Executive Summary

Achievements:

Evidence-based Advocacy and Mobilization: UNICEF finalized implementation of the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS4) in Qatar. A preliminary report on the findings was published by the Qatari Statistics Centre. All preparatory work to start MICS4 implementation in UAE has been undertaken. UNICEF and the Kuwaiti Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL) conducted a situation analysis for children (SitAn), and the first draft of the study will be ready in January 2013. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), the decision was made to conduct SitAn after concerted advocacy efforts by UNICEF.

Child Protection: UNICEF and the Supreme Council for Childhood and Motherhood (SCMC) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Ministry of Interior, and Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) started implementing an assessment of the national child protection system in UAE. Gaps are being assessed in laws, policies, and regulation in order to strengthen the child protection system. Results of the assessment will be ready in early 2013. UNICEF will be implementing a similar assessment in KSA in 2013.

Adolescent Empowerment: UNICEF, the General Women’s Union (GWU), Abu Dhabi Health Services Company (SEHA), and the Ministry of Education (MOE) raised the capacities of 2,983 students and 617 school staff and parents from 8 government schools in UAE on adopting healthy eating habits and the importance of physical activity.

Resource Mobilization: A new Resource Mobilization Strategy was formulated in 2012 with a vision that “UNICEF mobilizes partnerships with the Gulf to scale up sustainable income for the organization, and engage these countries as partners in the fulfillment of child rights, globally and in the Gulf”. The strategy emphasized the ‘One UNICEF’ integrated approach to RM in the Gulf. Overall, a total of US$22.4 million was raised from Gulf donors in 2012, out of which US$1.4 million regular resources (RR) to UNICEF headquarters (HQ), US$15.4 million to other resources (OR), and US$5.6 million to other resources for emergencies (ORE).

Shortfalls:

- Emergencies in 2012 increased in number and complexity, particularly with increased displaced people inside Syria and Syrian refugees in Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey. Requests for funding continued to be received from Somalia, Pakistan, Horn of Africa, Yemen, and Sudan.

- Unfortunately recruitment of Resource Mobilization staff is still not complete yet.

- The Gulf Region has no aid structure and decisions to provide funds are often delayed and depend entirely on one person.

Partnerships:

Programmes were implemented in KSA with the National Childhood Committee (NCC) and in UAE with SCMC and GWU as per signed programmes of cooperation and Plans of Action. During 2012, UNICEF forged donor partnerships with the Saudi Fund for polio eradication, the Saudi National Committees on humanitarian work, Qatar Foundation and Global Partnership for Education (GPE) on education, and Dubai Cares on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in schools.

In response to UNICEF’s global invitation to every country to sign a pledge to ‘A Promise Renewed’ in support for the movement to end preventable child deaths, the Gulf Area Office (GAO) advocated for the signature and sent invitations to the Ministers of Health in the five Gulf countries. Except for Saudi Arabia, the other countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and UAE) vowed to take action and accelerate progress on the newborn care and neonatal mortality reduction through their signature of the pledge.
Country Situation as Affecting Children & Women

According to the 2011 Human Development Report, the population size (in thousands) in the Gulf countries was as follows: 1,870.00 in Qatar; 7,890.90 in the UAE; 28,082.50 in Saudi Arabia; 2,818.00 in Kuwait; and 1,323.50 in Bahrain. [1] Given their geopolitical and economic situation, these countries attract millions of migrant workers, so one-third of their population is of expatriate origin. Adolescents aged 10-19 represent 8% of the population in Qatar, 12% in UAE, 18% in Saudi Arabia, 14% in Kuwait, and 12% in Bahrain. [2]

The Gulf countries achieved most of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and are on track in achieving others. In general, the Gulf countries made major improvements in net enrolment rates, gender parity in primary schooling, literacy rate of young adults aged 15-24, immunization coverage, under five mortality rate, infant mortality rate, and maternal mortality rate. Despite women's high educational attainment, their low political and economic participation still constrains the achievement of MDG 3 on promoting gender equality and empowering women. There were also improvements in realizing women’s rights. In Saudi Arabia, women were granted the right to vote and run in future municipal elections, the biggest change in a decade for women in the country. In the UAE, female citizens married to foreigners can now grant their sons the right to apply for UAE nationality at the age of 18.

The prevalence and magnitude of abuse and violence against children is not really known in the Gulf due to lack of data, official reports, and studies. However, there are cases that are reported by the media and human rights organizations. According to the 2012 MICS report in Qatar [3], 44% of children aged 2-14 experience violent discipline, which includes both psychological aggression and physical punishment. Comparing the findings for girls and boys, a somewhat higher percentage of boys experience this type of discipline. In the UAE, neglect of children is the most common form of abuse. A new comprehensive research into child abuse in the UAE found that 42% of children suffer neglect while over 25% are victims of violence at home. [4] While 3.1% of children aged 12-13 revealed they had been victims of sexual abuse, 17.6% said they had been exposed to pornographic movies.

According to the 2012 global report by the Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment of Children, all five Gulf countries have not legally prohibited corporal punishment in the home. [5] Moreover, while in Saudi Arabia prohibition of corporal punishment has not been enacted fully in any setting, in the UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia it remains lawful as a sentence for crime under state, religious, and/or traditional justice systems. [6]

A main hindrance in the Gulf is the lack of comprehensive and coordinated child protection systems. Responses are limited to interventions and services to respond to different risks facing children, rather than emphasizing prevention. For this reason, UNICEF is advocating for strengthened child protection systems in these countries. Discussions were held with the governments of UAE and KSA, and work on mapping and assessing the child protection system in the UAE has been initiated.

A major achievement was the approval of the Cabinet in the UAE of a law on children’s rights that encompasses protection rights. The law was submitted to the National Federal Council for endorsement in early November 2012. In Saudi Arabia, the Child Protection Law was approved by the Ministerial Council pending administrative procedures. In Bahrain, a children’s rights law was endorsed and issued in August 2012 after five years of discussions. Qatar and Kuwait have not enacted their draft children bills. [7]

According to a joint study between UNICEF and the American University of Beirut, youth aged 15-25 in the Gulf have high levels of optimism about their future prospects, while also reflecting grievances in some areas. Gulf youth expressed a strong need for more democracy and political participation. [8] Moreover, the public sphere of social and political activism in the Gulf remains heavily male dominated, and the absence of women in public and mainstream movements remains obvious. Yet in some cases, young women are becoming more active, and often lead movements for social, environmental, or political change, like in Kuwait. [9]

Children and adolescents in Gulf countries have some health problems that have not received adequate government attention, like adolescent mental health, accidents (including road accident prevention), and the rising rates of child obesity. In 2012, UNICEF implemented school-based peer education initiatives in UAE to
address several healthy lifestyle initiatives, such as prevention of injuries, obesity, and HIV/AIDS.

The political oppositions in Kuwait have been locked in a political limbo for months. Dissolution of parliament, protests, strikes, and two elections held in 2012 erupted political battles and labor upheavals. The participation of women in the protests and demonstrations held over in the last two months of the year was the most visible phenomenon, since such events used to be attended mainly by men. No reports indicate the involvement of children in the protests.

Bahrain experienced mounted protests in 2011 resulting in widespread arrests and torture in which children were part of. Although the uprising was controlled and the situation seems more stable, according to Amnesty International, “a growing number of 15 to 17 year olds have been held in adult prisons and detention centers in Bahrain in the past few months. Many of these children were arrested during demonstrations, where they were accused of “illegal gathering” and rioting.” [10]

The most recent session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process in Bahrain in September 2012 was a matter of procedure, whereas the first session held in May 2012 was the more substantive component. The significance of the UPR for Bahrain is that it has brought the national process and outcomes of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) into the arena of the international community. The acceptance of the UPR recommendations by the government constitutes a voluntary commitment to implement these recommendations and is viewed as such by the international community. Hence, the findings and outcomes of the UPR constitute key input for the Strategic Planning Framework. The Human Rights Council, the Foreign Ministry of Bahrain, and the Human Rights Ministry of Bahrain have met and agreed that the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) will undertake a technical mission to provide support, and that the Special Rapporteur on the Convention Against Torture will visit in February. The government has already extended a verbal invitation to OHCHR.

A disadvantaged group of children in the Gulf are Bidoons (means 'without') who are Arabs living without citizenship in the Gulf Cooperation Council states. They have lived there for generations, but for various reasons they have been denied citizenship in these states, which resulted in subjecting them to discrimination.

The latest report by Refugees International in 2012 indicates that the current number of Bidoon in Kuwait reached 100,000.[11] They are considered as illegal residents and refused birth certificates, public schooling, marriage certificates, and the right to peacefully assemble. Some Bidoon can access limited health insurance and others are denied health care altogether. Although the government promised to address the citizenship of 35,000 Bidoons in 2011, reports by Refugees International confirm that the promise has not yet been fulfilled and the Bidoon Committee has not conferred nationality on any Bidoon since 2009.[12] In the framework of conducting a SitAn in Kuwait, a UNICEF consultant consulted with Bidoon children and mothers, where the latter reported that despite the government-administered fund to support Bidoons with access to health and education services, their children were not covered through this fund and that they may also be denied birth certificates needed to attend school and receive health care.

UNICEF conducted consultations with children and adolescents with disabilities in the UAE, Bahrain, and Kuwait [13], which showed that inclusion of the latter in schools and society still face many challenges. Children with disabilities are isolated in care institutions. Females with disabilities suffer more marginalization socially and medically because of the fear of social stigma.

