1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The planned key results for 2010 were to: reduce under five and maternal morbidity and mortality; increase access to primary schooling and retention, while seeking to attain gender parity; strengthen child-sensitive national social protection systems with focus on community-based protection systems and legal systems to support prevention and response to protection related risks.

Equity lens was used in policy analysis, national planning and mid-term programme review. Continued revitalization of PHC clinics and focus on most disadvantaged communities increased access to basic health care from 40% to 70%. Pentavalent coverage was 78%, surpassing the target of 70%. Wild polio cases were reduced from 11 in 2009 to two. Up to 63% of households in five counties targeted by the integrated WASH package can properly treat water for household use. Over US$54 million was mobilized from the EFA/FTI and other donors to cover the Education Sector Plan funding gap. Primary school Net Enrolment Ratio is now 42%, a 9 percentage point increase over the previous year. The decentralised birth registration system has been instituted in three counties. The Children’s Bill was passed by the lower house - House of Representatives.

Despite strong leadership at the highest levels of Government, the lower than anticipated national absorptive capacity greatly hampered programme implementation. There are some disturbing trends. Stunting and under five mortality rate are increasing, maternal mortality remains high and gender parity index at primary level is widening. Liberia is unlikely to attain most of the MDGs. New comprehensive poverty and household level data are lacking. Currently, 15 posts are vacant thus affecting programme planning and implementation.

The self-start Delivery as One initiative in Liberia was officially launched in October 2010. Focus is on developing One Programme in 2011; and One Programme and One Budgetary Framework by 2012.

2. COUNTRY SITUATION AS AFFECTING CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Liberia reached the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HPIC) initiative completion point in June 2010. The country now qualifies for a full and irrevocable debt relief and the IMF estimates the cumulative debt relief, including post HPIC assistance at US$4.6b. This demonstrates the country’s commitment to poverty reduction, good public finance management and good governance. Implementation of the Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy (LPRS) is progressing well with 47% of the 486 interventions already complete, while 27% are on track for completion by June 2011. Liberia’s Cabinet identified LPRS priorities for the remaining period. Implementing these will cost US$610m leaving a funding gap of US$329m. The Infrastructure and Basic Services Pillar funding gap alone is US$217m.

The forthcoming Liberia 2010 MDG report notes that despite the remarkable efforts made thus far, only MDG 6 is likely to be met. MDG2 will probably not be met while MDG 3 is not likely to be met. The rest are unlikely to be attained. Poverty is the main cause of vulnerability in Liberia. The majority of Liberians (64%) are poor and the level of poverty is higher in rural (68%) than in urban (55%) areas. The 2007 poverty study found that 76% of the population in South-eastern and North-western regions is poor.
Unemployment or under-employment is very high (80%). The gender dimension shows that female-headed households constitute 73% of the poor. Women and girls’ vulnerability is exacerbated by the high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence.

Primary school Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) has increased from 25% in 2007 to 42% in 2009. But, girls’ NER (40%) fell behind boys’ NER (44%). The Gender Parity index gap widened slightly from 0.88 the previous year to 0.87 in 2009. Key barriers to education in Liberia include poverty, education level of head of household, age of the child, gender, absence of a father in the household and distance to the nearest school that will enroll the child.

Liberia is ranked 17th among countries with the worst under-5 mortality. Access to quality basic health care is low largely due to lack of trained people to work in the facilities. Whereas under-weight and wasting are reducing, stunting has increased - 41.8% compared to 36% in 2008. Barriers to health care include lack of money for treatment, availability of drugs, having transport to clinic and distance to health facility.

3. CP ANALYSIS & RESULT
3.1 CP Analysis
3.1.1 CP Overview:

The country programme (CP) seeks to contribute to the reduction of child mortality and vulnerability and the development of a safe, secure and peaceful environment for children. The programme focuses on: reducing under five and maternal mortality rate by 10% and 15% respectively; increasing primary school net enrolment ratio to at least 75% with gender parity through to grade 6 and 90% retention and completion rates; and creating a protective environment for children with effective institutions against violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect.

The equity considerations demand a significant supply and service delivery content coupled with capacity development at the national and lower levels. Public policy analysis, a key area of UNICEF work, will focus on ensuring that the policies and plans are anchored in a child-rights approach. The CP will continue to address equity,
community capacity development, and promote gender and youth empowerment, inclusion of children and adolescents in the development process, and achievement of social change. Although the CP supports national coverage through a coordinated UN response, special focus is being and will continue to be placed on the rural and hard-to-reach locations and most disadvantaged groups.

Towards the end of 2010, the CP was required to address a challenging situation arising from a deepened political crisis in Cote d’Ivoire in November, triggering mass movement of persons into Liberia. A total of 16,458 persons (62% children) had crossed into Liberia as of December 28, 2010. The inter-agency contingency plan for Cote d’Ivoire is being implemented. UNICEF is the lead agency for WATSAN, Nutrition, Education, Child Protection, and is supporting WHO in health. UNICEF Liberia’s initial response has so far included provision of basic water and sanitation supplies for 10,000 people for a month; nutrition screening and provision of essential medicines and nutrition commodities; rapid WASH, child protection and education assessments. Regular update on the situation is being provided.

Key constraints include low national absorption and implementation capacity, inadequate staffing in the country office and lack of comprehensive updated household level data. The approved budget for the CP for the year 2010 was US$32,963,000 with allotment of US$28.7 million and expenditure rate of 87%. The office strategically re-phased some US$5.6 million to 2011. The CP will need additional financial, human and logistical support if the situation concerning the influx of refugee population deteriorates.

3.1.2 Programme Strategy
3.1.2.1 Capacity Development:
The first two years of the country programme covered much of the policy formulation and national planning work concerning children, women and most disadvantaged adolescents. The challenge now is to support implementation of the policies and plans. Consequently, capacity development work is gradually shifting to county and lower levels. In 2010, the CP deepened implementation of the high impact child survival interventions at health facility and community levels focusing on maternal, new born and child mortality. Delivery of the integrated WASH package in rural areas, which started in 2009, was refined to target the under-served southeast region. Systems strengthening work included continued support to education and health management information systems, revitalisation of the decentralised birth registration system, and strengthening of a community-based system for protection of children, the Child-Friendly Schools initiatives and the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP). The ALP targets older children who missed out on education due to the conflict situation and other reasons.

To expand services to the most disadvantaged, UNICEF supported training of health workers and teachers, providing them with incentives to work in the hard-to-reach rural areas. The CP engaged in targeted construction of schools, health clinics and youth centres to ensure access to basic services for underserved children, women and youth.

On leveraging resources, UNICEF coordinated the appraisal of the Education Sector Plan 2010-2020 to make it equity focused and supported application to the Education For All Fast Track Initiative resulting in a funding grant of US$40 million.

UNICEF is a key contributor to the Health Sector Pool Fund. A social cash transfer programme scheme targeting ultra poor and labour constrained households is being implemented as part of the social protection programme. UNICEF continues to provide technical assistance to implementing partners and equipment and supplies to support programme implementation.
Limited human resources and poor infrastructure at the county and lower levels, along with lack of offices, accommodation, poor roads and communications discourage qualified staff from being deployed at county levels, in turn affecting the CP’s successful and speedy implementation.

3.1.2.2 Effective Advocacy:

Advocacy initiatives in 2010 were premised on lessons learnt and studies undertaken by UNICEF and partners. The Mid Term Review of the Country Programme provided opportunity for a renewed focus on the poorest and most disadvantaged children in Liberia through separate consultations with Government partners, civil society, children and young people. This resulted in the Government, UN and civil society agreeing to double efforts to achieve equitable results for children. The equity principle was considered during the UNDAF MTR and a joint press briefing on equity held by UNICEF and Save the Children.

Advocacy events and activities supported include the World Water Day, International Children’s Day of Broadcasting, Day of the African Child, World Breastfeeding Week, Global Hand washing Day, Liberia Children’s Festival, ‘Star is Born’ music contest and World AIDS Day. These created a greater awareness at all levels on the rights of children in general and more specifically on: decreasing diarrhoea through hand washing and hygiene promotion among school children; preventing malaria, better nutrition for mothers and their children; greater involvement and support from religious and community leaders to fight polio, HIV and AIDS stigmatization and discrimination, improving quality and access to education for all children, birth registration, and support for the poorest and most vulnerable families.

