

### Executive Summary

#### Achievements:

Equity of access for vulnerable children to services was enhanced through the achievement of two milestones: the "Child Certificate" and "Child Health Passport" initiatives, introduced by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in January 2011, and evaluated after six months of implementation. These were demonstrated to be effective in reducing informal payments for pediatric inpatient care for children 0-7 years of age and increasing accessibility of care for those who cannot afford it.

A critical mass of national and local civil servants is fully conversant with the innovative approach of the reform on Integrated Social Services (ISS), introducing needs assessment, case management and project management practices to respond in an effective way to families and children in need of social protection. The best practices and recommendations stemming from the pilot implementation of a model of ISS will be included in the terms of the reform, planned to be approved in 2012.

Two major milestones in the protection and promotion of Armenian children's rights have been achieved during 2011 thanks to the intensive advocacy work promoted by UNICEF: a multi-party working group was established in the Parliament on children's rights, and a child protection unit was created within the Human Rights Defender Office (HRDO). The two entities showed a high level of commitment in analyzing the situation of children in Armenia and promoting public debate on the improvement of services provided to children and families.

#### Shortfalls:

No progress was achieved in the revision of the Sit An report drafted with the involvement of the EU Delegation. A major revision focusing on strategic result areas and priorities for action will be finalized in 2012.

Furthermore, little progress has been achieved in the development of a master plan on de-institutionalization, identified as the required step to enhance the transformation of the child care system in Armenia.

Delays have been registered in the approval of the Law on Flour Fortification (FF), as well as in the procurement of the equipment required to start production. Further delays are foreseen in 2012 due to the upcoming elections.

#### Partnerships:

For the first time at a global level, IMF included UNICEF's analysis on child poverty in its second quarter Staff Report; this represents a major progress in cooperation between the two agencies, and will continue with the outline of high level advocacy actions for 2012.

During 2011, UNICEF repositioned itself as key mobilizer and technical advisor for Government counterparts and NGO networks in the areas of inclusive education and adolescents' health, with the active engagement of Parliament members.

### Country Situation

In 2011, the Armenian economy continued to struggle to recover from the deep recession of 2009, and to overcome the continuing repercussions of that year's 14.5 percent GDP loss.

Similar to 2010, in 2011, government policies targeted economic growth and poverty reduction, fiscal and debt sustainability, lowering the trade deficit and managing inflation and deepening structural reforms. After a sharp downturn in 2009 followed by a moderate recovery in 2010, represented by 2.1 percent GDP growth, 2011 is expected to see 4.6 percent economic growth by the year's end.

Gains in economic growth during the so-called recovery year of 2010 were not distributed evenly, leading to further polarization of Armenia's population. At the national level, the richest ten percent of the population did not suffer from the recession, whereas the poorest ten percent suffered more than others, thus increasing the gap between the richest and the poorest even further (see [http://www.civilitasfoundation.org/cf/images/stories/report\\_ENG\\_2011\\_2.pdf](http://www.civilitasfoundation.org/cf/images/stories/report_ENG_2011_2.pdf)). Figures released by the National Statistical Service (NSS) of Armenia in its report *Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia* show that, in 2010, the incidence, the gap and the severity of poverty increased as compared to 2008. More than one-third of the Armenian population – 35.8 percent – is living in poverty, 21.3 percent of the total population is considered 'very poor' and three percent of the population is 'extremely poor' (versus 1.6 percent in 2008), living on less than 2 USD a day (see <http://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=82>). Pensions and other social programmes have continued to account for the single largest share of Armenian Government expenditures in 2011 and will continue to do so in 2012. Increases in pensions and social benefits have been approved effective January 2012, whereby the minimum pension paid in Armenia increased by 24 percent and family benefits by nine percent. According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues (MoLSI), the Government has also eased eligibility criteria for social benefits in a move to include more poor families in the social security net in 2012 (see <http://www.azatutyun.am/content/article/24437495.html>).

Family benefits continue to play a crucial role in the well-being of extremely poor and poor families. Despite improved targeting, family benefits do not reach all those who are entitled to them: at present, only 67 percent of extremely poor families and 26 percent of poor families receive family benefits on a regular basis, which is still below the level of 2008.

No significant improvements in terms of allocation to the social sector have been made in the State budget approved by the Government for 2012. Despite assurances given by MoLSI to expand foster care in Armenia, there has been no increase in budget allocation for this programme.

Armenia continued to score poorly in terms of corruption, according to Transparency International ([http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2010/results](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010/results)).

In 2011, the score retained its earlier level, 2.6 points, putting Armenia in 129th place out of 183 countries. In 2011, the second census since independence (1991) was conducted not only to count the population, but also to ascertain its living conditions. The most recent estimates by the NSS indicate 3.27 million residents in Armenia. Government critics and some demography experts say the figure is inflated and does not take into account migration. The first preliminary results of the recent population count will be made public in early 2012.

A noteworthy step has been made to increase the protection of Armenian children. The Government has strengthened internal controls and reviewed the adoption rules amidst media allegations of illegal payments and bribes paid by overseas adoption agencies to local officials to circumvent certain steps in the adoption procedure. The proposals drawn up by the Government aim at increasing the transparency of the process and reducing the role of middlemen working for foreign adoption agencies. The new rules are also meant to make it easier for Armenian families to adopt and bring up children without parental care.

The report *Prevalence and Reasons of Sex Selective Abortions in Armenia* released by UNFPA (<http://www.unfpa.am>) in December 2011 shows alarming trends in sex selective abortions. Preference for boys is six times higher than for girls, resulting in a situation where in the last five years, 0.8 percent out of 900,000 Armenian women resorted to a sex selective abortion. According to the report, this means that each year, Armenia potentially loses around 1,400 girls.

### **Who are the deprived children in your country context?**

Children continue to be among the poorest people in Armenia. According to the *Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia* report released by the NSS, the poverty level among children is 41.4 percent compared to 35.8 percent for the rest of the population. Over 27,000 children, or 3.7 percent, live in extreme poverty compared to 3 percent for the rest of the population.

According to the same report, children living in families with four and more children are the poorest. The total poverty level among those families reaches almost 71 percent, while extreme poverty reaches 26.4 percent.

Children with disabilities continue to live on the edges of Armenian society. Being hidden in their homes, most of them are deprived of opportunities for social inclusion and integration. Over five percent of these

children live in extreme poverty, while 54 percent are poor.

There are around 8,000 children registered with disabilities in Armenia. For a large number, there is no record of any admission to school. Of these children, 2,800 study in special schools, separated from their families and communities and living in social exclusion.

In total, there are close to 5,000 children in residential care institutions in Armenia. Out of this number, 3,800 stay in those institutions permanently and rarely go home. Almost 80 percent of those children have at least one parent and ended up in a residential care institution mostly due to social and economic difficulties that their families are facing.

### **Data/Evidence**

Several initiatives were started or continued during 2011 to ensure a thorough collection and analysis of data highlighting the profile and needs of the most vulnerable families and children in Armenia. During the year, UNICEF contributed to the production of solid evidence aimed at increasing the awareness and informed decision-making of Government counterparts; the most relevant among these knowledge products are:

The preliminary DHS report (with added tables on birth registration, child discipline and child labor) was shared with UNICEF Armenia, RO and NYHQ for final comments. The report will be finalized in 2012. Datasets will be used for additional analysis on disparities and bottlenecks as part of the Sit An exercise. The Child Poverty analysis included in the Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia 2011 provided data on poverty prevalence among children with an added sex-disaggregated dimension and breakdowns for children with various social profiles. A more thorough analysis on material deprivation of children will be introduced in the 2012 report based on the revision of indicators suggested by UNICEF (with the technical support of York University).

Upon request of the MoLSI, UNICEF supported a comprehensive survey on the situation of children with disabilities, with the objective of identifying the level of access to services, satisfaction with different aspects of services, such as quality, distance and cost, and to determine the main barriers to inclusion. The data analysis, currently in progress, will also shed light on disparities related to gender, type of disability, and place of residence (urban versus rural). Special attention will be given to children with disabilities who live in institutions.

The ArmeniaInfo database has been expanded to include more indicators beyond the MDG ones and data disaggregation by region. The software is accessible at [www.armdevinfo.am](http://www.armdevinfo.am). The NSS promoted the use of ArmeniaInfo among representatives of ministries and universities, highlighting the advantages of the use of the database for planning and monitoring purposes.

Armenia was selected as one of the pilot countries for the regional initiative on the revision of the TransMONEE database, with the aim of introducing a new focus on equity and on consolidated data not provided by other sources. This will enhance its use among UNICEF offices and other entities. The framework for transformative monitoring in all sectors relevant to social protection was set up by ICON Institute in cooperation with NSS; a first set of indicators, which focused on equity by sectors, was developed and discussed.

