

### Executive Summary

**Achievements:** In August, the region was reconfirmed as polio-free. The Ministry of Health's effective response to the 2010 polio outbreak, with support from UNICEF and others, was critical in realizing this achievement. UNICEF provided vaccines and social mobilization.

UNICEF successfully demonstrated a sustainable model of early learning, opening an additional 50 ECD centers in 2011 and developing a financing model for scaling up. In October, the Government approved a programme which plans the establishment of 150 local government-funded ECD centers in 30 districts. This scaling-up success will significantly boost access to early learning.

A productive partnership was established with the Ministry of Finance, resulting in enhanced public financial management capacity in all districts in 2011. UNICEF will build on this partnership to maximize the benefits of public spending for children.

**Shortfalls:** UNICEF Tajikistan's decentralized approach to programme implementation needs improvement. Support for the 12 priority districts does not yet add up to a coherent package. The capacity of local authorities along with M&E arrangements to track the impact of the approach both need strengthening. UNICEF will address these issues in 2012 to ensure that children in disadvantaged districts benefit from this approach.

The Girls' Education project experienced delays with regard to the introduction of a social benefit scheme. This was due to a lack of consensus with the Government and development partners on the principal challenges of girls' education and the best policy response to address these. Evidence gathered in 2011 as part of the Out-of-School Children Study will be used in 2012 to strengthen advocacy on girls' education.

One of UNICEF Tajikistan's principal concerns is about HIV/AIDS in children and about the apparent growth in hospital-based infections. Going forward, there is a need for greater engagement on the part of the Government to investigate and address nosocomial HIV infections. Funding for Pediatric AIDS is limited in the current GFATM round for Tajikistan and the cancellation of the next GFATM round means that resources for this area will remain scarce. UNICEF will continue its advocacy on Pediatric AIDS in 2012.

**Partnerships:** UNICEF fully participated in the intensified coordination between the Government and development partners through the Development Coordination Council (DCC). As a follow-up to the December 2010 Development Forum, detailed action plans were developed and used to track progress in policy reform in key sectors. UNICEF was centrally involved in the education, health and social protection sectors. The quality of the policy dialogue between the Government and its development partners has improved.

The Country Office intensified its collaboration with the World Bank (WB). In education, UNICEF and the WB co-lead the Education Donor Group and closely collaborate on the Fast Track Initiative/Global Partnership for Education. There was also good cooperation on nutrition, where joint analytical work was continued and UNICEF leveraged WB resources by providing a programmatic steer for WB nutrition interventions. UNICEF and the World Bank also coordinated their work on public financial management reforms and on social protection.

In response to the 2010 polio outbreak, UNICEF partnered with Operation Mercy, Handicap International and the Ministry of Health to start a community-based rehabilitation project. The project provided much needed support to polio victims, but also opened up discussions with the Government on how best to promote community-based services for children with disability in general.

### Country Situation

**Economy:** Tajikistan felt a considerable impact of the global economic downturn in 2008/9. Economic growth fell to 3.9% in 2009. Kroeger and Meier (2011)<sup>[1]</sup> find that the crisis resulted in a reduction in labour market participation, a reduction in regular wage employment, and an increase in daily contract labour and unpaid family work. Men and women were affected differently – the probability of women being in regular wage employment decreased by 20%, compared to 8% for men. A timely policy response and sound macroeconomic management helped Tajikistan recover relatively swiftly at the macro-economic level. Economic growth rose to 6.5% in 2010, and to an estimated 7% in 2011. Strong growth in remittance inflows has driven the rise in economic activity, especially in the services sector. However, the country continues to face challenges related to inflation, unemployment, food insecurity, high dependence on remittance inflows, inequality and vulnerability to external shocks.

**Poverty:** Tajikistan remains the poorest country in the region despite a reduction in poverty rates from 83% to 47.2% between 1999 and 2009. Recent analysis indicates that the rate of poverty reduction has slowed, and extreme poverty remains nearly unchanged at 17.5%. In rural areas, extreme poverty increased from 16.4% in 2007 to 17.5% in 2009. This could be due to the consequences of the global economic crisis and the associated decline in remittances. Households with a large number of children have a higher incidence of poverty. Female-headed households are considerably poorer, highlighting the importance of women's economic empowerment. There is a risk that the gains of poverty alleviation will be partly reversed, as economic growth remains largely dependent on the external environment. This is particularly the case when it comes to the status of the economy in Russia, which is the destination of 90% of labor migrants, and the country's ability to overcome chronic energy shortages in the winter period.

**Labor migration:** Tajikistan's economy is heavily dependent on remittances which were equivalent to 31% of the GDP in 2010, the highest share in the world (World Bank 2011). A recent UNICEF study on the impact of migration on children left behind finds that increased household income due to remittances plays a significant role in facilitating access to healthcare and education for migrant households. The study finds a positive impact of remittances on children's perceived nutritional status, food diversity, morbidity, as well as school attendance and years of schooling. This is particularly true for households where the migrant continues to send remittances, whereas in abandoned households, children score significantly worse on all socio-economic parameters. The social costs of migration can be high due to family disintegration and lack of parental care. Evidence from both qualitative and quantitative research showed that children left behind had the tendency to become withdrawn, sad and depressed. This was more common with girls than boys and particularly pronounced for children in abandoned households. Moreover, depression in abandoned households sometimes extends to mothers who have to deal with the burden of raising their children alone (UNICEF, 2011).

**Nutrition and food security:** The 2009 Micro-Nutrient Survey supported by UNICEF Tajikistan highlighted that the nutritional status of children and women remains a concern, with nearly a third of children under five stunted and considerable levels of anemia and iodine deficiency in women and children. This situation is further complicated by food insecurity. Large parts of the country are classified by WFP as facing an acute food and livelihoods crisis. There has been considerable food price inflation throughout 2011, with prices for wheat increasing 29%, for rice 20% and for meat 33%. Fuel prices also rose sharply over the year (diesel - 49%). The severe winter weather of 2011-2012 aggravated the situation and the early cold and snow forced rural people to start using their food stocks earlier than usual. This will have an adverse impact on the food security of those relying mainly on home production and will put pressure on the prices of main food commodities.

**Immunity against vaccine-preventable diseases:** In 2010, following the world's biggest Polio outbreak in Tajikistan, the Government requested WHO to conduct a sero-survey to determine levels of immunity against major vaccine-preventable diseases, such as Polio, Diphtheria, Measles and Rubella. The results (yet unpublished) indicate that 47.3% of the country's population (1-24 years of age) are not fully protected against Diphtheria. Protection is low amongst the 10-19 years age group, with 63% not fully protected. Immunity to polio virus type 3 was identified as low at the time of the survey, but immunity is

likely to have improved dramatically with the special immunization activities of 2010/11. The Government is planning a diphtheria campaign in 2012 and UNICEF will support this effort.

**Social Protection:** Tajikistan's Social Protection system is in need of desperate reform. Existing social benefits are cumbersome to administer, poorly targeted and generally too small to effectively protect the intended beneficiaries. The World Bank and the EU are collaborating with the Government on Social Protection reforms and piloting a new means-tested social benefit scheme to combat poverty. UNICEF will closely follow these reforms to monitor impact.

**Sub-regional tension:** Relations with Uzbekistan remain strained, largely owing to Tajikistan's plans to build Roghun hydroelectricity plant which Uzbekistan fears could disrupt the flow of water needed for irrigation (EIU, 2011). Blockage of rail traffic by Uzbekistan along the border with Tajikistan has further aggravated tensions and affected the entry of essential commodities into the country.

**Corruption:** In its 2011 Perceptions of Corruption Index, Transparency International ranked Tajikistan 152nd out of the 183 countries assessed. Tajikistan received a score of 2.3 on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (very clean).

**Natural disasters:** Tajikistan is uniquely prone to natural disasters as a result of its location along a rift and with 93% of its land consisting of mountains. While the country did not experience any major emergencies, about 120 smaller natural disasters hit Tajikistan in 2011, causing 11 casualties (CoES, 2011). Damage caused by these disasters has been estimated at 43 million TJS (about US\$9 million).

[1] Kroeger, A. and K. Meier (2011). 'Employment and the Financial Crisis: Evidence from Tajikistan', [http://pagesperso.dial.prd.fr/dial\\_pagesperso/dial\\_eve\\_shocks/pdf/61\\_Kroeger.pdf](http://pagesperso.dial.prd.fr/dial_pagesperso/dial_eve_shocks/pdf/61_Kroeger.pdf) [1 August 2011]

### **Who are the deprived children in your country context?**

Tajikistan is the poorest country in the CEE/CIS region. It has significant manifestations of inequality, with higher levels of deprivation for certain districts and categories such as children with disabilities, children in institutions, children without parental care, children living in remote or mountainous areas, children in abandoned families, working children and children on the street, children from minority groups (such as Roma), and children living with HIV/AIDS.

Households with a large number of children have a higher incidence of poverty which results in the necessity for children to work and the inability to pay for school-related costs. Gender inequality is pervasive. Early marriage is oftentimes seen as more desirable for girls than pursuing their studies. Traditional gender values are particularly pervasive where poverty is acute.

When it comes to children with disabilities, they experience a lack of appropriate services that would allow them to flourish in a family environment, in addition to encountering stigma and discrimination. Institutionalization remains the preferred option. The education system is still far from inclusive.

Geographic conditions have an important effect on poverty, and children living in geographically remote and mountainous areas are more vulnerable. This is particularly the case because of difficulties in accessing appropriate services.

A particular concern is the growing number families who are 'abandoned' by a migrating parent. Such families are particularly vulnerable since they suffer the drawbacks of family disruption without the compensatory positive effect of remittances. Abandonment by migrant laborers contributes to the rapidly rising divorce rate in Tajikistan, with adverse effects on children.

### **Data/Evidence**

UNICEF Tajikistan integrates equity considerations into all its research, data collection and analysis. Major studies supported by the CO disaggregate data by sex, age, rural/urban and geographical location (province level only) wherever possible to identify the most disadvantaged groups. Studies such as the Migration Study, the Suicide Study, and the Out-of-School Children Study consider in detail which categories of children are most vulnerable and how their vulnerability manifests itself.

In 2011, the CO conducted a comprehensive Situation Analysis of Women and Children, with a focus on equity issues. The SitAn points out that the links between disparities in household wealth and outcomes for children and women in Tajikistan are not uniform. In some areas, such as immunization, differences in vaccination coverage across poverty quintiles are minimal. Conversely, nutritional outcomes and access to health and education are strongly correlated with household income. For example, the rate of stunting among children under five in Tajikistan is significantly correlated with the food security status: 24% of children in food insecure households are stunted, compared to 14% in food secure households. Household wealth also has an important effect on the uptake of antenatal services and on child mortality.

As part of the regional TransMonee initiative, UNICEF supported the Agency on Statistics to conduct an assessment of the feasibility of data collection for the newly disaggregated indicators in TransMonee aimed at monitoring disparities related to child rights. The assessment showed that the quality of data, data flow, and inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms for data dissemination remain a challenge in Tajikistan.

### **Monitoring Mechanism**

UNICEF employs various monitoring and evaluation tools to track the situation of children and women, as summarized in the multi-year and annual IMEP. In all M&E efforts, equity considerations are reflected and data are disaggregated for specific disadvantaged categories of children wherever possible.

The Situation Analysis commissioned in 2011 takes stock of research, surveys and studies conducted in the last several years to describe the status of children and women's rights in Tajikistan. The Terms of Reference for the SitAn specifies the need to investigate which children are particularly disadvantaged when it comes to the realization of their rights.

Since 2010, UNICEF has employed a decentralized approach to programme implementation and has a direct partnership with local authorities in 12 priority districts. Involvement of three field monitors proved to be efficient in monitoring UNICEF interventions and the situation of children in these districts. The creation of a district level cross-sectoral database also helps sharpen the analysis of the impact of UNICEF's programmatic interventions on disparities. The CO continues to build local capacity to collect, analyze and utilize data regarding children and women.

The CO has supported the development of the TojikInfo website which serves as a platform for child-related data. UNICEF is now considering how best to institutionalize TojikInfo in collaboration with the Agency on Statistics and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade's PRS monitoring unit.

A Demographic and Health Survey planned for 2012 will add to the understanding of equity issues facing children in Tajikistan. MICS modules could not be fully integrated into the DHS and the CO is considering how best to respond to the resulting data gap.

Thematic studies also allow UNICEF to better understand equity concerns. Examples include the Study on Out-of-School Children, the Migration Study and the Juvenile Justice Assessment.

### **Support to National Planning**

UNICEF, the wider UN family and other development agencies recognize the importance of strengthening

the national monitoring and evaluation system. Various donors support the improvement of sectoral management information systems. A range of donors support the Agency on Statistics and the PRS Monitoring Unit of MEDT.

USAID together with Macro International provides support to the Agency on Statistics which was selected as the national implementing agency for DHS. The World Bank supported the Agency in creating the National Strategy for Statistical Development and is willing to support its implementation. UNICEF also incorporated its M&E strengthening activities into the Strategy. The World Bank also provides technical support to the AS in improving the methodology for conducting Household Budget Surveys. The Asian Development Bank provides support to the AS in improving gender statistics.

WB, UNDP and UNICEF supported the PRS Monitoring Unit of MEDT.

UNICEF will pursue a stronger partnership with the Agency on Statistics and the PRS monitoring unit of the MEDT as the former is in charge of the national management of statistics, while the latter is the lead agency in monitoring and reporting on the country's development strategies.

The UN, including UNICEF, increasingly employs services of the research-focused national NGOs for the evaluation of progress or impact of development programmes and policies. The capacity of these NGOs in conducting surveys and studies is increasing.

There is a need for improved coordination amongst development partners in the strengthening of national M&E capacity. The UNDAF M&E framework may serve as a platform for that purpose.

### **Any other relevant information related to data/evidence?**

None to report.

## **Country Programme Analytical Overview**

In 2012, UNICEF Tajikistan will continue to strengthen its **decentralized approach to programme implementation**. This strategy was introduced with the new country programme in 2010 to deliver resources to the most deprived districts and make a tangible difference to children's lives. Entering the third year of the country programme, UNICEF has realized that, while solid partnerships have been developed with the twelve priority districts, there is opportunity to strengthen the approach. While resources are increasingly directed at the 12 disadvantaged priority districts, they do not yet add up to a coherent package of support. Also, capacity constraints in local authorities lead to implementation being slow and fraught with difficulties. Furthermore, shortcomings remain in the monitoring and evaluation arrangements that can enable UNICEF to track the impact of the decentralized programme approach.

