

Algeria

Part 1: Situation update in the country

Algeria is the largest country in Africa, with a land area of over 2.3 million square kilometres. It is also the third largest economy in the Arab region and the fourth in the Middle East and North Africa region. The country's Human Development Index (HDI) value in 2017 was 0.754 (0.729 in 2010 and 0.577 in 1990), a 30 per cent increase over 27 years. In 2017 it was ranked 85th out of 189 countries and territories and belongs to the 'high human development' category (UNDP, 2018 Statistical Update). Algeria is among the few countries that have to reduce the poverty rate by 20 per cent over a 20-year-period.

Over the past three years, the situation in Algeria has featured the following main characteristics:

(1) *Severe contraction in income* generated by trade in hydrocarbon products, resulting in a significant decrease in the price of oil starting in 2014. The country is largely reliant on the hydrocarbon sector, which in 2014 represented more than 90 per cent of its exports. Thanks to the income generated through oil and gas exports, Algeria has recently been able to pay off all its foreign debt and create important reserves – exceeding US\$200 billion in 2014. This contraction in resources, estimated to have reached nearly 50 per cent of pre-2014 income levels, has had an important impact on the national economy. GDP growth decreased from 3.3 per cent in 2016 to 2.1 in 2017, the value of the national currency depreciated, inflation reached 7.5 per cent in 2018 and the unemployment rate rose from 10.5 per cent in 2016 to 11.7 per cent in 2017 (World Bank). The Government was obliged to adopt a few corrective measures: (a) impose severe restrictions on imports, (b) adopt non-conventional financing systems for the national economy and (c) rationalize and reduce public spending while trying to spare social sectors from budgetary cuts. In fact, the share of the national budget allocated to social transfers increased slightly – from 23.1 per cent in 2016 to 23.7 per cent in 2017. However, 2018 budget allocations for ministries in charge of education, youth and social affairs declined.

(2) *A clear shift in demographic growth patterns* starting in 2012: births registered per year progressively increased from approximately 850,000 prior to 2012 to over 1 million by 2014, and up to 1.067 million live births in 2016 averaging 2,900 live births per day. It is worth noting that life expectancy at birth in 2017 stood at 76.3 years, six years longer than the year 2000 – an annual increase of more than four months over 17 years. This accelerated demographic growth is putting additional pressure on social services, particularly health and education. In 2018 the cohort born in 2012 at the beginning of the demographic shift had reached primary school age, but with insufficient or inadequate services available. The number of schools reached 27,000 in 2018 (compared to 25,868 in 2013), and significant recruitment helped stabilizing the pupil-teacher ratio at 23.66 in 2014. Due to insufficient numbers of classrooms, many schools have reinstated the double-shift class system and/or used prefabricated temporary rooms.

(3) Despite *episodes of protests* in 2018, particularly by teachers and young medical doctors, the Government of Algeria was able to maintain the delivery of social services to children. In 2019 Algeria will hold a presidential election.

Child survival

The vast majority of children are in good health, having benefited from the priority given by the Government to health, particularly child health. Great progress was registered over the past 20 years as a result of major investments in reducing health risk factors (e.g., through the immunization programme), improving health care services during the first 1,000 days of life and improving access to potable water and sanitation systems. The under-five mortality rate stands at 24 per thousand live births and the infant mortality rate has continued to decline, estimated at 21 per thousand live births in 2017 versus 22 in 2013. Decreases in the infant mortality rate slowed slightly over the past four years due to challenges faced in efforts to further reduce neonatal mortality, which accounted for 73 per cent of infant mortality in 2016.

The slowdown is mainly due to challenges faced in reducing perinatal problems and infectious diseases and in stopping so-called "development" diseases. The causes of child deaths have remained unchanged for several years: newborns younger than one month die mostly due to prematurity, neonatal infections or asphyxia, foetal distress or birth defects. Between 30 days and one year, deaths are due to diseases acquired during the neonatal period, birth defects and infections. Between ages one and five, children die because of infectious diseases (diarrhoea and respiratory infections), domestic accidents or non-communicable diseases.

In 2018 the health system continued to face structural bottlenecks that reduced its effectiveness: (1) centralized governance, (2) difficulties in transforming health services capacity to respond to a progressively more diversified demand for care, (3) regional disparities in access to universal health care, (4) insufficient quality of services and (5) inadequate prevention strategies. The system is also confronted by other factors related to stagnation of public resources allocated to the sector and high turnover among professionals who move to the private sector or abroad, along with discontent among personnel.

Yet the Ministry of Health (MoH) is actively searching for responses to issues faced by children. For instance, a national maternal mortality reduction plan (2015–2019) and a national perinatal health plan (2016–2020) were adopted, and a draft neonatal mortality reduction strategy was elaborated in 2017. In 2017 and 2018 the pilot phase of a new individual electronic vaccination record (DEVAC) was implemented in 80 communes of 12 provinces. This initiative is expected to help reduce immunization drop-out, which could be the cause of localized measles epidemics during the past two years. The new health map designed in 2018 will be a useful tool for the MOH to correct some of the regional disparities in line with the spirit of the new Health Law adopted in 2018, which confirmed the principles of free health care for all and priority health protection for the most vulnerable/at-risk groups. These various measures are too recent to have produced measurable impact, but they illustrate the will of Algeria to ensure the fulfilment of the right to health for all.

Children's and adolescents' education

Universal primary education is a fact in Algeria; net enrolment rate in primary education was 98.5 per cent in 2017/2018 versus 97.5 percent two years earlier and about 93 per cent in 2000. The gender parity index (GPI) is very close to 1:1. Regional disparities in primary education enrolment have almost disappeared. Access to lower secondary education has also

significantly improved: more than 93 percent of children of the corresponding age group are enrolled in school, a bit higher for females than for males. It is in upper secondary education that a significant gender disparity is noted in favour of girls: the GPI stands at 1.4, meaning that for every 10 males enrolled in high school, there are 14 females; the trend increases for higher education.

Between 1990 and 2017, Algeria's HDI rating increased by 30.6 per cent. Among the four index components, the two related to education contributed the most to this significant growth. The 'expected years of schooling' increased from 9.6 to 14.4 years - a 50 per cent increase. The considerable progress achieved allows Algeria to rank among the high achievers in the Arab region and is the result of huge investments made by the Government, which continues to allocate 16 per cent of its total budget to the sector.