Country Programme Analytical Overview

Some of the identified barriers and bottlenecks for the most disadvantaged children in the Gulf include the following:

- Lack of proper coordination and management of the childhood agenda at the national level in some Gulf countries to respond to issues of vulnerable children
- Access to indicators and analytical information on children is limited which hinders introducing evidence-based policies for the most vulnerable
- Laws for protecting child rights in the Gulf are either in draft form or have been recently endorsed and their implementation mechanisms are not fully operational
- Reporting, responding, referring, and rehabilitating cases of child violence, abuse, and exploitation do not follow a systems approach which weakens appropriate responses
- Children and adolescents’ participation is limited and forums for children’s participation in some Gulf countries are not available
- Social and cultural practices and beliefs do not fully support healthy lifestyles resulting in the prevalence of obesity, substance abuse, and road traffic accidents

The UNICEF Country Programme (2010-2013) in the Gulf addresses a number of identified barriers and bottlenecks for disadvantaged children. UNICEF is addressing the management and coordination of the childhood agenda at the national level by building the capacities of national childhood councils and commissions to coordinate relevant governmental and nongovernmental institutions and monitor the situation of children. Those councils and commissions and other relevant institutions are also being supported by UNICEF in preparing analytical studies on the situation of children, especially the most vulnerable. Several Gulf countries realized the importance of having updated and accessible information on children and started the MICS survey, conducting analytical studies on children, and establishing databases on children and women. UNICEF needs to continue its work to ensure that all Gulf countries have information on their children to develop appropriate policies, legislations, and establish necessary programmes and services.

UNICEF has also been supporting some Gulf countries in using the results of the analytical studies on children to develop policies and strategies for the well-being of children. Two countries (UAE and Bahrain) were supported in developing their national childhood strategies that identified priorities of action to ensure the attainment of rights for all children, focusing on special groups of vulnerable children.

For the child protection programme, UNICEF is addressing the enabling environment by supporting selected countries in assessing the gaps in policies, laws, services, and institutional structures in order to develop
investment plans to strengthen the child protection systems. UNICEF initiated this work in 2012 in UAE and will start this work in KSA in 2013. UNICEF intends to shift the focus from programming for children in need of special measures of protection to a wider concept of protection realizing that “primary prevention, through public health, education, social services and other approaches, of all forms of violence is of paramount importance.” In addition, UNICEF will implement effective mechanisms to identify children at risk and design interventions to reduce and/or eliminate the risk factors. In order to orient Gulf officials on this shift, a seminar on child-sensitive social protection for Gulf countries will be conducted in early 2013 to discuss the situation.

In relation to adolescent empowerment, UNICEF has been addressing several healthy lifestyle issues in UAE. The aim is to ensure that social and cultural practices and beliefs among adolescents, their parents, and school staff are supportive to adopting healthier lifestyles and in fostering a safer environment to reduce child injuries. UNICEF is advocating for replicating these initiatives in other Gulf countries and in adopting a more comprehensive life skills-based education approach as an interactive, educational methodology that focuses on transmitting knowledge, shaping attitudes, and developing interpersonal skills.

Accordingly in 2013, UNICEF needs to continue focusing on the programme component results identified in the Country Programme (2010-2013). It is worth noting that a new Area Programme Document (APD) (2014-2016) is being prepared by UNICEF and other bottlenecks and barriers for the most disadvantaged children are under discussion among the GAO country team, Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO), and the governments of the Gulf.

### Effective Advocacy

**Mostly met benchmarks**

Realizing the importance of advocacy and strengthening policy guidelines with an equity-focused approach, UNICEF developed an advocacy strategy with a plan of action linked to the Resource Mobilization and Partnership strategy. The advocacy strategy aims to enhance the cooperation framework with Gulf counterparts as a key expectation of UNICEF’s engagement in high-income countries, and reflect the modality of engagement.

Advocacy efforts were enhanced throughout UNICEF senior-level visits headed by the Regional Director and the Chief of Nutrition. The visits resulted in strengthening ties with high-level decision makers in the governments and presenting UNICEF’s performance and plans, including early childhood, nutrition, quality of education, child protection, etc.

In the area of evidence-based advocacy, partners realized the importance of having available data on children and conveyed their concern on the lack of data on child survival and development. Through various high-level meetings and orientation sessions, SitAns, MICS4, and DevInfo have been approved to be developed in partnership with relevant counterparts.

In the area of child protection, policy makers noted their fragmented activities and were persuaded to join efforts and consolidate functions to better protect children from harm and abuse. This resulted in agreement to implement projects such as mapping child protection, developing a manual on national procedures on child protection, developing a child safety program, and preventing child bullying.

### Capacity Development

**Partially met benchmarks**

UNICEF is aiming to prepare middle-line decision makers in the government and nongovernmental departments who apply the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) principles in their professional career through integrating CRC in the master programme of a selected university. The concept paper for CRC
integration has been prepared.

In Kuwait, capacity development of partners who are participating as members in SitAn working groups on CRC took place in 2012. In UAE, the capacities of relevant national partners were built on mapping the child protection systems, establishing and maintaining DevInfo, and implementing MICS4.

UNICEF implemented several training workshops and awareness raising seminars targeting school and university students on HIV/AIDS, injury, and obesity prevention.

In 2011, UNICEF started implementing with the American University of Dubai (AUD) an HIV/AIDS awareness raising campaign. This was accomplished by building the capacities of nine youth Peer Health Educators (PHE) and empowering them with the knowledge and skills needed to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS. In 2012, these students continued to raise awareness amongst their peers with the support of UNICEF and MENARO; and were further able to reach out to two other universities in the UAE (Sharjah University and Zayed University). These universities are now working on setting up their own PHE clubs, and UNICEF will support them in raising awareness on HIV/AIDS within their universities. UNICEF worked with both the Ministry of Health (MOH) and AUD on developing roll-up banners and an HIV/AIDS fact sheet. The fact sheet was distributed to students from three universities in the UAE (AUD, Zayed, and Sharjah) that attended the HIV/AIDS awareness workshop which aimed at building on the students’ knowledge on HIV/AIDS. PHE students at AUD, with the support of UNICEF, are currently working on developing an HIV/AIDS training manual to help support the PHE clubs in the other two universities. A Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) Survey will be scheduled in 2013 to assess students’ level of knowledge on HIV/AIDS following the awareness raising activities.

Gulf-wide, UNICEF builds up the capacities of national counterparts through the participation in regional functions such as the international experts conference on Measurement of Social Policy Approaches to Enhance Equity for the New Generations in MENA, and the conference on Protecting Children Better: Theory and Practice of Child Protection Systems.

**Communication for Development**

*Mostly met benchmarks*

UNICEF was engaged in 2012 with several communication and behavioral change awareness raising campaigns. Within the school-based obesity prevention project in UAE, UNICEF raised the awareness of 2,983 students and 617 duty bearers (school staff and parents) from 8 government schools in Dubai and Abu Dhabi by providing them with training on how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Awareness raising materials delivered information on healthy eating habits and physical activity.

On the occasion of World Food Day (October 16, 2012), UNICEF and MOH of UAE developed an interactive booklet targeting elementary school children and their parents to enhance their knowledge and awareness on leading a healthy lifestyle. The booklet was distributed to 40 government schools in UAE reaching approximately 5,000 children.

Following the success in 2011 of Phase I of the Child Injury Prevention project in raising awareness of 9,000 students, staff, and parents in Dubai, UNICEF continued its work alongside its partners (Dubai Health Authority and MOE) to reach larger numbers of students, school staff, and parents. UNICEF provided capacity development workshops to 103 adolescents (aged 12-15) from 19 government schools in 2 Emirates (Dubai and Sharjah). They were trained on designing and creating their own awareness raising initiatives in their schools and communities. UNICEF enhanced students’ knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of child injuries and preventive measures, and empowered them with life skills to become proactive in reducing the incidence of accidents and injuries in their schools and communities. This was evidenced by the number of awareness raising initiatives students accomplished that reached an additional 9,000 students, school staff, and parents in 2012.
Strategic Partnerships

Mostly met benchmarks

UNICEF was more strategic in its approach towards current and new donors and partners, and focused on securing donations from foundations rather than corporations. UNICEF worked on enhancing and fortifying relationships with current donors by engaging them as partners rather than donors and increasing regular communication and visits. This approach resulted in raising US$8.8 million in 2012 between pledged and received donations from the Saudi National Committees for projects in Somalia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Syria.

In KSA, UNICEF was able to get approval from a new partner, with Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, to support the Quality Basic Education for Girls project in Yemen (US$262,500) as the start of a long-term relationship. UNICEF will sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in January 2013. Moreover, UNICEF cemented the relationship with the Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND) by finalizing the pending projects and submitting new proposals for funding which may be approved by end of this year. UNICEF has been negotiating with the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) to secure US$7.5 million for polio vaccination activities in 2013. As well, UNICEF continued to receive donations from previous donors like the World Assembly for Muslim Youth (WAMY).

In UAE, UNICEF enhanced the relationship with the UAE Red Crescent; however, it did not result in securing any funds due to the change in their strategy to become implementers rather than donors. In addition, the emergencies in 2012 were man-made and not caused by nature, which some donors are hesitant to support. UNICEF has been taking the lead in negotiating with Dubai Cares for the programmes that they will support in 2013. Dubai Cares committed to support one project in Bosnia and Herzegovina for Early Childhood Development worth US$1.7 million for a period of two years.