The Country Office will also pursue two cross-cutting office priorities more strongly: **children with disability** and **early childhood development**. In the first two years of implementation, children with disability were solely seen as a concern for the child protection section of UNICEF Tajikistan. Starting in 2012, all programme sections will be expected to integrate concerns regarding children with disability into their work plans, and to demonstrate how work in their sector will benefit this category of children who are faced with multiple deprivations. Similarly, early childhood development will be treated as a cross-office priority. The Country Office had become too narrowly focused on early learning so from 2012 onwards, a broader range of early childhood development interventions will be supported.

UNICEF Tajikistan aims to **expand partnerships to promote child rights** in 2012. Collaboration with the National Commission on Child Rights was already strengthened in 2011 and will be further intensified in

2012. A partnership with the Ombudsman's office will also be further strengthened. A new collaborative partnership will be explored with the Parliament.

The Country Office will intensify its **communication for development** work. UNICEF will position itself even more strategically as information broker and will make more intensive use of internet and social networks to support this work. Campaigns will be more balanced and extend beyond a one-way push of advocacy and social mobilization messages to include more interactive and interpersonal communication.

### Effective Advocacy

*Mostly met benchmarks*

UNICEF Tajikistan led development partners in their engagement with the Ministry of Education on the finalization of the **National Strategy for Education Development (NSED) up to 2020**. This included technical and financial support, intensive liaising with other development partners, and the provision of consolidated comments on various drafts of the strategy. Advocacy focused on the incorporation of key issues into the strategy (girls' education, disaster reduction, early learning, etc.) as well as on delaying the rushed expansion to a twelve year system of education, which in the view of donors was premature and ill-prepared. Joint advocacy was successful in delaying the transition to a twelve year system of education and the majority of priorities set out by development partners were incorporated into the strategy.

UNICEF successfully demonstrated a low-cost, sustainable alternative to **early learning access** in Tajikistan. Based on the finding that the Soviet Kindergarten model is neither appropriate nor affordable in the context of Tajikistan today, UNICEF worked in its priority districts to establish community-based early learning centers. While UNICEF covers the initial investment to establish the centers, recurring costs are borne by parental contributions and, in some cases, by local authorities. Parents' demand for early learning services has proven to be high. Impressed with the approach promoted by UNICEF, the Government has decided to replicate and scale up this model through a new central programme for early learning and school readiness. In addition, local authorities have indicated their willingness to scale up investments in early childhood development, which can be seen as an advocacy breakthrough.

UNICEF built on its community-based rehabilitation project with Operation Mercy, Handicap International and the Ministry of Health to intensify policy debate on **children with disability**. At the end of the year, UNICEF organized a national roundtable on community-based rehabilitation with the National Commission on Child Rights. The roundtable was attended by government officials, disabled people's organizations, associations of parents of children with disabilities, international NGOs and development partners. The roundtable was a major advocacy effort to gain support for the scaling up of community-based rehabilitation. More generally, it served to highlight the rights of children with disabilities.

### Changes in Public Policy

Concerted advocacy efforts from development partners, with a strong lead role from UNICEF, convinced the Government to postpone the **transition to a 12-year education system**, which in the view of development partners was hasty and ill-prepared.

The Government **lowered the age of enrolment in grade 1** from 7 to 6 years of age, which is a change that many stakeholders involved in early childhood development and education had been advocating for. The Government also launched a new **programme on early learning and school readiness** which supports UNICEF's aim to drastically scale up access to early childhood development centers.

As a result of advocacy by UNICEF and other development partners, the Government has agreed to initiate **early infant diagnosis of HIV**. Previously, the Ministry of Health only considered the confirmation of HIV status of infants at 18 months. Advocacy focused on the WHO guidance that HIV can be diagnosed as early as two months. Support for the introduction of early infant diagnosis of HIV will start in 2012.

The Government decree introducing a **social benefit for children living with HIV/AIDS**, issued in May 2010, came into force on 1 January 2011. While earlier advocacy efforts focused on the introduction of the social benefit, in 2011, the Country Office worked closely with relevant parts of the Government to ensure satisfactory implementation of the new provision. This included further advocacy as well as capacity strengthening.

As a result of UNICEF advocacy, the **Ministry of Justice established a Juvenile Justice Unit** which is expected to play a critical role in promoting juvenile justice reforms in the country.

### Leveraging Resources

UNICEF's successful demonstration of a low-cost, alternative model of early learning has unlocked **government resources for the expansion of early learning access**. Under the newly approved government programme on early childhood development and school readiness, an additional 150 centers will be established with local government funding in 30 districts.

UNICEF leveraged **World Bank resources for nutrition** by providing programmatic guidance to World Bank interventions in nutrition in Khatlon Oblast in Southern Tajikistan, based on its understanding of the nutritional status of women and children in the country. The value of the World Bank intervention is approximately US\$2.8 million.

The Country Office frequently advocates for other development partners to make investments in the social sectors to the benefit of children. In 2011, this included advocacy with the **German Government** regarding support for polio interventions in Tajikistan, with the **Islamic Development Bank** regarding the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and girls' education, and with the **Asian Development Bank** on intensifying their support for education in general. Discussions were also initiated with the **Russian Federation** regarding support for the health sector in Tajikistan.

## Capacity Development

*Fully met benchmarks*

Capacity building is a core programme strategy for UNICEF Tajikistan. The following achievements in capacity building during 2011 merit highlighting:

**Neonatal care:** The National Mother and Child Health Coordination Council supported by UNICEF was instrumental in the finalization and approval of the first ever five clinical protocols on neonatal care. Once approved, a "cascading" capacity building of medical professionals at central and regional levels was rolled out. More than 100 medical staff involved in neonatal care from across the country have already been trained with UNICEF support. The training provided medical staff with new knowledge and skills which will improve neonatal care services. However, limited resources had an impact on the timely availability of printed protocols at all healthcare institutions and delayed follow-up trainings.

**Pediatric AIDS:** Tajikistan still lacks well-qualified expertise in the administration of anti-retroviral (ARV)

therapy to children living with HIV/AIDS and in the management of pediatric opportunistic infections. In 2011, UNICEF supported capacity building of twelve pediatricians who work with children living with HIV/AIDS. Seven of them received "hands-on" training on the premises of the Kiev Children's Hospital in Ukraine which specializes in the treatment of Pediatric AIDS cases.

**Juvenile Justice Training Needs Assessment:** A juvenile justice training needs assessment was conducted as part of an EU-funded UNICEF Regional Office project to support juvenile justice reforms in eight countries, including Tajikistan. In 2012, as follow-up to this needs assessment, three trainers will be identified and trained to work with the police, prosecutors and judges, incorporating juvenile justice training into their regular in-service training programmes.

**PFM training:** In 2011, the Country Office successfully completed a project with the Ministry of Finance in which staff of all of the 73 finance departments throughout the country acquired skills in finance operating systems, budget planning and execution and performance indicators in the social sector. This project is a major contribution towards ensuring that the Government budget at national and local levels has the maximum possible impact on children. In 2012, the Country Office will build on these achievements with a follow-up project with the Ministry of Finance.

**Financial management capacity of implementing partners:** Wherever possible, UNICEF Tajikistan uses Direct Cash Transfers to support the work of implementing partners as the preferred modality of assistance. In this modality, the implementing partners' own procedures for procurement and financial accounting are used whenever warranted, which helps to limit the burden of assistance on their organizational capacity. As a rule, implementing partners are assessed for their financial management capacity. The level of risk is identified and appropriate capacity building measures are specified as part of UNICEF's assurance mechanisms.

### Communication For Development

*Mostly met benchmarks*

Communication for Development continued to be an important programme strategy for UNICEF Tajikistan in 2011. The main C4D activities that were implemented in 2011 were:

- **Polio communication and social mobilization campaign:** To support the response to the 2010 polio outbreak, UNICEF organized a nationwide communication and social mobilization campaign which aimed to raise the population's awareness of the national immunization exercise against polio and convince parents and caregivers to vaccinate their children. The campaign specifically targeted isolated and hard-to-reach population groups, such as ethnic minorities and people living in mountainous, difficult to reach areas. The communication channels used included television and radio, banners, posters, and leaflets, as well as interpersonal communication (IPC) through mobile teams of health workers, religious leaders, volunteers and teachers in communities, hospitals, schools and mosques. Based on the lessons learned during the previous immunization rounds, emphasis was placed on reaching target audiences through health workers, TV and radio spots, religious leaders and IEC materials. The communication and social mobilization campaigns were instrumental in ensuring near universal coverage during the national immunization days.

- **Girls' Education Campaign:** To support UNICEF's work with the Ministry of Education and local authorities to promote girls' completion of the full compulsory education cycle, a nationwide communication and social mobilization campaign was initiated in October 2011. This is one element of UNICEF's girls' education strategy which addresses both supply and demand-side obstacles to girls' education. The campaign was launched jointly by the Representative and the Minister of Education. Posters and leaflets for students and parents were distributed, banners and billboards were displayed, radio and TV spots were

aired nationwide, and special TV programmes were broadcast. In regional centers, roundtable discussions were held and project schools participated in key activities. The campaign helped to emphasize the importance of girls' education and made a contribution towards building a critical mass of support for the cause of equal rights to education for boys and girls.

**- Hand-washing Campaign:** UNICEF Tajikistan organized a national hand-washing campaign leading up to the global hand-washing day in October 2011. Four cartoons were developed and aired on TV channels and on large media projectors in the streets of Dushanbe. The cartoons proved to be very popular with children. The campaign was also supported by a range of IEC materials. An agreement was reached with one of the leading mobile phone service providers to send out SMS messages to support the campaign.

**- Breastfeeding Campaign:** UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health in organizing the annual ten days for Breastfeeding in August 2011. Communication materials produced included banners, posters, fliers and TV spots. More than 90,000 women of childbearing age and over 1,000 primary healthcare workers were reached through the communication campaign.

**- Promotion of the Infant and Young Child Feeding Guidebook for Parents:** After the approval of the National Infant and Young Child Feeding Guidebook for Parents by the National MCH Coordination Council, UNICEF produced over 80,000 copies of the booklet. These will be distributed to families with newborns, primarily in the twelve UNICEF priority districts.

### Service Delivery

*Fully met benchmarks*

**Polio immunization:** In 2011, the rigorous response to the 2010 polio outbreak continued. The Government, supported by UNICEF and other partners, ensured the polio-free status of the region by organizing two more immunization rounds. The engagement of hundreds of health workers in Polio immunization days provided opportunities for UNICEF staff to enhance their capacity and skills in safe vaccination, planning and monitoring of immunization services. This has boosted their capacity not only to respond to outbreaks, but also to ensure good coverage of routine immunization services. UNICEF's focus is now shifting to supporting the Government in its routine immunization programme. Despite the successful polio response, the country must remain vigilant for as long as the Poliovirus is circulating freely in neighboring countries such as Afghanistan.

**Wedding package:** In 2011, UNICEF supported the local authority of Isfara district in Soghd Oblast to implement a 'wedding package' – an initiative to improve the nutritional status of first-time mothers. The 'wedding package' includes one pack of iodized salt, soap, information and education materials on maternal nutrition, breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding as well as a greeting card from the head of district. Training was conducted among health workers, jamoat leaders and staff of civil registration departments in four jamoats of the district. The packages were distributed to all jamoats. So far, 450 packages were distributed to newlyweds. A database was established to track the nutritional status in the district and to assess the impact of the initiative. In 2012, UNICEF plans to scale up this intervention to other priority districts.

**Early learning:** Access to early learning is extremely limited in Tajikistan. Less than 10% of children attend a pre-school facility. Those who attend are predominantly from urban areas and middle class backgrounds and there is a bias in favor of boys. The Soviet model of state kindergartens is both unaffordable and inappropriate in Tajikistan today. UNICEF has made a major contribution towards expanding access to early learning by demonstrating a low-cost, sustainable alternative model for early learning. In 2010-11, UNICEF opened 100 ECD centers in priority districts. This initiative was very well

received and is now replicated by the Government under the new state programme on early childhood development and school readiness. Several local authorities have shown their willingness to financially contribute to the expansion of this new model of early learning.

**Community-based rehabilitation:** Children with disabilities are faced with an almost complete lack of community-based services that would allow them to flourish in their own family environment. In response to the 2010 polio outbreak, UNICEF partnered with Operation Mercy, Handicap International and the Ministry of Health to initiate a community-based rehabilitation project. This was expanded to cover not only polio victims, but also children with disabilities more generally. This project has become an entry point for policy discussions on the establishment of comprehensive social care services for children with disabilities and other vulnerable children. In a severely resource-constrained environment like Tajikistan, low cost alternatives that make use of community-level skills and resources are an attractive option for scaling up service delivery.

### Strategic Partnerships

*Mostly met benchmarks*

UNICEF fully participated in the intensified coordination efforts between the Government and development partners united in the **Development Coordination Council (DCC)**. As a follow-up to policy priorities agreed between the Government and development partners at the December 2010 Development Forum, in 2011, detailed action plans were developed and used to track progress in policy reform in key sectors. UNICEF was centrally involved in the education, health and social protection sectors. This process has intensified and raised the quality of policy dialogue between the Government and its development partners.

The Country Office continued and intensified its positive collaboration with the **World Bank**. In the education sector, UNICEF and the World Bank co-lead the Education Donor Group and collaborate closely on the Fast Track Initiative/Global Partnership for Education. There was also a productive partnership on nutrition where joint analytical work was continued and UNICEF leveraged World Bank resources for nutrition by providing programmatic guidance for a World Bank programme. UNICEF and the World Bank also coordinated their work on public financial management reforms and on social protection.

In response to the 2010 Polio outbreak, UNICEF partnered with **Operation Mercy, Handicap International and the Ministry of Health** to start a community-based rehabilitation project which also extended to other children with disabilities. The project provided much needed support to polio victims, but also opened up discussions with the Government on how best to promote community-based services for children with disability.

In 2010, a joint MoU with **GIZ** was signed for the period 2010-2011 which sets out how the two organizations will collaborate to promote improved quality neonatal care in the country. As per the MoU, in 2011, UNICEF supported the National MCH Coordination Council – a ministerial coordination body led by the First Deputy Minister of Health that is instrumental in the development, approval and dissemination of MCH policies and guidelines in the country. This year alone, this partnership resulted in five new protocols on neonatal care being approved. The MCH Council also serves as a permanent platform for reporting on and coordinating all MCH activities. UNICEF and GIZ also coordinated their capacity building efforts in neonatal care. In 2012, UNICEF and GIZ are planning to renew their MoU.