In addition, continued advocacy with policy and decision makers resulted in the Nutrition Section being upgraded to a Division in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in order to intensify actions to improve the nutritional status of children. The joint advocacy and support by the World Bank administered Water and Sanitation Programme and UNICEF resulted in the Government undertaking a Water Point and Sanitation Mapping. The findings are being used to improve planning for the most inaccessible and disadvantaged children and communities in Liberia with safe drinking water. Dedication of the Ganta Child-Friendly LAB4LAB School by the President HE Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf was an important and innovative advocacy tool. The President commended the quality of the design and construction, making the school a model for primary schools in the country.

3.1.2.3 Strategic Partnerships:

The Government made a formal request in February 2010, for Liberia to become a “Deliver as One” (DaO) country. Accordingly, Government, donors and the UN in Liberia endorsed the DaO concept note and launched the DaO road map in October. The initiative seeks to institute one programme, one budgetary framework, organizational change, common services and harmonized business practices, joint communications and resource mobilization. A High Level Steering Committee has been established co-chaired by the Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs and Deputy SRSG/Resident Coordinator with representation from Government, donor community and the UN. UNICEF is a member of the steering committee and chairs the DaO Planning Team, which has been charged with the responsibility of developing One Programme in 2011, and One Programme and One Budget Framework for launch in 2012.

The Health Sector, Education Sector, WASH Sub-sector and Child Protection all have well established partnerships and coordination arrangements that meet regularly and take strategic decisions. Two joint programmes were finalized in 2010 - the Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS; and the Joint Programme on Advancing the Rights of Adolescent Girls in Liberia – thus bringing the number of joint programmes and joint work plans in Liberia to seven. UNICEF–NGO partnerships are specifically in the areas of nutrition, WASH,
child and maternal health, immunization, HIV and AIDS, Child Protection and Communication for Development.

During 2010, UNICEF concluded a partnership agreement with the Inter Religious Council of Liberia. This will support advocacy and participation for protection of children and adolescents against violence, abuse and exploitation; and prevention of and response to HIV and AIDS. UNICEF enhanced partnership with children through the Liberia Children Parliament (LCP). The 21st anniversary of the CRC was used to bring together NGOs and civil societies working for children in Liberia and members of the LCP from all counties for a Children’s Forum. Recommendations from the Forum were presented to the President of Liberia on November 21, 2010. UNICEF also concluded partnership with five FM radio stations and 20 community radios to ensure that issues affecting children are voiced and heard.

3.1.2.4 Knowledge Management:
UNICEF contributed to a variety of studies including the Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire survey, Labour Force Survey, Food Security and Nutrition Survey and school mapping, as well as the completion of the PRS Deliverable tracking system, Liberiainfo. UNICEF Liberia is maintaining an Equity Snapshot database in Devinfo to facilitate implementation of the equity principle.

Regarding the south-south knowledge exchange, the Government of Malawi provided technical expert to Liberia for 4 months (December 2009-April 2010) to establish the Social Cash Transfer Secretariat in Bomi County. The Government of Liberia and UNICEF staff also participated in training and exchanged experiences on social cash transfers for West and Central Africa in Accra, Ghana. A lesson learnt from this scheme is presented under the innovations and lessons learnt section of this report.

To leverage technology and innovation for children, UNICEF is supporting the Connecting Classrooms Initiative. The Ministry of Education has identified eight schools in five counties to start with, where computers will be provided with internet connectivity to allow students in these schools to be linked to other classrooms around the world, including Rwanda and Uganda. In the model CFS connectivity will use solar panels rather than generators.

3.1.2.5 C4D Communication for Development:
The focus for C4D included promotion of breastfeeding, malaria control, prevention of diarrhoea, hand washing and sanitation, immunisation, revitalization of birth registration, social cash transfers and Child-Friendly Schools approach. Findings of the qualitative study on infant and young child feeding practices in Liberia supported the development of key essential nutrition action messages, which are being disseminated. UNICEF, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and Breastfeeding Advocacy Group launched a Market Place Initiative (MPI) to promote proper infant and young child feeding. The MPI is being documented and will be reviewed for replication. Community mobilization conducted for seven rounds of polio eradication campaigns showed qualitative improvements. The lessons learned were crystallized into a new approach to reach communities. It entails working with the local government structures, community workers, NGOs active in a locality, community radios and community mobilization groups. This approach will be adapted for use in other C4D focus areas. Mapping of C4D resources in Liberia is underway.

The high profile visit to Liberia of Her Royal Highness Princess Mathilde of Belgium served to advocate and raise awareness for HIV and education related issues. On October 19, during one of her public engagements, she launched Facts for Life (F4L) in Bomi County. UNICEF partnered with UNMIL Public Information to produce radio programmes on F4L, to broadcast and share with partners, including 20 community radios. This is being done with full participation of children and youth. During 2011,
traditional leaders and other influencers identified in the on-going C4D mapping exercise will be included. Equally important is the need to establish a practical behaviour change monitoring arrangement for these C4D initiatives. To this end, Liberia participated in the C4D capacity building regional workshop organized by the regional office. The knowledge and tools obtained from the workshop are being used to support C4D planning.

The primary constraint is lack of a C4D Specialist in UNICEF, the recruitment for which is underway. Equally important is to build C4D capacity in Government in a sustainable way.

3.1.3 Normative Principles

3.1.3.1 Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation:

The CP is rooted in the human-rights based approach (HRBA) which is reinforced annually through annual work planning and review of implementation. The focus has been in supporting Government partners to develop capacity to mainstream human rights across all UN-supported programmes starting with joint programmes and integrated planning processes. UNICEF as the chair of the Inter-Agency Programme Team is playing a key role in this process and ensuring that equity principles are integrated.

3.1.3.2 Gender Equality and Mainstreaming:

Gender inequality is still a problem that is sustained by negative socio-cultural tradition, attitudes and perceptions. The war exacerbated gender inequality. Gender concerns are integrated in all programme aspects of UNICEF Liberia’s work. UNICEF’s Basic Education and Gender Equality Programme actively works to reduce the disparity between girls and boys at primary level. UNICEF works with the Ministry of Gender and Development to ensure that gender considerations are integrated throughout the national development process. There is a SGBV Secretariat as well as a Girls’ Education Unit overseeing progress in these areas. However, the technical and financial capacities of these Governmental entities are limited and require strengthening. The Joint Programme on Youth Empowerment and Employment works specifically with adolescents and focuses on empowering girls. Importantly, the UNCT has established a thematic group on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.

During 2010, UNICEF coordinated the development of the Joint Programme on Adolescent Girls’ Development. The programme seeks to empower most vulnerable and at-risk girls with livelihood and life skills, improve health service for adolescent girls, and reduce prevalence of harmful traditional practices and violence against girls. The programme will integrate education, health, protection, economic and social participation, taking into consideration the Liberian context, including traditional practices, gender roles, and legal issues that affect the rights of girls. Implementation of the joint programme starts in January 2011.

A key MTR recommendation is to strengthen the out of school adolescent HIV response, particularly targeting the most vulnerable and at risk 10-14 year olds. The recently developed guidance on Gender and HIV programming was used to refine the planned HIV initiatives and ensure the collection of disaggregated data by gender. A concept note on sexual and gender-based violence was developed and funding secured to conduct a study on SGBV targeting young girls, boys and women.

3.1.3.3 Environmental Sustainability:

3.2 Programme Components:

Title: Child Survival

Purpose:
This programme component focuses on attaining MDGs 4 and 5 by contributing to a 10% and 15% reduction in maternal and under five mortality rates respectively by 2012. In line with the Government's PRS and the UNDAF objectives, the programme focuses on increasing access to and utilization of evidenced based high impact maternal, newborn and child health, nutrition and WASH interventions by the most vulnerable populations of Liberia. To ensure this, the programme works at 3 levels: i) supporting policy frameworks for survival of children under five years of age and women of child-bearing age; ii) strengthening the capacity of child survival related ministries; and iii) improving the capacity of caregivers and communities for child survival and maternal health.