Upon request of the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MoTA), UNICEF and UNDP provided joint support to the expansion of the existing Community Database designed to provide sets of administrative data required in planning processes for social services. The database will be available in 2012 and contains data from urban and rural municipalities on population, education, health, sanitation, employment, migration, infrastructure, natural resources, and finance.

### **Monitoring Mechanism**

The year has been mostly dedicated to the consolidation of programmes initiated in 2010, also taking into consideration the evaluations previously carried out.

In several areas of work, specific tools have been designed to monitor the knowledge gain of stakeholders involved in capacity development and awareness raising initiatives:

A knowledge gain test was administered to all the participants in the three workshops on ISS and case

management conducted during the year. The results and trends of the tests highlighted the areas where additional in-depth work was required for the full comprehension of the themes addressed. They also enabled the capacity of the trainees to be assessed in regards to concepts and approaches applied in social work.

Pre- and post-KAP surveys were administered during the implementation of the "Every Child Needs a Family" campaign through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with target groups' representatives. The comparison of results showcased a change in the common perception of residential care institutions as a sole solution to the protection of children without parental care. Positive shifts in attitudes towards alternative care solutions have been registered with all participant groups, especially decision-makers as well as the public at large.

Pre- and post-KAP surveys were undertaken to collect the most relevant and useful information to shape DRR and disaster preparedness activities in selected preschools and schools, as well as to measure the impact of project intervention in selected regions in Armenia.

Two specific assessments were carried out to evaluate the progress of programmes initiated with UNICEF's support:

The MoH conducted a qualitative and quantitative assessment in collaboration with UNICEF and World Vision (with financial support from USAID) to evaluate the newly established Child Health State Certificate Programme and inform future decisions related to the programme. The findings clearly demonstrated that the programme significantly reduces informal payments for pediatric inpatient care for children 0-7 years of age and increases accessibility of care for those who cannot afford it. It also suggests the need to further increase providers' salaries and drug supplies in hospitals, and to revise standards for referrals.

An independent assessment was carried out, with the involvement of international experts, on the piloted model of ISS, designed and implemented by the MoLSI with UNICEF's support; the assessment aimed at identifying through a SWOT analysis good practices and gaps in the introduction of case management practices and providing recommendations for the mainstreaming of the reform in 2012.

The major challenge in monitoring the impact of upstream work promoted by the CO is the very nature of the interventions which involve UNICEF and other stakeholders in complex and lengthy negotiation and technical assistance exercises. The focus on processes of design and progressive introduction of new approaches is at the core of these initiatives to ensure sustainable changes in social policies and service provision. The results for the wellbeing of families and children can be measured only in the medium-long term after the adoption of policies, drafting of roll-out plans and finally, implementation of new programmes.

### **Support to National Planning**

All the processes of creation and analysis of data and evidence are conducted in the country with the primary involvement of Government counterparts. In the last several years, UNICEF has been steadily working to raise the awareness of decision makers about the need to base their planning on reliable and analyzed data and trends. All the initiatives carried out during 2011 to strengthen data collection systems (expansion of ArmeniaInfo; expansion of the community database; promotion of the use of SMIS in schools; improvement of child poverty data analysis in the Social Snapshots) are contributing to the production and diffusion of more relevant and reliable data for the use of national partners.

The annual *Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia* is collectively recognized as the most relevant publication in the country for the analysis of poverty trends and the impact of social protection and social service interventions on the wellbeing of the population.

UNICEF continually supports the diffusion of the data presented in the report and is working with other counterparts for the promotion of high level initiatives to advocate for the use of this evidence in decision making processes.

At the regional level, the work done to sustain access to and use of ArmeniaInfo aims at progressively increasing the capacity of local governments to orient their policy decisions based on updated evidence. It also aims at encouraging the direct involvement of local administrators in the revision and promotion of data collection through the community database.

In 2011, specific attention has been paid to the development of two sectoral monitoring mechanisms which will contribute to an improvement in the overall quality of the services provided:

A surveillance system on child growth and nutrition has been set up to track changes in the nutrition status of children and to help decision makers design public health interventions successful in addressing emerging trends. The system allows the systematic collection of data on child anthropometry and micronutrient deficiencies at the Primary Health Care level, with proper mechanisms for data analysis at regional and central levels.

UNICEF has supported the development of a web-based School Management Information Systems (SMIS) that has been launched thus far in all schools of Yerevan and Tavush regions and all high schools of Armenia. The aim is to facilitate improved school governance and enhance information systems for data-driven decision-making by education authorities at regional and national levels. SMIS will be expanded throughout the public school system in the coming years and will enable the MoES to have access to aggregated data on different education indicators, including those on children with disabilities and special education needs. The programme won the Best Software of the Year award at the GITI 2011 Conference in Georgia.

### **Any other relevant information related to data/evidence?**

## **Country Programme Analytical Overview**

In 2011, the work of the CO focused on the consolidation and enhancement of the strategic directions defined during 2010 at the beginning of the new programme cycle. While continuing with upstream work on policy advocacy and partnership for the promotion of children's rights, UNICEF re-positioned itself in various coordination fora with the provision of specific and qualified technical assistance.

Knowledge management, fund raising and partnership were identified as three potential risk areas during the ERM exercise; the definition of specific strategies for the CO in these areas were identified as risk control measures and were therefore presented and analyzed with programme colleagues on several occasions. Due to the replacement of the Representative, strategy documents in the three areas are planned to be finalized in 2012.

A specific focus was given to gender mainstreaming activities promoted by the CO. This entailed an in-depth analysis and discussion of staff members' attitudes towards gender issues and the identification of specific actions for the promotion of gender equality within the implemented programme, both of which increased the capacity of the office. Through this comprehensive approach, one of the corporate strategic priorities was enhanced in a consistent, relevant, and effective way.

The focus on inter-sectoral cooperation continued, in particular between the programme areas regarding the system strengthening component and also in relation to child rights monitoring, social policies, and local planning programme areas. The CO understands that additional efforts are required to help service providers to overcome the boundaries of their sectoral work and actively seek cooperation with other sectors. The inter-sectoral cooperation will improve efficient and cost-effective networks of services responding to the assessed needs of vulnerable categories of the population, within the framework of the integrated social services approach.

Heads-up meetings, initiated during 2010 as open occasions for brainstorming and exchange of views among staff on priorities and implementation strategies, continued with a lower frequency.

In close cooperation with the Planning section of the RO, a new format was finalized to facilitate quarterly reports. Expanding on the simplified results structure, the report was utilized quarterly to highlight progress in the overall implementation of programme areas, risks, opportunities and future plans, and has been evaluated as a useful monitoring tool both by POs and senior management.

### Effective Advocacy

*Mostly met benchmarks*

During 2011, the advocacy initiatives around child poverty reduction and the protection of children's rights were substantially strengthened.

Starting from the analysis of child poverty data produced by the NSS, position papers were presented to relevant Ministries and to the Prime Minister. They advocated for support to the reform of social protection services, promoting wider coverage of vulnerable families and children. Emphasis was placed not only on economic support but also on case management and referral practices aimed at strengthening this group's capacity to cope with difficult circumstances.

The advocacy strategy was developed within the promotion of the ISS reform to gain the consensus of key stakeholders. UNICEF, with the involvement of international technical expertise (service providers and managers from Italy), managed to ensure the embedding of the key principles of advanced ISS (case management and project management through local planning) in the strategy paper and action plan that was approved by the Government in 2011.

UNICEF also managed to continue engaging with the IMF in the promotion of a child poverty reduction strategy. A UNICEF textbox on the issue, advocating further allocations in the social protection sector, was published in July in the IMF second quarter Staff Report. The inclusion of UNICEF's perspective in this report, for the first time according to the IMF, is one of the most remarkable innovations by the CO in 2011. In its PRSP Progress country report (No 11/191), the IMF stated that in order to reach the Sustainable Development Programme (SDP) target for 2012, in 2009-2012, the poverty rate of children U5 years should be reduced three times.

Significant progress has also been achieved in enhancing the promotion and protection of children's rights in Armenia thanks to the consistent advocacy efforts of the UNICEF team. The major event of the advocacy strategy was the organization of the regional parliamentary conference on "making child rights a reality for the most vulnerable children". This conference was organized in Yerevan in collaboration with IPU and UNICEF HQ in June 2011. The MPs attending the conference adopted an outcome document including various pledges on the protection of the most vulnerable children. One of these was the commitment to ban the institutionalization of children below three years of age in response to the call of UNICEF CEE-CIS RO. The organization of an exchange programme with human rights bodies of Norway resulted in the establishment of a multi-party working group on Child Rights in the Parliament and a Unit on Child Protection within HRDO. The involvement of key representatives of Armenian national human rights bodies (HRDO and MPs) in this exchange program spurred improvements in the institutional setup for protecting children's rights and responding to child rights violations. The two units demonstrated a great commitment in promoting the accurate analysis of the situation of children in Armenia and stimulating dialogue with Government representatives on effective strategies to address the identified gaps.

