

Morocco

Part 1: Situation update in the country

Economic growth, urbanization, government action and royal initiatives to promote local development have improved social indicators in Morocco over the last decade. Despite significant disparities, most Millennium Development Goals have been achieved or nearly achieved, and in 2018 Morocco ranked as the fifth largest African economy. The country had European Union neighbourhood status, was active in the Council of Europe major committees and effectively promoted South-South cooperation. Following re-admission to the African Union in 2017, Morocco's application to join the Economic Community of West African States was accepted in principle in June 2018; however, obstacles to formal admission were not yet resolved at year end.

Political reform under the leadership of the King Mohamed VI, who is also the supreme religious leader of the country, has so far allowed Morocco to effectively fight extremism and to avoid the social unrest experienced in a number of other countries in the region. The 2011 Constitution laid the foundation for a more open, democratic and modern society and continues to represent an unprecedented opportunity for the realization of child rights in Morocco.

That being said, discontent among the population increased in 2018, reflecting both real and perceived inequality and dissatisfaction with national institutions. There were episodes of social unrest, such as the boycott against the high cost of living that targeted some brands of basic goods, the 'Hirak' movement in the Rif (social protests against the deterioration of the social situation and the widening of inequalities in northern of Morocco), and strikes and demonstrations in the mining town of Jerada following the deaths of miners. Against this backdrop, a profound debate began on the future of the development model of Morocco, in line with the goals set by King Mohammed VI.

This impetus for reform enabled Morocco, to a certain extent, to advance its economic, financial and social situation. The country made efforts to establish the foundations of a productive system with high potential, and to boost the functioning of its institutions by promoting the values of transparency and good governance. Morocco has gradually improved its attractiveness in terms of foreign direct investment and positioned itself in the region, capitalizing on its role as an important player in South-South cooperation.

The structural reforms deployed by Morocco in recent years have borne commendable economic, financial and social progress, made possible through the conduct of a budgetary policy index based on the imperatives of sustainability as well as on the country's economic and social development priorities. Along with fiscal and subsidy reforms, the introduction of new public finance reform reinforced the focus on performance and results. Those reforms substantially improved the profile of public finances, made evident by the budgetary deficit reduction of 3 GDP points between 2012 and 2017. This progress, while encouraging, remained below the country's potential, particularly with regard to Morocco's ambitions to make a significant, qualitative leap in development.

The adoption of the law on violence against women in September 2018 and on employment

conditions of domestic workers in October 2018 represented advances but have been criticized for not being comprehensive enough.

Improved growth but stronger momentum needed

The Moroccan economy's pace of progression evolved from 3 per cent during the 1990s to an average of 4.4 per cent during the 2000s. In 2018, the rate of Morocco's economic growth should be established in real terms at 3.5 per cent. This relatively favourable growth statistic is tainted by the increasingly weak capacity to create enough jobs. The national unemployment rate reached 10.2 per cent in 2017. The unemployment rate among young people worsened, reaching 2.5 times the national rate (25.8 per cent for the whole and 41.8 per cent for urban youth in 2016). The High Commissioner of Planning published alarming statistics on young people not in education, employment, or training: in 2016, almost one-quarter of the 15-24-year-olds were in that category, representing more than 1.7 million people. Among them, 18-24-year-olds were the most affected, and girls represented 78 per cent.

To ensure productive and decent employment, the National Employment Strategy 2017-2021 set four strategic axes: promoting job creation; valuing human capital; improving the effectiveness of active employment programs and strengthening intermediation and developing the framework for the governance of the labour market.

Despite the efforts made in recent years, geographic disparities in terms of growth persisted. Four of the 12 regions accounted for more than 60 per cent of the country's GDP. This was particularly notable within the framework of the sectoral strategies to inject more dynamism in the territories. Ensuring equitable growth, in both economic and social terms, will be key if Morocco is to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Demographics in transition and a marked level of disparities

The population of Morocco grew to 35.2 million in 2018, of which some 38 per cent lived in rural areas, 32 per cent were under 18 years old, and 8.7 per cent were under 5. There were approximately the same number of boys and girls in all age groups. The synthetic fertility index continued to decline, at 2.38 in 2018 at national level, compared to 2.6 in 2011.

Based on the 2018 report of the National Human Development Observatory on human development monitoring, several forms of poverty were measured and showed that absolute poverty (corresponding to a threshold of approximately US\$490 in urban areas and US\$450 in rural) was no longer significant, having dropped to from 7.1 per cent in 2012 to 1.4 per cent in 2018. Vulnerability to absolute poverty declined from 15.7 per cent to 9 per cent at the national level. Relative poverty, which represents another measure of inequality, was characterized by stagnation. The percentage of Moroccans in relative poverty was 19.7 per cent compared to 21.4 per cent in 2012. Almost 7 million Moroccans suffered from relative poverty, and approximately 74 per cent of them lived in rural areas.

The last measure of the monetary poverty of children was registered in 2017, at 4 per cent. Multidimensional poverty of children (based on National-Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (N-MODA) approach, which used the National Human Development Observatory household panel survey), was approximately 40 per cent of the national level (that are private in at least two dimensions essential to their well-being) and was almost 69 per cent in rural areas, compared to 17 per cent in urban areas. These measures gave rise to important recommendations, several of which were implemented in 2018. Among them were recommendations relating to the reform of the national social protection system, the widening

of the coverage of the cash transfer programs, the scaling up of initiatives targeting early childhood development and the strengthening of life skills of young people for improved socio-professional integration.

