

Evaluation of the UNICEF Child Protection Monitoring and Response System (CPMRS) in Thailand

Volume I
Final Report



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Executive Summary

Universal Management Group Ltd. and Child Frontiers are pleased to present this revised report on the Evaluation of the Child Protection Monitoring and Response System (CPMRS) in Thailand for the period 2006-2012.

The CPMRS project, launched by UNICEF in 2006 in association with key government and university partners, was intended to develop an integrated child protection system in the six tsunami-affected provinces in southern Thailand. The project was expected to: increase public awareness of children's rights to protection; track the magnitude of child protection issues at local, provincial and national levels in Thailand; and provide adequate response mechanisms for identifying children in need of special protection and for delivering suitable child protection services as early as possible.

UNICEF Thailand, in association with the Royal Thai Government (RTG), contracted the Universal Management Group Limited (hereafter "Universal") and its associate Child Frontiers to conduct an evaluation of the CPMRS and to provide an overview of the current child protection system in Thailand. Thammasat University School of Social Work was contracted to support the field data collection and analysis.

The objectives of the evaluation, which were revised in consultation with UNICEF Thailand during the Inception Phase, were:

1. To assess the actual and potential contribution of CPMRS to the national child protection system;
2. To determine the extent to which CPMRS has met its objectives;
3. To determine the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of the CPMRS as an approach to strengthen the child protection system, as well as the extent to which it has incorporated gender, human rights-based and equity-focused approaches; and
4. To provide recommendations for the refinement and potential scaling up of the CPMRS approach to the national level.

The evaluation is intended to provide input to RTG and UNICEF decision making on how to strategically advance the national child protection agenda and strengthen current systems towards a comprehensive and more holistic national child protection system.

The intended primary users of the evaluation are the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and other relevant Ministries of the RTG, such as the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of the Interior (MoI) and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), as well as the UNICEF Thailand Country Office (TCO).

Methodology

The assignment was carried out in conformity with international evaluation standards including OECD DAC, UNEG and UNICEF principles and guidelines. The evaluation was based on the Terms of Reference, the Inception Report, and an evaluation matrix that identified the main questions, sub-questions, sources of data, and data collection methods. The evaluation of the project's effectiveness was based on a reconstructed results framework as the project did not have one.

The evaluation used a mix of data collection methods including a desk review of documents; key informant interviews with 87 stakeholders at the national, provincial and local levels; field visits to four provinces in Thailand (Suphanburi, Ranong, Ubon Ratchathani, and Trang) for interviews and group discussions with community members, leaders and service providers; and a questionnaire administered in those provinces to CPMRS frontline workers from a range of agencies (such as TAO, OSCC, PSDHS, Education Services Area Office, police and Children's Reception Home staff). Careful attention was paid

to ensure the capacity of national researchers to facilitate the discussions in a sensitive and safe way, and to respond appropriately to potential disclosure of child protection cases. The evaluation team did not conduct group discussions with children. Given the resources available, the evidence generated was largely illustrative, providing an overview of the functioning of the CPMRS within the overall national system, rather than a representative national sample.

Limitations

The evaluation had several limitations. The most important of these are summarised below.

CPMRS results framework – Since the CPMRS design did not include a results framework, the evaluation team reconstructed one based on available documents. The team intended to review and revise this framework in consultation with key informants during the evaluation, but had difficulty accessing stakeholders who were knowledgeable about the project. In the absence of a validated set of results, the evaluation team instead anchored the evaluation of CPMRS effectiveness in the project's stated objectives.

Corporate memory gaps – With the exception of the CPMS component, there was little documented information available on the project's overall performance over time (e.g., annual reports on CPMRS performance). In addition, due to staff turnover within UNICEF, the National Child Protection Committee, Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the team had difficulty locating persons who were knowledgeable about the project. To address this limitation, the team relied heavily on a few key documents made available by UNICEF and interviews with one former UNICEF staff member. Despite these efforts, it was not possible to answer all of the sub-questions in the evaluation matrix.

Selection of field visit locations – Sites selected initially included locations where several components of the CPMRS were most likely to be functioning effectively, and a combination of sites that were involved from the beginning of the project (Ranong) and those added more recently (Suphanburi). The initial site selection was made during an Inception Phase meeting with representatives of MSDHS and other relevant Thai ministries; subsequent changes were made upon the request of UNICEF. Given limitations in the number of provinces that could be studied, it was not possible to include locations where the CPMRS is perceived not to be functioning as well, although this would have been useful for contrast and comparison purposes.

Limited knowledge of CPMRS among government respondents – Many provincial and sub-district level government officials interviewed had limited knowledge about the CPMRS and a number of respondents were reluctant to be interviewed.

Potential conflict of interest – A couple of the evaluation team members (from Child Frontiers and Thammasat University) were previously engaged in certain aspects of CPMRS design and /or implementation. The team managed this potential conflict of interest by clearly declaring their earlier involvement to UNICEF. In addition, Universalia team members took leadership for the evaluation component of the assignment, while Child Frontiers and Thammasat University team members took primary leadership for the contextual assessment.

Evaluation team member responsibilities – During the course of data analysis one of the Universalia team members was unable to continue due to health reasons. Her role was assumed by the Evaluation Team Leader.

Evaluation Findings

Relevance

Overall, CPMRS objectives were very relevant given global conventions such as the CRC, the spirit of child protection legislation in Thailand, the needs of children in Thailand, the latest thinking in child protection at the time of project development, UNICEF's systems-approach to child protection, as well as the strategic objectives of the UNICEF Thailand Country Programme in 2007-11. They were also relevant given recent promising actions by OPP and MoI to highlight child protection on the national agenda.

The CPMRS objectives are partially aligned with current UNICEF country programme priorities and strategies (e.g., 2012-16 CPD) which now focus more on upstream strategies at the national level. While this focus might help facilitate more extensive adoption of the CPMRS, implementation will still require continued collaboration with provincial and TAO level authorities.

The CPMRS objectives were least aligned with the national Thai context for the implementation of child protection legislation during the project implementation period (2007-11). The Child Protection Act (2003) makes insufficient provisions for preventative services, family support, and services for children in need. Moreover, the child protection response system in Thailand has been oriented primarily towards punishment and preventing bad behaviour of children rather than protection of vulnerable children. This is reflected in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Act, (which focuses primarily on punishments or admonishments of children who misbehave, rather than ensuring the protection of children in schools) and was also the view of local officials, traditional leaders and frontline workers who were interviewed for this evaluation, who frequently understood child protection to mean protecting society from bad / delinquent children.

Effectiveness

The overall objective of CPMRS was to create a model integrated child protection monitoring and response system and apply it at community, TAO and provincial levels in Thailand. UNICEF worked with a variety of partners both inside and outside of government, at national, provincial, and community levels on different CPMRS components, which were intended to function as a coordinated "model system" that could be replicated in other provinces and ultimately integrated into the Thai government infrastructure nationwide.

During the CPMRS implementation period, there were several notable contributions. These included the establishment of a child protection monitoring (surveillance) system at the TAO or sub-district level. The largest of all CPMRS project components, the CPMS was developed and implemented through a partnership with the INMU (which piloted the system in three TAO in 2006) and was eventually expanded to over 100 TAO by 2011. Noted shortcomings relate to the reliability and use of the information generated by the system.

A second contribution related to increasing the awareness of, and facilitating action planning on, child protection in Thailand, particularly at the provincial level, where the vast majority of project resources were invested. PSDHS officials, especially in provinces that were involved in the CPMRS for many years (such as Ranong), expressed some understanding of child protection and the objectives of the CPMRS as a result of training and their involvement in the project. Effects at national and TAO levels were relatively modest, due partly to high staff turnover in participating institutions and to the absence of institutionalized awareness programs. This initiative is also reported to have had a positive effect on one of Thammasat University's programs.

Finally, in efforts to strengthen the child protection response system, the CPMRS project contributed to establishing New Family Development Centres with trained Case Managers in 72 TAO. The effectiveness of this initiative was compromised by limited awareness and confusion about the role of Case Managers. The project also supported the development of a Child Protection Manual that provided operational

protocols for child protection response in piloted provinces, but the manual has not been integrated or applied nationally to strengthen the child protection response system in Thailand.

The CPMRS project objective to document progress was only partially realised. While the INMU (implementer of the CPMS component) provided significant analysis and progress reporting, other implementers did not. More importantly, however, insufficient attention was paid over time by UNICEF to tracking and reporting on the overall progress of the project as a whole. This is an important gap given the pilot nature of CPMRS.

However, due to a variety of challenging contextual factors and some unrealistic assumptions in the project design, the overall objective of CPMRS was not realised during the course of the project. On the basis of information collected during the evaluation, there is as yet no established “model” system in place in Thailand that integrates the child protection monitoring and response systems. The CPMRS project model was not introduced or implemented as intended and the overall objectives or results as defined in the CPD 2007-11 were not realised.

Stakeholder interviews and document review suggest that the CPMRS results framework was based on some implicit assumptions/expectations that did not hold true and that impeded the implementation of CPMRS as conceptualised. These included the assumptions that there would be: Thai ownership and leadership for the CPMRS integrated model; clearly defined Thai counterparts for UNICEF to work with on the application of the model at all levels; and coordination between Thai agencies with responsibilities for child protection. While the RTG has expressed increased political commitment towards children and families in the last decade (e.g., the Child Protection Act), the project was faced with ambiguities in the structure, accountability and leadership for child protection in Thailand (at the national policy level, as well as the provincial and sub-district levels) as well as capacity and resource constraints of various Thai stakeholders.

Sustainability: It is not likely that CPMRS results will be sustained without the investment of considerable additional effort and resources. The main reasons for the lack of sustainability of CPMRS results include: the modest levels of understanding and ownership of the CPMRS at the national level, and the absence of clear institutional “homes” for CPMRS results; varying degrees of understanding and support for the CPMS (while provincial respondents were positive, there was modest familiarity and understanding at the national level and mixed views at the TAO level); ambiguities regarding if and how the data generated by the CPMS will be effectively used, and if there will be the capacity and political will in Thailand to actually link the CPMS to the response system; and the preponderance of data collection systems (for Basic Human Needs, CPMRS, education, etc.) which has reportedly contributed to some confusion and data collection fatigue at the TAO level. Finally, due to TAO human and financial resource limitations, there is modest support for child protection. Case Manager responsibilities are typically perceived as an “add on” to the primary workload of staff, and funds to support child protection needs are typically very modest. The provision of training to Case Managers and the creation of the Case Manager job title and job description are necessary but not sufficient to institutionalise support for child protection at the TAO level.

UNICEF reports that MSHDS will be allocating 4 million baht and committing another 12 million baht next year for CPMRS; that it will support continued training for an additional 16 Tambon in collaboration with INMU in 2013; and that skills and expertise will be transferred to designated staff at the provincial level. While this is positive in terms of individual CPMRS components in some locales, it is not likely to culminate in the integrated monitoring and response systems envisaged in the project design.

Efficiency

While CPMRS was intended to generate an integrated model child protection and response system, this did not occur. CPMRS was implemented and managed by project component without a sustained focus on the project’s overall purpose and objective. This effectively prevented the emergence of an integrated child protection monitoring and response system model. Noted shortcomings in the design included:

- **Absence of an explicit strategy** for the development of an integrated system that identified the steps required to reach the long term objective, explaining and testing the cause and effect relationships that exist between each step, and identifying the assumptions on which these relationships are based.
- **MSDHS endorsement** – One of the project’s most important implicit assumptions was that the project concept would be endorsed and owned by MSDHS over time, which did not happen as envisaged. Despite this UNICEF continued to implement and support the project and became its primary “owner.” Given that the project was intended to develop a model that would ultimately be owned by RTG, this was problematic. In hindsight, perhaps the project design should have included a staged approach to implementation (e.g., if there was insufficient RTG buy-in after an initial period, the project would be stopped).
- **The absence of a project governance mechanism** – There was no governing body or mechanism for the project that brought together the key participating Thai government agencies (e.g., MSDHS, MoI, MoPH, MoJ), UNICEF, and key implementing partners on a regular basis to review planned/actual progress, identify solutions to address noted problems, and re-orient the project as required. Instead, the project was managed and implemented by UNICEF in association with its implementing partners. In the absence of a multi-partner governance mechanism, UNICEF had the implicit obligation to monitor project progress and make key decisions to keep it on track.
- **The project did not follow UNICEF guidelines for pilot projects** – While CPMRS was labelled as a pilot project, it did not follow UNICEF guidelines for pilots

Cross-cutting concerns

CPMRS design and some aspects of its implementation took gender and equity issues into account. Notable shortcomings include insufficient involvement of children and youths (and attention to them in project planning), and modest attention to gender issues in reviewed training materials.

Recommendations

The analysis of the the child protection context in Thailand and the performance of CPMRS helped provide the evaluation team with an understanding of the conditions under which UNICEF should support similar initiatives in the future. On this basis, the evaluation team developed forward-looking recommendations. For UNICEF, we recommend approaches it might use to design, manage, monitor and evaluate projects such as CPMRS in the future. For UNICEF and MSDHS, we identify options for future collaboration in child protection, based on our analysis and understanding of the present child protection context in Thailand.

Recommendations to UNICEF

Recommendation 1: In designing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should incorporate a process in the design phase to develop and articulate a common understanding of the project with national partners, and should establish criteria for assessing whether there is sufficient government ownership of the project objectives to justify start-up and continued investment over time.

One of the major limitations in the implementation of the CPMRS was the modest understanding and ownership of the integrated CPMRS model at the national level in Thailand. UNICEF (in association with other implementing partners) assumed leadership for implementing different CPMRS components, which led to some planned outputs and outcomes, but failed to satisfy the project’s ultimate purpose. Due to the lack of a process to develop a common understanding with national Thai partners in the project’s design phase, an integrated child protection monitoring and response system was never implemented /tested anywhere.

While UNICEF and the evaluation team believe in the potential value of demonstration projects such as CPMRS (see recommendation 3), and in projects that include objectives to increase government understanding, ownership and responsibility for new approaches such as that espoused by CPMRS, UNICEF Thailand should build in steps and processes that outline and proactively support the incremental role of government over time. It should also monitor and proactively address situations where there is modest ownership by key stakeholders, both initially and over time. Finally, it should be prepared to take corrective measures as required to address challenges experienced, including the addition of new components or make decisions that lead to the cessation of project activities if there is insufficient evidence of stakeholder ownership.

Recommendation 2: In light of the needs for child protection support at multiple levels in Thailand, UNICEF Thailand should consider the need for both upstream and downstream programming approaches.

UNICEF's current CPD (2012-2016) emphasises upstream programming. This is relevant as a firm commitment to the CPMRS at the national level through policy support could help facilitate implementation at the provincial and TAO levels. However, there is also a need for UNICEF to support a downstream approach that provides more technical support to those charged with developing and implementing a child protection system. This will require UNICEF to work at the provincial and TAO levels. This approach is particularly important when accommodating the needs of less mature development areas such as child protection in Thailand.

UNICEF plans to undertake a mid-term review of the CPD in 2014; it would be helpful if this review included a specific assessment of the appropriateness of the upstream approach given the Thai child protection context and of the possibility for flexibility in certain circumstances including less mature development areas such as child protection.

Recommendation 3: In the future, UNICEF Thailand should adhere to UNICEF pilot project guidelines in designing and implementing projects.

Although the CPMRS was identified as a pilot project, it did not follow UNICEF guidelines for pilots. This was noted in the 2009 MTR of the Thailand Child Protection Programme, but it is not evident that any corrective actions were taken. The lack of attention to CPMRS' status as a pilot contributed to several shortcomings in how CPMRS was managed and implemented, some of which could have been avoided if stakeholders had focused on making decisions and allocating resources appropriate for a pilot project.

In the future, UNICEF Thailand should pay considerably more attention to ensuring that all phases of a pilot project are managed to ensure that the learning and demonstration purposes of a pilot project are clearly defined and monitored over time. This should include mechanisms (including joint stakeholders mechanisms) to monitor whether the objectives are being realised, and with the authority to recommend changes to the project design and/or the project's continuation if deemed necessary. UNICEF might consider the value of external monitoring by independent UNICEF advisors and/or a timely mid-term evaluation.

Recommendation 4: In designing and implementing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should ensure that UNICEF's results-based planning and reporting guidelines are respected.

Section 4.5 of this report highlighted several gaps in how UNICEF designed, implemented, and monitored and evaluated CPMRS over time. One of the most significant gaps related to the modest attention to results-based management guidelines throughout all phases of project implementation. As a consequence, there was insufficient on-going attention by UNICEF (and other project implementers and stakeholders) to the planned/actual performance of CPMRS in realising its overall objective and its (implicit) medium- and long-term results.

Future designs should ideally include a theory of change, a well-defined results framework complete with results (outputs and outcomes) and indicators, risks and assumptions. These should be reported on and monitored on a cumulative basis over time, and used to inform project decision making.

Recommendation 5: In designing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should pay considerably more attention to monitoring the sustainability of project outputs and particularly outcomes.

The review of the sustainability of CPMRS results indicates modest overall performance. This is due in part to the limited attention to sustainability at the design stage, and throughout implementation of most components and activities. In the future, we suggest that UNICEF institutionalise measures (including internal checks and balances) to ensure that adequate attention is paid to sustainability at every stage of the project cycle, and the design stage in particular.

Recommendations to RTG

Recommendation 6: MSDHS, on behalf of the RTG, should initiate a process to develop a national vision for the development of a child protection system as well as a strategic plan for its implementation.

The evaluation highlighted several important contextual challenges that have adversely affected Thailand's commitments to child protection as articulated in the CRC, and, by extension, the effectiveness and sustainability of the CPMRS. In looking forward, the evaluation team believes that the challenges witnessed in implementation of the CPMRS will not be overcome until the RTG develops a clear national vision and policy framework for child protection in Thailand. In this way, the purpose and role of the CPMRS could be re-explored within a structured system development or reform process.

Child Protection System Policy

Based on the findings of the evaluation and context analysis, it is recommended that the MSDHS on behalf of the RTG undertake a comprehensive initiative to develop a national child protection system policy. The policy should clarify the principal objectives and overarching approach of the system, acknowledging the cultural and contextual realities of Thailand as well as the current and projected human and financial resources required. Where possible, it should build on the positive aspects of the Child Protection Act, while recognising that the law has significant limitations for guaranteeing the welfare and protection of children and their families.

The policy development process should be based on a collaborative approach integrating the expectations, values, beliefs and interests of a wide spectrum of stakeholders. This approach would ensure that the future system is based upon the needs of beneficiaries and designed in a contextually appropriate and sustainable way. If the CPMRS is to become an effective component of the national system, it must be reconceptualised within the broader vision for child protection and cease to be considered a stand-alone project.

System Design

Child protection monitoring and response systems are critical components of a broader national system. Designed and implemented in isolation, the CPMRS is unlikely to produce sustained positive change or become effective or meaningful to the Thai population. The dedicated functions of the CPMRS remain as relevant today as in 2007; however, it is increasingly clear that the absence of an overall system direction and local level service paradigm render the CPMRS - in its current form - largely ineffective. Given the findings of the contextual analysis, it is evident that simply 'fixing' the technicalities of the CPMRS will not improve or guarantee its future impact: there are too many external environmental factors that shape and determine its effectiveness to adapt the CPMRS in isolation.

The system design should be tailored to the identified social challenges facing children, families, and communities in Thailand. This will require a process of dialogue to identify common ground between different stakeholders, building upon existing system strengths and remedying weaknesses.

Strategic priorities of the child protection system should be defined by solutions that communities and families find helpful and relevant so that the formal system can offer appropriate support based upon a partnership approach to child and family welfare. As part of the system reform process, better understanding of how families deal with child welfare problems may be required in order to identify the strengths and limitations of community practices in facing serious problems.

The evaluation findings show that the current system does not produce positive results and is generally unable to help children and families. A thorough review at the highest level and within the provincial administration needs to take place to address this. The system needs reframing based on a process of reflection and decision-making in order to establish a common vision. If there is commitment to this at the highest level of MSDHS, the government should hire a technical advisor to help facilitate this process – but not to provide the solutions, as these will not be appropriate for Thailand.

Strategic plan

The strategic plan should clearly articulate RTG's vision for child protection, its objectives and expected results, as well as an accountability framework and mechanism. It should also outline

Core question to be addressed: What does the Thai child protection system want to achieve for families and children? If the primary objective of the system is that children are safe and their wellbeing is protected, a clear strategic plan that is acceptable to all stakeholders should be developed in order to achieve this.

what will be done, by whom and when, and allocate the necessary human and financial resources to translate RTG plans into action. As part of this process, the generic role of a local level monitoring system and a response system should be explored. The potential purpose, structure, function and resource requirements of the existing CPMRS can then be examined and assessed in light of these wider deliberations.

Recommendation 7: In developing the national policy and system for child protection in Thailand, the RTG should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the agency with primary responsibility and accountability for the protection of children in Thailand, as well as those of partner agencies at national, provincial and TAO levels. It should also establish needed inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms.

This evaluation flagged the challenges arising from the ambiguity regarding responsibility and accountability for the protection of children in Thailand. As part of a reform process, the RTG should consider the following measures for the designation of roles and responsibilities.

Structures for Child Protection

Institutional arrangements and leadership in the area of child and family welfare should be clearly mandated. Greater clarity needs to be drawn between the responsibilities of the MSDHS – with primary responsibility for the protection of children – and the responsibilities of partner agencies that have child protection duties and powers under the Child Protection Act.

- The complementarity of roles and responsibilities of agencies and services (MSDHS, MoI, MoPH, courts, NGOs) at both national and local levels should be reconsidered and articulated.
- National-level mandates and responsibilities for the protection of children should be appropriately reflected at the provincial and TAO level and resourced accordingly. This includes the need to clarify such questions as: what is the TAO responsibility in terms of welfare? What is the budgeting required for social cases? Is it possible to have staff dedicated to social welfare who do not have other compatible functions?

- Child and family welfare services should be available and accessible at the community level and designed to ensure these are relevant and effectively meet needs identified by families and communities.

Coordination and Collaboration

Through the appropriate ministry (e.g., MSDHS), the RTG should establish common child and family welfare objectives that are acceptable and understood by all relevant government agencies at the national, provincial and TAO level, as well as by NGOs. Clarification of respective roles and the creation of inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms will help to strengthen coordination and collaboration between key stakeholders based on a common framework and approach for child and family welfare.

Service Provision

The RTG should develop clear structures and processes for managing and implementing child and family welfare service delivery at the national, provincial, and local level. This includes clearly defining roles, responsibilities, accountability, and processes for decision making by responsible government authorities at each level, with specific attention to the service interface with the population at the local level and that other service providers and community members understand the role and responsible authorities in protecting children. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that services are available in rural and remote areas as well as the larger urban centres.

The RTG should direct responsible government agencies and service providers to prioritise efforts to directly support parents and families to ensure the welfare and well-being of family members, particularly children. Services designed on the basis of an accurate assessment and understanding of what families and communities require or identify as challenges would be more effective and are more likely to be used.

Lessons Learned

Throughout the data collection process, the evaluation team compiled lessons learned, both operational and developmental, emerging from UNICEF's support of CPMRS. These can serve to further develop the child protection system in Thailand, and to assess the pertinence of developing similar CPMR systems elsewhere.

