on disability and inclusive development
- Promote and support the implementation of the CRPD, with a particular focus on education and child protection
- Develop and implement evidenced-based good practice, policy guidance and tools in two countries (using Child Friendly Schools and Child Protection Systems as pathways of change).

#### **4.1 In Support of the Rights of Children with Disabilities, Strengthen UNICEF Capacities and Provide Coherence to its Work on Disability and Inclusive Development**

Working with a newly established 'direct dotted line' with UNICEF's Executive Director, the Disability Unit will continue supporting HQ Divisions and Sections, Regional and Country Offices and National Committees with guidance on disability mainstreaming: the earlier mentioned principles and framework on children with disabilities (CWD) will be adopted and rolled-out and the UNICEF's 2007 programme and policy guidance on disability will be updated with a focus on equity.

The staff and partners will have the opportunity to strengthen their sensitization to, understanding of, and capacities to support programming for children and women with disabilities through the web-based learning module available for use by all UNICEF offices. The module will be evidence-based and cover the fundamental issues on disabilities in an interactive, easy-to-follow format.

Moreover, the promotion of an inclusive UNICEF will be continuous and aimed at ensuring that organizational policies and practices related to human resources, administration, finance and safety and security, as well as accessibility to the physical environment, communication and information, including websites and publications, among others, are sensitive, responsive and inclusive of the rights of children and persons with disabilities. For example, a special edition of the staff newsletter will be dedicated to the issue of disability within the organisation and efforts to enhance inclusiveness of UNICEF as an organisation at all levels and within its different Divisions and Sections.

#### **4.2 Promote and Support the Implementation of the CRPD, with a Particular Focus on Education and Child Protection**

##### **Global and Regional work to promote and support the CRPD:**

In September 2012, a Global Partnership Forum on Children with Disabilities and Development will be convened in order to establish a common agenda and coordination mechanism at country and global levels in line with the CRPD.

Given the need to deal with the constraints of limited availability of data on children with disabilities, the collaboration with academic institutions will be expanded beyond the Global Partnership Forum on Children with Disabilities and Development to establish and implement a research agenda on children with disabilities, and to support the development of the State of the World's Children 2013 publication on children and youth with disabilities. With regard to the SOWC 2013, the Disability Unit will

collaborate closely with UNICEF Statistics Division, the Division of Communication and other Sections in PD as well as field offices and partners.

UNICEF, represented by the Disability Unit, will maintain its chair function in the Inter-Agency Support Group on CRPD and contribute to the development of general comments on CRPD articles on children and women. Likewise UNICEF will provide input to the UN Resolution on Inclusive Preparedness, Response and Recovery to Emergencies with regard to ensuring attention to the rights of children and persons with disabilities.

#### **Education and the CRPD:**

UNICEF Global and Regional Education focal points have discussed the REAP programming needs for strengthening capacities on children with disabilities in Child Friendly Schools (CFSs) as pathways to positive change. During 2011, two TORs and technical support on improving CFS teacher education in relation to inclusive education for children with disabilities were agreed upon as well as the timeframe for the work to be delivered in 2012 and early 2013. These relate to the development of the CFS training materials, tool kit and training-of-trainers on inclusive education.

In addition, a priority for the Education Section in 2012 will include the global mapping and scoping exercise around teacher education for children with disabilities. The CEE/CIS region will lead the global mapping exercise, which will engage one consultant to lead the analysis and assessment of existing literature, strategies and practices by region, and another consultant to address the capacity strengthening component regionally and globally, including the training of a team of regional trainers-of-trainers who will support each region in developing Teacher Preparation Programmes for Inclusive Education at country level. A concept note for both the CFS resource tool kit and the policy note will be finalized after the development of the mapping and scoping exercise and regional consultations.

The Programme Specialist responsible for education of children with disabilities will continue to provide knowledge inputs to the 'participating countries', Bhutan and Viet Nam, in order to guide and support how the funds are programmed at country level. This person will actively coordinate between Bhutan and Viet Nam so they can learn from each other. She will also provide coordination and knowledge sharing inputs with the Regional Education Advisors in order to strengthen their awareness and capacity and obtain their active support to accelerate regional and global coordination and the sharing of learning around inclusive education.

#### **Child Protection and the CRPD:**

During the coming year, the Child Protection Section in UNICEF NY/HQ will continue to use opportunities to promote and support implementation of the CRPD, including through its technical support to the Country Offices on finalizing the mapping and assessment of the child protection system in Bhutan and supporting the promotion of birth registration for children with disabilities in Viet Nam.

It will also promote the CRPD at the venue where it will organize / conduct the Global Child Protection System Conference and when initiating and following through with the global study on birth registration, linked to education and disability. Furthermore, it is expected that there will be opportunities to share the outcome results of the study and conference and, at the same time, promote the CRPD.

In partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a conference for parliamentarians on birth registration and parliaments' role will be held in Latin America towards the end of 2012; UNICEF will actively participate in it to reinforce the link between birth registration and disability.