### Mobilizing Partners

UNICEF Tajikistan is intensifying its collaboration with the **National Commission on Child Rights** which

brings together key stakeholders from across the Government and is a powerful mobilizing body for partnerships in support of children's rights. In 2011, the Country Office already successfully collaborated with the Commission to bring together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss the way forward in juvenile justice reforms and in building a comprehensive social care system for children with disabilities. The Country Office will build on these achievements in 2012. To this aim, UNICEF will be considering how best to boost the capacity of the Commission which has limited permanent staff capacity.

UNICEF aims to initiate work with **Parliament** to ensure MPs are aware of child rights issues in Tajikistan and to obtain their support in raising awareness of children's issues and analyzing policy from a children's perspective. Mobilizing interested MPs for child rights issues is a potentially powerful strategy for furthering child rights in Tajikistan.

There is an active **women's movement** in Tajikistan, including a large coalition of NGOs that focus on gender equality. UNICEF has initiated work with this coalition to promote the cause of girls' education. The partnership with this network will be further intensified in 2012 and used for advocacy efforts related to girls' education.

### Knowledge Management

*Partially met benchmarks*

**Information relevant to UNICEF's implementing partners** is shared routinely in the course of programme implementation. The Country Office ensures that its programmatic advice and guidance to implementing partners is always based on state-of-the-art thinking and informed by a sound understanding of international norms and standards. Examples of this in 2011 include the guidance to the Ministry of Health regarding neonatal care protocols and infant and young child feeding. As such, UNICEF acts as a key knowledge broker when it comes to information on child rights and child-focused programme interventions. Networking meetings supported by UNICEF, such as the Central Asia Child Protection Forum and the Pediatric AIDS stocktaking meeting in 2011, are additional examples of how the organization promotes learning and information sharing on child-related topics.

UNICEF Tajikistan **worked closely with local universities and research-focused NGOs** to conduct research on child rights in 2011. The study on suicide in Sughd Oblast was carried out by Columbia University in collaboration with Tajik National University and Khujand State University. The study on the impact of migration on families left behind was conducted by Oxford Policy Management working with Sharq research NGO. The advantage of partnering international and national research organizations is that this contributes to capacity enhancement of the local partner and promotes greater understanding and appreciation of child rights issues in Tajik civil society. The participatory Youth Study on the quality of education went one step further by directly engaging young people to conduct the research and contribute to its analysis. The participating youth felt empowered and involved as a result of their role and were ready to work on a variety of follow-up actions.

**Dissemination of research findings** is usually done through a launch workshop for the report in question, printing and distribution of the report, an executive summary in English, Tajik or Russian, and a press release or other media work. The study on the impact of migration on families left behind received much attention and good press coverage following its launch.

UNICEF also contributes to the **dissemination of global information** on child rights. For example, in 2011, the Country Office translated the State of the World's Children executive summary and the Call to End Placement of Children Under 3 in Institutions into Tajik and widely disseminated these publications. The Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Right of the Child's 2010 session on Tajikistan were

also translated and will be widely disseminated in 2012. Work with the Tajik National University to develop child rights course material for law students is another example of UNICEF's contribution to the understanding of child rights in Tajikistan.

The Country Office needs to make additional efforts to ensure **optimal use of the internet and social networking** to promote knowledge sharing on child rights issues. One of the ways it plans to do this is by revamping its website and establishing a presence on key social networks.

### Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation

#### *Mostly met benchmarks*

In 2011, UNICEF Tajikistan intensified its collaboration with the National Commission for Child Rights. One specific follow-up action was the translation into Tajik of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Tajikistan's periodic report under the CRC in 2010. The concluding observations have been widely used in UNICEF's advocacy, particularly in relation to the rights of children with disabilities and in the context of juvenile justice. In 2012, the Tajik translation of the concluding observations will be disseminated and used for further advocacy across the country programme. UNICEF also intends to invite one of the members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to assist in the dissemination of the concluding observations and associated advocacy.

UNICEF proactively participated in human rights reporting processes, highlighting the rights of the child at every opportunity. In 2011, UNICEF provided inputs to the Universal Period Review of human rights for Tajikistan, both through the UN Country Team and through UNICEF channels. The Country Office also provided inputs to the EU-Tajikistan Human Rights Dialogue. UNICEF fully participated in relevant donor working groups - most notably, the Human Rights and Rule of Law working groups.

In 2011, UNICEF Tajikistan initiated a new partnership with the Ombudsman as part of a joint UN initiative. UNICEF is working with the Ombudsman to strengthen the institution's capacity to document and address violations in child rights. The focus of the collaboration is on the rights of children in closed institutions.

The Country Office also contributed to a greater understanding and appreciation of child rights in the justice profession in Tajikistan. UNICEF worked with the Tajik National University to develop course material on child rights for law students which will be used in the University's child rights course from 2012.

UNICEF Tajikistan successfully incorporated the right to participation in several of its recent studies, most importantly the Youth Study on the Quality of Education in Tajikistan. This study was the first example in the country of truly participatory research with young people and was highly appreciated by the participating youth. Several follow-up activities were launched in 2011 with young people's organizations and more are planned for 2012. Youth participation will gradually receive more attention in the country programme.

The Situation Analysis commissioned by the Country Office in 2011 is based on a conceptual framework that is structured around child rights. However, the draft Situation Analysis report did not succeed in translating this conceptual framework into a comprehensive rights-based analysis of the situation of children and women.

### Gender

*Mostly met benchmarks*

In 2011, the Country Office continued to pursue gender mainstreaming across the programme. In particular, based on the recommendations of the Country Programme Gender Assessment (2010), the following actions were undertaken:

- the CO conducted a training on gender to sensitize and orient the entire staff on concepts related to gender and the critical aspects of gender mainstreaming;
- the CO familiarized staff with UNICEF Gender Policies and operational guidance;
- the use of the Gender Equality Marker was reviewed across all programmes to rate/assess the impact of UNICEF-supported interventions;
- the Health and Nutrition Section analyzed gender imbalances to better understand the low participation of boys and men in YFHS;
- thematic studies explicitly addressed gender issues (Migration Study, Suicide Study and Youth Study).

In the area of Girls' Education, the Country Office continued to address the issue of high dropout rates among girls, especially in grades 8 and 9. UNICEF provided financial and technical support to district education authorities in seven districts and handed over responsibility for project management and implementation to local education authorities. In two project districts, financial support for School Thematic Funding was directly transferred to local education departments. Using these funds, 15 schools in Isfara district and 25 schools in B. Gafurov district improved attendance among girls who were frequently absent from school and those who were at risk of dropping out. The community-based Education Management Information System was modified to collect data on boys and children with special needs as well.

In collaboration with international development partners, the CO intensified discussions with the World Bank and European Union regarding the introduction of a Social Benefit Scheme to promote girls' attendance and completion of compulsory education. Based on the outcome of these discussions, it was concluded that the CO will not pursue the introduction of a conditional cash transfer at this time, but will seek other ways to tackle the economic obstacles to girls' education.

Within the broader UN country team, cooperation with UN Women resulted in inclusion of Tajikistan in the Safe Cities Initiative, which for the next four years will fund innovative approaches to address the needs of women and girls in urban areas, particularly in Dushanbe. UNICEF also took the lead in submitting a joint UN Country Team proposal to the UN Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence Against Women with UNFPA and UNDP.

### Environmental Sustainability

*Mostly met benchmarks*

In 2011, the UNICEF Tajikistan education programme commissioned a redesign of the latrines it promotes as part of its WASH programme. For several years, the programme had been promoting a 'pour-flush' latrine design which is dependent on the availability of water in the school to function properly. Given that many schools in Tajikistan have no access or problematic access to water, this design was deemed inappropriate. In addition, it was also felt that the pour-flush design was relatively expensive. An international consultant worked with the Tajik Technical University to design a locally-appropriate version of a Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrine which is not dependent on the availability of water and can potentially be built more cheaply. It is expected that this change of design will make a contribution to water conservation. Furthermore, in its hygiene education component, the WASH programme is introducing water

conservation as a topic for students. In the past, the WASH programme has demonstrated that students can be important advocates for change with their parents, siblings and peers in the community. In a highly water-constrained environment, training of school children on water conservation is a potentially high impact intervention.

In 2011, with DIPECHO funding, UNICEF worked towards disaster risk reduction in some of the most disaster-prone districts of Tajikistan. The vast majority of disasters that occur in Tajikistan are directly or indirectly linked to climate change. The DRR approach provides not only increased emergency response capacity in schools and families but also a longer-term view of prevention through enhanced knowledge and behavior change in environmental management and conservation.

### South-South and Triangular Cooperation

In May 2011, UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office supported the **third sub-regional Child Protection Forum** for the five countries of Central Asia which was held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The Forum focused on juvenile justice reforms. It provided an opportunity for government officials, NGO representatives and experts in the field to review the most appropriate ways to reform juvenile justice systems in line with international and regional standards. Approximately 300 participants from throughout the sub-region compared experiences with juvenile justice reforms and were introduced to examples of reforms from elsewhere in the world. The high-level Tajik delegation was led by the National Commission on Child Rights and included the Minister of Justice. At the national level, the forum helped to intensify policy debate on juvenile justice reforms and the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Juvenile Justice. A roundtable on Juvenile Justice System Reform was organized by UNICEF and the NCCR in December 2011 as a follow up to the Forum. It was attended by 60 participants from government, civil society and international organizations who discussed the progress achieved in the first two years of implementation of the National Plan of Action. They also built on the experience gained during the Central Asia Forum to make recommendations to bring Tajikistan's juvenile justice system into compliance with international obligations. The resolutions of the roundtable will be followed up in 2012.

UNICEF Tajikistan supported the National AIDS Centre and the Ministry of Health to attend the biennial **regional Pediatric AIDS Stocktaking meeting** which was held in May in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The meeting provided an opportunity for UNICEF to update governments in the region on the latest developments in pediatric AIDS. Participating countries reported on the status of pediatric AIDS in their countries and their government's activities in this respect.

In October 2011, the Country Office attended a conference organized by the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre which was attended by a delegation from Afghanistan and a **community-based rehabilitation** expert from Iran. UNICEF Tajikistan exploited this opportunity by facilitating the interaction between UNICEF implementing partners and the visiting Afghan delegation and Iranian experts so that they can learn from UNICEF-supported activities in community-based rehabilitation in Tajikistan. The visitors were taken on a field trip to visit one of the CBR rooms established by UNICEF partners in response to the polio outbreak of 2010. This information sharing was found to be very useful by all involved.

UNICEF was instrumental in establishing **ties between the Ministry of Interior and the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA)** which will support juvenile justice reforms. As a first step, six officials were funded by TIKA to conduct a study visit to Ankara to observe the work of the Turkish Child Police.

### Country Programme Component: Child survival and development

#### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

| PCR  | EQRank | OTDetails  |
|--|--------|--|
| By 2015, more children, young people and women benefit from quality primary health care and nutrition services that are in accordance with international standards |        | 2 FA1OT7, FA3OT6, FA1OT6, FA3OT1, FA3OT2, FA1OT1, FA1OT8 |

#### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

| Resource Type | Planned for 2011<br>(as per CPAP ceiling ) | Allocated in<br>2011  | Estimated Year-End<br>Expenditure | %Spent<br>(4)/(3) *<br>100 |
|---------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| OR-E          |  |                       |                                   |                            |
| OR-R          | 1000000.00                                 | 999585.72             | 996655.15                         | 99.71                      |
| RR            | 500000.00                                  | 629216.95             | 609392.61                         | 96.85                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$1,500,000.00</b>                      | <b>\$1,628,802.67</b> | <b>\$1,606,047.76</b>             |                            |

#### Results Achieved

At the **policy level**, UNICEF supported the first Joint Annual Review (JAR) of the National Comprehensive Health Strategy for 2010-2020. The JAR is a step towards stronger coordination of support to the Health Sector and possibly a stepping stone towards a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp).

UNICEF supported the Government in initiating a pilot health financing mechanism in Soghd Oblast, introducing the Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks (MBB) tool. More than 30 staff from ministries and development partners attended an introductory workshop.

Government financing for immunization shows a steady increase from 12% of all requirements in 2009 to the current 17.5%.

UNICEF supported the National **Maternal and Child Health** (MCH) Coordination Council, collaborating with GIZ. In 2011, the Council approved five new protocols on neonatal care. More than 100 neonatologists and neonatal care nurses nationwide were trained on the newly approved national protocols benefitting approximately 62,000 newborns (one third of all newborns).

Five maternities were certified as baby-friendly, bringing the total number of BFHI hospitals to 52 (covering 70% of all births).

More than 872,000 under-fives received two doses of Vitamin A. Over 230 severely malnourished children received therapeutic food and medicine supplied by UNICEF. UNICEF supported a nation-wide communication campaign as part of National Breastfeeding Week, reaching over 90,000 women and 1,000 primary healthcare workers.

**Household practices on child survival, care and nutrition** in priority districts were strengthened with the introduction of a 'wedding package' in Isfara district to improve the nutritional status of first-time mothers. The package contains iodized salt, soap and education materials on maternal nutrition and child feeding. So far, 450 packages were distributed. The impact of the initiative on nutrition indicators is being tracked.

The National MCH Coordination Council approved the National Infant and Young Child Feeding Guidebook for Parents with support from UNICEF. More than 80,000 families with newborns, primarily in priority districts, will benefit from the booklet.

Around 40,000 children 6-24 months in priority districts benefited from micronutrient supplements; 134,000 children aged 2-6 years (80%) received anti-helminthic treatment; around 42,000 (90%) pregnant women and 24,000 lactating women received iron and micronutrient supplements.

Regarding the **prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and pediatric AIDS**, the proportion of HIV-infected pregnant women receiving ARV treatment increased from 25.5% in 2009 to 80%. Up to 82% of infants born to HIV-positive mothers received ARV prophylaxis – up from 45% in 2009. The Government issued new guidance on HIV testing of children and early diagnosis of infants born to HIV-positive mothers, resulting in an increase in identified cases. Twelve pediatricians received specialized training on pediatric AIDS. UNICEF helped to establish three intensive care rooms at the Dushanbe Children's Infectious Hospital to provide specialized services to children with HIV/AIDS.