However, the education system still faces several challenges.

(1) Algeria's educational system still generates too many out-of-school children both in primary and in lower secondary education. If the proportion of children who never enrol in school is about 1.5 per cent (mainly children with disabilities), according to an out-of-school children study jointly implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and UNICEF Algeria in 2014/2015, there remains a 1.44 per cent drop-out rate in primary education and 8 percent in lower secondary (10.8 per cent among boys, 6 per cent among girls). The drop out phenomenon is mainly in rural and underserved areas, especially those located in the highlands and the southern provinces.

(2) School dropout is to a significant extent linked to another challenge facing the system: the quality of education. Students completing the full nine-year basic education cycle do not necessarily master all competencies, which would enable them to enter secondary education with a fair chance of success, enter university or enter the labour market with a reasonable likelihood of finding a job. One key illustration of the quality issue is the repetition rate, which in 2017 stood at 5 per cent in primary education, 18 per cent in intermediate schools and 15 per cent in upper secondary. The school completion rate for the end of primary cycle in 2018 was 87.25 per cent (76 per cent in 2013) but only 56.88 per cent for middle school (48 per cent in 2013) and 55.88 per cent for baccalaureate (44.78 per cent in 2013), with strong variations between Wilayas.

For the first time in 2015 Algeria participated in the international study (for 8th grade students), ranking second among the 72 participating countries. However, the analysis highlighted that most high school students did not master core subjects or skills such as critical thinking, sharing, flexibility, initiative and interaction with others. This led the MoE to initiate additional studies and upon its request, UNICEF Algeria is contributing to building national capacity to conduct large-scale learning assessment studies. Similarly, the country office is supporting the implementation of a qualitative study to follow up on the 2015 out-of-school quantitative study, analyzing the reasons for dropout and learning what becomes of adolescents who drop out of school. This study should lead to the elaboration of a national plan to prevent and respond to school dropout, together with the implementation in 2019 of a pilot project in a few communes where dropout is particularly high.

To address the bottlenecks responsible for high repetition rates and improve exam success, the MoE has launched several initiatives since 2014 based on a "virtuous triangle" combining training-work-governance, primarily targeting the primary cycle, identifying inspectors and

primary teachers as "artisans of the school's re-foundation" and focusing on results-based management and accountability. These initiatives were accompanied by a package of measures covering all cycles of education. Among the flagship measures for early childhood and in line with goal SDG 4, Algeria embarked, with UNICEF support, in the development of an integrated, multi-sectoral early childhood policy that would encompass universal access to pre-school. Although efforts to develop this policy were suspended in 2018, the progressive expansion to all schools of preparatory education classes for five-year-old children remains high on the Government's agenda.

Protection of children and adolescents

Over the past three years, the field of child protection has registered significant breakthroughs including: (1) the 2015 adoption of a Child Protection Law, landmark text upgrading the child protection legal apparatus; (2) establishment of a National Institution for the Protection and Promotion of Children (ONPPE) reporting to the prime minister, now operational; (3) constitutional reform in 2016 to scale up the protection rights of children born out of wedlock or deprived of family care, obligating the State to ensure their protection; (4) revision in 2016 of the Penal Code, introducing new requirements to protect girls and women from violence. UNICEF also welcomed the establishment by the Ministry of Interior of 50 brigades specialized in the protection of children and women and of a new rapid alert mechanism for child kidnapping, after the high number of cases reported in 2017. The one missing element is the failure thus far to publish operational decrees tied to the 2015 Child Protection Law, which are needed to clarify the roles and prerogatives of key actors intervening in the management of children's cases and to develop standard operating procedures.

Much has been done in the field of child protection but several issues remain, such as the lack of specialized care facilities for victims; limited capacity of professionals from health, police and education sectors dealing with these problems; and limited budgetary allocations. Risks pertaining to unsafe use of the Internet by children have been reported, including cases of children who attempted to take their own lives. To address the impact on children, UNICEF Algeria is supporting the MoE to design a programme promoting safe and responsible use of the Internet by children and adolescents. This is in addition to a public campaign 'Child Online Protection' supported by UNICEF Algeria since 2016.

Algeria is a traditional destination, as well as a transit and country origin for migrants. In 2018, while experiencing issues associated with unsafe migration, including of children, Algeria offered free access to education and health care services for all population groups, including migrant children. Algeria hosts some 50,000 Syrian refugees and over 170,000 Sahrawi refugees (of whom more than 56,000 are children) who live in five refugee camps located in Tindouf province.

In 2018 the review of Algeria's submission on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict was completed. Progress reports are still awaited on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (due 2009) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (due November 2018).

Algeria and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Under the leadership of the national inter-ministerial SDG committee chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Algeria continued to progress toward implementation of the 2030 agenda. In 2018 the joint United Nations SDG programme coordinated by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in

which UNICEF Algeria is also a partner, allowed sessions to raise the awareness and knowledge of groups of Algerian civil servants, civil society and media representatives. Algeria committed to submit in 2019 its first voluntary national review report to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Part 2: Major results including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the country programme document

UNICEF Algeria's country programme document (CPD) is articulated around four outcomes reflecting its programmatic areas of intervention: improved access and quality of early childhood care and education, improved systems for child protection, enhanced knowledge of equity and improved children's social inclusion and cross-sectoral humanitarian assistance to Sahrawi refugee children living in camps.

Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

During 2018 UNICEF Algeria's work took into consideration provisions in the Government's 2017 action plan, such as the priority placed on maternal and child health, strengthening the national perinatal programme, reducing neonatal mortality and combating communicable diseases. The country office also welcomed provisions related to maternal, child and maternal health included into the new Health Law promulgated in July 2018.

UNICEF's programme places great importance on reducing neonatal mortality – which in 2015 had accounted for 70 per cent of infant mortality– particularly with interventions carried out under Outcome 1, aimed at improving care and learning opportunities to promote the survival, development and inclusion of all children. The main challenges faced to reduce maternal and infant mortality are underutilization of family planning for at-risk situations, insufficient knowledge of national standards, inadequate timely referrals, overload at some structures and inadequate allocation of human resources. Specific to neonatal mortality, the need to standardize structures dedicated to neonatology, including delivery rooms, was identified as a priority, as were: increased knowledge of the causes of maternal mortality, consolidation of a culture of continuous evaluation, and reinforced training of professionals, along with a curriculum review and the introduction of alternative training online.