In Qatar, UNICEF worked on revitalizing the relationship with Qatar Charity which may result in collaboration with some projects in 2013. Moreover, UNICEF was one of the beneficiaries of the Educate A Child Initiative launched by HH Sheikha Moza. Agreements worth US$45 million were signed for the benefit of UNICEF education projects in Sudan, South Sudan, and Chad.

Knowledge Management

Partially met benchmarks

As part of Kuwait SitAn implementation, UNICEF and MOSAL used a participatory approach to conduct the analytical study. A technical committee and four working groups representing key stakeholders were formulated to ensure data collection from all relevant sectors and to undertake causality analysis of certain child rights violations. Consultation with 150 children, especially vulnerable groups, took place to include their needs and aspirations in the SitAn.

UNICEF disseminated and shared the results of the assessment study of the Camel Jockey project (2011) in a workshop with stakeholders from the four source countries and relevant institutions in UAE.

The assessment of the national child protection system in UAE will provide policy makers with knowledge on the gaps in child protection-related laws, legislation, policies, human resources, institutional structures, and monitoring mechanisms.
Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

**Partially met benchmarks**

UNICEF considers the human rights-based approach (HRBA) as a main principle in programme design and implementation. UNICEF continuously seeks to develop strategies to build the capacities of duty bearers to fulfill their human rights obligations by involving officials in relevant capacity building activities. In KSA, children were educated on their rights through publishing stories on child rights. Parents are aware on the importance of kindergartens and early childhood development through publications targeting them; the media are more capable in producing qualitative and quantitative press articles on child rights using the ethical reporting standards; and a periodic report for Saudi media was produced for analytical review of media performance.

The Child Obesity prevention project in UAE follows HRBA for programming. The project builds and strengthens the capacities of people in charge of caring for children (duty bearers) to protect and fulfill the rights of children to enjoy a healthy lifestyle and enhance their quality of life, and in addition to building the capacities of children themselves (right holders) to claim their rights.

The HIV/AIDS awareness initiative in UAE also follows HRBA by advocating to address the cultural barriers for young adults’ rights to be provided with information related to HIV/AIDS. UNICEF continued to empower university students with knowledge and resources to ensure they are aware of how to protect themselves, and reduce stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS.

Gender Equality

**Mostly met benchmarks**

UNICEF reviewed the gender fact sheets developed by MENARO.

As part of the Child Obesity Prevention project, UNICEF provided equal opportunities for student participation by engaging an equal number of boys and girls schools (4 boys and 4 girls); and built the capacity of 1,058 girls and 463 boys.

The HIV/AIDS awareness strategy promoted gender equality by including equal numbers of male and female PHE trained students (5 male; 4 female). The KAP Survey collected information from 2,408 female and 860 male university students.

To ensure gender equality in the Child Injury Prevention project, UNICEF engaged 54 boys and 40 girls to educate their respective peers and communities on the different forms of injuries and how to protect themselves and people around them.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation

KSA was identified as one of eight countries for a stepped-up relationship for strategic partnerships with the United Nations. In June 2010, a United Nations Theme Group on South-South Cooperation was launched in Riyadh by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) as a means to explore new programming potentials, coordinate agency activities and information sharing, and advocate the role of the United Nations in support of MDG 8 on global partnerships for development.

Also, KSA is one of only five countries worldwide to have a specific country-level outcome related to South-South cooperation in its medium-term plan between the government and the United Nations, the Common Country Strategic Framework 2012-2016 (UNCCSF). The global partnerships and South-South cooperation component of the UNCCSF comprises the following two outcomes:
By 2016, national capacity is enhanced for engaging new global partnerships for development:
Under this outcome, the United Nations is supporting not only an analytical review of the state of global partnerships for development and best practices in official development assistance (ODA), but also a strategy for enhancing cooperation and support to dialogue with Southern partners such as China and India. Resources also are being mobilized for global development and humanitarian efforts.

By 2016, capacity is enhanced to engage in global dialogues, forums, and knowledge exchanges:
UNCT is also playing a role in responding to requests for analytic and advisory support in areas related to South-South cooperation and global partnership as it fulfills its mandate to strengthen country capacity to manage and coordinate global development assistance. This may include engaging KSA in the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum as well as the G20 knowledge network.

Meanwhile, a new Global Partnership Facility is to be based in the United Nations Common Premises in KSA. The staff of this facility will be specialized in various aspects of global partnership development and management, focused on various thematic issues such as crisis response and humanitarian relief; poverty reduction; food and water security; energy and environment; and capacity building for participation in world trade and investment. It will focus on key results in research and analysis; programme development, including design and resource mobilization for new interagency joint United Nations projects between KSA and Least Developed Countries on various thematic issues; annual policy dialogue to explore success stories and lessons learned on global partnerships for development on specific thematic issues; and communications and reporting.

Lastly, access to adequate funding is critical for successful South-South and triangular cooperation, together with support from headquarters. UNCT in KSA can work to assist in continuing to provide key sources of finance for the funding of South-South and triangular cooperation activities through such institutions as AFESD, BADEA, IsDB, OFID, and SFD.

UNICEF organized field visits for a delegate from the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in UAE. The visits were scheduled to showcase different models of national child protection systems (Indonesia and Morocco).
Narrative Analysis by Programme Component Results and Intermediate Results

Saudi Arabia – 3780

PC 222 - Evidence-based advocacy and mobilization

**On-track**

**PCR 3780/A0/05/334**: By 2013, childhood-related policies are based on information and evidence.

**Progress:**
Ensuring proper management and coordination of the childhood agenda at the national level is being addressed by UNICEF by building the capacities of national childhood councils and commissions to coordinate relevant governmental and nongovernmental institutions and monitor the situation of children. These councils and commissions and other relevant institutions are also being supported by UNICEF in preparing analytical studies on the situation of children, especially the most vulnerable. UNICEF and partners conducted three SitAns in UAE, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

Several Gulf countries realized the importance of having updated and accessible information on children and started conducting MICS, conducting analytical studies on children, and establishing databases on children and women. UNICEF needs to continue its work to ensure that all Gulf countries have information on their children to develop appropriate policies and legislation, and establish necessary programmes and services.

UNICEF has also been supporting some Gulf countries in using the results of the analytical studies to develop policies and strategies for the well-being of children. Two countries (UAE and Bahrain) were supported in developing their national childhood strategies that identified priorities of action to ensure the attainment of rights for all children, focusing on special groups of vulnerable children.

UNICEF supported several awareness raising campaigns on child rights in UAE and KSA reaching children, the public including parents, and media people.

**On-track**

**IR 3780/A0/05/334/006**: Parents' Awareness on early childhood development (ECD) - Inactive IR is raised.

**Progress:**
In 2011, UNICEF and the Saudi National Childhood Committee (SNCC) started implementing a Parenting Awareness project and contracted a company to establish a Web site to provide information to parents of children in their early years on child care and development. UNICEF provided technical support in establishing the Web site. SNCC formed a committee to prepare a bank of ECD messages targeting parents, while UNICEF provided several resources on ECD to enable the Technical Committee members to develop the messages.

Implementation was delayed due to some technical problems related to establishing the Web site. Launch of the Web site will take place in 2013.

**On-track**

**IR 3780/A0/05/334/007**: By 2013, policy makers and childhood professionals in Kuwait have a reference study that assesses and analyses the situation of children.

**Progress:**
UNICEF has been advocating for the importance of conducting a SitAn in Kuwait to inform policy makers and childhood professionals of the challenges facing vulnerable children. Consequently, UNICEF partnered with MOSAL to conduct the analytical study. By a Ministerial Decree, MOSAL established a Technical Committee represented by relevant governmental and nongovernmental institutions to oversee study preparation. Four working groups were also established to provide data and information and will work with UNICEF in 2013 on analyzing the causes and bottlenecks that hinders some vulnerable groups of children in attaining their
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rights.

UNICEF raised the capacity of the Technical Committee and working group members on CRC. Consultations and focus group discussions with different groups of children and adolescents were conducted to raise awareness on their rights as per the CRC. As well, and the consultations and focus groups identified their needs and aspirations to include in the analytical study and assist policy planners and decision makers in developing child-sensitive policies and programmes. Consultations covered the most disadvantaged children, such as children with disabilities, stateless children (Bidoon), expatriate children, children in conflict with the law, and children living in institutional care. In total, 150 girls and boys were reached. Consultations with mothers also took place.

Although work on the analytical study started, the implementation process faced many delays due to constrained coordination with and within MOSAL. The Kuwaiti political situation in 2012 entailed dissolution of the parliament, protests, strikes, and two elections which caused several changes in the government, hence changes in the designation of focal persons to the study. Not having presence as a UNICEF Country Office in Kuwait has been one of the challenges. Future projects require partnering with another UN agency that has in-country presence to assist with logistical aspects and project administration.

- **On-track**

IR 3780/A0/05/334/008: By 2013, children and communities are more aware of child rights issues through advocacy, media, reports, among other means information.

**Progress:**

Starting in 2012, UNICEF and SNCC implemented projects aiming at raising awareness on child rights. One result achieved was the availability of the Saudi periodic report on CRC for policy makers aligned with international standards. Another result was the availability of children’s stories prepared in a simple and child-friendly manner to educate them on child rights. SNCC contracted King Abdulaziz Library, a specialized unit, to develop the stories. Production was delayed since SNCC went through bureaucratic procedures in contracting the library and finding professional authors and artists to produce the stories. Final production of the stories will take place in early 2013. A third result was the availability of two periodic reports on Media Performance on Child Rights. The first report targeted media to develop their capacity in reporting articles on child rights in a highly technical and ethical manner. The second report is under preparation. A fourth result was the formulation of a media network, but it was discontinued due to amendment of the Annual Work Plan (AWP).

