

## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MTR suggested a need for consolidation and sharpening of UNICEF's contribution to the achievement of rights with equity for Belizean children. Apart from transitions at the institutional level, the need for innovation by UNICEF to add value to on-going efforts was evident. Building on and deepening its advocacy, strengthening capacity development efforts and monitoring children's rights are its core MICS roles today. UNICEF developed multi-layered initiatives in response to deep-rooted obstacles and challenges, which have resulted in an increasing number of pending tasks and investments to meet the MDG goals. Two key achievements were: establishment of the district coordination platform (TOLCA) to monitor the planning and implementation of child-centred social services in Toledo, and the reported 100% transition rate to secondary school among primary school students participating in the Samuel Haynes Centre after-school programme in Belize City. However, weak capacity and data gaps prevented completion of the CRC Report, and several planned annual goals were unmet due to delays in disbursement of funds and the need for programme consolidation and sharpening. Partnership with CARICOM made a difference to progress for children, due to its role as facilitator of youth development policy and help in positioning UNICEF as a leader on children's issues. The Statistical Institute of Belize deserves special mention for securing an improvement in the national data environment for children, including its pursuit of high quality outputs from its collaboration with UNICEF.

## 2 COUNTRY SITUATION AS AFFECTING CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Belize has made advances in meeting the MDG targets for 2015. It has performed satisfactorily in regard to health-related investments, and is poised to be on track for MDGs 4 (child mortality), 5 (maternal mortality), 6 (HIV/AIDS) and 7 (Environment). Issues related to data quality and inadequate reporting (which hinder the compilation of a more realistic national picture on HIV and AIDS) are being given attention via the new 2010-2015 Global Fund Round 9 project. The Government reports that debt servicing obligations constrain its capacity to increase social investments, especially in those areas where they are most needed. Belize is off track for achieving MDGs 1, 2 and 3. The UN system in Belize needs to sustain what has been achieved in the field of new policies and programmes by moving beyond policy development to focus on support for capacity development for both implementation mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation practices, to promote increased impact at the level of the ultimate beneficiaries.

Traditional areas of high vulnerability and low resilience are the southern, rural district of Toledo, which is predominantly indigenous Maya, and the Southside neighbourhoods of Belize City. New poverty data show substantial levels of deterioration in the northern region. Data also suggests that poverty was on the increase in Belize before the onset of the recent global food and financial crises. The additional effect of the current global downturn is likely to be an increase of the impact of poverty on poor communities, particular the most vulnerable boys, girls and families.

Confronted with a steady rise in violent crimes and violent behaviour, especially in Belize City, the government launched the RESTORE Belize initiative. The murder rate had increased to the record level of 39/100,000 (national) and was nearly double that rate in Belize City; the murder conviction rate dropped from 1 to 10 (1999-2007) to 1 to 46 (2006-2007). RESTORE Belize's pilot grounds are Southside of Belize City – where 10% of the national population resides and 40% of all murders occur – to improve citizen's security, safety and quality of life through the restoration of law, order and community building. The initiative is timely, especially as the Southside of Belize City is particularly prone to child deprivation; a 2009 UNICEF-sponsored Southside Belize City study

showed that some neighbourhoods were “chronically shackled to their own destitution” because of a prevailing attitude among residents that “they as individuals are inferior, but also that their community as a whole is inferior.

In part guided by the release of the latest poverty figures (2009 national poverty rate stands at 41.3%; child poverty at 52%), Government has taken steps to improve the features, efficiency and effectiveness of social safety-net programmes. MHDST is receiving technical support from the IDB for the establishment of the Single Information System for Beneficiaries, which will enable the state to efficiently identify and target the most vulnerable groups. In 2010, Government reached an agreement with the World Bank for the provision of technical assistance to design a formal Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programme. It will be piloted in the southern region, which includes the poorest and most-deprived Toledo district, and will upgrade and transform existing initiatives into a more rationalised and efficient social safety-net programme. It is estimated that proper targeting of eligible households and persons (including boys, girls and persons with disabilities) is already in place and will be enhanced through the SISB. The number of beneficiaries is expected to grow from the current 1,500 households (2,300 individuals) to 4,500 households (close to 10,000 persons) by the middle of 2011, potentially reaching 20% coverage of the indigent population (52,000 persons; CPA 2009).

Important 2010 releases:

Country Poverty Assessment 2009;

MDG Scorecard Outlook Report 2010;

HIV-AIDS UNGASS Report;

NPA Monitoring Report 2009;

Situation Analysis and Updated National Gender Policy;

Towards a Sustainable and Efficient State (IDB);

Male Social Participation and Violence in Urban Belize.

### **3 CP ANALYSIS & RESULT**

#### **3.1 CP Analysis**

##### **3.1.1 CP Overview**

2010 was a year of consolidation and capacity strengthening. The CP today is the result of the 2007 first-time UNDAF process, designed to represent “a shared consensus about collective priorities in committing scarce resources”. Despite its limited resources, UNICEF’s CPAP is aligned strongly with a 12-outcome, three-programme UNDAF. The 2007 Country Programme signalled an opportunity to “sharpen focus, identify new threats and gaps and ensure that interventions were aimed at reducing disparities and inequities and safeguarding the rights of children adolescents and their families”. This equity-focused agenda continues to be relevant today in Belize. Despite its intention to select a “limited number of key areas for concerted focus,” when five agencies signed the UNDAF in 2007, UNICEF had committed to 30 of 47 programme outputs. That commitment pre-disposed the UNICEF-GOB CP to immense capacity challenges, both internally and externally, which set the tone for many of the shortfalls we see today. In retrospect, the original CPAP was too ambitious and too dispersed, given limited resources.

With an ambitious programme, weak national capacity and natural disasters undermining on-going efforts, UNICEF provided technical support and partnership to the National Committee of Families and Children (NCFC) to ensure results for children. In late 2009 the MTR took place under NCFC leadership; the NPA served as the framework for review,

focusing on three CPAP programmes. The participatory, frank and intensive MTR process praised the partnership with UNICEF, the strong ownership by the Government and civil society for programme gains, but lamented shortfalls in the achievement of NPA results, and by extension those of the CPAP. Partners noted an "urgent need for seamless child-centred policies across the lifecycle and accompanying delivery models that are validated".

As follow-up, UNICEF quickly initiated dialogue with all development actors resident in Belize to catalyse a renewed emphasis on capacity development as a core strategy for achieving and sustaining country-led results. Aligning the programme around six roles in MICs and supporting implementation of the CRC and CEDAW Committees' concluding observations, a series of adjustments were made over the last seven months in Belize to ensure greater efficiency in delivering results for the most disadvantaged boys and girls.

### **3.1.2 Programme Strategy**

#### **3.1.2.1 Capacity Development**

Capacity development continued to constitute a pivotal axel of the CP assistance and intervention strategy; including the development of both technical and institutional/functional capacities (UNDG methodology). The 'clients' consisted of the main implementing partners, with a special place for the up-stream partner, the NCFC.

Technical capacity development occurred mostly in the form of technical training for individuals, in an attempt to augment and retain technical abilities at the institutional level. The areas of nutrition and youth participation are good examples of UNICEF-supported efforts.

Functional capacity development was fully directed at the organisational level and took place in three different forms:

- Training of partners in processes and procedures related to the UN Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). Reviews and explanations of fund management processes and procedures were instrumental in creating better understanding between UNICEF and implementing partners, better planning schedules and calendars, as well as in calling for improved intra-institutional communication at partner level.
- UNICEF spearheaded the introduction and real-time application of the UNDG/UNDP-designed capacity assessment methodology, initially to the NCFC, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Human Development and Social Transformation and the Ministry of Youth. Eventually, a full capacity assessment cycle was performed with NCFC, providing validation of critical issues detected earlier.
- Support was given for the establishment of a professional Community of Practice for Planning and M&E, to enable the development of capacities and mechanisms for inter-institutional, child-centred, evidenced-based planning and implementation within the framework of the National Plan of Action for Children and Adolescents. See section 6 (Lessons Learned) for more details. Support was also provided to the NCFC to develop and empower similar inter-institutional structures and abilities for civil society, which plays a vital, but often back-stage role in the provision of services to the most deprived children and their families.