Need for strengthened efficiency of social policies to boost development

Despite the proliferation of public social policies implemented by the Government of Morocco, the progress made in this area has not addressed the deepening of social inequalities. This situation raises important challenges in terms of strengthening the inclusiveness of the national development model, particularly regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the policies implemented for this purpose.

While Morocco has successfully ensured universal access to primary school and improved the enrolment rate at the secondary school level, the performance of the education system suffers from several shortcomings, made evident by the school drop-out rate and the substantial number of unemployed graduates.

At secondary level, the enrolment rates of children between the ages of 12 and 14 and for those aged 15 to 17 were 91.1 per cent and 67.2 per cent, respectively, in 2017-2018, compared to 87.6 per cent and 66.6 per cent in 2016-2017. The drop-out rate improved but remained significant (269,000 in 2017-2018 compared to 400,000 in 2016-2017). In 2017-2018, more than 700,000 children aged 4 to 5 attended pre-school education, representing a pre-school enrolment rate of 49.8 per cent (45.7 per cent for girls) at the national level, compared to 36.6 per cent (28 per cent for girls) in rural areas.

Improvement in this area hinges on the successful implementation of priority initiatives launched within the framework of the education strategic vision 2015-2030. Those include: pre-school education projects, the renewal of the pedagogical model of teacher training, education system governance, as well as social support for schooling for vulnerable populations.

A push to improve maternal and child health and to combat maternal and infant mortality resulted in an overall improvement in the main indicators of supply and demand for care. The maternal mortality rate declined by 68 per cent in the period 2004-2017, reaching 72.6 per 100,000 live births. Child mortality decreased to 18 per 1,000 live births for children under one year of age in 2017 (compared to 28.8 per 1,000 in 2011 and 40 in 2003-2004). This progress was insufficient to curb health inequities either by residence area or by region. Stunting was an area of concern, stagnating at approximately 15 per cent. Increased rates of chronic diseases were also a concern. Against this backdrop, the 2025 Health Plan was designed with the aim of building a homogenous health system characterized by an organized, high quality and accessible health care service for all.

The slow pace of implementation of the integrated public policy on child protection (adopted in 2015) and associated action plans contributed to insufficient progress in child protection. According to the 2017 employment surveys, there were 247,000 child labourers aged 7 to 17, with 162,000 involved in dangerous work, which corresponds to an incidence rate of 2.3 per cent. Children involved in dangerous work were predominantly in rural areas (76.3 per cent) and male (81 per cent). In 2015, more than 30,200 marriage records of minors (99 per cent girls) were registered with the Ministry of Justice, representing more than 10 per cent of the marriage records that year. The number of children living in institutional care was estimated at more than 80,000 in 2018. These institutions were generally underfunded, did not comply with international standards and lacked appropriate foster care systems. Violence against children

and adolescents (including those in domestic work) remained widespread, although its true extent was not known. Such violence continued to be aggravated by practices and social norms affecting the entire population. In 2017 there were a total of 61,630 children in conflict with the law.

With the semi-closure of the Libya-Italy route, the Morocco-Spain route became the main entry point to Europe for migration. Spain experienced a record number of sea arrivals in 2017 (22,103, a 170 per cent year-on-year increase) and the pace rose further in 2018, with 27,788 migrants arriving by sea between January and mid-August. Although exact figures are difficult to obtain, approximately 10 per cent of those migrants were estimated to be children. Morocco has taken a progressive approach compared to its neighbours and regularized the status of 50,000 migrants via two regularization campaigns. Policies exist to enable migrants and their children to access social services, but implementation remained an issue and criminal networks were a concern.

Several efforts were made to develop the social protection system in Morocco through major initiatives such as conditional cash transfers to increase school enrolment (TAYSSIR) and free health insurance for vulnerable individuals (RAMED). The social protection system was confronted with many challenges related to programme fragmentation and weak governance, hence the importance of using an integrated approach to social protection to strengthen equity and efficiency. The main challenge was the implementation of reliable targeting of beneficiary populations. The ongoing establishment of a Single Social Register, supported by the World Bank, aims to maximize the impact of state actions. A renewed impetus of the National Initiative on Human Development (INDH) saw the adoption in 2018 of a third phase (2019-2023) that will mobilize investments of more than US\$1.8 billion. This new phase will target the reduction of social and territorial disparities, the development of human capital, support to categories in difficult circumstances, and the launch of new income-generating and employment initiatives.

Part 2: Major results, including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the Country Programme Documents

2018 marked the second year of the 2017-21 Government of Morocco-UNICEF programme of cooperation. The programme emphasizes systems-building and policy dialogue at the national level and provides support to making decentralization most effective for children via development of models for scale-up at local level.

Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

With support from UNICEF, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Population Fund, the Ministry of Health published the preliminary results of the National Population and Family Health Survey, resulting in a much-needed update on the health and nutrition situation of children in Morocco. The results indicated improvements in key outcomes and coverage indicators as well as continuing and emerging areas of concern. There were significant reductions in both maternal and under-five mortality. The percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel increased to 86.6 per cent (up from 73.6 per cent in 2011). The percentage of children fully vaccinated rose to 91 per cent from 84.3 per cent. Stunting was an area of concern, stagnating at approximately 15 per cent. Increased rates of chronic diseases were also a concern. Exclusive breastfeeding rates remained low, at 35 per cent, (up

from 27.8 per cent in 2011). Across all indicators, urban-rural disparities persisted, although some improvements were observed in reducing those gaps.