### Changes in Public Policy

Besides those already mentioned, two significant policy changes were introduced during 2011 as a direct consequence of UNICEF's advocacy work during the last two years:

The Government approved the concept note and budgeted a plan of action for a programme of flour fortification (FF) strongly promoted by UNICEF as the most successful strategy to reduce micronutrient deficiencies in Armenia. The legislative framework for the sanctioned production of fortified flour, which includes technical standards, has been developed under the supervision of a Steering Committee established by the Prime Minister on FF. UNICEF is acknowledged by the Government as the main partner in the FF programme.

Through the implementation of the DIPECHO-funded regional programme on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in education, the strong emphasis placed by the Armenia CO on upstream work resulted in a strengthened legal basis for ensuring programmes and activities in preschools and schools promoting a culture of safety and resilience. The priorities of the Hyogo 2005-2015 Framework for Action are identified as one of the benchmarks of the Armenian education system, set out in the State Programme of Education Development for 2011-2015.

### Leveraging Resources

The successful features of some programmes supported by UNICEF in 2011 gained the attention of Government decision-makers and international donors, leveraging additional resources to sustain initiated processes:

In the health sector, the "Child Certificate" and "Child Health Passport" initiatives, promoted by UNICEF and WV in 2010 and introduced by the Government in January 2011, managed to attract additional internal and external resources. The budget allocation for pediatric hospital services was doubled in 2011 compared to 2010 and was mainly used to increase the salaries of hospital staff and introduce incentives for performance improvement. To sustain the initiative and further address the issue of informal payments, the Budget Law for 2012 foresees an 8.2% increase in specific allocation to pediatric hospital services. The programme also obtained the support of USAID which provided funds for its monitoring and evaluation after the first six months of implementation, resulting in encouraging findings.

The steady progress in the development of the reform on ISS, with the production of concept papers and reports shared with a wide range of stakeholders, attracted the interest of IFIs. The WB is directly involved in the structural revision of the existing services towards the production of a comprehensive model for the reform. The IMF is also monitoring the development of the reform process. UNFPA, UNHCR and USAID expressed interest in providing support to the reform.

### Capacity Development

*Mostly met benchmarks*

Capacity development of public service providers is a strong component of UNICEF's programme in Armenia, sustained through the provision of technical assistance, international expertise, and direct engagement of service providers. The most remarkable achievements for 2011 have been reached in the following areas:

**Public Finance Management:** UNICEF agreed with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) to address the capacity gaps of national staff in the area of programme budgeting. As the result of trainings provided on policy based budgeting and the Mid-Term Expenditure Framework, the budgeting documents submitted by the MoES in 2011 were considered to be of the highest quality among all social sector ministries.

**ISS:** UNICEF was entrusted by MoLSI to support the piloting of the identified model of ISS in selected areas, with the introduction of case management and networking practices. The final assessment of the pilots revealed a high level of capacity of Armenian professionals to fully understand the value of innovative working modalities and apply them in their daily work. The training materials utilized by case managers have been shared with national stakeholders for the mainstreaming of training programmes.

**Local Planning:** as an integral part of the ISS reform, the development of regional social plans (RSP) has been promoted in two regions with the involvement of local administrations and civil society. The plans aim at addressing the gaps between the assessed social needs of vulnerable groups and existing services. The planning exercise has enhanced the capacity of stakeholders to focus on results rather than on service performance, and to identify cross-sectoral issues and promote the integration of services.

**DRR:** professionals of selected schools and pre-schools in the four most vulnerable regions of Armenia have increased their capacity to implement disaster preparedness and risk reduction through methods that deepen their pedagogical experience. More than 4000 students have already been engaged through participatory approaches and innovative learning materials.

**Early childhood Development:** UNICEF continued the partnership with the WB on the establishment of pre-school services in vulnerable communities, and supported teachers of more than 120 schools with training on child-centered classrooms, interactive teaching methods, parents' involvement and gender roles, diversity and inclusion. Education and Development standards for 0-6 year-old children have been disseminated nationwide.

**Vaccine management:** within the framework of the National Immunization Programme, a Vaccine Supply Stock Management (VSSM) system has been introduced to improve surveillance, planning and rapid response capacity. With the support of UNICEF and WHO, a team of specialists was trained on the installation and use of VSSM in response to a need identified with the MoH.

**Neonatal care:** the capacity of health professionals to provide relevant neonatal services at the primary and secondary level has been enhanced in four regions of Armenia, increasing access to such services for vulnerable children. In response to a need repeatedly underlined by health service providers, referral mechanisms with social protection services have also been defined in one region, targeting families of children with disabilities or victims of abuse.

### Communication For Development

#### *Partially met benchmarks*

In 2011, UNICEF Armenia promoted the nationwide campaign “Every Child Needs a Family”, focusing on the right of a child to grow up in a loving and caring environment, even when separation from the biological family is necessary. The campaign aimed at giving additional impetus to the implementation of the de-institutionalization strategy adopted by the Government of Armenia.

The strategic choice was to focus on one theme of great relevance and articulate it throughout the whole year in various initiatives. This was done in hopes that focusing on one message would draw more attention from the population and better express UNICEF’s knowledge management and awareness-raising strategy. Prior to the launch of the campaign, focus group discussions and interviews with ordinary citizens and experts were conducted to identify attitudes prevailing in the society with regard to residential care and identify bottlenecks that prevent the public at large from making a shift towards a more inclusive, community-based provision of services for vulnerable children.

The campaign’s target audience included decision-makers, media, diaspora and the public at large. No audience segmentation was made since the campaign addressed general cultural attitudes rather than specific behaviors, and pursued the goal of gaining public support for family-based child care models and prevention of institutionalization. All key messages and communication materials developed during the campaign were pre-tested on the target audiences.

About 200 articles in local and diasporan media were published and more than 50 televised interviews broadcast. All major events supported by UNICEF, such as the visit of UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Maxim Vengerov, and the International Festival of Films for Children and Youth, were utilized as a platform to promote the messages of the campaign.

The CO also employed some non-traditional communication approaches. Of particular interest was the inclusion of key messages of the campaign in some episodes of the most popular TV soap operas in Armenia.

Furthermore, a group was created on Facebook to trigger public debates around the institutionalization of children in Armenia and the progress in implementing the de-institutionalization strategy. At the end of 2011, the group includes around 3,000 members – one of the largest among all Facebook groups for Armenia.

UNICEF used telebridges and dedicated media outlets to reach out to diaspora, advocating greater attention to vulnerable families and alternative services for children other than orphanages which have traditionally been a focus of the diaspora’s support.

For the first time, the campaign involved representatives of political parties from various fora who pledged to include the right of children to a family as a topic in their election programmes.

Delays in the progress of policy implementation have to some extent affected the impact of the campaign; although the promotion of foster care resulted in greater public demand, the very limited number of foster families in 2011 remains unchanged in the State budget for 2012.

Further efforts will be required to maintain results achieved through the campaign and fuel continued public debates, especially in the context of the upcoming parliamentary elections.

### Service Delivery

*Partially met benchmarks*

UNICEF in Armenia does not generally engage in service delivery, mainly as a result of the structured organization of public social services and the country's capacity to provide for the needs of families and children.

After careful analysis of the capacity and needs of other partners involved, the only area where services continue to be sustained by UNICEF is juvenile justice.

UNICEF, in cooperation with other implementing partners such as Project Harmony and Penal Reform International, supports the work of ten Community Justice Centers (CJC) operating in Armenia. The CJC began to be established in 2006 and are co-funded from a grant provided by the EU at the regional level. All partners and donors recognize the importance of community-based alternative resources in justice administration for adolescents.

CJC pursue actions that are deeply rooted in the restorative justice theory, seeking to involve the entire community in rehabilitating young people in conflict with the law and holding them accountable for their behavior. The CJC specialists (usually one psychologist, one pedagogist, and one social worker), law enforcement officers and community members operating the CJC constitute a Restorative Board which develops rehabilitation programs for law-breaching cases referred to the centers by the community and law enforcement officers at the local level. Around 86% of adolescents who have been in conflict with the law and were registered by the police, as well as those who have been referred to the CJC by schools and community members, have successfully completed their restorative justice programs at CJC.

The programme is accompanied by a thorough legislative analysis of compliance of the Armenian juvenile justice legislation with international standards and the identification of areas for improvement. The Minister of Justice expressed a commitment to include relevant recommendations in the new Criminal Procedure Code. The Ministry of Justice will also evaluate the opportunity to provide direct funding to CJC starting from 2014. This is strongly advocated by the State Police and other stakeholders in light of the positive results obtained so far with the restorative justice approach.