A trend analysis shows that the individual and institutional needs for capacity development and retention remain great, both in the public sector and within civil society. Attempts to connect capacity development efforts with the Ministry of Public Service will required further support.

#### **3.1.2.2 Effective Advocacy**

During 2010 UNICEF carried out advocacy around the following issues:

- Promoting achievement of the MDGs with equity, recognizing it as an urgent agenda with four years of possibility. UNICEF's key advocacy issues related to nutrition, child and adolescent well-being, quality education and gender equality and HIV prevention, including data collection
- Improved understanding of the CRC and CEDAW, and how failure to build a strong protection system is a direct cause of increasing concerns about violence, abuse and human trafficking
- The need for an integrated, lifecycle development response to violence prevention.

The country office welcomed an American Airlines Change for Good team, along with a representative of the US Fund for UNICEF (Natcom) in April 2010 to review progress on programmes supported by the Airlines Project. The theme 'The Two Belizes', with an emphasis on the ethnic dimensions relevant to children's well-being in Belize formed the basis of the visit, which provided an opportunity to stress our continuing need to advocate on the issue of disparity with a focus on Toledo and Southside Belize City.

Launch of the International Year of Youth was led by the Ministry of Youth and supported by UNICEF and the NCFC. This media-oriented dialogue with the Minister and young people received significant national attention, with numerous calls for re-broadcasting. The emphasis of this dialogue was on adolescent well-being and participation.

A Strategic Moment of Reflection allowed Belize CO to highlight at the regional and sub-regional levels lagging priorities and identify common sub-regional areas for advocacy in going forward from 2011, particularly education and data collection and knowledge.

The consultative and participatory nature of process used to compile information and data for the Situation Analysis and the design of the MICS4 provided a natural avenue and opportunity to convene and advocate with relevant stakeholders and partners to build ownership of, and consensus on, the importance of evidence-gathering and data analysis in the process of formulating, implementing and monitoring and evaluating child-centred policies, strategies and plans. Both processes included the establishment of functioning technical steering committees.

### **3.1.2.3 Strategic Partnerships**

In the post-MTR phase UNICEF invested a great deal of staff time in expanding partnerships, recognising that to create a culture of capacity strengthening and child rights requires both 'on the ground' and policy-making action. UNICEF engaged in:

- Expanding partnerships beyond the technical level to include closer engagement by policy-makers; key civil society organisations; institutions that have not before directly related to the NPA and the donor community
- Bringing a more visible ethnic dimension to programming by opening dialogue and planning for 2011 annual work plans with the ethnic councils, including the Garifuna, Q'eqchi and Creole Councils, to expand investment in the rights of some of the most disadvantaged children
- Broadening inter-agency partnerships to include more direct partnerships with IOM, the UN Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights, along with other locally based UN agencies such as PAHO, UNDP, UNFPA
- Strengthening understanding and coordination among partners regarding children's well-being and the need for integrated child-centred approaches and coherent policy across the lifecycle.

These actions were taken in close collaboration with the NCFC, Women's Commission and Women's Affairs Department. As part of the four-part Annual Review, UNICEF invited: CEOs and ministers to engage in discussion on key sectoral issues; young people to share their perspectives of life in communities and schools; the media to discussion their role in addressing children's rights; and the donor community to exchange

experiences. All these groups are considered to be strategic partnerships for social change in Belize. The multiple dialogues formed the basis for programming in 2011 and 2012. In the most disadvantaged areas of Toledo, UNICEF engaged NGOs on multiple occasions to enhance on-the-ground collaboration, and expanded NGO partnerships in Southside Belize City both to assess their current work and to learn from their rich experiences at the community level. During the hurricane season, the Red Cross, NEMO and other technical partners maintained close contact. In 2011 the C4D and communications strategies will incorporate a network of graphics and advertising agencies ready to work together with UNICEF for children.

#### **3.1.2.4 Knowledge Management**

UNICEF invited partner feedback to consolidate external knowledge management. These processes allowed participant agencies to learn from each other, build consensus on ways to shape and influence new policies and programmes for children. The objectives of the dialogues were to:

- (a) Identify programmes worth documenting and scaling-up
- (b) Discuss and plan in 2011 the integration of an over-arching well-being indicator framework for a seamless child-centred approach to programming and a coherent system of services for boys and girls
- (c) Focus partner investments on the most disadvantaged
- (d) Build wider national partner interest and capacity to develop the arguments that would foster sound policy for children
- (e) Foster improved coordination among partners working on common issues for children as a follow up to the MTR findings e.g., in the area of adolescent girls and protection.

At a meeting of CEOs and ministers, UNICEF received frank feedback and obtained a better understanding of the daily challenges facing senior policy-makers and their intentions on children's rights. Key processes that UNICEF found beneficial included the MTR of the UNDAF, the inter-agency MDG Scorecard, the Situation Analysis of Gender Issues in Belize, the NPA Monitoring Report and the four-part consultative Annual Review. All the findings provide excellent indications of progress and set out a common platform for discussion and priority-setting. The Annual Review was organised as a series of one-day meetings beginning with a key presentation by UNICEF followed by a dialogue. The series included a review with technical partners, ministers and CEOs, institutions and development partners. Since the Annual Review coincided with the UNICEF Situation Analysis, technical discussions took place, which helped to consolidate knowledge and lessons and invite new partnerships, such as the discussions with young people, media and NGOs working on HIV and Protection. The Representative also paid field visits to a number of counterparts to learn first-hand of their achievements, challenges and perspectives for reaching the most disadvantaged children.

#### **3.1.2.5 C4D - Communication for Development**

UNICEF Belize identified C4D with partners as a weak area of programming during the MTR and therefore as a key strategy for 2010. The new Representative and one programme staff member were trained in C4D through a sub-regional training workshop prior to 2010, which will facilitate expansion of this work within the Country Programme. Resources were allocated in the 2010 Annual Work Plan within each programme area to support behaviour change communication. The dialogues that were pursued during 2010 highlighted the behavioural changes required in a number of areas, related the failures of duty-bearers including parents, teachers and other care-givers, the police, and particularly in the media. C4D will be used to address the role that longstanding practices have played on child well-being, including corporal punishment, early marriage among the indigenous populations, practices that put pregnant teen mothers out of school, and poor environmental practices.

The CO has laid the foundation for a strengthened C4D work plan through the recruitment of a Communications/C4D Officer. It has also made an assessment and updating of all graphics and advertising agencies that could work as part of a team; met with media personnel to determine possibilities for collaboration and held C4D-specific discussions during programme planning meetings. It was determined that in order to address many of the needed behavioural changes, the GOB and UNICEF must focus in coming years on creating a stronger culture of child rights.

### **3.1.3 Normative Principles**

#### **3.1.3.1 Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation**

CRC and CEDAW are core frameworks for Cooperation, central to achieving the well-being of children and women. A human rights perspective draws attention to the imperative of respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights children as subjects of rights, rather objects with needs. Despite the promotion of rights by NCFC, UNICEF and partners, the culture of child rights remains quite weak in Belize. Participants in the MTR process also called for continued promotion of women's rights with respect to cultural norms and practices, particularly to reduce the negative effects these practices have on boys and girls.