The programme defined the following results for 2010: 1) Health, Nutrition and WASH sector policies and strategies that are equitable and supportive of child survival are in place; 2) National routine immunization coverage rates increased from 65% and sustained at 70% as measured by Penta 3 and TT vaccines; 3) Polio transmission is stopped and measles outbreaks controlled; 4) The proportion of health facilities delivering integrated MCH services including emergency obstetric care increased from 76% to 80%, and 10% of children are treated directly and correctly at home for malaria, pneumonia; 5) 80% of pregnant women have access to the anaemia control package (IPT, iron, LLINs) and 80% of children under five sleep under LLIN; 6) 50% of pregnant women and children access the PMTCT/paediatric HIV care package; 7) Improved infant and young child feeding practices including exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding; 8) 90% of children 6 - 59 months receive vitamin A supplementation in last 6 months, 90% of children 12 - 59 months are de-wormed, and 70% of pregnant women receive iron and folic acid supplementation; 9) 70% of identified severely malnourished children are treated, with 85% cure rate; 10) 200,000 persons including children less than 5 years old and women of childbearing age use the basic WASH package or the comprehensive WASH package as appropriate and; 11) 100 primary schools meet the WASH child friendly school criteria.

Resources Used:
The approved programme budget for 2010 was US$14,669,000 with allocation of US$9.9 million and 94% utilization rate. The programme is a major contributor to child survival work in Liberia.

During 2010, UNICEF provided US$2,150,931. Allocations from other donors were: the European Commission Humanitarian Office – ECHO (US$1,763,187), Government of Japan (US$1,572,717), the European Commission – EC (US$1,315,181), Ireland (US$283,218), the German Committee for UNICEF (US$560,094), SIDA – Sweden (US$540,412), the Canadian Committee for UNICEF (US$374,336), Norway (US$326,657), the United States Fund for UNICEF (US$444,170), CIDA/HAND (US$176,270), the GAVI Fund (US$114,055), the United States Agency for International Development (US$102,908), Australia – AusAID (US$25,678), the Netherlands (US$80,000), the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF (US$75,479), and Micronutrient Initiative Formerly IDRC (US$27,233).

Result Achieved:
Pentavalent coverage improved from 65% to 78% surpassing the target for 2010 of 70%. Wild polio virus cases decreased from 11 in 2009 to 2 in 2010 following 6 rounds of national immunisation campaigns, each reaching over 600,000 children under five. UNICEF ensured an uninterrupted supply of bundled vaccines, training of 50 staff on maintenance of solar refrigerators, and support to social mobilization, supervision and monitoring. Ensuring coverage for children in hard-to-reach locations, however, remains a cause for concern.

During 2010, the number of functional public health facilities increased from 302 to 378 thereby increasing access to basic health services from 40% to 70%. UNICEF contributed US$750,000 to the Health Sector Pool Fund and directly funded operation of nine clinics in the hard-to-reach areas of Lofa and Maryland counties. UNICEF also constructed 5
new clinics to improve access to basic health care in other marginalised areas. To strengthen basic service provision, UNICEF financed the training of 721 district health workers and 1,977 general Community Health Volunteers, as well as the establishment of 474 Community Health Committees and 85 Community Health Development Committees. Essential drugs and other supplies were provided for the community-based initiative. Twenty motorcycle ambulances were provided to 20 facilities to improve referral of pregnant women from communities to facilities. These actions resulted in increased institutional delivery from 45% to 62%, with 91% of them conducted by skilled attendants.

Household ownership of bed nets was estimated at 63% in 2010 (up from 30% in 2007), with use by children under five estimated at 70%. UNICEF provided 140,000 LLINs to households, and supplied SP for Intermittent Presumptive Treatment (IPT) of malaria in pregnancy, with 80% of women receiving at least 2 doses of IPT. The number of sites offering PMTCT services increased from 44 to 142. This enabled 68,029 pregnant women (up from 36,982) to access pre-counselling services with 45,019 accepting to take HIV test. And 440 of the 1,156 who tested positive were put on ART while 267 of the 363 live births recorded underwent early diagnostic testing.

The absence of concrete nutrition actions in the BPHS has been the weak link in the package of services delivered. To strengthen the preventive actions and contribute to reduction of stunting that continues to increase, the Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) framework was introduced into the Basic Package of Health Services. Training manuals on ENA were developed and 232 health workers from 8 counties trained and equipped with ENA job aids. In addition, 6,982 severely malnourished children were identified and managed with a cure rate of 85% and death rate of 1.3%. The expansion of community-based treatment and integration of care and treatment into existing facilities resulted in an increase in coverage from 60 to 67%. Two rounds of VAS and DW were conducted, reaching 95% of targeted children in each round.

Development of 174 safe water pointes and implementation of a household water treatment and storage strategy ensured access to safe water for 167,000 people in five counties. The percent of households in the five counties who can properly treat household water increased from 3% in 2007 to 63% in 2010. Implementation of the Community Led Total Sanitation approach enabled 10,250 people from 15 communities to live in an “open defecation free” environment. Hygiene promotion activities that foster safe practices such as water treatment, storage and handling; hand washing with soap; and total approaches to sanitation reached 200,000 people in communities, schools and health facilities. Implementation of a WASH Child Friendly School approach reached 62,000 school children in 245 schools.

Limited absorption and human resource capacity of partners (Government or other), poor access to parts of the country, the fragmented WASH sector, and the slow recruitment process within UNICEF (leading to vacancies for up to 6 months) are the main constraints to programme implementation. The overall weakness of the health system also contributed to slow progress.

Two studies, one assessment and one evaluation were conducted and the results are being used for improved programme planning and implementation as detailed in section 5 of this report.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is the main implementing partner. Other implementing partners include the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy, and the Ministry of Public Works, national and international NGOs.

**Future Workplan:**
The focus in 2011 and 2012 will be on:
- Improving routine immunization coverage rates through the sustained implementation of the RED approach and continuing support to eradication and control efforts for vaccine preventable diseases;
• Improved access to basic package of health and nutrition services through support to the roll out plans for IMNCI and the Operational plan for reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality;
• Support to PSM, procurement and distribution of ITN (limited number) including promotion of their use, and support to procurement and distribution of antimalarial medicines;
• Training of health personnel and CHV both pre- and in-service;
• Support alternatives of financing the health care delivery system, conduct assessments and studies to improve knowledge for evidence based planning, support the Health Management Information System;
• Support communication for development activities, and support the implementation of the scale up plan for PMTCT;
• Support the finalization of the Nutrition action plan, support the creation and operationalization of the nutrition division within the MoHSW, develop micronutrient strategy and action plan, organize twice yearly mass VAS and DW campaigns for children under 5, implement ENA approach in 250 facilities, finalize and enforce code of marketing of breast milk substitutes, implement home food fortification of complementary foods programme in South East counties, scale up out-patient management of SAM,
• Support WASH sectoral financing, policy, and strategy; Capacity building of the proposed Bureau of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation of the MoPW and the Directorate of Community Mobilization and Hygiene Promotion of the MoHSW; promotion of basic safe water usage, sanitation and hygiene at the household level and in schools;
• Strengthen supervision, monitoring and evaluation at national and county levels.

UNICEF will continue to strengthen its strategic partnerships with the UN team and other development partners to ensure that the overall goals of the Country Programme, the UNDAF, the PRS and the MDGs are met. The estimated 2011-2012 budget is US$20m, with US$4.0m from UNICEF’s own resources (RR) and US$16m from other resources. A total of US$5.0m is available leaving a funding gap of US$15m.

Title: **Basis Education and Gender Equality**

**Purpose:**
The purpose of the Basic Education and Gender Equality Programme (BEGE) is to increase access to primary schooling by raising the Net Enrolment Ratio from the estimated baseline of 25% (in 2007) to 75% with gender parity through to grade 6, and increase retention to achieve completion rates of 90%. The two programme components: Increased Access for Gender Equality and Implementation of Quality Improvement Initiatives address the above goals while also supporting MDGs 2 and 3 translated into UNDAF outcomes 4 and 5. The main implementing partner is the Ministry of Education.