Algeria's multi-year maternal mortality reduction acceleration plan (2015–2019), setting out specific measures to address the major causes of maternal mortality and prevent avoidable deaths, paved the way towards a significant reduction in maternal deaths throughout the country. It also established a systematic internal audit mechanism to review each death, for which outcomes now have now to be assessed. In support to the MoH, in 2017 UNICEF Algeria mobilized experts to draft a national strategy to reduce neonatal mortality. The document was drafted and awaits final endorsement by the Ministry. While advocating for the rapid implementation of the recommended measures, and to increase the quality of care in delivery rooms, UNICEF Algeria invested in developing the capacity of health professionals involved in perinatal care in line with the draft strategy recommendations. Material support was granted to the newly established neonatal simulation centre located in the national University Hospital Mustapha Pacha in Algiers, which will ensure the training of professionals working in neonatal wards throughout the country. Specialized equipment was provided to allow the centre to be fully functional. In addition, prominent Algerian paediatricians were trained as

trainers on medical simulation in the Hotel-Dieu Hospital (Paris, France). Training is to be complemented in 2019 and further duplicated in Algeria for professionals working on neonatal wards. In parallel, the country office supported the monitoring by MoH officials of several medical structures that promote exclusive breastfeeding, with a view toward identifying measures required to impact behaviours of both professionals and parents.

To further consolidate the achievements of the Algerian expanded program on immunization (EPI) and contribute to decreasing delays or non-presentation of children by parents at immunization appointments, the expert mobilized by the country office continued to upgrade the DEVAC. This innovative software was integrated into the health information system and field tested, which led to the inclusion of extra components such as an offline entry mode, a purchase and stock management module and a mechanism for reporting post-vaccination adverse events. Training sessions were held for 250 immunization staff in three pilot regions. In addition, the informing of parents by SMS or email was assessed with end-users. The technical assistance provided by the country office will be pursued in 2019 with the aim of supporting the gradual expansion of DEVAC. In the same field, following a UNICEF regional publication on immunization financing, the country office carried out advocacy with key stakeholders, including the Pasteur Institute of Algeria, to consider alternative options for strengthening EPI.

In support of the government priority on preventing communicable diseases, headquarters and country office staff from UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) conducted a joint mission to certify the elimination of maternal and new-born tetanus, which was certified in April 2018. Responding to an MoH request, UNICEF Algeria committed to support (with the joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and WHO) an evaluation of Algeria's national strategy for the elimination of mother to child transmission of HIV (EMCT), for which two experts were identified. The outcomes of this assessment will inform the development of a new national strategy on EMCT. Additionally, UNICEF Algeria, together with UNAIDS, WHO and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) took an active part in the coordination committee of the Global Fund against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, thus contributing to improved coverage of the most at-risk population.

In August and September 2018, Algeria faced a limited cholera outbreak in the northern parts of the country, with cases reported from seven provinces. From August 7th to September 5th, the MoH and the Algeria Pasteur Institute reported 83 confirmed cases and 217 suspected cases. UNICEF Algeria, with the support of UNICEF's regional office for the Middle East and North Africa and in collaboration with WHO, supported the MoH of Health in the development of awareness materials for schoolchildren on handwashing and waterborne disease, which were distributed in support of school-based awareness sessions to promote effective hygiene practices.

Responding to a request by the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women Affairs, UNICEF Algeria included in its technical assistance component under early childhood development (ECD) for the 2018/2019 workplan, a specific intervention to improve standards of care in day-care centres for children from three months to four years old, managed by public and private entities or by civil society organizations (CSOs). This intervention will build on a legal decree, currently under review, for improved child care, management and supervision in early childhood centres. As part of its efforts to promote best parental practices UNICEF Algeria developed a communication campaign that will be launched in early 2019, in line with the global campaign 'EarlyMomentsMatter'.

UNICEF Algeria's humanitarian programme was being implemented in the five Sahrawi refugee camps located in Tiindouf (Awserd, Dakhla, Laayoune, Smara, Boujdour), in an effort to improve maternal and child health. In 2018 UNICEF interventions benefited some 22,000 children below the age of five as well as some 6,000 pregnant and lactating women. In 2018, the provision of vaccines was ensured for a one-year period with eight antigens (including BCG, DT, Tetrac Hib haemophilus B, OPV, IPV, MMR, Hepatitis B) procured through the Algerian Pasteur Institute. The EPI was strengthened through support for improved cold chain, provision of additional equipment and refurbishment of the cold room building. In partnership with the association Enfants Réfugiés du Monde, 18 health workers (midwives and paediatric nurses) and three trainers from the Paramedical School were retrained, contributing to the establishment of a neonatal care ward at the central hospital.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

Retention in primary and lower secondary education still face challenges to (1) increase attendance and retention in secondary education, particularly for boys, (2) improve students' learning skills and (3) enhance the relevance of education. To achieve SDG 4, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all", and as part of the interventions supported under country programme outcome 1, UNICEF Algeria advocated for the development of a national plan to prevent and respond to school dropout, highlighting issues faced at the lower secondary. The country office promoted with ministries in charge of vocational training and youth and sports, measures to reinforce students' soft and life skills through a renewed focus on teaching approaches to ensure successful transition to employment and adulthood. The country office supported the completion of qualitative surveys on barriers to school retention in eight of the most impacted provinces. Ninety guidance counsellors were trained on interview techniques and on administering a questionnaire developed by the National Office for Education and Training; 444 interviews were conducted with key informants, including those at-risk of drop-out and adolescents who had dropped out. The analysis revealed that poor learning outcomes, social, cultural and economic barriers, as well as early marriage (especially for girls) and long distances to high schools (particularly in the south), were key factors to be addressed.