The sustainability of **youth-friendly health services** (YFHS) was enhanced by integrating the YFHS budget into the health sector MTEF. The Government expanded the number of YFHS from 18 to 21 in 2011. UNICEF supported the renovation of new centers and GFATM will equip them with medical supplies. All YFHS adopted the WHO standards on the quality of services provided to young people and almost 100 YFHS staff were trained.

### **Most Critical Factors and Constraints**

**Delays in off-shore procurement** of essential neonatal medical equipment hampered the impact of UNICEF's work by preventing timely utilization of skills and follow up training sessions in hospitals. **Limited financial resources and capacity constraints** within the Ministry of Health posed a further challenge to timely distribution, proper monitoring and reporting of MCH and nutrition supplies. This year, UNICEF continued to support custom clearance, storage and handling fees and distribution of supplies. However, the MoH confirmed that in 2012 the costs of these processes will be covered from the government budget. This is a major step towards strengthening the national stake in UNICEF-provided programme supplies.

Local authorities **lack adequate capacity for the planning, implementation and monitoring** of priority MCH and nutrition interventions at district level. In combination with **low prioritization** of MCH interventions, this is a major obstacle for improved district-level MCH interventions. The situation also contributes to delays in liquidation of DCTs and reporting of results. For instance, the "wedding package" initiative was only taken up by Isfara out of all priority districts. UNICEF will make use of the positive experience of Isfara authorities to advocate for the prioritization of community-based MCH and nutrition interventions in other priority districts.

**Funding constraints** severely hampered UNICEF's involvement in the management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). In the first nine months of 2011, MOH reported almost 900 severely malnourished children from 21 districts out of 68. Supplies provided by UNICEF for the treatment of SAM were only sufficient for 400 children. This points to the need to expand nutrition interventions across the country with a focus on community-based treatment of SAM, particularly in Khatlon and GBAO.

HIV testing has been hampered by **shortcomings in the supply forecast, distribution and reporting mechanism**, pointing to the need for improvements in its design. This affects the buffer stock of HIV rapid tests in reproductive health centers. The new policy of HIV testing of pregnant women, approved by the Ministry of Health in May 2011, now requires two HIV tests during pregnancy. This poses an additional challenge. The new policy did not take existing procurement mechanisms into account and is not reflected in estimations for HIV rapid and ELISA tests outlined in the GFATM-8 proposal. This resulted in a lack of tests and non-compliance with the new policy.

The Country Office is very concerned about the **lack of funding to address the issue of hospital-based infections with HIV**. There is credible evidence that the number of children who are infected with HIV in hospitals is growing. The current GFATM round does not include resources for this issue. Given the global cancellation of the next GFATM round, the CO plans to include this topic in the application for the next round have fallen through.

The **gender balance in the utilization of Youth Friendly Health Services (YFHS)** is heavily skewed towards girls (90%). UNICEF and partners need to develop strategies for increased attendance of vulnerable young men in YFHS. Youth Friendly Health Services also face **legal obstacles**, most prominently the inability to perform an abortion on a minor without parental consent, leading to a high level of illegal abortions.

### **Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration**

**WHO:** UNICEF has a strong and productive partnership with the World Health Organization in Tajikistan. This partnership helped the two organizations to effectively collaborate in response to the 2010 polio outbreak. In 2011, the two organizations collaborated closely in supporting the Ministry of Health in conducting the first review of the National Comprehensive Health Strategy which provides a platform for improved donor coordination and better quality policy dialogue in the health sector.

**GIZ:** In 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with GIZ for the period of 2010-2011 to collaborate towards improved quality neonatal care in the country. As per the MoU, in 2011, UNICEF supported the National MCH Coordination Council – a ministerial coordination body led by the First Deputy Minister of Health which is instrumental in development, approval and dissemination of MCH policies and guidelines in the country. The MCH Council also serves as a permanent platform for coordination of all MCH activities. In 2012, UNICEF and GIZ are planning to renew their MoU. UNFPA Country Office in Tajikistan has expressed an interest to join this partnership.

**World Bank:** The World Bank and UNICEF finalized their joint nutrition situation analysis which will be launched in 2012. UNICEF leveraged US\$2.8 million for nutrition programming in Khatlon Oblast by providing programmatic guidance for this World Bank intervention.

**Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM):** In 2011, UNICEF Tajikistan continued to serve as sub-recipient of the GFATM, working on two components of Tajikistan's eighth round grant: prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) and prevention of HIV in youth. This year, UNICEF received US\$687,000 from the GFATM, resulting in a total contribution of US\$1,286,753 for 2010-2011 (inclusive of UNICEF NYHQ Administrative costs). Successful implementation of all agreed interventions and achievement of agreed results under the first phase of the eighth round led to an approval of the second phase disbursement to UNICEF totaling US\$880,997 for January 2012–September 2013.

**NGO partnerships:** With support from UNICEF, youth NGOs “Young Generation of Tajikistan” and “Youth XXI Century” strengthened their outreach component and ensured high programme coverage and improvement of access of vulnerable youth to youth-friendly health services. Strong and productive outreach work by NGOs resulted in a significant increase of YFHS visits by young people: more than 21,000 youth visited YFHS Centers and more than 30,000 youth were provided with important information on prevention of STIs, including HIV. UNICEF also partnered with NGO “Guli Surkh” to provide social assistance to 88 families with HIV-positive children across the country. In addition to psychosocial and judicial services, parents also improved their knowledge, skills and commitment to ensure adherence to ARV treatment as well as to overcome fears and combat stigma. With support of “Guli Surkh”, a group of specialists visited all regions of Tajikistan to monitor implementation of the Government’s resolution on social assistance to children living with HIV/AIDS (TJS280.00 monthly). As a result, procedures for assistance are now streamlined throughout the country.

### **Humanitarian Situations**

In 2011, UNICEF continued to collaborate with the Ministry of Health and other development partners to support the response to the polio outbreak of 2010. UNICEF provided 2.5 million doses of OPV and supported a communication and social mobilization campaign. It also supported the Ministry’s efforts to ensure that almost 1,000,000 children under-five, more than 98% of the target, received two additional

doses of t-OPV during two rounds of Polio SIAs in April and May 2011 in an effort to sustain the Polio-free status of the region. In order to enhance the quality of routine immunization services, UNICEF provided support in improving the knowledge and skills of 400 PHC workers from priority and non-performing districts. As a result, immunization coverage rates increased to 94%, as per the monitoring reports of the MoH.

### Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations

The World Bank and UNICEF jointly produced a nutrition situation analysis report to estimate the human and economic cost of malnutrition, and the potential returns to higher nutrition investments in Tajikistan. The report provides compelling evidence of the potential to improve health and economic outcomes through scaling up effective nutrition interventions and introducing new measures to address the direct causes of malnutrition. This will support the Government of Tajikistan's commitment to ensuring the full realization of Tajikistan's children's right to survival and development. The launch of the report is planned for early 2012.

### Future Work Plan

Given limited resources, in 2012, UNICEF will focus on selected evidence-based interventions which will bring maximum benefit to the most disadvantaged children and mothers:

- a. A focus on routine immunization to ensure that all children are protected and to avoid future outbreaks of preventable diseases. Additionally, the CO plans to support the national diphtheria vaccination campaign to be conducted in the first half of 2012 based on the low immunity levels demonstrated in a 2010 Sero-survey conducted by WHO, CDC and UK HPA.
- b. Strong emphasis on the improvement of nutrition, including breastfeeding promotion, improved infant and young child feeding and achieving universal salt iodization, will help reduce stunting and iodine deficiencies which remain prevalent amongst many children and women. UNICEF will focus on improving the nutrition status of young women before their first pregnancy. This will include the introduction of a wedding package to a greater number of priority districts; promoting infant and young child feeding practices among families and health workers; continuing to support the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative; and enforcing implementation of the national laws on breastfeeding and Salt Iodization.
- c. Promotion of cost-effective and evidence-based approaches in neonatal care which are in line with WHO recommendations, including PMTCT.
- d. Acceleration of Pediatric AIDS interventions.
- e. Strengthening monitoring and scaling up of YFHS and approval of the recent WHO policy on breastfeeding and HIV.
- f. Rehabilitation of water/sanitation in selected maternities in priority districts.

## Country Programme Component: Basic education and gender equality

### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

| PCR   | EQRank | OTDetails                             |
|---|--------|---------------------------------------|
| By 2015, the education system provides gender-sensitive and healthy learning environments at schools, facilitates the completion of basic education by girls and supports expanded access to preschool programmes |        | 2 FA2OT1, FA2OT5, FA1OT13 (c), FA3OT8 |

### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

| Resource Type | Planned for 2011<br>(as per CPAP ceiling ) | Allocated in<br>2011  | Estimated Year-End<br>Expenditure | %Spent<br>(4)/(3) *<br>100 |
|---------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| OR-E          |  |                       |                                   |                            |
| OR-R          | 917000.00                                  | 1954869.53            | 1898734.64                        | 97.13                      |
| RR            | 434000.00                                  | 377409.61             | 354320.99                         | 93.88                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$1,351,000.00</b>                      | <b>\$2,332,279.14</b> | <b>\$2,253,055.63</b>             |                            |

### Results Achieved

**Girls' Education (GE):** The year 2011 saw the official handover of the GE project to seven District Education Departments (DEDs) in B.Ghafurov, Isfara, Istaravshan, Kulyab, Panj, Panjakent and Rasht. Based on the MoE/UNICEF GE strategy drafted in 2011, and combined with UNICEF-supported capacity building for 30 DEDs officials, this has resulted in the institutionalization of the project, strengthening local ownership and improving sustainability. The GE project is now under the direct supervision of DEDs in 100 schools in seven districts, benefiting over 6,000 girls in grades 7-9 who were at risk of dropping out. Over 200 headmasters, teachers and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members were trained to plan and utilize school thematic grants; implement community-based EMIS; and conduct outreach activities. Target schools were provided with a total of 6,000 supplementary reading materials and 650 sets of furniture. UNICEF also funded a national communication and social mobilization campaign on Girls' Education.

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):** UNICEF advanced the integration of WASH into the national education system. It supported the finalization of WASH in Schools guidelines and reinforcement of the sanitation and hygiene education component in the revised national Healthy Life Style (HLS) programme. Key WASH indicators were incorporated into the EMIS and a national communication campaign was conducted for Global Hand washing Day. At the school level, UNICEF supported DEDs to conduct an assessment of sanitation facilities in 50 schools in five priority districts (Istaravshan, Kulyab, Panj, Panjakent, and Rumi), which will inform future planning. Installation of hand washing and water filtration facilities was initiated in 100 schools in these districts, alongside orientation for teachers and PTA members on maintenance. This benefitted around 6,000 students.

**Life Skills-Based Education:** UNICEF and UNFPA supported the revision of the HLS programme, developing new textbooks for grades 10-11 with GFATM support. A monitoring system for LSBHE was established at the Republican Institute of In-service Teacher Training (RIITT) which included training for RIITT specialists and school inspectors. Data from 100 project schools were collected and entered into the data base. A KAP (Knowledge, Attitude and Practice) survey was conducted on the HLS programme covering 50 target schools, and demonstrated positive impact of the programme. At the school level, UNICEF supported an additional 149 schools in ten priority districts (Ayni, B.Ghafurov, Isfara, Istaravshan, Kulyab, Panj, Panjakent, Qabadiyan, Rasht, and Rumi) to implement HLS classes covering 90,000 grade 7-9 students and training for 600 teachers. Partnering with three NGOs, peer-to-peer education and awareness raising on HLS was conducted during summer sessions.

**Early Learning:** UNICEF supported a costing of the existing Early Learning (EL) models for scaling up and developing a per-capita financing (PCF) approach for state kindergartens, which was approved by MoE and MoF for piloting. Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) were approved by MoE and aligned with the existing Primary Learning Standards. At the district level, UNICEF supported DEDs to establish 47 additional school/community-based ECD centers and three two-shift kindergartens in five priority districts (Istaravshan, Kulyab, Rasht, Rumi, and Shugnan), benefiting around 2,000 4-6 year-olds. This included training for over 100 teachers to act as ECD centre tutors, provision of furniture and educational toys and materials, and community mobilization activities.

### Most Critical Factors and Constraints

One of the areas which needs to be strengthened is the acknowledgement of problems in **girls' education** and the commitment to address these both by the Government and amongst development partners. As per the MoE/UNICEF work plan for 2011, a comprehensive analysis was conducted on different social benefit scheme options to support grade 7-9 girls and their families, which resulted in a proposal to introduce conditional cash transfers (CCT) within the existing government system. After a series of intensive discussions with different key government stakeholders and international partners, the proposal was eventually found unviable. This is largely because stakeholders differ on the nature of the problem, the best way to address it, and the feasibility of CCTs in Tajikistan within the broader context of social protection reform. UNICEF therefore needs to reconsider its GE approach in 2012 in close consultation with MoE and other partners. Establishing a GE Task Force for advocacy purposes involving high-level government officials is also pending for 2012.

**Capacity constraints** of local governments and education authorities affected programme implementation, emphasizing the need for further strengthening of technical and operational capacity. Additional efforts must also be made to increase accountability of government partners to ensure timely and effective completion of planned activities. Capacity building of local government partners needs to continue being a top cross-office priority in 2012.

Internally, **staff turnover and delayed or failed recruitment** resulting from a lack of suitable candidates significantly affected the implementation of the WASH, Life Skills-Based Education and Early Learning sub-components. The WASH officer post created in 2011 remained vacant for the entire year, whilst the LSBE and EL posts were vacant for three months. This also added to the workload of other staff members within the section, which affected the performance of the entire Programme Component.

**Preparation for VISION** also affected the performance of the entire Component, especially towards the end of the year. In Tajikistan, the school year starts in September. Hence, the fourth quarter of the calendar year is a critical time for programme implementation. However, in 2011, due to the earlier closure of UNICEF accounts and the corporate decision to slow down implementation in the last three months of 2011, some planned activities in WASH and GE needed to be postponed to 2012.

### Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration

UNICEF continued to co-lead the **education donor group** under the Development Coordination Council with the World Bank. UNICEF demonstrated its leadership and coordination role in supporting the finalization of the National Strategy for Education Development (NSED) 2020, successfully coordinating dialogue between the Government and development partners and ensuring a focus in the Strategy on equitable access to quality basic education. UNICEF also co-led donors in the FTI-3 mid-term review as well as in developing, agreeing on and monitoring the Development Forum Action Plan (education) with GoT, setting out jointly agreed benchmarks in education sector reform.