In 2018 UNICEF Morocco continued to support the Ministry of Health via integrated and quality management of newborn health through the standardization of essential neonatal care and community kangaroo mother care and the operationalization of the neonatal care network. UNICEF also supported the Ministry through the generalization of the practice of clinical audit of stillbirths and neonatal deaths, the revitalization of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative and the acquisition of equipment needed for neonatal care for 10 structures to improve the quality of neonatal care services and prepare them for the accreditation process. UNICEF also continued to provide procurement services for all childhood vaccines in Morocco, supporting the Ministry of Health to maintain and improve the country's high child vaccination coverage. In 2018, more than 19.6 million doses of vaccines and nutrition materials valued at US\$7.2 million were secured via UNICEF procurement services.

To strengthen the capacity of health care providers, two new online courses were developed: Medical care of Tuberculosis in Children and Adolescents and Paediatric Emergency Management.. A total of 620 primary health care providers (280 women) were trained in 2018.

Communication for development sessions on the main themes of maternal and child health were an area of focus. These included early childhood development, the promotion of breastfeeding and the use of iodized salt, the use of care services and screening for congenital hypothyroidism. A total of 2,658 women benefited from 60 sessions of health education organized in vulnerable communities by an associative network consisting of eight civil society organisations in the region of Beni Mellal-Khénifra.

Morocco remained one of the countries with the lowest levels of adequately iodized salt, negatively affecting the cognitive and physical development of children. With financial support from USAID, UNICEF Morocco continued to support universal salt iodization, mobilizing expertise to evaluate the iodine deficiency control process in Morocco and the salt industry. UNICEF Morocco also supported a micro-nutrient survey, ongoing at year end, to update information about iodine deficiency in the country.

A model for early childhood cognitive, socio-emotional and psychomotor development was implemented in the Beni Mellal-Khenifra region, with the goal of informing scale-up, in partnership with the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Health, with UNICEF support, developed and adopted an integrated child health policy, based on the approach of human rights and equity and taking account the place of other departments to act on the social determinants of health. This policy focuses on two crucial periods of the child's life through early childhood development and adolescent health. The involvement of the district-levels of the territorial and central representatives of the health system as well as the other government departments allowed for wide appropriation of the policy. Community consultation through focus groups organized with families, children and the community helped to ensure that the population's concerns were taken into account.

Three regional action plans were developed with UNICEF support. The development process was marked by a strengthening of the health system based on equity in access to care and services through the analysis of health inequity indicators and the social determinants of health specific to each regional health system using the bottlenecks and barriers analysis and the

concept of integrating health into all policies. This participatory process helped to focus on high-impact and low-cost key interventions that address inequities in access to health.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

In 2018, UNICEF continued to contribute to education policies and strategies to ensure equitable access and completion at all levels of education for the most marginalized children, in line with the Ministry of Education's Strategic Vision for 2015-2030 and related action plan and the UN Development Assistance Fund education results area, which UNICEF co-presided along with the Ministry of Education.

Preschool education

While one year of preschool education was made mandatory in 2016, public provision of preschool education was still weak and only about half of children were enrolled in preschool (all types). In 2018, UNICEF focused its support on the finalisation of national norms and curriculum for preschool education. Adopted in June 2018, the finalized norms and curriculum enabled the Ministry of Education to launch the national programme for scale-up of access and quality of preschool services. The programme aims to have all children in preschool by 2027.

UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Education in finalizing training tools and guides for trainers and teachers. Three regions received support to develop dedicated training teams and reached more than 10,000 preschool teachers with training and capacity building to shift content and methods to new standards and norms.

UNICEF advocacy enabled budget allocation for preschool education through Ministry of Education and national social programs. The Ministry of Education budgeted a first allocation of US\$200 million for the first step of scale-up of preschool services within primary schools in rural and suburban areas. The Ministry of Interior, through the national initiative of human development and after consultation with UNICEF, allocated financial resources for 10,000 classes of preschool education within a three year period, targeting the poorest and most vulnerable districts. Although universal access to public preschool education is a medium-term goal (2027), efforts in 2018 already began to show results, with enrolment rates of preschool in the public sector increasing by 2 per cent (up from 10.4 per cent to 12.3 per cent).

Primary education

In 2018, UNICEF successfully embedded individual 'personal projects' within primary formal curriculum mainstreamed within 5th and 6th grade. The personal project consists of 10 activities that take students through a journey of learning and personal development by reflecting on the different opportunities and educational and vocational paths available to them at community level. Technical support was provided to the Ministry of Education to adapt personal project approaches and activities within primary-level learning and teaching methods. Extension and generalization within primary education has been planned to begin in the 2019 school year. UNICEF supported the finalization of coaching programmes, with a focus on primary to lower-secondary and lower-secondary to higher-secondary and vocational training. The national programme that includes para-curricular activities-based modules was expanded in four sub-national regions. The programme includes training of school counsellors.