- Government involvement in and meaningful input to project strategies and implementation is critical, particularly for initiatives designed to serve as a government child protection system.
- The likelihood of sustainability of project results increases when the project is anchored in a clear national policy framework and when there is national commitment to and ownership of the project objectives.
- A project design that clearly identifies expected results and includes a plan to monitor them over time provides a guide for stakeholders to know where they are going and if they are getting there.
- A project that is intended to test or demonstrate the value of a new approach should be designed, managed and monitored as such (i.e., like a pilot test). It is important to maintain focus on the overall purpose and expected learning of the pilot, rather than on the details of implementation.

A c r o n y m s	
CM	Case Manager
CO	Competent Official
CP	Child Protection
CPD	Country Program Document
CPMRS	Child Protection Monitoring and Response System
CPMS	Child Protection Monitoring System
CPRS	Child Protection Response System
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DG	Director General
DLA	Department of Local Administration (part of MoI)
EAPRO	East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF)
FDC	Family Development Centre
GD	Group discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INMU	Institute of Nutrition at Mahidol University
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MSDHS	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
NCPC	National Child Protection Committee
NESDP	National Economic and Social Development Plan
NFDC	New Family Development Centre
NGO	Non-government organisation
OPP	Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups (at MSDHS)
OSCC	One-Stop Crisis Centre
OWAFD	Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (MSDHS)
PCPC	Provincial Child Protection Committee

Acronyms

PSDHS	Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office
RTG	Royal Thai Government
SSI	Semi-structured interview
TAO	Tambon Administrative Organisation
TCO	Thailand Country Office
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPAF	UN Partnership Agreement Framework

Glossary of Terms

Child	According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), ‘child’ refers to anyone younger than 18 years.
Child and family welfare system	The child and family welfare system refers to those approaches nested within both communities and within the state-administered social welfare system (or social protection system where applicable) that aim at promoting children’s well-being and protection while enhancing the capacity of families and communities to fulfil their responsibilities. ¹
Child protection	A broad term used to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to prevent, respond to and protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the context of this research, it applies especially to the duty of individuals, families, communities, organisations and governments towards children in their care. ²
Child protection system	Although this term is widely used, its definition varies, thereby leaving it open to different interpretations. UNICEF uses a broad definition that includes a set of laws, policies, regulations and services that guide the work and approach of all social sectors across government, private service providers, non-government organisations and community and faith-based groups. From this perspective, a child protection system is one that is nested particularly but not exclusively within the areas of social welfare, education, health, security and justice. Other organisations, such as Save the Children, use a definition that relates more specifically to child protection concerns (such as violence and exploitation). In the academic literature, ‘child protection system’ refers to a specific typology or orientation of systems dealing with child welfare and maltreatment. ³
Child Protection Monitoring and Response System	Project implemented by UNICEF Thailand and the Royal Thai Government (RTG) since 2006 in collaboration with other partners to develop a model for a comprehensive child protection monitoring and response system (CPMRS) in tsunami affected provinces, later expanded to other locations in Thailand.
Community	A group of interacting people who live in some proximity to one another. For the purposes of this report, the term also refers to a social unit, larger than a household, which shares common values and interests.
Congruence	The concept is generally understood to be the quality or state of agreeing or coinciding. Systems are congruent if they are consistent and interact positively with one another. The evaluation reflected in this paper was designed in part to examine the extent to which the CPMRS is congruent with child caring and child protection realities in Thailand. It aims to investigate the nature and quality of the dynamic between the functions and services of

¹ Krueger & Delaney, 2008.

² For agency-specific definitions please see: UNICEF:

www.unicef.org/protection/files/What_is_Child_Protection.pdf and Save the Children Alliance: www.savethechildren.net/alliance/what_we_do/child_protection/ [Accessed 13 Nov. 2012].

³ Fremont & Cameron, 2006 and Hetherington et. al.1997.

	the formal system on one hand and the endogenous community practices along with the needs and perspectives of children, families and communities on the other.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. ⁴ Or, as the answer to the question "Is the activity achieving satisfactory results in relation to stated objectives?" ⁵
Efficiency	Seeks an answer to the question "Does the programme use the resources in the most economical manner to achieve its objectives?" ⁶ Otherwise stated, the analysis of the project's efficiency queries on the one hand whether similar results could have been obtained with fewer resources, and on the other whether appropriate resources were allocated to achieve the expected results.
Family	The term 'family' is used as shorthand to refer to those within the caring circle of a child. Membership in this caring circle varies according to culture and circumstance. For example, in some societies, the care environment of a child is limited to the nuclear family or household. In others, children are cared for in broad webs of relatedness and connection, encompassing members of the extended family, close kin who are not co-resident and close, sometimes unrelated, individuals with whom they may or may not reside. Despite having their own caring circle, children are often members in the caring circles of other boys and girls, for example as sibling caregivers. Individuals from the community or service providers who are not providing daily emotional, physical and psychological care to children are not considered family under this definition.
Formal system	This term is used to refer to the social construct that supports and enables the development of programmes and services provided by organised bodies, such as governments, civil society organisations (including international and national non-government organisations, community-based organisations, faith-based organisations and others) and private sector actors.
Household	A group of people who typically live and eat together in one spatial unit and share domestic functions and activities.
Household head	The person who makes decisions affecting the entire household and is recognised by household members to have this role.
Other Resources Regular (ORR)	Earmarked funds received for a specific programme purpose – at global, regional and country levels – or strategic priority. ORR are allocated to fund development activities as outlined in country programmes approved by the UNICEF Executive Board.

⁴ OECD (2010); Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management; p. 20

⁵ UNICEF (2007); Programme Policy and Procedure Manual. Programme Operations. Revised February 2007; p. 141

⁶ UNICEF (2007); Programme Policy and Procedure Manual. Programme Operations. Revised February 2007; p. 141

Prevention services	Services, programmes and accessible information designed to enhance the capacity of families and communities to keep children safe and cared for. It includes efforts aimed at promoting and supporting family welfare and reducing the probability of harm as well as early interventions to address existing family challenges and threats to children's well-being.
Regular Resources	Regular Resources (RR) or Core Resources are the most flexible contribution for UNICEF. As non-earmarked funds, these are not destined to any specific programme or activity, and can consequently be easily shifted towards areas of growing priority or to fill gaps as required.
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether an intervention or its design is still appropriate given changed circumstances ⁷ .
Response services	Child protection interventions respond to circumstances in which a child is at risk of harm or has been abused, exploited, neglected, abandoned or left without appropriate family care. These services seek to reduce the possibility of the recurrence of harm and to restore to the child a sense of well-being.
Sustainability	<p>The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed.</p> <p>The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.⁸</p>
Tambon	Sub-district
Tesaban	Municipality
Theory of Change	<p>The causal links between the building blocks that underlie a specific approach to change are often described as a program's theory of change.</p> <p>Developing a theory of change includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identifying and agreeing upon the long term objectives of a program/initiative – Identifying all the steps needed to reach a long-term objective, including the program's inputs, the activities they will be used for, the immediate results they will produce, and the intermediate and long-term results they will contribute to – Explaining and testing the cause and effect relationships that exist between each step – Identifying the assumptions on which these relationships are based.

⁷ OECD (2010); Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management; p. 32

⁸ OECD (2010); Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management; p. 36

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Universalialia is pleased to present this revised report on the Evaluation of the Child Protection Monitoring and Response System (CPMRS) in Thailand for the period 2006-2012. The report reflects UNICEF feedback on a draft report submitted in April 2013.

The CPMRS is a project launched by UNICEF in 2006 in association with key government and university partners that modelled a child protection monitoring and response system in the six tsunami-affected provinces in southern Thailand. The project was intended to: increase public awareness of children's rights to protection; track the magnitude of child protection issues at local, provincial and national levels in Thailand; and provide adequate response mechanisms for identifying children in need of special protection and for delivering suitable child protection services as early as possible.

Introduced in a phased approach in 2006 in three tsunami-affected Tambon (sub-district) administrative offices, selected CPMRS components were later adapted and adopted in five provinces and the project expanded over time to include six provinces and 185 Tambon. Different components of the CPMRS started at different times in different locations.

Exhibit 1.1 Provinces that Adopted CPMRS Components 2007-12⁹

Area	Province	CPMRS Component	
		CPMS	CPRS (NFDC/CM) ¹⁰
Tsunami affected provinces (Southern Thailand)	Ranong	x	x
	Phang-nga	x	x
	Phuket	x	x
	Krabi	x	x
	Trang	x	x
	Sutan	x	x
Central Thailand	Suphanburi	x	x
Southern Thailand	Songkhla	x	x
Northeast Thailand	Ubon Ratchatani	x	x
Northern Thailand	Phayao	x	x

UNICEF Thailand, in association with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSHDS), contracted the Universalialia Management Group Limited (hereafter “Universalialia”) and its associate Child Frontiers to conduct an assessment of the UNICEF-supported CPMRS, as well as to provide an overview of the current child protection system in Thailand. Thammasat University School of Social Work was contracted to support the field data collection and analysis.¹¹ The evaluation was carried out from September 2012 to May 2013 (see evaluation schedule in Volume II, Appendix I.)

⁹ Based on information contained in INMU Report for Quarter 3, April-June 2012

¹⁰ New Family Development Centre/Case Manager

¹¹ It should be noted that the Directors of Child Frontiers were working in UNICEF Thailand in 2008 and were instrumental in the design and rollout of the CPMRS. Likewise the lead researcher from Thammasat University was

This assessment represents an innovative approach, combining a project evaluation (based on UN and OECD-DAC evaluation standards) with a contextual description and analysis of the child protection system in Thailand.

Purpose, Objectives, and Use of the Evaluation

The overall purpose of the evaluation was to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNICEF's support for CPMRS in Thailand within the context of the broader national child protection systems in Thailand. Specifically, the study analysed the performance of the CPMRS project funded by UNICEF as well as the existing and potential value of CPMRS for ensuring the well-being and protection of the most vulnerable children.

Evaluation Objectives

The objectives of the evaluation, which were revised in consultation with UNICEF Thailand, were:

- To assess the actual and potential contribution of CPMRS to the national child protection system;
- To determine the extent to which CPMRS has met its objectives;
- To determine the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of the CPMRS as an approach to strengthen the child protection system, as well as the extent to which it has incorporated gender, human rights-based and equity-focused approaches; and
- To provide recommendations for the refinement and potential scaling up of the CPMRS approach to the national level.

The evaluation is intended to provide input to MSDHS and UNICEF decision making on how to strategically advance the national child protection agenda and strengthen current systems towards a comprehensive and more holistic national child protection system. It should also be relevant to all government agencies with responsibilities for child protection in Thailand (e.g., the National Child Protection Committee).

The intended primary users of the evaluation are the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and other relevant ministries of the Royal Thai Government (RTG), such as the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of the Interior (MoI) and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), as well as the UNICEF Thailand Country Office (TCO).

1.2 Methodology

Evaluation Approach and Framework

The assignment was carried out in conformity with international evaluation standards including OECD DAC, UNEG and UNICEF principles and guidelines. Within the resources available, the evaluation was evidence-based, utilisation focused, and participatory. The conclusions are those of the evaluation team, based on the context and evidence presented.

The evaluation was based on the Terms of Reference (ToR) provided in Volume II, Appendix II, and the Inception Report which included an evaluation matrix (presented in Volume II, Appendix III) that

formerly a UNICEF staff member and involved in the programme at its inception. This information was disclosed to all partners when recruitment was undertaken for this evaluation, including with the UNICEF M&E team. Universalialia has taken the lead role in the analysis contained within this evaluation report and has been mindful of potential bias. Child Frontiers and Thammasat University staff were purposefully selected for this analysis because they bring a unique historical perspective of the project and knowledge of the Thailand child protection context in which the CPMRS is nested.

identified the main questions, sub-questions, sources of data, and data collection methods. The evaluation of the project's effectiveness was based on a reconstructed results framework (see Section 2.3).

Responsibilities

The Evaluation Manager, Ms Victoria Juat, was responsible for the overall management of the evaluation, and the evaluation team reported directly to her.

The Evaluation Reference Group, which included representatives from UNICEF Thailand and UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific (EAPRO), provided oversight and guidance to the evaluation; this included the definition of the Terms of Reference, the selection of the evaluation team, and feedback on key deliverables including the Inception Report, the draft and final reports.

Universalialia, Child Frontiers, and a research team from the Thammasat University School of Social Work were responsible for data collection, analysis, and report writing. Universalialia focused on the collection and analysis of data to inform the evaluation questions. Child Frontiers and the Thammasat research team were responsible for the analysis of data related to the context and functioning of the child protection system in Thailand and the performance of CPMRS in four provinces. These agencies conducted the field research missions at both provincial and community levels. Information directly related to the contextual analysis of the child protection system in Thailand is summarised in Volume III.

The UNICEF Thailand Country Office (TCO) provided logistical coordination for field visits and Bangkok-based interviews, additional documentation where available as required, and the services of an interpreter in Bangkok and during the field visits. The TCO also provided consolidated comments on each evaluation deliverable.

Data collection methods

The evaluation used a mix of data collection methods including a desk review of documents; key informant interviews at the national, provincial and local levels; field visits to four provinces in Thailand for group discussions with community members, leaders and service providers; and a questionnaire administered in those provinces to CPMRS frontline workers from a range of agencies (such as TAO, OSCC, PSDHS, Education Services Area Office, police and Children's Reception Home staff). Given the resources available, the evidence generated was largely illustrative, providing an overview of the functioning of the CPMRS within the overall national system, rather than a representative national sample.

Desk Review

The evaluation team conducted a desk review to develop an understanding of the design and implementation model of the project itself and a general picture of the child protection system in Thailand. This involved a review of available project proposals and management documents and of literature on child protection compiled by in-country partners. The desk review provided key background information and helped to identify gaps in knowledge. (See list of documents reviewed in Volume II, Appendix IV.)

Interviews

The evaluation team interviewed 87 individual key respondents and held group discussions with over 120 community members (mothers, fathers), community leaders, and multidisciplinary team members. Child Frontiers conducted interviews at the provincial level with 54 respondents involved in child protection in different capacities¹² (see list of stakeholders consulted in Volume II, Appendix V). Semi-structured interview protocols were developed for each main category of informant (see sample interview protocol in

¹² 12 interviews in Ranong; 16 in Trang; 10 in Suphanburi; 16 in Ubon Ratchathani

Volume II, Appendix VI). The protocols were flexible and tailored according to the flow of the interview and the information received.

The main categories of interviewed stakeholders are described below:

- Persons involved in the development and implementation of the CPMRS at a conceptual level, including current and former UNICEF staff, the team at Mahidol University that was tasked with designing and leading the implementation of the CPMS, and officials at the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDSH) including the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (OWAFD) and the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), who have been involved in the implementation of the CPMRS.¹³
- Key central government level respondents in the RTG (policy makers, programme managers and administrators from government and non-governmental agencies, etc.) involved in child protection more broadly, such as the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The purposes of these interviews were to: identify key child protection issues; complete, validate and expand the research team's understanding of the child protection system in-country; situate the CPMRS within the wider child protection framework; gain a deeper understanding of the project's logic and results chain.
- National level respondents who contributed to our understanding of the RTG's approach to child protection writ large.
- Provincial and Tambon level respondents through field visits to four provinces.

Field Visits (three days in each of four provinces)

Child Frontiers and the research team from Thammasat University conducted field visits to four selected provinces of Thailand: Suphanburi, Ranong, Ubon Ratchathani, and Trang. The purpose of these field visits was to collect detailed information on the functioning of the CPMRS at the local level – primarily from service providers at the provincial level, and local *Tambon* level authorities and front line workers. The field visits involved:

- Structured / semi-structured interviews (approximately six per province) with key local level agencies / individuals involved in CPMRS service planning and delivery
- Group discussions with CPMRS service providers / frontline workers (one per province) at the local level
- Questionnaire for those participating in the group discussions with frontline workers to generate quantitative and qualitative information on service provision (see Volume II, Appendix VII)
- Four illustrative case studies from select service providers (see Volume II, Appendix VIII)
- Group discussions (five per province) with parents/caregivers and community welfare actors (conducted by Thai research team).

Ethical approach to data collection

Working directly with communities requires significant preparation and adherence to ethical responsibilities. Careful attention was paid to ensure the capacity of **national researchers to facilitate the discussions in a** sensitive and safe way, as well as respond appropriately to potential disclosure of child

¹³ The OPP representative had not been interviewed at the time of writing.

protection cases.¹⁴ These issues were addressed during training provided by Child Frontiers at Thammasat University prior to the fieldwork. Effort was made by the research team to ensure that community groups reflected community composition, including different religious and ethnic groups and families with disabilities. Where such composition would undermine the ability of certain individuals to participate meaningfully, groups were more homogenous (e.g., socio-economic parity).

The evaluation team decided not to conduct group discussions with children, as this was deemed not feasible within the constraints of the assignment due to the limited time for site preparation in each fieldwork location and capacity for appropriate and ethical selection of child participants. Efforts were made to counter this limitation during the fieldwork process, as far as possible, by detailing experiences of children in the child protection system.

Limitations

CPMRS results framework – Since the CPMRS design did not include a results framework, the evaluation team reconstructed a framework based on available documents during the Inception Phase (see Volume II, Appendix IX). While the evaluation team intended to review and revise this framework during the course of the evaluation, this proved difficult due to difficulties in accessing stakeholders who were knowledgeable about the project (see below). In the absence of a validated set of results, the evaluation team instead anchored the evaluation of CPMRS effectiveness in the project’s stated objectives.

Corporate memory gaps – With the important exception of the CPMS component (see sidebar), one of the most significant challenges faced by the evaluation team was the modest availability of documented information that could inform analysis of the CPMRS project’s overall performance over time (e.g., annual reports on CPMRS performance). In addition, due to staff turnover within UNICEF and RTG at national and provincial levels, the team had difficulty locating and interviewing

persons who were well informed and knowledgeable about the project. To address this limitation, the team relied heavily on a few key documents made available by UNICEF¹⁵ and interviews with one former UNICEF staff member. However, despite these efforts, it was not possible to answer all of the sub-questions included in the evaluation matrix; omissions are noted in the footnotes to the matrix (see Volume II, Appendix III).

Theory of Change –The original intention when designing this evaluation was to identify the implicit theory of change, and to comment on it. This has proven difficult as most of the stakeholders interviewed had quite limited knowledge or understanding of CPMRS results and/or design. Therefore it was not possible to develop a theory of change, and would be of questionable value without stakeholders’ input.

Information on CPMS component

The CPMS was unique among all CPMRS components in that it had:

- The largest budget (approximately 80% of the entire CPMRS budget)
- The longest duration, operating continuously from 2006-2012, although in different places at different times
- One institutional implementer for its duration (INMU) and one dedicated project manager
- The greatest level of activity, in terms of numbers of participating provinces and TAOs
- INMU progress reporting for the CPMS component was the most complete of all components reviewed.

¹⁴ Several ongoing cases of child sexual abuse were reported to the research team during interviews and group discussions. These cases were documented and reported directly to UNICEF for follow up, in accordance with Child Frontiers’ child protection policy.

¹⁵ Key documents are identified in Volume II, Appendix IV.

Selection of field work locations to be visited – Locations selected were identified as those where several components of the CPMRS were most likely to be functioning effectively, generally representing the best examples of implementation of the model. In an effort to assess differences based on duration of involvement in the project, the sites selected included a combination of sites that were involved in the CPMRS from the beginning of the project (Ranong) and locations added more recently (Suphanburi). The initial site selection was made during an Inception Phase meeting with MSDHS and other key Thai government ministry representatives; subsequent changes were made upon the request of UNICEF. Given limitations in the number of provinces that could be studied, it was not possible to include locations where the CPMRS is perceived not to be functioning as well, although this would have been useful for contrast and comparison purposes.

Selection of respondents for interviews and group discussions

The majority of interview and group discussion respondents were identified by the research team based on their direct involvement with CPMRS (community leaders, child protection officers, police officers, and NGOs). To reduce potential bias in favour of the CPMRS and to allow for a more nuanced series of stories, the evaluation team also conducted group discussions during all four field visits with community members with no direct connection to the CPMRS. See sidebar for the guidelines (shared with PSDHS staff in each province where fieldwork was conducted) used by the evaluation team to select parents/caregivers for group discussions.

Process to guide selection of parents /caregivers for focus group discussions

In each research location, a group of 6-10 mothers/female caregivers and a group of 6-10 fathers / male caregivers will be identified and invited to participate in a group discussion.

Participants will be parents / caregivers whose children are currently under the age of 18 years old.

A key concern for selecting parents to participate in the group discussions will be ensuring that “hard-to-reach” and marginalized community members are included in the group of participants.

To the extent that it is feasible and ethically appropriate, the research will aim to target parents who are likely to have had direct experience of child protection, especially the CPMRS. However, this will depend on the availability of accurate information about families who have received services and their current address/location.

Although local level authorities received clear instructions from the research team, via UNICEF, to ensure that group discussion participants were not employed by the government in either a formal or volunteer capacity, the research team discovered that in many cases selected participants were TAO staff or volunteers. In one province, for example, a former TAO head responsible for implementing the Case Manager project and one village leader participated in the fathers’ group. Given their roles and knowledge, these participants tended to dominate the discussion, providing a different perspective on CPMRS function than other community members without this experience.

In one province, due to a misunderstanding, discussions with representatives of the New Family Development Centre (NFDC) and with community leaders were combined. The group discussion with fathers had only two participants, as the local officials were unable to find fathers not involved in the local government structure. In the mother’s group, one participant was employed in the TAO government and was asked to remain silent until others had an opportunity to express their opinions.

Location of interviews and group discussions – The majority of these were held in provincial offices of the PSDHS, Children’s Reception Homes, or TAO offices, in many cases with PSDHS staff and other officials present or nearby. Since this may have inhibited participants’ willingness to speak freely about their perceptions of CPMRS services associated with PSDHS, where possible, PSDHS staff were asked to leave the room. In several instances this seemed to help participants, particularly Case Managers, to speak more freely.

In some instances, the international team members required the **assistance of an interpreter** – this poses important and well-recognised challenges with regards to the accuracy of the data obtained from

respondents. While impossible to overcome completely, these challenges were mitigated by the provision of a credible and reliable interpreter by UNICEF TCO. Additionally, the Child Frontiers international researcher who led the fieldwork data collection speaks conversational Thai and was able to cross-check the accuracy of the translation during interviews with government officials and service providers.

Limited knowledge of CPMRS among government respondents – Many provincial and sub-district level government officials interviewed had limited knowledge about the CPMRS and a number of respondents were reluctant to be interviewed. Some of the identified respondents sent other persons to participate in the interview who were not able to respond to the questions (e.g., an office assistant). In one province, the Director of a One Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC) agreed to be interviewed on the condition that no questions be asked about the CPMRS, which the evaluation team agreed to at UNICEF's request. However, the OSCC Director did not attend the interview and asked a senior representative of the hospital to participate instead. That person had limited knowledge of OSCC operations and could provide little information on the CPMRS or child protection. It is also important to note that midway through the data collection process, one of the fieldwork sites was changed from Phuket to Trang province in response to a formal request from UNICEF based on consultations with the Secretariat Office of the National Child Protection Committee. The rationale for this change was that there were reportedly no longer any PSDHS staff in Phuket who could provide information about the CPMRS.