In liaison with the Resident Coordinator's Office, UNICEF also led the process of establishing and operationalizing the **UNDAF education working group** which helped UN agencies move toward a more coordinated, prioritized and effective approach in the education sector as part of the UNDAF.

UNICEF collaborated with various UN agencies, including **WFP**, for the Education Indicators Survey which allows the organization to track a range of important programme indicators in schools covered by its programmes. UNICEF also worked with **UNFPA** for the HLS programme (HIV/AIDS prevention education), collaborating on the revision of textbooks for grades 10 and 11.

UNICEF effectively mobilized **media partners** for the communication campaigns for GE and Global Hand washing Day, including state TV channels, radio stations and newspapers. This enabled nation-wide coverage of the key messages, even in remote areas. UNICEF also partnered with **T-Cell** (mobile phone company) to send out hand washing messages through mobile phones at no cost to UNICEF, thus enhancing partnership with the private sector.

UNICEF's successful partnership with **local governments** in Early Learning resulted in some of the target districts deciding to cover the salaries of teachers and the maintenance costs of school/community-based ECD centers out of their local budget. This facilitated the institutionalization of these centers and hence ensured their sustainability. UNICEF also mobilized financial resources from the Kulyab district government by way of cost-sharing for the UNICEF-supported construction of a school in a flood-affected area in the district.

UNICEF's partnership in WASH in Schools was expanded to **academics** where Tajik Technical University was contracted to work alongside an international consultant for the development of low-cost, child- and environment-friendly designs of school sanitation facilities. This partnership had an important capacity-building aspect beyond the immediate deliverables of the contract.

Collaboration with **local CSOs** remained a key strategy for this Component. UNICEF engaged different local CSOs who worked not only towards the direct implementation of the activities, but also served as trainers for local government officials for knowledge and skills transfer. Two youth NGOs became partners to facilitate youth participation in education.

### **Humanitarian Situations**

UNICEF continued to lead the **WASH Cluster** and co-lead the **Education Cluster** with Save the Children, in coordination with the UN Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team (REACT). UNICEF took leadership in the Education Cluster in advocating with MoE to ensure that emergency preparedness and response in education is duly addressed in the National Strategy for Education Development to 2020. On the basis of a REACT Appeal issued in May 2010, **construction of a school** (with sanitation facilities) was initiated in Yokhsuchiyon village in Kulyab district to benefit over 400 flood-affected children in partnership with the Kulyab district government, MoE and Committee on Emergency Situations and Civil Defence (CoES). A Memorandum of Agreement was signed between UNICEF and the Kulyab district government in May 2011 to co-finance the construction. Bearing in mind lessons learned from the disaster experiences in the village, a technical assessment was undertaken to identify a disaster-proof construction site and disaster-proof construction standards were applied in the design. The school is expected to be complete by April 2012.

Funded by ECHO and in partnership with MoE and CoES, UNICEF supported **Disaster Risk Reduction** (DRR) capacity building under DIPECHO VI project which ended in August 2011. A school-based DRR model was implemented in 16 target schools in four disaster-prone districts (Ayni, Kulyab, Tojikobod and Rasht) to benefit over 9,000 children, promoting emergency preparedness activities, mobilizing communities and providing emergency preparedness and response-related supplies. Six hundred teachers and local officials were trained. To support the model, a comprehensive review of the school curriculum was conducted for the integration of DRR, the recommendations of which were discussed at a national workshop. School disaster safety assessment tools were developed and tested, and good practices and lessons learned were identified at the end-of-project workshop which was documented and disseminated among key stakeholders.

### **Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations**

As part of a UNICEF Regional Office initiative, a **Youth Study** on education quality was finalized in 2011. The study was the first of its kind in the country in which the youth themselves were directly trained and involved as researchers. While young people were fairly complimentary about the quality of education in Tajikistan, they were also dissatisfied in several respects. Youth link poor quality education to increased outmigration of youth, a weaker economy, poor health practices and decreased demand for secondary schooling. The strongest concern of young people relates to corruption in the education system. The results of the study will be used to advocate and implement innovative projects. At the end of 2011, two youth NGOs were supported to follow up on the study's recommendations. A national launch of the study is

planned in early 2012.

An **Out of School Children (OOSC) country study** for Tajikistan was initiated in the framework of the global OOSC initiative in partnership with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). The study will be completed in 2012. It will help to highlight the socio-demographic profile of children out of school or at risk of dropping out, which will help to further sharpen interventions by the Government and development partners in the education sector.

**A study on costing and financing for the EL system in Tajikistan** contributed to the evidence base required to inform the scaling up of successful EL models which are low-cost and community-based. The study strategized for the further expansion of EL models by suggesting sustainable financial and legal scenarios relevant in the Tajikistan context, including the adoption of per capita financing (PCF) in state kindergartens. Consequently, a relevant financial model for PCF for preschools and practical guidelines for its application were developed and accepted by the MoE and MoF for piloting in one of the districts of Tajikistan. A **KAP Survey** examined the effectiveness of the HLS programme by looking at changes in the behavior and knowledge of grade 7-9 students who had received HLS classes and comparing the results to those of students in non-project schools and students in an earlier cohort. The survey results showed a positive impact of the HLS programme and will be used to improve the design and implementation of the programme and its assessment tools.

Funded by ECHO, **DIPECHO VI baseline and end-of-project surveys** were conducted in 16 target schools to examine the impact of the project. The comparative analyses showed substantial improvements in the knowledge, attitudes and practices of students and teachers. The survey results were presented to the Government and other key stakeholders to inform future DRR work, as well as to strengthen advocacy on DRR in education.

In partnership with WFP, an **Education Indicators Survey** for 2010/2011 was completed, covering over 30% of all existing schools and kindergartens in the country, including all of the UNICEF-supported schools/ECD centers in 12 UNICEF priority districts. The survey for the 2011/2012 school year is underway. The survey results will be used to guide programming for 2012 as well as to support MoE in improving EMIS.

### Future Work Plan

In 2012, the programme aims to sharpen its focus on equitable access to education for girls, pre-school age children, and other marginalized groups of children, including children with disabilities (CWD). The ECD component will be strengthened to better support pre-primary school-age children, including 0-3 year-olds. The programme will work in the following six areas:

- 1) **Policy Development, Donor Coordination and Knowledge Generation and Management**, which will support evidence-based, pro-equity national policy and strategy development and implementation. This will include: timely completion of NSED 2020 Implementation Plans and FTI-3; preparation of the GPE (FTI)-4 application; modification of the PCF formula for basic education to facilitate enrolment of girls and CWD; and finalization of the OOSC country study and its launch for follow up actions and support to improvement of EMIS.
- 2) **EL and ECD**, which will focus on consolidating the foundation for the mainstreaming of alternative EL models, with reinforced emphasis on CWD and ECD. This will include: revision of the existing alternative EL models' package; advocacy campaigns; publication of ELDS; support for adaptation of the PCF formula for state kindergartens and legalization of alternative EL models; and mainstreaming two alternative EL models in priority districts, including parental education for 0-3 year-old children;
- 3) **GE**, which will combine advocacy, strategy and system development, capacity building and social mobilization efforts. The top priority will be to finalize and reach an agreement with MoE and partners on the revised MoE/UNICEF GE strategy and package. The planned activities will include: establishing a high-level Task Force for advocacy; revised GE strategy and package development; support for gender audit;

communication campaigns; scaling up of the revised GE package in priority districts; capacity building of DED officials, teachers and PTA members; and the national launch of the Youth Study and its follow up actions.

4) **WASH in Schools**, which will focus on the completion of a revised WASH in Schools package (both hardware and software components) to make it more cost-efficient, sustainable and child-friendly. Work will include: development and implementation of a revised WASH in School package; comprehensive follow up monitoring survey; support for dissemination and implementation of WASH in Schools guidelines; and Hand washing communication campaign.

5) **Life-skills Based Education (LSBE)**, which will have two major areas of focus: 1) strengthening the M&E system at RIITT for HLS programme and 2) supporting expanded implementation of HLS programme, including capacity building of teachers and school inspectors. The KAP survey on the HLS programme will also be disseminated.

6) **Emergency Preparedness and Response**, in which UNICEF will continue to take the lead in Education and WASH Clusters to enhance national capacity in emergency preparedness and response. Construction of a school in Kulyab for emergency recovery will be finished. School-based DRR activities along with advocacy and awareness raising activities will be implemented subject to funds availability.

### Country Programme Component: Child protection

#### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

| PCR  | EQRank | OTDetails              |
|--|--------|------------------------|
| By 2015, there is an increase in the proportion of vulnerable children who benefit from alternative community-based social services and family substitute care, and the judicial decision to incarcerate children is used as a last resort | 2      | FA4OT2, FA4OT3, FA4OT7 |

#### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

| Resource Type | Planned for 2011<br>(as per CPAP ceiling ) | Allocated in<br>2011  | Estimated Year-End<br>Expenditure | %Spent<br>(4)/(3) *<br>100 |
|---------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| OR-E          |  |                       |                                   |                            |
| OR-R          | 620000.00                                  | 683454.55             | 654357.65                         | 95.74                      |
| RR            | 400000.00                                  | 378000.00             | 363869.43                         | 96.26                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$1,020,000.00</b>                      | <b>\$1,061,454.55</b> | <b>\$1,018,227.08</b>             |                            |

#### Results Achieved

With regard to **child care reform**, UNICEF supported the Scientific Research Institute of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP) to provide training on social protection of children with disabilities (CWD) and on the provision of basic support to CWD and their parents. In 2011, 174 social workers from Social Assistance at Home Units (SAHU) and Child Rights Units (CRU) from 12 priority districts benefited from this training. SAHU and CRU Social Workers, together with other relevant local government structures, identified the most vulnerable children in priority districts and referred them to appropriate services. With UNICEF's support, MLSP drafted policy guidance on inter-agency coordination on child protection for local authorities to be finalized in 2012.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health and local authorities in the functioning of nine Psychological Medical Pedagogical Consultation Centers which provided support to 2,614 CWD and referred them to community-based services wherever possible.

A Round Table on CWD and Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) was organized by UNICEF and the National Commission on Child Rights (NCCR) in which over 50 people participated. The round table concluded with an agreement to establish a permanent governmental inter-sectoral working group on CWD to develop a coordinated approach and to ensure provision of a continuum of services for children with disabilities and conduct regular monitoring at national and district levels.

Under the **juvenile justice** sub-component, a high level delegation, including the Minister of Justice and led by the NCCR, participated in the Third Central Asian Child Protection Forum (CAR CP Forum) dedicated to Juvenile Justice in May 2011 in Ashgabat. As a follow-up to the CAR Forum, a national roundtable on Juvenile Justice System Reform was organized by UNICEF and the NCCR in December 2011. This was attended by 60 participants from government, civil society and international organizations and reviewed progress in the first two years of implementation of the National Plan of Action on Juvenile Justice System Reform. A resolution was reached and recommendations were formulated to bring national policy and practice into compliance with international obligations.

In March 2011, the Ministry of Justice established a Juvenile Justice Unit. However, a regulation determining its legal and institutional foundation is still pending and the Unit's Terms of Reference are not yet clear.

In 2011, the SDC-funded Juvenile Justice Alternative Project (JJAP) was expanded to Konibodom and Kurgan-Tube. The project now covers 14 districts. About 140 children in conflict with the law and children at risk were reached by the project. Fifty-one children referred to the project participated in Wushu (Chinese martial arts) classes. Sixty children were integrated with their families by the two Reception and Referral Centers of the Ministry of Interior (Dushanbe and Khujand), with support from UNICEF.

Training on international and national standards on juvenile justice, JJAP principles, adolescent psychology and communication with children was provided to 90 police officers, 35 prosecutors, 121 judges, 100 law enforcement officers from various bodies, and 77 staff of Child Rights Units and Centers for Additional Education. With UNICEF support, Tajik National University Law School developed a textbook and a handbook for teachers on child rights with a focus on juvenile justice.

### **Most Critical Factors and Constraints**

Greater coordination and monitoring at national and district levels is needed to ensure progress in child care reform and juvenile justice. Throughout 2011, UNICEF worked hard to remedy this situation. Closer collaboration with the NCCR has been initiated to this effect. The establishment of an intersectoral working group on CWD, the issuance of guidance on inter-agency coordination at district level, and high-level meetings on CWD and Juvenile Justice all contributed to a foundation for better coordination in 2012.

At the beginning of the year, there was a need for greater government ownership of the JJAP to speed up its implementation. The Central Asia Child Protection Forum and follow-up events in close collaboration with the NCCR eventually contributed to a strengthened sense of ownership. This should yield smoother project implementation in 2012.

**Capacity constraints** slowed down program implementation at the local level in selected districts. Limited capacity, low motivation, insufficient salaries, and high turnover of staff were common problems for all professionals involved in child protection.

### **Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration**

The JJAP continued collaboration with the Ministries of Interior, Education and Justice and two key NGO partners while entering into new partnerships with the General Prosecutor's Office and the Council of Justice. UNICEF started collaborating with the Ombudsman's Office to strengthen their capacity for monitoring of child rights violations. UNICEF also strengthened its collaboration with the NCCR for better coordination of initiatives in child protection.

UNICEF continued participating at the rule of law meetings to bring children's issues onto the agenda of other international agencies. UNICEF was instrumental in establishing links between the MoI and the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA). As a result, six Tajikistan government officials were funded by TIKA to go on a study visit to Ankara to familiarize themselves with the Turkish Child Police.

A Training of Trainers was organized for the PMPC staff jointly with the SOROS Fund. UNICEF also took the lead to bring international NGOs together to form an informal information exchange group on CBR. Collaboration with the EU also continued and linkages with the EU-funded Social Services Development Project were strengthened to maximize synergy with UNICEF-funded initiatives in child care reform. The Community-Based Rehabilitation project is a successful partnership between UNICEF, Operation Mercy and Handicap International, with the two international NGOs also leveraging resources into the partnership. This collaboration has brought about much needed services for children who became victims of polio, but also unlocked the debate on the establishment of services for children with disabilities more broadly.

### **Humanitarian Situations**

UNICEF, under the leadership of the MoH, continued to support the community based rehabilitation (CBR) project for children affected by polio and other children with physical disabilities which was initiated as a response to the 2010 polio outbreak. The main technical expertise was provided by Operation Mercy and Handicap International and MLSP and MOE were also involved. Health workers, social workers, teachers, and local leaders were mobilized to provide services for CWD at the local level. A total of 133 staff were trained as trainers and another 687 staff and 398 parents were trained. Eighteen schools were made wheelchair accessible, and 21 CBR support rooms were set up. A total of 674 children (531 affected by polio and 143 with other physical disabilities) were reached. Three hundred CWD received orthotics.