- **On-track**

IR 3780/A0/05/334/010: Graduated college students are more aware on the principles of CRC and more capable in addressing childhood issues in professional manner.

**Progress:**

UNICEF and SNCC initiated a project in 2010 to highly educate students on CRC principles. One of the deliverables produced was a project document on the master programme that includes the methodology, objectives, a plan of action, the levels, curriculum, etc. SNCC identified a college to include the project in its curriculum. SNCC needed to assess the programme before applying it as a prerequisite. Deliverables will be assessed once the programme is applied and students conduct the Performance-based Assessment.

- **On-track**

IR 3780/A0/05/334/011: By 2013, national institutions and policy makers have results of MICS4 survey as baseline for monitoring the situation of child survival and development

**Progress:**

Qatar piloted the MICS in 2011-2012 as per the agreement at the GCC Ministerial meeting in April 2011. The
survey was also the first completely PDA-based MICS survey supported by UNICEF New York HQ and RO. The survey was entirely funded by the Qatar Statistics Authority (QSA) with UNICEF MICS teams from RO and HQ providing technical expertise.

The capacity of QSA was instrumental in the success of the project. The population of Qatar is relatively small so the sample size was easily managed. Two preparatory workshops for advocacy and capacity building took place.

Not having staff from UNICEF on the ground in Qatar to continuously follow up delayed some decision making related to project implementation.

The LOA was signed in October 2011 and the data processing applications developed over the course of the first quarter 2012 as there were some inherent issues with the compatibility of the software (CSPRO) with Arabic and also with the devices available with QSA. These were resolved with the assistance of the HQ team and the regional consultants contracted to support QSA with the PDA application. RO consultants also assisted in training the enumerators, early monitoring of field work, data processing, and sampling issues which are ongoing. Field work was initiated in May and completed in August 2012.

The first set of tables and analyzed data were shared with UNICEF for review and a preliminary report was prepared based on these findings. The review of the data sets is still underway and is pending completion due to the delay in sharing anonymous data by QSA.

**IR 3780/A0/05/334/013**: By 2013, policy makers and childhood professionals can access and use childhood related indicators through DevInfo database for UAE.

**Progress:**

UNICEF supported SCMC in establishing a database (UAE Info) that includes data and indicators on children and women. UNICEF facilitated the training of SCMC staff through partnership with Dubai Statistics Center (DSC), where the latter assisted SCMC in establishing the database and train three staff on maintaining and updating UAE Info. The programme resulted in building a national team of three staff on DevInfo with commitment towards achieving national ownership for the data collected.

In terms of partnership, UNICEF fostered national and local ownership of UAE Info. A press conference on International Children’s Day took place to launch UAE Info by SCMC and DSC. This reaffirms the importance of mobilizing national ownership as an essential condition to monitoring children’s situation and achieving the MDGs. Having UAE Info also improves the exchange of knowledge between national institutions. The database will be used as an advocacy tool to attract financial and other resources for children by influencing the decisions of governments regarding allocation, and mobilizing additional resources from foundations and the corporate sector.

Although UAEInfo has been established and launched; it is still considered an initial database with a limited number of childhood indicators.

Currently, partners are working on setting the database on-line to be accessible to decision and policy makers, federal and national institutions, and the public. Once the results of the MICS4 are available, a second version of UAE Info will be produced. Capacity development is being planned for relevant institutions that will be using UAE Info.

**IR 3780/A0/05/334/014**: By 2012, national authorities in UAE and Bahrain finalize, endorse, and launch the national childhood strategies that were developed in 2011.

**Progress:**

The National Childhood Strategies (NCS) in Bahrain and UAE were developed based on HRBA as they covered
the main principles of the CRC. The evidence-based strategies were also drawn from the involvement of children themselves (200 children, 50% males and 50% females) as right holders. National consultations were led with children and adolescents where the latter expressed their views and concerns on issues that affect them.

In the UAE, four two-day preliminary expert group round table discussions were held in 2012 by UNICEF in partnership with GWU and SCMC to develop a preliminary draft of the Strategy around the four main pillars of child rights (i.e., health, education, protection, and participation). The results of the SitAn in UAE that was conducted in 2010 informed the experts in developing the preliminary draft strategy. Subsequently, a national consultation with approximately 150 representatives from relevant governmental and nongovernmental institutions at the federal and Emirate levels took place to review and discuss the preliminary draft strategy and come up with a final strategy document. The consultation process was patronized by the Ministers of Health, Education, Interior, and Youth and Community Development.

UNICEF followed a similar process in Bahrain to develop a national childhood strategy in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bahrain office, NCC, and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Rights. The strategy was developed based on the SitAn that was conducted in Bahrain in 2010. The National Childhood Strategy of Bahrain will also be launched in early 2013.

Through the strategy development process, UNICEF contributed to improving public policy development to realize the rights of children and women, pro-actively engaging national stakeholders, and maximizing the use of available resources for children.

**On-track**

**IR 3780/A0/05/334/015:** By 2013, policy makers and childhood professionals in KSA have a reference study that assesses and analyses the situation of children.

**Progress:**

SNCC decided to postpone conducting the SitAn in KSA to 2013. The joint SNCC and UNICEF work plan for 2013 includes conducting the SitAn.

**Constrained**

**IR 3780/A0/05/334/016:** By 2013, national institutions and policy makers have results of MICS4 survey as baseline for monitoring the situation of children in UAE.

**Progress:**

As UNICEF is committed to promote the use of data and evidence in policy development for children, UNICEF has been advocating with strategic partners on the importance of implementing a household survey (MICS4) that provides policy makers with information and indicators on children in UAE. Based on the results of SitAn and the country needs assessment conducted by UNICEF’s Regional MICS Coordinator in 2010, UNICEF has been able to persuade decision makers, stakeholders, and relevant audiences to support the implementation of MICS4. Consequently, GWU allocated necessary funds for its implementation.

Implementation of MICS4 in UAE is still in the preparation. A Letter of Agreement (LOA) between UNICEF and GWU was signed. A Higher Committee has been established by the GWU and a technical committee has been established by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Committee members were oriented on the various steps of MICS4 implementation and oversight mechanisms. Consensus on the objectives and processes for implementing the Survey Plan has also been achieved. UNICEF recruited the required technical experts to support partners and provide guidance and technical assistance for the preparation, implementation, and completion of MICS4.

UNICEF’s main strategic partner, GWU, coordinated and facilitated a number of meetings for the Regional MICS consultant with NBS, local statistics centers, and concerned ministries. The purpose was to discuss adapting MICS4 modules and questionnaires based on HRBA and to contribute to the fulfillment of the rights.
of children and women in UAE, particularly the most vulnerable and excluded. The strategy of capacity development in MICS4 will result in raising and strengthening the capacity of a national team to conduct such surveys periodically. This reaffirms the importance of capacity development and national ownership as essential conditions to achieving the MDGs. In terms of partnership, UNICEF fostered national and local ownership through capacity building to realize children’s rights and gender equality and thus achieve sustainable development. This also involved the government in ownership of the equity agenda.

The main constraint delaying project implementation is the fact that the national sample frame has not been updated since the 2005 census; hence NBS is hesitant to sign the LOA with UNICEF and GWU. In order to overcome this constraint, a sampling expert will visit the country in January 2013 to assist in evaluating the existing information (i.e., establishing surveys at the level of the individual Emirates) to help in drawing the sample frame. The delay in securing funding early in 2012 also contributed to the delay in implementation.

### PC 333 - Child Protection

- **On-track**

**PCR 3780/A0/05/333:** By 2013, the national system on child protection is strengthened to better address child protection issues including juvenile victims of abuse, violence, neglect, and exploitation.

**Progress:**

UNICEF is addressing the enabling environment for child protection by supporting two countries in the Gulf (UAE and KSA). The gaps in laws, policies, regulations, services, capacities, monitoring, and oversight needed across all social sectors (especially social welfare, education, health, security, and justice) are being assessed to prevent and respond to protection-related risks in order to strengthen child protection systems.

UNICEF initiated this work in 2012 in UAE in partnership with SCMC, MOI, and ECSSR. Capacity development to relevant stakeholders took place; however, data collection was delayed due to the delay in initiating implementation until the funds had been received. Results of the assessment should have been released by the fourth quarter of 2012; however this has been postponed to the first quarter of 2013.

UNICEF has been following up with the SNCC to start assessing the child protection national system; however, there have been delays due to discussions over the approach and methodology of implementation. It was agreed to start implementation in early 2013.

- **Constrained**

**IR 3780/A0/05/333/002:** By 2013, the capacity of school staff in KSA is developed on the early detection and intervention of child abuse cases.

**Progress:**

UNICEF and SNCC implemented the Early Detection & Intervention of Child Abuse project in 2011 to ensure access to adequately staffed services, facilities, and information at the school level to respond to cases of child abuse. UNICEF managed to raise the capacity of 59 school staff and prepare them as trainers. The training manual was developed based on the needs assessment with inputs from the assigned teachers as well as from major governmental and nongovernmental partners. In 2012, a plan of action to deliver training to all primary school education staff in government schools in the 13 governorates was developed and it is ready for implementation in 2013.

