

## Guinea

### Update on the context and situation of children

The Republic of Guinea has a population of 12.77 million in 2019, 52 per cent of whom are women and 77 per cent under 35 years of age. Despite ranking 174th out of 189 on the 2019 Human Development Index, Guinea has significant economic potentials. In addition to its massive hydrological resources, the country has a rich mining potential (*one third of the world's reserves of bauxite, gold, diamond, iron, manganese, zinc, cobalt, nickel, and uranium*). In 2019, the Guinean Government faced two major challenges, namely: maintaining the course of macroeconomic and fiscal reforms, while ensuring social and political stability.

The Guinean economy grew at around 10 per cent in 2016 and 2017, before slowing to 5.8 per cent in 2018 and 6.2 per cent in 2019. Growth nevertheless remains robust, driven by foreign direct investment in the mining sector. Inflation remains high - 9.9% per cent in 2019, owing to an increase in fuel and electricity prices. In 2019, Guinean authorities continued mobilizing external funding to scale-up public investments in infrastructure to support economic diversification and high growth. New external borrowing picked up significantly from 4.0 per cent of GDP in 2018 to 12.1 per cent in 2019. Net government domestic financing was negative in 2019 (-1.1 per cent of GDP), but the government is expected to gradually repay past borrowings from the BCRG, domestic arrears accumulated during 2017-18 to the private sector.

The 2019 National Budget Act shows that the share of the national budget devoted to education and health remains beyond global targets. This amounts to 15 per cent for education and 8 per cent for health - below the 20% of the budget recommended by the Global Partnership for Education, and the 15% recommended by the 2001 Abuja Declaration, respectively. Despite the improvement of the country macroeconomic outlook, it did not translate into improved children status in the country; in addition, the country remains at risk of political and social tensions.

The situation of Guinean children did not significantly improve in 2019 and remains worrying. This is the result of various crises in the social sectors, which negatively impact on most children in such areas as health, education, nutrition, access to water and the environment. Although still significant, child mortality is reduced compared to 2012. Compared to 2012, under five mortality in 2018 decreased by 11% while neonatal mortality remains high - 33‰ in 2012 to 32‰ in 2018. Guinea health system - under recovery - still faces many challenges and bottlenecks in areas such as financial management, human resources and supply management. In 2019, only a quarter of children were fully immunized; a decrease of 2% from 2016 and of 12% from 2012.

The 25 per cent success rate in the 2019 high-school baccalaureat - the worst result the country has ever seen - is illustrative of an unstable and tense education system in Guinea for years. This situation is confirmed by the low ranking on the 2019 global competitiveness index, 136th out of 141 ranking for mean years of schooling and 113rd for school life expectancy. Throughout 2019, the education sector was severely disrupted due to several teachers' and trade unions' strikes. As a result, most schools remained closed - compromising children's access to quality education. Vulnerable children, mainly in rural areas, are the most affected by this lack of access to education. As a result, 1,352,700 children between the ages of 7 and 16 are deprived of education, which, according to administrative data for 2018, represents 41% of the school-age population; 47% for girls and 53% for children in rural areas. The transition from primary to secondary is very low (*53.9% of 6th grade primary students will transition to secondary school, with 52.6% for girls and 33.3% for boys*). This is due in part to long distances between the pupils' villages and rural colleges, school drop-out among girls due to early marriages/pregnancies, but also the difficulty for the government to provide a complete and quality secondary education in these remote areas including wash facilities, which are important for adolescent girls.

In 2019, the nutritional situation of children in Guinea remained precarious. Overall, 30% of children under 5 years of age suffer from stunting (*13% of them in its severe form*) corresponding to more than 700,000 children affected. Acute malnutrition affects 9% of children under 5 years of age (*a third - 4% - of them in the severe form*), corresponding to more than 330,000 children (*120,000 severely malnourished*). Severe acute malnutrition (SAM) is one of the most common causes of death and disease among children in Guinea; less than 30% of the 120,000 cases of SAM are treated due to insufficient supplies of ready-to-use therapeutic foods and essential drugs.

Most Guinean children are living in households without access to an improved water source and safe toilets. More than 78% of the population do not have access to basic sanitation and more than 15% continue to defecate in the open. There are no collective or semi-collective waste disposal and treatment infrastructure, except in Conakry where, however, the sewerage network does not cover the entire city. Handwashing with soap is still not a widespread practice: only a quarter of households have handwashing facilities and one out of eight households has soap. Open defecation is still a problem in many communities.