### Strategic Partnerships

*Partially met benchmarks*

As part of the reflections generated by the Risk Control Self-Assessment (RCSA) library developed in 2010, a more strategic analysis of partnerships was considered as an effective risk management strategy for the CO. Programme officers were invited to collect and analyze information related to actual and potential partners and compile a partnership matrix which will be the base for the outline of a partnership strategy for the CO.

During 2011, partnerships continued or were initiated with various groups of stakeholders in different programmes based on the evaluation of the most effective opportunities:

- Partnership with other UN agencies continued in the promotion of human rights, through participation in the UNCT governance mechanisms, and in the identification of opportunities for the presentation of joint proposals, in particular in the gender mainstreaming sector. Interest was also raised among some UN agencies to support ISS;
- Partnerships with other donors were strengthened in terms of coordination and resource leveraging on structural reforms (in particular on the promotion of ISS and PFM), but also in more specific terms. For example, UNICEF established a strategic collaboration with USAID, State Health Agency and MOH to develop a child growth monitoring and nutrition surveillance system;
- Renewed attention has been given to the identification of future areas of strategic cooperation with the

EU, in particular in the area of social protection;

- Cooperation with IFIs that began in 2010 continued, in particular with the WB on the promotion of pre-school education in vulnerable communities, and in finalizing a model of ISS for the country. Noteworthy is the strengthened cooperation with the IMF which resulted in the unique opportunity to include child poverty issues in the IMF staff report;
- With reference to the private sector, the partnership with Clear Water continued in fundraising for the promotion of neonatal qualitative care. A renewed dialogue with telecommunication companies was initiated by the new Representative during the last quarter of the year;
- The tradition of strong cooperation with key national and international NGOs engaged in sectoral areas has continued throughout the implementation of the whole programme in Armenia. In particular, a renewed alliance has been established with national partners on the promotion of inclusive education, with the direct involvement of MPs. A strong cooperation has been established with various NGOs and the HRDO in the implementation of the project on JJ, not only through support to service delivery but also through the promotion of a qualitative needs assessment among children who have reportedly been victims of torture and/or ill-treatment. The smooth implementation of the DIPECHO-funded DRR project has been ensured through the definition of a MOU among the implementing agencies and national counterparts.

### **Mobilizing Partners**

During 2011, UNICEF Armenia identified different modalities to mobilize Civil Society Organizations (CSO): (i) convening them for policy dialogue and consultation; (ii) providing technical assistance to coordination mechanisms; and (iii) organizing and supporting major events on child related issues.

(i) CSO have been actively involved in the development of the RSP in two regions, in particular for the identification of specific social needs of the population, and negotiation with local administrators on the prioritized services to respond to those needs.

(ii) UNICEF actively engaged in promoting the social inclusion of persons with disabilities. The work focused on strengthening the inclusive education principles in the Law on General Education. Technical support was provided to the NGO network on Child Protection on the preparation and submission process for the CRC alternative report, and the follow up process of the CRC Concluding Observations with the involvement of the former Chair of the CRC Committee.

(iii) Three major events were supported during the year to mobilize a wide range of actors around priority issues:

- a parliamentary hearing, organized jointly with World Vision Armenia, served as a forum for CSOs to voice their concerns and recommendations to the newly established parliamentary working group on child rights;
- a national Conference on Adolescent Health and Development was organized to bring together policy makers, service providers and partners to discuss challenges and opportunities for strengthening health services for school-age children and adolescents with the main focus being on cross-sectoral collaboration between health, education, and social protection sectors. The Statement of Agreement approved at the Conference by all the partners confirmed the commitment to look more deeply into the health needs of children and adolescents and the service response, and set the basis for the development of a model of service provisions;
- a multi-disciplinary conference on Juvenile Justice was organized to bring together policy makers, experts and practitioners to discuss challenges and opportunities for improving the Juvenile Justice system in Armenia considering different perspectives, including prevention, prosecution, community involvement, protection and re-integration, with rehabilitative schemes for juvenile offenders. During the conference, the Manual for the Measurement of juvenile justice indicators was introduced.

### **Knowledge Management**

*Partially met benchmarks*

Knowledge management was identified as a risk area through the ERM exercise. During the staff retreat, a thorough discussion was initiated and continued during the year through "heads up meetings"; however, a comprehensive strategy on knowledge management for the CO has not yet been formulated.

The process of thorough revision of the Situation Analysis report was initiated in the last quarter of the year, in light of the unsatisfactory quality of the draft produced in cooperation with the EU. An international consultant has been involved in the identification of key analysis areas, with a focus on strategic results, determinants and bottlenecks for strategic programming.

During the year, various aspects of knowledge management have been promoted in different programmes:

- The most relevant production of knowledge relates to the assessment of the national programme of Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMCTC) of HIV/AIDS, which provides an overview of the effective integration of the programme into maternal and child health services and systematic provision of PMCT services for women and children. The findings and recommendations of the assessment have been reflected in the National AIDS Strategy developed for 2012-2016.

- The findings of the UNICEF-supported rapid assessment of residential care institutions and study on costing of residential and alternative care institutions, produced in 2010, have been discussed publicly during 2011 and widely used throughout the year for advocacy purposes.

- The revised version of the model of Universal Child Benefit (UCB), elaborated by York University, has been presented to Parliamentarians and experts at a dedicated round table. The UCB approach was unanimously considered as the most fair among existing poverty reduction strategies. However, the immediate application of the model seems quite unrealistic considering current budgetary constraints. Further consultations are required to promote the partial or gradual application of the UCB model.

- The numerous reports produced during the piloting of the model of ISS were widely shared with key stakeholders (MoLSI, service providers, and national trainers) and a wide range of subjects interested in the reform. The reports include training materials and working tools that were developed during the training workshops on case management and on local social plans. The final assessment report which highlights the recommendations for the finalization of the terms of the reform has been shared with counterparts and will be further promoted in advocacy events during 2012.

- Innovations and lessons learned in mainstreaming child poverty analysis and promoting inclusive education have been shared with UNICEF HQ upon request, to be included in global publications (*Knowledge for Action: Emerging experiences in child-focused Social and Economic Policy*, Volume 2; *Sharpening the equity focus: Selected innovations and lessons learned from UNICEF-assisted programmes 2009-2010*).

### Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation

*Fully met benchmarks*

The focus on the rights of the most vulnerable groups of the population, as well as the attention to equity of access to services, has continuously been pursued during the implementation of the Armenian country programme in 2011.

The establishment of a multi-party working group on Child Rights in the Parliament and a Unit on Child Protection within HRDO, resulting directly from the intense advocacy work carried out by the UNICEF office, represent two major milestones in the promotion of children's rights in Armenia.

The overall reporting mechanisms to the CRC, in preparation of the session for Armenia scheduled for 2013, were supported highlighting the significance of the CRC concluding observations for the enhancing and monitoring of children's rights in the country.

Several initiatives contributed to enhance the awareness of service providers as bearers of duties towards children and families. They are responsible for pursuing all possible avenues in responding to the needs of the most vulnerable categories of the population, in particular:

- the emphasis on the reform of ISS has stimulated a focus on the right to protection of the most

vulnerable families and children, and on the duty of the State to ensure the promotion of those rights. HRBA was also applied within the regional social planning initiative through the assessment of the social needs of the population as the necessary precondition for the development of community-based targeted services;

- continuous engagement in the inclusive education sector has strengthened the position of the CO in promoting the rights of children with disabilities. Evidence shows that they are among the most vulnerable groups in the country;
- the national awareness campaign on the rights of children to live in a family, promoted throughout the year, has facilitated the debate on the responsibility of a society and of local communities to care for their most vulnerable members, especially for children deprived of parental care. The emphasis on their rights to protection shed a different light on the common perception of the function of services and on the ethics of social protection choices.

The direct participation of right holders involved in the programmes was a priority, particularly in two programmes:

- Within the DRR programme, children from the most disaster-prone areas have been actively engaged in the development of teaching and learning materials, utilizing advanced methodologies such as backward design and integrated thematic units.
- More than 5,000 families, participating in the survey on the access of children with disabilities to social services, have been sensitized on the possibility to claim the rights of their children. This initiative was supported through the distribution of the information leaflet entitled "All Different - All Equal".

The launch of the web-based platform for children, planned for 2011, has been delayed due to technical constraints; once initiated, the platform will represent a primary tool for enhancing the engagement and direct participation of children and young people around the promotion of their rights.