Potential conflict of interest – A couple of the evaluation team members (from Child Frontiers and Thammasat University) were previously engaged in certain aspects of CPMRS design and /or implementation. The team managed this potential conflict of interest by clearly declaring their earlier involvement to UNICEF. In addition, Universalialia team members took leadership for the evaluation component of the assignment, while Child Frontiers and Thammasat University team members took primary leadership for the contextual assessment.

Evaluation team member responsibilities – During the course of data analysis one of the Universalialia team members was unable to continue due to health reasons. Her role was assumed by the Evaluation Team Leader.

Organisation of the Report

Following this introduction:

- Chapter 2 provides a profile of CPMRS
- Chapter 3 presents the evaluation context – descriptions of relevant global, UN, UNICEF, and RTG contexts
- Chapter 4 provides the evaluation findings, structured according to the Evaluation Matrix and covering the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. This section includes national, provincial and local level findings.
- Chapter 5 presents the conclusions, lessons learned, and forward-looking recommendations to strengthen the Thai child protection system and UNICEF's future development support for child protection in Thailand.

Volume II is a separate document that provides appendices, including the Terms of Reference, evaluation matrix, list of reviewed documents, stakeholders consulted, data collection tools, case studies, and other documents and analyses referred to in the report.

Volume III is a separate document that presents *Child Protection System Context*, a context assessment of aspects of the child protection system related to the CPMRS prepared by Child Frontiers as part of this consultancy.

2. Profile of the Project

2.1 Overview

This chapter provides a profile of CPMRS' objectives and expected results, project components, management and governance, and a financial profile.

2.2 CPMRS Background

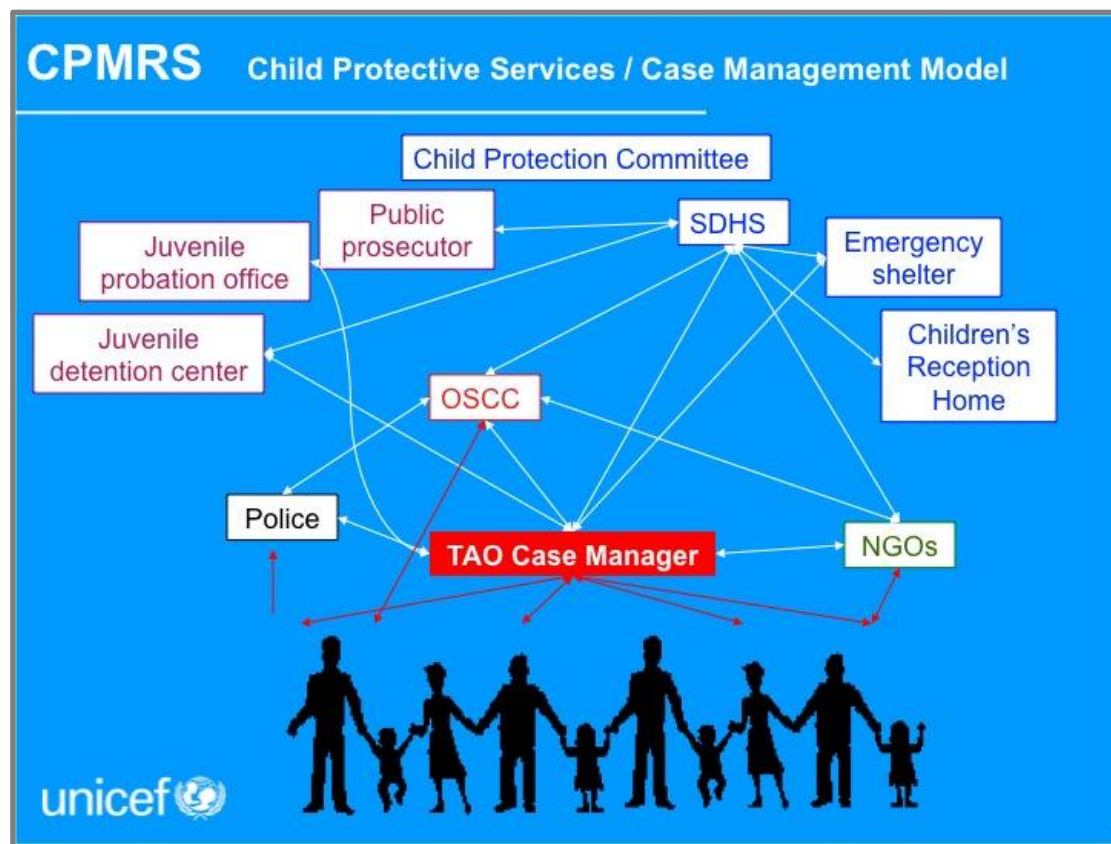
The Child Protection Monitoring and Response System (CPMRS) was established following the 2004 tsunami in an effort to address child protection challenges identified in tsunami affected areas in the south of Thailand. Based on discussions with partners and a child protection situation analysis, it was evident that there was limited understanding and recognition of child protection issues in Thailand. A distinct gap existed between service providers and communities and, as a result, social services available to children and families were extremely limited. This was further exacerbated by fragmentation of those services that were in place, lack of professional capacity and ineffective coordination between different approaches implemented on the ground.

UNICEF Thailand, in partnership with the MSDHS, developed the CPMRS in an effort to create an “early warning” system to identify children at risk, monitor the circumstances of children listed as “at risk,” and link them to appropriate services.¹⁶ The child protection monitoring system (CPMS) was designed to identify serious cases that might be addressed by the response system (CPRS). The provincial level child protection response system design was based on establishing a multi-disciplinary referral pathway and case management system. As part of this overall design, professional or para-professional Case Manager positions at the TAO level were created to encourage disclosure of child abuse and exploitation, facilitate community access to provincial level services, and strengthen child protection casework (see Exhibit 2.1). This TAO structure was defined as the New Family Development Centre (NFDC), expanding upon the existing Family Development Centre (FDC) model established by the RTG in 2004. The child protection system was to be developed by improving coordination and linkages between PSDHS, hospital-based One-Stop Crisis Centres (OSCC), Children's Reception Homes, police, NGOs and TAO authorities.

The response system described above was designed to be linked to a TAO level child protection monitoring system (CPMS) that was initially piloted in one TAO in each of Krabi, Phang-nga, and Phuket provinces during Phase 1 (2006). It was expected that child protection data collected and consolidated through the monitoring and evaluation process would generate information about all children in a sub-district and serve as an early warning alert to identify children at risk through a three-tiered classification system.

¹⁶ UNICEF Thailand. Assessment of the CPMRS Evaluation ToR.

Exhibit 2.1 CPMRS Child Protective Services/Case Management Model¹⁷



2.3 CPMRS Objectives and Expected Results

Project objectives

The **main objective** of the CPMRS is to create a model integrated child protection monitoring and response system for application at community, TAO and provincial levels. The project had **six sub-objectives**:

- 1) To increase awareness and facilitate action planning on child protection for TAO officials, teachers, and community members, including children and youth
- 2) To develop a child protection communication package for raising awareness, prevention, and providing necessary information for effective responses (e.g., printed and audio materials, “child line,” youth radio programmes, Web site).
- 3) To develop, provide training, and follow-up for a child protection monitoring system (CPMS) established at the TAO level – covering all children in all communities of each participating TAO – and with links to provincial monitoring and response systems.
- 4) To establish or strengthen an integrated child protection response system (CPRS) for preventive and emergency actions at community, TAO, district, and provincial levels (including persons, procedures, legal ramifications, and accountability).

¹⁷ Krueger, Alexander. “Child Protection Monitoring and Response System”. PowerPoint presentation. UNICEF. August 2006.

- 5) To increase the capacity of social workers and para-social workers to provide effective child protection services.
- 6) Documentation of the project process, including an evaluation of its effectiveness, for expansion and advocacy purposes.

Reconstructed results framework

Since the CPMRS design did not include a results framework, the evaluation team reconstructed one based on available documents (see Volume II, Appendix IX). This framework, which was approved by UNICEF as part of the Inception Report, was used as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of CPMRS.¹⁸

Project Components – In the reconstructed results framework, the team identified seven components. The activities and results associated with each of these components are summarised below. Readers should note that the component descriptions below reflect the activity and output (rather than outcome) focus found in reviewed documents.

Exhibit 2.2 CPMRS Components, Activities and Results¹⁹

No	Component	Description ²⁰
1	National and Provincial Advocacy Briefing	Activity: Stakeholder briefings at national and provincial levels Results: Authorities agree to undertake the project
2	Awareness and Local Action Planning	Activities: Selection of TAOs, TAO briefing/identification of focal points, Child Protection sensitisation workshops for TAOs and school children Results: Stakeholders identify Child Protection indicators, undertake local interventions, monitor status, participate in case management, establish local partnerships
3	Communication for Child Protection	Activities: Develop communication package, review resources, develop and disseminate materials Results: Increased stakeholder awareness, knowledge; guidance and support for local action developed; required materials identified, adapted and used
4	Child Protection Monitoring System	Activities: CPMS established at TAO level, community data collection, district and provincial support for response Results: Children at risk identified, response strategy created, monitoring system in place at community and TAO level
5	Child Protection Response System	Activities: CPRS established to complement CPMS, provincial multidisciplinary teams established, development of case reporting/management/referral mechanisms Results: Roster of professionals developed, public resource guide, developed, TAO multidisciplinary response teams created, procedures for reporting and referral created, accountabilities of key partners identified, temporary placement and centres accessible

¹⁸ As discussed in the limitations section, plans to update the draft reconstructed results framework did not take place as envisaged during the data collection phase. As a consequence, some gaps (or possibly inaccuracies) may remain in the draft framework.

¹⁹ Due to the evolving nature of the project, some aspects are applicable at different points during the project.

²⁰ Descriptions are based on what the evaluation team found in reviewed documents. May not reflect what actually took place (or what should have been included) in each component.

No	Component	Description ²⁰
6	Social Worker Capacity Building	Activities: Social and para-social workers recruited at TAO level to support CPRS and CPMS Results: Training of Case Managers and capacity building workshops for multi-disciplinary teams at provincial level
7	Documentation, Monitoring and Evaluation	Activities: National and international documents prepared, monitoring mechanisms developed for the project, project evaluation, external evaluations Results: External evaluations of Child Protection awareness and action, use of CPMS, utility of CPRS, quality of Child Protection services, effectiveness of links with provincial Child Protection committee, quality of life of children, recommendations for project expansion

2.4 Project Management, Implementation and Governance

The CPMRS was designed, managed and overseen through a working collaboration between the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and UNICEF Thailand.

A number of different agencies took lead responsibility for the promotion, design and implementation of the programme at the central and provincial levels, including: the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH); the Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University (INMU); the Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University; and the Faculty of Social Work, Thammasat University.

The project took place in 185 Tambon Administrative Organisations (TAO) and Tesaban (municipalities) in the participating six provinces (see Volume II, Appendix X for a list of participating Tambon by province).

No Steering Committee was established to guide or govern the CPMRS project, although there were regular meetings and workshops among all collaborating partners.

2.5 Financial Profile

Over the period 2006-12, UNICEF Thailand spent a total of \$US 2.668 million on CPMRS, of which 79 per cent went to the CPMS implemented by INMU (see Exhibit 2.3).

The project was financed by a variety of sources within UNICEF over time; however, Tsunami emergency funding was the most significant funding source in 2006 and 2007.

While UNICEF provided financial support for data collection and entry in all TAO in the first few years of the projects (in the CPMS sub project), these costs were borne by OWAFD between 2009-12 (at the rate of 13 Baht per child tracked in the system, intended to cover the average cost for data collection and entry).

Exhibit 2.3 CPMRS Expenditures by Sub Project 2006-12

Sub project	Implemented by	Total Expenditures (in \$US million)	% of Total Expenditure
CPMS (2006-12)	Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University (INMU)	\$2.107	79%
CPRS (2006-08)	Khon Kaen University	\$0.143	5%
Case Manager for CPMRS (2007-09)	Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University	\$0.156	6%

Sub project	Implemented by	Total Expenditures (in \$US million)	% of Total Expenditure
New Family Development Centres (2007-11)	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development	\$0.219	8%
Strengthening capacity of OSCC staff in southern border provinces and Mae Sot (2010-11)	Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)	\$0.041	2%

3. Context

3.1 Overview

This chapter presents a review of the overall context in which the CPMRS has been developed and operated. It includes an overview of the relevant global, UN, UNICEF contexts within which UNICEF's support CPMRS operates. It concludes with an overview of the formal child protection system in Thailand.

3.2 International Context: Strategic Approach to Child Protection

International approaches to understanding and strengthening national child and family welfare systems have evolved significantly in recent years. Within the sphere of international development, the move towards developing a more comprehensive approach to child welfare has been emerging.

A key feature of this shift in thinking is the increasing global recognition of the need for a more integrated and systems-based approach at the national level to prevent and protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Within the global debate, emphasis is increasingly moving towards a more holistic approach, encompassing proactive and preventive child and family welfare services rather than simply reactive interventions after violence or abuse has occurred. Exclusive focus on the child victim is gradually shifting towards interventions directed at the whole family, aiming to improve parents' capacities to provide appropriate care and protection or to provide alternative family-based care for children who cannot live with their own family. The systems approach is grounded in research that suggests a comprehensive, tailored, well-organised set of measures to prevent and mitigate the incidence of child protection violations is a prerequisite for supporting social and economic development.²¹

Although a systems approach has long been a feature of countries with more developed social welfare provisions, as evidenced in Thailand, the traditional model of service provision in developing countries has generally been issue-based. In countries experiencing multiple and complex child protection challenges in a context of limited resources, 'one-off' issue-based approaches reduce potential for synergy between direct services provided and is rarely based on actual needs of individual children. The systems approach is grounded in research that suggests a comprehensive, tailored, well-organised set of measures to prevent and mitigate the incidence of child protection violations is a prerequisite for supporting social and economic development.²²

In past years, international agencies and governments have developed a variety of frameworks for protecting children. Prior to 2000, the approach was based predominately on issue-specific programming, addressing topics including commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, street children, juvenile justice and children affected by armed conflict. In the past decade there has been a shift in focus towards a broader approach to child protection that covers the range of abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence.

3.3 UNICEF Context

Global

In 2003, UNICEF developed the Protective Environment Framework in an effort to move towards a programming response advocating for and supporting the creation of a protective environment for children

²¹ Krueger, Alexander, and Stephanie Delaney (2008), "An Overview of the Role of a Social Welfare System for Child Protection and Promoting Children's Well-Being," in *Child Protection Programming Strategy, A Toolkit*, UNICEF EAPRO.

²² See Krueger & Delaney, 2008.

in collaboration with governments, national and international partners and civil society. The protective environment was depicted as a ‘web’ of interconnected elements that create layers of safety nets and ensure appropriate responses when needed. In practical terms, however, UNICEF programming continued to focus on categories of children in specific problems.

The UNICEF Executive Board approved a Global Child Protection Strategy in June 2008 that incorporated the concept of the Protective Environment Framework and recognised the need for building national protection systems.²³ Based upon a human rights-based approach and emphasising government accountability, the global strategy states that “*child protection is an issue in every country and a high priority for UNICEF.*” It also states that “*preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse is essential in ensuring children’s rights to survival, development and well-being*” and identifies key strategies for strengthening the protective environment for children.

Since 2008, the Global Child Protection Strategy has increasingly influenced UNICEF’s country programming around the world, and it is expected that this systems approach will continue to develop in the future. Given the relative infancy of this approach in development settings, international and national actors continue to debate new concepts and strategies. It is increasingly recognised, however, that child protection systems cannot simply be interpreted and built using a Western lens, but must be contextualised and draw from a variety of perspectives from other parts of the world and countries at different stages of development, such as Thailand. Experience and learning from the implementation of the CPMRS may provide valuable insights and further inform these discussions. Conversely, new approaches and understanding of child protection system development may help to strengthen the implementation of the CPMRS model in Thailand.

East Asia and Pacific Region

The Child Protection Programming Strategy developed by in the East Asia and Pacific Region (EAPRO) in 2007 presented a new approach to child protection programming and suggested that a protective environment for children can be categorised into a number of core ‘systems’ for children and families. This broader-based approach recognised that children are likely to experience more than one of many problems during their childhood and youth and strong prevention interventions are required to protect children from potential problems.

It is within this context that the CPMRS project framework was developed for Thailand. Acknowledgement of the interconnections and gaps in the response mechanisms, as was apparent in Thailand following the tsunami, required a shift in approaches to the protection of children at the community and national levels. The shift includes an emphasis on prevention as well as the coordination of the many relevant interventions (including rehabilitation of survivors/victims and provision of out-of-home care). The CPMRS model, however, represented a starting point and initial attempt to build a child protection system based on the information and understanding of systems available at that time. Conceptual thinking and the global debate on child protection and child and family welfare systems have developed significantly in the five years since the CPMRS was first implemented.

UNICEF Thailand

Over the period 2006-12, there have been several important changes in UNICEF Thailand that had and will continue to affect its support for child protection initiatives. The most important changes relate to: how UNICEF Thailand programme priorities are defined and resourced; a significant reduction in programming funds and UNICEF Thailand staffing levels after 2007.

²³ United Nations Economic and Social Council. UNICEF Child Protection Strategy. New York. May 2008.

2007-2011

Over the period 2007-11, child protection was one of the key programme priorities of UNICEF Thailand as reflected in the country programme document guiding the period (see sidebar).

During the period 2007-11, tsunami emergency funding was a very important source of funding for the UNICEF Thailand programme. It benefitted the entire programme in general, and the Child Protection Programme in particular. As shown in the sidebar, Child Protection represented the largest proportion of all UNICEF Thailand programme expenditures (28 per cent or \$US 13.9 million of a total expenditure of \$US 48.8 million). This vastly exceeded the total financial resources envisaged in the 2007-11 Thailand CPD by approximately \$US 10 million. Funding for Child Protection was at its peak in 2007 (over \$4 million) and declined to approximately \$2 million in 2011; total Child Protection expenditures in 2012 were US \$850,000.

Over the same period, UNICEF's Regular Resources (RR) represented a relatively modest source of Child Protection funding (an average of 9 per cent per year). Emergency funds to support Tsunami affected children was the major Child Protection funding source in 2006 and 2007, representing 36 per cent and 46 per cent of total Child Protection programme funds respectively; Tsunami support ended in 2008, and represented 15 per cent of total Child Protection funding sources.

UNICEF identified the following lessons from 2007-11:²⁵

- Increased importance of upstream programming by UNICEF – Thailand is a middle income country and there is a need for greater emphasis on evidence-based programming, advocacy, policy development and legislative reforms
- UNICEF needs to support the RTG to overcome challenges in translating policies, legislation and programmes into effective action

UNICEF Thailand goals and results (2007-11)²⁴

National laws and policies effectively respond to children's and women's rights

Systems for monitoring for children's and women's rights are in place at all levels

Targeted programmes are implemented for the protection of vulnerable children, including those of ethnic minorities and from neighbouring countries

Vulnerable children with access to early, primary and secondary learning opportunities

HIV transmission among children and young people is reduced

Capacities at sub-national level (sub-district, district and provincial) for planning and action for children are strengthened

Disaster preparedness and response is improved

Thailand's experiences and best practices in furthering children's rights are analysed, documented and shared with other countries in the region and beyond through south-south cooperation

By end 2009: Key results achieved in the tsunami-affected provinces

UNICEF Thailand Expenditures by Key Programmes 2007-2011

Child Protection: 28%

Education: 22%

Local Capacity Building: 11%

HIV/AIDS: 10%

Advocacy and Social Mobilisation: 8%

Five other programmes : 21%

²⁴ From UNICEF Thailand 2007-11 Draft CPD

²⁵ From UNICEF Thailand 2012-16 Draft CPD

- The Strategic Moment of Reflection (SMR) in 2010 concluded that UNICEF needs to have a more systematic and strategic approach to building national capacities to ensure greater and more sustainable impact for children. This may include greater use of technical assistance through institution-based arrangements (rather than stand-alone consultancies).

2012 – 2016

Building on several of the lessons noted above, the CPD for 2012-16 is designed quite differently. As shown in the sidebar, it emphasises upstream strategies with results at the national level focusing on child protection system development and resource mobilisation, with no explicit focus on either the provincial or Tambon levels, or on directly addressing the practical needs of children (through, for example, targeted programmes for vulnerable children). The current emphasis on upstream programming appears to be at odds with initiatives such as CPMRS which focus at provincial and more particularly community levels²⁷. The increased emphasis on upstream programming requires child protection staff to engage in new kinds of activities such as advocacy, policy dialogue, negotiation and so forth, with potential effects on the numbers of staff hired as well their skills and profiles. It also requires active engagement by senior UNICEF management in Thailand to engage in such dialogue.

A key cross-cutting programme priority in both periods was focused on reducing disparities in outcomes for children, given that children from ethnic minorities, children with disabilities and children affected by HIV and aids suffer from unequal access to social services.

The proposed CPD budget for the period 2012-16 (\$US 71 million) exceeds actual expenditures in the previous period. However, it is not possible to compare UNICEF's financial commitments to Child Protection in these two periods,

because the 2012-16 programme components do not refer specifically to Child Protection (see sidebar). In evaluation interviews, UNICEF Thailand staff report that the Child Protection programme depends on Other Resources that are generated through private fundraising efforts; available Regular Resources are used mainly to cover UNICEF staff costs.

Staffing – Another important change over the period related to changes in the programming context and the number of staff working in UNICEF Thailand, and in the Child Protection Programme in particular. For several years following the tsunami, UNICEF staff were extremely busy designing, implementing and

UNICEF Thailand goals and results (2012-16)²⁶

Strengthened national systems for social policy and economic analysis, generating evidence and monitoring the situation of the most vulnerable children

Strengthened national systems for reducing disparities and social exclusion and increasing protection of children from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation

Heightened importance of children in national awareness and on the policy agenda and mobilisation of national resources for children

2012-2016 UNICEF Thailand Programme Components

Social policy analysis, budget, evidence and monitoring

Increasing equities, social inclusion and protection

Advocacy, social action and resources mobilisation

Cross-sectoral support

²⁶ From UNICEF Thailand Draft CPD 2012-16, Summary Results Matrix

²⁷ In theory, CPMRS could have been designed and managed (in keeping with UNICEF guidelines on pilot projects) as a potential model that could inform national policies and programs and/or be adapted more broadly. However, the project was not managed that way, instead focusing exclusively on downstream implementation at the provincial and tampon levels.

overseeing programmes and related activities, and child protection staff numbers (including the “Tsunami team” based in the affected provinces) totalled 10 persons in each of 2006 and 2007.²⁸ Between 2008 and 2012, child protection staff numbers gradually declined to four, reflecting reduced post-tsunami resources and programming and the dismantling of the Tsunami team in 2008. These staffing changes reduced the amount of time that UNICEF staff had to manage and oversee child protection programming, including CPMRS, particularly after 2008.

3.4 UN Context in Thailand

The UN Country Team for Thailand has a relatively small presence in Thailand, in part reflecting the country’s improving development situation and its status as a Middle Income Country (MIC). The UNCT aims to support and complement Thai national policy processes in areas where the UN has a mandated expertise and can add value. It focuses on groups with specific needs or vulnerabilities such as border populations, those at risk of or subject to trafficking, migrants, women and the rural poor.

