

Morocco

Executive Summary

In 2015, through evidence generation, technical assistance and advocacy, UNICEF contributed to key reforms related to children rights realization in Morocco.

In education, the adoption of a new education strategy and action plan by the Ministry of Education included several areas recommended and supported by UNICEF Morocco. Noteworthy was the introduction of a mandatory one year pre-primary, the launching of a public debate on the importance of early childhood development (ECD), the reflection on school governance (INSAF model, “escuela nueva”), the emphasis on out-of-school support (life skills standardisation, second chance schooling) and renewed attention to girls education and inclusive education. More than 15,000 children and adolescents were reached by modelling of pilots, which are informing the generalization and implementation of the reform.

In health, the support to the acceleration of reduction of child and maternal morbidity and mortality prioritised six regions covering more than 50 per cent of the total population of Morocco. About 1.6 million children under five years old benefited from the joint intervention in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

In protection, the integrated child protection policy was adopted by the Chief of Government, included in the Finance Act and an interministerial committee was established for ensuring follow up. UNICEF continued to work with the Ministry of Social Development as the main coordinator to support its operationalization. UNICEF Morocco also intensified initiatives for the prevention of violence against children and advocated for the child-related aspects in legislation. In order to position issues related to children without parental care and juvenile justice higher on the public agenda, UNICEF and partners supported national studies to generate evidence, convened workshops, and supported professional training. As a result, UNICEF mobilised the European Union (EU) as a major donor for justice for children reform, and with the Ministry of Justice agreed on key priority areas of intervention benefiting approximately 10,000 children and young people.

The renewed commitment by the independent Council of Human Rights to reinforce monitoring of child right violations will also ensure a field-based presence for alerts and action. A training programme on children rights was included in the curricula of their newly-established training centre and will benefit the Council regional representations and civil society. Regular dissemination of recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child was undertaken throughout the year with the participation of members of the Committee, thus contributing to inform policy dialogue and legislative proposals.

South-south and triangular cooperation were reinforced with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs across sectors, and in particular in the area of social protection creating stronger ties between Latin America and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. UNICEF Morocco continued to fundraise successfully and to develop partnership initiatives to expand resource mobilization and leveraging. Communication for development (C4D) interventions

remain to be reinforced, as does digital engagement. The opportunities provided by the private sector require analysis.

Key internal priorities were to strengthen the office structure to respond to the needs of the Mid-Term Review (MTR), address audit recommendations, respond to the Global Staff Survey and promote staff development.

Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan

The UNICEF country programme of cooperation is closely aligned to the UNICEF Strategic Plan core interventions, especially in health, education, child protection and social inclusion.

There are three main lessons learned during the first two years of the implementation of the global Strategic Plan for a middle income country like Morocco:

- The strong relevance of the Strategic Plan to local priorities, especially considering that Morocco is at the crossroad of development. It faces issues related to the “unfinished agenda”, such as malnutrition, child mortality and morbidity, and issues similar to those faced by high-income countries, such as the development of non-communicable diseases, and adolescent and youth unemployment. For UNICEF, this has translated into upstream policy work, together with sub-national level modelling based on inter-sectorial responses. In this regard, the multi-dimensionality of approaches and responses should be better reflected in the Strategic Plan.
- Some strategic areas, such as governance and decentralisation or climate change, are still less mature than others areas where UNICEF has been working for a long time in terms of guidance, best practices and operational suggestions. A stronger feedback loop may enable the consolidation of these areas of expertise. Similarly, some cross sectoral strategies or areas of intervention such as communication, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) may not sufficiently appear, although they constitute an important element of UNICEF work, particularly in smaller country programmes.
- The life cycle is still not entirely balanced. Positive demographic dividend and participation could be better highlighted to strengthen UNICEF's role in adolescent development and participation (ADAP). Similarly, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) elements such as wellbeing might be under-estimated in the Strategic Plan.

Overall, the 2014-2017 UNICEF Strategic Plan provides a clear and relatively comprehensive framework for programming, especially under the new SDG context.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

ADAP - Adolescent Development and Participation

AFD - Agence Francaise de Développement

BAD - Africa Development Bank/Banque Africaine de Développement

BCP - Business Continuity Plan

C4D - Communication for Development

CESE - Economic, Social and Environmental Council

CMT - Country Management Team

CNDH - Conseil National des Droits de l'homme (Human Rights Council)

COP - Conference of Parties

CPAS - Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy

CPD - Country Programme Document
CRC - Convention on Rights of the Child
CSO - Civil Society Organisation
DCT - Direct Cash Transfer
DRR - Disaster Risk Reduction
ECD - Early Childhood Development
ENSPF - National Survey on Public and Family Health (Enquete Nationale de Santé Publique et Familiale)
EU - European Union
GCPAS - Global Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy
GIZ - Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GMT - Global Management Team
HRBAP - Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming
IB - Institutional Budget
ICT- Information and Communication Technology
IMCI - Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
INSAF - Association INSAF
IPC-IG - International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth
LTA - Long-Term Agreement
M&E - Monitoring and Evaluation
MAGG - Ministry of General Affairs and Governance
MDG - Millennium Development Goal
MENARO - Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (of UNICEF)
MoE - Ministry of Education
MoH - Ministry of Health
MoJ - Ministry of Justice
MoRES - Monitoring for Results with Equity
MRE - Moroccan Living Abroad
MTR - Mid-Term Review
NGO - Non-governmental Organisation
OIP - Office Improvement Plan
ONDH - National Observatory for Human Development
OOSC - Out-of-School Children
OR - Other Resources
ORE - Other Resources for Emergency
PPIPEM - Integrated Public Policy for Child Protection in Morocco
RMT - Regional Management Team
RR - Regular Resources
SB - Support Budget
SDG - Sustainable Development Goals
SIC - Communal information System
SitAn - Situation Analysis
UNDAF - United Nations Development Framework
UNDSS - United Nations Department for Safety and Security
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
WASH - Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB - World Bank
WCARO - West and Central Africa Region Office
WHO - World Health Organization

Capacity Development

The sudden decentralisation process in 2015 highlighted the need to rapidly reinforce sub-national capacity, while the expansion of reforms in some social services, including pre-school, justice, and social development, also require a review of existing capacities and the dissemination of new concepts and methodologies.

Community capacity development faces three major bottlenecks in Morocco: gaps in nationwide data availability, the complexity of determinants, and wide geographic dispersion of the poorest communities.

UNICEF is thus actively pursuing capacity development on three levels:

- Evidence generation, in some cases through innovative approaches to provide new and more timely data on the most vulnerable, such as children with disabilities. This has included a panel survey with the National Observatory for Human Development (ONDH), financial modelling for subsidy reforms, inclusion of the most vulnerable in the Census conducted in 2014, support to national health survey, municipal information system, education information system;
- New concepts and modalities of work for middle-level managers in Government, NGOs and independent monitoring institutions - on human rights-based approach, results-based planning, monitoring children rights, budgeting, Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) or on some technical issues such as integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI) using e-learning;
- Capacity development of parents and community leaders through existing participation mechanisms, including use of the Monitoring of Results for Equity (MORES) approach in schools to encourage communities to create change at their level or being more aware of disaster risk reduction (DRR), and improving “mother class” curricula in health. New opportunities, such as using pre-schools to develop a parenting education programme have also been grasped.

Communication for development remains a challenge, as well as creation of linkages between capacity development and emergency preparedness. It is planned to address these more strategically in the new country programme which is under development.

Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

2015 witnessed important policy changes informed by UNICEF evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy.

Support provided to line Ministries and consolidation of strategic partnerships with the National Observatory of Human Development, the National Human Rights Council (CNDH – the Constitutional body in charge of human rights monitoring) the Economic and Social Council, NGOs, and centres of excellence were key to generate evidence and knowledge on social protection policies, child protection and education concerns, and juvenile justice.

In protection, the reform of the Penal code, the operationalisation of the integrated child protection policy, the reinforcement of the role of civil society and the reinforcement of child rights monitoring system were undertaken in response to evidence generated in partnership

with line ministries and civil society. The prioritization was undertaken in line with the recommendations issued in 2014 by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Evidence was also used to inform law reforms on domestic workers, early marriage, and sexual violence. These elements are enshrined in the latest Bill on finance.

In education, the new national strategy 2015-2030 included several areas recommended and supported by UNICEF, such as the introduction of mandatory one year of pre-primary school, governance (INSAF model, “escuela nueva”), inclusive education (data system and regional strategy), out-of-school support (life skills standardisation, second chance schooling), better adolescent development (orientation reform, curricula reform), prevention of school dropouts, and reduction of violence.