The GOB is signatory to a number of human rights instruments, respects the rights of its citizens and has structures and mechanisms in place to avoid, insofar as possible, violations. Human rights challenges in Belize include killings, the use of excessive force by security forces, lengthy pretrial detentions, domestic violence, sexual abuse of children and trafficking of persons. The response to improving the HR situation lies in strengthening the protection framework and maintaining reporting obligations to many international bodies so that monitoring of gaps becomes a practice that guides policy. UNICEF has agreed to expand support to the Ministry of Human Development and the NCFC to strengthen the protection framework for children and to create a culture of rights in Belize, while empowering children themselves with skills and knowledge to know and defend their rights.

UNICEF staff continue to be trained to support on-going efforts and most recently participated in a Regional Training on Human Rights and Movement of People supported by UN agencies and Universidad de la Luz-Panama, a UN interagency initiative aimed at ensuring that human rights are considered in all areas of UN work. Additionally technical support is needed to share experiences from other countries on how they have established child rights frameworks, legislation and systems of protection, including for independent monitoring. A number of emerging issues, such as human trafficking, make it imperative for Belize to invest resources in meeting the international standards established in commitments that the Government has ratified.

#### **3.1.3.2 Gender Equality and Mainstreaming:**

The Gender Policy and the Strategic Priority Action Plan for Gender Equality (2010-2013), serves as a guide for the post-MTR CP in Belize. The life-cycle CP design offers an opportunity to analyse and address gender inequality beginning early in life, thereby building equality actions in from the beginning. The key goal of the CP from 2011 is to build a seamless child-centred programme in which all key indicators of well-being, including gender equality, have a place and contribute towards the holistic development of the child.

The gender equality MDG is off-track in Belize due to a lack of women's political participation; persistent regression has occurred since 1993. Despite higher academic participation and achievement, women's labour force participation rates remain low, unemployment is high, and their share of national income is low. With increasing poverty rates, poor women and girls exchange sex for money or favours, putting them increasingly at risk of violence, abuse and poor reproductive health outcomes. Boys'

under-participation in education erodes the core strategy for achievement of gender equality, further complicating the challenge. Several small NGOs run 'second chance' programmes for women and girls but most have not been fully assessed, despite apparent gains. A Government-funded project on single mothers was also introduced (2008) to provide women with skills to become gainfully employed or start businesses. UNICEF led an interagency training workshop on "Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming in the UN System," with the support of the Regional Office and led by Pilar González Rams - Gender Programme Officer, and Magda Raupp - Consultant. Training, internally and externally, is an indispensable tool for social change.

The Women's Commission in Belize and Women's Affairs Department representatives participate in many of UNICEF's programme planning and review sessions. They indirectly act as monitors of UNICEF's work and often hold UNICEF accountable for ensuring that women and girls' rights are being adequately addressed.

In 2011 UN agencies will begin a joint programme on adolescent girls to strengthen existing community-based efforts in Belize and promote scaling-up of strong programmes and improve those that require further support.

### **3.1.3.3 Environmental Sustainability:**

Belize, a low-lying coastal country with the second longest barrier reef in the world, is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Due to its geographical location wedged on the border of the Caribbean Sea and Central America, and with its major urban centers such as Belize City located in the coastal belt, the Belizean population is highly vulnerable to the threats of climate change. Families, especially the most disadvantaged, lose their homes and access to water, food and even jobs during the annual hurricane season. As a coastal country that is economically dependent on its natural resources, Belize is very vulnerable to sea level rises and temperature changes and the resulting impact on its natural ecosystems, agricultural systems and other sectors, such as tourism and fisheries.

One of the most visible impacts of climate change is the increased incidence and types of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, coral bleaching and impairment in natural and human ecosystem functions. As a cross-cutting issue, climate change has exacerbated the impact of natural disasters and is a cause of poverty in Belize, particularly due to the destruction of property, accessibility to clean water, food (crops) and homes. The 2010 CPA pointed out that "disaster management and relief operations were estimated to have worked well in many parts of the country," although it is noteworthy that the impacts of the natural and artificial ecosystems affecting sectorial activities are interrupted and in some cases with no short-term recovery, resulting in economic losses that have direct negative effects on living standards of those affected.

The frequency and severity of natural disasters will continue to increase with climate change and environmental degradation, exacerbating the threat of poverty. It is essential that the government, international institutions, NGOs and communities address this issue with urgency. It was noted that climate change and environmental issues received little mention during the poverty community assessments, indicating a lack of awareness of the importance of a healthy environment in abating some of the impacts brought about by climate change and how it is linked to poverty. Belizean children need to be empowered, educated and informed on climate change to reduce their vulnerability and promote adaptation mechanisms to reduce their risks.

In 2010 UNICEF Belize took steps to strengthen its early warning system and collaborative arrangements with UN and national partners to ensure the level of readiness required to respond to multiple threats. The government of Belize over the last three years has made a growing investment in disaster management and response, facilitating a process of change and rapid recovery. Despite these efforts the need for

speedy response continues to pose a challenge for the Government; UNICEF has supported distribution efforts, made assessments of the situation of children and women and distributed thousands of ORS packs (19,000), school-in-a-box kits and information materials to maintain children's rights to education and health. UNICEF also provided \$200,000 (US funding) to protect on-going investments in education and child-friendly schools, as well as supporting distribution of micronutrients in poor communities. Details are outlined in sectoral areas of this report.

### **3.2 Programme Components:**

#### **Title: *Child survival, education and development***

##### **Purpose:**

The Government of Belize, as part of the country programme, has strived to meet the MDG survival and development priorities and targets to fulfil the human rights of children and adolescents. Under the framework of the Belize National Plan of Action (NPA) the country programme, since 2007, has sought to address on-going threats to MDG achievement by focusing on nutrition, child survival, safe motherhood, and quality education, with special attention to reaching women, boys and girls in the most disadvantaged areas. Despite the number of investments, however, Belize continues to struggle in closing gaps related to child survival, education and development. The 2010 NPA monitoring report shows that indicators related to child health, nutrition, and school net enrolment are not on target.

This programme component, therefore, aims to build the capacity of duty bearers to better fulfil their responsibilities by delivering services of high quality in a well-planned, integrated and responsive manner. It focuses on the most disadvantaged and makes use of these interventions as a platform for policy work. This equity-focused approach promotes greater collaboration between state and non-state actors and builds the capacities of rights holders to actively claim those rights. Consequently, investment is prioritised in the Toledo district which, according to the 2009 Country Poverty Assessment, reports a 60.4% poverty rate. The largest population of indigenous boys and girls is also represented in the rural, remote areas of this district.

The programme is designed to deliver the following:

- Women and children in 20 of the poorest communities, particularly Toledo, benefitting from Early Child Development (ECD); high-impact health, nutrition, water and sanitation, and survival interventions; and safe motherhood, baby-friendly hospitals and school-readiness programmes
- 60% of pre- and primary schools rated child-friendly
- 50% reduction in repetition and dropout rates.

One AWP was signed with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Human Development and the Ministry of Education.

##### **Resources Used (in US Dollars):**

Total Approved Budget:	\$752,940.81
Regular Resources:	\$77,500.00
Other Resources	\$675,440.81

7% Set Aside Funds to support Global Economic Slowdown and Volatile Food Prices (Nutrition Focus)	\$240,000.00
7% Set Aside Funds for ACSD (H1N1 Response)	\$45,000.00
Emergency Reserve Fund (EPF)	\$200,000.00

## **Results Achieved:**

### **1. Nutrition Across the Life Cycle**

According to the MICS Survey (2006) the national malnutrition rate among children under 5 is 18%, with a reported 44% among the indigenous population. In response to this data, measures were taken to improve nutrition across the life cycle. Key areas of response include data, technical capacity building, advocacy and awareness.

Data coordination and technical assistance was provided for the implementation of the national nutrition survey to analyse micronutrient levels by social, demographic, and health status characteristics in non-pregnant women of child-bearing age and children ages 6-59 months.