Many Guinean children continue to suffer gender-based violence. Even if there are signs of rising political will to end child marriage in Guinea, forced and early marriage of young girls continues to be widely practiced, especially in remote and

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rural areas. Approximately 46% of women were married before 18 years of age, 17% of them before the age of 15. Female genital mutilation/cutting, although prohibited by law and recognized by national authorities as a form of violence, continues to be practiced in significant proportions. It affects 95% of women of reproductive ages. Finally, despite the political will and significant funding invested, with bilateral and multilateral partners support, birth registration is not yet systematic, free and universal in Guinea, even though it has increased from 57% to 62% between 2012 and 2018.

### Major contributions and drivers of results

A key result for children prioritized by UNICEF Guinea as part of its Country Programme of Cooperation (CP) 2018-2022 is that by end of 2019, at least 80% of children 0-11 months nationwide - and 90% in the 40 Convergence Municipalities - are protected against vaccine-preventable diseases by being immunized with three doses of DTP, which equates to approximately 380,000 children in the country. This will contribute to the outcome 3 "Effective Social Services" of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2018-2022 for Guinea, which in turn is aligned to pillar 3 "Inclusive Human Capital Development" of the Guinea's National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES) 2016-2020.

In 2019, 92.8% of children under 12 months received their third dose of pentavalent during routine immunization, according to administrative data, with a 7% dropout rate (8% in 2018). Approximately 87% of the districts have reached at least 80% of Penta3 coverage (compared to 76% of districts in 2018) and 80% of the Convergence Municipalities have at least 90% of Penta3 coverage. No stockout has been reported at national level, however 7 out of 38 health districts have experienced Penta, OPV and IPV stockouts. These stockouts of vaccines and essential medicines, coupled to refrigerators' breakdowns, low quality of data (large discrepancy between administrative data and survey data) and lack of formative supervision - especially at decentralized levels - might compromise Guinea's efforts to achieving the 2022 target of the country programme.

UNICEF's contribution towards improving immunization coverage in 2019 involved supporting the Ministry of Health in the development of the 2018-2022 community health strategic plan, and the harmonized guide for the implementation of community health and its monitoring and evaluation plan. These documents were adopted in the reporting year and have been implemented already in 40 out of 342 municipalities. UNICEF support included the bottom-up elaboration process of the 2019 working plans and the joint integrated supervision which enabled the General Secretary of the Ministry of Health to send a feedback letter to regional and prefectural directors regarding the level of their performance, thus strengthening the Ministry's accountability environment. The Ministry of Health - with support from UNICEF - has brought immunization services closer to vulnerable communities through the supply of 848 health posts in cold chain and motorcycles. To decentralize and improve equipment maintenance at all levels of the health pyramid, the Ministry of Health - with support from UNICEF through the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) funding - conducted training of 37 maintenance technicians.

The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Decentralization, with support from UNICEF, ensured monitoring and formative supervision of 1,855 Community Relays (RECOs) and the training and equipment of 190 Community Health Workers (CHWs) on the integrated community health package. UNICEF also supported the 40 Convergence Municipalities in essential drugs for RECOs and motorcycles for CHWs to improve service delivery quality. In 2019, 9,803 cases of pneumonia, 6,345 cases of diarrhea in children under 5 years of age were treated by the RECOs in the 40 Convergence Municipalities.

Following high level advocacy from UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, the Agency for Local Government Financing (ANAFIC) has agreed to cover the salaries of these 2,045 community's staff through a dedicated line item of the 2020 National and local governments' Budget. In addition, the Ministry of Health has committed to recruit 5,000 CHWs to fill the human resources gap, and this will be done by favoring community-based recruitment with the aim of improving the retention of health service providers in their workplace.