The project has been constrained because SNCC decided to review the training package before including it in school curriculum. Another constraint has been realizing the need to have supervisors (female supervisors for female schools and male supervisor for male schools) to manage the trainers’ activities and oversee implementation of the training plan. These supervisors will also need to be trained. These administrative constraints have been discussed among partners, and starting in 2013, UNICEF and SNCC will resume implementation aiming at reaching public schools across the 13 governorates of KSA. The aim is to conduct
2 training sessions (one for males and one for females) in the 13 provinces, totaling 26 training sessions. Twenty participants will be trained for each session, bringing the total to 520 participants.

**On-track**

IR 3780/A0/05/333/004: By 2013, national institutions and policy makers in KSA will have developed their national systems and procedures on child protection, and identified the gaps in child protection services.

**Progress:**

UNICEF and SNCC planned to assess the national child protection system in 2012 to ensure access to adequately staffed child protection services, facilities, and information, and introduce necessary child protection policies. However, both parties decided to widen the scope of the project and amended the AWP accordingly. It was agreed that UNICEF and SNCC will start implementation in 2013. Expected results are (1) that government institutions and ministries will have a guide on protection procedures across and within ministries and government institutions, and (2) the results of the assessment report on the national child protection system with recommendations to improve the overall child protection system.

**On-track**

IR 3780/A0/05/333/005: By 2013, national institutions and policy makers in UAE have knowledge on the gaps in child protection laws, legislation, and services.

**Progress:**

The national child protection system in UAE needs to be strengthened according to the recommendations of the 2010 SitAn. Since then, UNICEF has been advocating with relevant strategic partners for the importance of assessing the national child protection system in UAE in order to strengthen it and properly respond to cases of child abuse, violence, and exploitation. Subsequently, UNICEF, SCMC, GWU, MOI, and ECSSR partnered to start the process of assessing the national child protection system. A toolkit that was developed by UNICEF to map and assess child protection systems globally was also used for the UAE assessment.

UNICEF recruited an international consultancy firm (Maestral International) to provide capacity development and technical support for data collection using the toolkit. UNICEF and GWU facilitated a five-day orientation workshop to build the capacities of 35 representatives from relevant governmental and nongovernmental institutions on assessing child protection systems and on child protection global trends. Consequently, the participants were able to identify child protection challenges, gaps, and priority needs in UAE. In addition, the capacity of a team of seven researchers from ECSSR was built on data collection using the toolkit.

Data collection, originally scheduled to take place in early December 2012, will start at the end of January 2013 due to delays in receiving funds. Investment plans for strengthening the child protection systems in two Emirates will be developed in 2013 based on the assessment results.

UAE is the first country in the Gulf to adopt this approach. The toolkit has been translated into Arabic by the Government of UAE and will be shared with UNICEF’s Regional Office and other Arab Country Offices for potential use.

**PC 334 - Adolescent empowerment**

**On-track**

PCR 3780/A0/05/336: By 2013, adolescents' awareness on leading healthy lifestyles is raised through school peer education initiatives.

**Progress:**

UNICEF has been addressing several healthy lifestyle issues in UAE to ensure that social and cultural practices and beliefs among adolescents, their parents, and school staff are supportive in adopting healthier lifestyles and fostering a safer environment to reduce child injuries. UNICEF is advocating for replicating these
initiatives in other Gulf countries and in adopting a more comprehensive life skill-based education approach as an interactive, educational methodology that focuses on transmitting knowledge, shaping attitudes, and developing interpersonal skills.

**Progress:**

Child injuries are the leading cause of death and disability amongst children and adolescents in UAE. UNICEF has been advocating for the participation of adolescents in planning and implementation of youth-led peer injury prevention initiatives.

Following the success in 2011 of Phase I of the Child Injury Prevention project in raising awareness of 9,000 students, staff, and parents in Dubai, UNICEF continued its work alongside its partners (Dubai Health Authority and MOE) to reach larger numbers of students, school staff and parents. UNICEF provided capacity development workshops to 103 adolescents (aged 12-15) from 19 government schools in 2 Emirates (Dubai and Sharjah). They were trained on designing and creating their own awareness raising initiatives in their schools and communities. UNICEF enhanced students’ knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of child injuries and preventive measures, and empowered them with life skills to become proactive in reducing the incidence of accidents and injuries in their schools and communities. This was evidenced by the number of awareness raising initiatives students accomplished that reached an additional 9,000 students, school staff and parents in 2012. It is worth noting that UNICEF reached all secondary school students in the Emirate of Dubai, and approximately 30% of school students in the Emirate of Sharjah.

This project follows HRBA for programming by advocating for the protection of children from accidents and injuries, and promoting the participation of children in issues related to their protection and well-being. To ensure gender equality, the project recruited 9 girls’ and 10 boys’ schools, training a total 54 boys and 40 girls to educate their peers and communities.

**Progress:**

According to the 2010 Global School Health Survey in the UAE, 40% of school children (aged 12-15) are overweight or obese. To reduce the prevalence of child obesity, UNICEF partnered with GWU, MOE, Abu Dhabi Education Council, and SEHA ambulatory health services to work on a one-year Child Obesity Prevention project (November 2011-June 2012). UNICEF enhanced the capacities of 2,983 students and 617 school staff and parents from 8 government schools in Dubai and Abu Dhabi by providing them with training workshops on how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Awareness raising materials providing information on healthy eating habits and physical activity were developed and distributed to approximately 5,000 students.

DSC helped analyze the data collected from students at the start and end of the project, and the results showed a positive impact in changing students’ behavior in adopting a healthy lifestyle. There was a 4% drop in the number of children consuming unhealthy snacks and junk food. Furthermore, SEHA with the support of UNICEF built the capacities of 236 school staff to help teachers and administrators effectively identify and deal with the psychological problems obese children face in schools, such as bullying. A 40% increase in knowledge was evident following the workshops.

Since 2010, UNICEF has been actively advocating for improving children’s health and well-being by ensuring the introduction of school health policies. UNICEF was successful in influencing MOE to pass a law at the end of 2010 banning schools from selling unhealthy items; however, not all schools introduced the necessary policies and guidelines. UNICEF will keep on advocating with policy makers to ensure that schools are better informed on the importance of meeting these guidelines so that students are able to enjoy healthy meals.
This project follows the HRBA for programming through building and strengthening the capacities of people in charge of caring for children (duty bearers) to protect and fulfill the rights of children to enjoy a healthy lifestyle and enhance their quality of life. As well, the project built the capacities of children themselves (right holders) to claim their rights. UNICEF provided equal opportunities for the participation of males and females by recruiting an equal number of boys and girls schools (4 boys and 4 girls) in the project and built the capacities of 1,058 girls and 463 boys.

**On-track**

**IR 3780/A0/05/336/003:** By 2013, university students in Dubai and Sharjah have increased awareness on HIV/AIDS.

**Progress:**

In 2011, UNICEF and MOH in the UAE conducted an HIV KAP survey collecting data from 3,359 university students. Results showed that only 50% had good knowledge on HIV/AIDS and 40% had highly stigmatized attitudes to HIV/AIDS. To reduce the gaps of knowledge on HIV/AIDS and change attitudes and behavior, UNICEF has been advocating with MOH on the importance of developing an HIV/AIDS communication strategy targeting young people in the UAE. In 2012, UNICEF shared and discussed an HIV/AIDS work plan with MOH and is awaiting its approval for implementation.

Revealing data on sensitive issues remains a challenge and caused delays in promoting HIV/AIDS awareness amongst university students in the UAE. Despite these delays, UNICEF signed an agreement with AUD to reinforce and continue working with a group of nine Youth PHEs. UNICEF built the capacities of the PHEs and empowered them with the knowledge and skills needed to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS. These students continue to raise awareness amongst their peers, and with the support of UNICEF and MENARO were able to reach out to two other universities (Sharjah University and Zayed University). These universities are now working on setting up their own PHE clubs, and UNICEF will support them in raising awareness on HIV/AIDS. UNICEF worked with both MOH and AUD on developing roll-up banners and an HIV/AIDS fact sheet which was distributed to students from three universities (AUD, Zayed and Sharjah) that attended the HIV/AIDS awareness workshop. PHE students at AUD, with the support of UNICEF, are currently working on developing an HIV/AIDS training manual to help support the PHE clubs in the other two universities. A post-KAP survey will be scheduled in 2013 to assess students’ level of knowledge on HIV/AIDS following the awareness raising activities.

UNICEF is strongly committed to following HRBA for HIV/AIDS awareness in the UAE by advocating to address the cultural barriers for young adults’ rights to be provided with information related to HIV/AIDS. UNICEF continued to empower university students with the knowledge and resources to ensure they are aware of how to protect themselves, and reduce stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS awareness strategy promoted gender equality by including equal numbers of male and female PHE trained students (5 male; 4 female). The KAP survey collected information from 2,408 female and 860 male university students.

**On-track**

**IR 3780/A0/05/336/005:** By 2013, policy makers' knowledge on the causes and effects of obesity on children and young people in KSA. The capacity of the non-government partner (KAYL) is empowered to lead the initiative in KSA.

**Progress:**

Starting in early 2013, UNICEF, as a member of UNCT, will implement the obesity initiative in KSA targeting policy makers to increase their knowledge on the causes and effects of obesity on children and young people.

**On-track**

**PCR 3780/A0/05/337:** By 2013, children and adolescents in KSA are more capable in participating to realize
their right to participation.

**Progress:**

Postponed as per request from SNCC.

Starting in 2012, UNICEF and SNCC implemented the Youth Forum project. Results achieved are the preparation of the governance structure of the Saudi forum. To learn from successful experiences, SNCC facilitated the participation of three Saudi adolescents in the Arab regional forum. SNCC planned to activate the forum and connect it with existing national and regional forums. UNICEF will advocate for activating the forum and provide technical support throughout the process.