**Resources Used:**
The 2010 approved programme budget was US$8,510,000 with allocations of US$9.1 million and utilisation rate of 93%. The allocations include US$2.976 million contributions to the Education Pooled fund.

The allocations were as follows: UNICEF regular resources (US$292,527), Global – Girls Education Thematic Funding (US$22,172), Basic Education and Gender Equality Thematic Funding (US$2,000,170), the Netherlands Government (US$645,540 of which US$2,976,000 was direct contribution to the Education Pooled Fund), Government of Japan (US$229,590), and the European Commission (US$140,000).
Result Achieved:

Two key results were attained by the programme in 2010: (1) The programme contributed to the increased primary school Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) from 33% in 2007/2008 to 42% in 2008/2009. The 9 percentage point increase in the NER is above the PRS/UNDAF planned target and thus a significant achievement. A disturbing trend, however, is the widening Gender Parity Index at primary school level which has moved from the 0.92 in 2007 to 0.87 in 2009. (2) UNICEF as the Education Sector Coordinating Agency spearheaded the resource mobilisation drive to cover the Education Sector Plan 2010-2020 funding gap. This yielded US$40 million from the EFA/FTI Catalytic Fund (over 3 years), US$8.5 million from the Government of Japan (over 2 years), and US$6.18 million from the Netherlands Government funding to Education in Emergencies and Post Crisis Transition (EEPCT) programme.

In 2010, 5,000 copies of the sector HIV and AIDS Policy, 2,000 copies of the Strategic Plan and 1,000 copies of the Operational Plan were printed.

Strengthening the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) continued with UNICEF funding the data analysis and printing of the 2008/2009 national school census report. This provided vital education statistics at the primary, junior and senior school levels. School Mapping was completed in 14 of the 15 counties. Results of the rapid assessment of factors affecting girls’ learning achievement are being used to develop a girls’ achievement programme.

The model Child Friendly School completed in Ganta, Nimba County met 11 of the 12 CFS criteria. The Buchanan CEO’s office complex was completed together with installations of water facilities and generators in the renovated complexes in Bong, Bomi, and Gbapolu.

At least 31 government primary schools in eight counties were renovated providing 3,000 learners with better classrooms and furniture.

Separate latrines (for girls and boys), water points and hand washing facilities were provided in 245 government schools; ‘child to child’ hygiene education clubs improved the WASH environment for over 100,000 learners in at least 100 school communities.

Learning achievement was supported by the printing and procurement of 213,236 supplementary readers for grades 2, 3, 5 and 6.

Programme implementation was somewhat delayed due to changes of key decision makers in the line Ministry. School construction using the funding from the Government of Japan was delayed by lack of in-office expertise. UNICEF is establishing a construction unit to address this.

The 2008/2009 school census report has provided vital information on enrolment and basic education statistics for assessing progress in the sector. The school mapping exercise has now covered 14 out of the 15 counties and the results will be available in early 2011. This will facilitate analysis and identification of gaps in existing education facilities and help determine the sites for new schools and/or existing schools that need to be expanded. The preliminary results of the Liberia evaluation of the Netherlands funded EEPCT programme indicate that: (i) there is a significant impact of the programme on access and quality of education improvement; (ii) innovation has been clearly demonstrated in the Learning Along Borders for Living Across Boundaries (LAB-LAB) initiative and the Education Pooled Fund; (iii) Liberia has been the largest recipient of the Netherlands funding to the EEPCT programme. The first audit of the Education Pooled Fund was conducted and revealed no significant risks.

The Ministry of Education is the main implementing partner. Others are UNESCO, UNDP, UNHCR, WFP, UNMIL, USAID, EC/EU, World Bank, Open Society Institute (through Open Society Initiative/West Africa (OSIWA), Norwegian Refugee Council, International Rescue
Committee, Liberia Education Trust, Save the Children UK, the University of Liberia, FAWE and Action Aid.

**Future Workplan:**
UNICEF will continue to advocate for sector wide programming with a focus on primary education through an equity lens for disparity and vulnerability reduction. To this effect funding and technical support will be provided to developing and using an operational/action plan and monitoring tool for the primary education sub-sector, and to monitor progress on implementation of the ESP by participating in Sector Reviews and Public Expenditure Reviews. Advocacy for approval of the School Fee Abolition Policy, which operationalises the School Grants scheme, will be linked to the establishment and functioning of the proposed County School Boards and the decentralisation of the education system approved by the Catalytic Fund. Support to implementation of the ALP policy guidelines, Girls’ Education policy, HIV and AIDS sector policy and strategic plan will intensify.

The school mapping and micro planning will be completed in early 2011. UNICEF will provide funding and technical support for the 2010/2011 national school census. Thereafter, it is expected that MOE and LISGIS will continue data collection through School mapping, analysis and linking this to national statistics.

UNICEF will support basic school management and supervisory skills development for CEOs, DEOs, school principals, PTAs, School Boards, and MoE staff through training in relevant skills and learning by doing alongside experienced contracted staff. The Girls’ Education Achievement Programme currently under development, which includes the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, will be implemented to help address the widening gender gap and gender violence.

UNICEF will continue its support to quality improvement through the roll out of the CFS approach through construction of new schools and renovation of schools, support to WASH in schools, and de-worming. The in-service training of teachers will focus on the use of participatory methodologies.

To enhance evidence based programming, UNICEF will support an Out Of School Children Study and an End of Programme Evaluation of the Accelerated Learning Programme and use the recommendations to advocate for relevant policies to address the education needs for the excluded, and also to advocate for a relevant NFE programme with a skills development component. A comprehensive ECD programme that includes all programme areas and approaches the child’s needs holistically will be developed.

**Title: Child Protection**

**Purpose:**
The Child Protection Programme consists of two components: Child Justice and Social Protection of vulnerable children and youth. The programme focuses on building and strengthening child-sensitive national social protection systems, including the building of community based conflict management structures and legal systems to support prevention and response to protection related risks. It contributes to the creation of a protective environment for children against violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. Achievements of these results are contributing to the attainment of UNDAF Outcomes 1, 3, 4 and 5; PRS pillars III and IV, and MDGs 1, 3, 6, 7 and 8.

The key planned results for the programme are: i) Improve the institutional and operational capacity of Rule of Law institutions to deliver effective justice to children in accordance with international and national laws; ii) Increase the capacity of national institutions, civil society groups, and communities to effectively deliver conflict resolution and manage social protection services for the most vulnerable groups, including addressing the needs of juvenile justice, and prevent and respond to gender based
violence nationwide; iii) Ensure young peoples’ rights and interests are better served, with their increased participation in society through the implementation of the national youth policy, education and trainings in peace-building and leadership, and enactment of a legal framework.

**Resources Used:**
The approved programme budget was US$5,939,000 and US$3.5 million was allocated with 81% utilization rate. Allocation from UNICEF resources was US$1,691,923. Other funding allocations for the year were from USAID (US$366,267), UN Joint Programme (US$110,920), UNDP-Admin Services Section (US$529,802), UNFPA-USA (US$110,002) and the European Commission (US$722,114). Funds provided by the Swiss and Belgium National Committees were strategically allocated to 2011.

**Result Achieved:**
The draft Children’s Act was finalized and two sensitization workshops for legislators were organised. The Act has been approved by the House of Representatives and is currently in the Senate. Technical support was also provided to the Interim National Adoption Authority to develop adequate interim measures towards ratification of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption. Funding and technical assistance was provided to develop a 10-year Social Welfare Policy and Plan of Action. The policy and a two-year action plan were approved by the Cabinet, and its implementation has begun. The decentralised birth registration system was launched on July 30, 2010. A Birth Registration Management Information System has been developed and synchronised with a web-based application to collect and transfer data from districts, county and central levels. The database is functional at the central level and in three counties where 126 birth registration centres have been established and 61,471 children under the age of 13 years retroactively registered. UNICEF paid the salary for the Universal Birth Registration National Coordinator.