The Child Protection team at UNICEF NY/HQ will also continue to work with countries in the dissemination and use of 'It's About Ability' booklet, and provide technical and administrative support to UNICEF programmes and input on documents from a disability perspective as framed by the CRPD. Reviewing the current practices on the use of 'It's about Ability', the Child Protection Section will be determining ways to further promote the CRPD and the protection of children with disabilities.

#### **Bhutan and the CRPD:**

Contingent on the timeline for the Education Section at UNICEF NY/HQ to develop the planned CFS – inclusive education materials, REAP funds will be used to implement training-of-trainers on the rights, education and protection of children with disabilities in Bhutan in 2012, followed by the roll-out of the training in 2013. To prepare for this training and advocate for increased attention to the rights of children with disabilities per the CRC and CRPD, UNICEF will convene a meeting of key Government partners to identify a lead agency to work with on REAP project implementation. Government partners have agreed that the agency with the lead mandate for the CRPD should partner with UNICEF on this training activity and the overall REAP project implementation. Thus, as previously mentioned, this meeting will support a broader agenda to clarify how the Government can coordinate its obligations under the CRPD and, as part of putting it into practice, systematically implement the REAP project.

#### **Viet Nam and the CRPD:**

In 2012, the One UN in Viet Nam, including UNICEF partnerships with relevant ministries, is starting a new Country Programme cycle. For UNICEF Viet Nam, all components of the 2012-2016 Country Programme have integrated a strong equity focus, which includes giving focus to children with disabilities. REAP funds will be used to support the finalisation of the two circulars that will help to determine levels of disability and contribute to the national programme for children and adults with disabilities. These are two important legal documents that will be instrumental in clearly guiding and supporting the implementation of the CRPD.

REAP funds will be used for communication activities to increase awareness and understanding of the society on the rights of children with disability, and reduce stigma and discrimination against them, as part of the National Plan of Action on Persons with Disabilities.

In addition, UNICEF Viet Nam will support the review, development and implementation of the Civic Registration Law to ensure birth registration is supported and takes place for children with disabilities.

As a concrete action towards disability mainstreaming in child protection systems, the Country Office will assist with the creation of a Management Information System to collect disaggregated data on children in alternative care, using a rights-based approach framed by the CRC and CRPD.

### **4.3 Develop and Implement Evidenced-based Good Practice, Policy Guidance and Tools in Two Countries (Using Child Friendly Schools and Child Protection Systems as Pathways of Change)**

#### **Bhutan:**

In 2012, using REAP funds, UNICEF Bhutan will finalise the Child Protection System Mapping and Assessment and provide follow-up on the findings. To ensure the inputs of disability stakeholders into

the mapping and assessment exercise, UNICEF will co-convene a civil society consultation, including organisations, such as the Ability Bhutan Society. Once the Child Protection Mapping and Assessment Report is finalized, UNICEF will support its partners to translate the findings and recommendations for use in relation to the National Child Protection policy/programme and the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

UNICEF will further support Bhutan's drive for inclusive access to quality education through its Child Friendly Schools project. Informed by the findings of the two-stage Disability Assessment, UNICEF will use REAP funds to support the procurement and provision of user training on the application of Rapid Neurodevelopmental Assessment tools to selected community-based ECCD centres, schools and basic health units for early detection, diagnosis and referral services for children with disabilities.

The Bhutan Country Office will carry out awareness raising campaigns for children with disabilities using various innovative strategies to dispel stigma about disabilities and bring children with disabilities into inclusive school settings. There will be cost-sharing with other funding sources for these activities. The education outputs and outcomes are expected to create an enabling environment for children with disabilities that will result in promoting and facilitating their right to education and protection.

#### **Viet Nam:**

In the area of education, UNICEF will continue to help the MOET to monitor the implementation of the Law and Decree on Persons with Disabilities. Education managers at the national and sub-national levels will be assisted to improve their capacity to provide inclusive education for children with disabilities. UNICEF will collaborate with the MOET to finalise two circulars, one related to Resource Centres and the other related to teachers for training on inclusive education for children with disabilities, as well as monitoring the implementation.

The Country Office will support the MOET to undertake a Situation Analysis on the right of children with disabilities to education, which will contribute to informing education planning, programming, communication strategies and monitoring and evaluation. The funds will also be used to assist the MOET to develop early diagnostic and assessment tools for early education interventions and provide training for education managers and teachers on understanding and using the tools.

## **V. FINANCIAL SITUATION**

### **5.1 Financial Implementation**

Of the US\$735,138.07 (equals AUD 712,350.01) received from AusAID, UNICEF spent US\$ 11,821.27 in the 2011 calendar year. In spite of the initial delay in project start up in 2011, it is expected that the use of the remaining funds will be expended as projected during 2012-2013.