The UN Partnership Agreement Framework (UNPAF) for Thailand is aligned with the six development strategies of Thailand’s 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) (2012-16) with the three development strategies of *promoting the just society, strengthening economic and security cooperation in the region and managing natural resources and the environment towards sustainability* and is aligned with other NESDP strategies including *developing human resources to promote a life-long learning society, balancing food and energy security and creating the knowledge-based economy and enabling economic environment*. At present, there is no specific focus on child protection, nor is there a UN working group in Thailand focused on child protection. However, during the emergency flooding situation in Thailand in 2011, the UN Protection sub-cluster addressed child protection concerns.

While there are 24 UN agencies in Thailand, UNICEF is reported to be the largest in terms of programming resources. The UN agencies most involved in child protection are UNICEF, UNHCR (migrant and stateless children) and ILO (child labour). Interviewed UNICEF staff report that they work most closely with UNHCR, sharing their resources (financial and human) to address issues of common concern (e.g., migrant children). UNICEF is the only agency focused on a systems- approach to child protection in Thailand; UNICEF Thailand reports that others tend to have more of an issue-based focus.

3.5 RTG Context for Child Protection

The evaluation’s in-depth national child protection analysis is presented in full in Volume III. This section provides an overview of the characteristics of Thailand and the RTG that relate to or have an effect on the CPMRS, namely the government’s approach and policies towards child protection.

Child Protection Situation in Thailand

Thailand has experienced rapid economic development in recent years and made positive progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The child protection system, however, faces a number of challenges, with research indicating that children in Thailand appear to be exposed to a significant level of violence and harm from relatives, friends, acquaintances, parents, teachers, and others.²⁹ Court records indicate that the number of reported cases of sexual abuse of children under the age of 15 increased by 40 per cent during 2002–2006, from approximately 6,000 to more than 10,000 cases.³⁰ Despite this evidence,

²⁸ Information provided by UNICEF Thailand in March 2013

²⁹ Office of Women’s Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2007; Institute of Population and Social research, Mahidol University and Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2007.

³⁰ Gender Development: Similarities and Differences, Thammasat Press, 2008.

there appears to be a general lack of awareness or acknowledgement of child protection issues by authorities and key child protection stakeholders.

As in many countries, official figures significantly underestimate the true magnitude of physical and sexual violence against women and children. Cultural dynamics and barriers against disclosure reinforce reluctance to seek assistance for child victims of violence. As a result, children are reluctant to seek help and family members may cover up violent behaviour. Community findings from the research conducted also indicated police reluctance to deal with domestic violence or child protection issues, as these are perceived as internal family matters.

Despite the 2003 Child Protection Act and significant efforts on the part of the government, international agencies and NGOs to improve the welfare of children, the general level of awareness and recognition of child protection problems by officials legally mandated to respond to these remains limited and insufficient. The overall child protection environment in Thailand is characterised by a combination of lack of knowledge about child protection issues and tolerance of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect of children.

Legal and Policy Framework for the Delivery of Child Protection Services

The Government of Thailand has made significant strides to develop a comprehensive framework for the welfare and protection of children and has ratified the following international conventions for child welfare and protection:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded 1991
- The ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, ratified 2001
- The Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, ratified 2006
- The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, ratified 2006
- The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, ratified 2002
- ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, ratified 2004
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, ratified 2012

The Child Protection Act (2003) heralded a renewed commitment to vulnerable children. Its implementation has proved challenging as it makes few references to preventative services and family support (focusing instead on the investigative process, case referral and management mechanisms, and child placement procedures).

Designation of Authority for Child Protection – A number of ministries are responsible for the enforcement of the Child Protection Act (MOI, MSDHS, MOE, MOJ). Ambiguity about roles and authority for policymaking, budget allocation, and implementing services has caused unnecessary confusion and, at times, paralysis of the child protection system.

Additional challenges related to the Child Protection Act and the CPMRS, explored in detail in Volume III, include the lack of protocols, procedures and leadership; the absence of a paradigm of services to prevent and mitigate the general incidence of child abuse and exploitation; resource limitations; and incongruence with traditional values and practices.

Child Protection System Policies and Strategies

The Government of Thailand has developed a number of additional policies and strategies related to the welfare of children and families in line with the national political context. While the many different pieces of legislation and policies currently in place contribute to the welfare and protection of children in different

ways, to date there is no overarching policy document or strategic vision in place for child protection in Thailand. In addition, two different national committees nominally have authority for child protection system policy development: i) the National Child Protection Committee and ii) the Sub-Committee on Child Protection System in Thailand under the National Child and Youth Development Committee (OPP).³¹ While the MSDHS acts as the chair for NCPC and is the Secretariat for OPP, there appears to be limited coordination or communication between these committees, resulting in confusion with regard to where primary leadership for child protection system development lies.

Key national policies related to child protection include the National Strategy and Plan of Action for a World Fit for Children (2005 – 2015), 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) (2012 – 2016), and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the Ministry of Public Health on Improving the Quality of Life of Abandoned Children (2005). Building upon Thailand's commitments under the CRC, the National Strategy and Plan of Action for *A World Fit for Children* 2007–2016 guides Thailand's long-term agenda for children and youth. The 11th NESDP includes social indicators (Basic Minimum Needs) on child and youth development and child rights as social development priorities. Priority areas related to child and family welfare include: promoting a just society and building human resources to promote a life-long learning society. The MOU between MSDHS / MoPH highlights the role of the State to protect and ensure that abandoned children are able to survive and develop to be well-prepared to live in society, enjoy a good quality of life, and become self-reliant.

Structures for Child Protection

National Level

The child protection system at the national level has historically been characterised by a general lack of leadership, clear mandates and interaction between key ministries with responsibilities related to children and families. As a result, there is no common framework or national strategy for child protection and the aims, objectives and overarching approach of the child protection system have yet to be defined. Different government ministries with responsibilities for children have tended to work in relative isolation.

Although the MSDHS is the primary national ministry with responsibility for driving the national child protection agenda in Thailand, the Minister of Interior, Minister of Social Development and Human Security, Minister of Education, and Minister of Justice are given responsibility for enforcement of the Child Protection Act and are directed to appoint competent officials and issue ministerial regulations or regulations to enable its implementation (Article 6).

Two national committees have responsibility for child protection policy development: the National Child Protection Committee (NCPC) under the Office of the Permanent Secretary, and the Subcommittee on Child Protection System in Thailand under the Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups (OPP).

Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS): The MSDHS, established in 2002, is mandated with implementation of the Child Protection Act.³² Responsibilities for child protection and family support within MSDHS fall under the responsibility of approximately 12 different divisions, reporting to five different departments, in addition to three functions under the Permanent Secretary Office.

National Child Protection Committee (NCPC): Established under the Child Protection Act, the NCPC is responsible for child protection policy development under Article 7 and chaired by the Minister of Social Development and Human Security. The NCPC does not appear to have served as an effective mechanism to

³¹ Established January 2011 under Article 18 of the Child and Youth Development Act

³² UNDP. Thailand Human Development Report 2009. Bangkok, 2010.

coordinate child protection policy or actors at the national level, as envisioned under the Child Protection Act (see sidebar).

Office of the Permanent

Secretary: Operates Provincial Social Development and Human Security Offices, supervises the

Office of the Secretariat of the NCPC, and is responsible for MSDHS strategy and policy development.

NCPC role has been negatively affected by factors including the absence of a current action plan;³³ the mixed experience of its members in child protection; the absence of senior RTG representatives with decision-making power at NCPC meetings; considerable turnover in representatives sent to NCPC meetings and in NCPC leadership over the past several years; as well as tendency to focus on specific child protection problems rather than systemic issues. The NCPC meets twice a year.

Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups (OPP):

Responsible for formulating and coordinating broader child and youth policy, led by the Subcommittee on Child Protection System in Thailand.³⁴ The OPP is currently conducting an assessment of the child protection system in seven provinces of Thailand, which should be available shortly. The assessment reportedly focuses on a variety of child protection issues evident in different locations and will provide information on government structures and services in place to address these.

Department of Social Development and Social Welfare: Line organisations with specific child protection mandates include the Bureau of Social Welfare Services and the Bureau of Anti-Trafficking in Women and Children.

Office of Women Affairs and Family Development: Responsible for empowerment of the family institution, as well as oversight and coordination of the TAO-based Family Development Centres and Case Managers.

Provincial Level

As a result of the child protection measures established in the Child Protection Act of 2003, the RTG has made strides towards the development of provincial level child and family welfare services. Key provincial level services established include Reception Homes for Children and Families and provincial hospital-based One Stop Crisis Centres (OSCC). While not all provinces have established the full complement of support services and quality of services can vary significantly by location, all provinces have at least one OSCC and a Children's Reception Home in place. The majority of formal child protection services tend to be concentrated at the provincial level and located in the capital, with limited outreach or access to the TAO or community level. The presence of NGOs differs by location and acts to supplement and support government structures in many districts across the country. During the CPMRS project period (2007 – 2012), formal child protection structures including the OSCC and Children's Reception Homes have become more established and services provided are increasingly well-known by authorities and, to a lesser extent, by community members. Referral processes have been established between key service providers, although these generally tend to be based on personal relationships rather than formal procedures or guidelines.

Multidisciplinary teams (MDT) were established at the provincial level in 2008 in an effort to coordinate child protection work. Key objectives were to ensure effective linkages between services and ensure that child protection cases were overseen by experienced professionals. MDT members include PSHDS officials, provincial police, education officers, Children's Reception Home staff, public health officers,

³³ An action plan was developed five years ago to guide the work of the NCPC; this was not well developed or shared with all members or committees.

³⁴ Prime Minister, Chair of the National Child and Youth Development Committee. Order of National Child and Youth Development Committee, Subject: Establishment of the Sub-Committee on Child Protection System in Thailand. 25 March 2011.

Competent Officials, and the Public Prosecutor for Children and Families, among others. While potentially an effective approach, the research findings indicate that provincial level MDTs rarely meet and coordination for service provision depends largely on personal relationships.

TAO Level

A significant challenge for the implementation and accessibility of the child protection system in Thailand is that the key ministries or agencies mandated with child protection responsibilities do not have a formal presence at the local level where child protection monitoring and response systems are located. MSDHS, for example, is therefore obliged to coordinate directly with Tambon authorities (TAO) on an individual basis due to lack of authorisation of the CPMRS by the MoI – specifically the Department of Local Administration (DLA) – at the national or provincial levels. As a result, no agency has assumed primary accountability for service provision and support to families at the local level.

In addition to the structural challenges described above, there are other more fundamental reasons why the system does not function as it might be expected to. The evaluation findings regarding community practices (e.g., of not seeking formal sector help and lack of service uptake – see section 4.3.3) may indicate that the current service paradigm is not appropriate and realistic for the Thai context. This may be a reflection of the fact that the child protection system has largely borrowed the legal measures and service typology from other countries: they have not been adapted to the unique Thai social and cultural context. As a result of this and other factors, communities do not appear to view formal child protection services as a reliable or beneficial source of assistance and only access government assistance in rare situations when alternative options are unavailable.

Apart from the Family Development Centres, the majority of public services (OSCC, Children’s Reception Home, PSDHS Social Workers) are concentrated at the provincial level. In this sense the services may not be physically accessible to communities. The combination of the concentration of services at the provincial level with the lack of coordination between agencies, as well as with local level authorities, results in a situation where few services actually ever reach the children and families they have been designed to serve. This lack of accessibility is compounded by the reality that the majority of child protection cases are not referred to government authorities. If the problem can be handled at the local level, community members will do everything possible to avoid formally reporting to external agencies. This only occurs in the most severe cases, which were defined by community leaders as “repeated violence that causes contusion and bleeding, life-threatening injury, unconsciousness and noticeable wounds.”

According to the Child Protection Act, all children in Thailand are eligible for services, regardless of citizenship; however it does not appear that all communities and ethnic groups have equal access. There are many reasons for this: language can represent a barrier for ethnic minorities or migrant groups; children without Thai citizenship may be less comfortable or likely to access the system; and children and families in remote and border areas face practical barriers in accessing provincial level services located in urban centres.

Resources for Child Protection

The current number of qualified child welfare professionals is inadequate and unable to effectively meet present needs. A 2008 report on the social work profession developed for UNICEF highlighted high workload, a wide range of responsibilities, limited technical capacity, and lack of understanding of children’s rights issues as key human resource challenges for social welfare service provision in Thailand.³⁵ Many government officials involved in child welfare service provision do not fully understand or have the technical capacity to fulfil their obligations as agents of the State. Interviews with officials from OSCCs,

³⁵ Report prepared by Sompong Jirtradab, part of meeting document by Department of Local Administration and UNICEF, 2008.

PSDHS and Children's Reception Homes in the four provinces where fieldwork was conducted indicated that these agencies had insufficient staff to handle child protection responsibilities and as a result only the most urgent cases are prioritised.

The national budget places a high priority on social development. Education expenditures accounted for 18.7 per cent of total national budget in 2012, 9.3 per cent was allocated to health expenditures and 7.5 per cent allocated to social protection programmes.³⁶ The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security received 0.4 per cent of the total budget in 2012, a 4.6 per cent increase over 2011, although this represented a smaller percentage of the total budget allocation than in the previous year.³⁷

There is no long-term budgeting process in place for child protection policy development by the NCPC. The Child Protection funding committee reportedly tends to prefer to support new ideas rather than provide financial support for implementation of tested models or on-going strategic plans. The Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups receives a regular budget allocation based on proposals submitted to the budget bureau, which typically cover costs of meetings and other activities of the sub-committee on child protection strengthening, among others. Both the NCPC and the newly established child protection committee reportedly have funding for meetings and small activities including field visits, workshops, etc. These funds are facilitated and managed by OPP and NCPC Secretariat Office.

Coordination and Functioning of Services

While significant effort has been made to provide a greater range of professional services to children at risk of and/or suffering abuse and exploitation in Thailand, chronic challenges have emerged over the years, some of which pertain to the design and implementation of the system itself. The government's overall approach to child protection is a response-based system that addresses only the most serious cases that are brought to the attention of authorities either through the OSCC, police, or Children's Reception Home. Focus on provision of preventative services and proactive identification of vulnerable families and children is limited. Many government officials view their primary child protection responsibilities as being oriented towards punishment of perpetrators and preventing bad behaviour of children. While officials can describe their responsibilities related to provision of services for children at risk, in difficult circumstances, or who have already suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation – in reality this appears to be a very small part of their actual work. The majority of consulted officials, for example, had difficulty providing examples of child protection cases that they had been involved in within the past three years.

The CPMS has established a mechanism for identifying families in difficulty in selected locations. However this has not been implemented nationwide and it remains unclear what early intervention initiatives or services are available or provided to at-risk families once identified. Response services focus primarily on individual children, with removal of children into alternative care being the default response to many child protection cases, despite growing recognition of the importance of keeping children with their family whenever possible.

A critical gap in the child protection system is the lack of a clearly defined authority responsible to intervene on behalf of children in need of assistance. In the absence of any official with a clear mandate, by default nobody has assumed responsibility and limited or no action is therefore taken. This appears to largely be the case at the provincial and local level – even when cases of child abuse, exploitation and neglect are identified, in many situations very little appears to be done in response. Prior to the introduction of the Manual of Child Protection Protocols and Procedures in some locations, clear guidance for risk assessment, case reporting and referral, case management, and service provision was not available. Referrals between agencies, including the OSCC, Children's Reception Home, PSDHS, schools and law

³⁶ Government of Thailand, Bureau of the Budget. Thailand's Budget in Brief, Fiscal Year 2012.

³⁷ MSDHS received 0.5 per cent of the total national budget in 2011.

enforcement, appear to be done on an ad hoc basis and are largely driven by personal connections and relationships established between individuals.

While referral to and utilisation of formal services may appear to be the preferred response to child protection cases, this is based on a critical assumption that formal system services are both functioning effectively and able to provide beneficial outcomes from the perspective of children and families. Until the quality of services and outcomes for children and families are significantly improved and communities perceive the services available as useful or necessary, the rate of uptake will remain low. Despite the creation of a complex framework of agencies and formal structures designed to address and respond to child protection challenges, the vast majority of child protection cases do not appear to be addressed by the child protection system. An overarching national vision or policy for a child protection system that is appropriate to the Thai context is required in order to support meaningful reform to restructure the system in a way that more effectively meets the needs of families and children.

4. Performance: UNICEF Support for CPMRS

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents evaluation findings on the performance of CPMRS between 2006 and 2012 in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, the sustainability of CPMRS results, efficiency, and cross-cutting concerns.

4.2 Relevance

This section examines the relevance of CPMRS from several perspectives: its consistency with international conventions and agreements related to child protection, and with the child protection context in Thailand (including RTG policies and priorities and capacities and the child protection needs of Thai children and families). Finally, it examines the relevance of CPMRS from the perspectives of both UNICEF Child Protection strategies and policies and UNICEF Thailand priorities, objectives and results for the project period.

Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities, and partners' and donors' policies. Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether an intervention or its design is still appropriate given changed circumstances.³⁸

Finding 1: CPMRS objectives are conceptually aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and those sections of CEDAW that refer to the best interests of the child.

Thailand is a signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which strongly emphasises state responsibilities towards children who are deprived of their family environment (Article 20). The convention requires signatory states to develop national frameworks to guarantee children the right to protection from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The CRC underlines that actions and services must be in the best interest of the child; that all children, regardless of nationality or statehood, are entitled to support; and that services and actions should encourage and support the active participation of children and youth.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly; it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. Where CEDAW makes specific reference to children (see sidebar), it echoes CRC principles related to the 'best interests of the child'.

Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

CEDAW Article 16 (f)

CPMRS objectives, which focus on the development of a model child protection monitoring and response system in Thailand, are conceptually aligned with the intent of both the CRC and CEDAW Conventions. However, as discussed below, various limitations associated with the legal framework in Thailand as well as RTG government structures and capacities present practical challenges in the realisation of some CRC principles, including the challenge of who is authorised to determine what is in the best interest of the child.

³⁸ OECD (2010); Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management; p. 32

Finding 2: CPMRS objectives were in line with the spirit of child protection legislation in Thailand, but the national context for the implementation of such legislation has been challenging. Recent actions by OPP and MoI to highlight child protection on the national agenda are promising.

Historically, the legislative priority in Thailand was the criminal (penal) code which stipulates penalties for specific crimes against children. In recent years, there has been increased emphasis on legislation that governs the delivery of welfare and protection services for children, women and families. The predominant approach of the legislative framework is rescue and rehabilitation; there has been relatively modest emphasis on the preventative measures needed to mitigate risks for children. In addition, the laws tend to focus on individual children, rather than family and community needs.

The CPMRS was designed as a way of bolstering implementation of the Child Protection Act (2003), by providing standards and protocols designed to make the Act functional and ensure that children on the ground actually receive services.

The Child Protection Act (CPA), which focuses on child welfare, safety, protection, and behavioural promotion, governs the delivery of core response and services to children and families at the provincial and district levels, and thus underpins the CPMRS objectives. Through specific measures, it is intended to address some of the emerging child protection issues in families and communities. It is supposed to direct the establishment of systems to protect children, create responsibilities for responding to vulnerable children, and demand standards for a more professional service of care. The *Situational Analysis of Women and Children* (UNICEF 2011) recognised the growing appreciation in Thailand of the need for child protection, particularly in relation to the enactment of the Child Protection Act (see sidebar).

The enactment of the Child Protection Act in 2003 was a major advance in efforts to address child protection in Thailand. The Act mandates the establishment of Child Protection Committees at the national and provincial levels while delegating responsibilities to government heads and officers at the district and sub-district levels. The Act also stipulates that all members of society, not just officials, have a responsibility to protect the rights of children. Along with the introduction of new legislation and policy, there appears to be a growing appreciation at both the national and local levels of the need for child protection.

Situational Analysis of Women and Children (UNICEF 2011) p. 45

Of particular interest is Section 8 of the Act which states that the Office of the Permanent Secretary of MSDHS has “*the power and duty to develop system, modality and procedure on, and to provide service in concerning with, child assistance, welfare protection and proper behaviour promotion...*” and “*to gather analytical result and research on, and to monitor and make an evaluation of the performance of related State and private agencies in accordance with the policy and plans in providing child assistance, welfare protection and proper behaviour promotion, and report to the Committee.*”

While the objectives of CPMRS reflect the spirit of the Act, several reviews and critiques of the Act over the past decade have identified many important shortcomings of the Act and its implementation – as discussed in detail in section 3.5.³⁹ The Act is currently being reviewed by the sub-committee on Law Reform, which was established under the National Child and Youth Development Committee. OPP is the secretariat of this sub-committee.

There are also several other laws relating to children in Thailand –including the Domestic Violence Act (2007) and the Anti-Trafficking Act (2008) – but there is no overarching policy document or strategic vision in place for child protection.

³⁹ See Volume III for a more detailed analysis of the legal framework.

The enforcement of existing laws and policies concerning child protection in Thailand has been challenging due to a number of factors at the national and sub-national levels (see sidebar). These challenges affected the CPMRS in terms of some of the assumptions in its design and in its implementation. In 2011, however, the incoming Director General (DG) responsible for the Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups (OPP) initiated several measures to address noted challenges. See section 4.3.2.

Enforcing laws and policies relating to the protection of children is hampered by limitations in the capacity of and commitment to social change among relevant actors and institutions at the sub-national level. A review of the capacity of local government to develop activities for protecting children and youth noted that most experience problems in implementing the National Child Protection Act [...] In addition, many local government officers lack an understanding of children's rights issues and their obligations as agents of the State and thus do not appreciate the need to carry out child development and protection activities.

Situational Analysis of Women and Children (UNICEF 2011)

Finding 3: CPMRS objectives are relevant to the needs of children in Thailand for protection and to overcoming identified cultural barriers to and understanding of child protection.

Many children in Thailand experience abuse and violence in their communities and homes, often inflicted by family members and others in their immediate environment. While actual rates of familial abuse and violence are difficult to measure, statistics on child abuse and violence against women and children in Thailand indicate significant challenges. According to data from the One-Stop Crisis Centres, 15,882 persons sought help during 2006, or approximately 44 cases per day. In 2007 this number increased to 19,068 reported cases, or 56 cases per day, including 9,598 child victims of violence and abuse. Of these cases involving children, 7,772 victims (81 per cent) were girls, and 6,020 cases involved sexual abuse.⁴⁰ Court records indicate that the number of reported cases of sexual abuse of children under the age of 15 increased by 40 per cent during 2002–2006, from approximately 6,000 to more than 10,000 cases.⁴¹ Given that the vast majority of such cases are not reported, actual incidence is likely much higher.

Thailand experienced its worst natural disaster in recent history in December 2004. The Indian Ocean tsunami took thousands of lives and as many as 1,480 children lost one or both parents. The local environment and economy was devastated and almost 5,000 homes were destroyed, significantly increasing the vulnerability of children. Response efforts in the wake of the tsunami highlighted many of the challenges facing the embryonic child protection system in Thailand. This provided an opportunity for analysis of strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the existing system, which ultimately informed the conceptualisation of CPMRS.