**Constrained**

**IR 3780/A0/05/337/001:** By 2013, children and adolescents start practicing their right to participation through the creation of and participation in forums.

**Progress:**

SNCC decided to postpone activating the forum. UNICEF will keep on advocating for establishing the forum and provide technical support throughout process.

**PC 335 - Cross-sectoral costs**

**PCR 3780/A0/05/335:** Cross-sectoral costs will support the management of the overall programme, including planning and coordination, M&E, media outreach and strengthened information management. It will be used to support staff and non-staff cross-cutting costs, including one international professional social policy specialist post, national staff, office equipment, operations, communications, staff training, travel, and logistics.

**On-track**

**IR 3780/A0/05/335/004:** UNICEF’s people effectively deliver results for children and women.

**Progress:**

UNICEF’s structure was developed to maximize existing expertise to achieve the required results for children. The main structure was kept with no changes in the 2012 Performance Assessment (PAS/e-PAS) in a result oriented discussion on time with regular discussions between the staff and supervisors. The office achieved 100% completion of the Performance Assessment (PAS/e-PAS). All Human Resources (HR) actions were completed and accurate.

**On-track**

**IR 3780/A0/05/335/005:** By 2013, UNICEF’s equity-based approach and advocacy in the Gulf for the new Area Programme Document (2014-2016) are better introduced.

**Progress:**

An advocacy strategy and plan were developed for increasing the awareness of Gulf governments on the importance of addressing the rights of the most vulnerable children in their countries. The strategy tackled the government’s role as a graduated country programming partner and studied the partner-donor relationship in high-income countries. It provided the possible engagement modality with Gulf countries in the next APD (2014-2016). Meetings with governmental and nongovernmental counterparts, the private sector, and main donors have been conducted to assess the needs to and from UNICEF and the strengths and weaknesses of its partners.

Technical support in framing the social policy at the national and regional levels is being provided. Engagement in social policy dialogue with the Gulf governments for programme development and increased resource allocation towards the social sector have been initiated through discussions on the new APD or
through a conference to be held mid-January 2013 in Riyadh.

On-track

**IR 3780/A0/05/335/006:** Salaries of programme and administration support staff.

**Progress:**

UNICEF GAO received a ‘satisfactory’ internal audit rating in the area of operations in 2010. Grants were not utilized to the maximum as some of these programme budget allotments (PBAs) continued to cover activities in the next year. The small amount of thematic funds received were 87% utilized and the remaining will be used in 2013. The Support Budget was 100% utilized. The OR (government) funds were 51% utilized after receiving a new grant for MICS in December 2012. Private fundraising and partnerships (PFP) funds were 50% utilized because of the delay in recruiting the available posts. Proper inventory reported 0% variance, effective travel management, and transportation management.

On-track

**IR 3780/A0/05/800/001:** Adequate governance structures and oversight of office activities in support of the programme of cooperation.

**Progress:**

UNICEF GAO’s objectives and priorities were defined. The CMT met nine times in 2012, reviewing the office efficiency using the office programme and management indicators and the manager dashboard.

On-track

**IR 3780/A0/05/800/002:** Safeguarding the financial and other assets of the organization by maintaining and improving financial and administrative systems and procedures to ensure efficient, timely, cost-effective and transparent utilization of these resources.

**Progress:**

UNICEF GAO received a ‘satisfactory’ internal audit rating in the area of operations in 2010. Grants were not utilized to the maximum as some of these PBAs continue to cover activities in the next year. The small amount of thematic funds received were 87% utilized and the remaining will be used in 2013. The Support Budget was 100% utilized. The OR (government) funds were 51% utilized after receiving a new grant for MICS in December 2012. PFP funds were 50% utilized because of the delay in recruiting the available posts. Proper inventory reported 0% variance, effective travel management, and transportation management.

On-track

**IR 3780/A0/05/800/888:** UNICEF’s people effectively deliver results for children and women.

**Progress:**

UNICEF’s structure was developed to maximize existing expertise to achieve the required results for children. The main structure was kept with no changes in the 2012 Performance Assessment (PAS/e-PAS) in a result oriented discussion on time with regular discussions between the staff and supervisors. The office achieved 100% completion of Performance Assessment (PAS/e-EPAS). All HR actions were completed and accurate.
Effective Governance Structure

The key programme results and operational priorities articulated in the Annual Management Plan (AMP) focused on child survival, development, and protection with an emphasis to reach the most disadvantaged children in the Gulf. A set of programme and management indicators were developed focusing on assessing the situation of children so as to identify barriers and bottlenecks and highlight the areas of inequality. As well, the effective and efficient use of UNICEF financial and human resources helped to strengthen partnerships with donors and others to leverage resources for children and advocate for equal rights in both development and humanitarian settings. The indicators were reviewed by the CMT on a quarterly basis, measuring the office performance against results, and identifying areas for improvement.

The CMT met nine times in 2012, reviewing the office efficiency using the office programme and management indicators and the manager dashboard. The CMT reviewed the office work processes, Visual Integrated System of Information (VISION) role distribution, Segregation of Duties (SOD) conflict report, Risk and Control Self-assessment (RCSA) library and updates, audit recommendations, donor reporting, Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) liquidations, staff welfare, and security situation in the Gulf countries. All audit recommendations in 2011 were closed and regularly reviewed during the CMT meetings (three recommendations on quarterly basis). The GAO retreat meeting was held on November 26, 2012 and was dedicated to review the office achievements and set new results for the coming programme cycle (2014-2016).

GAO has established a number of governance committees: Contract Review Committee, Property Survey Board (PSB), Local Training Committee (LTC), Local Central Review Body (LCRB), and Local Joint Consultative Committee (LJCC). The frequency of the committee meetings depended on the office requirements that the functionality was at the highest level of efficiency.

GAO started working on VISION/SAP in 2012 and faced several challenges in terms of OR funds planning and ceiling and PFP funds management. The role distribution was a challenging process given the small size of the office and limited number of staff. GAO managed to reduce the number of conflicts in SOD to 0 violations. Mitigation measures were identified in risk informed work processes. Staff were informed and aware of the sensitivity of their roles. A Delegation and Acceptance Form was issued to staff with critical roles. As per the instructions from the comptroller, the GAO developed a Table of Authority (ToA) featuring the key functions identified in these instructions.

GAO discussed signing the updated Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) template with the UAE and KSA governments. KSA wanted to update the existing one and the issues of dispute are pending with the legal section at HQ. In addition to the BCA in UAE, the International Humanitarian City in Dubai has requested UNICEF to sign their rules and regulations being the hosts of the GAO in the free zone in Dubai. GAO requested guidance from the legal section at HQ and is waiting for their feedback.

Strategic Risk Management

GAO completed the risk control library in 2011. The Action Plan was reviewed and updated in 2012 to reflect the actions made and the new assessment accordingly. The review of the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) risk control library resulted in identifying three medium-high risk areas, including strategy mission and vision, budget management, and safety and security. There were also nine medium-low risk and nine low risk areas. These risks were addressed in the 2012 AMP and the action plan was reviewed during the CMT meetings. Actions were taken to mitigate the risks throughout the year. The updated library was shared with the ERM focal point at HQ in September 2012. GAO included some of these risks in its Office Improvement Plan. Three work processes were updated in 2012 considering the areas of risk and mitigation measures. GAO roles assignment and ToA reflect the office risk tolerance.

GAO also updated its Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in 2012 and posted it on the Business Continuity Desktop on the intranet. The Crisis Management Team members and the Critical Operations Staff were updated accordingly.
GAO planned to update the EPRP/EWEA in 2012, and assistance was requested from the RO. Unfortunately, this activity has been postponed to 2013 due to other office priorities.

**Evaluation**

GAO’s Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) was developed to plan and implement evaluations in key programme, strategies, and management areas. The IMEP was updated on a regular basis as part of the mid-year and annual programme review engagements.

GAO’s structure does not include monitoring and evaluation (M&E) dedicated staff; therefore, the office obtained such capacities from external institutes or consultants to cover the gap. Directions to consultants were provided by programme staff and follow up with consultants were encouraged through CMT meetings.

Two evaluation studies were completed in 2012 on the Child Obesity Prevention project and Child Injury Prevention project. The recommendations of evaluation studies were discussed by management to improve programme implementation and achievement of results for children in the Gulf.

GAO consulted MENARO regularly on the terms of references involving consultancies for conducting evaluations and studies. GAO cleared with the Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office (PARMO) and PFP MOUs to comply with UNICEF standards and criteria.

GAO evaluated the office performance using the set of established indicators and the managers’ dashboard as a tool to identify areas for improvement.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

Information and communication technology (ICT) solutions were provided by the ICT Hub in MENARO. All ICT solutions were in accordance with UNICEF standards and policies as in previous years. ICT colleagues ensured that all requirements were in place for VISION to be running at the beginning of 2012.

Connectivity was acquired through a leased line from a local Internet service provider (ISP) in KSA and Dubai, and a digital subscriber line (DSL) connection in Abu Dhabi. Wireless connections as a backup are also available in the three offices.

Microsoft Windows server update services was installed and servers were upgraded to Microsoft Windows 2008 in 2012. Four visits from the Regional IT Officer were conducted in 2012 to provide support for the office to properly function and ensure reliable information technology (IT) resources at all times.