### **Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations**

**Assessments of Juvenile Justice System Reform and of the Training Needs of juvenile justice professionals**, initiated by the Regional Office, were conducted in Tajikistan. Both assessments will be used to define future activities under the JJAP project.

**An assessment of Centers for Additional Education** (under the Ministry of Education) was initiated by UNICEF in order to map their condition, structure and capacity. The assessment revealed a number of significant shortcomings that impede the further development and improvement of the Centers for Additional Education (CAE), also affecting their role under the JJAP project. These findings will be taken into account when planning for the JJAP project.

**A mid-term evaluation of JJAP** was conducted to assess the accomplishments of the project, the bottlenecks encountered, and factors limiting achievement of results. The evaluation made a number of recommendations regarding the Project. Results of the evaluation were instrumental in writing the second phase of the project proposal to the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development which was an opportunity to remove ineffective components of the project and to include new initiatives.

UNICEF supported the MLSP to carry out a **competency based analysis of Social Assistance at Home Units** in 12 districts to assess the capacities of SAHU and the main bottlenecks to fulfilling their mandate. The study revealed that the salaries of staff are very low, that there are no budget allocations for home

visits, and that the staff are in great need of systematic training on social work.

An **assessment of the CBR project** found that despite its short duration, a conducive environment for promoting CBR was established. There is governmental interest at both the national and local level and the project is performing satisfactorily.

A **Study on Prevalence and Dynamics of Suicide** among children and young people (12-24 years of age) in Sughd Region was completed by Columbia University in collaboration with Khujand State University, Soughd Oblast Local Authority Working Group and local NGOs. The initial results were presented at a Round Table in Khujand. The report will be finalized by the end of January 2012.

### **Future Work Plan**

In 2012, UNICEF will focus on the following priorities in Child Protection:

**Policy Development, Implementation, and Monitoring:** UNICEF will closely collaborate with the NCCR and will advocate for the establishment of a permanent inter-agency working group on Juvenile Justice and CWD under the NCCR. UNICEF will support the Government to revise national legislation to bring it in compliance with the CRC and other international standards. The Government will be supported to establish sound indicators on child protection and strengthen data collection and evidence-based policy making both at the national and local levels in the project districts. UNICEF will provide support in developing a comprehensive plan of action for prevention of juvenile offending and re-offending. A Department on Child Rights will be established under the Ombudsman's Office and will be supported to monitor the violation of children's rights, especially those in closed institutions. The judicial system will be supported in assigning specialized judges to hear children's cases and in piloting of child-friendly courtrooms in at least one district. Work will be initiated with Parliament to enhance MP's understanding and appreciation of child rights and to boost their capacity to take a child rights perspective in the legislative process.

**Capacity Building:** The MLSP will continue to be supported to develop the field of social work. Collaboration with the Tajik National University Departments of Social Work and Psychology Department and the Training Institute for Civil Servants will be established to develop child protection and child rights trainings for staff of SAHU and CRUs. A national team of juvenile justice trainers will be formed and, with the leadership of three master trainers, it will develop training materials to be used by the national training institutes for justice professionals. Capacity building will extend to include justice for children, addressing the issues faced by children as victims and children as witnesses of crimes.

**Improving Service Provision:** CRUs, staff of CAE, PMPCs, will be supported to carry out family support and family substitute care services for children at risk. UNICEF will strengthen the network of police, child rights units, communities and schools to prevent offenses among children, as well as the network between CRU, SAHU, PMPC and NGOs for provision of integrated services for children deprived of parental care and CWD. Special attention will be given to ensure that children below three are not placed in institutions. As part of a global initiative, Dushanbe city authorities will be supported to make the city safe and friendly and prevent violence against children and women.

### Country Programme Component: Policy and planning

#### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

| PCR  | EQRank | OTDetails              |
|--|--------|------------------------|
| By 2015, Government allocates proportionately more resources to critical social protection sectors (preschool education, neonatal care, family based care and protection) based on evidence and general public support | 2      | FA5OT1, FA5OT6, FA5OT2 |

#### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

| Resource Type | Planned for 2011<br>(as per CPAP ceiling ) | Allocated in<br>2011 | Estimated Year-End<br>Expenditure | %Spent<br>(4)/(3) * 100 |
|---------------|--|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| OR-E          |  |                      |                                   |                         |
| OR-R          | 167000.00                                  | 66867.24             | 64861.78                          | 97.00                   |
| RR            | 416000.00                                  | 435583.05            | 421259.45                         | 96.71                   |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$583,000.00</b>                        | <b>\$502,450.29</b>  | <b>\$486,121.23</b>               |                         |

#### Results Achieved

UNICEF provided technical support to eight of its priority districts to improve data collection on selected social and demographic indicators to support **better planning for the needs of children** at the district level. Key local government departments of the four newest priority districts were provided with IT equipment with the same aim. Also in 2011, a mapping of data availability was conducted in eight priority districts to identify areas of data collection that need further support. The findings of the mapping will be used to inform UNICEF's support to evidence-based decision making at the district level in 2012 and beyond. Statisticians from the local governments of Sughd Oblast were trained to use the TojikInfo (ChildInfo) database for monitoring key social and economic development indicators, in collaboration with the Agency on Statistics (AS). The statisticians expressed a need for further capacity building in the basic concepts of M&E, maintaining and updating databases and good use of data.

UNICEF continued to support the Agency on Statistics to provide the annual update for the regional TransMonee database and the associated analytical report. Two representatives from the Agency attended the TransMonee network meeting in Vienna in 2011. An international consultant helped the Agency to match TransMonee data requirements to locally available data sources. TransMonee is proving to be an increasingly important tool at the national level, bringing together a host of data on child rights indicators that is not centrally held in any other database in the country.

Within the context of **child friendly public policy and budgeting**, UNICEF supported the Government of Tajikistan to implement several key elements of the PFM reform. UNICEF became a full member of Government/Donor PFM Council in 2011. The organization successfully completed a project with the Ministry of Finance on strengthening the capacities of all 73 finance departments nationwide. Through this partnership, the MoF employees have acquired skills in finance operating systems, budget planning and execution and performance indicators in the social sector.

Decentralized programme implementation focused on the most deprived districts and was further expanded to new partnerships with Istaravshan, Ayni, Rumi and Murgab districts, bringing the total number of UNICEF priority districts to 12. All priority districts have received direct cash transfers to support programme implementation. In addition, they have received supplies where required, as well as training and technical assistance.

The Country Office's **communication** efforts were mainly focused on disseminating messages to support key programme interventions, such as the Polio Immunization Rounds, Breastfeeding week, Girls' Education

and Hand Washing campaigns. Social mobilization for Polio Immunization was supported with the distribution of IEC materials and training of health workers and journalists. These efforts relied on a full range of print, audio and video materials. Major steps were taken to ensure better visibility of UNICEF, which was given high priority in 2011.

### **Most Critical Factors and Constraints**

**Human capacity:** Staff turnover and limited capacity in state agencies as well as in UNICEF affected efforts to improve evidence-based decision making. While the TojikInfo website has been administered by the Agency on Statistics since 2008, developments in 2011 showed that TojikInfo is still not sufficiently institutionalized. This urged UNICEF to reconsider its approach and take concrete steps towards institutionalization of TojikInfo in 2012, in collaboration with the Agency on Statistics and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade's PRS monitoring unit.

**Data constraints:** Monitoring of Child Rights, tracking Country Programme implementation and evidence-based decision making for children more generally continues to be hampered by data constraints. Data on specific indicators is lacking (most notably in child protection); data is often not sufficiently disaggregated (which makes it difficult to track the most disadvantaged children, such as CWD or girls); and data that exists is often less robust than desired. Strengthening data systems needs to continue being an important focus of the country programme.

**PFM reform:** Although substantial progress has been made in various aspects of public administration reform, some challenges still hinder the effective implementation of the PFM strategy in Tajikistan. Going forward, concrete steps need to be taken to overcome the fragmentation of the budget process and poor cash management, better integrate central and local government budgeting processes, build institutional capacity to carry out budget reforms, and strengthen linkages between policy and budget formulation. UNICEF needs to support these steps and define PFM interventions to maximize the benefits of public spending to the most deserving children.

**Decentralized approach to programme implementation:** The first two years of implementation of this approach have already yielded a series of positive results, even though there are still some constraints that need to be addressed. For example, there is a need to consolidate disparate UNICEF interventions into one coherent package, build the capacity of local government authorities, create a sense of ownership at regional and district levels, improve sharing and implementation of legal/normative acts at the grassroots level, and ensure better use of funds and greater transparency.

### **Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration**

**Agency on Statistics:** UNICEF continued its close collaboration with various departments of the Agency on Statistics towards improving the quality and availability of data on key indicators related to child rights. TransMonee and TojikInfo were the two main focus areas for collaboration. In order to further strengthen the system for monitoring key national development strategies, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy and National Development Strategy, it will be important to bring the PRS monitoring unit of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade into this partnership. A tripartite partnership between UNICEF, the Agency on Statistics and MEDT will provide the opportunity to not only strengthen the quality of data collected, but also to use this data in key government decision making processes.

**Ministry of Finance:** UNICEF strengthened its partnership with the MOF by supporting its 73 finance departments throughout the country to improve budget planning and execution as well as monitoring and reporting in the social sectors. In 2012 and beyond, UNICEF aims to use this newly forged partnership to pursue activities that highlight the needs and priorities of children and incorporate these into the budget process.

**Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and Local Authorities:** In 2011, a trilateral partnership was established between UNICEF, MEDT, and four new priority districts (in addition to the eight already existing districts) to bring UNICEF support closer to targeted children and women. The involvement of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in a tripartite partnership with the priority districts helps to ensure that the support provided to the priority districts is in line with the Government's approach to decentralization and public financial management.

**UNCT:** UNICEF supported the UN Communication Groups' initiative to develop and broadcast the film on UN achievements in Tajikistan.

### Humanitarian Situations

No humanitarian situations occurred in 2011 that required a response within this programme component.

### Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations

**Situation Analysis:** In 2011, UNICEF initiated a comprehensive Situation Analysis of women and children. The Situation Analysis took stock of research, surveys and studies conducted in the last several years to highlight the status of children's and women's rights in Tajikistan. The Situation Analysis is scheduled to be finalized in early 2012 and its results will be disseminated through various communication channels. The Situation Analysis will be treated as a live document and will be updated as new research and data on the situation of children and women in the country become available.

**Migration Study:** In 2011, the CO finalized and launched its report on the "Impact of labor migration on children left behind in Tajikistan". Labor migration is an important livelihood strategy for many Tajik households. More than a million Tajik citizens, mainly men, work abroad. The majority of them work in the Russian Federation doing low-skilled work on construction sites and in markets. The report draws the attention of key government decision-makers and development partners to the mixed impact of migration on the well-being of children and recommends a number of social policy measures that could boost the positive impact of migration on children while minimizing the potential negative impact.

### Future Work Plan

In 2012, the Policy and Planning Programme will focus on the following activities:

- Improve the monitoring of the situation of children and women in collaboration with the Agency on Statistics and the PRS monitoring unit of the MEDT, including through institutionalizing TojikInfo and bringing on board other UN agencies.
- Closely collaborate with the Agency on Statistics and USAID on the implementation of the 2012 Demographic and Health Survey to ensure high quality and representative data on the wellbeing of children and women.
- Strengthen the capacity of local governments at the district level to collect, analyze and present data for monitoring of child rights-related development indicators, and promoting the use of available data on the situation of children and women for decision-making through district level planning workshops.
- Support the district-level planning, prioritization and budgeting process. UNICEF considers it critical to collaborate with other UN agencies and development partners to ensure that the efforts of these partners truly support local level planning processes, rather than fragment and undermine them;
- Work towards a stronger evidence base on inequities and inequalities in Tajikistan, using this to inform national planning and budgeting processes;
- Further support the GoT in the implementation of the PFM reform agenda, with more emphasis on priority districts to ensure that the budget process effectively considers the needs and priorities of children, women and poor families;

- Further boost UNICEF internal capacity to implement the decentralized approach and maximize its impact, including moving towards a coherent package of UNICEF interventions in each district;
- Strengthen partnerships with the media and civil society to support the realization of children's rights, particularly the rights of marginalized children;
- Expand Communication for Development (C4D), focusing on campaigns planned by the Programme for 2012;
- Introduce child rights training for journalists in collaboration with a leading Tajik University.

### Country Programme Component: Cross-sectoral

#### PCRs (Programme Component Results)

| PCR   | EQRank | OTDetails |
|---|--------|-----------|
| Effective & efficient programme management & operations support | 1      | FA6OT9    |

#### Resources Used in 2011(USD)

| Resource Type | Planned for 2011<br>(as per CPAP ceiling ) | Allocated in<br>2011 | Estimated Year-End<br>Expenditure | %Spent<br>(4)/(3) * 100 |
|---------------|--|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| OR-E          |  |                      |                                   |                         |
| OR-R          | 50000.00                                   | 0.00                 | 0.00                              | 0.00                    |
| RR            | 262000.00                                  | 502000.00            | 484063.89                         | 96.43                   |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$312,000.00</b>                        | <b>\$502,000.00</b>  | <b>\$484,063.89</b>               |                         |

#### Results Achieved

Under this programme component, UNICEF ensured effective and efficient programme and operations support. This covered costs incurred that could not be linked specifically or exclusively to one of the other programme components:

- Staff costs for five operations staff members, including two drivers
- Staff travel costs
- Staff training costs
- Cross-office translation costs
- Rental and maintenance of office premises and equipment
- Communications
- Office Supplies/IT equipment
- Costs related to MOSS compliance
- Cost of HACT micro-assessments of key implementing partners
- Cost of a consultancy to carry out a Country Assessment of Essential Commodities (CAEC)

Local staff costs amounted to 18% of total expenditure under this component.

The planned amount for this component does not reflect the real needs of cross-sectoral support. This led the Country Office to exceed the planned amount for 2011. In addition, one-off expenditure on HACT micro-assessments and the CAEC further increased expenditure under this component.

As a result of activities under this component, the office and programme support functions were adequately staffed; adequate investments were made in developing staff capacity in line with the office training plan; the communications and IT environment was maintained at a satisfactory level; and the organization

remained MOSS compliant.