Two regional meetings were held to promote exchanges of experience between guidance counsellors, which highlighted specific difficulties faced in a variety of contexts, with multiple cultural dimensions and children with unique profiles. This analysis, combined with the outcomes of the 2015 out-of-school quantitative study, will inform the elaboration of a plan to prevent and respond to school drop-out. The plan will involve various stakeholders, such as municipal authorities and decentralized authorities in charge of vocational training, social affairs, or youth to ensure the inclusion of children in the long run. In early 2019 a pilot will be conducted in two or three municipalities in remote rural areas impacted by the most complex issues. UNICEF Algeria expertise was offered to refine and finalize the response plan, which is to be expanded nationally in coming years, along with various recent reforms. Taken together the plan and the reforms suffer from high centralization and inadequate coordination between the schemes for young people. Specific attention will be paid to the establishment of linkages between school-based interventions and alternative pathways for children leaving the school system.

Implementation of the regional initiative on life skills and citizenship education (LSCE)—viewed as an opportunity to address challenges in education quality, relevance and to increase youth employability— started in 2018 involving institutional counterparts (MoE, Ministry of Youth and

Sport, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training and Ministry of National Solidarity), CSOs and United Nations agencies. As part of multi-sectoral programming using the life-cycle approach, a mapping of existing programmes and materials was carried out using questionnaires tailored to the Algerian context with a second version adjusted for the Sahrawi environment. Eighty 80 responses were received; data analysis is under way that should feed into a national consultation on LSCE planned for 2019.

In parallel, advocacy efforts were sustained to promote an inter-sectoral approach to reinforce life skills education and various meetings held with key partners to strengthen exchanges and promote cooperation with the largest number of actors to re-imagine together education and learning through formal and non-formal pathways. A concept note for a United Nations joint project based on LSCE was also developed and submitted to the Government, promoting the engagement of a variety of sectors and actors to enhance impacts on youth inclusion and employability.

Linked to CPD Outcome 1, and in the context of education sector evaluation reform, which seeks to improve the quality of education with equitable and inclusive access and enhanced student learning outcomes, the MoE is pursuing investments and efforts in three areas: (1) upgrading professional skills, (2) curriculum review and (3) improving education governance. Ministry wants to maintain the dynamic of improving system governance through increased transparency; improved school-based management; regular consultations between all educational actors, including parent/teacher associations; and promoting the Ethics Charter.

To enhance the quality of education and as part of interventions carried under CPD Outcome 2, UNICEF Algeria is supporting the Ministry of Education to establish a national students learning assessment system. This represents a major step toward strengthening both management of the education sector and capacities to monitor the impact of education reforms. Such a system would serve to monitor achievement in improving the quality of education and progress toward Algeria's attainment of SDG Goal 4.

Throughout the year under review seven training sessions were conducted by four international and national experts, delivered to a national team in charge of conducting national assessments. In the process 45 statisticians, educational inspectors and guidance counsellors were trained in the areas of statistics, sampling, psychometric analysis and items redaction. The country office also purchased four licenses for STATA software for use by the Directorate of Evaluation and Prospective, which will enable surveys to be carried out and analysis conducted of sampling, information gathering and evaluation tests. The national team had the opportunity to test their knowledge while conducting regional assessments for 4th and 7th grade students in various disciplines such as mathematics, science, physics, English, Arabic and French. Another five sessions will be conducted during the first half of 2019, and the technical assistance completed with a final capitalization seminar for the benefit of the entire national team.

The country office also committed to providing technical assistance to the MoE in support of a strategy for achieving SDG 4 involving capacity building, data generation and monitoring technics. This is of importance given the decision made by Algeria to submit in 2019 its first voluntary national review report to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. In that light, representatives from UNICEF Algeria took part in a regional workshop held by UNESCO in Beirut to enhance their knowledge on the use of SDG 4 monitoring tools and build their capacity to engage in education planning, programming and

policy discussion with the MoE, including in the context of crisis, to ensure that data on displaced children is available and accounted for in national monitoring of progress of SDG 4.

As part of outcome 2, and to reap the demographic dividend, UNICEF Algeria designed a two-year workplan together with the Ministry of Youth and Sport in 2018 with the objective of promoting increased participation during the second decade of life. The plan calls for improving access to opportunities, enhancing the quality of programmes and increasing skills for learning, employability, active citizenship and personal empowerment. During her mission to Algeria UNICEF's regional adviser for adolescence introduced the PEER approach and encouraged the country office and Ministry of Youth and Sport to engage in the design of programmes for adolescents.

UNICEF Algeria supported the Ministry of Youth and Sport to design a project to improve the quality of programmes delivered in youth centres, with support for regional models of youth-friendly centres. The outcome of a national competition launched by the Ministry in 48 Wilayas will help to build on the best initiatives prepared by youth, based on their needs and expectations. This project will contribute to reinforcing the capacity of professionals working in youth centres and camps, while promoting innovative approaches to attract adolescents, in particular girls, facing specific challenges to access services.

This partnership will also build on regional best practices to be explored by representatives of the Ministry of Youth and Sport and other key partners during a 2019 mission to either Lebanon or Jordan, where models promoting civic and social engagement and addressing social cohesion issues are relevant for Algeria. The mapping of youth centres and services initiated with the Ministry of Youth and Sport in 2015 to better inform youth about available opportunities and services, was halted by the Ministry in 2018; however, the expert will finalize the compilation of data and present an analytical report with recommendations for possible follow-up by UNICEF. The country office suggested using available information to support one youth centre and pilot the recommendations. It also established relationships with CSOs active in the youth sector, and will explore collaboration, particularly in the areas of promoting child rights and child participation. On those topics, UNICEF Algeria advocacy was rich in 2018 with an increased participation in public events gathering youth and youth actors, such as the International Jamboree of the Algerian Muslim Scouts— an opportunity to sensitize, through recreational activities, more than 500 adolescents on child rights and life skills.

Liked to CPD outcome 1, UNICEF Algeria took note of the decision made this year by the Government of Algeria to suspend the development of an integrated multi-sectoral early childhood policy, which resulted in the postponement of planned support for implementation of a skills' assessment for pupils entering first grade, as a means to assess the effectiveness of different preschool education modalities and to guide work on early learning standards. Discussions with the MoE are, however, ongoing. To advance work on early childhood, UNICEF Algeria is supporting the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Affairs to reinforce standards of care at early childhood centres run by the Ministry or by non-governmental entities, including the private sector. This area of cooperation is providing an opportunity to open discussions on parenting practices.