## Gender

*Mostly met benchmarks*

In 2011, UNICEF Armenia, with support from the CEE/CIS RO, engaged in a comprehensive revision of the promotion of gender equality within the country programme. This work had three main objectives: 1) to strengthen the commitment, tasks and accountability for gender mainstreaming at the CO level; 2) to increase the gender awareness and gender mainstreaming capacity of CO staff; and 3) to achieve measurable progress in UNICEF's programme with respect to women's/girls' empowerment and enhance gender equality. The process entailed five consecutive steps:

- A capacity building workshop on gender mainstreaming was organized for UNICEF staff, combining plenary sessions with sectoral meetings focusing on specific capacity building needs and entry points by sector.
- An internal process of prioritization, by sector, of the issues and entry points elaborated in the first workshop was carried out. This was followed by drafting an office memo on gender mainstreaming ("Gender Memo"), including the formulation of clear TORs for the gender focal point (GFP) and a monitoring plan to accompany the implementation of the Gender Memo. The main emphasis in the selection of entry points in programme sectors was the feasibility of the activities to be implemented, given the relatively short time frame (focusing on 2011 only) and the fact that RWPs had already been agreed on with national partners.
- Over the course of 2011, the action plan formulated in the gender memo was implemented.
- A mid-term report on the implementation of the Gender Memo (internal) reviewed the priorities selected in the different programme sectors.
- A second capacity building workshop on gender mainstreaming for the staff was organized to monitor

progress toward the priorities selected in the programmes and overall progress for gender mainstreaming in the CO. This training will ensure a more specific focus on gender mainstreaming in the elaboration of the next RWPs (2012-2013) finalized in December 2011.

The following programmatic actions were prioritized in the Gender Memo for 2011 and were successfully promoted:

- Increased attention to fathers' involvement in parental education centers in Tavoush and Lori Marzes, with the engagement of health service providers.
- The introduction of a module on addressing gender stereotypes in early childhood education during the training of preschool staff.
- Gender-balanced learning material, with the introduction of non-stereotypical images related to the roles of men and women, was produced within the DRR project despite the initial resistances of partners.
- Gender mainstreaming was ensured in the process of development of RSP in two pilot regions not only providing for the equal participation of women in focus group discussions, but also drawing attention to women-related issues in the identification of social needs.
- Together with the new deprivation indicators, sex-disaggregated data were introduced in the poverty snapshot report (to be issued in 2012).

UNICEF's commitment to gender mainstreaming also continues through its participation in the national Expanded Theme Group on Gender, through the organization of joint initiatives for internal capacity building, and the contribution to joint UN project proposals addressing gender equality and gender-based violence.

### Environmental Sustainability

*Partially met benchmarks*

Environmental sustainability was promoted during 2011 through education programmes:

The overall implementation of the regional DIPECHO-funded programme on DRR in education raised the awareness and expertise of national decision makers and service providers on children's and families' vulnerability related to natural and man-made disasters, and on mitigation strategies. The work done at the national level enhanced considerably the incorporation of DRR sensitivity into policy documents.

The sensitization of students on environmental issues has been promoted in two schools through a Green School project, providing hands-on environmental education in activities such as plastic and paper waste recycling, composting, tree-planting, a living Christmas tree campaign, and environmental film festival. The lessons learned from the implementation of this programme will be used for scaling up school-based environmental initiatives.

Environment-friendly measures have also been introduced in the office, from the use of recycled paper for printing, to the promotion of paper collection for recycling in the whole UN building, to the emphasis on energy-saving daily habits of staff.

### South-South and Triangular Cooperation

N/A

### Country Programme Component: Child rights monitoring and social policies

#### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

PCR	EQRank	OTDetails
The Government at the national and local level systematically identifies and addresses the needs of vulnerable children based on data produced by national and regional networks		3 FA5OT6, FA5OT1, FA5OT2, FA5OT3, FA5OT7

#### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

Resource Type	Planned for 2011 (as per CPAP ceiling )	Allocated in 2011	Estimated Year-End Expenditure	%Spent (4)/(3) * 100
OR-E	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
OR-R	216000.00	108240.00	22995.00	21.24
RR	308000.00	490990.00	370490.00	75.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$524,000.00</b>	<b>\$599,230.00</b>	<b>\$393,485.00</b>	

#### Results Achieved

The advocacy and partnership work promoted in the area of child poverty reduction: the continuous improvement of NSS child poverty analysis; the presentation of an updated model of Universal Child Benefit for Armenia; and the advocacy for increased coverage in social protection measures which resulted in the inclusion of UNICEF's analysis on child poverty in the second quarter staff report of IMF for the first time at the global level. This result represents major progress in cooperation between the two agencies which will continue with the outline of high level advocacy actions for 2012. In cooperation with the RO, UNICEF Armenia is identifying additional advocacy tools for the child poverty reduction strategies, e.g. the UNICEF-ILO social policy costing tool.

Steady progress was also made in support of improved data collection and analysis on children:

- UNICEF and other UN agencies continued to support NSS in expanding the Armenia Info database with regional data. The launch of the database in two pilot regions by the Vice-Prime Minister highlighted the importance given by high level officials to the use of reliable data for planning and monitoring purposes.
- The work done in local planning was accompanied by an increased engagement in data collection and analysis, with support provided to the MoTA in mainstreaming the community database. This was originally introduced by UNDP with the full engagement of NSS (and UNICEF support through the use of Armenia Info). The support to the database will allow UNICEF to advocate for an increased focus on equity in data analysis.

In the social policy sector, UNICEF maintained its role of technical advisor to MoLSI and MoTA for the finalization of the reform on ISS, launched in 2010. Significant progress was achieved in piloting the outlined model of ISS in selected territories, with the engagement of a critical mass of senior managers and service providers:

- Case management practices and referral mechanisms, considered the first pillar of the model of ISS, were successfully introduced in the work of service providers. An overall structural-functional analysis of the work of all the units included in territorial offices of social services was conducted by the Ministry with support from the WB;
- The capacities of regional departments were strengthened through engaging in the drafting of RSP, with the identification of community-based services tailored to the assessed needs of the population and the outline of a social planning methodology. The work of UNICEF in RSP is centered in the Lori and Tavush regions. The methodology is based on good governance principles, including the involvement of CSOs in the various phases of the development of social

plans, and was presented to the MoTA for approval.

Over time, the reform has progressively gained wider support from Government high level officials and donors and is supposed to be approved in the first quarter of 2012.

### **Most Critical Factors and Constraints**

- Constraints have been encountered in finalizing the Situation Analysis report, drafted in 2010 with the direct engagement of the EU. A plan for the entire revision of the document has been outlined in the last quarter of the year, with the engagement of an international consultant.
- Delays in the organization of the inter-ministerial committee (to be chaired by the Deputy PM) planned to facilitate various components of ISS reform may present a challenge for the scaling up of activities, and the leveraging of required resources to support the reform. In light of the parliamentary elections scheduled for May 2012, the overall approval of the reform could also be delayed.
- The regional budget analysis *Social Services for Children in Lori and Tavush Marzes: From Policies to Financing*, finalized in 2010, has not been launched yet in agreement with the MoTA. The report is planned to be launched at a major advocacy event on ISS and is to be organized in 2012.
- Despite the continuous appreciation of the work done in developing RSP by the MoTA, more decisive support is required to secure the approval and mainstreaming of the methodology and the identification of strategies for resource leveraging related to the defined plans. The protracted lack of funding for implementing these plans could compromise the involvement of numerous stakeholders in the complex process of re-organizing the provision of services.
- Cooperation with the EU in supporting ISS has not yet been secured. However, progressive support on the MoLSI side is likely to have a positive effect also on the decisions of the main donor in the country. The donor theme group on social protection has not been convened during the year.

### **Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration**

- Cooperation with other UN agencies has been particularly relevant in the area of data collection and analysis. Both the expansion of ArmeniaInfo at the regional level and the support to the revision of community databases are the result of joint UN programmes.
- UNICEF's role of mobilizer for support towards ISS has been strongly recognized by MoLSI. Additional resources in support of the reform have been pledged by UNFPA and UNHCR, and interest has been expressed by USAID, while IMF maintains strong interest in following the development of the reform. Major advocacy events are planned with Government counterparts for 2012 to engage other IOs, in particular the EU.
- Strong cooperation with the Italian NGO Educaid, involved since 2010 in providing technical support to the reform of ISS, and with the Armenian NGO CFOA have secured a critical mass of stakeholders fully conversant with the new concepts of the model of ISS for Armenia (case management and social planning).
- During 2011, UNICEF has positioned itself in the context of donors' support to PFM;. In particular, the engagement with GIZ resulted in joint support to capacity development of the MoES and Science on Programme Budgeting and Mid-Term Expenditure Framework.

### **Humanitarian Situations**

N/A

### **Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations**

EducAid-UNICEF, *Technical support to the Integrated Social Services reform in Armenia, 4th-5th-6th-7th mission reports; Final assessment report*, UNICEF Armenia, May-December 2011

The mission reports of Educaid, related to the piloting of the model of ISS, provide a full description of the

work conducted. They also describe specific training materials which have been shared with national stakeholders for defining a training package for case managers to be promoted during the mainstreaming of the reform. A clear interaction between case management and regional planning is outlined in all the documents. The definition of terms of cooperation with other services and main features of the RSP have also been highlighted as a key requirement for the effective implementation of ISS. The reports include the results of knowledge gaining tests administered to participants during the workshops. The final assessment report, shared with the MoLSI and other stakeholders, provided useful recommendations for the ministry to finalize the terms of the reform framework to be presented to the Government in the first quarter of 2012. The report provides a general overview of the requirements identified for the effective implementation of ISS, based on the experience of Western European countries (in particular Italy). It also highlights the need to include in the terms of the reform specific provisions for the role and accountabilities of case managers, with a particular focus on achieving the highest possible level of autonomy and decision making.