CPMRS objectives related to increasing awareness are also relevant in terms of addressing noted discrepancies in how child protection is understood in Thailand. As discussed in section 3.5 above, cultural dynamics and barriers against disclosure reinforce reluctance to seek assistance for child victims of violence. A Thai proverb states, “Don’t take family matters outside; don’t bring outside matters into the family.”⁴² The CPMRS was designed to increase awareness about child protection issues as defined in the CRC.

⁴⁰ Office of Women’s Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2007; Institute of Population and Social Research, Mahidol University and Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2007.

⁴¹ [117 Gender Development: Similarities and Differences, op. cit.]

⁴² UNDP. Human Security Today and Tomorrow. , Thailand Development Report 2009.

Finding 4: CPMRS objectives were in line with the latest thinking in child protection at the time of project development, and with UNICEF’s systems-approach to child protection over the past few years.

The 2006 decision by the UNICEF Thailand Country Office to move away from what was largely an issue-based approach to child protection to investing in CPMRS by creating an integrated model child protection monitoring and response system was very much in line with the latest thinking on child protection strategies at the time and in keeping with UNICEF’s own corporate approach since 2008 (see sidebar). The one notable exception was how several CPMRS components were ultimately implemented - in parallel to the established government systems rather than closely integrated with it. This was due to the policy context in Thailand (see Finding 2) and challenges in securing an institutional home for the CPMRS project within the RTG.

The global strategy states that “child protection is an issue in every country and a high priority for UNICEF.” It also states that “preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse is essential in ensuring children’s rights to survival, development and well-being” and identifies key strategies for strengthening the protective environment for children.

UNICEF’s Global Child Protection Strategy (2008)

In a 2009 external evaluation of UNICEF support to the tsunami (see sidebar), the authors noted that in developing the model, UNICEF drew upon international and national thinking regarding child protection at the time, noting that “*the CPMRS model has conceptual clarity, and is one of a number of models of child protection systems development that has attracted global interest within the Child Protection Working Group of the inter-agency Protection Cluster Working Group (convened jointly by UNHCR and UNICEF).*”

All evidence suggests that UNICEF was right to prioritise child protection systems strengthening both as a specific response to address protection risks made evident subsequent to the tsunami, and as a more general strategy of relevance for national implementation. The case made to stakeholders – that a systems response was the most appropriate way to address concerns of children ‘falling between the cracks’ of existing provision – was a sound one, and is now widely accepted in discussions at local and national level.

Tsunami Evaluation Report (2009)

Finding 5: CPMRS objectives were aligned with the strategic objectives of the UNICEF Thailand Country Programme in 2007-11 and are partially aligned with current country programme priorities and strategies.

The CPMRS project objectives dovetail with several of UNICEF Thailand Programme objectives and results over the period 2007-11 particularly those shown in the sidebar.

During the period under review, there is evidence of synergy between UNICEF’s two major projects for child protection in tsunami-affected provinces:

monitoring placement conditions for separated and orphaned children, and CPMRS.⁴³ The first project involved a number of discrete, relatively short-term initiatives that documented needs and provided

Selected UNICEF Thailand Country Programme Priorities (2007-11)

Systems for monitoring for children’s and women’s rights are in place at all levels

Targeted programmes are implemented for the protection of vulnerable children, including those of ethnic minorities and from neighbouring countries

Capacities at sub-national level (sub-district, district and provincial) for planning and action for children are strengthened

⁴³ As reported in the Tsunami Evaluation Report (2009)

important information for advocacy regarding the vulnerabilities of orphaned and migrant children; it identified important principles and practices relevant to child protection systems work. In developing and piloting the CPMRS, which was the major investment in the child protection sector in the tsunami-affected provinces, UNICEF used a systems approach to address identified protection risks and develop a model of protection monitoring and response for potential replication on a national scale.

Looking forward, the CPMRS objectives appear to be partly aligned with 2012-16 UNICEF CPD results for Thailand. As noted in section 3.3, the UNICEF Thailand programme now focuses more on upstream strategies at the national level while RTG child protection responsibilities are decentralised. Given noted adverse effects on CPMRS implementation to date (due primarily to the lack of a national mandate and ministerial support from either MSDHS or MoI), UNICEF's current focus on upstream engagement with government and obtaining buy-in at the national level could help to facilitate more extensive adoption of the CPMRS. However, successful CPMRS implementation will still require continued collaboration with provincial and TAO level authorities directly, location by location.

UNICEF Thailand staff who were interviewed for this evaluation acknowledged a “disconnect” between the CPD 2012-16 priorities and the realities of the child protection context in Thailand. They noted that the MSDHS is relatively young (approximately 10 years old) compared to other ministries in the country, and that there are still some fundamental differences between how child protection is understood in Thailand and how it is interpreted in the CRC – which has resulted in a delayed understanding of child protection needs and the political commitment required to address child protection. They also recognised the challenges for upstream work in this context, and expect that the upcoming MTR of the UNICEF Thailand CPD in 2014 will identify how to address lessons and challenges experienced to date.

4.3 Effectiveness

4.3.1 Overview

In the absence of a validated set of results (see limitations, section 1.2), the evaluation team anchored the evaluation of CPMRS effectiveness in the project's stated objectives and referred to the reconstructed results framework selectively.

This section examines the extent to which the overall objective of UNICEF's support for CPMRS and the six specific objectives over the period 2007-2012 were realised at the national, provincial and/or sub-district levels. (See section 2.3 for a list of objectives.) Findings on CPMRS effectiveness are grouped in five sub-sections below: overall project effectiveness, awareness raising, CPMS, CPRS, and knowledge generation.

Effectiveness can be defined as “the extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance”,⁴⁴ or as the answer to the question “is the activity achieving satisfactory results in relation to stated objectives?”⁴⁵

⁴⁴ OECD (2010); Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management; p. 20

⁴⁵ UNICEF (2007); Programme Policy and Procedures Manual. Programme Operations. Revised February 2007; p. 141

4.3.2 Overall CPMRS Objective

Finding 6: Due to a variety of challenging contextual factors and some unrealistic assumptions in the project design, the overall objective of CPMRS was not realised during the course of the project.

The overall objective of CPMRS was to create a model integrated child protection monitoring and response system and apply it at community, TAO and provincial levels in Thailand. UNICEF worked with a variety of partners both inside and outside of government, at national, provincial, and community levels on different CPMRS components, which were intended to function as a coordinated “model system” that could be replicated in other provinces and ultimately integrated into the Thai government infrastructure nationwide.

On the basis of information collected during the evaluation, there is as yet no established “model” system in place in Thailand that integrates the child protection monitoring and response systems. The CPMRS project model was not introduced or implemented as intended and the overall objectives or results as defined in the CPD 2007-11 were not realised (see sidebar).

Interviewed stakeholders in UNICEF, various government ministries involved with child protection in Thailand, and participating implementing partners agreed that while some elements of the CPMS and CPRS are in place in numerous TAO (as described in subsequent sections below), there is no TAO or tesaban where all components of the CPMRS model were actually introduced. In our view the adoption by TAOs of a couple of CPMRS components does not imply, nor is it equivalent to, the adoption of the CPMRS model. See also section 4.5.

Stakeholder interviews and document review suggest that the CPMRS results framework was based on some implicit assumptions/expectations that did not hold true and that impeded the implementation of CPMRS as conceptualised. These included the assumptions that there would be: Thai ownership and leadership for the CPMRS integrated model; clearly defined Thai counterparts for UNICEF to work with on the application of the model at all levels; and coordination between Thai agencies with responsibilities for child protection. While the RTG has expressed increased political commitment towards children and families in the last decade (e.g., the Child Protection Act), the project was faced with ambiguities in the structure, accountability and leadership for child protection in Thailand (at the national policy level, as well as the provincial and sub-district levels) as well as capacity and resource constraints of various Thai stakeholders. These are discussed below.

Ownership and leadership for the CPMRS – One of the challenges was building sufficient awareness, understanding and ownership for the project at the national level, particularly in MSDHS, one of the ministries designated as responsible for child protection in the 2003 Child Protection Act. This challenge is reflected in the CPMRS design (e.g., the inclusion of result 1.1b which was aimed at identifying national and provincial government focal points in order to encourage their collaboration in the projects, its expansion and sustainability). While interviewed UNICEF staff indicate that they made advocacy efforts at the national level to build Thai ownership for the CPMRS during the conceptual, design and early implementation stages (i.e., 2005-08), they had modest success. While this is perhaps not surprising, given the limitations in the development of the child protection system in Thailand as discussed in chapter 3, it

CPMRS Expectations

UNICEF Thailand CPD 2007-11, p.8

The strengthening child protection systems project will ensure timely and appropriate monitoring and data collection, responses and services, and will ensure that the policy and legislative framework for child protection is translated into action. Indicators will include functioning multi-disciplinary child protection committees and community-based responses for protection.

UNICEF Thailand CPD 2007-11, Results Framework

By 2011, functioning Child Protection systems in 25 priority provinces for prevention, monitoring, reporting and response of children affected by abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence

does call into question the approaches used to develop and institutionalise the model. In fact, the majority of persons interviewed for the evaluation, particularly at the national and TAO levels, were not aware of the CPMRS model and/or did not understand the proposed implementation as conceptualised in the project design.

Nevertheless, UNICEF Thailand was convinced that the CPMRS model would prove useful for Thailand and it had the tsunami emergency resources to support the project). It proceeded with CPMRS implementation at the provincial and community levels – believing that the results would eventually demonstrate the value of the CPMRS model, and thus encourage national ownership of and support for the project.

In 2006-07, some interest was generated at the national level (particularly within MoPH and the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development of MSDHS), but the type of government-wide commitment, support and ownership needed to support the model integrated system was never realised. In its absence, UNICEF Thailand assumed leadership for the project and implemented the project as four separate components (awareness raising, CPMS, CPRS, and knowledge management) with willing and interested partners, particularly at the provincial and community levels. While this permitted CPMRS activities to begin, it also contributed to what several persons interviewed referred to as a 'fragmented system.'

On a more positive note, the MSDHS has shown increased interest in the CPMRS since late 2011. On learning about the fragmentation in existing systems, the incoming Director General (DG) responsible for the Office of Welfare Promotion, Protection and Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups (OPP) initiated several measures to address noted challenges in 2011. This included a visit to Ranong province to examine the progress of the CPMS; the creation of an internal working group to coordinate child protection work in MSDHS led by the DG OPP; an upcoming meeting between the DG OPP and the DG of the Department of Local Administration (DLA) (MoI) to discuss collaboration at the sub-district level; and a plan to expand CPMS to four new provinces in 2013 with the technical support of INMU. Finally, the various partners within MSDHS have identified previously ear-marked funds for CPMRS which they intend to invest in system improvements. While these are relatively recent and modest steps, they are indications of increased political commitment and leadership related to child protection in Thailand.

Overlapping mandates and lack of clarity regarding responsibilities for developing a national child protection strategy and for child protection at various levels in Thailand made it difficult for UNICEF to identify and secure effective working relationships with government counterparts at the national level. As noted in section 4.3.4, three ministries have responsibilities in this regard: MSDHS, MoI and MoPH.

Coordination among agencies – The limited coordination mechanisms within and among government ministries and participating Thai agencies working in child protection at various levels, and with CPMRS implementing partners presented obstacles to the establishment of a

MSDHS does not have a presence or authority at the Tambon level where child protection monitoring and response systems are located; it is therefore obliged to coordinate directly with Tambon authorities (TAO) on an individual basis due to lack of authorisation of the CPMRS with by MoI (DLA more specifically) at the national or provincial levels.

model integrated child protection system (see sidebar). This was exacerbated by limitations with the NCPC (see section 3.5). Interviews conducted in the provinces during the evaluation revealed that coordination was weak within key ministries (e.g., MSDHS) and between ministries such as MoI (which is critical in coordinating with TAO) and MoPH (which operates the hospital-based One Stop Crisis Centres), and with other agencies and entities such as universities. Fragmentation of the child protection system structure at the provincial and sub-district levels may also be partially attributed to administrative decentralisation processes and the Ministry of the Interior's devolution of authority to the TAO level (see Volume III).

4.3.3 Awareness Raising

Finding 7: The CPMRS project has contributed to increasing awareness of and facilitating action planning on child protection in Thailand. Overall, success is most pronounced at the provincial level, with modest progress at the Tambon and national levels.

As noted in Section 3, one of the challenges in the Thai context is how child protection issues are understood, given the primary focus on addressing anti-social behaviour exhibited by children rather than protecting children from violence, abuse and exploitation (see also Volume III). As noted in the 2009 MTR of the Child Protection Programme, child protection problems are “hidden, which means that families, communities and society as a whole lack understanding of the harm being caused to children.”⁴⁶

When CPMRS was conceptualised and designed, the need to address awareness gaps at national, provincial and community levels was understood⁴⁷ and these gaps were articulated in a 2007 UNICEF study (see sidebar). However, the evaluation team is not aware of any baseline data that measured these gaps. In the absence of national or provincial survey data (either at the time of CPMRS design or at present), the evaluation team relied on the perceptions of surveyed and interviewed individuals and on CPMRS component reports and evaluations.

Objectives:

To increase awareness and facilitate action planning on child protection for TAO officials, teachers, and community members, including children and youth

To develop a child protection communication package for raising awareness, prevention, and providing necessary information for effective responses (e.g., printed and audio materials, “child line,” youth radio programs, Web site).

Within communities there was a general and widespread lack of awareness of child protection issues, child rights and of the procedures to follow. It was of great concern to find that many organisations involved with children were ignorant of laws and procedures for referring allegations of child abuse, though the training being sponsored by UNICEF is obviously having an important impact on this.

There is generally an extremely low level of understanding of child protection and children’s rights within the communities researched, and people are very reluctant to refer as they see it as a private matter rather than a public concern. There is often a strong reluctance to involve the police and ignorance about other routes for referring cases to the appropriate authorities. On the other hand, among more informed sources, the picture revealed is that child abuse, and especially child sexual abuse, is probably very widespread and seriously under-reported.

Strengthening Alternate Care Options for Children without Parental Care in the Tsunami Affected Provinces, Thailand (UNICEF 2007)

⁴⁶ MTR Child Protection Programme (UNICEF 2009) p.5

⁴⁷ These gaps were summarised in *The Model of a Comprehensive Child Protection System for Thailand* (Krueger, A., 2007). The two key gaps identified were a lack of awareness among local government officials about their duties and powers under CPA 2003 and a general lack of awareness and confusion about children’s rights, child protection issues, and legal provisions.

As discussed below, the overall success of awareness-raising activities has been mixed and modest. In many ways, this should not be surprising given the relatively modest investment and scope of awareness-building activities as compared to other CPMRS components, and the fact that increasing awareness and changing behaviours takes a long time in any context – particularly in contexts such as Thailand where deeply rooted customs and beliefs that hinder child protection.

TAO level

According to evaluations from 2008 and 2009 there were some immediate positive changes at the TAO level in both awareness and action planning following UNICEF-supported training sessions and these were echoed in the Tsunami evaluation report (see sidebar).

In more recent data collection for the evaluation (November 2012-February 2013) consulted stakeholders in all four provinces visited indicated that training and awareness-raising activities were seen positively by community members and participants and useful for education and planning purposes, but that there remains a lack of awareness of child protection issues and that further actions are needed in this area. Moreover, interviewed community representatives repeatedly note that child protection problems continue to be handled internally within the family whenever possible.

During interviews and group discussions conducted during the evaluation, team members frequently observed respondents' deeply rooted beliefs and perceptions that child protection means "keeping society safe from bad children." When asked to describe the leading child protection issues in their community, respondents frequently identified drug addiction, teenage pregnancy and motorcycle racing. Teenage pregnancy was an issue of particular concern among government officials, several of whom cited World Health Organisation statistics that Thailand is ranked first in Asia and second globally in pregnancy rates among 15 to 19-year-olds in the world, after South Africa. Their observations focused on the behaviour of children and youth, rather than on children as victims of crimes in need of assistance – an aspect of child

From Summary of the Evaluation Report (NFDC, 2008)

There is a change in the attitude of the community members participating in the project. They realise more that child protection issues are not private problems. It needs intervention from the community

From Tsunami evaluation report (2009)

All of the provincial and Tambon administrative offices visited felt that awareness had been raised in communities, schools, childcare centres and among child protection officials, both about child protection and about child rights. The trainings that UNICEF held were positively regarded.

Specific benefits noted included the opportunity to learn more about child rights and learning how to plan activities related to children's discrete developmental needs at different ages. The workshop gave them more examples of activities, as well as opportunities for sharing and learning experiences with other TAOs.

Several of the TAOs visited had developed their own initiatives on child protection. For example, one TAO had produced posters and stickers to promote child rights and child protection, with a phone number to call to report on suspected child abuse or neglect. Another TAO hosted a project by Thammasat students to make a booklet on child protection for the community.

Approach used to assess community awareness of child protection during the evaluation

To determine the general level of awareness of the CPMRS at the local level, as well as understand if and how CPMRS services are used by beneficiaries and what factors influence responses to child protection problems, the evaluation team developed a case story describing physical abuse of a young girl that was presented to service providers, community leaders, mothers, and fathers.⁴⁸ In order to understand local response patterns, participants were asked what would happen to this child if she were in their community.

⁴⁸ See Volume II, Appendix VIII.

protection that appears to be largely overlooked, even among officials with direct responsibilities for child protection.

The limited awareness at the TAO level may be due to several factors, including:

- turnover among TAO officials who are elected every four years, and limited/no child protection awareness training for newcomers;
- some CPMS indicators that focus on negative behaviours (e.g., “child perpetrators of violence” and “children using illegal drugs and alcohol”) may detract emphasis from other indicators of vulnerability (see sidebar)
- the absence of institutionalised awareness-raising training programmes and materials that are used on an on-going basis at the TAO and other levels. One of the CPMRS project objectives (objective 2) was to develop a communications package, and several communication strategies and tools were developed by INMU in 2007. However, the evaluation team did not find any evidence that these have continued to be used and maintained over time, or if/where they are institutionalised. On the positive side, it does appear that the Case Manager training module has positively influenced the class materials for the Department of Social Work in Thammasat University (see also section 4.4, Sustainability).

High risk indicators used by the CPMS include: child perpetrators of violence; children ever using illegal drugs, tobacco or alcohol; children ever receiving protection services; children with health challenges; homeless children; child migrants (alone); domestic violence; households with members in trouble with the law; Household addiction to illegal drugs, alcohol or gambling.⁴⁹

Provincial level

Several provincial authorities interviewed (including PSDHS Heads and provincial governors) expressed interest in expanding both the CPMS and Case Manager / NFDC models to additional TAO within their provinces. Provincial officials appreciated the role of Case Managers which they said helps them gain access to communities and coordinate with TAO authorities; and many provincial officials felt that the CPMS database would be valuable for their work, although the majority were not currently using it extensively.

However, in interviews at the provincial level, the evaluation team found that there is a continued focus on children’s harmful behaviours. Moreover, while Ranong province is frequently cited as a key CPMRS “success”, Case Managers interviewed during the evaluation reported that they have no time for child protection responsibilities and/or limited understanding of child protection (see section 4.3.5).

⁴⁹ To follow in the revised version

National level

Evaluation data suggest that awareness-raising actions at the national level have resulted in some increased understanding and commitment to addressing child protection issues, but that commitments vary among and within RTG ministries. While awareness and commitment was quite modest at the time of CPMRS design, over the course of the project several key ministries and/or departments within some key ministries became actively involved in CPMRS implementation using UNICEF and/or their own human and financial resources (see sidebar). Without detracting from these actions, if RTG's awareness, commitment and support were assessed using indicators such as the number of CPMRS outputs institutionalised or replicated, it would not receive a positive assessment.

Mixed awareness and actions by RTG Ministries

The Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (OWAFD) played a key role with UNICEF in creating the concept of New Family Development Centres and in implementing this sub project as part of CPMRS. It also started to contribute financially to the project and assumed responsibility for the training of Case Managers (which had been managed by Thammasat University)

In the Ministry of Public Health (which engaged in a CPMRS sub project aimed at strengthening the capacity of OSCC staff in southern border provinces), interviewed officials did not appear to be aware of the CPMRS or have a clear understanding of the role of the OSCC in the CPMRS response mechanism

In the Department of Local Administration (MoI) and MSHDS: Over the course of the project, there was limited progress in building commitment, but this has changed recently in MSDHS where there has been increased interest and action, including the creation of an internal working group and plans to expand some CPMRS components into other provinces.

4.3.4 Child Protection Monitoring System

Finding 8: The stated objective of the CPMS component was partially realised. Shortcomings and concerns relate to the reliability and utility of the information generated by the system and the disconnect between the CPMS and the child protection response system in Thailand.

The Child Protection Monitoring System (CPMS) component was intended to establish a child protection monitoring (surveillance) system at the TAO or sub-district level that would be linked to the child protection response system (CPRS) component of the CPMRS. The CPMS was developed and implemented through a partnership with the INMU, which piloted the system in three TAO in 2006, and was eventually expanded to over 100 TAO by 2011.

The CPMS functions under the authority of three Ministries: i) the Ministry of the Interior (which oversees the TAO through the DLA); ii) the Ministry of Public Health (responsible for the Community Health Volunteers who collect the data; and iii) the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (through PSDHS). Throughout CPMS implementation, there was no inter-ministerial coordination mechanism that provided oversight for CPMS; INMU instead worked directly with interested provinces and TAO.

From the perspective of the stated objective (see sidebar), the project was successful in developing and providing training for a large number of TAO in Thailand over the project period. As of June 2012, INMU reported that the CPMS was operating

Objective: To develop, provide training and follow up for a child protection monitoring system (CPMS) established at the TAO level - covering all children in all communities of each participating TAO - and with links to provincial monitoring and response systems.

in over 191 TAO in ten provinces across Thailand, as shown in Exhibit 4.1 below. While interviews with key stakeholders indicate that a portion of the CPMS systems were developed independently – an indication of awareness, interest and buy-in from those participating provinces and TAO – at the time of

finalizing this report, the evaluation team was only able to locate information on Ranong⁵⁰; unable to obtain quantifiable information on this across participating provinces.

The CPMS is the project component that provincial governments appear most interested in expanding / replicating, in some cases with their own funding (see sidebar). Their interest also reflects the perceived lack of local level information within provincial government agencies; respondents hope that this information will help them get a better grasp of the community level situation.

At April 2012, INMU reported that 69 of 191 (or 36 per cent) TAO/Tesaban were self-funded, while the rest received funds from: the NCPC (33 per cent), New Family Development Centres (18 per cent), or Provincial Child Protection Funds (13 per cent). At the time of writing, it was not known if/how this funding mix had changed.

Exhibit 4.1 CPMS Implementation by Province (June 2012)

Province	No of TAO/Tesaban
Trang	18
Krabi	16
Phang-nga	41
Ranong	30
Ubol Ratchatani	8
Phayao	4
Phuket	1
Satun	4
Suphanburi	39
Songkhla	30
TOAL	191

While the CPMS component was successful in terms of the number of systems developed in TAO, it was less successful in several other respects as described below.

Weak Link with CPRS

The original plan that the CPMS would be integrated with the child response systems in Thailand never materialised due to RTG policy and contextual reasons discussed in Section 3.4.2 and further elaborated on in Volume III. CPMS was implemented by one bureau of the MSDHS and the response system by another.