To increase access to justice and delivery of legal services to children, UNICEF supported the Judicial Training Institute to develop a Child Justice Curriculum and separate training modules for judges, magistrates, defence counsellors and prosecutors. The curriculum is being integrated into existing training regimes and regular trainings of judicial actors. UNICEF paid for recruitment of a Child Justice Staff Attorney in the Ministry of Justice. As a result, issues of children have received more attention, coordination of all actors in the area of child justice has improved, and 100 boys who were in conflict with the law were reintegrated into their communities.

Implementation of the social cash transfer project reached 1,047 most vulnerable households consisting of 2,082 children with direct cash and counting. The Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs has established a Social Protection Secretariat at the Ministry and a Social Cash Transfer Secretariat in the project county (Bomi) under the supervision of the County Administration. Equally important, the Government of Liberia has agreed to include social protection in the new PRS.

UNICEF, line Ministries and Child Protection NGOs are strengthening community and school social protection systems. A total of 427 child welfare committees consisting of 4,125 (2,398m, 1,727f) members were established or reactivated and trained on child rights and protection as well as prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence. In addition 3,702 (3139 m, 563f) teachers, 1998 (1132m, 866f) PTA members, 50,271 (32,751 m, 17,520 f) students in 370 schools in 238 communities participated in training to increase the understanding and appreciation of SEA in schools. Comprehensive care and protection was provided to 513 (225 girls, 66 women, 22 boys) survivors of gender-based violence through functional safe house services in three counties.

Peace-building and Leadership skills training reached 5,700 youth across 30 communities in Grand Bassa and Grand Cape Mount Counties. An additional 1,500 community monitors were trained. Their monitoring reports show that the training has contributed
to reconciliation and reduction of mob violence and violence against women, and increased awareness of civic rights and responsibilities. Women and youth are also formally integrated in community decision making structures. Construction of three Youth Centres in Grand Bassa and Cape Mount, and rehabilitation of one Youth Centre in Grand Bassa were completed. The centres are providing information resources for peace building and leadership skills as well as sexual reproductive health services. Two child protection specialists have been seconded to the MoHSW and MoG.

Key constraints include lack of quality up-to-date data; insufficient government budget and allocations; and lack of synergy amongst social protection interventions. Technical assistance through secondment of experts to Government has enhanced the technical capacity of line Ministries to deliver programmes. A longer-term, more sustainable approach is needed to guarantee ownership by Government.

An assessment of juvenile justice focusing on diversion, customary mechanisms and alternatives to incarceration was undertaken. A policy analysis and budgeting of alternative care in the country was started and the report is expected early 2011. The findings of both studies will inform future interventions and priorities.

UNICEF is working with three joint programmes and two joint work plans. Partners include Government line Ministries, UN agencies, UNMIL and members of the Child Protection Network.

**Future Workplan:**

In 2011, the programme will address the social protection of vulnerable children and strengthening of the justice system to provide social and legal safety nets for children in need of protection.

The Social Protection component will continue strengthening child protection systems with a strategic focus on: (i) policy development, (ii) improving professional and technical capacity of relevant Government line Ministries, (iii) strengthening information systems and social welfare service delivery, (iv) developing community child protection systems, and (v) improving sectoral coordination.

The Youth Empowerment and Social Cohesion component will conduct an assessment, mapping and evaluation to determine the potential locations of future conflict in order to expand the Peace building and Leadership training. It will also target high risk youth, in particular youth engaged in most hazardous forms of labour. The structures and capacities developed throughout the project will be enhanced and linked to promote access to justice, security and reconciliation under PBC engagement. This will include developing prevention and diversion programmes for youth in conflict with the law and provision of alternatives to incarceration with a focus on restorative justice, civic education, leadership and skills training in order to promote reintegration and prevent recurrence of violence and delinquent behaviour.

Strengthening of the rule of law and governance structures to develop policies and programmes to address child justice issues in accordance with universal and African norms and standards will continue. Core areas of intervention include capacity building of the Government, judiciary, civil society and community-based mechanisms to improve access to justice and delivery of services to at least 75% of children in contact with the law; advocacy and technical assistance to Government partners and legislature on the formulation of policies and laws for the protection and promotion of children’s rights. UNICEF will support Liberia’s membership in Peace Building Committee to ensure that issues of children receive adequate attention in Rule of Law reform.

The Child Protection programme budget for 2011 is US$4 million - RR: US$1m; OR: US$3m.

**Title:** Cross-sectoral Programme

**Purpose:**
The Coordination, Policy and Planning unit, within the Office of the Deputy Representative, provides cross-cutting support to facilitate attainment of country programme results. These include enhancing the capacity of UNICEF and Government counterparts in public policy analysis, planning, research, gathering, analysis and using up-to-date evidence to leverage resources for the critical efforts for women and children. It is also responsible for institutionalizing results-based programming and strengthening the M&E capacity of partners, through the IMEP. Coordination of emergency response, HIV and AIDS action is also within the ambit of this unit.

**Resources Used:**
A total of US$100,000 was allocated from UNICEF regular resources for HIV and AIDS, and Monitoring and Evaluation activities in 2010 with a utilization rate of 88%.

**Result Achieved:**
The influx of asylum seekers from Cote d’Ivoire, which started in November 2010, triggered implementation of the inter-agency contingency plan. UNICEF provided emergency supplies for at least 10,000 displaced persons, participated in assessments, cluster coordination and leadership in line with the IASC and Core Commitment for Children guidelines. The country office (CO) received US$1.5 million from the EPF and technical assistance from the Regional Office to support initial response and plan for full-scale emergency should the situation deteriorate.

The mid-term review of the country programme was conducted in July 2010. The key recommendations were to refocus programme and advocacy efforts to ensure equity; include early childhood development as part of the country programme; and strengthen tripartite partnerships with Government, civil society and the UN. In addition, the Programme Component Results and Intermediate Results have all been refined to reflect equity dimensions.

The UNDAF MTR was also conducted in December. UNICEF co-chairs the Infrastructure and Basic Social Services Outcome group. The key recommendations were to: identify and invest more in the most deprived communities; support decentralization and build the capacity at county level; partner with communities to maximize impact and ensure sustainability; enhance coordination, monitoring and supervision to improve tracking progress; and develop an investment case for improved resource mobilization for the infrastructure and basic social services pillar of the LPRS and UNDAF.

Progress on public policy development over the past years has been commendable. The country programme supported development of a Child-friendly Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy and supportive sectoral policies, strategies and plans. The National Health Sector Policy and Plan, the Nutrition Policy, the Community Health Policy and the Health Financial Policy were developed. In addition, the Child Survival Strategy and Communication Strategy have been formulated. The Girls’ Education Policy, the Accelerated Learning Policy Guidelines, School Fees Abolition Policy, the HIV and AIDS Policy and Strategic Plan for the Education Sector response, and the Education Sector Plan 2010 – 2020 were all developed taking into consideration equity issues. During 2010, equity lens was used in the finalisation of the Water and Sanitation Policy, PMTCT Policy and Plan, and the review of EPI Policy. In addition, the Children’s Bill was passed by the House of Representatives.

As a follow up to the MTR, UNICEF coordinated the development of a Joint Programme for Adolescent Girls. The programme will seek inclusive and holistic development of marginalized young girls aged 10 to 19 years, with emphasis on those aged 10 to 14 years. UNICEF was involved in the development of the UN Joint Programme on HIV, which awaits endorsement. UNICEF was identified within the Joint Programme as the lead agency for PMTCT, Paediatric HIV, and social protection for vulnerable children and as co-lead with UNFPA on adolescent HIV prevention.

The HIV risk and vulnerability analysis, and mapping of the social protection system for at risk children started in 2010 with participation of adolescents, Government and CSOs
representatives. The adolescents highlighted the risk and vulnerability facing them and were instrumental in updating the research questions to their current realities. The study will be completed in 2011. UNICEF Liberia and UNICEF Sierra Leone will join efforts to utilize the same technical assistance on the studies.

UNICEF also supported the development and implementation of LiberiaInfo for monitoring PRS outcomes and MDGs. The office has developed equity tracking indicator database using Devinfo. A number of studies are being supported as part of implementation of the National Strategy for Development of Statistics and the IMEP. UNICEF continues to support strengthening of the Education, Health and Community-based child protection sectoral information systems.