Secondary education

While Morocco has made considerable progress in improving access to education at all levels, the quality of education remained a major concern, as evidenced by drop-out rates at the

secondary level and difficulty in school-to-work transition. In 2018, UNICEF continued to support quality improvement via life skills and citizenship education. Specifically, UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Education to develop life skills and citizenship education-based curriculum and approaches within lower-secondary education. A lower-secondary curriculum was finalized with a participatory approach including teachers and children to develop a technical framework for curriculum reform. In 2018, subject-based teams of Ministry of Education experts and teachers were supported to develop life skills and citizenship education-based teaching tools and their piloting within 152 lower-secondary schools, benefiting 16,276 children (7,452 girls). Learning monitoring tools were also developed and piloted under the life skills and citizenship education Middle East North Africa framework. In November 2018, UNICEF supported efforts to further develop tools to build a national framework for life skills and citizen education-based curriculum reform.

To improve school-to-work transition, UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Education on the modelling of second-chance schools. UNICEF support included curriculum development for basic and life skills as well as tracking mechanisms, vocational training programmes and school-to-work transition activities. UNICEF supported the finalizing of second-chance schools management guides as work on content development continued. In total, 357 children (146 girls) benefited from UNICEF-supported model second-chance schools in 2018. Based on the model, the Ministry of Education included the opening of 100 second-chance schools in its five-year plan, beginning in 2019. Entrepreneurship programs mainstreamed with UNICEF support via civil society partnership in two regions reached more than 5,640 children (2,650 girls). Those results were made possible thanks to financial support from Canada.

Inclusive education

UNICEF supported expanding the inclusive education model within three regions, reaching more than 1,000 teachers with training. The number of disabled children benefiting from inclusive education in primary schools increased from 9,800 in 2017 to 16,449 in 2018. UNICEF supported the development of training modules for teachers, head of schools, parents and trainers. UNICEF launched modelling of secondary inclusive education within two regions in 2018. A large assessment of primary to secondary transition and learning of disabled children in secondary education and a school-based mobilization and awareness kit for secondary schools were developed. Guidance on disabled children's access and learning was integrated within preschool curriculum and training.

Out-of-school children and drop-out prevention

In collaboration with Ministry of Education, UNICEF developed a national programme for tracking of out-of-school children. The child-to-child programme was reviewed and strengthened through a school-based approach and mobilization method within most at risk of drop-out schools. The programme successfully tracked 74,000 out-of-school children and adolescents in 2018, of whom approximately 36,000 were reintegrated in formal school and 38,000 were provided with non-formal and second-chance schooling. UNICEF successfully advocated for launching the development of a holistic school-based real time out-of-school children monitoring system integrated within the Ministry of Education information management system. A national program of educational support within lower-secondary education also was finalized and expended within one sub-national region in 2018. The programme includes tracking children at risk of dropping out and tools to tailor educational support using child-friendly approaches for learning gaps remediation. The pilot phase of the programme in 2018 reached more than 1,856 children (1,215 girls) within lower-secondary education schools.

Education governance

UNICEF continued its support to extend INSAF, a school-level monitoring and action tracking tool, to more districts and schools, with 24 additional schools within one region added in 2018. The expansion of the use of the tool was led by a sub-national team of experts supported by UNICEF to develop a technical framework for a school dashboard using existing systems of monitoring. The technical framework was finalized in May 2018, enabling further advocacy within the Ministry of Education. UNICEF successfully advocated for high-level Ministry of Education stakeholders to include school governance development as a Ministry of Education priority. This was made effective in September 2018 under a dedicated national programme including the INSAF approach alongside a pilot deconcentrating of budget responsibilities to head of schools. UNICEF also supported including violence free and inclusive approaches to build school projects in 2018 through national existing school projects guidance Ministry of Education tools for head of schools and committees.

Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

UNICEF Morocco's child protection component aims strengthen policies and systems for protecting all children, including children deprived of parental care, in contact with the law, and child victims of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, in line with international standards and the Morocco Integrated Public Policy for Child Protection.

Justice for children

UNICEF supported the strengthening of the justice for children system, including the role of judges, through legislative advocacy, capacity-building and intersectoral cooperation, particularly for diversion and alternative measures, the treatment of child victims and reintegration following detention. In 2018, thanks to financial support from the European Union, more than 600 justice actors were trained in child-sensitive procedures for magistrates, judicial police officers, social workers of courts, clerks, directors of child safeguard centres, educators, and probation delegates. UNICEF also supported the process of strengthening the capacity of the Higher Institute of the Judiciary to review the curriculum in line with the international norms and rights of the child. Specialized units were setup and equipped to ensure participation of children in the justice process and to improve conditions of care for children in conflict with the law. This included the equipping of five support centres for post carceral follow-up for children in conflict with law; establishment of five vocational training units within the child safeguard centres; and equipping of 15 child safeguard centres with computers to be used in new generation vocational training. Those efforts contributed to an increase in the number of children in conflict with the law who benefited from non-residential alternatives to arrest and detention in 2018 (from 8,600 to 11,359).

Child protection system strengthening

The purpose of the partnership between UNICEF Morocco and the Ministry of Social Development was to support the process of implementing the Morocco Integrated Public Policy for Child Protection and its programme of actions. Several activities that were agreed to in the action plan were postponed to 2019. A national roadmap was adopted by the inter-ministerial commission in early December and will provide a legal basis to start working in three provinces (Sale, Oujda and Tiznit) for modelling of a child and family-centred case management system and mechanism for local governance and decentralization of protection. UNICEF will be a member of the steering committee of this process for advisory purposes.