### Future Work Plan

- Continuous support to NSS in the overall improvement of data collection and elaboration, in particular through the introduction of sex-disaggregation and deprivation indicators in the child poverty analysis included in the annual Snapshots; capacity development of regional departments on the use of ArmeniaInfo for the monitoring of MDGs and social indicators; collection and use of revised indicators within the TransMONEE database.
- Finalization of the Situation Analysis report, with the identification of strategic result areas and equity-focused data analysis.
- Promotion of the use of reliable data for programming in the social sector through access to available databases and reports.
- Continuous support to the ISS reform, with a focus on finalizing a national training package on case management and referral mechanisms.
- Increased advocacy on additional resource allocation for child poverty reduction, with widened coverage of distribution of family benefits, and the identification of extremely poor families with the involvement of case managers.
- Advocacy with the MoTA for the approval and application of the RSP methodology and the allocation of resources to the developed RSPs, while promoting the preparation of RSP in other regions of the country.
- Capacity development of local stakeholders on data analysis for development and monitoring of RSP, and for the preparation of project proposals aimed at leveraging resources around services prioritized within the RSP.

## Country Programme Component: Systems strengthening in social sectors

### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

PCR	EQRank	OTDetails
The social sector system reduces disparities in access to quality social services for girls and boys		2 FA1OT2, FA1OT10, FA2OT7, FA4OT2, FA4OT3

### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

Resource Type	Planned for 2011 (as per CPAP ceiling )	Allocated in 2011	Estimated Year-End Expenditure	%Spent (4)/(3) * 100
OR-E	0.00	131610.00	131610.00	100.00
OR-R	414000.00	842650.00	584580.00	69.37
RR	379000.00	434000.00	299510.00	69.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$793,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,408,260.00</b>	<b>\$1,015,700.00</b>	

### Results Achieved

The strong emphasis given during the year to advocacy and policy upstream work resulted in three achievements:

- As a result of the intensive sensitization of national institutions on the promotion of children's rights (funded by the Norwegian Government), a multi-party working group on Child Rights was established in the Parliament and a Child Protection Unit was set up within the HRDO.
- As a result of the policy work done within the DIPECHO-funded DRR project, the Parliament included the objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action in the ratified National Programme of Education Development for 2011-2015 and enhanced the integration of DRR in the revised Standards for General Education.
- School Management Information Systems (SMIS) was launched in 259 schools across Armenia, allowing regional and national education authorities to receive first-hand education-related data from schools, disaggregated by gender, age, social groups, type of residence, disability and other variables, thereby creating an enabling environment for evidence-based policy making.

Community-based services reaching disadvantaged children and promoting equity were at the core of social sector programs:

- Urban/rural disparities have been mitigated by setting up new kindergarten services primarily in rural areas through a World Bank loan. Close to 3,000 children are benefiting from ECD services in 125 communities (90% rural) where UNICEF has conducted training and year-round mentoring on child-friendly, gender-sensitive teaching methodologies.
- Intensive neonatal care units established in regional facilities, as well as the child health passport programme, have improved the access of the rural and disadvantaged population to newborn emergency interventions and essential primary and secondary health care for children below seven years of age. The cooperation between health providers and case managers on the issues of child disability and violence successfully initiated in one territorial area serves as an example of the application of ISS principles.
- Children in contact with the law, mostly from socially vulnerable families, have benefited from the services provided by CJsCs operating in Yerevan and seven regions of Armenia where psychologists, teachers and social workers interact with young offenders, promoting effective citizen participation in community life. Around 86% of children have successfully completed their restorative justice programs at CJC and have not committed repeat offences.

Efforts continued in the programme section with counterparts to identify areas for inter-sectoral cooperation which need to further be strengthened in 2012 include:

- The conference on school-age children and adolescent health organized by UNICEF highlighted that inter-sectoral cooperation is the key strategy for improving prevention and protection health services tailored to the needs of the target groups, and is high on the agenda of line ministries and the Parliament. The conference set the basis for a model of school-based health services to be presented in 2012.

- Parents as main caregivers, with particular attention to fathers, are targeted by both Health and Education programs to provide better care to newborns and young children and to increase their engagement in the early education of their children.

### **Most Critical Factors and Constraints**

- Despite the strong social mobilization obtained with the national campaign “Every Child needs a Family”, little progress was achieved in the development of a Master Plan on de-institutionalization. The overall plan needs to build on a consensus among different ministries (MoLSI, MoES and MoTA) who also need to review budget lines and accountabilities in regard to the existing institutions. Even though there is high level commitment towards the agreed objective of de-institutionalization, greater consensus needs to be built around developing a concrete road map. The CP programme component on the set-up of a continuum of services in two regions is also proceeding at a very slow pace. This is mainly related to the need to involve and coordinate many stakeholders and to ensure their full endorsement of a new framework of cooperation which is progressively introduced during the preparation of the ISS reform;
- Albeit the National Education Development program 2011-2015 lists inclusive school network expansion and reduction in the number of special schools as one of the programmatic directions of education development, greater steps needs to be taken to scale down special schools and invest in a fully-fledged inclusive system. The approval of the law on fortified flour has been delayed and will most probably be further postponed during the 2012 pre-election, thus hindering the start-up of sanctioned production of fortified flour. An additional challenge may involve insufficient resources for procuring the initial supply of premixes to start FF production.

### **Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration**

- Cooperation among UN agencies continued to sustain the common areas of work in health, education, and gender mainstreaming. Particularly successful was the result of the Joint Programme “Provision of Sustainable Healthy Lifestyle Education for 10-11 grades at Armenian schools”, supported by UNICEF, UNFPA, IOM Scientific Association of Medical Students of Armenia (SAMSA). A healthy lifestyle course was introduced in the curriculum of 10-11 grades, teacher guidelines and teaching materials were developed, and teachers from Yerevan and three regions were trained.
- In recognizing the Parliament’s key role in representing the interests of all sectors and especially of children, and in articulating these interests into relevant policies and making sure that these are implemented efficiently, UNICEF further strengthened its partnership with the National Assembly of Armenia. Throughout the year, several joint events were organized to voice the need for greater attention to children’s rights, including the inter-parliamentary conference on children’s rights (with the participation of delegates from ten European countries) and the parliamentary hearing where the new multi-partisan working group on children rights was presented.
- UNICEF renewed its support to the working group promoting inclusive education. At present, the group is revising the policy framework for the provision of education to all children to substitute the parallel legislation on special education for children with disabilities. The working group is composed of Parliament members, MoES representatives and NGOs and aims at a progressive promotion of school inclusion. The Ro provided technical advice to this initiative.
- A strong partnership has been established between UNICEF, Red Cross, Oxfam GB and two key ministries (education and emergency) through the signature of a five party MOU proposed by UNICEF to support strategies that enable communities and institutions in Armenia to better prepare for responding to disasters and ensuring a safer environment for children. The partnership around DRR was opened to other key stakeholders involved in the activities of the newly established DRR National Platform.

### Humanitarian Situations

N/A

### Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations

*Advanced Social Technologies, Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction amongst Vulnerable Communities and Institutions in Southern Caucasus: Baseline and End of Action Surveys*, UNICEF Armenia, 2011

Baseline and end-of-project surveys were carried out by a locally-hired research organization to measure the impact of DRR activities implemented in selected regions of Armenia on the knowledge and awareness of the population. Over 800 school/preschool children, teachers, and administrators were involved. Standardized interviews or self-administered interviews were conducted, while the information from the preschool children was acquired through games and drawing. The report, available in Armenian and English, concludes that the implemented project has mostly contributed to increasing the natural hazards awareness level of teachers and children; however, more effort is required to further strengthen the capacity of beneficiaries to reduce disaster risks. In this regard, the recommendations are to: ensure regular theoretical and practical training on natural hazards; provide more in-depth knowledge on how to identify the symptoms of possible disasters and strengthen preventive protection; and provide schools and pre-schools with the necessary infrastructure for natural hazards preparedness.