The joint National Labour Force/Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire Survey was conducted in 2010 but the report is not yet out. The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-information Services (LISGIS) and the country do not have sufficient capacity for data analysis. Absence of the M&E Specialist for most of the year (8 months) affected implementation of the M&E work plan. The office has not been able to recruit a Social Policy Specialist, three years since the first advertisement was put out. The key partners are LISGIS, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Ministries of Health and Social Welfare, Gender and Development, Education, UN agencies and UNMIL.

**Future Workplan:**

UNICEF will support the LPRS and sectoral M&E mechanisms to produce data that allow analysis of equity dimensions of programmes. Capacity building and financial support will be provided to LISGIS and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs to decentralize Liberiainfo, conduct data collection and analysis, and develop and implement the Dissemination Strategy for the National Statistics System. In addition, the CO will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the situation of children and women in preparation for the next CP; intensify community capacity building and empowerment work; embrace the use of innovation and technologies for improved planning and monitoring; and intensify advocacy for enactment of the Children’s Act.

The programme will take advantage of the Delivery as One initiative, and of the national processes currently underway, especially development of the new LPRS and the 2030 national visioning exercise that seeks to make Liberia a middle-income country in 20 years, to ensure equity focus.

As part of resource leveraging, UNICEF will advocate for an equity-based investment case based on MBB and similar tools. The office will also support development of the MTEF focusing on the primary education sub-sector.

HIV and AIDS action will focus on strengthening partnerships with religious, traditional, women and youth leaders enabling them to play a central role in the national efforts to combat the spread of HIV and AIDS; complete the research on adolescent/youth vulnerability to HIV risk along with the mapping of the social protection system; and provide technical assistance to national civil society organizations and Government agencies.

The budget for 2011 for the cross sectoral programme is US$700,000 with RR of US$450,000 and other resources of US$250,000.

4. OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT

4.1 Governance & Systems

4.1.1 Governance Structure:

The 2010 annual management plan (AMP) articulates the governance structure and office management priorities. Composition of the County Management Team (CMT) was reviewed to include all section chiefs. To enhance cross-sectoral programming,
coordination and collaboration five working groups were used. All the working groups report to the Programme Management Team which in turn reports to the CMT. A Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) Committee was retained to review PCAs. Eleven other internal committees or teams supported programme management and coordination. Schedules of meetings for each committee or working group were detailed in the AMP. The added-value of each committee and fulfilment of its assigned role and responsibility are evaluated each year. In addition to the statutory committees, there are monthly general staff meetings chaired by the Staff Association President. The Representative participates in the meetings briefing staff on relevant issues and events within the office, the UN system and the country. Additional cross-cutting themes such as gender, peace building and capacity building are handled by focal points. Office management indicators monitored by the CMT are contained in the office management report.

During 2010, the office identified five key management priorities: the Country Programme Mid-Term Review (MTR); the Country Office Internal Audit; improved programme supervision, monitoring and evaluation (including end user monitoring); improved internal communication; and improved productivity behaviour among staff members to attain the best results for children by addressing individual needs that drive and motivate workplace behavior. The MTR and Audit were successfully conducted. Training was conducted on end user monitoring tools for staff. The office sent three staff members for training on the simplified results framework. However, two got re-assigned to other countries and one resigned. The CO plans to conduct in-house training in 2011. The Learning and Development Committee and Caring for Us Committee developed and implemented their respective work plans. The group and individual staff training activities helped improve staff productivity and morale. The key constraint was inadequate funding for the work plans.

4.1.2 Strategic Risk Management:
The 2010 Audit of the country programme identified 21 risks ranked from low to high. The audit rating was partially satisfactory for governance and programme management while the rating for operations was satisfactory. The office has developed an action plan to address these risks that is being monitored by the CMT. First feedback on the status of implementing audit recommendations is due February 2011. Some of the recommendations completed include a new ToA format, assessment of printing facilities in Liberia, draft BCP plan finalized. An Audit and Oversight Committee, headed by the Deputy Representative was created to shadow implementation of action plans to address the risks.

In December 2010, the CO reviewed and revamped the Business Continuity Plan. The priority risks identified were limited ability to telecommute, potential of fire, civil unrest in the light of the 2011 presidential and general elections, limited security measures, critical IT services and telecom failure. A crisis management team was established and action plan developed. Immediate actions include: development of IT disaster recovery plan for the office; enhancing access capabilities through improved telecommute and remote access; and digitizing, collating and backup of vital records in safe but easy to access locations.

An Inter-agency Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan were developed to respond to emergency in Liberia, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire. The roles and responsibilities of the Government and the different agencies are detailed in the respective plans. This plan was regularly updated, with the last update taking place in November 2010. The constant level of preparedness for the first response action within the context of the CCCs is established as follow: Health (5,000 women and children under five); Nutrition (15,000 women and children under five); Education (10,000 children); WASH (20,000 persons); and Child Protection (2,500 children and young people).
The inter-agency contingency plan for Cote d’Ivoire is being implemented following an influx of asylum seekers into Liberia. The original assumption was for 25,000 persons but following a subsequent surge, a revised proposal for 50,000 persons has been prepared. The office applied for and received US$1.5 million from the EPF to facilitate the initial response.

4.1.3 Evaluation:
The CO conducted an impact evaluation of the WASH package in November 2010. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the WASH package approach, its impact on target population and key lessons learnt in order to improve the design of subsequent projects. It revealed that implementation of the WASH package had positive impacts on the targeted populations.

UNICEF also coordinated the evaluation of the Netherlands funded Education in Emergencies and Post Crisis Transition (EEPCT) programme in Liberia. Preliminary results indicate that the programme has had a major impact on both access and quality of education improvement; that there is a strong component of innovation, doing things differently to reach children after emergencies. The evaluation also showed that Liberia has been the largest recipient of the Netherlands funding to EEPCT, reflecting the number of goals being pursued by the CO.

The first audit of the Education Pooled Fund was conducted and revealed none of the risks reported by the World Bank’s first assessment.

The Mid-Term Review recommended that at least two evaluations be conducted in the second part of the Country Programme - 2011 and 2012. In this regard, the End of Programme Evaluation of the Accelerated Learning Programme will be conducted in 2011. Liberia is participating in the global out of schools study and plans a comprehensive analysis of the situation of children and women.

4.1.4 Information Technology and Communication:
The thrust in 2010 continued to be replacement of IT equipment as and when needed based on the latest guidelines. The 15 desktop PCs were replaced with laptops and docking stations that improved the mobility and productivity of staff and enhanced disaster preparedness. Also, bulk IT supplies/consumables were ordered offshore because of lower cost and better quality leading to considerable cost savings for the office. The office dropped its local service provider due to performance and reliability issues, and moved to using only the band width from EMC (the UNICEF corporate service provider). The UNITRACK (installed last year) was upgraded to the latest version and a radio/internet link was established between the UNICEF warehouse and the main office to improve data entry and system reliability. A closed-circuit TV system was installed in the office to improve security and is linked to the office network and monitored by key staff in security & operations. The footage is backed up for future reference. In November work started on connecting the residences of the Deputy Representative and the Operations Manager to the office Network to enhance disaster preparedness and better use of their time; the work is still ongoing to overcome some technical challenges. Telecommunication equipment (HV and VHF radios) are being upgraded and replaced. In addition, new vehicles are being ordered with factory installed telecommunication equipment. On the Programme/budget monitoring side, ProMS was upgraded to version 9.1 in preparation for implementing the simplified results structure which is a pre-requisite for VISION Roll-out in 2012.

4.2 Fin Res & Stewardship
4.2.1 Fund-raising & Donor Relations:
The 2010 approved budget for the CP was US$32,963,000; US$28.0 million being other resources. The office was able to mobilise 71% of other resources requirement. The main donors to the CP remain Governments (57%), followed by UNICEF (31%), National
Committees (9%) and others (3%). The office was successful in maintaining all the current donors and recruiting two new ones. The percentage contribution by National Committees increased by 3% in 2010 compared to 2009, but that of Governments and UNICEF dropped by 3% point. A total of 35 donor reports were prepared in 2010 and all reports were submitted on time.