As part of the CPD cross-sectoral humanitarian intervention in support of Sahrawi children, UNICEF continued supporting the education of some 38,000 pupils in the camps. As co-lead of the education sector coordination team (ESCG), UNICEF Algeria contributed to enhancing governance of the sector. Distribution of individual school kits continued, covering the needs of

all school children for two quarters of the school year. The refurbishing of nine primary schools was completed. These improvements, including WASH facilities, benefitted 6,566 children (52 per cent girls), in line with the 2017 infrastructure strategy that was updated in August by the ESCG. In partnership with the Italian NGO CISP, UNICEF Algeria developed a guide that provides standards for latrine construction in light of lessons learned. An expert contracted by the country office designed a guide on hygiene promotion in schools, which will be used to increase children's awareness about appropriate behaviour and contributing to maintenance of WASH facilities through a hygiene promotion programme to be implemented during the school year by CISP. The ESCG also initiated a water distribution assessment in schools and a situation analysis on school drop-out, which was recently aggravated due to the resignation of some 200 teachers leading to the drop-out of an additional 500 children in 8th and 9th grade who were unable to travel to enrol in Algerian schools.

The capacity development plan for education personnel was completed by three Algerian experts hired by UNICEF. Through a partnership with an Algerian association, the training sessions on pedagogy and engineering will benefit 475 education staff (headmasters, teachers, trainers, inspectors), 84 per cent of whom are female. This intervention will be accompanied by the design of a training plan on subject-matter.

Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

UNICEF Algeria's interventions support implementation of the Child Protection Law adopted in 2015, which specifies that the State is to implement all appropriate measures to guarantee the protection of children against all forms of harm, negligence, violence, abuse, exploitation, physical, moral or sexual violence. The Law provides for the establishment of the National Institute for the Protection and the Promotion of Childhood (ONPPE), tasked with promoting children's rights by ensuring the coordination of actors intervening in child protection, including 16 ministries and a variety of non-governmental actors. Therefore, UNICEF Algeria dedicated time to developing a two-year work plan with ONPPE and to introducing its staff to UNICEF's mandate and operating procedures. While no specific decree is expected to contribute to enhanced coordination of child protection actors, the creation of ONPPE and the responsibilities assigned to it are important, given the challenges faced by actors in the field in relation to coordinating preventive and remedial actions. The decree regulating ONPPE explicitly tasks its Directorate for Child Rights Protection to put in place operational mechanisms for reporting children at risk, which will be key to guiding UNICEF's anticipated assistance to various sectors and promoting actions sensitive to the life-cycle approach to programming.

While preparing partnerships this year, UNICEF Algeria took into consideration the sectoral directives provided by the 2017 government action plan for child protection. Law enforcement agencies (police, gendarmerie, tribunals) are tasked with preserving people's safety. The protection of children's rights falls under the framework of national solidarity and social policies to guarantee their development and social welfare, and, when appropriate, to ensure alternative care actions. The education sector is tasked with improving educational performance to better contribute to developing students' sense of citizenship, and thereafter to the elimination of violence within the school environment, and more generally to the decline of violence and incivility.

Institutional partners have taken actions to strengthen the overall protection of children, contributing to enhanced inter-sectoral approaches. The national police setup a National Office

for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups, to take the place of the previous child protection and delinquency brigade. The ONPPE operationalized a child helpline, with support from UNICEF Algeria, including the provision of awareness-raising materials, and the country office has designed a capacity-building plan for the ONPPE staff running the free-toll child helpline, to increase quick referral of cases of child victims or those at risk to relevant services and to reinforce inter-sectoral case management, while advocating for the establishment of an overall referral mechanism. For that purpose, a public event is planned for a large consultation on best practices, as part of the first two-year workplan (2018/2019) for the ONPPE and UNICEF Algeria.

In addition, the competencies of specialized social workers to support women victims of violence and their children are being enhanced through the introduction of dedicated modules in the formal training curriculum—a key step to reinforce overall social workforce capacity, as advocated by UNICEF's global call for action. The project supported by UNICEF Algeria for establishing reinforced standards of care for children in institutions will contribute to enhancing cooperation between social, judicial and health actors. To ramp up advocacy and to learn from small-scale initiatives designed to prevent unnecessary institutionalization, the country office provides targeted support to women and children who are victims of, or at risk of, violence, including their socio-economic reintegration through the animation of a "Café Solidaire des Femmes". UNICEF also promoted increased cooperation between social workers and judicial officers through development of an interactive digital platform, thanks to partnership with the National School of Computer Science. The online tool, to be completed in 2019, will allow professionals of both sectors to be informed, in real-time, about the availability of accommodations for children in need of placement.

Communication materials were designed with the Ministry of National Solidarity for the campaign to highlight the risks associated with Internet use by children. The MoE is also engaged in guiding pupils on safe Internet use, with support from UNICEF Algeria. Awareness-raising tools are being developed and a training programme is ongoing for school inspectors tasked with supporting teachers and school managers to organize sessions on safe online behaviours. A new partnership was concluded in late 2018 with the Ministry of Communication, to expand UNICEF Algeria's outreach through public media. Promotional materials on the Convention on the Rights of the Child were made available to the ONPPE, along with flyers and leaflets targeting children and adults to raise awareness about the Child Protection Law and child helpline, and were distributed during various public events.

However, the lack of reliable data on children at risk or victims of neglect, abuse, violence or exploitation remains a critical gap for ensuring proper planning and designing preventive and remedial actions. Partial statistics are shared randomly; mostly through the press: the national police reported, for instance, 7,061 cases of violence against women for the first nine months of 2018, the ONPPE child helpline documented 720 cases requiring referrals and the Ministry of National Solidarity recorded 1,128 cases of violence against women in the first quarter of 2018 alone. Carrying out the sixth multi-indicator cluster survey (MICS 6) will contribute to updating some indicators pertaining to child protection (e.g. child labour, early marriage, violent discipline, attitudes toward domestic violence.) However, routine and regular data on child protection issues are needed, and the country office will support the ONPPE, now tasked with managing a national information system on children in coordination with other institutions, with targeted training to increase the capacity of its staff to undertake regular analysis, assessment and reporting on children.