Evidence emanating from the Convergence Municipalities point to the strong potentials of community health in achieving universal health coverage. Consequently, several multi- and bilateral partners are providing funding to scale up the initiative beyond the initial 40 Convergence Municipalities: (i) the World Bank through the health services and capacity building project (PRSCS) covers 2 regions and 43 municipalities; (ii) The Global Fund through Catholic Relief Services (CRS) covers 2 prefectures and 18 municipalities; (iii) USAID through JPHIEGO is supporting 11 Lower Guinea's municipalities. The number of municipalities increased from 40 in 2019 to 112 in 2019. Other partners such as the European Union within the framework of the Health System Strengthening and Support Project (PASA 2 in French) committed to join in 2020.

Prevention of Stunting is another key result for children prioritized by UNICEF Guinea as part of its Country Programme of Cooperation (CP) 2018-2022 with the Government of Guinea. Specifically, the CP's aim is: by end of 2019, at least 85% of

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girls and boys 6-59 months receive two annual doses of vitamin A nationwide, which equates to approximately 1,900,000 children in the country. This will contribute to the outcome 3 "Effective Social Services" of the Guinea's 2018-2022 UNDAF, which in turn is aligned to pillar 3 "Inclusive Human Capital Development" of the Guinea's 2016-2020 PNDES.

In 2019, 2,586,257 children received two doses of vitamin A through the organization of two supplementation campaigns (1,471,286 girls and 1,259,251 boys on the first round versus 1,400,856 girls and 1,185,401 boys on the second round). It represents an increase of 22% from 2018 (2,117,987 children) and 36% since 2017 (1,903,771 children). In 2019, Guinea started implementing its transition from mass supplementation campaign to mainstreaming of vitamin A supplementation into routine health services: 98,629 children received the vitamin A supplementation routinely. It represents an increase of 90% from 2018 (52,000 children). Approximately 11,648 children - boys and girls - in the 40 convergence municipalities supported by UNICEF were treated according to the new national SAM treatment protocol (cured: 91%; defaulted and non-recovered: 8.2%; died: 0.8%). Progress achieved in 2019 show that Guinea is on track to achieving the 2022 target of the country programme.

UNICEF's contribution towards preventing stunting in 2019 involved supporting the government in the development of a budgeted Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) plan – which will be available in 2020. A situation analysis of the IYCF (exclusive breastfeeding and food diversification) and a study on early breastfeeding services were finalized. The results of these two activities would help to strengthen exclusive breastfeeding and food diversification promotion. The Ministry of Health advocacy with support from UNICEF, contributed to a breakthrough: for the first time, the Government allocated US \$ 1,368,249 from the National Development Budget (BND) for the purchase of nutritional supplies (RUTF, Vitamin A, Mebendazole, etc.). This is a strong signal from the Government to honor its commitments following the high-level meeting on nutrition held in November 2018. Advocacy by the Ministry of Health, with support from UNICEF, has resulted in the issuance of a decree by the Prime Minister to establish a national multisectoral coordination platform on nutrition.

The Ministry of Health with support from UNICEF, provided 100% of the municipalities targeted in 2019 with nutrition, health, hygiene and sanitation, community mobilization and C4D integrated activities through a network of 800 women's groups. From January to September, 24,750 awareness sessions including 6,489 cooking demonstrations on different topics reached 371,931 people including 233,949 women and 137,982 men. In addition, 104,826 children (boys and girls), aged 6 to 23 months received multi-micronutrient flour as part of home food fortification efforts.

UNICEF is committed to improving learning outcomes and has planned, in its CP with the Government of Guinea, by the end of 2019, the following result: at least 85,000 pupils from pre-primary to lower secondary education, boys and girls, and mainly in the 40 convergence municipalities, are provided with individual education/early learning materials to better perform and to improve their learning outcomes and skills. This will contribute to the outcome 3 "Effective Social Services" of the Guinea's 2018-2022 UNDAF, which in turn is aligned to pillar 3 "Inclusive Human Capital Development" of the Guinea's 2016-2020 PNDES.

In 2019, 91,770 pupils in preschool and elementary were provided with individual school education/early learning materials. To achieve this result, 56,000 children's books were given to schools in convergence municipalities and 53,000 individual cross-thematic notebooks to students in lower grades. It represents an increase of 114% from 2018. In convergence municipalities, 1,040 additional children had access to early childhood education through the construction and equipping by communities of 29 community pre-school centers and the training and support of 64 educators. Primary school-aged children have also been reached through the community-based construction of 301 classrooms for primary and 153 classrooms for secondary schools.