Additional resources were mobilised to implement other Government supported programmes that target children. Working closely with the World Bank, the supervising Entity (SE) UNICEF, the education Coordinating Agency (CA) in Liberia, led the appraisal of the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2010-2020 and submitted the application package to the Education For All Fast Track Initiative’s (EFA/FTI) Catalytic Fund Committee. This led to Liberia’s ESP being granted the $40 million dollars funding gap requested. UNICEF used its strategic lead position to structure the funded projects around increasing access, equity, quality and focusing on disparity and vulnerability reduction. Using the model Child Friendly Schools approach, UNICEF successfully raised US$8.5 million dollars from the Government of Japan for school construction and renovation, to cover a total of 90 schools. The online proposal submitted for the Government of the Netherlands funding to Education in Emergencies and Post Crisis Transition (EEPCT) programme was approved for US$6.18 million dollars, US$3.5 million of which was used to replenish the Education Pooled Fund.

The challenge is to intensify resource mobilisation to meet the dire need but also to work with Government and other partners to enhance national absorptive capacity. The situation in Cote d’Ivoire is likely to lead to a call for more resources in the event of increased influx of people into Liberia.

4.2.2 Management of Financial and Other Assets:
Financial management continues to improve in 2010. The guesthouse continues to be in high demand and generated enough funds to offset its rent and operating expenses. Investment (upgrade and maintenance) in the electrical generators in the office has yielded improved cost savings and reliable power supply. In addition, generators (including a backup one) have been installed in the warehouse to support the running of the cold room used to store drugs for programme use. In response to the aging fleet of office vehicles, 6 new vehicles were procured in 2010 - 4 have already been received. This will allow the office to gradually phase out older vehicles and reduce running costs. The gaps in funding for the cross sectoral support programme prompted the office to do more frequent monitoring of PBAs and frequent requisitions adjustment, to release unspent funds and re-utilize them as quickly as possible. In line with a recommendation made by the 2010 audit, the CO has commissioned an external company to undertake an office inventory the data from which will inform the new Non Expendable Property (NEP) inventory. This is very timely considering IPSAS requirements and emphasis on inventory/NEP management. In terms of managing liquidity and bank balances (according to corporate guidelines), Liberia as one of the 5 focus WCAR countries, exhibited performance that varied from good to excellent throughout the year as far as maintaining low balances at month end and actual replenishment close to forecasted targets.

4.2.3 Supply:
Supply Assistance remains a significant component of the CP amounting to US$6,105,618 (8.3% being freight); an increase of 72.5% over 2009. The value of supplies brought forward from 2009 was US$1,827,941 making overall procurement value of US$7,933,559. Procurement in the last quarter accounted for 18.16% of the total Supply Assistance for 2010, a considerable improvement compared to 42.77% in 2009. High value offshore supplies included vaccines, syringes, mosquito nets, drugs, medical supplies, educational materials, and therapeutic food. Major Long Term Arrangement (LTA) supplies included computer equipment and accessories, vehicles,
copiers, motorcycles. Local supplies included printing, school furniture, stationeries and construction materials.

The Government does not have adequate logistics to manage all supplies, especially in the rural parts of the country. To enhance accountability and prompt delivery to beneficiaries, UNICEF continues to assist with clearance of supplies, which totalled US$69,568 and duty free customs clearance is still in effect for all supplies. The CO retained two firms on LTA to facilitate project implementation and delivery of supplies at a cost of US$140,285. About 60% of offshore supplies are transited through the UNICEF warehouse because Government lacks adequate warehousing facilities. The stock inventory value was US$2,571,532. This is attributed to the huge volume of school supplies planned for distribution in January 2011 while others were reprogrammed to support activities in the first quarter of 2011. This is also part of the dry season where access to all parts of the country is possible.

The Supply Division helped the CO develop a plan to restructure and enhance capacity to handle construction projects, arrange UniTrack training in the office with support from the Guinea Bissau CO, and in establishing management of the pool fund for the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW).

Construction services amounted to US$2,101,859 during 2009 and 2010. Procurement Services value was US$4,163,514. Partners included MoHSW and UNDP. Donation in kind totalled US$1,338,732, from GAVI and office equipment from HQ. The CO was audited and the supply component was found to be satisfactory with no high risk identified. Nevertheless, recommendations for improved supply management are being addressed.

4.3 Human Resource Capacity:
The office enabling work environment is largely determined by strong leadership, empowerment of staff in the performance of their duties, staff participation in office management processes, transparency in decision making and, access to learning and training opportunities.

The rotation of the Deputy Representative, Chief of Child Protection and existence of 15 vacant posts significantly increased the workload of the remaining staff. As these positions are filled, other positions are expected to fall vacant in 2011. There is also need to recruit a planning officer, emergency programme coordinator and establish the construction unit.

The staff retreat discussed and agreed on key management issues that were included in the 2010 Annual Management Plan (AMP). Continued staff participation was ensured through the revised office governance scheme. In consultation with the Staff Association and the CMT, membership of all office management committees was revised in early 2010. The new composition, their terms of reference, and schedule of meetings, were published in the AMP.

The various work processes and practices continued to be reviewed, streamlined and clarified to staff to facilitate smooth operations. An open door policy is in place, whereby all staff queries are acknowledged and addressed. Regular presentations and discussions were held to enhance staff understanding of the policy framework and procedures for recruitment and staff selection, especially with regards to managing staff expectations of broad participation, and placing special emphasis on the necessary confidentiality of these processes. The review identified flaws in two processes applied in the past that resulted in overpayments to some staff that needs to be recovered. Hazard Pay was discontinued in June 2010 although the country is still in a security Phase III. The office maintains mechanisms for early warning in situations that may affect staff safety and security.
The Caring for Us Committee led some initiatives on staff wellbeing and on HIV/AIDS at the workplace. The 2010 learning plan covered group and individual training, and mixing e-learning and face-to-face learning. The majority of the no-cost activities were completed. Although budgetary constraints hindered complete implementation of the learning plan, more staff attended training abroad than in 2009.

4.4 Other Issues

4.4.1 Management Areas Requiring Improvement:
The guesthouse generated US$27,350, enough to cover its operating expenses and leaving a balance to offset other operating expenses. The guesthouse also provides added flexibility to host visiting staff and consultant in a MOSS compliant location when hotel rooms are not available especially now that there is heightened activity level and increased visitors due to the situation in Cote d’Ivoire. Sharing office space with Swedish International Development Agency and the Irish Aid generated income and strengthened relations.

All UN agencies continue to use the services of UN Mission in Liberia for fuel distribution and access to fuel throughout the country which facilitates the logistics of missions. The agencies are billed accordingly and accounts settled locally with UNMIL. In addition, field missions to remote areas utilize the UNMIL flight shuttles and this is especially helpful during the rainy season when access by road is not possible. Currently, this does not cost the agencies as it is part of the services provided by UNMIL.

4.4.2 Changes in AMP:
The 2011 management priorities will be to close any open audit recommendations, equip the office and staff to effectively use IPSAS and VISION management utility, and finalize and implement the Business Continuity Plan along with the Enterprise Risk Management which will be introduced for the first time in the CO. Management will also focus on the development of an effective monitoring mechanism for the new PCRs/IRs. The demand put on UNICEF as chair of the inter-agency programme team charged with delivering One Programme in 2011 and the current regional emergency compelled the office to propose two posts - Planning Specialist and Emergency Specialist.

5. STUDIES, SURVEYS, EVALUATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

5.1 List of Studies, Surveys & Evaluations:
1. Accelerated Child Survival Project Gbarpolu County
2. Assessing of WASH package in 5 counties in Liberia
3. A qualitative study of maternal and newborn care practices in Liberia
4. A Situational Analysis of Human Trafficking, Especially Women and Children in Liberia
5. Feasibility Study for Manual Drilling in Liberia
6. A qualitative study of infant and young child feeding practices in Liberia

5.2 List of Other Publications
1. Essential Nutrition Action training Materials
2. Hand washing
3. Prevention of infectious diseases among children
4. Jingles on Facts for Life

6. INNOVATION & LESSONS LEARNED:
Title: Promotion of proper infant and young child feeding in Montserrado County – Market Place Initiative

Contact Person: Fazlul Haque. E-mail: fhaque@unicef.org;
Abstract:
Through its local partner, Breastfeeding Advocacy Group (BAG), UNICEF developed and launched a pilot project that aims to increase awareness and encourage behaviour change following the dissemination of Essential Nutrition Action (ENA) messages and related actions undertaken in Greater Monrovia. The project's innovation lies in identifying five local markets as an entry point for the promotion of improved infant and young child and maternal feeding practices. Trained peer counsellors will go around the market regularly to conduct individual counselling of marketers, complementary feeding preparation demonstrations, and video shows.