R. Belyavina et al, *International Education Policy Studies: Teacher Quality and Teacher Work Conditions in Armenia*, UNICEF Armenia, 2011

The report presents findings on the challenges facing Armenia's education sector today based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected in two regions in Armenia. The case studies of ten schools, although not fully representative of the entire country, demonstrate some pervasive problems in the education system: under-qualified teachers, including teachers without pedagogical or subject training; an aging teaching workforce, with many schools retaining retired teachers and not attracting qualified university graduates with pedagogical degrees; shortage of available teaching hours; and increasingly challenging working conditions, ranging from deteriorating building infrastructure to a rise in bureaucratic processes that distract teachers from their main responsibilities. The report also examines recent national-level education policies and how their implementation has affected schools in urban and rural areas across Armenia. The report was translated and will be shared with MoES and relevant stakeholders in 2012.

### Future Work Plan

At the inter-sectoral level, the following actions will be promoted:

- The strategic priorities for progress towards the de-institutionalization reform will be further discussed with Government counterparts. Technical support will be given to analyze the utilization of financial flows, human resources, and infrastructure in the process of transformation. Additional advocacy on the expansion of foster care will be promoted.
- The capacity of regional departments will be enhanced in the definition of protocols of cooperation (within the framework of ISS) and in the set-up of a child rights violation reporting mechanism, with the involvement of the HRDO Child Protection unit.
- Efforts to promote the social inclusion of children with disabilities will be increased. In particular, technical assistance will be provided for the introduction of ICF standards and for the outline of transformation plans for one or more special schools, with the establishment of resource centers and the re-location of professional resources in inclusive regular schools. This will take place alongside strengthening the cooperation with other services to support families of children with disabilities.
- Health services provided to school-age children and adolescents will be strengthened through the development of an effective model of school-based health services supported by inter-sectoral collaboration and referrals.
- Neonatal services will be improved through the establishment of four additional intensive care units, while referral practices will be expanded. Parental education and counseling on child health will be established in primary health care facilities of three more regions.

At the sectoral level, in 2012, work will continue in the following areas:

- Support to preschools, primarily in rural areas. A stronger emphasis will be given to ensuring access to children with disabilities. Gender sensitivity will also be addressed in teacher training programs, focusing on the reduction of gender stereotypes.
- Internal assessment indicators of the child-friendly school (CFS) framework will be finalized and piloted in 2012. With the engagement of student councils, teachers, parents and community stakeholders, school improvement plans will be developed to compete for funding.
- Environmental initiatives will be promoted in schools in agreement with the MoES, with a particular focus on solid waste disposal.
- Pending the approval of DIPECHO, a new DRR programme is planned to be implemented, focusing on supporting the most vulnerable schools and pre-schools to undertake disaster preparedness and risk reduction effectively, and to become community resources for DRR.
- The three year Juvenile Justice project will be continued with the organization of training for Master trainers from the Police Academy, Judges Prosecutors Schools. Gender mainstreaming training will be organized for police officers and CJC staff, focusing on the perception of masculinity among adolescents.
- Support will be provided to the introduction of new vaccines and improvement of immunization programme management. UNICEF will assist the MoH in drafting a national health promotion strategy.
- The FF programme will be sustained with the procurement of micronutrient feeders and an initial supply of premix, capacity building of milling companies, communication and social marketing activities.

### Country Programme Component: Cross-sectoral costs

#### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

PCR	EQRank	OTDetails
Programme Support		0 FA6OT9, Support 2

#### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

Resource Type	Planned for 2011 (as per CPAP ceiling )	Allocated in 2011	Estimated Year-End Expenditure	%Spent (4)/(3) * 100
OR-E	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
OR-R	70000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RR	63000.00	62000.00	52200.00	84.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$133,000.00</b>	<b>\$62,000.00</b>	<b>\$52,200.00</b>	

#### Results Achieved

Cross sectoral costs include programme support expenses for staff supporting the UNICEF Armenia programme of cooperation not covered by the two programme components i.e. "Child Rights Monitoring and Social Policies" and "Systems Strengthening in Social Sectors - young child and adolescent health, basic education and child development and child protection". The results and analysis of this programme component are integrated in other sections of this report, including in Section 4 on Management and Operations.

### **Most Critical Factors and Constraints**

N/A

### **Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration**

N/A

### **Humanitarian Situations**

N/A

### **Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations**

N/A

### **Future Work Plan**

N/A

### Effective Governance Structure

A two-day office retreat was organized in March 2011 to deliberate on management priorities and staff responsibilities, discuss staff development and follow up on the Global Staff Survey, orient the staff on risk management, review and discuss Emergency Preparedness activities and agree on a calendar of major events. Special training on stress management was delivered during the retreat to all staff.

Weekly Monday morning meetings with all staff were used for information sharing on priority setting for each staff member and programme area. This regular coordination meeting also provided an overall overview of past and future events and actions with a clear task division.

During the Monday meetings, standing and specific agenda items were identified both for CMT and Programme meetings. Management indicators in line with the OMT were reviewed regularly and actions were agreed upon to address gaps. Feedback on discussions and decisions of CMT and programme meetings was provided to all staff. Additional topics requested by staff were added to the CMT and programme meeting agenda.

Payments to governmental parties and mechanisms were made more efficient and internal processes were reviewed and streamlined by CMT members on a regular basis. The Office applied financial spot checks of all implementing partners with PCAs or SSFAs.

The transition to VISION and related activities were among the office priorities throughout the year and affected routine work of all staff, in particular Operations staff. Senior management nominated the Operations Manager as a VISION Coordinator. Office staff were constantly informed on updates and where required briefings and special sessions on VISION were delivered to ensure that all staff members were aware of major changes introduced and actions required. The CMT addressed VISION issues on a regular basis.

The Armenia CO has four super users, one for each module, who participated in Global ToT on VISION. The Representative, Deputy Representative and Operations Manager participated in three days training on VISION organized during RMT and DROPS. The Office allocated five full working days for end users training which was held at the end of December. Super users will continue supporting end users during 2012 and coordinate emerging queries. The ICT Assistant will continue to play a major role in the transition process and ensure technical expertise is provided.

The Operation section established an informal group with colleagues from other international organizations (e.g. World Bank and OSCE) responsible for administration and procurement to further improve cooperation and information sharing. As a result, common vendors were identified and negotiations were improved to ensure consistency in pricing for similar services. One proposal has been to formalize this group in 2012, with the UNICEF Armenia taking the lead.

### Strategic Risk Management

The office invested in a comprehensive discussion on risk assessment. Risks were analyzed and mitigation plans were agreed upon. Concrete risk control actions were planned for 2011 and incorporated in the planning. Every second month, at PCM meetings, the progress of risk response implementation has been monitored, including continuous or specific actions. Since all risks identified in the 2010 framework were strategic, the discussions in the programme meetings have revolved around improving staff awareness of and capacity when it comes to programme strategies, concepts and risk responses.

The Office has a standing minimum level of readiness to respond to an emergency. Recently, emergency supplies were donated by UNICEF to the Ministry of Education to support its emergency response readiness.

The Country Business Continuation Plan was updated twice in the system during 2011.

The Early Warning Early Action database was updated with the completion of all the templates provided by the system. The country risk profile was updated twice during 2011, with corresponding amendments in

preparedness activities. UNICEF is a member of the UN Disaster Management Team and coordinates the psychosocial support cluster.

### Evaluation

The 2011 IMEP was developed based on the multi-year IMEP for 2010-2015 and comments provided by the RO were incorporated. The implementation of the IMEP activities was closely monitored by the CMT during monthly meetings and adjustments were made as required.

As part of the risk control self-assessment exercise, advocacy plans for the following month were also discussed at CMT meetings in an attempt to link the events planned in the IMEP in a coherent way and to build on the opportunities of a specific period.

No evaluations were planned for 2011. The office continued monitoring the activities defined in the management response to the evaluation of Inclusive Education conducted at the end of 2009. The revised version was uploaded on the INTRANET.

The Office used the Regional Monitoring and Evaluation facility with the aim to review the TORs for two surveys conducted in 2011.

### Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The ICT work was very intensive in 2011 as the Office was actively involved in UNICEF global ICT projects. The internet connectivity bandwidth was upgraded from 1Mb to 3Mb. All staff are now equipped with Windows 7 compatible hardware standard laptops. UNICEF Windows 7 latest standard image was installed and MS Office 2010 has been successfully introduced in the office. Corporate applications were upgraded to their latest version and according to the global release plan. Virus definition and security patches are updated on all machines in a timely manner.

The virtualization project was successfully implemented in the office. A hype-V host machine based on Windows Server 2008 R2 is operational. All physical machines were converted into virtual machines with the exception of the Domain Controller which is still running on physical hardware and is planned to be converted in 2012. The adoption of server virtualization will help to reduce the hardware footprint, software license costs and will also further improve the efficiency and ICT management capabilities. This will result in energy savings.

The office has a 3G mobile broadband device for remote Internet access from anywhere anytime in the country. This arrangement helped to improve staff mobility and allows the use of the Internet during workshops and trainings.

The office remained MOSS compliant in 2011 and made additional efforts to strengthen its emergency preparedness and business continuity capacity. The ICT disaster and recovery plan was tested and updated accordingly.