**Technical Capacity Building:** Efforts were made to build capacity of the Ministry of Health's technical staff in nutrition in technical meetings to strengthen the framework for nutrition across the lifecycle. The nutritionist attended a workshop in Mexico City for scaling-up the use of micronutrient powders to improve the quality of complementary foods for young children in Latin America and the Caribbean. To foster an integrated approach to ECD, and based on the recommendation of TACRO, three technical professionals of the Ministry of Education and Human Development participated in a South-South exchange with Cuba to learn from effective implementation of comprehensive ECD policy.

**Advocacy and Awareness:** The Ministry of Health provided training for 100% of technical staff and counterparts on C4D, which resulted in the development of a C4D plan. User-friendly flipcharts on infant and young child feeding practices were produced for use at the community level.

**Baby Friendly Hospitals:** Two hospitals in the South and a community resource centre were certified as baby-friendly. Belize City's major hospital was also recertified, bringing the total number of hospitals certified as baby friendly to four.

**Early Childhood Development Policy:** In keeping with the CARICOM Regional Guidelines, the MoE led the development of an integrated draft ECD policy and work plan. Completion is slated for March 2011.

**Roving Care-Givers Expansion to Southside Belize City:** The Roving Care-Givers Programme expanded to: 14 Rovers covering seven communities in the Toledo District; six Rovers in Southside conducting early childhood stimulation to over 350 children and providing parenting skills to over 300 families. A study tour for RCP in Jamaica in early March helped to shape the comprehensive model of a parenting strategy across the life cycle, which the RCP project will advance in 2011 with the collaboration of key personnel in other line ministries.

**Child-Friendly Schools:** The Quality Child-Friendly Schools Initiative (QCFSI) standards and framework are being piloted in ten schools reaching a total of 1,344 children in Toledo and 2,187 children in Southside Belize City. One major components of the QCFSI is the inclusion of 'Alternative Discipline', as a result of the Education and Training Act 2010, which prohibits corporal punishment and was signed by the MoE. Additionally, a school improvement plan for implementing Positive Discipline is underway.

## **Future Workplan:**

Due to the continuing need to mainstream gender issues that are fundamental to achieving equity and improving the wellbeing of women and children, the future work plan reflects strengthened programme coherence, focus and strategy. Direct

interventions will not only target the most disadvantaged but will also be models for advocacy leading to shifts in policy and practice. In 2011, therefore, efforts will be accompanied by a clear communication and advocacy strategy.

Utilising the revised PCR/IR structure, the equity agenda and bearing in mind the CRC and CEDAW recommendations, three core results have been drafted for the next two years:

- By 2012, relevant national and community-based service providers in Southside Belize City and Toledo have strengthened capacity to develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmed to reach the most vulnerable boys and girls.
- By 2012, 50% of vulnerable boys, girls and families in Southside Belize City and Toledo District are benefiting from increased coverage of an integrated package of ECD services and improved parenting, care and nutrition practices.
- By 2012, 50 % of the most disadvantaged boys and girls in Southside Belize City and Toledo District are benefiting from improved school readiness practices and increased access to quality learning supported by communities, teachers and families

**Title: HIV and AIDS, violence and adolescent development**

**Purpose**

One of the lessons learned from the past is that small-scale projects and broad-brush approaches lead to a triangle of discontinuity. Although demonstrating anecdotal evidence, many fail to provide an adequate basis upon which to build policy and achieve scale. Programme approaches have tended to focus on a problem-driven approach by addressing prominent issues facing young people such as HIV and AIDS, crime and violence, teenage pregnancy etc. rather than a holistic approach to adolescent development. Additionally, little attention has been given to the participation of adolescents in programmes affecting them, and there are limited platforms for adolescent participation in decision-making. Today, adolescents continue to be marginalised and unable to enjoy their rights as outlined in the CRC. Of particular concern is the absence of early adolescence from any national programming context, which was highlighted in a 2009 Literature Review of Adolescents 10-14.

Following the MTR in 2009/2010 and based on the revised MTSP it was agreed that two fundamental shifts were necessary in this programme area: (1) a programming approach that addresses adolescent development and participation from a holistic perspective, and (2) programming that supports a seamless transition from childhood to adolescence.

This resulted in the following revised targets for adolescents for 2011:

- 20% of adolescent boys and girls have increased capacities, services and support to enable a smooth transition to adulthood.
- National programmes and policies affecting adolescent boys and girls have established mechanisms to take their opinion into actions
- 50% increase in number of successful prosecution of perpetrators of abuse, trafficking and exploitation
- 75% of children in conflict with the law benefit from mediation and diversion and rehabilitation strategies.

**Resources Used (in US Dollars)**

Approved Budget as per CPD	Available for 2010	Expended 2010
RR 205,000	RR 331,250	295,994 ( 89.4%)
OR 240,000	OR 71,800	71,800 (100%)
Total US\$445,000	403,050.00	367,794

## **Results Achieved**

In keeping with the CRC Concluding Observations, CEDAW, and the revised MTSP framework, the following results were achieved:

Support was provided to CARICOM for putting adolescent and youth development on Caribbean governments' agenda. CARICOM Heads of Government and Ministers of Youth were presented with the findings of the 'Adolescent Hopes and Dreams' and 'CARICOM Commission on Youth Development' reports, which highlight the need for earlier investments in adolescents. These recommendations were endorsed, and the UN International Year of the Youth was identified as a platform for action in the region.

Nationally, this influenced the National Youth Policy's development. Technical support was provided through monthly technical dialogue and at least three capacity-building sessions with technical staff and stakeholders. Given the current problem-focused approach to adolescent development, it is necessary to continue supporting capacity development to ensure that the policy outlines a framework for positive approaches to adolescent and youth development.

The International Year of Youth was launched. This national event raised the visibility of adolescents and created spaces for 100 vulnerable adolescent girls and boys from South side Belize City and Toledo to address their concerns and aspirations to high-level government officials. Despite numerous studies documenting young people's feelings of 'voicelessness,' participation is not seen as an urgent national priority. One area that stands out is the absence of spaces to promote arts, culture, music and other forms of cultural expression among adolescents. Although Belize is a rich multi-cultural nation, these important elements shaping adolescent identity are rarely emphasized.

Additional results achieved in adolescent participation include: the development of leadership and governance capacity of a cadre of over 60 adolescents, with particular emphasis on indigenous Mayan adolescents from seven rural communities in Toledo; participation of an adolescent delegate at COP 16; participation of over 1,000 adolescent boys and girls in Jump Rope for Heart programme and participation of over 1,000 adolescent girls and boys in a "Ballers for Life" Sports for Development programme. The latter saw a 10% increase in girls' participation, especially among girls from Toledo.

The Regional Advisor for Child Protection provided support in assessing the child protection environment. This resulted in a request by the Ministry of Human Development to build their capacity to strengthen the child protection system. If the Child Protection system is strengthened it is likely that Belize will meet most of the recommendations in the CRC concluding observations.

A high-level conference on CSEC, hosted by Belize's First Lady and supported by TACRO, saw the participation of over 100 stakeholders and resulted in the formation of a working group to draft a CSEC plan.

The adolescent-friendly space model in Southside Belize continues to provide over 150 vulnerable adolescents with opportunities to engage in after-school programmes and social networks. Positive impacts include a 100% transition rate to secondary school among students participating in the programme. With over 50% of adolescents of secondary school age out of school, such programmes have strong potential for reaching and saving vulnerable urban adolescents. ECD and Child Protection Regional Advisors provided input in identifying areas for evaluation and scaling of the model.