In 2018, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Development to implement objective 4 of the

Morocco Integrated Public Policy for Child Protection, which concerns the promotion of protective social norms for children. With financial support from Belgium, the capacity of 56 government partners was enhanced on communication for development through a workshop where they applied the approach in a practical and realistic way. A reference framework on positive parenting was developed. It is an essential tool for social workers in the child protection sector. The process of developing training content and supporting the promotion of positive parenting was ongoing under the leadership of the Department's Family Division. The child participation component of the project was launched through the development of the 2019 agenda of the child parliamentarians in collaboration with the national observatory of child rights. This resulted in the mobilization and engagement of 100 girls and boys aged 13 to 17 from different regions of Morocco for the promotion of the rights of the child and the prevention of violence against children.

Child rights monitoring

In February 2018, following years of technical support and advocacy by UNICEF, law No. 76-15 on the re-organization of the Morocco National Human Rights Council was adopted. This law enables the Council, which serves as Morocco's national human rights institution in accordance to the Paris Principles, to establish an independent monitoring mechanism for children victims of violations of their rights, with a clear mandate to regularly receive and address individual complaints of alleged violations of children's rights. This represents a significant step toward the establishment of an effective children's ombudsman mechanism in Morocco. With the adoption of the new law, the collaboration between UNICEF and the Council focused on the preparation the technical preconditions required for the implementation of the mechanism (ombudsman), insuring its compliance with the Paris Principles and the general observations of Convention on the Rights of the Child. The referential document/guidance that defines the mission, structure, modality of governance and functioning of the appeal mechanism was finalized, presented to the Council management board and adopted as a key framework to orient the work of the institution to establish the mechanism at national level and create ways of communication and connection with its different branches at subnational level.

UNICEF Morocco, in collaboration with UNICEF Belgium, facilitated the organization of a study tour to Belgium for the benefit of the Child Right Focal Points at subnational level. The visit allowed Morocco National Human Rights Council staff to meet with the Ombudsman and with different institutions in charge of the protection of children's rights, including the National Commission for Child Rights, the Office of Public Prosecutors, the mediator, and keys non-governmental organization networks working on child rights monitoring). The meeting helped informing the Council on options to operationalize the mechanism and to develop collaborative connections with relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and children.

UNICEF also supported implementation of an awareness raising campaign to inform children and adolescents about the existence of the new Council through summer camps activities carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sport. A mobile application was developed to receive and handle child complaints. The application was designed to ensure accessibility for children and facilitate collection of data on child rights violations.

UNICEF worked with the Inter-ministerial Delegation in charge of Human Rights to foster coalitions that can benefit civil society organizations working toward children's rights. A network representing 86 civil society organizations with extensive field presence in four regions of Morocco (Tangier–Tetouan-Al Hoceima, Fez-Meknes, Sous-Massa and Draa-Tafillelt)

benefited from the mapping of child protection systems/actors, which make possible to link location services, actors' roles and ability and resources with the specific conditions and forms of vulnerability that encounter children at local level. The process also included a series of training on techniques of mapping, modalities of participation, advocacy and mobilization of decision makers. The collaborative relationship between the Delegation and the network of civil society organizations was institutionalized through partnership agreements supported by UNICEF.

Deinstitutionalization and alternative care

Via technical expertise and advocacy, UNICEF continued to support the adoption of national alternative care standards and norms, emphasizing deinstitutionalization. Capacity for implementation was enhanced via support to the standardization of the social work profession and the development of social care mechanisms that support the ongoing reforms in the sector. Under the leadership of Ministry of Social Development, a repository of professions for social work in the field of child-protection was developed. A training and competency building framework for social workers involved in child-protection was finalized. In November 2018 the framework was endorsed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and other national partners (including the Ministries of Health, Justice, Police and Youth). It will be widely disseminated in 2019 to inform the ongoing process of adopting a national law on social work force.

Operational support was provided to 130 provincial delegates of the social welfare national agency (Entraide Nationale) to reinforce their capacity with basic child protection concepts and their roles in the child protection local system implementation coming in 2020.

Several knowledge and evidence generation initiatives were launched, including the Social Service Workforce (SSW) Middle East North Africa study, with the support of UNICEF Middle East North Africa Office. The aim of the study is to provide a baseline on the state of the social service workforce in Morocco and develop an action plan to strengthen it. This will contribute to the strengthening of the child protection system in the country. UNICEF also supported a national study on norms and standards for institutional care services and structures; and a national mapping of children and youth living in residential care including hospitals, as a part of the response to the concluding observation of the Committee for Child Rights, in partnership with the social welfare national agency and the National Observatory of Child Rights (ONDE). A study visit to Turkey by a Moroccan intersectoral ministry delegation (Social, Justice and Civil Society) with the support of the Ministry of Family and Social policies of Turkey and the UNICEF office resulted in a report on the related policies and services framework that will be disseminated to high level representatives at the Ministry of Solidarity of Morocco.

Goal area 4: Every child has an equitable chance in life

UNICEF Morocco's social inclusion efforts contribute to policies and systems to reduce child poverty and vulnerability via support to the development of equity focused, child sensitive social protection policies and social spending, nationally and regionally.

Data and evidence generation

In 2018, emphasis was placed on the effective dissemination and use of the results of the study on multidimensional child poverty (National-MODA) produced in collaboration with the National Observatory of Human Development (ONDH), the Ministry of Social Development and UNICEF and published in late 2017. National and sub-national level advocacy efforts, including with the media, included extensive dissemination of the study. The data from this

study were used and cited by national partners in the Parliament.

With support from UNICEF, the World Health Organization and the UN Population Fund, in 2018 the preliminary report of the national survey on population and family health was finalised and disseminated. The report includes data and evidence on mother and child health.