Country/section	Funds received (AUD)	Funds received (USD)	Funds utilised (USD)	Funds remaining (USD)
Bhutan	106,997.65	110,420.50	5,274.97	105,145.53
Viet Nam	106,997.65	110,420.50	0.00	110,420.50
HQ-CP	32,099.29	33,126.15	6,546.30	26,579.85
HQ-Edu	246,094.59	253,967.15	00.00	253,967.15

DPP-DU	220,160.83	227,203.77	00.00	227,203.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>712,350.01</b>	<b>735,138.07</b>	<b>11,821.27</b>	<b>723,316.80</b>

## 5.2 Resource Mobilisation

During 2011, UNICEF negotiated additional support for its work on disability with the donor community. The donors have expressed their trust in UNICEF's role to ensure the rights of children with disabilities are included in the global and national development cooperation agenda, for example:

### With National Committees

- United States Fund for UNICEF: Viet Nam Country Office received matching funds to complete the Ford Foundation support to the project entitled 'Towards non-discrimination and inclusion of children with disabilities in Viet Nam'.
- Negotiations are on-going to develop a partnership with a US philanthropic donor contributing \$2.5 million on the development of a comprehensive change approach project, similar to the REAP project, with the focus on educating children with disabilities in Mozambique. This project will complement the REAP 'participating countries' in the Asia Pacific and South Asia regions.
- Support from the UNICEF Netherlands was instrumental in supporting Bhutan's Special Education programme to ensure education for children with disabilities.
- After a visit by the National Committee of UNICEF Sweden, a commitment of 5 million Swedish Krona per year for three years starting 2012 was made to UNICEF Viet Nam to fund disability related work, including policy work and implementation of projects for children with disabilities at national and provincial levels.

### With Bilaterals

- UNICEF leverages funds with DFID (UK), CDC and Swedish SIDA to prevent injury through mine action and armed violence reduction.
- UNICEF works with partners, such as Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (USAID) and PEPFAR, to strengthen child protection systems and specifically address the areas of children who are at risk of family separation and placed in alternative care. It is noted that, in many countries, children with disabilities appear to be at a disproportionately higher risk of being placed in institutional care than non-disabled children.
- A secondment of an Advisor on inclusion of children with disabilities in education is being discussed at the global level with Finland Foreign Affairs.
- UNICEF leverages funds from the EU and others to address the issue of harmful practices. Of note, last year the second course on social norms and addressing harmful practices was held for UNICEF staff, with the third one being planned for 2012.

## Conclusion

During the past year of preparing the 'groundwork' for the REAP partnership to take off in 2012 and beyond, the opportunities that were presented for direct interaction between AusAID's Disability Inclusive Development Department and UNICEF's REAP Project Implementation Team were highly

appreciated. They significantly contributed to ensuring the REAP AusAid / UNICEF Partnership and Project were off to a strong and well-directed start.

With the backing of this valued Partnership, UNICEF is increasingly being recognized as a leader in advancing the fulfilment of the rights of children with disabilities in line with the CRC and CRPD and, in turn, supporting the transformation of education and protection systems so that they become more sensitive, responsive and inclusive of children with disabilities.

With the REAP project support, several concrete steps were taken to prepare for and support actions to further develop and enhance education and child protection systems that respect, fulfil and protect the rights of children with disabilities in Bhutan and Viet Nam, the two 'participating countries'.

As well, the impetus from the AusAID project funds and partnership, combined with other sources of UNICEF funding and partnerships throughout the world, is generating global and regional awareness, motivation, guidance, capacity and participation in many fora and through various interventions that give attention to the rights and special needs of children with disabilities and their full and equal inclusion in society.

This year and the coming year bode well for following through with REAP plans and actions described in this report to increase capacity and cross sectoral coherence in favour of the rights, education and protection of disabled children.

Soon there will be a lead agency in Bhutan to move forward with the implementation of the REAP project in line with and complementing efforts to implement the CRPD, making use of the data and information from the two-stage child disability surveys/assessments, the communication and educational materials and processes on promoting and supporting the rights of children with disabilities, nurturing the nascent civil society organizations, etc.

Viet Nam's commitment to realizing evidence-based inclusive education and child protection systems for children with disabilities and other vulnerable children is clearly backed by the National Law for Persons with Disabilities and related Decrees, the upcoming circulars in support of national systems to support persons and children with disabilities, teacher capacity development and the resource centres supportive of children with disabilities, its communication strategy to advocate for the inclusion of disabled children in society, and the first ever National Programme on Child Protection that has a substantial commitment of government resources.

Notably, AusAID has a strong history of supporting UNICEF's emergency responses in Bhutan. UNICEF recognizes that there are opportunities to harmonise with other AusAID support provided to Bhutan to increase the scope and take to scale the plans to promote and support the rights of children with disabilities. UNICEF welcomes any and all opportunities to partner with Australian partner organizations and volunteers in support of children with disabilities in order to complement and strengthen the REAP project.

AusAID's support is well recognized by UNICEF Viet Nam as a significant catalyst that is contributing to the national efforts to promote and protect the rights of children with disabilities, who constitute the biggest group of children in need of special child protection in Viet Nam.

In sum, the REAP AusAID/UNICEF Partnership and Project is providing critical steps to ensure that well managed and meaningful results are achieved to systematically and systemically mainstream children and persons with disabilities into responsive, caring, inclusive, well designed and delivered services and systems across the sectors.