UNICEF's contribution towards improving learning outcomes in 2019 involved supporting the government in the development of the new ten-year Education Sector Plan (ProDEG 2020-2028) which was adopted in the reporting year and has been endorsed by Development Partners. UNICEF support was crucial, from the development of the financial simulation tool to that of the budgeted 2020-2022 multi-year action plan and the integration of an equity and gender strategy. UNICEF announced its contribution to the new aligned modality called "Special Allocation Budget", that would be operational mid-2020. The Special Allocation Budget will draw its funding from GPE, French Development Agency and UNICEF. This modality will enable a reinforcement of national procedures and mechanisms as well as national capacities. As part of its plan to improve opportunities for children to read, the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF, partnered with local editors to organize a national book fair in Conakry and advocate for building libraries in rural areas.

UNICEF's contribution involved also supporting the Primary Education Delegates in organizing various intersectoral activities in 60 preschool centers, including medical check-ups, malnutrition diagnoses, early detection of disabilities and parental awareness of these issues. Thanks to public-private partnership with an optometrist, about 100 visually impaired children received glasses after sight screening. All convergence municipalities now have at least one community preschool center. To concretely promote girls' retention, UNICEF provided backpacks for girls enrolled in late primary and encouraged gender equality in children's participation in schools' governance. To improve access to secondary education for vulnerable adolescents, UNICEF has begun implementing a scholarship programme to support the most disadvantaged families and

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enable them to send to and maintain their children in school to complete at least the 4-year cycle of lower secondary education. The main objective of the programme is to increase secondary school enrolment, especially for girls, and to improve retention rates for vulnerable secondary school students. In 2019, 1,000 beneficiaries were identified based on specific criteria, including extreme poverty, gender, distance from schools, disability or orphanhood.

UNICEF's advocacy and technical assistance contributed to bring together the Ministries of Education and Territorial Administration to jointly define the roles and responsibilities as well as the mechanisms for collaboration between the service in charge of school mapping, the service in charge of school infrastructure and the Agency for Local Government Financing (ANAFIC). A protocol was signed in early 2020 by the two Ministers. This will allow the Education donors to comply with the law in the implementation of school construction programs by placing the Municipalities in charge of tendering and site monitoring. To respect the bottom up approach of the new law on decentralization and to give the necessary tools to the Communes during the 2020 planning, the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF, supported a school mapping exercise for each of the 40 Convergence Municipalities hence contributing to better knowledge of the needs in terms of classrooms and school rehabilitation/building and teachers.

Another key result for children prioritized by UNICEF Guinea CP is that by end of 2019, at least 16,701 adolescent girls aged 10-19 years - mainly in the 40 convergence municipalities - received prevention and care interventions to address child marriage. This is to contribute to the outcome 3 "Effective Social Services" of the Guinea's 2018-2022 UNDAF, which in turn is aligned to pillar 3 "Inclusive Human Capital Development" of the Guinea's 2016-2020 PNDES.

In 2019, 15,320 adolescent girls were identified and protected against child marriage. It represents an increase of 3.6% from 2018. In 2019, child protection and health services at central and decentralized levels were strengthened - enabling them to respond to violence against children and harmful practices (FGM and child marriage): 1,920 children were cared for in 2019, compared to 999 in 2018 (an increase of 92%). Stronger community surveillance mechanisms have contributed to the prevention of 21 cases of child marriage. Approximately 232 of the communities in the targeted areas declared that they were abandoning female genital mutilation and child marriage. Results achieved in 2019 relating to child marriage show that Guinea is on track to achieving the 2022 target of the country programme, as well as the regional target for 2021 which is aligned to the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

UNICEF's contribution towards enhancing child protection in 2019 involved supporting the government and the National Assembly in revising and adopting Guinea's Children's Code, taking into account the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child related to the prohibition of child marriage, especially for girls, the judicial protection of children in conflict with the law, and the protection of children against violence. UNICEF, jointly with civil society and development partners, continues to advocate for the promulgation by the Head of State of the revised children's code. UNICEF is supporting the government in the development of the national strategy to end child marriage in the Republic of Guinea. This national strategy along with its budgeted action plan will be available by the first quarter of 2020.