To increase children's awareness about harmful practices, the 'child online protection' campaign was re-launched on February 6th, with a celebration in the city Setif of 'Safer Internet Day', together with partners and UNICEF Algeria's Goodwill Ambassadors. Adolescents described their experiences and shared concerns about the risks and opportunities offered by the Internet, in gatherings that brought together 800 children and young people. The country office is also supporting the MoE to implement an awareness program about the risks faced by children on the Internet, involving reinforcement of knowledge by 500 school directors, inspectors and guidance counsellors on these issues and strengthening their capacity to develop activities that teach life skills such as critical thinking, cooperation and creativity to reinforce pupils' safe behaviour. The partnership between UNICEF Algeria and the Higher Institute for Computer Science Innovation Lab continued to stimulate student innovations in relation to UNICEF concerns such as LSCE, ECD and child online protection.

In Tindouf, the lack of funds prevented reactivation of interventions in the child protection sector, despite an active fund-raising effort to promote the empowerment and social inclusion of children and adolescents living with a disability in the Tindouf refugee camps. The educational environment requires strengthening, through an adaptation and/or rehabilitation of educational centres and provision of the specialized equipment necessary for their proper functioning. The quality of learning must be enhanced in both ordinary and specialized education facilities, and inclusiveness has must be promoted at all levels to support parents and families to identify appropriate services available to their children living with a disability.

Goal area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

As part of the CPD cross-sectoral humanitarian intervention in support of Sahrawi children, UNICEF Algeria is also improving education infrastructure, completing the basic renovation of 10 primary schools in 2018 (particularly WASH facilities), benefitting 6,566 children, of whom 52 per cent were girls. This activity was in line with the five-year education facilities' rehabilitation strategy developed in 2017 by the UNICEF-led education sector coordinating group (ESCG). In August 2018, one year after the strategy was developed and the rehabilitation and reconstruction projects completed, the group worked with local counterparts to update the initial strategic priorities. This collaboration allowed a review of priorities taking into consideration the substantial price inflation of construction materials, unwillingness of donors to invest in kindergartens and other pertinent issues. The group decided to carry out a second round site review to update financial requirements based on agreed rehabilitation priorities and guidelines. In partnership with CISP, the country office also finalized a guide that provides standards for latrine construction in light of lessons learnt from earlier construction efforts. An expert contracted by the country office also designed a guide on hygiene promotion in schools, which will be used to increase children's awareness about appropriate behaviour and contribute to WASH facilities maintenance through a hygiene promotion programme to be implemented during the school year by CISP. The ESCG also initiated in September 2018 a water distribution assessment in all 67 schools in the camp with regard to access to water and the physical state of WASH facilities. Visits are to be carried out by two persons (United Nations, NGO, education authority) using a survey form to collect data on water distribution systems, status of toilets, latrines and kitchens – with photos and comments from school directors – to propose a specific water distribution for all schools in order to avoid shortages.

UNICEF Algeria provided inputs for the corporate emergency preparedness platform tool, and set up an emergency management team to enhance awareness of and preparedness for emerging needs. In addition, the country office is contributing to the development of

contingency plans in support of humanitarian interventions carried out in the refugee camps in Tindouf. Together with the ESCG team, UNICEF particularly collaborates with the Spanish Red Cross to develop an education contingency plan as part of the disaster risk reduction project. In addition, given UNICEF's strong institutional commitment to accountability to affected populations and its support for the World Humanitarian Summit outcomes, the country office engaged partners in the Sahrawi camps to better understand and analyse the distinct needs, priorities and perspectives of the Sahrawi refugee population and integrate this into appropriate, relevant and effective responses. This activity was undertaken with continual involvement of beneficiaries, from the planning to the evaluations, implementation, coordination and monitoring phases, guaranteeing active participation by Sahrawi refugee community representatives.

As part of efforts to reduce its carbon footprint, UNICEF Algeria established a greening committee that developed an action plan. Among actions taken in 2018, the office put in place measures to reduce paper consumption and promote the ban of single-use plastic containers and utensils. A system for recycling paper and plastic waste was established, and the office initiated energy-saving measures recommended in the energy audit conducted in 2017.

Goal area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

Adolescents and youth

In 2018 Algerian youth aged 15-to -24 made up 16 per cent of the total population. This rate has slightly but steadily declined, but should resume its growth by 2025 due to the rise in birth rates and marriages. While the share of youth in the population is generally well understood, their socio-economic situation is not as thoroughly documented. Educated young people, young people with little education and very vulnerable, young employees, young entrepreneurs and the very young face various challenges. A substantial number of unemployed young people still survive via small-scale daily arrangements and family solidarity. Issues related to violence in the public space (especially during sports competitions), ardent desire for emigration, increased consumption of addictive substances and a difficult access to employment are often raised in the public arena. In a labour market characterized by rapid growth of the labour force and ever-fewer positions in the civil service and state-owned enterprises, young people are experiencing massive and persistent unemployment, including when they graduate. Despite the number of domains that have been reinforced and the progress made by the Government in the past, the issues currently affecting young people should be addressed with a close eye on demographic projections, which indicate that youth demand will increase. Just in relation to employment, by 2020 Algeria will have to provide over 250,000 jobs per year for young people in this age group.

Child poverty and social protection

For the first time, the scale and nature of poverty among Algeria's children and youth became visible in government documents and discussions during a national reflection on a universal child grant (UCG), which was promoted as a pathway to reducing or eliminating child and youth poverty. The National Economic and Social Council (CNES), a consultative institution which advises the Government on social and economic development, produced a comprehensive child and youth poverty analysis that reports the first government-owned estimate of multidimensional child poverty. The Council used the national multiple overlapping deprivation analysis (N-MODA), developed by UNICEF as a methodology to estimate child poverty. In addition to the under-18 child population, Algeria's N-MODA expanded the analysis

to include youth aged 16-to-24, and analysed child and youth poverty estimates for 2006 and 2012 using the MICS data. The Council had created an *ad hoc* equity cell in 2015 composed of technical staff from social ministries, as well as the Ministry of Finance, National Statistics Office and research institutions, to work on the N-MODA analysis. The group is expected to continue working on social equity analysis, including an update of the N-MODA with data from the forthcoming MICS 6, the results of which are expected in the first semester of 2019.