In keeping with the 4Ps framework, several results were achieved in HIV. With the highest rate in Central America and 5th in the Caribbean HIV requires strategic focus in

Belize. Some significant results included: improved NGO efforts at the community level, resulting in 30% increase in families living with HIV receiving services and support; the piloting of a model for addressing the social needs of HIV-positive adolescents, south-south cooperation between the Ministries of Health of Belize and Suriname to strengthen PMTCT, support for the revision of the HFLE policy and support to UWI for completion of Belize's chapter on sexuality education in schools. With the highest rate of new infections reported among young people 15-24, the area of prevention requires more attention.

### **Future Workplan**

During the remainder of the CP, efforts will be made to consolidate the various programme components into a comprehensive adolescent protection and development programme. Three areas; HIV and AIDS, Child Protection and Adolescent Development and Participation will be consolidated into one broad framework of Protection and Development. The programme will sharpen its focus on reaching the most vulnerable adolescents, with technical support from TACRO in developing the framework.

A joint UN project on adolescent girls, led by UNICEF, is planned for 2011. This project will address the social and economic vulnerability of adolescents girls in Southside Belize City and the southern districts – areas identified as those most in need of attention.

Efforts will be made to expand volunteerism as part of promoting adolescent well-being and fostering connections with communities. Concerted efforts will be made to attract volunteers to support the downstream elements of the CP.

On the heels of COP 16 success, UNICEF will continue to work with HQ and TACRO to strengthen the participation of adolescents in disaster prevention and response and mitigating climate change. This is an area of much interest for young people and can provide opportunities for unique partnerships with adolescents and non-traditional partners.

Utilizing the revised PCR/IR structure, the equity agenda and bearing in mind the CRC and CEDAW recommendations, three core results have been drafted for the next two years: By 2012:

- The child protection system at the national and community level with an emphasis on Toledo and Southside Belize City is providing a comprehensive continuum of care, support and developmental services for the most vulnerable boys and girls birth to 18 years.
- 30% of the most vulnerable adolescent girls in Southside Belize City and Southern Region have increased capacities and access to integrated services and support that reduce their social and economic vulnerability, poor reproductive health outcomes and better manage interpersonal relationship with boys and men.
- National policies and programmes targeting adolescents have established mechanisms, including media and culture, for full participation of the most disadvantaged boys and girls, converting their opinions into actions.

### **Title: *Disparity reduction through public policy, investment and participatory governance***

#### **Purpose:**

The cross-cutting Programme 'Disparity Reduction Through Public Policy, Investment and Participatory Governance' targets the programmatic contribution to creating a culture of human rights and accountability, through building capacities among government and its social partners, through strengthening partnerships and advocacy for the increase of social investments. Efforts with the GOB are required to move beyond a focus on accession to global instruments and associated compliance reporting to enabling a

national human rights framework, a human rights-based approach to programming and the fostering of a human rights 'culture' which effectively promotes the centrality of human rights as the logical and crucial context within which human development can occur in an appropriate manner.

The Programme Component is designed to ensure that:

- The processes and capacity for national child-friendly public policy formulation, implementation and monitoring are strengthened;
- National budgets are assessed, developed and implemented from a human rights-based approach for effective social investments;
- The overall quality and relevance of social statistics to effectively monitor the situation of children and women and to facilitate better decision making in the policy environment are improved;
- Quality research is undertaken with key partners and findings are disseminated and utilised
- Key partnerships to promote, protect and fulfill the rights of children are strengthened
- The rights of indigenous boys, girls and women are safeguarded in the process of national development.

### **Resources Used (in US Dollars)**

Approved per CPD		Available 2010	Expended 2010
RR	95,000	263,250	190,400
OR	120,000	156,134	127,428
Total	215,000	419,384	317,828

### **Results Achieved**

Advisory services were invested in the institutional strengthening of the NCFC, aiming to support this important partner for improved planning of and delivery on its mandate and critical functions. Support was intensified to NCFC and other partners via the introduction of the UNDG capacity development methodology. Although less robust than expected, they provided additional momentum for channelling executive attention and energy to the institutional parameters under which duty bearers can better deliver on their obligations. As capacity development response, support was provided to MHDST for operational improvements to the ministry's Planning Unit.

Technical sessions were conducted with NCFC, centering on the design and promotion of integrated life cycle-based services and services-delivery models. As a follow up, planning services were extended to TOLCA, the Toledo district-based platform for institutional collaboration, resulting in TOLCA's re-positioning for enhancing local child well-being. In Southside Belize City, the advent of the RESTORE Belize initiative filled part of the institutional coordination vacuum. UNICEF has strategically contributed to the design of participatory processes to populate the strategic elements of RESTORE Belize, and in late 2010 initiated technical support to draft RESTORE Belize's Strategic (Master) Plan.

Support to the gender situation analysis resulted in the 2010 updated National Gender Policy document. Dissemination is pending a review by Cabinet, due to a controversial abortion-related segment.

After a stakeholder sensitization meeting co-facilitated by the regional monitoring specialist, a MICS4 coordinator and the establishment of a national Steering Committee guided national ownership defining and managing the scope and technical design of the

survey that will deliver results in 2011. Simultaneously, preparations for a Situation Analysis got underway, leading to a semi-final draft at the end of the year, to be completed and disseminated in early 2011. Process results indicate that: i) pending child rights-related issues require sustained attention; and ii) UNICEF remains at the forefront as convening actor for child rights dialogue and advocacy.

The mid-term monitoring report of the National Plan of Action for Children and Adolescents (NPA) was finalised and provided a picture of progress that is aligned with the state of progress of MDG achievement. It pointed to data gaps, as almost half of the indicators remain untracked.

Establishment of the development think-tank 'Policy Observatory' at the University of Belize (UB) move slightly, but failed to lift the initiative to the next level, due to challenging institutional growth dynamics at the UB.

Progress, as measured against the higher-level results planned in the CPAP and UNDAF, remains slower than desired. Trends detected and reported in previous years, indicating that national environments are slow to move beyond the close-at-hand horizons of concrete, sometimes stand-alone project outputs, continued in 2010. The rudimentary presence of effective coordination among key social sector actors and lack of deliberate inter-institutional calendars for effective analysis and planning continued to set the agenda for UNICEF. Capacity problems are omnipresent, including insufficient staffing levels and trained professionals, and continued weak levels of institutional growth and consolidation. The small size of the country, the limited pool of human resources (affected by weak educational output, continued brain-drain and emigration) and the complexity of governance models constitute national operational environments that are characterized by extreme work pressures and workload, frustration, poor accountability structures and difficulties in integrating and consolidating activities beyond existing institutional structures.

However, entry points for change exist. Critical monitoring and planning functions are being perceived by duty-bearers and rights-holders as a natural element of work processes. Capacity development with duty-bearers for knowledge generation and management needs to continue, and be better grounded in improved institutional arrangements. Well-tailored capacity building efforts with rights-holders (boys, girls, adolescents, parents, communities) also needs to be accelerated.

### **Future Workplan:**

Under the newly adopted intermediate results, the future work agenda will include a continued focus on:

- Improvements to data systems environments through improving capacities for data disaggregation (with a focus on inequities), enhancing data analysis and modeling, developing innovative dissemination strategies that promote the use of data, and designing models for monitoring by and for boys, girls and communities
- Improvements in institutional capacities for child-sensitive public policy development and implementation through advocating for and enhancing capacities within all stages of the policy cycle (including budgeting), providing down-stream pilot investments that deliver demonstration and scale up elements, and advocating for evidence-based connections between policy benefits and social investment options.

## **Title** *Cross-sectoral costs*

### **Purpose**

In 2010 cross-sectoral costs consisted of those that covered selected staff, logistics, vehicle maintenance, communication and information expenses, rent and partnership-building. As UNICEF Belize shifted focus, the need to make more field visits, fill empty posts, (re)build new partnerships and re-launch advocacy and visibility for the entire programme this programme area included actions to facilitate well-resourced, more strategic and cost-effective responses to ensure the respect, protection and fulfillment of children's rights was maintained in the country.