In social inclusion, UNICEF simulations impacted on some decisions on the prices of subsidized commodities and reinforced social protection coherence. New monitoring tools (for example, panel surveys) clarified aspects of poverty or even causes linked to school dropout, which appears to be a child’s decision, not a parental one), so that programmes could be adjusted accordingly.

UNICEF is a key partner for ministries and observatories when it comes to evidence generation concerning children, and is regularly consulted by bilateral and multilateral organisations.

Partnerships

UNICEF evidence generation and advocacy efforts managed to enhance the enabling environment in key areas of reform, but also served to broker new and strengthen old partnerships.

While partnerships with Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education, Health, Social Development, Governance and the Interior remain key, the partnership with the Ministry of Justice led to a tripartite agreement with EU on Justice Reform for children. A new partnership was formed with the Ministry of Environment in preparation for 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22), and with Moroccans living abroad (MRE) which increased the focus on migrants. Local Government remains key in operationalizing equity-based responses in the field; and with the ongoing decentralization process, partnerships at this level (region-province and municipalities) will be further strengthened.

In parallel, observatories and councils play an essential role for monitoring, policy advice and advocacy. These include the Human Development National Observatory, Human Rights and Economic and Social councils and the High Authority for Communication.

Royal Foundations (such as Foundation MVI for prisoners) are efficient relays and advocates. NGOs remain key partners, especially in child protection to complement service provision, advocate and identify violations. A move towards “NGOs of professionals” (for example, midwives, and evaluators) proved to be a strategic approach.

UN agencies (World Health Organisation/WHO, UNFPA, UN Women, International Organisation for Migration/IOM, International Labour Organisation/ ILO), multilaterals (World Bank, EU) and bilaterals (Governments of Canada, France, Italy, Japan, and Belgium) are regularly approached to complement, leverage or relay children rights priorities and concerns.

The potential of the private sector potential remains still unexplored. Despite a partnership finalized with the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises (CGEM) on corporate social responsibility actions remained limited and of a small scale in terms of resource mobilization (Sheraton, Clairefontaine, Marathon des Sables, Inwi) mainly due to lack of dedicated capacity.

Universities and external think tanks remain a major source of technical support, which should be better explored.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

Morocco is a pilot country for the new UNICEF Global Communication and Public Advocacy Strategy (GCPAS) and has developed its local strategy. Four programme priorities were identified for the communication action plan: ending violence, education, youth, and child poverty. A new focus was made on millennials and the middle class, in addition to the “traditional” audiences. Equity was at the heart of each action. The result of the communication and public advocacy interventions was based on stakeholders monitoring, one-to-one discussions with decision makers, youth engagement and developing strategic alliances with community service organisations (CSOs), media (both on and offline), private sector, artistic community and sports actors.

Several initiatives were carried out in 2015. Two of them were selected as “Things we can learn from” by UNICEF headquarters, in addition to the End Violence campaign initiative. The three examples below show how communication intervention led to engagement on behalf of children with communication-related contextual shifts:

- The launch of the national Youth Movement for Children’s Rights initiative in Morocco in partnership with youth CSOs. The movement advocated during the year to stop violence against children. The web platform that is hosting their End violence communication material had more than 1.5 million views in less than six months. This confirmed the effectiveness of the investments made by UNICEF Morocco both in youth capacity development and in engagement through the digital space;
- The End Violence campaign was an example of integrated interventions, where the broad public was involved via the “Appel aux créatifs” launched on the UNICEF Morocco Facebook page, which led to a national public awareness campaign funded by private sector partners;
- Team UNICEF, the new concept to create a social movement through sport, was the umbrella of UNICEF’s leg during the 30th edition of “Marathon des sables”, with global media coverage and fundraising operation.

The expansion of digital media in the country needs to be better seized and an assessment of the current media environment needs to be undertaken to position more strategically UNICEF’s communication.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

Morocco South-South cooperation is well-developed, especially with Western Africa. Under the new royal orientations this cooperation started to be reinforced with other continents as well.

In the area of social inclusion, UNICEF supported information-sharing between Morocco, Mexico and Brazil, which were considered relevant given their socio-economic status and wide disparities. UNICEF supported the National Observatory of Human Development in learning from their experiences in social protection, evaluation and poverty measurement, as well as responses to better target children, and then supported the experience -haring with neighbouring countries in MENA region. A forum with 30 experts from different countries (Mexico, Brazil, Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, Ghana, Mauritania, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Pakistan) was organized in September 2015 to share experiences and lessons learnt.

UNICEF Morocco continued to support the Association of Moroccan evaluators. A forum on the importance of promoting independent evaluation was organized with the participation of MENARO, the Francophone Network of Evaluation, the African Association of Evaluation, Madagascar, Ghana, Belgium, Canada, Italy, and Spain. Technical cooperation was reinforced, and lessons learnt shared.

Finally, UNICEF Morocco technically supported the Moroccan delegation to participate in a Bangkok meeting to review SDG indicators, especially in health, since the Moroccan equity approach was selected as a good practice during the Global Neonatal Conference in Mexico.

In education, a partnership with Colombia and Argentina initiated a “new school” pilot model, centred on children’s rights and child participation with the aim of reducing drop outs. A visit from the Minister of Education was followed by the establishment of agreements of technical cooperation.

Internally, Morocco served as a training hub for West and Central Africa Regional Office (UNICEF –WCARO) on HACT in 2015, and hosted a multi-regional conference on iodine reduction, enabling cost reduction and sharing of best practices.

Identification and Promotion of Innovation

Some of the inequities in Morocco are rooted in the fact that some interventions or areas are not explored, therefore promoting new concepts may be seen as an innovation.

In health, a new focus was put on disability prevention and early treatment rather than pursuing the usual trend of the Ministry and Association to merely consider rehabilitation. Thanks to new laboratory equipment and methodology, the incidence of hypothyroidia (the main preventable disability) is being reduced, while a new action plan aiming at reducing birth-induced disabilities was developed.

Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages

Integrated and cross sectoral programming was pursued more systematically in 2015 as follows:

- The integrated child protection policy adopted by the Chief of Government was a key example supported by UNICEF, as well as the coordination work pursued in the area of social protection by Ministry of General Affairs;
- Joint programming between sections with one Ministry: protection and health (for violence detection), protection and education (for violence prevention or disability issues), education and local development (for ECD), social policy and education (for education cash transfer),

social policy and health (for Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey/MICS preparation). Five thematic areas (gender, violence, handicap, adolescent and youth and preschool) were selected for joint approaches.

- Integrated data collection: the ONDH panel survey includes data on five major sectors (including health, education, socio-economic and demographic aspects), the Census included comprehensive social data collections, the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (CESE) dashboard includes 53 indicators, while the proposed scorecards for adolescents, to be hosted by ONDH, includes data from five sectors.
- At local level, the new regionalisation process gives regions a strong mandate to work on social issues and to even lead social services delivery in an integrated manner. UNICEF started an analysis of the positive implications and opportunities created by the process.
- UNICEF advocacy for the life-cycle approach, involving the inclusion of adolescents in programming, also contributed to integrated visions through development of a 0-18 child health policy).

Sensitivity about the importance of addressing intersectoral issues increased, however, coordination and governance structures both internally and externally require reinforcement.

Service Delivery

Being in a middle income country, UNICEF in Morocco does not – except in some pilot areas – usually consider service delivery as a strong area of added value, except for the following components, that were particularly developed in 2015:

- Procurement: Morocco purchases a large of its vaccines via procurement services (15 million doses for US\$7.3 million in 2015 alone). UNICEF facilitates quality planning, monitoring and delivery. The second area, which is still relatively new, relates to preschool equipment. Considering that norms are still being finalised by the Ministry and that quality procurement in this sector is rare in Morocco, UNICEF supported – from a Moroccan Government grant – the procurement of preschool equipment for 59 centres as close as possible to the community, to ensure matching of needs to local demand;
- Increasing local demand from the community: this approach has been a standard characteristic of UNICEF's programmes since the inception of MoRES and was used in protection (creating demand for territorialised services), education (MoRES-based school governance, non-violent schools) and social inclusion (decentralisation, participation, and community-based initiatives such as Dar Oumouma);
- Reinforcing field partners' capacity to provide services (please also refer to the section on capacity development) in ensuring that common norms and standards in preschool curricula and environment, IMCI, non-formal education, and in child protection care and support, are disseminated and applied through reinforced networks;
- Reinforcing monitoring and accountability, for example, through institutionalisation of evaluation, as well as municipal information systems.