In the meanwhile, the group will start working on an updated conceptual framework for the N-MODA, considering new dimensions such as ‘social protection’, thanks to the related module added to Algeria’s MICS. The CNES and the equity cell used their own technical capacities throughout the N-MODA process, including report preparation. The country office provided capacity building support to the equity cell and setup a critical review system to review and validate the N-MODA methodology and the draft final report completed in 2018.

Although child monetary poverty has not yet been estimated by the Government, the CNES and the equity cell used a proxy from the MICS to make this estimate. The proxy consists of the “availability of an occupation income in the household”. A cross-tabulation between multidimensional child and youth poverty and the proxy monetary child and youth poverty enabled the identification of distinct groups of children and youth suffering from different forms of deprivation. This approach was inspired by the methodology used by the Mexican Council for the Evaluation of Social Development (CONEVAL), in the framework of a South-South cooperation project between the CNES, CONEVAL and UNICEF Algeria on institutionalizing multidimensional poverty and public policy evaluation.

Social protection interventions were constrained by the unclear scope of social protection, the limited opportunities to influence public policy and the unavailability of data on child poverty and social protection coverage for children in the country. The Government prioritized “more equitable social transfers” in its 2017 action plan, and is finalizing a review of energy subsidies. This coincided with the moment when UNICEF globally decided to launch a reflection with countries, the international community and experts around the UCG as a potential child-sensitive social protection option.

To make the link between child and youth poverty with social protection, a dialogue with the Government of Algeria was initiated by the country office around a possible ‘child-sensitive social protection’ policy option in response to its ongoing energy subsidies review. In this context, Algerian representatives will take part in the upcoming international conference on the UCG in early 2019, organized by UNICEF and the Overseas Development Institute. The conference is an opportunity for the Government of Algeria to be exposed to a viable alternative to energy subsidies. With this new opportunity, UNICEF support is expected to continue for developing capacity within the Government to analyse and design child-sensitive social protection options capable of reducing multidimensional child and youth poverty.

Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

1. Limited availability of regular, up-to-date data. Limited availability of social sector data remains a constraint for analysing the situation of children in Algeria, as well as for assessing country progress and the impact of UNICEF interventions. The country also lacks up-to-date data on SDG indicators, including the 50 child-related indicators monitored by UNICEF. Monitoring progress against the UNICEF’s CPD 2016-2020 results or UNICEF-related UNDAF

achievements would require nationwide social sector surveys. The Government has been committed to implementing the MICS since its inception, and is now conducting fieldwork for the sixth round, with technical and financial support from UNICEF and UNFPA. This initiative will strengthen Algeria's statistical system for social sectors and for monitoring progress toward the SDGs. Government institutions and development partners recognize the importance of investing in updated data on children, youth, women and families, but the MICS alone is not sufficient for providing regular and frequent data on these populations. Since MICS surveys are implemented every three to five years, they are useful for gauging the long-term impact of social policies. However, the data does not allow for analysis of short-term changes in the situation of children and related policies. In addition to MICS, government partners and UNICEF will need to continue investing resources in strengthening real-time monitoring of the situation of children and adolescents, especially in the wake of public policy reforms and economic shocks. More will have to be done to improve regular administrative data collection systems, and to open avenues for exchange of knowledge, in order as well to make Algeria's experience known internationally.

2. Partnership opportunities open the way to enhanced outcomes. UNICEF Algeria is a partner to several Algeria institutions, including: the MoE; Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Affairs; Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reform; Ministry of Youth and Sports; Ministry of Communication; as well as the ONPPE and the CNES. Despite mutual engagement and support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the time spent in 2018 developing annual or biannual work plans and obtaining a final partner agreement slowed down implementation. In addition, UNICEF staff devote much time and resources to operational and administrative transactions, hindering their capacity to offer quality technical support to country programme partners. To address these constraints, UNICEF Algeria initiated discussions with the MoE and MoH about how better use could be made of the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT), which allows for direct payment and direct cash transfers with government institutions for logistical transactions. This would permit the country programme to focus its limited resources on the provision of high-quality expertise to partners. HACT has been used for years with non-governmental organizations supporting implementation of the humanitarian program in the Sahrawi refugees' camps, and has proven to be useful and effective.

Other strategic partnerships were developed to support implementation of the country programme. For instance, Triangular and South-South cooperation (TSSC) is a key strategy for the UNICEF Algeria's 'social inclusion' programme. Two such arrangements have been implemented with Latin America countries, the first with Brazil on social protection, and the second with Mexico on multidimensional poverty and public policy evaluation. These two initiatives were discussed in the context of a global UNICEF consultation on TSSC experiences in different countries.

In Algeria, TSSC was implemented following two different approaches. With Brazil, TSSC was not formalized, but rather based on study missions and participation to international conferences and seminars in Algeria and Brazil. In 2015 a memorandum of understanding was signed between Algeria's CNES, Mexico's CONEVAL and UNICEF to support the institutionalization of multidimensional poverty measurement and public policy evaluation in Algeria. The Algerian Government and UNICEF do not have an institutionalized approach for managing TSSC. To strengthen the contribution of TSSC strategy in achieving results, and to increase its effectiveness and impact on children, it is important to develop a common institutional framework with the Government for TSSC projects. This will promote an organized, well-coordinated and a collaborative approach. It will also support mutual positive benefits

between TSSC initiatives.

UNICEF plans to document the two past TSSC experiences involving Algeria, in consultation with the Government and involved partners, to build new foundations for an impactful TSSC benefitting poor and vulnerable children. This process will help the Government and the country office to discuss and share ideas to improve and revitalize their collaboration under this strategy and to develop a more sustained institutional set-up.

Despite the priority placed on increasing implementation of programmes at the regional and local levels, experience in 2018 has shown that the country programme faced challenges in replicating institutional support at the central level to decentralized levels. The mid-term review planned for early 2019 will be an appropriate forum to reflect on the best ways to equip country programme stakeholders to increase localized interventions by exploring other tools and partnerships with local entities such as municipal and provincial councils.