### **Resources Used**

Approved	Funded	Expended	%
US\$175,000	216,000	182,637.64	87.25

### **Results Achieved**

- Filling all vacant posts to meet the demands for the implementation of the country programme, thereby reducing the impact of human resource constraints on a few staff members
- Efficient management of key partnership-building meetings with members of the diplomatic corps, NGOs and the media designed to establish a dialogue on common areas of interest, understanding of challenges and the opportunity to unite for the development community around children's issues in Belize.
- Enhanced office environment for staff, including upgrading UNICEF branding, key messaging and creating space for high-energy work and an optimistic outlook.
- A very professional approach by staff and efficient process for the preparation and implementation of new processes demonstrating growth in the team and readiness for innovations.

### **Future Workplan**

In 2011 this cross-sectoral area will be split into two areas: one with the same name and the other called 'Support' under the new Vision structure.

PCR: Well resourced, evidence-based communication for development, research and lessons learnt from evaluations of existing programmes, are facilitating more strategic and cost-effective responses to ensure the respect, protection and fulfilment of children's rights

IR 1: By 2014, positive behavioural outcomes are evident among key duty-bearers, resulting in the creation of child-friendly environments and practices. (Gender marker 2)

IR 2: By 2012, state-of-the-art research is informing policy that influences the achievement of outcomes in early childhood and adolescence in Southside Belize city and Toledo District, including influence on MDG outcomes. (Gender marker 2)

IR3: By 2011, supplies are forecasted and procured in a timely manner to ensure rapid access and smooth workflow for programmes, including during emergencies. (Gender marker 1)

## **4 OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Governance & Systems**

#### **4.1.1 Governance Structure**

The CMT met regularly during the year in Belize and made use of all available tools to ensure good governance. Of particular importance were the updated CCCs, which were widely distributed, and the new Early Warning System that supported preparedness and response plans. At least three sessions were held with staff members to ensure a more participatory approach to preparedness and response and an understanding of UNICEF's role in emergencies. Several staff members worked together during times of emergency to manage UNICEF's response under the Representative or OIC following guidance outlined in UNICEF's EWS, inter-agency emergency plan and based on experience. The OIC took the lead for oversight, with support by emergency and security focal points. The CMT revised its governance structure to include new staff members, taking into consideration existing experience and expertise thereby ensuring that oversight, monitoring and reporting on core processes was well delegated and secure. TORs for each governance body were re-distributed. As part of the annual work planning session and following the development of the ERM, the CMT and other members of the team reviewed all of the key operations procedures, eliminating outdated and unnecessary practices, addressing areas identified as weaknesses and seeking to address the issues identified in the Business Information Report (BIR). Regular use was made of the BIR to lead CMT discussions and to guide improvements in programme and management. More needs to be done in 2011 to refine the processes internally, but there now exists a much better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various positions.

#### **4.1.2 Strategic Risk Management**

Belize continues to maintain a high level of awareness and readiness among staff for potential risks to the disruption of workflow, including as a result of natural disaster, and takes steps to mitigate such risks. As mentioned earlier a number of potential risks can affect business operations in Belize including natural disaster (hurricane, floods), security threats due to the high levels of crime and violence and the circulation of arms. The issue most evident in Belize is that of security, or a sense of insecurity among staff. Issues of security and mitigation measures are regularly monitored by the Security focal point, with support from UNDSS in Guatemala. Necessary safety equipment is in place and staff members have all been briefed on ways to mitigate and report potential threats or experiences in their environs. As natural disaster is the norm, Belize CO sought support from the TACRO Emergency advisors to learn about and update the new Early Warning System (EWS). The CO appointed an office emergency focal point who has been well trained for the purpose by the Red Cross and UNICEF and ensures that the EWS is kept up to date. Part of risk-management preparations also included updating the Business Continuity Plan to include new staff and to reallocate tasks and responsibilities. With respect to programme, the AWP's give consideration to potential risks due to failures on the part of partners and/or UNICEF to put measures in place to mitigate risks or challenging circumstances. The Table of Authorities was updated several times during the year to ensure correct delegation of authority during fluctuating staffing arrangements. Operations practices were reviewed and refined to ensure that UNICEF processes are respected and updated in line with current business processes. The CO participated in the development of the ERM system. The process provided an opportunity to review and prepare (or update) responses to risks and to take steps in 2011 to mitigate the potential development of new risks identified in the ERM. The CMT met regularly and discussed key management issues, taking a solutions-oriented approach to addressing impediments to proper workflow.

#### **4.1.3 Evaluation**

The office IMEP was updated twice during the year to capture the on-going studies and planned evaluations and/or research. The Office did not conduct any evaluations during the year and suffered the loss of its Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, reducing

the opportunity to begin evaluating on-going programme models. The issue of evaluation was dealt with in the NPA and discussed during the MTR in May 2010. Key MTR findings noted that at the national level, the interim targets of the NPA were not on track, resulting in a lack of delivery of results for children. Failure to set baselines, monitor and evaluate governmental and non-governmental programme efforts consistently accounted for the weaknesses in the NPA achievements. In light of the challenges and in accordance with UNICEF's core roles in Middle Income Countries, steps were taken by UNICEF to fill the M&E post, revise the IMEP, dialogue with partners and undertake field visits to ensure that UNICEF is able to deliver more effectively on results for children and women through evaluation and documentation. One of the goals of Programme three that faced multiple obstacles was the establishment of a Community of Practice for Planning and Monitoring and Evaluation (COPPME). Despite efforts on UNICEF's part to build a community and culture for research and evaluation, overstretched public M&E officers rarely had the time to participate in capacity-building processes, weakening the possibilities of COPPME. Funds have been allocated in 2011 specifically to support the evaluation component and to strengthen the processes to ensure transparency and work at the level of the standards set by the UN inter-agency evaluation group. There is a dire need to strengthen in-country capacity for planning, monitoring and evaluation, and the CO is investigating new collaborative arrangements as well as seeking opportunities for external support from M&E networks in the region or Centres of Excellence. This is a very important area for Headquarters and Regional Office support in 2011.

#### **4.1.4 Information Technology and Communication:**

Information Technology (IT) made great improvement in 2010. Procurement of computer hardware resulted in replacement of out-dated hardware to meet 2011 new standards in preparation for VISION, along with a rack to protect IT equipment and organize the IT space. Procurement of computer hardware is consistently done through the LTA established by Supply Division with Atlantic Business Systems (ABS), as local prices are usually almost double those of ABS. Only small items are procured locally.

Reliability of internet services in country remains a challenge. Belize has a very small pool of internet service providers and coverage is very limited. With respect to VOIP, the only reliable service provider is BTL Ltd., which holds a telecommunications monopoly leading to high client costs. Guidance was therefore sought from TACRO and all systems requiring internet access will be routed through IPSec in January 2011. This change should meet the required stability in internet connectivity to minimize interruption and impact on online business processes. The services of our present ISP, Netking, will be retained as a backup.

Common ICT services are not possible as the four UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, PAHO) are housed in different locations. Nevertheless, during emergencies UNDP office accommodates all UN agencies at a 'common emergency center' to facilitate support to Government for disaster mitigation and response.

Tremendous progress has been made in the use of ICT to influence policies and actions. This can be seen in the adoption of MICS4 by GOB and partners using DevInfo. Training has been provided to the Statistical Institute of Belize and other social partners. Support will continue to partners to strengthen their ability to produce data and information that will influence policies.

Equipment is usually disposed of by donating to schools, technical institutions or partners providing after-school ICT classes, following a Property Review.

Remote access to the network is not possible, as most officers do not have access to internet services at home.

Computers are imaged with official UNICEF images thereby maintaining the applications as per UNICEF standards.