In collaboration with other UN agencies and under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, micro-assessments were carried out on 33 of UNICEF's key implementing partners. This will facilitate collaboration with these partners in the years to come and highlight areas for capacity building and areas where assurance mechanisms need to be put in place.

Following up on an Audit Recommendation, the Office carried out a Country Assessment of Essential Commodities in 2011 which will be instrumental in guiding both programme and operations colleagues in programme planning and procurement in 2012 and beyond.

### **Most Critical Factors and Constraints**

The work on the **Country Assessment of Essential Commodities** was complicated by the fact that the suggested methodology for the study was over-specified and not suited for the Tajikistan context. There is extremely limited experience with carrying out this kind of analysis in the CEE/CIS region, leading to a lack of guidance from other country offices or the Regional Office. Competitive tendering for the assignment to carry out the assessment failed initially. Eventually, the Country Office agreed to a simplified format for the assessment with the Regional Office and the assessment was carried out and finalized in 2011.

The **HACT micro-assessments** were plagued by multiple delays, which resulted from the need to get several UN agencies aligned for the exercise, the scale of the task, the difficulty of finding suitable contractors, and the need to translate the assessment reports. Despite these difficulties, the assessments were successfully finalized in 2011. In 2012, UN agencies will focus on choosing cash transfer modalities and designing assurance plans in line with the findings of the assessments.

Due to the lack of availability of suitable companies that can be hired in for outsourced security and cleaning services, UNICEF Tajikistan is limited to using **UNDP Service Contracts** for its security guards/receptionists and cleaners. Regional Office approval was obtained for this modality. The situation is not satisfactory, but can only be remedied if suitable companies for outsourcing emerge on the local market.

### **Key Strategic Partnerships and Interagency Collaboration**

UNICEF uses the premises of **UNDP** Khudjand and **WFP** Kurgan-Tube for the offices of regional Field Monitors. UNDP premises are rent-free, while WFP premises are at a nominal price. UNICEF also uses UNDP rented warehouse premises in Kurgan-Tube on a cost share basis.

A partnership was forged with the **UN Resident Coordinator's Office** and other UN agencies in the conduct of HACT micro-assessments. UNICEF aims to continue to foster this partnership in developing the HACT assurance plans in 2012.

### **Humanitarian Situations**

No humanitarian situations occurred in 2011 that required a response under this component.

### **Summary of Monitoring, Studies and Evaluations**

A **Country Assessment of Essential Commodities** (CAEC) was carried out in 2011 as a follow up to a 2010 audit recommendation. The assessment followed a simplified format, as approved by the RO. UNICEF Tajikistan is one of very few countries in the CEE/CIS region to have completed this kind of assessment. Its findings will feed into programme and operations planning for 2012 and beyond.

CAEC findings have already been used to inform programme interventions in the following ways:

- Access to safe water and sanitation in maternal facilities in selected priority districts will be addressed with the recently received Set-Aside funding.
- CAEC findings on the need for assistive devices for children with disabilities were used to ensure that more of these devices are in place.
- UNICEF is currently finalizing the new design for school toilets to be approved by the Government, which includes facilities for children with disabilities.

### **Future Work Plan**

In 2012, with the new programme structure in VISION for Tajikistan, cross-sectoral allocations will be reflected under PCR 5 (Support) and PCR 6 (Cross-Sectoral). The planned activities will be reflected under the respective IR. All activities that can be associated with an IR in any of the other PCRs will be reflected there. PCR 5 and 6 will only contain those activities that are truly cross-office activities. PCR 6 will be limited to procurement support, while other programme support costs will be reflected under PCR 5.

As a follow-up to the HACT Micro-Assessments, a HACT Assurance Plan needs to be developed for 2012. Assurance activities will need to be carried out in a systematic manner to build the financial capacity of implementing partners. This is a major initiative to be undertaken in 2012 and may need to be outsourced.

### Effective Governance Structure

The Annual Management Plan 2011 (AMP) included key office and programme management priorities and defined key results and responsibilities of staff to achieve the office objectives. The status of AMP achievements was reviewed during the Staff Retreat in September 2011.

In-house committees functioned well during the year and memberships were updated in October 2011.

1. The **Country Management Team** (CMT) met three times in 2011, including in February, September and December. Major discussions were related to: a) changes in office structure for submission to PBR; b) Cost Control Measures; c) misuse of programme funds by implementing partners; and d) decisions on major office milestones and plans. Key management indicators were reported at CMT meetings and also at weekly Section Chief meetings.
2. The **Contract Review Committee** met to review and recommend 37 cases for Head of Office approval in 2011. The CO established ceilings above which CRC review is mandatory at \$10,000 for Supply and \$15,000 for Contracts. The CO did not have any Post-facto Notifications to report, as per FC 19, Rev. 3. One mid-sized Construction Works contract was referred to Supply Division and approved. The advance payment on this construction contract was referred to DFAM and approved as per FC 33.
3. As per the AMP, **Programme Coordination Meetings** should occur monthly, but due to competing office priorities, including VISION preparations in the last quarter of the year, only five meetings were held. Also, during most of 2011, there was a degree of functional overlap between Programme Coordination Meetings and weekly Section Chiefs Meetings. Towards the end of 2011, the attendance and focus of Section Chiefs Meetings were narrowed to reduce overlap and strengthen the rationale for monthly Programme Coordination Meetings.
4. The **Local Training Committee** met five times in 2011. The Committee compiled an Office Training Plan based on organizational priorities which was included in the AMP. Emphasis was given to training for VISION. Individual staff training requests were reviewed by the Committee and passed to the Representative for approval.
5. The **Joint Consultative Committee** met three times during 2011. Consensus was reached on all issues addressed by Staff Association and Management. Major issues included: a) Office environment survey and Action Plan; b) Office preparedness for VISION and new job roles; c) Cost cutting measures applicable to >9 hr. travel; d) Management transition resulting in changes to existing office procedures; e) Quality of local medical care; and f) Training in Local Salary Survey Methodology.
6. The **PCA Review Committee** reviewed a total of eight cases in 2011, which were passed to the Representative for approval.
7. Other committees, such as the **LCRB** and **LPSB**, met when required.

All Internal Audit Recommendations were closed by the OIA deadline of June 2011. This included the closing of the recommendation on the Situation Analysis (SITAN) and Country Assessment of Essential Commodities (CAEC), which OIA decided to close while the studies were in progress. The CAEC was completed shortly thereafter, but due to some delays with the consultant, the final version of the SITAN is due in early 2012.

### Strategic Risk Management

The **Risk Control & Self Assessment** (RCSA), consisting of the Country Office Risk Profile and the Risk Control Library (RCL), are working documents and are used as a benchmark for assessing risks, with

periodic updates capturing all internal and external changes in the operating environment. The RCSA was last updated in December 2011, taking into account the Tajikistan Security Risk Assessment (TSRA) updated by DSS in the same month. The RCL has identified the Risk Responses and Controls for the 'moderately high' rated risks of the Office in order to manage and mitigate risks at a tolerable level. The RCSA will be revisited quarterly at CMTs, or as warranted.

The UNICEF Tajikistan **Business Continuity Plan** was last updated in August 2011 capturing operational changes after the previous update of the Tajikistan Security Risk Assessment of March 2011. The BCP update also captured critical staff changes within the UNICEF office. The BCP will be updated again in early 2012 on the basis of the TSRA update of December 2011.

The Emergency Risk Assessment of **EWEA** was updated in June and December 2011, incorporating comments received from OPSCEN. The threat levels have not changed in comparison to previous versions of the EWEA pages for Tajikistan. UNICEF will specify preparedness activities in its EWEA pages in early 2012, update all requirements of the EWEA portal, and conduct a staff briefing to provide updates on the requirements.

Staff are kept well abreast of risk mitigating factors and options available to them and their families in times of emergencies. The Country Office receives full support from DSS on security related issues and DSS-organized MOSS trainings are consistently attended by relevant UNICEF staff (Agency Security Focal Point, drivers, and Security Wardens) and office guards/residential guards.

### Evaluation

All Country Office monitoring and evaluation activities are guided by the two-year rolling IMEP. Progress on the implementation of the IMEP was reviewed quarterly at programme coordination meetings and CMT. The CO updated the multi-year IMEP and used it to plan studies and evaluations to assess the progress of the country programme, to inform programming, and to advocate for children's issues. The proposed studies and surveys were the product of joint programme reviews with the Government and partners. The M&E officer uploads the annual updated IMEP on the online Evaluation and Research Database together with periodic updating of studies and surveys. The management response to the Gender Assessment of the Tajikistan Country Programme has been tracked periodically.

The CO did not conduct any evaluations in 2011. Even though in-country capacity for conducting evaluations is limited, there are a handful of research entities of high caliber operating in the country.

In 2012, the Office will focus on strengthening performance monitoring based on CPAP indicators and analyzing initial trends in social and economic indicators at the decentralized level, with a particular focus on equity. This will allow an assessment of the progress in implementation of the country programme in priority districts against the baseline.

With the Mid-Term review coming up in 2013, the Country Office will use 2012 to collect evidence to inform the review which will assist in judging the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme strategy in the current Country Programme, with the selection of one thematic evaluation.

### Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

Despite its limited budget, UNICEF Tajikistan effectively used information and communication technologies. The following actions merit highlighting:

- The Country Office prepared the infrastructure for the Microsoft 2008 Server operating system and successfully released it. The existing compatible servers were upgraded with additional CPUs and RAM. A new server was procured to replace an outdated appliance.
- Windows 7 was successfully installed in all office workstations.
- The UN ICT Working Group made concrete plans for IT equipment to be deployed to an alternative site in the context of the Business Continuity Plan. UNICEF agreed to purchase part of the required server and network equipment. The remaining equipment is to be purchased out of the 2012 budget. Ultimately, the plan is to build a facility which would contain a server rack with configured servers, wired and wireless network equipment. UNICEF offered its iDirect terminal for WAN and Internet connectivity of an alternative site should business continuity require this.
- Arrangements were made to ensure that during office VISION trainings, the existing WAN bandwidth is sufficient for the ERP application as well as Internet bandwidth for remote access via HQ Citrix.
- Optimal performance of VISION was achieved by splitting corporate traffic and Internet traffic to EMC VSAT and local ISP, respectively.
- The CO ensured that the office IT equipment was up-to-date at all times to support global applications and services.

### Fundraising and Donor Relations

The fundraising environment in Central Asia, and Tajikistan in particular, is constrained. The number of traditional bilateral donors is limited and shrinking. Non-traditional donors such as the Russian Federation and China are increasingly active in the region, but tend to favor bilateral support to the Government over support channeled through UN agencies.

In the course of 2011, Tajikistan Country Office participated in a Regional Office initiative to build stronger relations with the European Union. It took part in a meeting of Central Asia Representatives with relevant officials from the European Commission in Brussels. Discussions were held with the Islamic Development Bank and the potential of a partnership with the Russian Government was explored. The Country Office submitted a range of proposals, as an individual agency and jointly with other UN agencies.

In 2011, UNICEF Tajikistan successfully mobilized funds from SDC for the second phase of the Juvenile Justice Alternatives Project (US\$1,088,672); and from the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for the second phase of the 8th Grant Round (US\$880,997.51). The Country Office also received US\$200,000 set-aside funds to pursue the Safe Cities Initiative with UN Women, US\$250,000 of UNICEF Thematic funds to improve WASH in health facilities, and US\$100,000 of UNICEF Thematic Child Protection Funds at the end of 2011. The CO also relied extensively on UNICEF Basic Education and Gender Equality Thematic Funds. Finally, the Office was pleased to receive US\$270,000 of Global Thematic funding for humanitarian response against the 2011 Humanitarian Action for Children Report, which was a mere fraction of the US\$5.5 million that was estimated in the report.

Together with other UN Agencies, UNICEF submitted two joint proposals to the Human Security Trust Fund and the UN Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence against Women, respectively. While the first proposal was rejected, the second one is pending.

Jointly with WHO, an information package was sent to all potential donors requesting their support for the implementation of a planned Ministry of Health-led Diphtheria Campaign. This activity is in response to results from a serosurvey showing alarmingly low rates of population immunity to the Diphtheria antigen.

OR allocations were equal to or exceeded planned amounts as per the CPD in 2011, with the exception of

PCR 4 (Policy and Planning) and PCR 5 (Cross-Sectoral), which are traditionally difficult programme components for raising donor funding.

Two PBA extensions were requested and approved in 2011, both in relation to late disbursements by the donor. All but one of the ten donor reports were issued on time. An agreement was reached with one of the donors for extending a deadline due to an oversight with respect to the deadline for reporting.

In 2012, the Country Office will develop a systematic fundraising strategy and streamline its efforts to improve its visibility and enhance its fundraising capacity.

### Management of Financial and Other Assets

All outstanding observations from the 2010 audit were successfully closed in 2011.

Programme utilization exceeded 95% for both Regular and Other Resources.

Efficiency gains of US\$30,000-45,000 were realized in 2011 as a result of various cost saving measures. The Office had to seek two PBA extensions, in both cases due to late disbursement by the donor. Nine of the ten donor reports in 2011 were issued on time.

Within the HACT Framework, 31 of the CO's major Implementing Partners (IP) were Micro Assessed during 2011. The UN Coordination Unit managed the process for a total of 41 implementing partners from all UN agencies. The process took six months, with the final reports only available in November. UNICEF's IPs consisted of the following categories and risk levels:

3 Ministries (2 Medium, 1 Low risk)

9 Government Agencies (5 Significant, 4 Medium, 1 Low risk)

7 NGOs (4 Significant, 2 Medium, 1 Low risk)

12 Local Authorities at district level (11 Significant, 1 Medium risk)

Of the above, 2 IPs were common IPs among two or more UN agencies. The decision on the Cash Transfer modalities and required assurance measures will be made in 2012.

The CO had two cases of DCT adjustments referred to DFAM and received approval in the fourth quarter of 2011 for the amounts of \$5,084 and \$1,226, given to two government agencies. These adjustments were due to HACT Spot Checks revealing that the partners had not used the funds for the purposes intended.

Another Spot Check of the activity with the Republican Healthy Life Style Center (RHLSC) revealed misappropriation of approximately \$9,180. However, after persistent negotiations with the implementing partner, the CO was able to obtain a refund of these funds before 2011 year-end.

Given the high risk environment, the Country Office will step up its efforts in 2012 to improve capacity of partners in financial management, reach out to the Government and other international donors/partners for identifying viable solutions, conduct audits and establish robust assurance plans vis-a-vis high risk partners. The programme-related decentralized PFM capacity building will also be contributing in this regard.