UNICEF also supported outreach and advocacy based on relevant evidence from the evaluation of two social protection programmes targeting the most vulnerable, including children: the school social support program and the health insurance program for the economically poor. This data and evidence served as a basis for the launch of the update report for the situation analysis of children (SitAn) in Morocco, expected in 2019.

Social protection

In 2018, there were major advances in the social protection reform process. UNICEF supported the Ministry of General Affairs and Governance, to develop, via a participatory approach, comprehensive scenarios of social protection reform with some specific components on children, especially the most vulnerable. UNICEF also supported the Government to develop a specific response in terms of governance, targeting and funding for social protection reform.

To ensure a wide national public debate on all these scenarios for a harmonized and child-sensitive social protection system, the Ministry of General Affairs and Governance organized, with technical support from UNICEF and financial support from the European Union, the National Social Protection conference (assises). Under the high patronage of His Majesty the King of Morocco and the presidency of the head of government, the first National Social Protection assises were held in November 2018 in Rabat, with more than 600 participants and in collaboration with sister agencies of the United Nations and other international organizations such as the World Bank, Handicap International, the International Policy Center for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG from Brazil) and the European Union. International experiences, best practices lessons learned from other countries on social protection were shared. Recommendations were made supporting the adjustment of the scenarios of social protection reform. An integrated social protection policy will be developed.

Thanks to UNICEF's advocacy and technical support, social protection initiatives, such as the cash transfer programme TAYSSIR, with the objective to fight school drop-out, were extended.

Local governance

Technical support was provided in 2018 to validate the updated version of the Territorial Information System (SIC) and to validate the training package for the elaboration of the Communal Action Plan. This training package was produced with specific child sensitive modules on preparation of the process of PAC; the participative approach to be adopted; situation analysis tools; partnership and cooperation mechanisms; and monitoring and evaluation systems.

In 2018, in accordance with the decentralization reform in Morocco, a new partnership between UNICEF and the DRAA-TAFILALET Region was formalized. This partnership is the first one between UNICEF and sub-national elected instance. The partnership aims to reinforce the child sensitive evidence generation and analysis at local level; build capacity of elected officials and managers at decentralized level; and establish mechanisms to ensure effective participation of children and young people in the planning process.

Cross-cutting issues

Children on the move

In December 2018, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) was adopted in Marrakech. Leading up to this event, UNICEF Morocco supported global UNICEF efforts to ensure appropriate reflection of child rights in the Global Compact. UNICEF Morocco supported the establishment of UNICEF's relationship with the Global Forum on Migration and Development, co-chaired by the Moroccan Ministry of Migration for 2017-2018. This led to the Forum organizing, with UNICEF support, a three-day thematic workshop on 'Children and Youth on the Move: Implementing Sustainable Solutions' in Agadir, Morocco in June. This was the first time that the Forum hosted a child-specific event. The workshop was attended by more than 180 representatives from approximately 30 participating UN Member States, 8 Observers and 26 civil society and private sector organisations, together with 13 young people with migrant backgrounds from Germany, Italy, Morocco and the United Kingdom. The young delegates first came together to plan their contributions during a one-day, youth pre-meeting facilitated by UNICEF and the UN Major Group of Children and Young People

The workshop focused on informing the implementation of the Global Compact by identifying solutions to address priority issues for children and youth on the move. It served as a platform to positively influence the final text of the Global Compact (agreed upon one month later in July) regarding child rights. The workshop also led to the Forum's co-chaired parties committing to youth participation going forward, a commitment that was honoured with a young person being included in the opening session of the Forum summit in Marrakech in December.

During the Marrakech Migration week in December, UNICEF Morocco provided logistical and technical support for UNICEF's organizational presence and participation. This included the Youth Forum, attended by more than 160 young people from around the world, with support from UNICEF, the International Organization on Migration, and the UN Major Group of Children and Young People UNMGCY. The Youth Forum included the launch of the global UNICEF Youth Poll.

In 2018, UNICEF Morocco launched multi-sectoral (health, education, protection, justice) support to children on the move, with financial support from the European Union. Under the overall coordination of the Ministry of Migration, the three-year project aims to provide support in ensuring the best interests of the migrant child in decisions taken in their regard, and to ensure that migrant children, regardless of their legal status, have equitable access, education, health care, appropriate social and judicial care. It also aims to ensure that migrant children are sufficiently informed to understand their situation, are able to negotiate their interests and be consulted for decisions concerning their lives. The project's activities were integrated in UNICEF's workplans with the sectoral ministries, with results expected in 2019.

Leveraging for children

The Moroccan context of stability and a growing economy, coupled with ongoing reforms in the social sectors, offers opportunities to influence focus and resources for the benefit of children. UNICEF Morocco continued to use evidence-based advocacy and technical expertise to positively influence and leverage efforts and resources for children. In September, the King of Morocco launched the third phase of the National Human Development Initiative (INDH). The initiative, first launched in 2005, has the objective of 'ensuring a better distribution of the fruits of growth and to improve the living conditions of citizens.' UNICEF was consulted in the

planning of the third phase (2019-23) and provided evidence and guidance on the need to invest in children, especially in the early years and the second decade. This contributed to the third phase of the initiative having, for the first time, a specific focus on children. Entitled 'Boosting the next generation of human capital,' programme 4 of the third phase focuses on improving early childhood development and the education and transitions of adolescents. The programme has a budget of US\$600million over five years, 80 per cent of which will come from state resources. In 2019, UNICEF will aim to support the initiative in the implementation of programme 4, in collaboration with partners such as the World Bank.