## **4.2 Fin Res & Stewardship**

### **4.2.1 Fund-raising & Donor Relations:**

Donor reporting is weak. Key reasons in 2010 were senior officers vacancies and the heavy staff workload due to staffing gaps. These HR issues have been addressed and governance structures and responsibilities updated to ensure that reporting obligations are met in a timely fashion.

UNICEF managed a visit from the US Fund and American Airlines in April, resulting in very positive feedback on programming and the successful experiences of the visit. A second visit is planned for April 2011.

UNICEF also engaged the donor community in Belize in a dialogue to learn about common areas of interest and on-going work. Many donors have a community-based focus around priority areas of violence prevention, human trafficking, peaceful co-existence at borders (OAS), police reform (US), and crime prevention (US). The opportunity exists for collaboration in 2011 as UNICEF supports the Ministry of Human Development and Transformation to strengthen child protection. Dialogues provided an opportunity for networking and information exchange around best practices, lessons learned from field operations and potential for collaborative arrangements. Some of the areas of work identified by donors with potential for coordination include: child protection and youth at risk (US); rural development, including addressing social issues in Toledo (EC); Cuba's work on health care support to the Pickstock community; the OAS collaboration on mapping of resources in poor communities and the IDB's interest in strengthening the capacity of non-governmental organizations. Brazil has also developed its own arrangement for cultural development in Belize and this could augur well for the area of adolescent and youth development. The Representative is drafting a new fund-raising strategy to guide 2011 work, which is intended to go beyond fund-raising to partnership with the donor community to improve aid effectiveness.

UNICEF supported the UNCT in the development of an aid effectiveness proposal to put the Ministry of Economic Development in a leadership position around coordination of development partner investments in the country. This is an on-going initiative.

### **4.2.2 Management of Financial and Other Assets**

HACT training was carried out with Government and counterparts to assist in their understanding of UNICEF financial processes. Long outstanding DCT funds for over nine months were reduced drastically with the arrival of the interim Representative in March. New arrangements have been made to monitor programme funds and implementation rates of the respective programme officers through monthly field visits to counterparts. The programme implementation rate for RR funds was 91.05%; for OR funds it was 97.42%. The Support Budget implementation rate was over 95%. Savings in local staff post were returned to the Regional Office due to a post being vacant for ten months. Monthly bank reconciliations are performed in the time required and submitted to Headquarters. Internal financial processes are monitored for correction of GL coding. IPSAS standards are being applied with the support of two trained staff members and the Operations Officer.

### **4.2.3 Supply**

The annual Supplies Plan was submitted to the CMT for approval early in the year for the local procurement of office supplies. The need for emergency supplies are minimal (ORS packets, health packs, school in a box, recreation kits, ECD materials, water containers) and are kept at the NEMO warehouse in Belmopan (one of three emergency warehouses in the country). Most items stored were distributed during the hurricane recovery phase to Government counterparts. TACRO Emergency Advisors are coordinating replenishment of local stores on behalf of Belize. In addition to the supply items listed above, seven new computers and three laptops were purchased for staff in compliance with IT standards.

On occasion, UNICEF was requested to provide support to the Ministry of Health, either to source supply items (Plumpy'nut, cold chain equipment, vehicles) or to facilitate purchases of small supplies. This is limited on an annual basis. UNICEF has not confronted serious supply delays, since the CO takes steps to plan early. Local market procurement is also limited as Belize does not have a large manufacturing or even private sector, which increases the costs of supply items due to the import taxes.

Since the supply side of the Country Programme is small, the only monitoring required is that of emergency supplies since Belize has a potentially high threat for natural disaster. The CO emergency focal point performs this task once every quarter to update the supply list in the warehouse, check and destroy expired goods with the help of the Government and maintain pre-positioning requirements.

UNICEF conducted a review of existing suppliers in Belize and found still limited supply possibilities locally, highlighting the importance of coordination with the RO and perhaps other nearby countries, such as Mexico.

### **4.3 Human Resource Capacity**

2010 can be described as the most challenging one for the human resources area in the CO. A substantial portion of the year was spent on recruitment of new staff, with a keen eye on excellence, dynamism, innovation and talent to ready UNICEF to mobilise social change for children in Belize. These recruitments included key posts such as the Representative, the Programme Specialist and the Planning and M&E Specialist. The newly created posts of Social Policy Officer and Driver were also filled and the post of HIV/AIDS Officer was abolished and reclassified based on the approval of the PBR. Despite significant gaps in human resources, tremendous support from TACRO in addressing HR issues resulted in all posts being filled by year's end. This led to important improvements in the work environment, with staff sensing greater stability and clearer direction for the CP. Significant emphasis was placed on building staff capacity. Staff completed training in Gender, Human Rights, IPSAS, Information Technology and VISION. One Programme Officer successfully completed the LDI. In keeping with UN Cares minimum standards, 100% of staff participated in a UN Cares training facilitated by UN Cares personnel and the UN Joint team on HIV. The findings of the Global and Regional Staff Surveys were discussed among staff and the Staff Association, along with the Learning and Development Committee, which helped HR to address some outstanding issues. One significant response to the surveys was a staff retreat, which addressed team-building, conflict resolution, and personal financial management. This was complemented by a series of online courses through Skill Port on communication, conflict resolution, team-building and creativity. Staff capacity was consistently evaluated and areas of untapped potential identified in order to grow talent and ensure succession planning. Additionally, apart from regular duties staff members were assigned focal point responsibilities such as emergency, gender, and climate change.

## **4.4 Other Issues**

### **4.4.1 Management Areas Requiring Improvement**

Distance acts as impediment to efficiency gains through UN Common Service arrangements. With increasing poverty situation and an increasingly challenging child protection system in Belize, the CO received increased demands for support. The increased demand for completion of pending staff recruitments and the need to make use of the full office space required closing the contract with UNFPA for shared space, leading to an increase in monthly rental costs.

As resources to MIC countries shrink, however, and with a 0% RR growth, efficiency in operations in Belize is fully dependent on the human resources. With this in mind, Belize CO took steps to strengthen the human resource base. With the arrival of the new RC, steps will be taken to reopen the discussion on common services around transportation, courier, banking, travel, joint visits and the use of online services to reduce the phenomenally increasing costs of fuel for transport to and from meetings.

### **4.4.2 Changes in AMP**

Several changes will be made in the Annual Management Plan in 2011, in keeping with the recommended MTR shifts, including a reflection of the new consolidated programme structure, the abolishment of one programme post and establishment of another, the revised governance bodies and a new organisational chart. The PROMS Table of Authorities was revised several times in 2010 and with new staff fully on board in 2011 similar changes will be required. With the introduction of the new EWS and ERM, IPSAS and VISION management arrangements will be reflected.

The latest CPMP reflects management arrangements for the period up to 2011. Following approval of the programme extension in 2011, changes will be required to reflect the extended arrangements to 2012. The funding strategy requires updating to reflect current needs.

## **5 STUDIES, SURVEYS, EVALUATIONS & PUBLICATIONS**

### **5.1 List of Studies, Surveys & Evaluations:**

1. *Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Belize*

### **5.2 List of Other Publications**

1. *Highlights of the 2007-2011 GOB-UNICEF Country Programme*
2. *Positive holiday message from UNICEF staff*
3. *Belize-specific Christmas Card*

## **6. INNOVATION & LESSONS LEARNED:**

**Title:** *Community of Practice for Planning and M&E (COPPME)*

**Contact Person:** Paulette Wade, pwade@unicef.org

### **Abstract**

The initiative attempted to apply the concept of professional platforms, the Community of Practice, which has been adopted as a good practice by many institutions and networks, to the national environment of planning, monitoring & evaluation within the realm of the National Plan of Action for Children and Adolescents (NPA). Ultimately, this platform (COPPME) is expected to contribute to and evolve into a central authority for Development Planning.