The office is constantly improving its telecommunication systems to provide efficient and effective service to users as well as to reduce telecommunication costs. The BGAN emergency telecommunication kit was tested and is ready for use. VHF and two Thuraya portable phones are also periodically tested. External VoIP was used successfully to reduce the costs of international calls. Video conferencing equipment was widely used during the year by UNICEF as well as by other UN agencies.

### Fund Raising and Donor Relations

All PBAs were entirely utilized before expiry without any extension request. Funds utilization was monitored on a regular basis during CMTs, also utilizing the Office Management Reports drawn from the Business Information site. The Office submitted two out of three donor reports by the due date.

In 2011, UNICEF Armenia received funding from the EIDHR on Juvenile Justice as part of a regional project. The Office continued its cooperation with a private water company (Clearwater) which created extensive visibility for UNICEF. However, the mobilization of ORs for the programme remains critical. A number of project proposals on priority areas such as "Strengthening of Neonatal Care", "Transformation of residential care institutions" and "Juvenile Justice" were presented to potential donors for fundraising.

Parallel funding was used in the following Joint Programmes and initiatives: "To set up a Healthy Lifestyle Education in 10th-11th Grades at Schools of Armenia" with UNFPA, IOM and SAMSA; ArmeniaInfo Database with UNDP and UNFPA; and expansion of the existing community database with UNDP.

### Management of Financial and Other Assets

The flexible budget planning included in the rolling work plans gave needed flexibility for implementation within a broader allocation scheme and was very effective, allowing the planned activities to be in line with set budgets. The expenditure rate of RR was 73% since some funds are planned to be spent in 2012 also due to reduced resources. All expiring PBAs were fully utilized.

As per the HACT assurance plan, all NGO partners were assessed through spot checks to ensure sound financial practices. Bank reconciliations and month and year-end closures were completed on time. NO DCTs were outstanding for more than 6 months. By planning well in advance and taking necessary actions, the office managed to have no outstanding DCT at the end of the year and managed to complete all liquidations prior to the December freeze period.

The Office had significant cost savings during the year. The Internet connectivity bandwidth was upgraded from 1Mb to 3Mb while maintaining the same price level, the virtualization process helped in reducing electricity bills, and phone costs were reduced thanks to the use of VoIP and External VoIP for international calls and cellular GSM Gateway.

The Office also managed to negotiate a special exchange rate for foreign currency which the bank provides only to selected customers, with an approximate saving of \$5,000 throughout the year.

### Supply Management

The procurement of programmatic and office supplies/hardware was carried out through direct ordering to the local market as well as through offshore procurement with the Supply Division.

In total, \$319,690 was spent on the office supply component (\$159,624 for offshore procurement and \$160,066 for local procurement, including design and printing).

The office conducted six CRC and nine PCARC (PCA review committee) meetings during the year. Due to the establishment of additional LTAs for services, the office had only eight ITBs and 13 RFQs during the year. Apart from UN LTAs, the Office also signed seven additional LTAs for which no interest was expressed from other agencies. Out of ten UN Common Services, the Office led two major ones, namely the interpretation and the design and printing services, while being actively involved in six other common service provisions.

The Office ensured timely preparation and submission of the supply plan to the CMT, considering it an effective tool.

With reference to effective support to counterparts, within the framework of the MoU signed between the CO and the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Office successfully assisted with the procurement services offered by the Supply Division for all the vaccines and other non-vaccine supplies requested by the Government. An additional procurement arrangement has been organized for a Diaspora NGO providing funds for vaccines.

The Ministry of Emergency Situations provided space to UNICEF for the storage of emergency supplies, thereby resulting in savings of warehouse costs. A MoU for the provision of free of charge warehouse services was extended successfully for an additional two-year period.

UNDP continued to administer the common UN services and premises, after taking over from UNICEF in 2010. However, within the framework of the security enhancement strategy, UNICEF continued to manage

two pending issues related to the construction works for a security boot and access control equipment.

### Human Resources

Two recruitment processes took place in 2011 for the posts of Education Officer and of Administrative/HR Assistant. The first post became vacant because the incumbent was promoted to an international assignment. The second post was vacated due to the resignation of the former incumbent who moved from Armenia.

Interviews were conducted by CBI-trained staff with the involvement of the Regional Office. Panel members were chosen according to the guidelines and included a subject matter expert, an HR representative and a senior management representative. All cases were submitted to the new CRB.

Timely individual work plan developments and PER were monitored by CMT; the completion rate was 89%.

One temporary assignment was opened for the Region to cover the Administrative/HR Assistant's maternity leave, with the engagement of two staff members from the Country Offices of Uzbekistan and Russia. The SA Chair, who is also the Secretary of the regional SA, follows up regularly on the agenda of the regional and global SA, organizing briefings for the staff when required.

The annual Training and Learning plan was prepared with significant support of the HRDT and approved based on the Office's priorities. It was ensured that training plans were relevant to staff members' assignments, and were within the foreseen budget.

### Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

In general, the UN Common building provides a significant opportunity for cost savings on shared services, in particular related to security.

The use of a free warehouse space provided by the Ministry of Emergency Situations allowed savings of approximately \$2,700. Additional funds were saved through the use of local VoIP and GSM Gateway for calls, the upgrade of internet bandwidth without additional cost and the favorable negotiation of the exchange rate.

### Changes in AMP and CPMP

In the programme section, we will review the programme component results and intermediate results of the 2010-15 CPD. Special focus will be given to the activity areas, determinants and indicators related to the new monitoring framework. In 2012, we will prepare the mid-term review which is scheduled to take place in early 2013. We will therefore need to prepare and adapt our current IRs and activity description within the new M&E framework to reflect the shifted priorities.

We will focus on the identification of the programme areas requiring an intersectoral plan for the effective achievement of results, with the assignment of responsibilities among programme staff related to the leading and contributing functions defined in the intersectoral plans. The intersectoral component will gain more importance in 2012 and will be reflected in individual PERs.

Special focus will be given to the strategic priorities based on the outcomes of the Risk Control Self

Assessment library 2010-11. It was identified that a resource mobilization and knowledge management strategy would be needed to mitigate major risks. In 2012, both strategies will be drafted and plans of action developed for 2012-2013.

It is foreseen that more emphasis will be given to social policy, particularly the child protection component of the programme with a request to upgrade the Child Protection programme officer's post from NOB to NOC.

### Summary Notes and Acronyms

CJC – Community Justice Centers  
CO – Country Office  
CMT – Country Management Team  
CSO – Civil Society Organizations  
DRR – Disaster Risk Reduction  
ERM – Enterprise Risk Management  
FF – Flour Fortification  
HRDO – Human Rights Defender Office  
ISS – Integrated Social Services  
MoES – Ministry of Education and Sciences  
MoH – Ministry of Health  
MoLSI – Ministry of Labor and Social Issues  
MoTA – Ministry of Territorial Administration  
MPs – Members of Parliament  
NSS – National Statistical Service  
PCM – Programme Coordination Meeting  
PFM – Public Finance Management  
PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper  
RCSA – Risk Control Self Assessment  
RSP – Regional Social Plans  
SDP – Sustainable Development Programme  
SMIS - School Management Information Systems  
Sit An – Situation Analysis  
SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats  
UCB – Universal Child Benefit

### Document Centre

#### Evaluation

	Title	Sequence Number	Type of Report
1	Assessment of PMTCT services in Armenia	001	Study
2	Technical Support to the Reform of Integrated Social Services in Armenia: Assessment of the Pilot of Case Management Practices within a Model of Integrated Social Services, November 2011	002	Study
3	Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction amongst Vulnerable Communities and Institutions in Southern Caucasus: Baseline and End-of-Action Surveys	003	Survey

#### Other Publications

	Title
1	Preschool Teacher Manual
2	ECD Standards for 0-6 Age Group
3	ArmeniaInfo User Manual (Armenian)
4	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Education Handbook
5	I CAN...Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Game-Book
6	"I KNOW, I AM PREPARED, I CAN..." Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Book
7	"IT'S A JOKE, BUT A SERIOUS ONE" Handbook
8	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) ALPHABET
9	Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters
10	"I CAN" Poster
11	The RA Legislation and Education Policy in the Area of Disaster Preparedness: From the Perspective of Needs and Rights of Children
12	"At Home or in a Home" Report
13	Manual for the Measurement of Juvenile Justice Indicators
14	CRC Concluding Observations 2004
15	SOWC 2011: Adolescence an Age of Opportunity

#### Lessons Learned

	Title	Document Type/Category
1	Gender mainstreaming in the UNICEF Armenia CO	Innovation
2	Advocacy on child poverty reduction strategies: the alliance with IMF	Innovation
3	Piloting Integrated Social Services: East-West professional exchanges between service providers	Lesson Learned

## Programme Documents