All these elements aim at progressive autonomy and sustainability, since they either build on existing institutions or create networks backed by the law. The inclusion of territorial protection

systems in the Finance Bill was a successful example of the sustainability of the service-oriented approach.

Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

2015 was dedicated to supporting the implementation of the 2014 recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. More specifically, efforts were made to:

- Operationalise the Integrated Protection Policy launched in May 2014, through mobilisation of Government partners and creation of NGO networks. This component was finalised (and appears in the Finance Bill) and the territorialisation of the action will be the final step in 2016;
- Reinforce local capacity to monitor child rights and their violation. An agreement was reached with the National Human Rights Council for UNICEF to create and support a training module in their new training centre that will enable all field-based CNDH staff to improve their capacity to identify, report and alert others about child rights violations;
- Promote an appeal mechanism for children whose rights have not been respected. This has proven politically sensitive, but is progressing towards an independent ownership within the CNDH.

These interventions are mostly under the responsibility of the UNICEF Child Protection section, but the human rights-based approach to programming (HRBAP) is prevalent throughout the country programme via a three-pronged approach:

- Promoting the switch from an “offer” approach towards a rights approach (for example, ECD is now considered a right, and health adopts a rights approach focused on equity);
- Promoting interventions for especially vulnerable children, such as children with disabilities, in health (prevention and early detection), protection (care in centres) and education (inclusive education);
- Promoting life-cycle interventions. Adolescents have often not been considered as children and thus were excluded from programmes. In response, UNICEF promoted adolescent health, a focus on justice and early marriage, and secondary education.

Internally, an equity case study about the “school of respect” in Morocco was published on the UNICEF intranet, staff and partners were trained during the UNDAF development on HRBAP (September 2015) and a MoRES-based Situation Analysis, published in May 2015, is guiding the ongoing new country programme preparation.

Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

This is considered a cross-sectoral issue and strongly supported by the highest authorities since the family code reform (Mudawana in 2006), the implementation of which nevertheless requires further advocacy and technical support. Although the office cannot afford a gender specialist, important initiatives have taken place –in accordance with global gender strategy – to promote a safer life and more equal opportunities for girls and boys in Morocco.

- Girls’ education: While indicators are similar between girls and boys at primary levels, there is a major drop during transition to secondary. A mixed array of interventions are being

implemented with the Ministry of Education (use of MoRES, improved environment, reduced violence, better orientation, non-formal education) in order to increase the number of girls in the secondary education system in 2016 by 10 per cent compared to 2012.

- Adolescent health: The National Youth Strategy, developed with UNICEF support, focuses on better access to health, with adolescents being integrated into the child health policy. In 2015, an “All-In” approach for adolescents regarding HIV/AIDS, in partnership with UNFPA and UNAIDS, resulted in manuals and methods prepared with a national HIV action plan for adolescents, especially girls, so that no adolescent girl is infected by 2020. However, the lack of data on girls and social taboos create challenges to the achievement of this objective.
- Early marriage and single-mother support is probably the most urgent issue, with 40,000 early marriages per year. After successful advocacy for the annulment of Article 475 (enabling rapists to marry their victims), efforts have focused on prevention - with 35,000 people reached - training of judges, and inclusion of the issue in justice reform to reduce the current situation in which 99 per cent of early marriage applications are authorised by judges. Parallel interventions aim at reaching single mothers, to promote reunification with spouses, working opportunities for autonomy, and reducing stigma.

In addition to these highlighted programmes, UNICEF Morocco, in close partnership with UN Women, works to improve disaggregation of data, address domestic labour performed by under-aged girls, reduce gender bias in curricula and develop action plans for safer cities (for example, in Marrakesh).

Environmental Sustainability

2015 was an important year for UNICEF in Morocco regarding environmental sustainability. During the early years of the country programme, the necessary prioritisation of activities, combined with lack of funds and of partners, saw UNICEF reduce interventions in this area to pilot activities in WASH (latrine construction in 40 schools), local development activities (playgrounds in five child friendly municipalities), participation in some isolated events (such as Forum de la Mer) and integration of some modules into education curricula (for example, school gardens, theatre play on water management).

However, in 2015, three important changes took place:

- New partnership with the Ministry of Environment: This initial partnership will lead to a tripartite agreement with the Ministry of Education to ensure that more environmental issues and behaviour change are included in the school curricula. Similarly, UNICEF advocated jointly with WHO on social health determinants in 2015 to highlight environmental impacts on health, such as dust, water pollution, and smoke.
- Preparation for CoP 22: Learning from CoP 21, UNICEF Morocco will support the agency’s global efforts during CoP 22, which will take place in Marrakech in 2016. Current actions include partnership setting, social mobilisation, voice of youth mobilisation through texts, drawings and events, concrete actions in schools, and reflections on key issues, such as climate change, water management, and deforestation.
- Country Programme preparation: An important mapping process is being conducted in the area of water, hygiene and sanitation in Morocco. The major actors (African Development

Bank, French Development Agency/AFD, EU, World Bank, Italian Cooperation, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit/GIZ, and Belgium Cooperation) are involved, but the main focus is on global distribution, and does not sufficiently consider “last mile”, school connections and hygiene.

Effective Leadership

In addition to the all-staff-endorsed Enterprise Risk Management, the 2014 Audit and Global Staff Survey results guided the 2015 management response to pursue support to change.

A reinforced Country Management Team (CMT), with the adoption of new CMT management principles, regularly reviewed the areas for improvement. This included:

- Review of operational work processes (March);
- Senior surge support in operations (March and November) to improve task accountability, processes, committees, and risks;
- Audit response, with feedback in May and August, and closure of the majority of the recommendations.

Indicators, which were defined in the Annual Management Plan, were reviewed monthly through programme meetings. Two CMT meetings (June and December) were specifically dedicated to management indicators, and ad hoc meeting was held on financial performance. At the other CMT meetings, the focus was placed on major issues impacting programmes, such as UNDAF and country programme preparations, integrated programming, new partnerships, Global Management Team and Regional Management Team decisions. The audit response remained a standing item throughout the year.

In addition to CMT and weekly all staff meetings, programme retreats, bilateral meetings with each section and an all staff retreat, as well as constant consultations with the staff association, contributed to increase proximity and understanding between staff and management.

Risk management was at the core of prioritisation of actions, and is considered an all staff responsibility.

Programme coordination received alerts during the above-mentioned meetings, and also from system monitoring tools, external actors and partners.

UNICEF Morocco’s capacity to manage an emergency response faced some structural bottlenecks. To partly overcome these, a refresher training for all staff was held in December. The main remaining challenges are to overcome the length of time for recruitment, as well as the functioning of key committees. Partnerships management must also be strengthened, considering the increase of funds and the complexity of some of the donors.

A partnership with Akhawayne University was initiated to train all staff in leadership skills.

Financial Resources Management

The CMT met monthly to review the management indicators, discuss programmatic and operational aspects and follow up on the Institutional Budget (IB) and Programme Budget (Regular Resources/RR and Other Resources/OR).

Additional meetings were held during November and December to review the programme

budget, especially in relation to expiring grants.

The funding utilisation was:

RR: 99 per cent

OR: 87 per cent (100 per cent on OR expiring in 2015)

IB: 99 per cent

HACT has been used by UNICEF Morocco since 2009, but the required assurance activities need improvement. New partners, especially NGOs are briefed on the new HACT and CSO policies. Evaluations were conducted before signing Small-Scale Funding Agreements. Better follow up, through programme visits and spot checks needs to be made to ensure that the funds are used in the respect of the agreement signed and the approved budget.

Significant efforts were made to clear outstanding Direct Cash Transfers (DCT), especially those over nine months.

By the end of the 2015, the total of the outstanding DCT was US\$1,569,741, of which 5 per cent was over nine months.

A new contract signed with the European Union increased the total OR funding by US\$3,000,000, bringing the total amount of OR funds raised in the fourth year of country programme to the required level of 75 per cent of the ceiling. This amount should continue to grow, as some donors (Spain for Protection and Health, Belgium for Protection) have expressed interest in cooperating with UNICEF. Two donor visits took place in 2015.

While participation in regional appeals and initiatives did not result in actual funding, they enabled a clearer positioning of UNICEF Morocco and served as a basis for strategic advocacy for Thematic and set aside funds.