Innovation or Lessons Learned:
The pilot project started in December 2010. Peer counsellors were trained on Essential Nutrition Actions and interpersonal communication. The launching in five markets was warmly received by the market associations. Ensuring that marketers receive sound nutrition messages was seen as a good contribution by the associations...

Potential Application:
The pilot will be evaluated after a year to determine the effectiveness of promoting nutrition messages to the public. In the meantime, a team of volunteer college students were trained to conduct regular monitoring and ensure that counsellors carry out their tasks.

Issue/Background:
The 2010 nationwide food security and nutrition survey shows that only 44% of newborns start breastfeeding within hours before birth while a third of the children start eating complementary foods too early. This supports the qualitative study conducted in 2009 on infant and young child feeding and practices that revealed there is a limited awareness on the benefits of breastfeeding and preparation of nutritious complementary foods that would allow children to receive minimum acceptable diet appropriate for their age.

Strategy and Implementation:
UNICEF partnered with BAG, a local NGO with prior successful experience in conducting health and nutrition promotion activities. Regular meetings with BAG and UNICEF were conducted to provide proper guidance and support to the project. The NGO identified five local markets within Greater Monrovia as pilot sites.

Market associations were approached and encouraged to participate either as volunteers or respondents. Volunteers were identified and trained to become peer counsellors and student monitors. The project was launched in five markets with an opening ceremony to inform the public on the new service that is available to them in markets.

Progress and Results:
Not applicable as the project had just commenced.

Next Steps:
The project is innovative and UNICEF is closely monitoring, supporting and documenting it to ensure that its objectives are met and good practices upscaled.

Title: Social Protection of most vulnerable children
Contact Person: Fazlul Haque; e-mail: fhaque@unicef.org
Abstract:
In November 2009 the Government of Liberia with support from UNICEF launched the first Pilot Social Cash Transfer Programme in Bomi County. The programme targets
households that are extremely poor and consist exclusively of children, elderly people, people with disability or people living with HIV and AIDS. They cannot benefit from labour-based interventions such as public works or credit schemes and are unable to fend for themselves. The objectives of the programme are to reduce poverty, increase school enrolment rates and improve the nutritional status of children in the most vulnerable households. Beneficiaries receive monthly disbursement of cash based on the size of the households and number of school-going children in the household. The programme will be evaluated in 2011. Thereafter, the Government plans to move the programme to the Southeast, considered the most underserved region of Liberia. To date, 1047 households received social cash transfers from the programme.

Innovation or Lessons Learned:
Importance of impact-related evidence: Anecdotal data and monitoring reports have shown results and changes in the lives of beneficiaries. The link between cash transfer and social protection, increase in school enrolment rates and the alleviation of negative coping strategies such as sexual exploitation and abuse can be observed.

- **Leadership by Government:** This has been critical to the programme’s outcomes. The evidence gathered from the pilot has led the Government to show great interest and commitment to further the implementation of social cash transfer programmes in Liberia.

- **Concerns among non-beneficiaries:** Many of the non-beneficiary households, particularly those whose situations are similar to those in the beneficiary households, understandably are not happy with the programme and feel they are being discriminated. To mitigate this challenge, other social protection interventions are being considered that will address the broader poverty-affected spectrum.

- **Decentralized Administrative Structure to Support the Programme:** The programme was originally designed to use existing administrative structures as a strategy for efficiency. This approach was particularly suitable in the context of the Government implementing a decentralization programme. However, the planned local structures are either not in place or do not possess sufficient capacity to implement the programme.

- **Inter-agency Coordination:** The programme was designed to rely on Government structures at the county level for implementation and coordination. However, as the current administrative structures lack the capacity to absorb the above functions, alternative strategies were introduced.

Potential Application:
The pilot Social Cash Transfer programme has the following potential

- Reduce poverty, hunger and starvation in all households of Bomi County that are extremely poor and at the same time labour constrained

- Increase school enrolment and attendance and improve the health and nutrition of children living in target group households

- Generate information on the feasibility, cost-effectiveness and impact of a social cash transfer scheme administered by a county administration.

Issue/Background:
The Government of Liberia is implementing a Poverty Reduction Strategy which aims at reducing extreme poverty from 48% to 44% in 2012 and to 40% by 2015. Poverty assessments revealed that the PRS interventions do not reach households that are extremely poor and do not have adult household members who are fit for productive work. An estimated 50,000 households belong to this category. To lift these households over the extreme poverty line and to empower them to meet their basic needs Government with funding from UNICEF is testing the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of a social cash transfer programme.

Strategy and Implementation:
The programme was designed using a participatory process in 2009 and its implementation started in January 2010. Funding and Technical Assistance to the programme is provided by UNICEF. A team of inter-ministerial delegates and UNICEF staff from the Education and Child Survival section went on a study tour to Malawi to learn about the Social Cash Transfer programme.

The programme used community-based targeting which was effective at the beginning of the programme’s roll out. As the coverage area expanded, it was observed that residents of beneficiary communities were ‘coaching’ other households and communities with the ‘expected’ responses to enable them to qualify for inclusion as the programme’s beneficiaries. This resulted in very high inclusion errors. To mitigate this challenge, a new targeting method was adopted, which is based on household census data and updated to reflect current realities. A programme monitoring and evaluation system has been established and should inform the evaluation planned for 2011.

Partnerships:
Government partners include the Ministries of Gender and Development, Planning and Economic Affairs, Finance, Health and Social Welfare, Internal Affairs.
Bilateral and multi-lateral agencies include EC, GOJ, World Bank.
NGOs partners include Child Fund Liberia; and community-level partnerships with the local chiefs and community structures.

Progress and Results:
• In its first 12 months, the cash transfer pilot programme has received considerable attention and support from the Government and from UNICEF, even as its performance has undergone a dramatic process of reform and adaptability. Lessons have been learned and it has become clearer what works and what do not work.
• Coverage as of November 2010: 1,047 households in 15 clans in the pilot county have been targeted thus far with a population of 3,457 including 2,639 elderly people, 808 orphans and vulnerable children, and 10 Child Headed Households.
• A Social Cash Transfer Secretariat has been established in Bomi County under the supervision of the County Administration, where the project is being implemented.
• The Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) is heading the Social Protection group responsible for steering the policy and oversight aspects of the programme. The Ministry will lead the development of the Social Protection Policy for Liberia. In addition, the Government of Liberia has recognized Social Protection as one of the pillars of its development agenda from 2012 to 2025.

Next Steps:
To ensure quality data on the pilot’s performance and towards the scale up of the piloted approach, as well as to address some of the challenges encountered, the following have been designed as the next steps:
• Impact Evaluation: Integral to the programme design, an impact evaluation is scheduled to be done in the last year of the two-year pilot. Arrangements are currently underway to hire an independent consulting firm.
• Establishment of the Social Protection Secretariat: The experience gained from the pilot’s implementation suggests that a social cash transfer programme intervention is not as effective when implemented alone. Accordingly, the Government has decided to develop a Comprehensive Social Protection Strategy to guide investments in social protection as well as ensure efficiencies in programme implementation. To this end, a National Social Protection Secretariat is being established within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs. In addition to
developing the above named Strategy, the secretariat will be responsible for coordinating all social protection interventions in the country.

7. SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Through a Cooperation Agreement between the Governments of Liberia and Malawi, a technical expert from Malawi was seconded to Liberia for four months (December 2009-April 2010) to provide assistance in establishing the Social Cash Transfer Secretariat in Bomi County. UNICEF provided the funding and technical assistance for this secondment.