3. Legal and regulatory framework promoting child rights realization was constrained by delayed operational mechanisms. The significant changes adopted by Algeria to its legal framework have the potential to translate into accelerated improvement for children in the country. The Child Protection Law opens the way for major changes in the organization of social services benefitting children and support for increased cooperation between public and non-governmental entities. This potential was illustrated by the establishment of a standing coordinating committee within ONPPE comprised of 16 ministries and more than 10 non-governmental organizations. Further, the revised Constitution provides for the establishment of a consultative High Youth Council composed of civil society and youth representatives nominated by the Ministry of Youth; 16 representatives of youth living abroad, designated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and officials from 21 ministries and five institutions dealing with youth-related issues. The Council is mandated to formulate recommendations for addressing youth needs and on proposed development in the economic, social, cultural and sports arenas. The newly promulgated Health Law supports national priorities and benefitted from UNICEF Algeria support, in areas such as reducing neonatal mortality and preventing transmittable diseases. The Law also provides for increased attention to adolescent health. However, all these opportunities were constrained by delayed promulgation of operational decrees or slow implementation processes. Meanwhile, it is important that UNICEF continue to work with different national partners involved in child and youth institutions and initiatives by strengthening their capacity to implement interventions within the existing legal framework and standards.

4. Unbalanced progress between social equity monitoring and social protection. The social inclusion programme consists of two components: (1) analysing social equity and 2) promoting child-sensitive social protection. These two areas are coherent and relevant to Algeria's socio-economic context. However, since the start of the present UNICEF country programme in 2016, work on social equity analysis has progressed more quickly than work on social protection, despite the technical support offered by UNICEF in facilitating South-South cooperation between the Algerian and Brazilian governments on social protection, and a tentative plan to pilot a project to digitalize social assistance monitoring in a disadvantaged area of the country in partnership with the Ministry of National Solidarity.

One of the lessons learned regarding the social inclusion programme is the need to clarify the focus of UNICEF social protection support to the Algerian Government (which until now has been too broad), in order to achieve tangible and concrete results for children through logic and

linked interventions. With the mid-term review of UNICEF Algeria country programme initiated in 2018 with the Government, and the global opportunity to debate the UCG supported by UNICEF, ILO and the Overseas Development Institute, an analytical paper was prepared to recommend a new orientation for the social protection component for the remaining years of the programme cycle (2019-2020). A shift should be made toward strengthening government capacity to analyze and develop a policy option with a robust impact on children, and identifying sustained fiscal resources from ordinary and oil-based taxation systems to fund the policy option selected.

The first step toward this shift will be Algerian Government participation in the international conference on UCGs planned for 2019 in Geneva. The conference aims to stimulate debate around these grants based on experts' research and countries' experiences. The reflection on a possible UCG could be part of the ongoing review undertaken by the Government to transform energy subsidies into targeted transfers to the poorest. Alongside with the technical assistance provided by the World Bank to the Government on the process of subsidies review, UNICEF is well positioned to support the Government in analyzing a child-sensitive social protection option policy such as the UCG. UNICEF's role will not consist of proposing a specific content for the grants, but rather to support the Government with analytical tools to reach the most appropriate and effective decision for poor and vulnerable children.

5. Increased efforts to mobilize resources yield modest results. Fund-raising efforts to increase humanitarian interventions for Sahrawi refugees in the Tindouf camps led in 2018 to regular support secured from the European Commission Humanitarian Office and the Italian Government, which was complemented by UNICEF regular resources to ensure the continuity of activities supported by UNICEF Algeria in Tindouf. However, resource mobilization efforts aimed at reinforcing child health and protection interventions and expanding UNICEF's support to education did not bear fruit. The country office will continue to strengthen this argument and encourage funding designated for strengthening health, education and social systems in the camps. In 2019 special attention will be paid to under-resourced sectoral areas for interventions carried out to support the Algerian Government. Private sector fundraising is an area deserving to be explored, with promising signals from private companies operating in Algeria. However, exploring untapped opportunities would require an assessment of potential support for programme interventions, with support from UNICEF's private fundraising and partnerships team; the same is true for the pursuit of potential multi-year funding opportunities with bilateral cooperation and other donors.

Building UNICEF Algeria's private sector partnership engagement is prioritized in the coming year, and a dialogue was initiated with the Government to agree on potential assessment of opportunities. The potential value of UNICEF's 'equity brand' and its status as one of the most trusted organizations globally is an opportunity worth exploring, both in terms of resource mobilization, promotion of child rights and promoting best practices that benefit children and youth. Increased attention to mobilizing UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors, celebrities and supporters is seen as a strategic investment, given their capacity to encourage positive changes favouring children's rights and support UNICEF's advocacy for children by amplifying critical issues nationally. UNICEF Algeria's experience in this area has been positive, and needs to be expanded to a wider range of ambassadors and supporters.

6. Cross-cutting strategies to maximize the delivery of results. UNICEF Algeria's country programme document is articulated around inter-sectoral outcomes, promoting involvement with a variety of actors to achieve results. However, preparations for the mid-term review

highlighted that this shift should be revisited and better articulated around, and in support of, existing government mechanisms if it is to bear fruit.

Multi-sectoral approaches were promoted to address the complex needs of children, for reinforced coordination across a continuum (from childhood to adulthood) and across sectors (such as child protection, education, youth, health and social policy). This was initiated through support provided to the Government to develop an integrated early childhood policy with the involvement of the ministries in charge of education, social affairs, health and religious affairs. However, the absence of an institutional mechanism to lead the process constitutes a challenge that has not been overcome, leading to the suspension of the activity this year. The anticipated projects requiring multi-sectoral interventions, such as those on prevention and response to violence, will thus require formal arrangements, to prevent delays, in addition to clear theories of change elaborated jointly with key counterparts to agree on anticipated impacts and to design roadmaps agreeable to all.

Finally, ongoing cooperation with United Nations sister agencies has proven fruitful and will be pursued to maximize our common impact on neonatal and maternal mortality, youth engagement and participation and for Algeria's attainment of the SGDs.

Looking ahead

These challenges and proposed adjustments will contribute to the exchanges that will take place as part of the country programme mid-term review scheduled early 2019, under the strong leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and involving UNICEF experts and country programme partners. The discussions will also build on the recommendations of the gender review carried out by UNICEF Algeria in 2018.