While beyond the control of those implementing the CPMS component, this meant that the CPMS was a stand-alone system, with reduced potential benefits and utility in addressing child protection needs in Thailand. Interviews and document review confirmed the weak links between the CPMS and existing child protection systems in Thailand. These issues, which are described in detail in Volume II of this report, were flagged in the INMU Progress Report (December 2010) which stated:

- Though the CPMS has made good progress in expanding geographically and in building local capacity for child protection, its success does not and cannot rest only on collecting data and developing plans at sub-district and provincial levels. These activities aim largely at prevention.*

⁵⁰ INMU's June 2012 progress report indicates that in 2012, seven (of 30) TAO in Ranong use their own budget to conduct the CPMS.

For the CPMS to be truly effective, and to contribute to ensuring its sustainability, steps must be taken to make it a firmer part of Thailand's child protection response system, with CPMS data being used for both prevention and for responding to cases of child victims and those at high risk.

- *What has not been fully realised is that proper monitoring should involve mechanisms to ensure proper response to cases of child victims that are uncovered as well as mechanisms for preventing those children at high risk from becoming victims [...] within most Provincial SDHS Offices, and between these Offices and Emergency Shelters, those working on the CPMS and those working on CPRS initiatives do so separately and not as a united front for child protection. The major exception here is Ranong province⁵¹.*
- *As a result, one valuable "Next Step" towards child protection in Thailand is to go back to the roots of the CPMS project and re-energise the integrated Child Protection Monitoring and Response System so that more coordinated, systems-based and timely monitoring, prevention and response actions can be taken in the best interest of the child.*

While UNICEF reports that some strong and deliberate measures were taken to link CPMS and CPRS since 2011, this occurred almost at the end of the CPMRS program, too late to have any significant effect on the results of CPMRS project that ended in 2012.

However, since 2011 when OPP took the lead and established a child protection working group under the leadership of the Director General (DG), CPMRS has been brought to the agenda of the Ministry. The DG is now monitoring, allocating resources and providing oversight, which has helped to clarify and increase accountability for the CPMRS.

Accuracy of Information

Interview respondents familiar with the data collection process in all four provinces visited noted problems with the quality and accuracy of the data collected. PSDHS staff and Case

"Community health volunteers are the ones who actually collect the data. We have to trust the data collectors, because they are close to the communities. We cannot look into the details of every case, we [Case Managers] are not as close to the communities"

Case Manager, Ubon Ratchathani

Managers cited examples of missing or unclear information, as well as the data collectors' lack of understanding of the data collection criteria and information needed as illustrated below:

- In Suphanburi, when the first round of data collection was completed, a TAO committee meeting was held to review the tabulated information. Members were surprised by information that appeared incorrect. Case Managers were then responsible for following up and crosschecking information collected.
- In Ranong, Case Managers explained that the data collectors had difficulty communicating with community members, many of whom are Burmese migrants. They reported witnessing volunteers completing forms themselves and a case was submitted of a two-year-old child addicted to drugs and abusing alcohol, which was clearly inaccurate. Several respondents noted that volunteers at times added their personal thoughts and perspectives into the information submitted, which affected the quality of the data collected.
- Community members in Trang province noted that data collectors sometimes do not actually meet with families to collect information, but rely on their familiarity with the community to complete the survey forms without checking with individuals directly.

⁵¹In Ranong there there appeared to be more coordination between the Children's Reception Home, PSDHS staff and CMs. However, coordination with the OSCC (where the majority of Child Protection cases are identified) was limited and in Ranong, as in other locations, CMs were not actually dealing with Child Protection cases.

- In the TAO where fieldwork was conducted in Trang province, data is no longer being collected annually as per the original CPMS plan. Due to lack of funding, volunteers now collect data on an on-going and more informal basis and additional volunteers who have not received training have been recruited to support data collection.

Purpose and utility of information generated

Interviewed frontline workers and community members in the four provinces had mixed views on the purpose and utility of the information generated by the CPMS in their locale:

- The information generated by the CPMS was used by the Office for Information Technology (MSDHS) which published a booklet on CPMS and analysed CPMS data for the years 2007 and 2009.
- OSCC staff interviewed had not seen or used the CPMS database, although when this was described to them, several felt that this information might be helpful.
- Provincial level service providers felt that the data could be useful for monitoring the current situation, planning, and designing prevention activities for specific target groups. However it is not clear that this is actually being done at present or which child protection service providers outside of PSDHS have access to the database information. One official commented that if TAO were mandated by the central government to address teenage pregnancy, policymakers could potentially use the database to set target numbers for prevention campaigns.
- Service providers in several locations, apart from Ranong, felt that while the information from the database is useful, their ability to use this information effectively is limited due to the fact that in many provinces CPMS geographic coverage remains incomplete. A senior official in Ubon Ratchathani stated that the CPMS database has the potential to provide detailed information about child protection at the community level to improve the ability of the government to effectively address problems. However, the usefulness of this information is very limited as only five of the more than 200 TAO in Ubon Ratchathani province are currently represented in the database. The same respondent expressed interest in expanding the CPMS to all TAO in Ubon Ratchathani and appreciated the effort of the TAO in implementing this programme.
- In several provinces, Children's Reception Homes have access to the CPMS database and use the information to crosscheck reports received and to respond to child protection cases referred through the 1300 hotline. The degree of utilisation of the database information appears to vary significantly by location.
 - In Ranong province, for example, data is available on 80 per cent of all children in the province. Information on mobile families who move frequently across the border with Myanmar is reportedly less reliable. However, the database includes both Thai and non-Thai children and it is possible to enter information about a child who does not have a 13-digit Thai identification number, if this is unavailable. Service providers in Ranong province stated that the database provides useful updated information for child protection planning at provincial and community levels, as well as for responding to child protection cases.
 - Staff from the Children's Reception Home in Trang province stated that while they have access to the database in the Reception Home, they do not look at the information in detail. If a child is identified as high risk, the Case Manager is supposed to report this to the Reception Home Social Worker⁵². Reception Home staff will then conduct outreach to the child and their family, inviting them to participate in community programmes and activities.

⁵² It is unclear if the reporting process works in the way described. Interviews suggest that there is a significant gap in what 'should' happen in theory and actual practice. CMs and Reception Home staff, for example, were unable to

- Apart from Children's Reception Homes in some provinces, other agencies including the OSCC, police, and education service units have reportedly never seen the database or used CPMS data. Integration of the CPMS with the government system on a wider scale appears limited. Service providers explained that the database is generally known only within a limited group of involved agencies. Interviews conducted with OSCC staff at the provincial level indicated that OSCCs do not generally have access to the CPMS database information. In some cases, such as Ranong province, the OSCC reportedly submits data via fax to PSDHS for inclusion in the database, but in the majority of locations OSCC staff were unfamiliar with the existence or purpose of the CPMS and did not appear to share child protection data with Case Managers or PSDHS.
- NFDC members also expressed concern regarding the lack of clarity around the objectives of the data collection process and use of information, particularly among the villagers from whom data is collected. A data collector participating in the discussion added that he did not fully understand the objectives of the data collection or the purpose of this process. NFDC members suggested that communication with communities to clearly explain the objectives of the monitoring system and how data is used should be strengthened to improve collaboration at the local level.
- PSDHS reported lack of interest from some TAO level authorities, who *"do not see the necessity of the use of database or the role of the TAO in child protection."* Coordination with the TAO represents a significant structural obstacle for the viability of the CPMRS and was highlighted in all provinces where fieldwork was conducted. This issue is discussed in more detail from a system perspective in Volume III.

Multiple data collection systems

Interviews suggest that there is significant confusion between the CPMS and the Basic Minimum Needs (BMN) survey conducted by MoI, for which the Case Manager also appears to be responsible. The community level data for this survey is collected by the same Health Volunteers who are responsible for collecting the CPMS data, adding to the confusion.

Interviews at the TAO level (where the data are collected) revealed that everyone involved was confused (see sidebar). The data collection process is supposed to be led by the Case Manager but in some locations where data was not collected, this was reportedly due to confusion between the CPMRS and the BMN. A related issue is that the data collected is designed to be analysed and used at the TAO level, which clearly cannot happen if Case Managers cannot differentiate between CPMRS data and BMN data.

Community leaders in Suphanburi also noted that they have worked with Mahidol University to develop a database that collects information about child related problems, but were unable to explain why or how this information is used.

Basic minimum needs (BMN)

The BMN information system has been implemented since 1985, with a household survey conducted annually. The objective of the survey is to improve the "quality of life through enabling local people and communities to meet their own basic minimum needs." Since 1990, the Department of Community Development, Ministry of the Interior has coordinated BMN data collection in rural areas and updated indicators in accordance with national social and economic development plans.

(<http://dataverse.dvn.utcc.ac.th/dvn/dv/cdd>).

Community leaders in Ubon Ratchathani, for example, only knew about the BMN database and were not aware of the CPMS.

In Suphanburi, confusion between the CPMS data collection and the government Basic Minimum Needs Survey apparently resulted in the failure to collect CPMS data in several TAO.

provide more than a few specific examples of this taking place and it was primarily in less sensitive cases of poverty or neglect.

TAO Workloads

As the primary local government unit, TAO level staff is responsible for collecting a wide range of community data for many different ministries. For the PSDHS alone, the TAO staff is expected to collect data on the disabled, elderly, and other vulnerable groups. The Department of Community Development under the Ministry of Interior, the agency directly responsible for the TAO, also collects separate database information. As a result TAO staff and volunteers at the community level responsible for data collection are overburdened and confused about the types of information required and what to prioritise. This is exacerbated by the perception that a significant amount of the data collected is not being effectively analysed or used. As a result, the TAO staff in some locations is not motivated to support additional or new data collection processes such as the CPMS.

In Suphanburi, for example, the provincial government has established a community monitoring system called “e-Care” that collects detailed data on all households in the province. This system appears to be a priority of the government and PSDHS has worked with Mahidol University to look at possibilities for integrating the CPMS data with e-Care. The 13-digit individual identification number was added to the CPMS database records at the request of the provincial government in an effort to facilitate this.

In some locations, Case Managers were appreciative of the training and technical support provided, but expressed frustration with the perceived lack of attention from Mahidol and central level authorities to the challenges and community level issues faced in collecting data.

When Mahidol and central level authorities come to monitor, they just check to see if the system was in place. They just want to get the outcomes of the data and do not look at the details or ask about our challenges. We understand that can be difficult to look at all the details at the community level – they are big government people and are very busy. We don’t want to make more trouble and try to make it run smoothly.

Case Manager

CPMS model and learning

While there has been significant learning by INMU during CPMS component implementation, the learning tends to be about a stand-alone system, rather than an integrated one, reducing its potential value to others who might want to develop an integrated system in the future.

Related to this, while INMU established linkages with government counterparts at the provincial and local (TAO) levels during the implementation phase, the CPMS was

Even in places where there is not CPMS, assistance is being provided to children by local government-is CPMS therefore necessary?

MSDHS official

never authorised by the government at the central level. (An effort was reportedly made to present the CPMRS to the NCPC, but this never happened (only the Case Manual was presented and approved). UNICEF has stated that effort to work with MSDHS at the national level only began in recent years.) As a consequence, several key central government officials interviewed for the evaluation reported that they had limited to no knowledge of CPMS; some even questioned the rationale for such a system (see sidebar).

The extent to which sufficient attention was paid to knowledge management in all CPMRS components including CPMS is addressed in section 4.3.6.

4.3.5 Child Protection Response System

The Child Protection Response System (CPRS) was intended to establish or strengthen the child protection system in Thailand (see sidebar). As part of the CPMRS design, UNICEF supported a couple of key activities: the restructuring of several Family Development Centres into New Family Development Centres and the development of a Child Protection Manual. Some support was also provided to MoPH for OSCCs in the southern provinces.

Objectives:

To establish or strengthen an integrated child protection response system (CPRS) for preventative and emergency actions at community, TAO, district, and provincial levels (including persons, procedures, legal ramifications and accountability).

To increase the capacity of social workers and para-social workers to provide effective child protection services

Finding 9: CPMRS support contributed to establishing New Family Development Centres with trained Case Managers. The effectiveness of this initiative in strengthening the child protection response system has been compromised by limited awareness and confusion about the role of Case Managers.

The RTG established Family Development Centres (FDCs) in 2004. The purpose of these community-based centres was to provide counselling and other support services to mobilise communities and opportunities to develop and strengthen families, including family planning and health-related services.⁵³

Under CPMRS, UNICEF supported the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (OWAFD) under MSDHS to restructure these units into New Family Development Centres (NFDC), building upon the FDC model by adding a professional service component to the community-based network approach. The objective was to address a gap identified at the outset of the project between provincial level formal child protection services and children and families at the community level.

FDCs and NFDCs

The primary difference between the FDC and NFDC is the presence of the Case Manager and training provided to staff as part of their participation in the CPMRS project.

In an effort to bridge a gap that was identified at the local level following the tsunami, the Case Manager position was established to provide a link between children, families and formal system services. Key responsibilities (also see sidebar)

include: acting as a focal point for children's issues at the TAO level; supporting implementation of the child protection monitoring system; and promoting TAO budget allocation for child protection prevention and response services.⁵⁵ Through the CPMRS, UNICEF provided financial support for training selected Case Managers and also paid their salaries in selected TAO in the first year. After that initial period, TAO were expected to assume responsibility for Case Managers' salaries.

According to the job description developed for the Case Manager position, this staff member is part of the local administration and is responsible for "developing and adopting better strategies and approaches in order to address major risk and vulnerability factors for children and youth".⁵⁴

⁵³ UNICEF, New Family Development Centres Framework 2007

⁵⁴ TAO Case Manager Job Description, UNICEF Thailand.

⁵⁵ Ibid

Under the initial project design, UNICEF supported the recruitment and salaries of 15 social work students who were trained and appointed as Case Managers in 2008. According to OWAFD staff interviewed, this did not work well because the Case Managers were not members of the local community. Local government authorities proposed that TAO officials instead be trained as Case Managers, with no additional salary support required. Under this new model the number of Case Managers increased from 15 to 29 Case Managers in 2009. In 2010, this increased to 60 Case Managers, and OWAFD has received funding from an external agency to add another 40 Case Managers between 2012 and 2014. The goal is to expand to 300 TAO.

While this increase appears to be a positive improvement, it must be understood within context. First, Case Managers are now local government officials rather than trained social workers (as intended in the original CPMRS design) and often have no child protection background. Second, TAO officials nominated as Case Managers already have a full workload of primary responsibilities within the TAO and therefore do not always have time to follow through on their case management responsibilities which are perceived as additional work. Giving TAO staff additional titles does not mean that a child protection response system has been effectively implemented. Indeed, the fieldwork indicated that child protection cases (including several specific ongoing cases identified during the research process) are not being responded to.

The Case Manager (CM) Role

The full job description of the TAO Case Manager is presented in Volume II, Appendix XII. The Case Manager (CM) is the human link between the ‘client’ (child-family) and the system and the only service provider concerned with and responsible for the whole client. The CM is assigned to the TAO and is responsible for coordinating and providing services in favour of children and families. The CM is part of the Local Administration and contributes in developing and adopting better strategies and approaches in order to address major risk and vulnerability factors for children and youth. Specific responsibilities include:

- Function as the focal point for children issues at the Tambon level; working with other TAO officials and all relevant professionals of other services at the TAO level and relevant community based organizations and volunteers.
- Responsible for the proper functioning of the child protection monitoring system and the analysis of the data
- Responsible for the promotion of suitable TAO planning and budget allocation for preventing and addressing child protection violations in the communities.

Interviews with provincial stakeholders and the document review suggest that to date, the appointment of Case Managers has not made any notable change to child protection response in visited TAO. While respondents were generally able to identify the Case Manager’s role in terms of community coordination and referrals, they did not highlight any specific role played by Case Managers related to child protection (see sidebar).

This role ambiguity vis-à-vis child protection was confirmed by interviewed Case Managers (who often carry the formal title of TAO Community Development Officer)

Members of the NFDC in Suphanburi were confused about the CM role and responsibilities. Respondents were uncertain what types of cases can be referred to the CM and what action the CM is authorised to take.

NFDC members in Ubon and Trang had a clearer understanding of the CM role, which was viewed as being responsible for: coordination with other agencies; budget management and allocation; documents and filing; and organising community activities. NFDC members in Trang province stated that the CM’s work focuses on coordination, referral and support.

Community leaders in Ranong felt that community members were generally aware of the CM role which is seen as an intermediary role between community members and the TAO authorities, which was perceived as helpful.

who expressed confusion with regard to their responsibilities and appropriate level of involvement in child protection cases. When asked to describe their role, the majority of Case Managers interviewed stated that their primary responsibilities involve advocacy, prevention, education and awareness. One consulted Case Manager commented that they are also responsible for “*skill development, income generation and looking after the social welfare of all community members from birth to death*” as well as following up on cases and working with families to ensure access to services. In all visited TAO, responsibility for case management has been given to an existing staff member in the TAO in addition to their on-going duties (which can include tax collection, general community development, acting as an assistant to senior TAO officials, etc.). While OWAFD explained that this was a cost-saving measure adopted when government took on responsibility for the CM, this approach also has the effect of minimising the visibility of the Case Managers’ role in child protection and the time that they have to dedicate to such responsibilities. This also represents a major challenge for effective implementation of the CPMRS. Many Case Managers interviewed recommended that a specific dedicated CM position be created in the TAO. This decision would have to be made by the MoI at the national level.

Moreover, interviewed community members were also sceptical about involving an “outsider” such as a Case Manager in a situation of abuse or violence against a child, reflecting deeply rooted beliefs. Community members stated that only families who ‘have a close relationship’ with the Case Manager would contact them for assistance. An initial motivation for appointing TAO staff as Case Managers was to avoid recruiting someone from outside the community for this role, which would in theory improve accessibility and build trust with communities.

Case Managers’ Authority

Apart from a small number of Case Managers who have attended the training for Competent Officials, the majority of Case Managers do not have the authority to intervene in a child protection case without the cooperation and consent of the family and relatives. Their primary role is to conduct follow-up and investigate a case and report this information to PSDHS, TAO, the Children’s Reception Home, or other authorities named as Competent Officials under the CPA as appropriate for assistance (see sidebar). While some Case Managers felt that this limited their ability to effectively ensure the protection of children in their communities and suggested that they be authorised to take action in child protection cases, others were strongly opposed to this. Many Case Managers stated that they did not want this authority, as they felt this would put them in danger and add to the many responsibilities they already have. The majority of Case Managers felt that it would be extremely risky to have this responsibility and preferred to rely on others for help. In several provinces (Ubon, Trang) Case Managers described several on-going serious child abuse cases they were aware of in their communities but were unable to take action to assist the child victim.

The Head of the TAO Administration, Head of the Provincial Administrative Office, Head of Municipality, and TAO authorities (named as Competent Officials under the CPA 2003) have authority to take action and remove children if needed, but this rarely happens. These authorities reportedly pass cases on to the Case Manager to deal with, although the Case Manager has no authority to intervene if a child is in danger.

Inter-agency coordination

The level and quality of coordination between the TAO-based Case Managers and other child protection agencies appeared to vary by location and agency. PSDHS officials and staff of the Children’s Reception Homes report that Case Managers have helped facilitate community access to

The OSCC is responsible for addressing immediate physical needs while the victim is in the hospital and may contact the Children’s Reception Home upon discharge if there is concern about the safety of the child. However, the OSCC does not have the capacity or mandate to conduct follow-up once the child has returned to the community. This is where the Case Manager could play an important role, but at present this linkage does not appear to have been made in most of the locations where fieldwork was conducted.

services, and that Case Managers contact the Children's Reception Home to request financial support for poor families on occasion, as the Home and PSDHS have funds to address educational and financial needs. However, Case Managers appear to have significantly less interaction with the One Stop Crisis Centres. Case Managers themselves in several locations stated that they have not worked directly with the OSCC, and OSCC staff did not appear to be aware of the Case Manager role (see sidebar).

In some locations, consulted Case Managers reported that they had never handled a child protection case, although some had been working in the same location for up to five years. While some Case Managers and TAO officials said this was because there were no child protection issues in their areas, this contradicts data collected from Children's Reception Homes and OSCCs which report a significant number of cases. This is corroborated by national level hospital/OSCC data shown in Exhibit 4.2.

Overall, the effectiveness of the NFDC initiative in addressing child protection response appears to be compromised by: the significant lack of community awareness of the role of Case Managers; ambiguities in others' perception and understanding of their role and level of involvement in child protection cases; Case Managers' heavy workloads and limited authority. There is no evidence that the addition of a Case Manager to Family Development Centre increases the community's ability to address child protection needs any better than centres that do not have such support. The limited attention paid to such questions and analysis throughout CPMRS implementation is a concern that is addressed in Section 4.3.6.

Exhibit 4.2 Cases of Violence against Women and Children Reported by Hospitals/OSCC (National)⁵⁶

YEAR	Number of Hospitals/OSCC	Number of Cases Reported
2007	297	19,067
2008	582	26,631
2009	602	23,499
2010		25,744

Finding 10: The Child Protection Manual provided operational protocols for child protection response in piloted provinces, but has not been integrated or applied nationally to strengthen the child protection response system in Thailand.

The Manual of Protocol and Procedures for Preventing and Responding to Children at Risk of Abuse, Neglect, Violence and Exploitation, also known as the Child Protection Manual, was developed in an effort to strengthen the child protection response system, particularly in terms of coordinating between key agencies. In 2008 the Child Protection Manual was implemented in four southern provinces (Krabi, Phangnga, Ranong, and Phuket). Following approval by the National Child Protection Committee, use of the manual was expanded to four other provinces (Satun, Trang, Ubon Ratchathani and Lampoon).⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Bureau of Health System Development. *Situation of Violence Against Women and Children*. PowerPoint Presentation, 29 January 2010.

⁵⁷ The Child Protection Manual was not implemented in Suphanburi Province.

During the evaluation fieldwork, interview and group discussion participants were asked if they were aware of the Child Protection Manual and, if so, how they used it in their daily child protection work. Interviews in three provinces visited suggest that there is mixed awareness and use of the manual, as demonstrated below (see also sidebar).

In a survey of CPMRS frontline workers in the 4 provinces visited during the evaluation

- 60% of respondents had heard of the Child Protection Manual, the remaining 40% had not or did not know
- of those who had heard of the manual, 77% said they thought it was being used by service providers

Ranong

- Service providers in Ranong stated that the Child Protection Manual has been useful for facilitating coordination of different agencies involved in the multidisciplinary team in response to cases of child abuse. The team has adapted the intake form to make it consistent with the Child Protection Act reporting mechanism and to facilitate its use. The intake form has helped reduce overlap among the work of different agencies and was based on a general agreement among coordinating agencies. The adaptations have not been formally incorporated into the manual, as an official change of protocol may require formal authorisation. Service providers noted that one limitation to effective use of the Child Protection Manual is its physical size, which is inconvenient to carry in the field. It was also recommended that the manual be adopted in an MOU at the Ministry level (in addition to the provincial level) to improve coordination and linkages with TAO local administration.
- Case Managers in Ranong were unfamiliar with the Child Protection Manual, noting that they have several manuals that they work with.