Considering these interesting, yet insufficient trends, leveraging through the mobilisation of other donors (for example, the World Bank on ECD) or Government (such as the Souss Massa Draa Region committing US\$1,000,000 to inclusive education, and the Government commitment of US\$4.5 million on ECD) is seen as a priority.

All donor reports were sent on time in 2015, but work processes will be improved to avoid a last minute upload. Fundraising is still heavily dependent on the personal involvement of the Deputy Representative and Representative.

The main risks concern the ability of the UNICEF Morocco to respond to donors' demands and conditionalities. This is particularly the case with new donors, such as the European Union, since past experience demonstrates that operational delays can hamper relationships with donors.

A final bottleneck concerns staffing capacity and time to follow up opportunities with the private sector. The office capacity seems to have reached some limits, with several approaches (UNILEVER, Philips) not producing the expected results while others (Roca, Sheraton, IKEA, Marathon des Sables, Inwi) could probably be upgraded. Other sectors, such as logistics, banking, telecommunications, and insurance, were not explored or relations were not maintained. The potential of digital fundraising in Morocco should be explored.

Evaluation

The evaluation function in UNICEF Morocco was hampered by the delayed recruitment of an M&E Officer, which has been pending since 2014. However, programming in 2015 was informed by the two major exercises that took place in 2014: several MTR assessments (in health, education, and local development) and the Situation Analysis.

The office commissioned an independent programme evaluation of a sub-component of its local development programme, Child Friendly Cities. Priority was given to supporting the UNDAF evaluation for the United Nations Country Team, with the direct involvement of UNICEF through the Technical Group on M&E. Two joint programmes with UNICEF involvement were also evaluated (Ministry of General Affairs and Governance and National Observatory for Human Development).

The exercise proved complex given environment changes and lack of strong evaluation capacity in-country. This lack of capacity impacts on the quality and independence of evaluations – especially when Government or local authorities are involved – and the office aims at mitigating this gap by encouraging international evaluations or developing existing capacities.

UNICEF Morocco continued to support the Moroccan Association of Evaluation. This included support for the international forum on professionalisation of evaluation, that took place in Marrakech in December 2015 and the international conference on the institutionalisation of evaluation held in September with Coneval (Mexico) and CREST (Tunisia), to operationalise evaluation, improve efficiency of public policies and ensure that the limited funding available benefits the most vulnerable.

In spite of the above constraints, important efforts have been made regarding data collection and evidence generation. This included the ONDH panel survey, Census, on-going national health survey, nutrition survey, municipal information system, and the dashboard of the Economic and Social Council).

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

UNICEF Morocco continued to improve in tracking expenses and ensuring the optimization of disbursement. The internal circular on cost reduction was updated and shared with the CMT. The new circular took into consideration the environmental footprint assessment results to focus on the areas that were identified as the most important CO2 emission factors. These areas include vehicles, air travels and electricity consumption.

The most significant cost reductions achieved during 2015 were:

- Maintenance of premises: 69 per cent
- Maintenance of security equipment: 63 per cent
- Office supplies: 65 per cent
- Maintenance of air conditioning: 42 per cent
- Freight: 52 per cent
- Water and electricity: 5 per cent
- Security services: 28 per cent
- Maintenance of vehicles: 39 per cent
- Courier: 22 per cent

The most important expenditures in 2014 had been related to the relocation of the office and the

renovation of the new premises, which explains the important difference between 2014 and 2015 in terms of cost reductions. However, in 2015, UNICEF Morocco achieved cost savings in non-relocation related expenses, such as freight, maintenance of vehicles and courier services.

As part of optimization and effective use of resources, Long Term Agreements (LTA) were instituted for office supply and services. Most of the LTAs were either based on UNDP contracted LTAs for the same period or those in the context of common services with other UN agencies.

UNICEF continued to participate in the UN Operations Management Team. A joint operations strategy with other UN agencies has not yet been adopted.

Supply Management

In 2015, the expenditures on procurement (Programme & Operations) was US\$ 7,696,153 (Programmes – US\$ 7 464 439 and Operations US\$ 231 714).

Following the 2014 MTR recommendations, UNICEF Morocco created a position of a national Supply and Procurement Officer, which was filled in November 2015.

UNICEF Morocco continued to support the Ministry of Health by facilitating vaccine procurement using the Procurement Services mechanism, through the UNICEF Supply Division. In 2015, this was to the value of \$US6,780,150

UNICEF does not maintain a warehouse facility in Morocco.

Security for Staff and Premises

The political, economic and social situation continued to be stable in Morocco, providing a safe working environment with no impact on the safety of UNICEF staff and assets. However, the office continues to update its Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and the evacuation plan, and continuously briefed staff on the security measures to be taken to ensure their safety and security, as well as the equipment at their disposal.

A test of the evacuation plan was taken towards the end of the year, followed by a test of the BCP, with the assistance of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), and the outcomes were used to strengthen the systems.

Training on emergency preparedness was also conducted at the end of the year with the assistance of the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO). This was a refresher for the existing staff and orientation for new staff, to ensure that all are prepared and ready to maintain the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Situations.

Follow up with UNDSS was done continuously to make sure the office is compliant with the Minimum Operating Security Standards, known as MOSS.

The call tree was updated monthly, and a VHF radio test undertaken on a monthly basis with the assistance of UNDSS.

In compliance with UNICEF policies, the necessary mandatory activities were performed in order to control and secure assets, especially information and communication technology (ICT)

equipment. Unrequired assets were submitted to the Property Survey Board, and disposals conducted based on their recommendations.

Human Resources

Following the 2015 Global Staff Survey results, the management and the staff association, in consultation with all staff, developed an office improvement plan (OIP, taking into consideration the area highlighted as most important to be addressed.

The implementation of the OIP was assured during the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) meetings, whose minutes are periodically shared with MENARO.

The office also organized a two and a half day training session on leadership for all staff.

The Performance Appraisal System continued to be monitored during Monday morning all-staff meetings and by the CMT, and feedback provided to staff to remind them to ensure timely completion.

Staff were also encouraged to use Agora for the development of their skills.

Training sessions were held on Friday afternoons on the new policies such as HACT and Programme Cooperation Agreements, as well as refreshing staff on other important policies and rules mainly related to human resources, office committees, and security (including the BCP and the evacuation drill).

A two-day training session was also held at the end of the year on emergency preparedness with the support of MENARO.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

During 2015, UNICEF Morocco accomplished a migration project from standalone servers to centrally-hosted servers to provide a cluster shared storage, which enabled alignment with the standards and provided high availability for essential services. In addition, the office managed to reduce by seven per cent the value of ICT equipment while reaching the 100 per cent mark, meeting the organization standards.

Another successful project conducted this year was the implementation of Universal Wi-Fi which provided access to core UNICEF systems over Wi-Fi and Internet connectivity to UNICEF guests.

Cloud-based tools were reinforced by implementing a Team-Site, in order to improving work efficiency. Annual Leave Planner, Driver Dispatch and Staff Induction are examples of projects to be adopted. Several training sessions were conducted on SharePoint - OneDrive to increase the adoption ratio, and to move from domestic shared drives to the cloud, reducing the infrastructure footprint.

The UNICEF ICT unit continued to advocate for effective use of Lync for teleconferencing, which resulted in more controlled costs. A satisfaction survey on ICT services was conducted: the results indicated 75 per cent of staff were extremely satisfied or satisfied.

UNICEF Morocco scaled up its social media presence. Actions included the creation of End Violence subsite, the creation of a Social Media content workflow on Team-Site and a complete

overhaul of the website which resulted in a new landing page, with fresh design elements to draw visitors in visually, and to reduce bounce rate.

In an effort to strengthen emergency preparedness, with support from MENARO, the ICT unit participated in School of Tertiary Technology training. The training helped during the full scale test of the BCP. This simulation enabled the office to identify shortfalls which were subsequently accounted for in the ICT supply plan.

Programme Components from Results Assessment Module

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Vulnerable populations have a better access to maternal, neonatal, postnatal and nutritional quality care, and the principle of equity is reinforced in health programs and policies.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Equity:

Equity is a cornerstone of the new Moroccan Health Strategy. Ensuring that the Ministry accepts the conceptual move towards equity in health was the most strategic move of UNICEF as a partner. The approach and tools to measure and correct inequity in access to health have been fully integrated in the Health Strategy (Marrakech Health Forum, 2013) and were recognised at international level (Mexico Global and Maternal Health Conference, October 2015)

A post-2015 action plan combining the unfinished agenda and the reinforcement of health services for better inclusion of well-being and the life cycle was designed with technical UNICEF support in 2015 and built around three axes (maternal health, neonatal health, child health (including adolescents)).