The Ministry of Social Action with support from UNICEF conducted training and capacity development of 1,615 child protection structures, which implemented action plans on priority themes. In addition, 28 convergence municipalities signed local intersectoral protocols to improve the care of children victims or at risk of violence, exploitation, discrimination, abuse and neglect (VEDAN). Capacity building also involved key players of the child protection system and the effective interoperability between the health and child protection systems at central and decentralized levels

UNICEF is a key player in birth registration in Guinea. UNICEF has committed to achieving, by the end of 2019, that 100,000 children aged 0-6 months - including 30,000 in the 40 convergence municipalities - have their birth registered and have a birth certificate. This contributes to the outcome 3 "Effective Social Services" of the Guinea's 2018-2022 UNDAF, which in turn is aligned to pillar 3 "Inclusive Human Capital Development" of the Guinea's 2016-2020 PNDES.

In 2019, 138,255 children - including 62,715 girls - had their birth registered and received a birth certificate, an increase of 35% from 2018. In the convergence municipalities, 28,023 children had been registered out of 30,000 planned - including 13,461 girls. In October, Guinea's representatives attended the Fifth Conference of Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, demonstrating the strong commitment of the country at international level. In 2019, Guinea signed a 38 million euros budgetary support agreement for the European Union to support the implementation of the national strategy and action plan on the modernization of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems. To strengthen this process, coordination and collaboration between the Ministry of Decentralization and the Ministry of Health were enhanced, for better service delivery within civil registration offices while encouraging their use by communities. A ministerial decree defining interoperability mechanisms between health services and civil registration and vital statistics was released and was implemented in 113 out of 342 municipalities. It will contribute to improving birth registration coverage and vital statistics coverage. Guinea is therefore on track to achieving the 2022 target of the country programme. However, some major challenges remain that might compromise this positive picture: the non-systematization of births notification by health departments to civil registration offices; the low appropriation of the content of the interoperability protocol by health and civil registration services, the unavailability of a knowledge sharing framework at community level for the exchange of

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immunization and civil registration data.

UNICEF's contribution towards improving birth registration coverage in 2019 involved supporting the government's participation in the Fifth Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration. Advocacy made by UNICEF and Ministries of Health and of Territorial Administration and Decentralization contributed to the institutionalization of the collaboration between health and civil registration services. A joint ministerial decree on interoperability between health and civil registration nationwide was released in May 2019. The Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization with support from UNICEF provided 1,237 health workers and civil registration workers with equipment for civil registration in 145 municipalities - including the 40 Convergence Municipalities. Also, 58 civil registration centers and 60 health centers were provided with office supplies and equipment, village registers and birth registration forms.

To improve sanitation in Guinea, UNICEF has also prioritized among its CP's key results for children that by end of 2019, at least 200,000 additional people live in newly certified Open Defecation Free (ODF) communities. This will contribute to the outcome 3 "Effective Social Services" of the Guinea's 2018-2022 UNDAF, which in turn is aligned to pillar 3 "Inclusive Human Capital Development" of the Guinea's 2016-2020 PNDES.

In 2019, a total of 825,205 additional people from 1,942 communities lived in a certified open defecation free (ODF) environment through the implementation of the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach. This represents an increase of respectively 122% and 24% from 2018. In 2019, 40,500 new people (*including around 30,000 children*) living in rural communities had access to safe water, an increase of 13% from 2018. With respect to WASH in schools, a total of 6,500 school children from 26 primary schools improved their hygiene conditions through increased availability of water and/or sanitation infrastructure in 2 regions of the country. While the KRC target of 30 schools has been nearly reached through the construction of WASH infrastructure, there is a need to improve the quality of the hygiene subcomponent. A total of 22 Health Care facilities benefitted from improved water in 3 regions (Kindia, Labe and N'Zerekore). In 2019, the institutional context of the WASH sector evolved with the creation of a single ministry responsible for water and sanitation. Indeed, institutions in charge of sanitation now come under this ministry whereas they were divided between 4 ministries in the previous system. The hygiene sub-sector is still weak within the Ministry of Health because it was downgraded to the level of the ministerial division.