Efforts were made with other UN agencies in KSA and UAE to contract ISP and telecommunication providers as a One UN team to ensure competitive prices and services. In KSA, the UN building has provided GAO access to common services as part of the business continuity, like photocopiers, wireless access, on-site IT support, etc.

As part of the office and UNICEF strategies for saving costs, GAO limited the upgrades of hardware to the essential needs only; and used voice over Internet protocol (VOIP), Webex, and Skype for communicating in CMTs and daily work.

Service Manager was used to raise service calls for problems, and the Electronic Standard Access Form (ESAF) was used to manage user accounts.

For business continuity, Thuraya phones were available in Dubai and Riyadh; however, the subscriptions were not renewed and should be acted on in early 2013. Broadband global area network (BGAN) phones and 3G connectivity modems were available. BlackBerry services and e-mails on Smart phones were also maintained.
for the office staff.

Obsolete equipment was submitted to the PSB for proper disposal.

GAO will continue relying on the ICT support provided from MENARO as the office application servers are hosted there.

**Fundraising and Donor Relations**

Overall, a total of US$22.4 million was raised from Gulf donors in 2012, out of which US$1.4 million was RR to UNICEF HQ, US$15.4 million was OR, and $5.6 million was ORE.

The GAO programme ceiling for the 2012 cycle was US$3 million, of which the office raised 22.4% through government contributions and private sector fundraising.

More than 95% of the funds were utilized before PBA expiry. GAO uses the manager’s dashboard and CMT meetings to monitor the funds and avoid unnecessary extensions, which resulted in submitting four donor reports on time in 2012.

GAO used the standardized template for donor reports which was developed following the MENA Donor Reporting Quality Assessment in 2010, and is in line with MENA Donor Quality Assurance Checklist and PARMO Donor Reports guidelines.

UNCT (including UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, UNDP) signed an agreement with the Kayl Society for raising awareness of obesity in KSA.

**Management of Financial and Other Assets**

GAO received a ‘satisfactory’ rating in the area of operations during the last audit review in 2010. Continuous improvements are being introduced to maintain this rating for future audits.

GAO financial resources are inadequate due to three Gulf countries not paying their funds committed to the APD. Therefore, the resources were carefully planned and expenditures closely monitored. Matching the planned resources to the planned results was one of the major challenges GAO faced. GAO had a shortfall of funding of 53% from the APD ceiling, which required prioritizing implementation based on the availability of funds and the situation in the country.

With the implementation of VISION in January 2012, the office faced challenges in processing transactions and delays in payments were noted up to nine days. Bank reconciliations for five bank accounts were finalized on time with some delays in the ZBK11 approver due to technical errors. Cash forecast and monthly optimization reports were posted on the intranet regularly. All fundraising amounts received in GAO bank accounts that exceeded the office needs in disbursements, were transferred to the cashier account.

CMT monitored closely the government contributions status, budget control, and financial procedures along with the DCT liquidation status, donor reporting, and the bank reconciliation submission as part of the management indicators.

DCT liquidations remained a difficult problem to get the partner, who is the donor at the same time, to provide GAO with the minimum required documents for liquidation. All of GAO’s DCT were over nine months, and efforts were made by the programme, operations, and Representative to liquidate.

Transactions were coded to correct GL accounts. Open items were regularly checked and cleared. Segregation of duties among staff was maintained. Description of roles and their accountability were shared with staff to ensure proper understanding.
GAO encountered certain challenges managing the PFP funds because of the different company codes in VISION, but was able to manage in most of the areas with support from PFP Geneva.

As a fully self-funded OR dependent office, grants were not utilized to the maximum as some of these PBAs continue to cover activities in 2013. The small amount of thematic funds received were 87% utilized and the remaining will be utilized in 2013. The Support Budget was 100% utilized. The OR (government) funds were 51% utilized after receiving a new grant for MICS in December 2012. PFP funds were 50% utilized because of the delay in recruiting the available posts.

Assets acquisition and disposals were entered into VISION after PSB or CRC, and data was kept up-to-date in the system. The office purchased a new car in 2012 after the loss of the main car in an accident.

The Operations Section introduced to the staff a set of work process to ensure efficiency in the response time and quality of the services provided.

### Supply Management

GAO is serving in high-income countries; therefore, partners do not require UNICEF supply assistance as the governments are considered self-sufficient and they usually provide supplies to other countries in need as donations. UNICEF’s programmes in the Gulf do not include a supply component. Procurement is mainly made for technical expertise.

GAO collaborated with other UN agencies to develop long-term agreements (LTAs) for office supplies and consumables.

The GAO supplier database includes mainly individual and institutional contractors, and office consumables suppliers. This database helped to streamline the contracting processes of GAO to serve as technical assistance and to procure office consumables.

### Human Resources

GAO’s structure was developed to maximize existing expertise to achieve the required results for children. The main structure was kept with no changes in 2012, but changes were made to the PFP structure. PBR new P4 communication post was established and a change in title for the Chief Fundraising with a view to increase UNICEF’s capacity to leverage resources for children.

The P5 Resource Mobilization Chief post in Dubai was advertised three times and finally a suitable candidate was identified pending recommendations from the Central Review Body (CRB). The P3 Fundraising Specialist post was advertised, but the recruitment process stopped at the CRB recommendation and the post remained vacant. The NOB Resource Mobilization Officer post was advertised and a candidate was selected pending the approval of the Regional Director. A P4 Communication Specialist and a GS5 Fundraising Assistant were appointed on a temporary basis in Dubai. The Executive Assistant was granted a special post allowance on GS7 as a Senior Programme Assistant, and the Fundraising Assistant GS6 was granted a special post allowance on NOA level as Fundraising Specialist.

The 2012 Office Training Plan identified five areas based on the global, regional, and office priorities to address the gaps in the office staff competencies. Four out of five areas were completed. All GAO staff attended at least one or more training session, depending on their function. Staff were encouraged to take e-learning courses and visit the ileran website for hands-on training. Completion of developmental output was monitored throughout the year in the PAS/e-PAS.

The knowledge sharing policy was sustained in GAO, and orientation on global issues took place regularly during staff meetings, retreat, and CMT meetings. Staff were encouraged to read UNICEF’s new initiatives and policies shared by global broadcasting or management.
GAO achieved 100% completion of the Performance Assessment (PAS/e-PAS). The Performance Assessment (PAS/e-PAS) in a result oriented discussion on time with regular discussions between the staff and supervisors. Staff were involved in the revision of the RCSA library to ensure their understanding of the risk management.

All staff members were aware of the Peer Support Volunteers (PSV) and some staff have used their services. Two staff members were trained as PSV for the office. GAO has a functioning Staff Association committee. GAO staff participated in the 2011 Global Staff Survey, where a number of areas were identified for improvement and strengthening. Improvement targets results from the Global Staff Survey were reviewed with all staff and addressed in the office improvement plan focusing on the following topics: accountability and transparency, business process efficiency, knowledge management, and work-life balance. Some of these areas were also addressed in the office Risk library.

A flexible time and work place policy was implemented in the office.

Flu vaccines were offered to staff in Riyadh by MOH free of charge.

Staff in Riyadh attended the annual HIV in the workplace orientation held by UNDP.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

The expenditure on official travel costs was reduced by adopting a number of measures which included changing the travel agency, eliminating overnight stays wherever possible, and planning ahead to get better air fare rates.

Further, GAO has significantly reduced telecommunication costs (i.e., voice and data) by using VOIP, Webex, and Skype in communicating between offices.

In addition, GAO continued its efforts to get in-kind support from partners for programme implementation in terms of facilitators, catering, venue, and consultancies.

GAO stayed in rent-free premises. In addition, the Representative agreed with UNDP in KSA to reduce the common shared services for 2012 to US$45,000.

Courier charges were offered free of charge by ARAMEX as per the partnership agreement UNICEF GAO signed with them.

Outsourcing of driver services also contributed to the cost saving efforts.

**Changes in AMP & CPMP**

The current programme cycle comes to an end in 2013, which will be a significant year for GAO. The AMP will focus on closing the ongoing projects. No major changes will be made in the 2013 AMP as will be a year of preparation for the new cycle 2014-2016.