UNICEF advocacy led to the decision to develop an integrated child care policy, to be based on the human right to health approach and a life-cycle principle, covering all interventions from neonatal resuscitation to adolescent health.

A new National Health Survey and Nutrition Survey (including iodine deficiency disorders) were prepared and will be launched as soon as the population sampling is finalised. Actions have already started with respect to iodisation, by mobilising the private sector to ensure that while overall salt content in food is reduced, the quantity of iodine is increased.

Equity is also directly relevant for specific categories of children, such as children with disabilities. UNICEF in Morocco was instrumental in 2015 in participating to the design of the Ministry of Health disability strategy, especially with respect to ensuring better prevention and early detection of disabilities, including mental ones.

Finally, the issue of adolescent health, which has for too long been either disregarded or limited to sexual or at-risk behaviour, is being integrated into child health policies, due to UNICEF advocacy.

Integrated child care:

Further to Morocco's inability to reach Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5, the acceleration plan to reduce the maternal mortality ratio to 60 per 100,000 live births, the under-five mortality rate to 23 per 1,000 live births, and the infant mortality rate to 14 per 1,000 live births was rapidly operationalised in seven regions covering 40 provinces (54 per cent of the population) in

cooperation with Ministry of Health, WHO and UNFPA). UNICEF is the programme coordinator and continued to support integrated management of childhood illness interventions through capacity development via e-learning.

UNICEF support to procurement services in immunization contributed to reducing the costs of health services for the system and the people. The switch from oral to injectable polio vaccine, which was supported by UNICEF, was successful. The Government of Morocco purchased more than 15 billion vials of vaccines worth US\$7.5 million through UNICEF Procurement Services in 2015. New vaccines, including HPV/human papillomavirus, are being explored.

UNICEF co-led an “All-In” initiative on HIV/AIDS to ensure that adolescents, a particular at-risk group, are better included.

OUTPUT 1 Equity is put at the centre of health interventions, including through: a) pursuing documentation on current inequities; b) advocating for neglected diseases and disability, and; c) reinforced communication for development for the most vulnerable populations

Analytical Statement of Progress:

As of December 2015, despite disbursement and human resource constraints, UNICEF contributed to the following achievements.

Documentation of inequities:

- Launch of the design process of a new Child Health Policy, including adolescent health and emerging issues such as disability, to ensure that all interventions related to children (including adolescents) are compiled under a single document. The design is led by both a medical consultant and a human right consultant.
- Launch of the new post-015 action plan, which includes a neonatal and child component and focuses on equity, prevention, social health determinants and required action from other ministries. It is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and new global health strategy.
- Sharing of the current social health determinant research and programmes for the Global Maternal and Child Health network in Mexico in October 2015, to serve as a further planning tool for reduction of inequities.
- Support for the design and launch of the new National Survey on Public and Family Health (Enquete Nationale de Santé Publique et Familiale - ENSPF). The questionnaires were designed, but the launch was delayed until early 2016 because of the national census conducted between March and June and because of local elections.

Neglected diseases and disability:

- Support for disability prevention via participation in the design and launch of the new health component of the national disability strategy. UNICEF technical involvement focused on prevention and early detection, considering the limited financial and human resources from the Ministry. A first concrete step was taken with support for hypothyroidia equipment and testing (hypothyroidia is the main preventable disability in Morocco).

- Revival of salt iodisation efforts. UNICEF strongly advocated with Iodine Global Network and prepared a new plan with the Directorate of Epidemiology in the Ministry of Health. An international forum took place in June in Casablanca with UNICEF support, and led to substantial exchanges, especially on South-South issues. The private sector was mobilised both to reduce salt intake and to increase iodisation. The Morocco iodine plan relies on a new micronutrient survey, which in turns depends on the now-delayed ENSPF (see above).
- Other efforts in nutrition, except some public communication on breastfeeding, have been constrained by the delayed National Nutrition Survey.
- Support for the joint UNFPA/UNICEF "All In" approach to HIV, focusing on adolescents at risk. UNICEF is represented on the steering committee of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Morocco, which enabled participation in the launch of the 2015 proposal on Health Systems Strengthening. This brought in US\$8.5 million for systems that will benefit the equity approach, especially regarding price and quality of essential drugs, human resources, issues and decentralisation.

In C4D there was limited progress, due to delays in recruiting a new C4D Officer. Some issues are being explored through ECD, and some "traditional" campaigns were launched, especially on breastfeeding. Besides the limited human resource capacity in the UNICEF Morocco health section, the current partner in the Ministry of Health (Directorate for Planning) may need additional reinforcement.

OUTPUT 2 Morocco's Survival MDG acceleration plan is supported through a joint UN approach, via: a) regional development of neonatal plans; b) advocacy for pursuing IMCI activities; c) revitalization of immunization activities, and; d) acceleration of nutrition activities, especially iodisation and breastfeeding

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The integrated child care approach benefits from the equity interventions listed under the previous output (post-2015 action plan, child health policy, actions on disability and inequity mapping). Additional specific results follow.

Regional development plans:

A joint UNICEF/UNFPA approach funded by Spanish Cooperation in order to ensure that six key regions - out of the nine most vulnerable - develop and implement their own acceleration plans. Due to the direct relationship with regions, and regular technical visits from either UNICEF or UNFPA acting almost as a single technical agency, the implementation rate of activities was smooth and mobilisation of local teams impressive, except in one region (Oriental). This joint approach, focusing on both maternal and neonatal health, and primarily aiming at making delivery safer, is benefitting from the strong programmatic leadership of the Directorate of Hospitals/DHSA. The recent reorganisation of regions, however, will oblige the working group to review budget allocations.

Advocacy for pursuing IMCI activities:

While the Ministry did not see IMCI as its main strategy for a relatively long time, two key elements introduced in 2015 provided grounds for future progress.

Firstly, the development with UNICEF support of an IMCI e-training tool will facilitate initial and refresher training, especially for front-line staff in isolated areas. This system is currently being

tested and reviewed. Secondly, the new focus being put on community health services - while still restricted to "mother classes" - will ensure that the approach is pursued in future. While important efforts were taken to ensure that the Ministry of Health maintains its focus on all aspects of childhood diseases, the recent shortfall in reaching MDGs 4 and 5 has led to an even stronger focus on neonatal issues. This action will be pursued. The issue of quality of services is also a recurrent constraint, although a "quality checklist" is being implemented in Marrakech region.

Immunization activities:

While only limited direct activities were supported by UNICEF, this is one of the flagship interventions, involving: (i) support extended to Procurement Services, ensuring smooth and rapid delivery of all required vaccines and preventing any shortage, thanks to constant and direct negotiations with Supply Division; (ii) support for calendar reform, and; (iii) support for the introduction of injectable polio vaccine/IPV, which took place smoothly without any logistical or medical difficulties. UNICEF Morocco strongly supported the Government in using its experience with Procurement Services to extend them to other drugs or countries. With the facilitation of UNICEF Morocco, 15 billion doses were purchased by Morocco in 2015 at a cost of over US\$7 million.

OUTCOME 2 Access and retention to an equitable quality basic education are improved, especially in favour of disadvantaged children and adolescents.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

The Education programme addresses equity and quality issues to ensure quality education for all children focusing on the most vulnerable in a low middle income country environment. In Morocco, inequity and quality issues still undermine the right of children to a quality education and to the completion of a full cycle of education, which would enable opportunities for better social inclusion of future generations.

Early learning, and preschool education in particular, remains a major bottleneck to timely access to basic education and quality learning outcomes. Only 57 per cent of children have access to a preschool education; and less than 25 per cent in the case of rural girls. Basic education is characterised by low learning outcomes and multiple bottlenecks in terms of primary to secondary transition (only 67 per cent girl's enrolment in 2015). Drop-out rates in compulsory education are also high (3.2 per cent in primary and 10 per cent in lower secondary) resulting in 245,000 compulsory schooling aged education children being out of school in 2015, two-thirds of them in rural areas.

Meanwhile, the lack of inclusiveness and equity-based planning and action at the school level are major constraints to improving learning outcomes, while school-to-work transition needs to be improved through a more differentiated response addressing post-basic education in terms of life skills improvement and a multi-pathway integrated education model.

Taking advantage of the opportunities offered by an education reform context, the education programme was re-oriented after the Mid-Term Review to focus on preschool education, out-of-school children (OOSC) including disabled, school equity-based planning and action (MoRES), and life skills and opportunities development for adolescents for better social inclusion.