Influenced by UNICEF-supported analysis of expenditure on social programmes, in 2018, the Government of Morocco increased its expenditure on the "Tayssir" programme, a conditional cash transfer aimed at reducing school drop-out, by US\$150million, allowing it to provide support to more than 2 million children (an increase from 706,000).

Gender

UNICEF Morocco contributed to the Gender Action Plan in the areas of quality maternal care, gender equality in learning and prevention of violence against girls and boys. Targeted programmatic areas included the girls' secondary education and skills. The ongoing situation analysis update, to be completed in 2019, has a specific chapter on the situation of the girl-child in Morocco. UNICEF Morocco actively participated in the inter-agency gender thematic group meetings and workshops for capacity building and gender analysis exercise. UNICEF also contributed to joint advocacy and social mobilization activities carried out in the scope of the 16 days of activism on violence against women and girls. Two digital campaigns were initiated by UNICEF for the 16 days of activism, reaching 28,537 followers on social media and generating 2,341 comments. In 2018, UNICEF Morocco designated an international professional staff member as gender focal point. A programmatic gender review with support from the Regional Office is anticipated as a part of the midterm review in 2019.

Life-course approach

The overall focus of the UNICEF Morocco Country Programme is on the two age groups that are currently most underserved, and among whom inequalities in development opportunities are largely manifested, namely, early childhood and adolescence. In 2018, UNICEF Morocco continued to focus on the second decade of life via its multi-sectoral programme FORSA - Opportunities for All. The five-year programme (2014-2019), with financial support from Canada, implements a model of integrated interventions in education, child protection and social inclusion. UNICEF Morocco and partners provide young people with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, capabilities and experiences to negotiate multiple life domains and become economically independent. In 2018, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the programme made advances in integrating life skills and citizenship education in the lower-secondary curriculum and in developing the second-chance school model. Alternative care pilots were developed in partnership with civil society to support vulnerable youth, including single mothers and those in contact with the law, in their transition to active economic life. This included the adaptation of life skills and citizenship education for vulnerable adolescents and youth in out-of-school situations. The social inclusion aspect of the programme complements the education and child protection efforts via data analysis and evidence generation. In 2018, in partnership with the National Human Development Observatory, UNICEF began an analysis of the situation of children and young people not in education, employment or training in Morocco. The study is a transversal and longitudinal analysis of the situation of those children and young people, using panel survey results to analyse the phenomenon of school drop-out in Morocco.

Early childhood development was integrated within UNICEF Morocco's four programme components and appeared as a specific element in workplans with government partners. In education, the focus was on supporting the Ministry of Education in the preschool generalization programme, which was launched in June 2018. In child protection, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development, parental education modules related to social norms and violence against children were developed. In health, the focus was on nutrition, in particular breastfeeding and the use of sufficiently iodized salt, and the implementation of a model for early childhood cognitive, socio-emotional and psychomotor development in one region, with the goal of informing scale-up in partnership with the Ministry of Health. In 2018, UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Health in the finalization of the Integrated Child Health Policy, which focuses on two crucial periods of the child's life through early childhood development and adolescence.

UNICEF technical support and advocacy efforts contributed to significant investment by institutional partners in early childhood development and adolescence. . UNICEF ensured internal inter-sectoral coordination on those two age groups via specific tasks forces for each that include matrix-managed accountability.

Humanitarian situations and preparedness

UNICEF Morocco did not engage in humanitarian response in 2018. Based on analysis of the risks in Morocco and considering national and regional capacities and UNICEF's comparative advantage, UNICEF Morocco put in place the mechanisms and systems to enable an effective and timely emergency response to humanitarian crisis in case it is required. All minimum preparedness requirements as per UNICEF Procedure on Preparedness for Emergency Response were completed.

Office growth

In 2018, UNICEF Morocco transitioned from a small- to a medium-sized office, with throughput doubling compared to 2017, to approximately US\$10million in utilization, and staff size growing to 39. In preparing for this transition, via the annual management plan, the establishment of proper chains of accountability and work flows within programme and operations were prioritized to ensure resources were efficiently and effectively managed. As a result, throughout 2018, UNICEF Morocco met UNICEF global key office performance indicators while growing significantly. Successful resource mobilization continued, with more than 70 per cent of the five-year Other Resources ceiling mobilized at the end of the second year. While the funding pipeline was strong overall, in 2019 special attention will need to be paid to under-resourced programme areas and those for which multi-year funding will come to an end.

Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

National reform process

The 2011 Constitution laid the foundation for a more open, democratic and modern society and continues to represent an unprecedented opportunity for the realization of child rights in Morocco. The Constitution recognizes the supremacy of international conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child over national laws, sets up independent monitoring bodies, and confirms that the State must provide equal protection and equal social and moral

consideration to all children, irrespective of their family situation. Within this framework, the Government launched justice, education, decentralization and social protection reforms in 2014-2015 that have been providing the space for renewed engagement with UNICEF to enhance investment in child well-being.

While the national reform process (particularly in the field of education, social protection and child rights monitoring) has generally provided for opportunities to advance child rights and position UNICEF strongly as the guardian of Convention on the Rights of the Child, its slow pace has affected the achievement of some of the targets set for the year. That has also brought to the surface the need for more strategic investment in national and local capacity building to address broader governance challenges.