GAO will submit an Area Programme Management Plan (APMP) in 2013, which may include changes in the office programme staffing structure and will focus on new programme components.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronyms</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGFUND –</td>
<td>Arab Gulf Programme for Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMP –</td>
<td>Annual Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APD –</td>
<td>Area Programme Document</td>
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<tr>
<td>APMP –</td>
<td>Area Programme Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUB –</td>
<td>American University of Beirut</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUD –</td>
<td>American University of Dubai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWP –</td>
<td>Annual Work Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCA –</td>
<td>Basic Cooperation Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCP –</td>
<td>Business Continuity Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>BGAN –</td>
<td>Broadband Global Area Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BICI –</td>
<td>Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4D –</td>
<td>communication for development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFS –</td>
<td>Child Friendly Schools</td>
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<td>CMT –</td>
<td>Country Management Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRB –</td>
<td>Central Review Body</td>
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<td>CRC –</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC – Dubai Cares</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DCT –</td>
<td>direct cash transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>DevInfo –</td>
<td>Development Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS –</td>
<td>Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSC – Dubai Stats Center</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DSL –</td>
<td>digital subscriber line</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECD –</td>
<td>early childhood development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECSSR –</td>
<td>Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERM –</td>
<td>Enterprise Risk Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERP –</td>
<td>Enterprise Resource Planning</td>
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<td>ESAF –</td>
<td>Electronic Standard Access Form</td>
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<td>GAO –</td>
<td>Gulf Area Office</td>
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<td>GPE –</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>GWU –</td>
<td>General Women’s Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>HH –</td>
<td>Her/His Highness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIC –</td>
<td>high-income country</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS –</td>
<td>human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>HQ –</td>
<td>head quarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR –</td>
<td>Human resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRBAP –</td>
<td>Human rights-based approach to Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT –</td>
<td>information and communication technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMEP –</td>
<td>Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>IR –</td>
<td>Intermediate result</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISP –</td>
<td>Internet service provider</td>
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<tr>
<td>IT –</td>
<td>information technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>KAP –</td>
<td>knowledge, attitudes, and practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>KM –</td>
<td>knowledge management</td>
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<tr>
<td>KSA –</td>
<td>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCRB –</td>
<td>Local Central Review Body</td>
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<tr>
<td>LJCC –</td>
<td>Local Joint Consultative Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTA –</td>
<td>long-term agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTC –</td>
<td>Local Training Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOA –</td>
<td>Letter of Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E –</td>
<td>monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<td>MENA –</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>MENARO –</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa Regional Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG –</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>MICS4 –</td>
<td>Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – Round 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MOE – Ministry of Education
MOH – Ministry of Health
MOI – Ministry of Interior
MORES – Monitoring Results for Equity System
MOSAL – Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor
MOSD – Ministry of Social Development
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
MTR – mid-term review
NBS – National Bureau of Statistics
NCC – National Childhood Committee
NCS – National Childhood Strategy
NGO – nongovernmental organization
NOA – National Officer – Level A
OCCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
ODA – official development assistance
OR – other resources
ORE – other resources (emergency)
ORR – other resources (regular)
PAS – Performance Appraisal System
PARMO – Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office
PBA – Programme Budget Allotment
PBR – Programme Budget Review
PCR – programme component result
PFP – private fundraising and partnerships
PHE – Peer Health Educator
PSB – Property Survey Board
PSV – Peer Support Volunteer
QSA – Qatar Statistics Authority
RCSA – risk and control self-assessment
RM – resource mobilization
RO – Regional Office
RR – regular resources
SCFA – Supreme Council for Family Affairs
SCMC – Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood
SEHA – Abu Dhabi Health Services Company
SFD – Saudi Fund for Development
SitAn – situation analysis for children
SNCC – Saudi National Childhood Committee
SOD – segregation of duties
ToA – Table of Authority
ToT – training of trainers
UAE – United Arab Emirates
UN – United Nations
UNCT – United Nations Country Team
UNDAF – United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund
UPR - Universal Periodic Review
VISION – Visual Integrated System of Information
VOIP – voice over Internet protocol
WAMY – World Association for Muslim Youth
WASH – water, sanitation, and hygiene
WHO – World Health Organization
Lessons Learned / Innovation

1 Strategic partnerships and concerted advocacy

<table>
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<th>Document Type/Category</th>
<th>MTSP Focus Area or Cross-Cutting Strategy</th>
<th>Related Links</th>
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<td>Lesson Learned</td>
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<td>Contact Person</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Emergency Related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maha Alefrangi</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"malefrangi@unicef.org"

Abstract

The purpose of sharing this lesson learnt is to highlight the importance of identifying champions, who enjoys high authority in the country, to advocate with UNICEF in fulfilling its mission and convince partners and decision makers in achieving results for children.

Innovation or Lesson Learned

Building high network relationships help UNICEF in fulfilling its mission. Strategic partnerships and concerted advocacy efforts can be helpful in overcoming major obstacles.

Potential Application

Issue

The latest SitAn for Saudi Arabia was conducted in 2003. Several advocacy meetings took place advocating for conducting SitAn in KSA. However, it has been continuously postponed. UNICEF convinced it’s partner to include it in 2012 annual workplan (AWP), however the partner postponed implementing again. GAO identified a champion, HRH Prince Adelah bint Abdullah, the daughter of the King and the wife of the Minister of Education to support and advocate with UNICEF on the importance of conducting SitAn and provide analytical information on the situation of children in KSA.

Strategy and Implementation

UNICEF adopted the advocacy and partnership strategies in it’s attempts to convince the partner to conduct SitAn. Conducting SitAn required involving the National Family Safety Program, headed by HRH Princess Adela, as a technical partner needed to facilitate data accessibility.

Progress and Results

HRH Princess Adela contacted UNICEF’s partner, SNCC, and informed them about the importance of having an updated analytical information on the situation of children in KSA and that UNICEF is ready to provide it’s full capacity and technical support to assist SNCC in its implementation.

Accordingly SNCC approved the inclusion of SitAn implementation in 2013 AWP and will start...
implementation early 2013.

### Next Steps

UNICEF will highlight the important role played by Princess Adela through media and will partner in SitAn implementation with the institute that she is presiding ‘the National Safety Programme’.

## 2 Children Formerly Involved in Camel Racing in the UAE Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type/Category</th>
<th>MTSP Focus Area or Cross-Cutting Strategy</th>
<th>Related Links</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Focus Area 5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Contact Person**

Lara Hussein

"Ihussein@unicef.org"

**Language**

English

### Abstract

The Project is a multi-dimensional project that not only addressed the issue of using children in camel racing in the UAE but also improved the living conditions of at-risk children in Bangladesh, Sudan, Pakistan and Mauritania. It addresses a national, regional and international issue, and it has yielded visible positive outcomes with respect to providing a protective environment for children at risk of trafficking, exploitation and violence and can serve as an example for other COs wishing to replicate the Project.

The key successes it achieved were mainly attributed to the enhancement of partnership between the various participating partners in the UAE, Pakistan, Sudan, Mauritania and Bangladesh. UN agencies, governmental and non-governmental bodies and associations represented by decision-makers in five countries and three UNICEF regions took part and contributed to this effort. Local communities, community leaders and government authorities in the countries of origin were involved in the process for reintegration of children with their communities.

### Innovation or Lesson Learned

Many important lessons were drawn through the implementation of the Project. The Project has achieved sustainable results and brought structural changes that will prevent child trafficking in the communities targeted. Two things could have been done differently: a) More time was needed to be allocated to develop physical mechanisms for communication, coordination and procedures related to repatriation of children – stakeholders at the countries of origin should have been involved at the outset of the Project. This would have prevented the repatriation of some children without receiving psycho social support and without being counted to know exactly the number of children identified and repatriated; b) Many children had fears of reintegration and reunification with their families, given their poor or deficient skills of communication in using their mother tongues. Knowledge-based education and language teaching, using mother tongue, is a core issue and should have been given to children in the mid-way centres in the UAE.

### Potential Application

Commitment by both the governments involved and UNICEF, the financial support rendered and the engagement of the local communities are the key factors that would guarantee a successful replication of the Project in other countries. Ensuring the willingness and preparedness of the countries of origin to accommodate children upon repatriation is another additional factor.

### Issue

Male children (3-10 years) from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sudan and Mauritania used to be illegally brought into the UAE to become camel jockeys. They used to train, clean up, feed or guard the racing camels, and often suffered from malnutrition; injuries; ophthalmia, sore throat or dermatitis resulting from direct exposure to sand and camel riding.
In 2005, the Government of the UAE decided to stop using children as camel jockeys and consequently, the Ministry of Interior signed an agreement with UNICEF GAO where the latter extended technical assistance throughout the implementation of the project from 2005-2010 and was officially closed in 2012.

**Strategy and Implementation**

The Project adopted several strategies:

- Legislative change: UNICEF worked with partners in each country to promulgate legislation and draw out specific policies to address the issues of child trafficking, abuse and exploitation. The affected countries have thus strengthened legislation and policies that prevent the trafficking and exploitation of children for use in camel racing and protect and assist young victims.

- Awareness raising: the level of children, youth, families and communities awareness on child trafficking issues has been increased through interactive sessions provided in communities in Bangladesh, Sudan, Pakistan, Mauritania.

- Victim support: camel jockey children were retrieved from camel farms, provided with psychosocial support services, healthcare, educational and recreational activities in social support centres in the UAE, repatriated to their countries, rehabilitated and reintegrated in their own communities.

- Bilateral agreements with governments of source countries and international cooperation: partnership between the UAE, UN agencies, three UNICEF regions and all governmental agencies, communities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Bangladesh, Sudan, Pakistan and Mauritania was enhanced and thus ensured the Project’s success.

- Capacity building: the Project placed a great emphasis on the national capacity building in the countries involved so that they could address and tackle child-related difficult situations and future trafficking issues.

**Progress and Results**

As a result of the Project, 1100 children were repatriated and reintegrated in their communities. Moreover, the Project also sought to improve the living conditions of the entire vulnerable communities in the countries involved (not only children previously involved in camel racing and their families) through integrated community-based initiatives funded by the UAE government. The Project also helped in strengthening preventative mechanisms in traffic prone communities. Children at risk of trafficking were provided with basic services, child psycho-social support services, and they were empowered to improve their living conditions through vocational training and survival skills.

Key underlying causes behind attainment of the Project objectives include overall commitment by the UAE government, the governments of the countries of origin, UNICEF GAO and UNICEF COs to render the Project successful and to work together to achieve the Project’s goals. The other important factor is the engagement of the local government administration officials and activation of the coordination mechanisms among governments and NGOs which have contributed to the expansion of community mobilization against child trafficking and enhanced flexibility to attain the goals and overcome the Project challenges.

**Next Steps**

The Project was documented and evaluated in 2011 and was officially closed in 2012. UNICEF GAO will share the evaluation with other COs and ROs. A case study on the application of the HRBA to the Project is under review by HQ and will be shared subsequently.