Rapid progress was achieved in 2015 with respect to preschool, with UNICEF providing support to the MoE in developing standards and norms with a strong emphasis on equity. An international conference was held with participants from 12 countries providing high level

expertise, best practices and experience in systems building and strengthening. Preschool education was made a national priority, and a start was made on Government funds mobilisation to enhance decentralised capacities for service extension, targeting the most vulnerable.

The 'INSAF' initiative resulted in the systemic implementation of school equity-based planning and action. This is already showing results by empowering civil society, including parents, at the local level to address inequities in access and providing a more coordinated local response to improve access and retention in 52 primary and secondary schools with more than 8,000 children, resulting in an improvement in access and transition to secondary schools. INSAF has also facilitated monitoring system improvements including a school dashboards development, articulated with a national system of MoE monitoring of school action, and a broader evaluation system based on INSAF indicators.

With respect to out-of-school children, continuous advocacy and support for OOSC campaigns at central and local levels was accompanied by the development of school- and community-based prevention and remediation mechanisms to prevent and detect dropping out. This involved the use of new tools and mechanisms, developed with UNICEF technical support to MoE, in six provinces of three regions. Quality standards for non-formal schools was developed and adopted by MoE, and was completely rolled out in three regions in 2015. This first phase is already showing results in terms of monitoring improvements among 32,000 OOSC in the three regions.

Another major result was the mainstreaming of an initiative to combat school violence, which was piloted in Marrakech under MoE ownership. More than 8,000 children had access to violence detection services, mediation and participatory mechanisms for violence detection and awareness. This led to an official MoE road map to combat school violence and a change of regulation and school mechanisms for child protection in schools in January 2015. A national school-based monitoring system was developed and generalised to all schools, with effect from June 2015. School anti-violence committees were institutionalised in September 2015.

In order to address the high level of school non-participation among children with disabilities and the lack of adaptive quality education, the MoE and UNICEF supported the regional academy of education of Souss-Massa-Daraa in developing a inclusive education regional strategy pilot programme. It aims to improve access and learning practices for disabled children through a broad participatory approach, benefiting 9,200 children in seven provinces. The first 12 months phase evaluation of the programme found that advocacy and mobilisation had a significant impact in ensuring the continuity of local multi-services committees to improve inclusive education, and in enhancing inclusiveness of schools in terms of learning practices and perceptions.

Finally, adolescent development continued through a major programmatic shift. This involved strengthening the focus on the school-to-work transition via the revision of orientation mechanisms, and the launch of life skills development, based on multiple entry points, encompassing curriculum content, school-based professionalization and the opening of schools to their environments.

The integrated programme launched under the "Forsa" initiative has major goals for education – namely, strengthening the monitoring of learning and the development of a life skills policy covering both formal and non-formal education, in addition to citizenship capacity building and participation of adolescents and youth. The first phase developed in 2014 and initiated in 2015

resulted in a national framework addressing strengthening the counselling system for life skills development and school-to-work transition. Institutional tools and mechanisms are being developed in three regions in the first phase. Testing of these tools, including child personal projects, points to major improvements in school environments and in the motivation of children for learning and preparation for social inclusion.

OUTPUT 1 Youth and adolescent development: Participation and orientation mechanisms are developed and life-skills competencies for adolescents and youth are strengthened: a) orientation mechanisms are developed and strengthened; b) life skills development is integrated within education system mainstream, and; c) school-to-work transition mechanisms developed and implemented within formal, non- formal and vocational education systems.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

A national programme was developed in partnership with MoE to develop a national system to enhance life skills and school-to-work transition. A steering committee was established bringing the main education stakeholders together under the leadership of the vocational training department of MoE. The first phase resulted in the finalisation of a set of child-based tools for life skills development in both primary and lower secondary education. These have been tested in three regions targeting more than 500 children.

Within this context, a programme of personal projects for life skills and child participation among children in primary and lower secondary children was finalised and benefited 115 children in two regions in the testing phase. The first results indicated that the children displayed attitude change, with greater interest in learning and better relations between children and teachers. Furthermore, national standards and tools for education counselling for school-to-work transition were finalised and are being embedded in the MoE training system.

A pilot entrepreneurship programme was developed and mainstreamed in one region, involving 400 children of lower and higher secondary schools. The launch of the programme, in partnership with a major NGO and the decentralised MoE structure, resulted in a system change by creating an official structure for life skills development, including MoE pedagogical experts and counsellors. An action plan was developed for life skills development in secondary education with the support of MoE central level: this will feed back into the national strategy for life skills being developed by MoE with UNICEF support.

The development of life skills modules for second-chance schooling for out-of-school children was finalised. It is being validated at the central level for a second phase of expansion to four other regions, completing a revised model of second-chance schooling which incorporates school-to-work transition capacity development.

OUTPUT 2 Equity in access and learning in strengthen at the local level: a) continuing and strengthening education MoRES implementation; b) developing mechanisms and tools to support MoRES based school action plans, and; c) reinforcing upstream processes through results-based advocacy and partnerships.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Equity in access and learning is addressed through strengthening school equity-based planning and action, combating school violence, addressing out-of-school children and strengthening monitoring and action for learning.

The 'INSAF' initiative was carried to a second phase following the new MENARO conceptual

framework. The emphasis is on building and strengthening the equity-based monitoring of results and learning achievements as well as the development of a system of equity-based school dashboards. A national strategy was elaborated to combat violence in schools, including regional action plans, with a major focus on monitoring child protection in schools and school-based capacity development through a finalised national pedagogical and mobilisation mechanism.

For out-of-school children, the national school-based mechanism was finalised and endorsed in school projects in three regions to tackle the risk of dropping out and reintegrate school drop outs as well as strengthening bridges between non-formal and formal education. A pilot new second-chance schooling model commenced in March 2015, integrating school-to-work transition and strengthening of life skills. The model is being finalised to reflect a more integrated approach, addressing the specificities of out-of-school children and being linked both to school reintegration and socioeconomic inclusion. Finally, quality norms have been endorsed by a MoE certification system, ensuring better monitoring of non-formal education in one-third of non-formal education structures in 2015.

OUTPUT 3 A preschool national framework is developed and endorsed by education system: a) preschool norms are developed and institutionalised; b) national adaptive costing model is developed and endorsed, and; c) mobilisation and coordination strengthening is supported and included in process of national strategic framework development

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Advocacy for early learning and school readiness headed by UNICEF and including a national mapping exercise and a high-level conference of international experts resulted in the adoption of the development of preschool education as a main priority of the Moroccan Government's new education strategy for 2015-2020, which was launched by the Higher Council of Education in May 2015.

A national Pre-primary Education Strategy was prepared, envisaging the development of norms and financing models through a broad participatory approach. A national strategic committee, including all preschool stakeholders and main service providers, was established under the leadership of MoE to guide national strategy building for the regulation and expansion of preschool services. A national curriculum finalized with UNICEF support in 2015 was tested in three regions and the capacity of teachers developed through training modules.

Costing models were developed, leading to a first-phase budget allocation (US\$4.5 million) for preschool education in November 2015, for the purpose of strengthening decentralized MoE structures to carry out a progressive expansion of preschool services and develop local partnerships for better equity-based targeting.

Technical expertise support was the key to ensuring institutionalization of the decentralized structures for preschool development in four regions which aims to develop the capacity of teachers and to strengthen preschool governance.

Parental education development was launched with a major NGO in partnership with MoE. A national framework was developed with the technical support of UNICEF. The partnership with NGOs made it possible to strengthen the capacity of civil society, which plays a key role in supporting service extension for the most vulnerable, especially in rural areas. In 2015, UNICEF support resulted in the leveraging of funds for 44 preschool units which are targeted for preschool parental education development, covering 2,600 children.

OUTPUT 4 A regional piloting model is developed and used as advocacy to inclusive education within education system: a) a regional framework of access and completion improvement is developed, and; b) multisectoral mobilisation and participation is ensured.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

A pilot inclusive education programme was developed to produce a regional strategy for inclusive education including capacity building, participation and network creation, as well as a national advocacy strategy. The pilot initiative will serve as a reference for inclusive education development nationally. It is being extended to two regions, and at the same time being utilized in the development of a national strategy for the education of children with disabilities. Major results at system level are shown by the inclusion of children with disabilities in national education monitoring starting in September 2015, as well as the embedding of national pedagogical differentiation mechanisms for children with disabilities into the teacher training system.