### **Innovation or Lessons Learned**

As it operates within the concept of institutional re-engineering, while suggesting a methodological reconfiguration along a life-cycle approach, it cannot grow and evolve in a vacuum. Reasons for failure referred to inability of platform members to dedicate quality time to the design and implementation of the platform's thrusts, even when supported by their own senior supervisors. Deeper analysis however shows that institutions (social sector line Ministries and coordination authorities) function within the traditional concepts of the State's structure and division of portfolios. It also shows that institutional re-engineering efforts have to be very well designed and accompanied by well-documented advocacy efforts to break the existing institutional silos and introduce a new life-cycle-based approach to deliver on obligations to rights-holders, in this case girls and boys and their families.

### **Potential Application**

The lesson learned can be applied when in the design phase of initiatives to advocate for transformative public functional governance practices that more integrated and collaborative, effective practices, delivering better results for rights-holders. The application could be both at national or sub-national level. When at sub-national level, it might be able to drive and lead advocacy for changes at the national level, and vice-versa.

### **Issue/Background**

The NPA 2004-2015 was received as a superb non-partisan plan to guide all work towards the fulfilment of children's rights. However, various attempts to create functioning mechanisms to enhance planning and implementation along the NPA's Multi-Year and Annual Work Plans remained unsuccessful, creating a situation in which NPA stakeholders (government and non-government) planned and budgeted in isolation, transforming the NPA into a dormant document and process and impeding the monitoring of the plan.

### **Strategy and Implementation**

The initiative made arrangements for the convening of an initial social sector-based group of planners and M&E officers from policy & planning units of key social sector ministries and coordinating bodies; provided possible structures, guiding references; and inserted capacity building elements to enhance inter-institutional coordination for the analysis and planning of national responses and initiatives related to children's rights and well-being.

### **Progress and Results**

Although all actors at various levels endorsed and subscribed to the concept of building a cross-institutional technical platform, the initiative has remained without any tangible consolidated progress or outputs.

### **Next Steps**

Two mutually reinforcing layers will be developed. First, in collaboration with the NCFC and Ministry of Human Development, an advocacy plan will be designed and implemented to create awareness and mindset shifts by promoting the benefits of inter-institutional monitoring, planning and budgeting for children's well-being along a life-cycle approach. Detailed relevant and concrete work processes and tools and explicit technical capacity-building opportunities for the platform's members will be identified. Second, using existing entry points of area-based platforms for community-based social services programmes and models, spaces will be created for concerted monitoring, analysis, planning and budgeting for localised intervention models, connecting professionals to community residents, including adolescents and youth.

**Title: *Child and Adolescent Friendly Spaces***

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**Abstract**

This UNICEF supported pilot project is Belize's first and only adolescent-friendly space catering to vulnerable children and adolescents from the south side of Belize City. Scheduled for evaluation in 2011, this innovation demonstrates how community-level interventions can significantly reduce adolescents' vulnerability to crime and violence, increase educational achievements and build assets among people thus creating positive outcomes for vulnerable adolescents. It also demonstrates how well-planned interventions at the community level can contribute to reducing disparities by providing equitable access to services and support.

**Innovation or Lessons Learned**

The adolescent-friendly space, named Samuel Haynes Institute of Excellence, is an innovation because it provides a sound model for the creation of safe spaces for adolescents in communities plagued by crime and violence. It also demonstrates how exposure to music, arts, culture, and life skills can improve young people's self-esteem, cultivate a sense of identity and build positive assets in vulnerable adolescents. The space has also demonstrated that it can be a beacon in the community and transform a crime ridden area to a safe haven for vulnerable adolescents.

One area that can be improved is the area of monitoring and evaluation. When the programme was being established, a strong indicator framework was lacking to monitor programme impact. Consequently, many of the results achieved were not measured against any baselines, and it cannot be scientifically concluded that the programme resulted in changes among the participants. This has since been addressed and the 2011 evaluation will allow for a more robust indicator framework to be put in place.

**Potential Application**

This innovation only reaches adolescents in one portion of Southside Belize City. Once evaluated, factors that make it work will be identified, along with recommendations to strengthen the existing programme and develop similar programmes to reach vulnerable adolescents in other parts of the south side of Belize City.

**Issue/Background**

54% of residents in Southside Belize are considered poor, with another 26% considered indigent. According to a study on Male Social Participation and Violence in Urban Belize "the entire human ecology in which the Belizean youth participate and attempt to survive must be addressed." The increase in crime and violence has sent the country into social shock; urban Belizean children and adolescents are involuntarily caught in the midst of the violence. Additionally, there are limited opportunities for children from poor families to access services and support in a safe space with caring adults and strong role models.

**Strategy and Implementation**

Discussions, highlighting the eroding situation in the community and its impact on children and adolescents were held with community leaders. This increased awareness prompted community leaders to organise to respond to the needs of children and adolescents. In 2008 the safe space was established based on existing models of child-friendly spaces observed in Brazil.

Technical support was provided by UNICEF to design the space and the programmes offered. Community capacity was developed to implement programmes and manage adolescent-friendly spaces. This was a core strategy to ensure that ownership was built in from the onset and that the programme was community-owned and managed. Discussions were held with the community to highlight the benefits of child and adolescent participation in programmes.

Once the space was established, UNICEF provided technical oversight and allowed the community to implement its ideas for development. UNICEF engaged in regular technical meetings with counterparts in the community to monitor and support effective implementation, funding small needs of the now growing model.

### **Progress and Results**

In the midst of poverty, crime and violence, Samuel Haynes Institute of Excellence provides an opportunity for vulnerable children to participate in after-school programmes, social networks and develop life, livelihood skills and join the marching band. Within its first year of existence it was able to demonstrate positive impacts on adolescents including a 100% transition rate to secondary school among participating students. With over 50% of adolescents of secondary school age out of school, this programme has strong potential for reaching and saving vulnerable urban adolescents.

The programme was also able to attract single parents of participating adolescents and has engaged them in literacy and livelihoods training, which is translating into income-generating opportunities. Although not formally evaluated, anecdotal evidence demonstrates that the programme is having a significant impact on participants' ability to manage conflict, as well as their self-esteem and learning.

Factors that seem to contribute to the success of the programme include: strong community ownership, sound adult role models, on-going technical support from interested development partners, participation by retired persons who build connections with children and the capacity and warmth and love of programme staff.

### **Next Steps**

During the next quarter the programme will be formally evaluated and results utilised to strengthen and make recommendations for scaling-up. However, one of the key areas for strengthening includes leadership, voice and participation of the young people in the governance of the programme. Although the programme is having a significant impact on adolescents, they do not currently play an active role in its governance. The programme could be significantly improved with increased adolescent participation.

## **7 SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION:**

UNICEF and PAHO facilitated technical exchanges between the Ministry of Health Suriname and the Ministry of Health Belize. Belize is recognised in the region for its best practice in the integration of PMTCT services into its Maternal and Child Health Programme. Through this exchange Ministry of Health personnel in Suriname received hands-on training in the integration of PMTCT services, which is now being adopted in Suriname. Belize was also able to benefit from the good practices of Suriname in PCR testing of newborns for HIV infection. The Ministry of Health in Belize is consequently reviewing its policy on PCR testing.

The Early Childhood Unit of the Ministry of Education also benefited from an exchange visit to Cuba, where they saw first-hand the functioning of an integrated approach to early childhood care and development. This visit was timely, given the on-going development of an ECD policy and the move to ensure a broad inter-sectoral approach to fulfilling children's rights to early care and education and support.

Potential exists for South/South collaboration between Belize and Brazil, particularly since the two countries have a signed agreement to promote language and cultural development, among other areas. UNICEF initiated a discussion that we would like to pursue with counterparts in both governments to promote the opportunity for exchange around children's cultural development in Belize.