UNICEF's contribution towards improving access to drinking water and basic sanitation in 2019 involved supporting the government participation in the WASH sector ministers' meeting in April in Costa Rica. It was an opportunity to review three commitments: the sectoral coordination mechanism's improvement, the development and implementation of a roadmap to end open defecation and the support for decentralized WASH services. UNICEF's advocacy efforts in the WASH sector resulted in the government allocating of US \$ 600,000 in the 2019 National Budget. UNICEF supported the development of partnerships between municipalities and qualified local NGOs under the supervision of government actors. This contributed to the efficient outsourcing of CLTS results. The government with UNICEF support, built 65 new boreholes (including 50 drilled manually) and 7 solar powered water systems in 4 regions of the country (N'Zerekore, Faranah, Kindia and Labe). In addition, the Guinean government has launched a program to build 455 boreholes equipped with hand pumps with support from the Islamic Development Bank. This national program marks the country's commitment to invest in accelerating national coverage of drinking water.

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### Lessons Learned and Innovations

A critical lesson learned in 2019 was the need for better coordination of education actors. Despite a formal commitment by development partners to align with the sectoral policy, partners of the Ministry of Education follow different funding modalities and approaches without any space for sharing of information. It is thus often difficult to find synergies and complementarities. In addition, Ministry of Education services are overloaded with meetings related to procedures with partners, and this often prevents them from carrying out all planned internal missions and from fully achieved results. Strong leadership from Government, combined with thematic spaces for exchange with technical and financial support from partners, has the potential of helping better unite all stakeholders and making interventions effective and achieve impactful results. Coordination of education actors at the local level and discussion of statistics are necessary, with quality deconcentrated structures to provide guidance and help in solving problems.

The Ministry of Education, with support from UNICEF, launched 3 innovative initiatives to contribute to local governance and decentralization. The first one is making more operational the 42 Primary Education Delegates of the Convergence Municipalities and strengthening their capacity to deliver. They benefited from motorcycles and computers, as well as capacity building on administrative and pedagogical leadership, preschool teachers coaching and basic computer literacy. The second innovation consisted in the pilot of a performance-based financing approach for the municipalities, with reinforced Mayors' involvement in Education matters. The evaluation of their performance is still to be held (first quarter of 2020), but this approach has already generated a strong enthusiasm for achieving results and awareness on the essential role of local authorities in the adequate functioning of schools. UNICEF's contribution through subsidies to municipalities led to communities spontaneously building 18 additional Preschool centers with their own funds. Finally, the results-based financing and the accountability of local authorities have proven to be in their interest and have put them in the driving seat of the growth of the education sector in their municipality. However, accompanying measures and continuous communication are essential to the success of the programme.

The third innovation was the use of tablets to manage schools' human, material and pedagogical resources, thus enabling school principals to communicate online with Primary Education Delegates, sending them weekly basic data on children and teachers' attendance, progress of teaching program, status of supplies and financial and school implementation plan. At the same time, tablets enabled the school to receive digital pedagogical material and videos.

To strengthen community health implementation, improve immunization coverage and ensure the effectiveness of services offered in the 40 convergence municipalities, Ministries of Health and of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, with UNICEF support, introduced in 2019 a new mechanism to address large discrepancies between administrative data and survey data. This mechanism tested in four municipalities, consists in a comprehensive census of all children 0-59 months and pregnant women through community mapping and household level census. This exercise revealed that targets identified through community mapping and household level census were sometimes twice higher (1,056 against 427) than estimates provided by projections using 2014 population and housing census. In addition, a digital application for household level individual child tracking was developed in one municipality to catch up which children have not been vaccinated and which are not fully vaccinated. Coupled with the community mapping, it contributed to facilitate children census and immunization coverage real-time monitoring. In municipalities covered, this innovation contributed to improve the control of targeted population, data quality as well as capacity of data managers. As this mechanism add real value, UNICEF has successfully advocated for its adoption by the Government, as a key condition for the scale-up of community health interventions and monitoring. In 2020, UNICEF will position this initiative as an office priority to support the Government to consolidate and expand community health nationwide.

The Ministry responsible for water and sanitation, with UNICEF support and as part of Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) strategy implementation, has put local governments (municipalities) in the driving seat for all phases (planning, management and monitoring) of interventions, working closely with NGOs and technical services. Furthermore, CLTS was implemented in all villages of a target municipalities, leading to ownership and accountability of these entities. The approach has led to excellent results beyond expectations (1,942 communities ODF for a target of 700). In 2019, the programme has undergone a strategic shift from target villages to whole municipalities for the attainment of ODF status.