The pilot programme covered 18 schools and more than 9,200 children, mobilizing local and regional institutional mechanisms, education actors and other stakeholders to improve access and learning practices for children with disabilities and ensure a continuum of services targeting the most vulnerable to enhance education access and quality in public schools.

The first-phase evaluation of the programme found that it had a significant impact on learning practices and perceptions. Based on the positive results and lessons learned, the regional academy of Souss Massa Daraa launched the first regional strategy of inclusive education and budgeted funds to improve access and quality learning for children with disabilities. This will feed into a national evidence-based advocacy effort supported by UNICEF aimed at generalizing inclusive education at national level.

OUTCOME 3 Vulnerable children, especially those deprived of their family or community environment, are better protected against all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, and their vulnerability is reduced.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF's role in policy advice and technical assistance was central for progress achieved during the year. This was particularly through addressing the ability of line ministries, national institutions and NGOs to develop, implement, and/or monitor child protection policy, justice reform and the Concluding Observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

2015 was a crucial year for the development of the integrated child protection policy that will frame the national responses to different forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect against children, both in terms of prevention and in terms of interventions. UNICEF therefore intensified its provision of technical assistance to engage all stakeholders to strengthen the institutional anchoring of the policy, as well as to increase their capacities to deliver on their mandates coordinate and monitor the policy implementation. UNICEF technical assistance and advocacy contributed to the adoption of the framework of the integrated public child protection policy by the Ministerial Commission in charge of monitoring the implementation of national policies and action plans related to the protection of children, chaired by the Head of Government, in June 2015.

UNICEF contributed to the inclusion in the Finance Act, adopted in late December, of a clause which stipulates that “During 2016, priority should be given to the development and implementation of innovative strategies for child protection against all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, through the strengthening of the legal framework, the establishment of a territorial and integrated child protection system, the standardization of child protection services and practices, and the establishment of the reliable information system required for the regular monitoring and evaluation of child protection work”.

UNICEF also contributed to the extensive national efforts to support the implementation of the ongoing justice reform. UNICEF Morocco contributed to debate around the legal reform to ensure that the new criminal code safeguards the best interests of the child in contact with the criminal or administrative justice system, including through the provision of child-sensitive procedures and alternatives and community responses. A three-year programme of support for the improvement of the system of justice for children was approved with European Union funding of US\$3,000,000. This will support the promotion of the justice for children approach, and facilitate access of all children to justice in line with the relevant international norms.

With respect to child rights monitoring, UNICEF was active in disseminating the Concluding Observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and in advocating for a systemic follow up under the coordination of the Inter-Ministerial Delegation of Human Rights, including the setting of indicators to monitor the implementation of the recommendations. For this purpose, UNICEF organized a national seminar on the Concluding Observations with the participation of the vice-president of the Committee and the representative of its secretary.

The National Council of Human Rights renewed its commitment to reinforce the monitoring of child right violations once the law governing this institution is adopted. This will ensure a field-based presence for child rights violation alerts and action. To this end, UNICEF is supporting the newly-established Human Rights Training Institute to develop a tailored training programme for the different committees of CNDH on monitoring and reporting child rights violations

OUTPUT 1 Knowledge and partnerships are built for a justice system for children based on: (a) the prevention of juvenile delinquency; (b) the adoption of alternatives to court proceedings and the deprivation of liberty, and; (c) the integration of international standards of juvenile justice.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of justice for children, as required by the justice reform charter, and to prepare for the implementation of the EU-funded project, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in coordinating an independent evaluation of the justice for children system. The evaluation aimed at assessing and analysing the current situation of justice for children in Morocco, and at producing reliable information and evidence on the current functioning of the system, particularly in term of relevance, effectiveness efficiency, sustainability and impact on children. The process involved a considerable element of capacity development. All stakeholders - public officials, courts, police, detention centres, social workers and civil society partners - participated in a series of discussions, technical consultations and workshops at national and subnational levels. The evaluation resulted in a compressive analysis of the different interactions between the roles and responsibilities of different components of the system, and supported the identification of bottlenecks that need to be addressed through more focused efforts and with the expectation of a long-term impact.

As part of the UNICEF Regional Leadership Area, UNICEF participated in the regional study on

models of community-based responses to juvenile justice. In line with the findings of this study and the recommendations of the regional workshop held in September 2015, UNICEF is supporting the implementation of a joint plan of action of the MoJ and the Ministry of Youth and Sport in order to revitalize the role of the probation system and to increase the capacities of these line ministries to advocate for its reform, notably with respect to the ongoing project of law governing 'Sugared Centres'.

In parallel, UNICEF followed up its technical assistance and advocacy towards national counterparts and the EU Commission in support of justice reform. A delegation agreement signed with the EU in December will pave the way for comprehensive action to increase access for all children in contact with the law to appropriate and protective justice in line with the relevant international norms. The purpose of the action is to design and identify performance indicators for justice for children and link these to in-depth training activities to increase the knowledge of specialized professionals working with children. This includes training of prosecutors, legal aid service lawyers, judges and police officers, concerning international standards and practices in the area of juvenile justice, and to strengthen their capacities to support child victims and witnesses of crime. A roadmap outlining the processes and procedures required to facilitate children's access to justice will be developed for potential scale-up of the results achieved.

UNICEF contributed to the processes of elaborating the new penal code by providing insights and advice that concretely reflected the principles of children's rights, the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN minimum standards for justice administration. UNICEF also supported efforts to develop the capacities of court social workers to better address and refer cases of violence against children, as recommended by the new law.

OUTPUT 2 Actors are mobilized along agreed standards so that children deprived of their family environment or at risk of family separation, benefit from: (a) pilot alternatives to institutionalization; (b) reviewed standards of services for the alternatives, and; (c) pilot social support services for families.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In line with the findings of the 2013 UNICEF study on the situation of children in alternative care which pointed to the growing numbers of children in care, and shed light on the main reasons for child separation, UNICEF Morocco placed more emphasis on developing the partnership with the Entraide Nationale to provide alternatives to institutionalization. Actions taken in 2015 included UNICEF's participation in a debate within the NGOs involved in the management of residential institutions, and the identification, through benchmarking, of a range of best practices to support families at risk of separation, together with proposals for services targeting the most vulnerable families.

UNICEF continued to support the previously-established NGO network working on the protection of children's right to family protection. The network is currently supported as one of the different thematic groups created within a national movement of child protection NGOs in the context of the implementation of the national child protection policy.

OUTPUT 3 Mobilization and monitoring for the integrated protection policy leads to strengthened multi-sectoral supply chains and coordination models and enables closer monitoring and appeals for child rights violations.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

During 2015, Morocco adopted the Integrated Public Policy for Child Protection (PPIPEM) which had been under development for over two years with the technical support of UNICEF and the participation of governmental and non-governmental actors. The PPIPEM expresses the ambition and the will to build an integrated child protection system that takes into consideration the institutional, social, economic and cultural development of the country and is supported by the necessary means and resources to ensure an effective protective environment in accordance with national and international standards.

The operationalization of the Policy is conditioned by the implementation of the five strategic goals adopted by the ministerial commission in charge of monitoring the implementation of national policies and action plans related to the protection of children:

- Strengthening the legal framework for child protection and its effectiveness;
- Establishment of a territorial and integrated system for child protection;
- Standardization services and child protection practices;
- Promotion of protective social norms;
- Establishment of a reliable and standardized information system for follow up and evaluation and regular monitoring.

UNICEF continues to support the Government, via the Ministry of Solidarity and Social Development, to elaborate the operational plan of the Policy. The aim is to define agreed results to be achieved during the next five years, together with the measures and modalities for their implementation, and to agree on the common and specific responsibilities of the different stakeholders, the resources to be mobilized, and indicators for monitoring and evaluation. The plan will also enhance the integration of the child protection policy results in the current Finance Act.

UNICEF's support to the Policy included not only the provision of technical expertise to institutional actors, but also the facilitation of a participatory process involving civil society organizations. UNICEF is supporting a group of more than 50 national and international NGOs (over than 50) with a view to creating an independent NGO movement fully and equally engaged in the implementation and the monitoring of the Policy. Specifically, this effort aims to mobilize NGOs and coalitions to negotiate their roles and responsibilities in the process of implementation of the policy; equip them with skills and capacities to elaborate advocacy strategies; and support them to outline frameworks for constructive and equal partnerships with institutional actors to operationalize the Policy. The results achieved so far highlight the strategic role of this movement in organizing discussions and ensuring coordination through the establishment of thematic and regional NGO groups, which facilitated the involvement of NGOs in more isolated and remote areas.