In particular, the regionalization (decentralization) process, which has not advanced at the planned pace, has influenced slow progress on planned results for UNICEF. Experiences in 2018 showed that where UNICEF worked directly with regions, such as in the education sector, it greatly facilitated results. The challenge is how to replicate this model in sectors where the institutional decentralization process is not as advanced. Via the midterm review planned for 2019, UNICEF will reflect on how to better address this issue and explore partnerships with local entities such as regional councils.

In the justice sector, the process to ensure independence of the judiciary power from the executive has required more investment from UNICEF Morocco to match the new roles and responsibilities of stakeholders with the interventions of the programme and expected results for children. UNICEF engaged several stretch assignments and obtained a time-extension for the funding to address this issue.

Other constraints related to sensitive issues such as social norms related to violence against children and de-institutionalization. Progress was slow in those areas, with activities waiting for validation by institutional partners. Experience in 2018 showed that diversification of partnerships will be needed to advance work in such areas.

The role that UNICEF played in the social protection reform process in 2018 merits special attention. UNICEF supported the Ministry of General Affairs and Governance to lead the reform process and provided technical assistance, with financial support from the European Union. UNICEF is at the very heart of this reform process, with an influential role, and excellent visibility. The King's throne speech in July directly referred to the findings and recommendations put forward in UNICEF's work. As advised by UNICEF Regional Office and Headquarters colleagues, UNICEF Morocco needs to strike a balance between a convening and an influencing role, and it is not always easy to reconcile the two. Going forward, UNICEF Morocco will need to prioritise which aspects of the reform agenda it will focus on in greater detail, and which elements it will leverage others (such as the International Labour Organization or the World Bank) to take the lead on. It makes sense for UNICEF to focus particularly on the aspects of the reform agenda that deal with children and with vulnerable population categories, including children on the move.

Partnerships

The Moroccan context, which includes the Government, civil society and constitutional entities reporting directly to the Palace, and an increased focus on decentralization, requires continuous investment in a high number of strategic partnerships. UNICEF is well positioned in that regard and has been able to build good relations with both the Government and the royal

circle (advisors, foundations and non-governmental organizations chaired by members of the royal family). This supported the achievement of both direct and leveraged results for children in 2018. The management of those relationships and partnerships needs constant attention, as power mapping in the country is dynamic and must be closely followed if UNICEF is to continue to maintain its influence. The high number of partnerships (there were 19 active workplans in 2018), while necessary, also carries risks related to UNICEF's ability to maintain high quality collaboration and keep transaction and time costs at reasonable levels.

Results were constrained in areas where partnerships need to be strengthened and/or diversified. Especially for child protection system strengthening, UNICEF will need to diversify its partnerships to accelerate results. The Country Programme with the national government concentrates on improving national systems for providing services. Parallel interventions with respect to knowledge, attitudes and practices and levels of empowerment, as well as action at the local level or specific actions for disadvantaged groups, also act as vehicles of change. To deliver results in those areas, partnerships with subnational actors, civil society and academia need to be further strengthened. There have been significant delays in workplan signatures for the work on public finance for children and decentralization. UNICEF may not yet be seen as a partner of choice for those areas, but perhaps can have an important role to play in leveraging resources for children.

Resource mobilization

UNICEF Morocco successfully mobilized resources, with more than 70 per cent of the Other Resources ceiling on hand at the end of the second year of the 5-year programme cycle. The ability to convey to potential financial partners how the fulfilment of child rights contributes to dividends such as stability, reduction in population movements/migration, preventing/combating violent extremism has been key to that success. UNICEF will need to continue to strengthen this argument and encourage funding that aims to strengthen systems for all vulnerable children, while taking into account the populations in particular need. While the funding pipeline is strong overall, in 2019 special attention will need to be paid to under-resourced programme areas and those for which multi-year funding will come to an end.

Private sector fundraising is a promising trend, but there has been no formal exploration of untapped opportunities. UNICEF Morocco has had only a few experiences with private sector donors to date, but they have been positive. The potential for private sector fundraising and corporate social responsibility in support of programme interventions needs to be explored with the support of PFP.

Office growth and operations

In 2018, UNICEF Morocco transitioned from a small- to a medium-sized office, with throughput doubling as compared to 2017, to approximately US\$10 million in utilization and staff size growing to 39. This growth presented several challenges that will need continued attention going forward. These include the fact that there is an increased accountability to donors as non-core budget has grown and a need to show tangible results in a traditionally upstream context. The growth also resulted in a need for effective technical onboarding of new staff and for staff heading growing sections to shift roles from specialists to managers. UNICEF also needs to ensure that growth is aligned between programme and operations.

Transfers to counterparts make up the largest portion of expenditures (approximately 50 per cent in 2018), followed by staff costs (25 per cent), contractual service (10 per cent), general operations (8 per cent), supplies (3 per cent), and travel (3 per cent). The vast majority of

transfers to counterparts were via direct cash transfers (92 per cent), followed by direct payment (6 per cent) and reimbursement (2 per cent). UNICEF Morocco made considerable progress in the timely liquidation of direct cash transfers, meeting organizational benchmarks for most of 2018, despite significant increase in throughput. Long-standing liquidation bottlenecks with UNICEF Morocco's were resolved thanks to dedicated capacity building of partners and close monitoring. However, some issues remained and will require continued focus, especially with new partners.

These lessons learned and constraints will feed into UNICEF Morocco's midterm review process, planned for 2019.

END/