Ubon Ratchathani

- Service providers in Ubon Ratchathani stated that several key multidisciplinary team (MDT) members (including the Prosecutor for Children, Youth and Family) had never seen the Child Protection Manual. Representatives of the police said they had seen the manual but do not review or use it regularly. However, other MDT members (such as PSDHS officials, education officers, public health officers) report that they “actively use the manual) to support processes for assisting children and guiding their work.
- PSDHS staff commented on the usefulness of the diagram of steps to be taken in response to a case (p.64-65), the diagram of concerned agencies to be involved in a child protection case (p.100), and the detailed explanation provided of the roles of different agencies.
- Service providers recommended that specific sections of the manual be updated, including names of the agencies listed in service directory as these are now out-dated due to the introduction of new services. The information on key child protection issues dealt with in the past (p.21) would also benefit from revision to reflect current data.
- Case Managers, OSCC officials, and Children’s Reception Home staff interviewed in Ubon Ratchathani did not appear to be familiar with or regularly use the Child Protection Manual.

Trang

- Case Managers and Children’s Reception Home Staff in Trang Province did not appear to be familiar with or use the Child Protection Manual on a regular basis. Reception Home staff stated that they have their own internal guidelines and procedures that they follow to guide their work.
- PSDHS officials stated that the Child Protection Manual was distributed to all schools and TAO in the province, in an effort to improve access to available services. However, no clear information was available about the actual level of utilisation of the manual by school and TAO authorities.

The mixed feedback on the Child Protection Manual in the provinces visited raises questions about the extent to which is helping to strengthen the Child Protection Response System as intended. Moreover, while the Child Protection Manual was endorsed by the NCPC in May 2009, this action does not obligate provinces to adopt the manual. Thus there is no expectation or guarantee that it could be replicated in other provinces in Thailand; it is up to each province to decide. As noted in previously reviewed components, the limited attention paid during CPMRS implementation to the value-added of this component over time has meant that there is little or no evidence to justify its value or continued development.

4.3.6 Knowledge Management

Finding 11: The CPMRS project objective to document progress was only partially realised as modest attention was paid over time to tracking, reporting on, and sharing progress and lessons learned.

One of the objectives of CPMRS was to document the project's processes, progress, and lessons learned, with the implicit purpose of disseminating this

Objective: Documentation of the project process, including an evaluation of its effectiveness, for expansion and advocacy purposes

information to other interested parties inside and outside of Thailand. Such information was important given both the "model" nature of the project and UNICEF's objective to demonstrate the benefits of such an initiative to RTG. The reconstructed results framework suggests that the activities and results associated with this objective included the preparation of advocacy and process documentation, monitoring mechanisms, and a couple of evaluations (including this current evaluation).

A review of UNICEF Thailand documents and files related to CPMRS, as well as interviews with key staff who were involved in the project over time, suggest that most of the available project documentation was generated by CPMRS project implementers whose reports described the activities and outputs associated with the components for which they were responsible. The reports produced by INMU were an exception, as these generally provided additional analysis, highlighted constraints, and identified lessons. The lack of documentation on project progress became evident during the Inception Phase when the evaluation team experienced difficulties in locating key documents; this is flagged as a limitation in Section 1.

Interviewed UNICEF Thailand staff reported that they did not prepare periodic reports (annual or otherwise) on overall CPMRS progress (planned to actual), or on lessons or actions required to improve project performance. They noted that after the Tsunami team based in the affected provinces was disbanded, there were few resources available to monitor and report on CPMRS progress. While they had some resources for occasional visits to the Tsunami-affected provinces after 2008, these visits were typically used to address specific issues and not to monitor or report on the overall performance of the CPMRS.

UNICEF staff reported that a meeting of UNICEF partners in 2009 included a high level review of CPMRS and discussed overall programme performance. This culminated in the Mid Term Review of Child Protection in Thailand for the period 2007-10.

The MTR report noted that the project had had some success but that "*the model was still in development phase with lessons feeding into continuous development of the model*".⁵⁸ It identified several challenges and lessons learned related to the context for child protection in Thailand which appear relevant to CPMRS (e.g., the absence of high level commitments to child protection in Thailand, fragmentation within MSHDS vis-à-vis its response to children, turnover in senior government officials, limited number of partners to support strengthening child protection systems, political and cultural sensitivities, weaknesses in child

⁵⁸ UNICEF MTR Child Protection (2009) p.1

protection data, and the need to ensure that policy and legislative changes at the national level translate into real changes at the local level).

The MTR identified several adjustments to the Child Protection Programme and UNICEF's institutional arrangements (including: the need to support advocacy at the NCPC and with provincial governors; the need to generate evidence about child protection systems, gaps, strengths; the need for a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation; the need to support national capacity building (particularly for MSDHS and the NCPC). The MTR flagged some specific limitations related to the CPMRS (see sidebar) but did not include any specific recommendations related to CPMRS.

CPMRS Limitations

CPMRS piloting did not follow the specific guidance on piloting from the UNICEF Programme and Procedures Manual

Child Protection Programme MTR 2009 (p.10)

Reasons for the lack of attention to knowledge management and monitoring likely include the heavy workloads of UNICEF staff during the post Tsunami period (2006-07); the reduced numbers of UNICEF staff and resources for monitoring from 2008-2012. As a result, various opportunities for learning and finessing CPMRS implementation were lost, with negative effects of CPMRS effectiveness, relevance and sustainability.

4.4 Sustainability

According to the OECD, sustainability is the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed; the probability of continued long-term benefits; the resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.⁵⁹ UNICEF expands this definition by assessing the sustainability of a project through the following questions:

- *Are the activities and their [results] likely to continue when external support is withdrawn?*
- *Will the strategy be more widely replicated or adapted? Is it likely to go to scale?*⁶⁰

This section examines the sustainability of CPMRS results (outputs or outcomes) that have been realised to date.

Finding 12: It is not likely that CPMRS results will be sustained without the investment of considerable additional effort and resources.

To date, the CPMRS project has achieved several of its planned outputs and a few outcomes as shown in Exhibit 4.3 below. The CPMRS design did not include a component or strategy that emphasised sustainability of outcomes. An analysis of the potential sustainability of these results within the relevant local, provincial and/or national contexts in Thailand suggests that few will be sustained in the future without the investment of considerable additional effort and resources.

⁵⁹ OECD (2010); Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management; p. 36

⁶⁰ UNICEF (2007); Programme Policy and Procedure Manual. Programme Operations. Revised February 2007; p. 141

Exhibit 4.3 Assessment of the Sustainability of CPMRS Outputs and Outcomes

Objective	CPMRS outputs	CPMRS outcomes	Likelihood of sustainability	Explanations
Development of a model integrated child protection and monitoring system			Not applicable	The integrated model was never developed, thus there is no system to be sustained.
Awareness raising	Increased awareness of individuals who received training		Medium	There is some evidence that individuals who participated in training events will sustain the knowledge gained. However, it is not evident that this will have any ripple effects on others.
	Communications materials	None	Unknown	While communications and training materials were developed by Mahidol, at the time of writing it was not known if they have been institutionalised in RTG; if they have been updated or further developed over time; and if/how they are being used on an on-going basis.
CPMS	CPMS systems established in over 190 Tambon in Thailand ⁶¹	CPMS information	Unknown	A focus of the CPMS in recent years has been to encourage provincial PSDHS offices and TAO to take greater responsibility for CPMS implementation. According to INMU quarterly reports, this has been increasingly successful, with local officials taking over responsibility for data collection, data entry, cost of training, and general oversight of CPMS implementation. However, there are some concerns about the financial viability of the CPMS system in TAOs. While several have been successful in mobilising their own and other resources to support CPMS implementation locally, ongoing support for CPMS is not guaranteed (for example by being provided for in national budgets). The effective implementation of CPMS requires inter-ministerial cooperation among Mol, MSDHS and MoPH, which is still nascent. Interviewed TAOs report data collection fatigue- given that they need to collect data for a number of different systems including BHN, education, etc.

⁶¹ As noted earlier, it is not known how many are functioning at the time of writing (April 2013)

Objective	CPMRS outputs	CPMRS outcomes	Likelihood of sustainability	Explanations
CPRS	NFDCs exist and have a Case Manager		Low	While NFDCs have appointed individuals to act as Case Managers, consulted Case Managers report having little time and modest resources to carry out those responsibilities on top of their normal duties. Moreover, several ambiguities about their role prevent them from carrying out their assigned role. Some Case Managers lack the training and /or experience to carry out the responsibilities.
	Child Protection Manual created		Low	The Child Protection Manual is known and used in some visited TAO, but it appears that no one at the provincial level has taken responsibility for keeping it up to date. At the national level, there are reports of interest in replicating the manual in some provinces. However, despite being endorsed by NCPC several years ago, it is not clear that the NCPC or any RTG ministry has assumed ownership for the manual, or that any ministry is promoting and encouraging others to use it.
Knowledge Generation	None with the exception of the current evaluation report		Not applicable	While CPMRS was a pilot project (intended to generate a model integrated child protection and response system) there was no attention paid or resources invested in the learning component throughout the project.

The main reasons for the lack of sustainability of CPMRS results include:

- The modest levels of understanding and ownership of the CPMRS at the national level, and the absence of clear institutional “homes” for CPMRS results. While CPMS systems, communications materials and a Child Protection Manual have been developed, it is not clear who in the government is the champion for these initiatives, with the responsibility and motivation to encourage or require others to use, adapt, and maintain such results over time.
- There are varying degrees of understanding and support for the CPMS. There is modest familiarity and understanding at the national level. At the provincial level, respondents were generally eager to collect and review this data and most felt the CPMS should be expanded. At the TAO level, however, interviewed and surveyed stakeholders had limited understanding of the purpose, value-added, or utility of several CPMS outputs (e.g., information generated by the CPMS, the Child Protection Manual, and the role played by the Case Manager).
- It is unclear if and how the data generated by the CPMS will be effectively used, and if there will be the capacity and political will in Thailand to actually link the CPMS to the response system – in order to take action on high-risk cases, and to analyse and use the data to design prevention programmes
- The preponderance of data collection systems (for Basic Human Needs, CPMRS, education, etc.) has reportedly contributed to some confusion and data collection fatigue at the TAO level. There is ambiguity about the need and value of an additional system such as CPMS. Without established “demand” for such results, there is little incentive or reason for such results to be sustained.
- Due to TAO human and financial resource limitations, there is modest support for child protection. Case Manager responsibilities are typically perceived as an “add on” to the primary workload of staff, and funds to support child protection needs are typically very modest. Moreover, the provision of training to Case Managers and the creation of the Case Manager job title and job description is necessary but not sufficient to institutionalise support for child protection at the TAO level.
- Another important constraint relates to the financial viability of the CPMS system at the TAO level. The lack of sufficient funding to support the data collection process was identified as a limitation in all provinces.

CPMS Data Collection Costs

The National Child Protection Committee provided an initial budget of 80,000 baht (USD \$2,667) to support the data collection in **Suphanburi**. The cost of data collection per child is 13 baht (USD \$0.43), which includes 3 baht to print the form, 5 baht to collect the data and an additional five baht to enter the data received.

Health volunteers are paid five baht per questionnaire completed in **Ranong** province. Each village has one volunteer for every ten houses, with between 100-200 volunteers in each TAO. Volunteers receive a stipend of 600 baht (USD \$20) per month. Many respondents noted that the volunteer network was very helpful and effective, as these are local community members who know the area and families in each village well, while some Case Managers are originally from other locations in Thailand.

Konsai TAO, in **Ubon Ratchathani** province, has a total population of 6,000. PSDHS provides 20,000 baht (USD \$667) per province annually for data collection and based on this population the budget is sufficient. However, an identical budget is provided for all TAO, regardless of population; in larger TAO, the funds available do not cover the cost of data collection and TAO are reportedly required to identify other sources of funding to supplement the funding gap.

In **Trang** province, the TAO has not had sufficient funds to pay the health volunteers to collect data since UNICEF support ended in 2008-09. Since then, the Case Manager asked them to continue to collect the data at no cost. The type of data collected has reportedly been simplified, as it was not practically feasible to collect the detailed level of information originally envisioned. Health volunteers collect the data for free in exchange for lunch hosted by the Case Manager on occasion.

Community health volunteers are responsible for data collection in communities and are paid per survey completed. However, payment arrangements and amounts vary considerably by province, as shown in the sidebar.

UNICEF reports that MSHDS will be allocating 4 million baht and committing another 12 million baht next year for CPMRS; that it will support continued training for an additional 16 Tambon in collaboration with INMU in 2013; and that skills and expertise will be transferred to designated staff at the provincial level. While this is positive in terms of individual CPMRS components in some locales, it is not likely to culminate in the integrated monitoring and response systems envisaged in the project design.

4.5 Efficiency

For UNICEF, the notion of efficiency seeks an answer to the question “Does the programme use the resources in the most economical manner to achieve its objectives?”⁶² In this section, we explore the extent to which the project was designed, managed, implemented and monitored efficiently, with particular attention to its governance mechanisms.

Finding 13: CPMRS was implemented and managed by project component without a sustained focus on the project’s overall purpose and objective. This effectively prevented the emergence of an integrated child protection monitoring and response system model.

Global discussions about national child and family welfare systems by UN agencies and other international actors influenced the CPMRS project design (in particular its objectives) and the institutional context in which the project has been implemented. The CPMRS project was established as a result of the tsunami but was informed by evolving thinking on child protection systems at the time. As such, the project reflected the realisation that the child protection system needed to move beyond immediate crisis intervention by articulating a more comprehensive focus on both prevention strategies and long-term rehabilitation. This was reflected in the project through the new linkages between the response system and the community-level monitoring system covering all children in all locations of each participating TAO.

As noted previously, while CPMRS was intended to generate an integrated model child protection and response system, this did not occur. One of the key reasons was a disconnection between how the overall project was conceptualised, and how it was subsequently implemented and managed. This section reviews the project by stage of implementation and draws upon analyses provided earlier in this report where relevant.

Design

A review of available project documents suggests that there were several shortcomings⁶³ in the project design. These included:

- **The absence of a theory of change** that detailed the problems the project would address, how they would be

This is not to ignore specific threats to sustainability in the shorter-term, however, which may translate into longer-term fallback. One, the failure to firmly institutionalise or imbed change of approach before moving on to another setting, has been highlighted already. Another, signalled in a number of interviews and recognised by UNICEF, is the issue of leadership. Sustaining momentum within initiatives, at Tambon, provincial or national levels was often attributed to the commitment and reliability of key individuals. Strengthening the cadre of leaders (political and technical) with a vision for improving circumstances for children will likely be a key contribution to supporting sustainable change in policy, strategy and services for children.

Tsunami Evaluation Report

⁶² UNICEF (2007); Programme Policy and Procedure Manual. Programme Operations. Revised February 2007; p. 141

⁶³ Normally, evaluations also describe design strengths. However, due to the paucity of information available about the design as well as staff turnover, it was not possible to obtain such information.

addressed by identifying the steps that would need to be taken to reach the long term objective (including activities, outputs, outcomes and so on), explaining and testing the cause and effect relationships that exist between each step, identifying the assumptions on which these relationships are based and so forth.

- **MSDHS endorsement** – One of the project’s most important implicit assumptions was that the project concept would be endorsed and owned by MSDHS over time, which did not happen as envisaged. Despite this UNICEF continued to implement and support the project and became its primary “owner.” Given that the project was intended to develop a model that would ultimately be owned by RTG, this was problematic. In hindsight, perhaps the project design should have included a staged approach to implementation (e.g., if there was insufficient RTG buy-in after an initial period, the project would be stopped).
- **The absence of a project governance mechanism** – There was no governing body or mechanism for the project (such as a Steering Committee) that would bring together the key participating Thai government agencies (e.g., MSDHS, MoI, MoPH, MoJ), UNICEF, and key implementing partners on a regular basis to review planned/actual progress, identify solutions to address noted problems, and re-orient the project as required. Instead, the project was managed and implemented by UNICEF in association with its implementing partners. In the absence of a multi-partner governance mechanism, UNICEF had the implicit obligation to monitor project progress and make key decisions to keep it on track. However, a review of available documents suggests that UNICEF paid more attention to CPMRS management and implementation than governance. As a consequence, its support for CPMRS continued, despite noted limitations. This may have been due in part to internal pressure to spend resources allocated for post-tsunami projects such as CPMRS as well as UNICEF’s mandate and obligations to support child protection.
- **The project did not follow UNICEF guideline for pilot projects** – While CPMRS was labelled as a pilot project, it did not follow UNICEF guidelines for pilots.⁶⁴ The guidelines include the need to: i) clarify the purpose of the pilot project, ii) formulate two different levels of results (one level is intended to generate proof that the model intervention has the expected effect, and another level that provides proof of adoption of the model), iii) project design, operational considerations, as well as guidelines for analysis, documentation and reporting. While this shortcoming was identified in the 2009 MTR of the Thailand Child Protection Programme,⁶⁵ it is not evident that any corrective actions were taken to address it.

⁶⁴ See the Programme Policy and Procedure Manual. Programme Operations. (UNICEF, 2009) p. 276-282

⁶⁵ The MTR of UNICEF Thailand’s Child Protection Programme (2009) assessed overall efforts for piloting and evaluation in the first half of the cycle and brought out their weaknesses. Pilots were found to be insufficiently rigorous in their design, implementation and evaluation. The MTR also noted room for improvement in the quality and use of evaluations, and noted that evaluation results were not always used strategically. The 2009 evaluation raised concerns about the limited involvement of children and youth, and the limited appreciation within communities of the value of involving children and youth in child protection action planning.

Implementation

While the project was intended to culminate in an integrated model system, its implementation was fragmented (see sidebar). Individual components received different amounts of financial and other support, took place in different provinces and Tambon, were managed by different implementing partners who did not meet together, and extended over different time periods (e.g., the CPMS component lasted for the full six years (with different annual foci and objectives), while other components took place for one or two years).

Project implementation was driven by the interest that provinces and TAO expressed, which led to different activities in each location (see Appendix X). This made it virtually impossible to compare and contrast experiments, or draw conclusions and lessons to inform the design of the integrated model.

From 2009 Tsunami Evaluation

One concern about the approach – given the goal of developing an integrated system of child protection – is the somewhat artificial division that has occurred between the monitoring (CPMS) and response (Case Manager within NFDS) elements of the system. This division has largely come about because of pragmatic issues around implementation. The CPMS has been implemented with a clear, respected technical lead from Mahidol and with a clear route of access into appropriate governance structures at the Tambon level. Implementation of the case manager model has required more complex governance structures involving the PSDHS and was more commonly declined by Tambon.

From INMU report

When UNICEF (not INMU) originally conceived and launched the CPMS and the “Child Protection Response System” (CPRS) in 2006, they were a part of a single “Integrated Child Protection Monitoring and Response System” project. Over time, however, these two components have become separate entities – one focusing on monitoring and prevention, and another on response/rescue – with different parties (INMU, Thammasat University, MoSDHS and others) serving as implementers, all of which had different interests and priorities. This situation has led to fragmented, non-integrated efforts rather than a holistic, systemic approach to child protection.

Monitoring/reporting

As noted throughout the report, little attention was paid to monitoring or reporting on the project as a whole. To summarise:

- The evaluation team was unable to find any comprehensive reports on CPMRS performance for any year. UNICEF’s Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool for 2007-09 included some activity and output reporting on individual components; however, reviewed reports did not include such information after 2009.
- While the 2009 MTR of the Child Protection Programme in Thailand noted some shortcomings with CPMRS, it is not clear if/how these influenced CPMRS implementation after 2009.
- Reductions in UNICEF child protection staff in Bangkok and tsunami-affected provinces after 2008 meant that UNICEF had few staff to monitor CPMRS performance after 2008. UNICEF instead relied on the progress reports of its implementing partners which varied extensively (e.g., INMU reports were the most detailed and useful).
- Moreover, there was no system established by UNICEF with RTG to carry out joint monitoring of CPMRS.
- Despite the experimental nature of the CPMRS, it appears that a mid-term review was not envisaged. In hindsight, this could have been a valuable opportunity to identify and address or mitigate shortcomings noted above.

Finding 14: There is insufficient data to assess the efficiency of the CPMRS.

Due to significant gaps in CPMRS corporate memory and lack of progress reporting and financial reporting, it is not possible to assess whether CPMRS outputs were timely and/or within planned budgets, or to assess whether the financial or human resources allocated to CPMRS were sufficient to meet planned objectives.

4.6 Cross-cutting Concerns

Finding 15: CPMRS design and some aspects of its implementation took gender and equity issues into account. Notable shortcomings include insufficient involvement of children and youths (and attention to them in project planning) and modest attention to gender issues in reviewed training materials.

According to the Child Protection Act, all children in Thailand are eligible for services, regardless of citizenship; however it does not appear that all communities and ethnic groups have equal access. There are many reasons for this: language, citizenship, lack of services in remote and border areas.

Local authorities and frontline workers interviewed stated that effort was made to treat all children equally regardless of ethnicity or citizenship, however challenges remain. In some cases children and families may be unable to access services due to language barriers or fear of legal repercussions if the illegal status of parents is revealed. (In many tsunami-affected provinces where the CPMRS was implemented, as well as other locations in Thailand, there are increasing numbers of migrant, refugee, asylum seeking and stateless children, predominantly from Myanmar and Cambodia.) At risk of being deported, migrant families are often less likely to access Thai government services for vulnerable children or those who have been abused or neglected.

Interviews and feedback from persons associated with CPMRS design and CPMS implementation suggest that differing norms, religious practices, and gender were taken into account in several ways:

- The original CPMRS design focused on integration from various perspectives, including the need to pay attention to all children in need of protection (not simply special groups) and to reduce the apprehension associated with children without Thai citizenship
- Representatives of Thai and non-Thai communities, Buddhists and Muslim populations and peoples of all ages and sexes were consulted to help define child protection indicators in CPMS;
- CPMS software programs were designed to disaggregate information by such factors as sex, economic status, nationality, etc. so that information could be analysed to highlight disparities (e.g., the 2011 INMU report provides a profile of children at risk by sex, nationality and other dimensions⁶⁶).
- Some data collection instruments have been translated into Burmese to accommodate migrants in provinces participating with CPMS systems (e.g., in some TAO in Ranong, 90 per cent of the school population is Burmese migrants; services are provided to all residents, regardless of their nationality).

Stakeholder interviews and document review also flagged several shortcomings concerning cross-cutting issues:

- **Youth engagement:** Although it was not an explicit expectation of the children and youth plans that were to be prepared following training workshops, the failure to engage youth through the structure of youth organisations at the local level is an indication of a lack of awareness of the

⁶⁶ Thailand's Child Protection Monitoring System: Child Protection Trends 2009-11 (INMU, 2011)

need for explicit planning to engage children and youth for effective participation. A number of Tambon reported that young people could make their views known in general public hearings on the Tambon plan, but there were clearly no high expectations of youth involvement by this means.

- **Gender considerations in CPMRS training materials:** The 2009 Tsunami Evaluation flagged concerns about attention to gender in some CPMRS materials (see sidebar).