OUTCOME 4 The policy, programmatic and social environment at national and local level, including social protection systems and budgets, is more equitable, inclusive, child-sensitive and evidence-based.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

2015 was the first year after the MTR which resulted in the fusion of two programmes - Social Policies and Decentralization – into a single Social Inclusion programme. The programme was implemented in line with the MTR orientation and adjustments, reinforcing collaboration with all main partners for a more equitable, inclusive and child-sensitive policy, programmatic and social environment at national and local level.

In terms of social protection, UNICEF Morocco finalized its work with the Government on subsidy reform with the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) and MENARO support. In this context, policy options were developed to mitigate the impacts of the subsidy reform, especially by finding ways of allocating the savings from the reform to support poor and vulnerable households and their children through a more integrated social protection system.

Meanwhile, UNICEF also worked with the Ministry of General Affairs and Governance (MAGG) towards the development of a child-sensitive, integrated Social Protection vision. With UNICEF support, MAGG completed social protection mapping and international benchmarking studies. The first ideas were produced for the integrated social protection vision using an international firm with considerable expertise in this area. UNICEF collaborated well with the EU, World Bank and ADB, and will continue to have more synergy with these actors in the area of social protection, including inclusive targeting for the most vulnerable.

With respect to South-South Cooperation, UNICEF Morocco reinforced the relevant and strong cooperation of its partner ONDH/Morocco with CONEVAL/Mexico and CRES/Tunisia. The exchange of expertise and mutual technical support were strengthened in several areas, especially evaluation, the multi-dimensional approach to poverty measurement and information systems, with a special focus on child-sensitive and inclusive techniques. A number of events were conducted with UNICEF support. This included the international conference on the institutionalization of evaluation successfully organized in Rabat with the participation of international experts including experts from CONEVAL and IPC/Brazil. In addition, support was provided for an international conference on the professionalization of evaluation, organized with the Moroccan Evaluation Association during the Moroccan Week of Evaluation, with participants from MENARO, the Francophone Evaluation Network, the African Association of Evaluation and others significant actors. A study tour in Mexico was organized for high-level experts from ONDH and CRES.

In terms of advocacy and the production of specific evidence on the situation of children, UNICEF disseminated the final results of its Situation Analysis (SitAn) to the main national partners, including Government at national and decentralized level, civil society, mass media and international cooperation partners. The SitAn was also presented at a national workshop with child participation and to relevant national actors like the Economic, Social and Environment Council, which will use it in its advocacy for child rights. The SitAn has already been used to finalize the CESE dashboard to monitor the achievement of social, economic and environment rights especially for the most vulnerable populations including children.

In relation to advocacy and the promotion of the use of the multidimensional approach to measuring poverty, UNICEF provided supported to its national partners, especially ONDH and HCP, to reinforce the institutionalization of this approach. The HCP made use of the multidimensional approach to measuring poverty for monitoring MDG1 in its final MDG report (2000-2015). A new report on child multidimensional poverty measurement is about to be finalised. The ONDH is also working to adjust its multidimensional approach to measure human development and poverty. In this area UNICEF facilitated the support of CONEVAL and the exchange of ideas between the two institutions. Finally, UNICEF is currently supporting the Ministry of Health to conduct a household survey using a mixed methodology drawing on MICS and the Pan Arab Project for Family Health/PAPFAM. This survey will provide Morocco with a very good opportunity not only to update its estimates of child mortality and maternal mortality and other relevant indicators, but also to establish a baseline for the SDGs.

In decentralization, UNICEF supported the efforts of the Ministry of the Interior to finalize the Communal information System (SIC). The SIC will improve the monitoring of the situation of children in Morocco by generating relevant and useful data on children's health, education, participation and protection at the local level. UNICEF also continued to build capacity in the new area of local finance, specifically, the development and monitoring of municipal budgets and expenditures in a child sensitive manner. Training modules and technical tools on local finance were developed and tested ahead of generalization. Elsewhere, the accreditation of child-friendly municipalities is being examined on the basis of specific criteria, and a replication strategy is in place for the child and youth-friendly municipality initiative.

OUTPUT 1 A child-sensitive approach is integrated into national social protection reform, budget allocations and evaluation of public policy.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

In view of the negative impact of subsidy reform on the level of poverty and child access to basic education and health services, UNICEF has supported the Moroccan Government in identifying mitigations measures and policies. With the assistance of MENARO, UNICEF Morocco benefited from IPC-IG technical support to produce a specific policy paper on measures for the mitigation of the impact of subsidy reform on children in the short and medium terms. This work was finalized in 2015 and presented by the IPC consultants to the Ministry of General Affairs and Governance. Some of the measures were adopted and will be implemented in 2016, including the extension of TAYSSIR (a conditional cash transfer programme linked to education) and cash transfers to poor widows or divorced women with children. Other proposed measure are under discussion, in collaboration with other actors including the World Bank. These include the harmonization of targeting among social protection programmes like TAYSSIR, RAMED (a national health insurance program - Regime d'Assistance Medicale) and the National Human Development Initiative project/INDH.

With UNICEF technical support, a mapping exercise was carried out on social protection programmes and policies in Morocco under the supervision of MAGG and in collaboration with the main actors in the sector, who showed a high degree of commitment. MENARO was involved in the process from the beginning. The draft mapping report was shared with all relevant departments and was discussed at a national workshop in November. Special attention was paid to children during this exercise, taking account of different age groups and risks. The first ideas for a child-sensitive, integrated social policy vision were prepared by EPRI and shared with MAGG and MENARO for feedback. EPRI also finalized an international benchmarking study on the social protection visions or systems of some countries similar to Morocco. UNICEF Morocco was able to cooperate well with the World Bank, the ADB and the EU on the theme of social protection.

In September 2015, UNICEF Morocco supported the organization by ONDH of an international conference in Rabat on the institutionalization of evaluation. About 30 experts participated from several countries from Latin America, Africa, MENA, Asia and Europe, including Mexico (CONEVAL); Brazil (IPC-IG); Tunisia (CRES); Algeria (CNES); Sri Lanka; Mali and Ghana. Three evaluation networks also participated: the African network, the francophone network and the Tunisian network. UNICEF Morocco also supported the organization of the Moroccan Week of Evaluation in conjunction with AME (Moroccan Evaluation Association). Many international experts took part including the MENARO M&E Specialist. These South-South Cooperation activities reinforced the processes of institutionalization and professionalization of evaluation, and contributed to the national capacity building process supported by UNICEF in Morocco.

UNICEF Morocco also finalized its support to the Government in elaborating possible scenarios for the institutionalization of evaluation in Morocco, in collaboration with all relevant actors including civil society,

OUTPUT 2 Multidimensional approaches, tracking and generating evidence: Multidimensional measurement of child poverty and disparities is institutionalized as part of central and decentralized information and monitoring systems.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

Technical support and advocacy for the use of a multidimensional approach in measuring poverty (including for children) and tracking and generating evidence continued with several departments, especially ONDH, HCP and MoH. This approach was used in 2015 in the measurement of poverty in Morocco by HCP. There are now four measures of poverty based on the multidimensional approach (1990, 2003, 2011 and 2014). The HCP also prepared a draft multidimensional measure of child poverty for 2014.

The final report of the Situation Analysis, based on the equity approach, was completed and presented to all concerned actors including children. The SitAn was also disseminated to the main actors including Government, civil society, media, political parties, UN agencies, international development organisations, as well as children. It is currently being used in the planning of the new country programme, and to advocate for children's rights, and will be updated regularly.

- UNICEF Morocco had also finalized, in collaboration with CESE the elaboration of a dashboard for the social charter with specific component for children. This dashboard will be used in the annual report of CESE which is submitted to the King of Morocco, and used as important reference for the Government planning and social and economic policies monitoring.

OUTPUT 3 Decentralization and local/territorial governance policies and mechanisms are child-sensitive and effectively improving service delivery and participation for the most vulnerable children.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

UNICEF supported the Ministry of the Interior in revising the Communal Information System with a focus on child data needs. The SIC continues to serve as a very useful tool to improve national system capacity to monitor the situation of children.

National capacity building was also reinforced, especially with respect to child rights-sensitive planning and budgeting at local level. Training modules and technical tools were developed and tested with a view to generalization.

The accreditation of child-friendly municipalities is being examined based on specific criteria.

The supply of preschool equipment to five provinces is underway.