At the end of 2011, 18% of DCTs issued by the Office were outstanding six to nine months and 1% was outstanding over nine months.

The CO is still awaiting a VAT refund from the tax authorities relating to 2007 invoices amounting to \$2,633, currently charged to VAT Receivable GL 143930.

All IPSAS requirements and reporting deadlines were met. This includes reporting on Capital Assets and Receivable Accounts to be set up in VISION. VISION trainings on Finance and Inventory modules were attended by two staff members in each category, acquiring knowledge on how transactions are to be treated in VISION.

Non-expendable Property physical count was carried out as of 31st Dec. 2011, with no reconciling items between the database and the count. Programme Supplies Inventory physical count was carried out as of 31st Dec. 2011, with no reconciling items between Unitrack and the count.

### Supply Management

In 2011, the supply component of the Country Programme (including approved OBOs) consisted of:

- 18% of total expenditures incurred through the PGM/PO modality, and
- 14% of total expenditures incurred through the Institutional Contract modality.

Of total Local Procurement PGMs, 28% were raised for Non-Standard items, mainly for the Early Learning and WASH projects, requiring a bidding process in each instance. The Country Office foresees challenges with the procurement of large volumes of non-standard items given the procurement procedures under VISION and aims to establish Long Term Agreements (LTA) to address this challenge. In 2012, the CO will be Calling for Interest from suppliers with a general listing of non-standard items. Supply Division has been requested to create new material codes for country specific non-standard items which will facilitate the procurement process for such items using VISION.

In 2011, UNICEF Tajikistan encountered challenges with short expiry dates of certain items in Hygiene Kits (catalogue no. 362350-001) and IEHK 2006 Kits (cat. Nos. 9906610). This required disposing of and replacing these specific items within each kit, requiring additional logistics and expenditure. When ordering and assembling kits in the future, closer attention will need to be paid to the expiry dates of individual items.

UNICEF Tajikistan has had some difficulties in obtaining certificates from SD for warehouse medical material items. SD provides certificates of analysis for pharmaceuticals, but certificates for material medical items (e.g. syringes, gloves, and bandages) are not provided and the CO needs to request the Tajik State Institute of Analysis (TSIA) for an independent analysis. TSIA's analysis and issuance of certificates usually takes 1-2 months, delaying programme delivery.

Tajikistan CO leases warehouse premises at two locations, in Dushanbe and Kurgan-Tube. One warehouse stores perishable items which require special storage conditions. In 2011, a decision was made to move non-perishable items to a common warehouse also used by UNDP & UNHCR for cost effectiveness purposes. An MOU with UNDP was signed for this rental agreement. Both warehouse locations are well managed and records are accurate, as evidenced by the Physical Inventory Count carried out in Dec. 2011. Use of Unitrack facilitated programme supply data migration to VISION. It is unlikely that free of charge government premises can be negotiated for UNICEF warehousing.

The CO benefited from a visit of the Chief of Procurement Services (PS) to the region. Individual meetings were arranged with all PS partners - UNDP, IMCI, MOH and RCIP. A pending 'consignee' issue with RCIP was resolved. The visit helped PS partners and UNICEF staff to better understand PS Policy and processes.

In response to an Internal Audit recommendation of 2010, a simplified Country Assessment of Essential Commodities (CAEC) was undertaken by the CO and completed by a consultant in mid-2011. The results of the study were shared and discussed during the Staff Retreat in September 2011 and will inform programmatic interventions linked to supplies. The report was also shared with the RO, SD and DPP. In 2012, better streamlining of the functions of the two staff (Admin and Supply Officer and Supply Assistant) will take place to improve efficiency. The presence of field monitors improved supply assistance monitoring at the local level.

### Human Resources

The Country Office proposed changes in the staffing structure to the 2011 PBR, in line with programme needs. The following posts were approved using OR funds:

- C4D Specialist – L3 level
- Education Officer, EL – NOB level
- WASH Officer – NOB level
- Programme Assistant (Social Policy) – GS5 level

In 2011, the CO successfully recruited a Communications Officer, Child Protection Officer, M&E Officer and Early Learning Officer, all at NOB level. The Child Protection Officer post was filled by an internal candidate. The selection process for the posts of WASH Officer and Programme Assistant (Child Protection) were completed by year-end. The post of Representative also underwent a transition with the arrival of the new incumbent in early September.

The posts of WASH Officer, C4D Specialist and Programme Assistant were vacant for over six months in 2011 due to inability to identify a suitable candidate for the former and lack of OR funding for the latter two.

Four staff members resigned to pursue further studies. With the end of the DIPECHO project in September, two temporary staff completed their TA contracts.

The Country Office has noted rising numbers of applicants for the advertised posts. This trend provides a larger pool for selection and demonstrates the increasing competence of Tajik nationals to compete for posts in international settings.

The Selection Panel (SP) and Local Central Review Body (LCRB) functioned well in 2011. Many staff members still lack Competency Based Interview (CBI) training. In 2012, the Country Office hopes to host a visit by RO HR staff during which CBI training will be provided.

The following staff trainings were completed in 2011 as part of the Office Training Plan, apart from the participation of staff in Regional network meetings and workshops:

- SAP HR & Payroll – 3 staff from Operations Section
- PPP – 8 programme staff
- WASH-in-Schools 6 month on-line course - 2 staff (NO and GS)
- PFM and Health System Financing - 2 staff (Chief of Health and Social Policy Officer)
- Management Development Programme – Chief of Education
- VISION trainings of 7 super-users
- Safe Driving – 2 drivers
- Strategic Choices for Education Reform training by the World Bank Institute - 2 staff (Representative and NO Education)
- Public Financial Management Training - 2 staff (Deputy Representative and NO Social Policy)
- Office-wide group training on Gender mainstreaming
- Office-wide group training on HIV/AIDS in the workplace where all staff were familiarized with UN Cares.

The Office prepared a comprehensive VISION training plan which was implemented for all staff in November. Training on Emergency Risk Management will be addressed in 2012.

The office performance on closing 2010 E-Pas and Pas was below the benchmark at only 76% by February. The Office will prioritize timely completion of performance appraisals in 2012.

The CO has hired three regional Field Monitors on SSA contracts since May 2010 to facilitate monitoring of UNICEF interventions on a regular basis. They work full time and are on a monthly fee equivalent to GS4 level. This contract modality will continue in 2012, and will be reviewed at the Mid Term Review in 2013.

### Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

In response to the Executive Director's message of 22nd Dec. 2010 on Cost Control and Deputy Executive Director's message of May 2011 on Managing operating costs funded from RR, the UNICEF Tajikistan CMT and JCC reached consensus on measures that could be introduced for cost savings across the Office.

These cost savings were related to:

- The use of cheaper venues for meetings, events, trainings etc.
  - Encouragement of staff to use economy class air travel when entitled to a higher class due to the location of Tajikistan and the very limited availability of international flights, resulting in the majority of travels exceeding nine hours, even in the Region
  - Reduction in driver overtime, with staff using other options for airport transfers in particular.
- These measures have resulted in cost savings estimated at \$20,000.

Efficiency and cost saving gains have also been made by leasing a second warehouse at lesser cost. This is a joint UN initiative and the premises are efficiently shared between UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. The items moved to this location are emergency stock pile items with infrequent movement. The savings from this initiative are estimated at \$10,000- \$15,000 in 2011.

### Changes in AMP and CPMP

No major changes are envisaged in the AMP for 2012.

Minor office management changes which were introduced in 2011 and will be documented in the 2012 AMP include:

- Limiting attendance at Section Chiefs Meetings to Section Chiefs and management and focusing its functioning on ongoing work planning and reporting
- More frequent CMT meetings from a minimum of four per year to six per year.
- AMP indicators will be reviewed to adapt them to IPSAS/VISION and to better capture office management and programme performance
- A number of work processes need to be revised to reflect the role mapping for Tajikistan Country Office under VISION

In 2012, the Office will be preparing for the mid-term review of 2013. The MTR will be an opportunity to assess whether the office structure is still best suited for the implementation of the Country Programme. Any proposals for changes to the office structure will be raised in the context of the MTR.

### Summary Notes and Acronyms

ADB: Asian Development Bank  
AMP: Annual Management Plan  
ARV: Anti-retroviral  
AS: Agency on Statistics  
BCP: Business Continuity Plan  
C4D: Communication for Development  
CAE: Centre for Additional Education  
CAEC: Country Assessment of Essential Commodities  
CBI: Competency-Based Interviewing  
CBR: Community-Based Rehabilitation  
CCT: Conditional Cash Transfer  
CDC: Centre for Disease Control  
CMT: Country Management Team  
CoES: Committee on Emergency Situations and Civil Defense  
CP: Country Programme  
CPAP: Country Programme Action Plan  
CRC: Contract Review Committee  
CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child  
CRU: Child Rights Unit  
CSO: Civil Society Organization  
CWD: Children with Disabilities  
DCT: Direct Cash Transfer  
DED: District Education Department  
DHS: Demographic and Health Survey  
DIPECHO: ECHO Disaster Preparedness Programme  
DRR: Disaster Risk Reduction  
ECD: Early Childhood Development  
ECHO: European Community Humanitarian Office  
EIU: Economist Intelligence Unit  
EL: Early Learning  
ELDS: Early Learning and Development Standards  
EMIS: Education Management Information System  
EmOC: Emergency Obstetric Care  
ERP: Enterprise Resource Planning  
EWEA: Early Warning Early Action  
FTI: Fast Track Initiative  
GBAO: Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast  
GDP: Gross Domestic Product  
GE: Girls Education  
GFATM: Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria  
GIZ: German Technical Cooperation  
GoT: Government of Tajikistan  
HACT: Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers  
HLS: Healthy Life Style  
IMCI: International Management of Children Illnesses  
IMEP: Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan  
IPSAS: International Public Sector Accounting Standards  
ISP: Internet Service Provider  
JAR: Joint Annual Review  
JCC: Joint Consultative Committee  
JJAP: Juvenile Justice Alternative Project  
KAP: Knowledge, Attitude and Practice  
LCRB: Local Contract Review Body  
LPSB: Local Property Survey Board

# Country Office Portal

## Annual Report 2011 for Tajikistan, CEE/CIS

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LSBE: Life Skills Based Education  
 LTA: Long-Term Agreement  
 MBB: Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks  
 MCH: Maternal and Child Health  
 MDG: Millennium Development Goal  
 MEDT: Ministry of Economic Development and Trade  
 MICS: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey  
 MLSP: Ministry of Labor and Social Protection  
 MoE: Ministry of Education  
 MoF: Ministry of Finance  
 MoH: Ministry of Health  
 MOSS: Minimal Operational Security Standards  
 MTEF: Medium Term Expenditure Framework  
 NCCR: National Commission on Child Rights  
 NDS: National Development Strategy  
 NSED: National Strategy for Education Development  
 OBO: Outstanding Budget Obligation  
 OOSC: Out of School Children  
 OPV: Oral Polio Vaccine  
 PBR: Programme Budget Review  
 PCA: Programme Cooperation Agreement  
 PCF: Per Capita Financing  
 PFM: Public Finance Management  
 PGM: Procurement of Goods and Materials  
 PHC: Primary Health Care  
 PMTCT: Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission  
 PRS: Poverty Reduction Strategy  
 PTA: Parent-Teacher Association  
 RCIP: Republican Centre of Immunoprophylaxis  
 RCL: Risk Control Library  
 RCSA: Risk Control & Self Assessment  
 REACT: Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team  
 RHLSC: Republican Healthy Life Style Centre  
 RIITT: Republican Institute of In-service Teacher Training  
 SAHU: Social Assistance at Home Unit  
 SAM: Severe Acute Malnutrition  
 SDC: Swiss Development Cooperation  
 SIA: Special Immunization Activities  
 SSA: Special Service Agreement  
 SWAp: Sector Wide Approach  
 TA: Temporary Appointment  
 TIKA: Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency  
 TJS: Tajik Somoni  
 TSIA: Tajik State Institute of Analysis  
 TSRA: Tajikistan Strategic Risk Assessment  
 UIS: UNESCO Institute of Statistics  
 UNDAF: United Nations Development Assistance Framework  
 USAID: United States Agency for International Development  
 VAT: Value Added Tax  
 WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene  
 WB: World Bank  
 YFHS: Youth Friendly Health Services

### Document Centre

#### Evaluation

|   | Title  | Sequence Number | Type of Report |
|---|--|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 | Comprehensive Costing and Finance Strategies for Early Learning System in Tajikistan                                     | 2011/004        | Study          |
| 2 | LSBHE KAP Survey: Assessing Impact on Children   | 2011/007        | Survey         |
| 3 | Community Based Rehabilitation Model Assessment  | 2011/011        | Study          |
| 4 | Assessment of Juvenile Justice System Reforms: Achievements and Gaps   | 2011/009        | Study          |
| 5 | TransMonEE: Assessment of Feasibility of Data and Data Collection in Tajikistan  | 2011/009        | Study          |
| 6 | Impact of Labor Migration on "Children Left Behind" in Tajikistan  | 2010/001        | Study          |
| 7 | Youth Perspectives of Education Quality in Tajikistan: A Case Study of Education Quality for Youth in the CEE/CIS Region | 2010/002        | Study          |

#### Other Publications

|    | Title  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Impact of Labor Migration on "Children Left Behind" in Tajikistan  |
| 2  | National Breastfeeding Week: Communication Materials   |
| 3  | Infant and Young Child Feeding Parents Guidelines  |
| 4  | National Immunization Days against Polio: Communication Materials  |
| 5  | State of the World's Children 2011: Executive summary of the Report in Tajik   |
| 6  | Girls' Education National Communication Campaign   |
| 7  | Disaster Risk Reduction in Education - A Review of UNICEF Experience in Tajikistan                                     |
| 8  | National Report on Education Sector Development  |
| 9  | WASH in Schools - Global Hand washing Day: Communication Materials   |
| 10 | It is about Ability: Book in Tajik and Russian   |
| 11 | Ending placing children under three in institutions, Call for Action: Leaflet in Tajik                                 |
| 12 | Protecting children against torture and ill treatment in Central Asia and Eastern Europe: Leaflet in Tajik and English |
| 13 | Opportunities in Juvenile Justice Reform: the Third Child Protection Forum for Central Asia                            |

#### Lessons Learned

|   | Title  | Document Type/Category |
|---|--|------------------------|
| 1 | Expanding access to quality Early Learning opportunities | Innovation             |

### **Programme Documents**