- **Equity considerations in Youth Plans:** From material available to the evaluation team there was some evidence that project initiatives addressed migrant and other vulnerable children

(with one specifically targeting Moken children), but children and youth plans reviewed did not give a high profile to equity issues. Risks associated with migrant status are noted on the CPMS and this provides a mechanism for monitoring vulnerability although, as suggested earlier, the follow-up on identified concerns was weak in many Tambon.⁶⁷

Review of the curriculum and materials used for training suggests that they were generally of high quality, and addressed an appropriate range of topics at an appropriate level. The one major lapse in terms of content was the scant attention given to issues of gender. Broader child rights issues were, however, well covered, and the 'assessment-analysis-action' structure suggested for planning was sound and accessible.

Tsunami Evaluation Report (2009)

⁶⁷ See 2009 Tsunami evaluation

5. Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

5.1 Overview

The evaluation's assessment and recommendations are intended to provide a platform for the RTG and UNICEF partners to evaluate how best to strategically advance the national child protection agenda, as relevant through integrating and building upon positive elements of the CPMRS. It is our hope that the evaluation will provide an evidence base for the development of the Thai child protection agenda.

A summary of the conclusions of the evaluation is presented below, followed by recommendations to the RTG and UNICEF.

5.2 Conclusions

Relevance

Overall, CPMRS objectives were very relevant given global conventions such as the CRC, the spirit of child protection legislation in Thailand, the needs of children in Thailand, the latest thinking in child protection at the time of project development, UNICEF's systems-approach to child protection, as well as the strategic objectives of the UNICEF Thailand Country Programme in 2007-11. They were also relevant given recent promising actions by OPP and MoI to highlight child protection on the national agenda.

The CPMRS objectives are partially aligned with current UNICEF country programme priorities and strategies (e.g., 2012-16 CPD) which now focus more on upstream strategies at the national level. While this focus might help facilitate more extensive adoption of the CPMRS, implementation will still require continued collaboration with provincial and TAO level authorities.

The CPMRS objectives were least aligned with the national Thai context for the implementation of child protection legislation during the project implementation period (2007-11). The Child Protection Act (2003) makes insufficient provisions for preventative services, family support, and services for children in need. Moreover, the child protection response system in Thailand has been oriented primarily towards punishment and preventing bad behaviour of children rather than protection of vulnerable children. This is reflected in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Act, (which focuses primarily on punishments or admonishments of children who misbehave, rather than ensuring the protection of children in schools) and was also the view of local officials, traditional leaders and frontline workers who were interviewed for this evaluation, who frequently understood child protection to mean protecting society from bad / delinquent children.

Effectiveness

The overall objective of CPMRS was to create a model integrated child protection monitoring and response system and apply it at community, TAO and provincial levels in Thailand. UNICEF worked with a variety of partners both inside and outside of government, at national, provincial, and community levels on different CPMRS components, which were intended to function as a coordinated "model system" that could be replicated in other provinces and ultimately integrated into the Thai government infrastructure nationwide.

During the CPMRS implementation period, there were several notable contributions. These included the establishment of a child protection monitoring (surveillance) system at the TAO or sub-district level. The largest of all CPMRS project components, the CPMS was developed and implemented through a partnership with the INMU (which piloted the system in three TAO in 2006) and was eventually expanded to over 100 TAO by 2011. Noted shortcomings relate to the reliability and use of the information generated by the system.

A second contribution related to increasing the awareness of, and facilitating action planning on, child protection in Thailand, particularly at the provincial level, where the vast majority of project resources were invested. PSDHS officials, especially in provinces that were involved in the CPMRS for many years (such as Ranong), expressed some understanding of child protection and the objectives of the CPMRS as a result of training and their involvement in the project. Effects at national and TAO levels were relatively modest, due partly to high staff turnover in participating institutions and to the absence of institutionalized awareness programs. This initiative is also reported to have had a positive effect on one of Thammasat University's programs.

Finally, in efforts to strengthen the child protection response system, the CPMRS project contributed to establishing New Family Development Centres with trained Case Managers in 72 TAO. The effectiveness of this initiative was compromised by limited awareness and confusion about the role of Case Managers. The project also supported the development of a Child Protection Manual that provided operational protocols for child protection response in piloted provinces, but the manual has not been integrated or applied nationally to strengthen the child protection response system in Thailand.

The CPMRS project objective to document progress was only partially realised. While the INMU (implementer of the CPMS component) provided significant analysis and progress reporting, other implementers did not. More importantly, however, insufficient attention was paid over time by UNICEF to tracking and reporting on the overall progress of the project as a whole. This is an important gap given the pilot nature of CPMRS.

However, due to a variety of challenging contextual factors and some unrealistic assumptions in the project design, the overall objective of CPMRS was not realised during the course of the project. On the basis of information collected during the evaluation, there is as yet no established "model" system in place in Thailand that integrates the child protection monitoring and response systems. The CPMRS project model was not introduced or implemented as intended and the overall objectives or results as defined in the CPD 2007-11 were not realised.

Stakeholder interviews and document review suggest that the CPMRS results framework was based on some implicit assumptions/expectations that did not hold true and that impeded the implementation of CPMRS as conceptualised. These included the assumptions that there would be: Thai ownership and leadership for the CPMRS integrated model; clearly defined Thai counterparts for UNICEF to work with on the application of the model at all levels; and coordination between Thai agencies with responsibilities for child protection. While the RTG has expressed increased political commitment towards children and families in the last decade (e.g., the Child Protection Act), the project was faced with ambiguities in the structure, accountability and leadership for child protection in Thailand (at the national policy level, as well as the provincial and sub-district levels) as well as capacity and resource constraints of various Thai stakeholders.

Sustainability

It is not likely that CPMRS results will be sustained without the investment of considerable additional effort and resources. The main reasons for the lack of sustainability of CPMRS results include: the modest levels of understanding and ownership of the CPMRS at the national level, and the absence of clear institutional "homes" for CPMRS results; varying degrees of understanding and support for the CPMS (while provincial respondents were positive, there was modest familiarity and understanding at the national level and mixed views at the TAO level); ambiguities regarding if and how the data generated by the CPMS will be effectively used, and if there will be the capacity and political will in Thailand to actually link the CPMS to the response system; and the preponderance of data collection systems (for Basic Human Needs, CPMRS, education, etc.) which has reportedly contributed to some confusion and data collection fatigue at the TAO level. Finally, due to TAO human and financial resource limitations, there is modest support for child protection. Case Manager responsibilities are typically perceived as an "add on" to the primary workload of staff, and funds to support child protection needs are typically very

modest. The provision of training to Case Managers and the creation of the Case Manager job title and job description are necessary but not sufficient to institutionalise support for child protection at the TAO level.

UNICEF reports that MSHDS will be allocating 4 million baht and committing another 12 million baht next year for CPMRS; that it will support continued training for an additional 16 Tambon in collaboration with INMU in 2013; and that skills and expertise will be transferred to designated staff at the provincial level. While this is positive in terms of individual CPMRS components in some locales, it is not likely to culminate in the integrated monitoring and response systems envisaged in the project design.

Efficiency

While CPMRS was intended to generate an integrated model child protection and response system, this did not occur. CPMRS was implemented and managed by project component without a sustained focus on the project's overall purpose and objective. This effectively prevented the emergence of an integrated child protection monitoring and response system model. Noted shortcomings in the design included:

- **Absence of an explicit strategy** for the development of an integrated system that identified the steps required to reach the long term objective, explaining and testing the cause and effect relationships that exist between each step, and identifying the assumptions on which these relationships are based.
- **MSDHS endorsement** – One of the project's most important implicit assumptions was that the project concept would be endorsed and owned by MSDHS over time, which did not happen as envisaged. Despite this UNICEF continued to implement and support the project and became its primary "owner." Given that the project was intended to develop a model that would ultimately be owned by RTG, this was problematic. In hindsight, perhaps the project design should have included a staged approach to implementation (e.g., if there was insufficient RTG buy-in after an initial period, the project would be stopped).
- **The absence of a project governance mechanism** – There was no governing body or mechanism for the project that brought together the key participating Thai government agencies (e.g., MSDHS, MoI, MoPH, MoJ), UNICEF, and key implementing partners on a regular basis to review planned/actual progress, identify solutions to address noted problems, and re-orient the project as required. Instead, the project was managed and implemented by UNICEF in association with its implementing partners. In the absence of a multi-partner governance mechanism, UNICEF had the implicit obligation to monitor project progress and make key decisions to keep it on track.
- **The project did not follow UNICEF guidelines for pilot projects** – While CPMRS was labelled as a pilot project, it did not follow UNICEF guidelines for pilots.

Cross-cutting concerns

CPMRS design and some aspects of its implementation took gender and equity issues into account. Notable shortcomings include insufficient involvement of children and youths (and attention to them in project planning), and modest attention to gender issues in reviewed training materials.

5.3 Recommendations

The analysis of the the child protection context in Thailand and the performance of CPMRS helped provide the evaluation team with an understanding of the conditions under which UNICEF should support similar initiatives in the future. On this basis, the evaluation team developed forward-looking recommendations. For UNICEF, we recommend approaches it might use to design, manage, monitor and evaluate projects such as CPMRS in the future. For UNICEF and MSDHS, we identify options for future

collaboration in child protection, based on our analysis and understanding of the present child protection context in Thailand.

Recommendations to UNICEF

Recommendation 1: In designing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should incorporate a process in the design phase to develop and articulate a common understanding of the project with national partners, and should establish criteria for assessing whether there is sufficient government ownership of the project objectives to justify start-up and continued investment over time.

One of the major limitations in the implementation of the CPMRS was the modest understanding and ownership of the integrated CPMRS model at the national level in Thailand. UNICEF (in association with other implementing partners) assumed leadership for implementing different CPMRS components, which led to some planned outputs and outcomes, but failed to satisfy the project's ultimate purpose. Due to the lack of a process to develop a common understanding with national Thai partners in the project's design phase, an integrated child protection monitoring and response system was never implemented /tested anywhere.

While UNICEF and the evaluation team believe in the potential value of demonstration projects such as CPMRS (see recommendation 3), and in projects that include objectives to increase government understanding, ownership and responsibility for new approaches such as that espoused by CPMRS, UNICEF Thailand should build in steps and processes that outline and proactively support the incremental role of government over time. It should also monitor and proactively address situations where there is modest ownership by key stakeholders, both initially and over time. Finally, it should be prepared to take corrective measures as required to address challenges experienced, including the addition of new components or make decisions that lead to the cessation of project activities if there is insufficient evidence of stakeholder ownership.

Recommendation 2: In light of the needs for child protection support at multiple levels in Thailand, UNICEF Thailand should consider the need for both upstream and downstream programming approaches.

UNICEF's current CPD (2012-2016) emphasises upstream programming. This is relevant as a firm commitment to the CPMRS at the national level through policy support could help facilitate implementation at the provincial and TAO levels. However, there is also a need for UNICEF to support a downstream approach that provides more technical support to those charged with developing and implementing a child protection system. This will require UNICEF to work at the provincial and TAO levels. This approach is particularly important when accommodating the needs of less mature development areas such as child protection in Thailand.

UNICEF plans to undertake a mid-term review of the CPD in 2014; it would be helpful if this review included a specific assessment of the appropriateness of the upstream approach given the Thai child protection context and of the possibility for flexibility in certain circumstances including less mature development areas such as child protection.

Recommendation 3: In the future, UNICEF Thailand should adhere to UNICEF pilot project guidelines in designing and implementing projects.

Although the CPMRS was identified as a pilot project, it did not follow UNICEF guidelines for pilots. This was noted in the 2009 MTR of the Thailand Child Protection Programme, but it is not evident that any corrective actions were taken. The lack of attention to CPMRS' status as a pilot contributed to several shortcomings in how CPMRS was managed and implemented, some of which could have been avoided if stakeholders had focused on making decisions and allocating resources appropriate for a pilot project.

In the future, UNICEF Thailand should pay considerably more attention to ensuring that all phases of a pilot project are managed to ensure that the learning and demonstration purposes of a pilot project are clearly defined and monitored over time. This should include mechanisms (including joint stakeholders mechanisms) to monitor whether the objectives are being realised, and with the authority to recommend changes to the project design and/or the project's continuation if deemed necessary. UNICEF might consider the value of external monitoring by independent UNICEF advisors and/or a timely mid-term evaluation.

Recommendation 4: In designing and implementing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should ensure that UNICEF's results-based planning and reporting guidelines are respected.

Section 4.5 of this report highlighted several gaps in how UNICEF designed, implemented, and monitored and evaluated CPMRS over time. One of the most significant gaps related to the modest attention to results-based management guidelines throughout all phases of project implementation. As a consequence, there was insufficient on-going attention by UNICEF (and other project implementers and stakeholders) to the planned/actual performance of CPMRS in realising its overall objective and its (implicit) medium- and long-term results.

Future designs should ideally include a theory of change, a well-defined results framework complete with results (outputs and outcomes) and indicators, risks and assumptions. These should be reported on and monitored on a cumulative basis over time, and used to inform project decision making.

Recommendation 5: In designing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should pay considerably more attention to monitoring the sustainability of project outputs and particularly outcomes.

The review of the sustainability of CPMRS results indicates modest overall performance. This is due in part to the limited attention to sustainability at the design stage, and throughout implementation of most components and activities. In the future, we suggest that UNICEF institutionalise measures (including internal checks and balances) to ensure that adequate attention is paid to sustainability at every stage of the project cycle, and the design stage in particular.

Recommendations to RTG

Recommendation 6: MSDHS, on behalf of the RTG, should initiate a process to develop a national vision for the development of a child protection system as well as a strategic plan for its implementation.

The evaluation highlighted several important contextual challenges that have adversely affected Thailand's commitments to child protection as articulated in the CRC, and, by extension, the effectiveness and sustainability of the CPMRS. In looking forward, the evaluation team believes that the challenges witnessed in implementation of the CPMRS will not be overcome until the RTG develops a clear national vision and policy framework for child protection in Thailand. In this way, the purpose and role of the CPMRS could be re-explored within a structured system development or reform process.

Child Protection System Policy

Based on the findings of the evaluation and context analysis, it is recommended that the MSDHS on behalf of the RTG undertake a comprehensive initiative to develop a national child protection system policy. The policy should clarify the principal objectives and overarching approach of the system, acknowledging the cultural and contextual realities of Thailand as well as the current and projected human and financial resources required. Where possible, it should build on the positive aspects of the Child Protection Act, while recognising that the law has significant limitations for guaranteeing the welfare and protection of children and their families.

The policy development process should be based on a collaborative approach integrating the expectations, values, beliefs and interests of a wide spectrum of stakeholders. This approach would ensure that the future system is based upon the needs of beneficiaries and designed in a contextually appropriate and sustainable way. If the CPMRS is to become an effective component of the national system, it must be reconceptualised within the broader vision for child protection and cease to be considered a stand-alone project.

System Design

Child protection monitoring and response systems are critical components of a broader national system. Designed and implemented in isolation, the CPMRS is unlikely to produce sustained positive change or become effective or meaningful to the Thai population. The dedicated functions of the CPMRS remain as relevant today as in 2007; however, it is increasingly clear that the absence of an overall system direction and local level service paradigm render the CPMRS - in its current form – largely ineffective. Given the findings of the contextual analysis, it is evident that simply ‘fixing’ the technicalities of the CPMRS will not improve or guarantee its future impact: there are too many external environmental factors that shape and determine its effectiveness to adapt the CPMRS in isolation.

The system design should be tailored to the identified social challenges facing children, families, and communities in Thailand. This will require a process of dialogue to identify common ground between different stakeholders, building upon existing system strengths and remedying weaknesses.

Strategic priorities of the child protection system should be defined by solutions that communities and families find helpful and relevant so that the formal system can offer appropriate support based upon a partnership approach to child and family welfare. As part of the system reform process, better understanding of how families deal with child welfare problems may be required in order to identify the strengths and limitations of community practices in facing serious problems.

The evaluation findings show that the current system does not produce positive results and is generally unable to help children and families. A thorough review at the highest level and within the provincial administration needs to take place to address this. The system needs reframing based on a process of reflection and decision-making in order to establish a common vision. If there is commitment to this at the highest level of MSDHS, the government should hire a technical advisor to help facilitate this process – but not to provide the solutions, as these will not be appropriate for Thailand.

Strategic plan

The strategic plan should clearly articulate RTG’s vision for child protection, its objectives and expected results, as well as an accountability framework and mechanism. It should also outline

what will be done, by whom and when, and allocate the necessary human and financial resources to translate RTG plans into action. As part of this process, the generic role of a local level monitoring system and a response system should be explored. The potential purpose, structure, function and resource requirements of the existing CPMRS can then be examined and assessed in light of these wider deliberations.

Core question to be addressed: What does the Thai child protection system want to achieve for families and children? If the primary objective of the system is that children are safe and their wellbeing is protected, a clear strategic plan that is acceptable to all stakeholders should be developed in order to achieve this.

Recommendation 7: In developing the national policy and system for child protection in Thailand, the RTG should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the agency with primary responsibility and accountability for the protection of children in Thailand, as well as those of partner agencies at national, provincial and TAO levels. It should also establish needed inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms.

This evaluation flagged the challenges arising from the ambiguity regarding responsibility and accountability for the protection of children in Thailand. As part of a reform process, the RTG should consider the following measures for the designation of roles and responsibilities.

Structures for Child Protection

Institutional arrangements and leadership in the area of child and family welfare should be clearly mandated. Greater clarity needs to be drawn between the responsibilities of the MSDHS – with primary responsibility for the protection of children – and the responsibilities of partner agencies that have child protection duties and powers under the Child Protection Act.

- The complementarity of roles and responsibilities of agencies and services (MSDHS, MoI, MoPH, courts, NGOs) at both national and local levels should be reconsidered and articulated.
- National-level mandates and responsibilities for the protection of children should be appropriately reflected at the provincial and TAO level and resourced accordingly. This includes the need to clarify such questions as: what is the TAO responsibility in terms of welfare? What is the budgeting required for social cases? Is it possible to have staff dedicated to social welfare who do not have other compatible functions?
- Child and family welfare services should be available and accessible at the community level and designed to ensure these are relevant and effectively meet needs identified by families and communities.

Coordination and Collaboration

Through the appropriate ministry (e.g., MSDHS), the RTG should establish common child and family welfare objectives that are acceptable and understood by all relevant government agencies at the national, provincial and TAO level, as well as by NGOs. Clarification of respective roles and the creation of inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms will help to strengthen coordination and collaboration between key stakeholders based on a common framework and approach for child and family welfare.

Service Provision

The RTG should develop clear structures and processes for managing and implementing child and family welfare service delivery at the national, provincial, and local level. This includes clearly defining roles, responsibilities, accountability, and processes for decision making by responsible government authorities at each level, with specific attention to the service interface with the population at the local level and that other service providers and community members understand the role and responsible authorities in protecting children. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that services are available in rural and remote areas as well as the larger urban centres.

The RTG should direct responsible government agencies and service providers to prioritise efforts to directly support parents and families to ensure the welfare and well-being of family members, particularly children. Services designed on the basis of an accurate assessment and understanding of what families and communities require or identify as challenges would be more effective and are more likely to be used.

5.4 Lessons Learned

Throughout the data collection process, the evaluation team compiled lessons learned, both operational and developmental, emerging from UNICEF's support of CPMRS. These can serve to further develop the child protection system in Thailand, and to assess the pertinence of developing similar CPMR systems elsewhere.

- Government involvement in and meaningful input to project strategies and implementation is critical, particularly for initiatives designed to serve as a government child protection system.

- The likelihood of sustainability of project results increases when the project is anchored in a clear national policy framework and when there is national commitment to and ownership of the project objectives.
- A project design that clearly identifies expected results and includes a plan to monitor them over time provides a guide for stakeholders to know where they are going and if they are getting there.
- A project that is intended to test or demonstrate the value of a new approach should be designed, managed and monitored as such (i.e., like a pilot test). It is important to maintain focus on the overall purpose and expected learning of the pilot, rather than on the details of implementation.

Appendix I List of Findings

- Finding 1: CPMRS objectives are conceptually aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and those sections of CEDAW that refer to the best interests of the child.
- Finding 2: CPMRS objectives were in line with the spirit of child protection legislation in Thailand, but the national context for the implementation of such legislation has been challenging. Recent actions by OPP and MoI to highlight child protection on the national agenda are promising.
- Finding 3: CPMRS objectives are relevant to the needs of children in Thailand for protection and to overcoming identified cultural barriers to and understanding of child protection.
- Finding 4: CPMRS objectives were in line with the latest thinking in child protection at the time of project development, and with UNICEF's systems-approach to child protection over the past few years.
- Finding 5: CPMRS objectives were aligned with the strategic objectives of the UNICEF Thailand Country Programme in 2007-11 and are partially aligned with current country programme priorities and strategies.
- Finding 6: Due to a variety of challenging contextual factors and some unrealistic assumptions in the project design, the overall objective of CPMRS was not realised during the course of the project.
- Finding 7: The CPMRS project has contributed to increasing awareness of and facilitating action planning on child protection in Thailand. Overall, success is most pronounced at the provincial level, with modest progress at the Tambon and national levels.
- Finding 8: The stated objective of the CPMS component was partially realised. Shortcomings and concerns relate to the reliability and utility of the information generated by the system and the disconnect between the CPMS and the child protection response system in Thailand.
- Finding 9: CPMRS support contributed to establishing New Family Development Centres with trained Case Managers. The effectiveness of this initiative in strengthening the child protection response system has been compromised by limited awareness and confusion about the role of Case Managers.
- Finding 10: The Child Protection Manual provided operational protocols for child protection response in piloted provinces, but has not been integrated or applied nationally to strengthen the child protection response system in Thailand.
- Finding 11: The CPMRS project objective to document progress was only partially realised as modest attention was paid over time to tracking, reporting on, and sharing progress and lessons learned.
- Finding 12: It is not likely that CPMRS results will be sustained without the investment of considerable additional effort and resources.

Finding 13: CPMRS was implemented and managed by project component without a sustained focus on the project's overall purpose and objective. This effectively prevented the emergence of an integrated child protection monitoring and response system model.

Finding 14: There is insufficient data to assess the efficiency of the CPMRS.

Finding 15: CPMRS design and some aspects of its implementation took gender and equity issues into account. Notable shortcomings include insufficient involvement of children and youths (and attention to them in project planning) and modest attention to gender issues in reviewed training materials.

Appendix II List of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: In designing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should incorporate a process in the design phase to develop and articulate a common understanding of the project with national partners, and should establish criteria for assessing whether there is sufficient government ownership of the project objectives to justify start-up and continued investment over time.
- Recommendation 2: In light of the needs for child protection support at multiple levels in Thailand, UNICEF Thailand should consider the need for both upstream and downstream programming approaches.
- Recommendation 3: In the future, UNICEF Thailand should adhere to UNICEF pilot project guidelines in designing and implementing projects.
- Recommendation 4: In designing and implementing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should ensure that UNICEF's results-based planning and reporting guidelines are respected.
- Recommendation 5: In designing projects in the future, UNICEF Thailand should pay considerably more attention to monitoring the sustainability of project outputs and particularly outcomes.
- Recommendation 6: MSDHS, on behalf of the RTG, should initiate a process to develop a national vision for the development of a child protection system as well as a strategic plan for its implementation.
- Recommendation 7: In developing the national policy and system for child protection in Thailand, the RTG should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the agency with primary responsibility and accountability for the protection of children in Thailand, as well as those of partner agencies at national, provincial and TAO levels. It should also establish needed inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms.