

Philippines

Country programme document 2012-2016

The draft country programme document for Philippines (E/ICEF/2011/P/L.7) was presented to the Executive Board for discussion and comments at its 2011 annual session (20-23 June 2011).

The document was subsequently revised, and this final version was approved at the 2011 second regular session of the Executive Board on 15 September 2011.

Basic data[†]*(2009 unless otherwise stated)*

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|--|--------------------|
| Child population (millions, under 18 years) | 37.0 |
| U5MR (per 1,000 live births) | 33 |
| Underweight (% , moderate and severe, 2008) | 22 ^a |
| Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births, 2006) | 160 ^b |
| Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female, 2008) | 91/93 ^c |
| Survival rate to last primary grade (% , 2006) | 73 ^c |
| Use of improved drinking water sources (% , 2008) | 91 ^d |
| Use of adequate sanitation facilities (% , 2008) | 76 ^d |
| Adult HIV prevalence rate (%) | <0.1 |
| Child labour (% , 5-14 years old, 1999) | 12 |
| Birth registration (% , under 5 years, 2000) | 83 |
| (male/female, urban/rural) | 83/83, 87/78 |
| One-year-olds immunized with DPT3 (%) | 87 ^e |
| One-year-olds immunized against measles (%) | 88 ^e |

[†] More comprehensive country data on children and women can be found at www.childinfo.org.

^a Birth to 60 months. World Health Organization child growth standard.

^b 94 deaths per 100,000 live births is the 2008 estimate developed by the United Nations Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-agency Group (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Bank, together with independent technical experts), adjusted for underreporting and misclassification of maternal deaths. For more information, see www.childinfo.org/maternal_mortality.html.

^c Basic Information Education System data: Net enrolment ratio (per cent): 85.1 (total), 84.6 (male), 85.7 (female). Survival rate: Total = 78.32%.

^d National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2008 data: Water = 90.1%, sanitation = 65.8%.

^e NDHS 2008: DPT3 = 85.6%, measles = 84.5%. These survey results confirm the country's administrative coverage figures (which form the basis for the WHO/UNICEF estimate) and the NDHS 2008 data for children vaccinated by 12 months of age: DPT3 = 82.8% and measles = 76.2%.

Summary of the situation of children and women

1. The Philippines is an archipelago of over 7,000 islands with a population of nearly 89 million. It has a presidential form of government, and law-making is vested in a bicameral Congress. Since July 2010, a new democratically elected administration has initiated reform articulated in the Philippines Development Plan, 2011-2016. The plan prioritizes achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and is complemented by a flagship conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme and a newly energized peace process. The reform faces challenges in rectifying deeply rooted social, economic and political inequalities.

2. The 2008 Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the third and fourth Philippines State party reports commended some key measures and progress in promoting and protecting the rights of children. These included the passage into law of a women's rights law (the "Magna Carta of Women") and the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act of 2006 and abolition of the death

penalty for juveniles and adults. However, in 2009 the Committee noted the need to coordinate and increase budgetary allocations for children. It highlighted the need for legislation and implementation of laws on corporal punishment, promotion of awareness of child rights and improved data collection and dissemination. The Committee made particular reference to vulnerable groups of children, including those in areas vulnerable to disasters and conflict and those affected by any form of abuse, including children with disabilities.

3. The economy has grown at an average of 6 per cent per year since 2005, and the country's Human Development Index has improved. However, serious structural problems threaten the sustainability of these gains. Child poverty remains high, at 41 per cent, as does inequality, as indicated by a Gini co-efficient of 0.448. Regional disparities have increased due mainly to the pattern of growth led by the private sector, a bias towards the rich in budget allocations, low revenue base, corruption and low investment in social sectors (less than 4 per cent of gross domestic product, or GDP). Certain provinces of Visayas and Mindanao suffer deeply from social inequities. Non-State-sponsored armed insurgencies give rise to human security risks, as do rising tensions in the area of the South China Sea and vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change. These challenges also constrain the availability of resources to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

4. The Philippines is on track to meet most of the national Millennium Development Goals, including gender equality. However, under-achievement in primary education, maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS reflects critical investment gaps. While the under-five mortality target is likely to be met, high rates of neonatal mortality and malnutrition remain a significant challenge. Early childhood care and development (ECCD) coverage is low, at 33 per cent. School dropout rates are high, mostly among boys, in the first two years of elementary education, mainly attributed to poverty. Around 20 million Filipinos lack access to sanitation, as do over half the public schools. Although national HIV prevalence remains below 1 per cent, new cases among 15- to 24-year-olds have increased fivefold in two years. Knowledge of HIV prevention is low among high-risk 15- to 17-year-olds, and access to services is limited.

5. Children continue to be recruited and used in armed conflicts. The Philippines was prioritized in 2007 by the United Nations Security Council for implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on grave child rights violations under resolution 1612 (2005). There are knowledge and data gaps on child vulnerabilities. The number of internally displaced families rose to 158,000 at the height of fresh armed conflict in some provinces of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in August 2008. The peace talks have since resumed, and the number of displaced families was reduced to 35,000 by October 2010.

6. The Philippines lies along the so-called typhoon belt facing the Pacific Ocean within the Pacific "Ring of Fire" and is severely affected by climate change. This vulnerability is multiplied by uncontrolled settlement in disaster-prone areas, as well as high poverty rates, lack of adherence to building codes and degradation of forests and coastal resources, among other factors. In 2009, typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng affected 9.3 million persons, resulting in losses estimated at 27 per cent of GDP.

7. The Constitution and the Local Government Unit (LGU) Code of 1991 provide for a highly decentralized LGU system consisting of provinces, cities, municipalities and *barangays*. It provides for an effective institutional mechanism to deliver social

services and address inequity. The policy environment is amenable to influence by civil society, which is represented by a rich mix of non-governmental organizations, including faith-based institutions. The private sector is strong, and social responsibility and individual giving are significant strengths that could be harnessed to realize child rights.

Key results and lessons learned from previous cooperation, 2005-2011

Key results achieved

8. The 2007 midterm review of the country programme and a 2008 programme performance assessment led by the Office of Internal audit highlighted the key role of UNICEF in creating and developing various children's rights networks and coalitions in the Philippines. The assessment recognized the capacity of UNICEF in advocacy, its strong awareness of local planning and budgeting, and its skilful engagement with legislative processes. A country programme evaluation completed in 2010 further confirmed that the objectives set in the programme were relevant to the needs and priorities of the Philippines and that UNICEF had made notable contributions to enhancing government capabilities to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

9. On the legislative and policy front, the programme evaluation noted that UNICEF is credited with important contributions by providing key and timely technical, legal, financial and advocacy support. The law on child pornography was enacted in 2009, and other laws — including on children affected by armed conflict, on the age of sexual consent and on corporal punishment — were filed in Congress. The passage of the Juvenile Justice Welfare Act (2006), the implementing rules and regulations of the National Guidelines for the Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (2007) and the Expanded Breastfeeding Promotion Act (2010) were reported as having had multiplier effects.

10. The evaluation also highlighted the contribution of the education programme to access to ECCD services, with support from the Australian Government Overseas Aid Program (AusAid). It noted that the percentage of children aged 3 to 5 receiving ECCD services grew from 30 per cent in 2004 to 56 per cent in 2009. This programme involved support for national policies, standards, learning materials and national plans to improve centre-based early childhood development services and to institutionalize and expand home-based ECCD through innovative models.

Lessons learned

11. The midterm review found the integrated, multi-sectoral approach of the current country programme to be rich in concept but overly complex, especially regarding the results framework, and hindered by a lack of adequate data. This led to reliance mainly on sector-level strategies at the expense of the full realization of cross-sectoral synergies. It was recommended that UNICEF clarify its role so as to maximize its comparative advantage and use of resources. The new country programme is based on a robust vulnerability analysis and clear articulation of intended results that foster integration and cohesion.

12. In 2010, UNICEF identified the need to take fuller account of emerging risks for children from rising regional disparities, climate change and increasing natural disasters and conflicts. It was noted that these challenges contribute significantly to poverty and perpetuate inequities. It was recommended that UNICEF develop specific responses to vulnerabilities of children by region and income level. This has been addressed by developing a specific result aimed at improving human security and mitigating risks.

13. The country programme evaluation in 2010 noted that many stakeholders and partners appreciated the broad scope of the engagement of UNICEF for children, but to better ensure relevance it urged UNICEF to focus on fewer roles, sectors, activities, geographic areas and partners. Taking this into account, the new country programme clearly defines its scope of engagement through baseline indicators, mapping of risks by region and evidence-based targeting of resources. For instance, UNICEF will work in the health sector only in regions where skilled birth attendance coverage is less than 50 per cent.

The country programme, 2012-2016

Summary budget table

| <i>Programme</i> | <i>(In thousands of United States dollars)</i> | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|---------------|
| | <i>Other resources</i> | <i>Regular resources</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| Millennium Development Goals achieved with equity | 40 700 | 6 310 | 47 010 |
| Social policy and risk mitigation | 24 200 | 2 675 | 26 875 |
| Cross-sectoral costs | 5 100 | 6 510 | 11 610 |
| Total | 70 000 | 15 495 | 85 495 |

Preparation process

14. In August 2008, the Government recommended deferring the start of the country programme and the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), covering the period 2012-2018, to align with the Government's next development plan (Philippines Development Plan 2011-2016). Preparation of the new programme started with implementation of the recommendations to streamline the programme after the midterm review, followed by province-level discussions from March to October 2008. Programme discussions were also held during the 2008 programme performance assessment.

15. These were followed by an external evaluation of the present and previous country programmes, completed in 2010. Key events in planning for the new programme were a consultative Strategic Moment of Reflection (April 2010) and strategy meeting (October 2010) in partnership with the National Economic and Development Authority. These drew on the outcomes of a participatory gender audit completed in April 2010. In February 2011, a final draft of the country programme document was presented to the National Steering Committee. The country programme was prepared in coordination with the UNDAF and the new programmes of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and World Food Programme.

Programme and component results and strategies

16. The country programme will contribute to progressive realization of children's rights in line with government priorities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Component 1 focuses on services and systems ('downstream') to address inequities and therefore contribute to achieving national Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Component 2 focuses on policy initiatives ('upstream') to put in place an improved human security and social policy framework by 2016 to mitigate risks arising from inequities, conflict and natural disasters.

17. UNICEF efforts will focus on a subset of vulnerable geographic regions identified by the Government in the Philippines Development Plan as suffering from the highest levels of inequity. To ensure that interventions are sustainable and scaled up, UNICEF will work primarily through public sector institutions (LGUs) as the main instruments of service delivery and systems-building. The level of engagement with government institutions will take into account capacities, economies of scale and sector issues. Lessons from this approach will be used for development of policies to address specific risks and encourage nationwide implementation.

18. Within the context of limited investment in the social sectors, and guided by the human rights-based approach, UNICEF will advocate and leverage resources for children and promote efficient use of resources by the LGUs. Vulnerable populations will be emphasized, and UNICEF will work in close alignment with the government-led CCT programme. Institutional incentives will be created for LGUs to encourage investment in improving social outcomes. They will receive grants to invest in children based on good performance (verified through community-based monitoring).

19. Policy, public advocacy and knowledge management will form a core pillar of efforts to improve the human security environment and develop strategic partnerships for children. This will be advanced in two ways. First, UNICEF will build and strengthen partnerships, advocate for reducing disparities, stress peacebuilding and strengthen disaster preparedness. Second, within the context of South-South cooperation, UNICEF will take the lead in promoting the use of proven practices to advance children's rights and develop programmes and policies based on sound evidence. This will be undertaken jointly with other United Nations agencies within the context of the UNDAF.

20. Communication for Development will complement advocacy to encourage positive community behaviours. Multiple communication channels will be employed to target important care practices such as encouraging exclusive breastfeeding and micronutrient supplementation. Community efforts will be undertaken to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS among high-risk young people and of significant child protection issues, such as violence and abuse. Disaster risk reduction capacity will be strengthened in collaboration with partners to equip communities with knowledge of preparedness.

Relationship to national priorities and UNDAF

21. The country programme is closely aligned with the Philippines Development Plan and relevant sectoral policies. Education initiatives will contribute to the 2015 Education for All plan and to the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda. For the health sector, efforts will align with the newly announced Aquino Health Agenda,

National Objectives for Health (2012-2016) and the Philippines Medium-Term Plan of Action on Nutrition. For child protection, the foundation will be the extended Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection and related national plans.

22. The peacebuilding programme component aligns with the government-led Promoting the Peace project to enhance delivery of social services in conflict-prone areas. Disaster risk reduction activities will be guided by the “Guidelines on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in subnational development” and the National Framework on Climate Change.

23. The UNDAF has four outcomes, and UNICEF will contribute directly to three: by 2018 (a) the poor and vulnerable will have better access to quality social services, with a focus on the Millennium Development Goals; (b) more citizens, especially the poor and disadvantaged, will be empowered to exercise their human rights and participate in governance processes that promote development, peace, justice, equality, integrity, accountability and inclusivity; and (c) vulnerable communities and natural ecosystems will be resilient to threats, shocks, disasters and climate change.

Relationship to international priorities

24. The programme supports the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. It will address the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the content of the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The programme will continue to support the monitoring and reporting mechanism for grave child rights violations in situations of armed conflict, as mandated by Security Council Resolutions 1539 and 1612, and the Paris Principles on children associated with armed forces or armed groups. The programme supports the Government in monitoring performance of these mechanisms.

Programme components

25. **Millennium Development Goals achieved with equity.** This component works to improve targeting of public resources in selected vulnerable LGUs through three major results. The first result aims to increase access to high-impact preventive services and behaviour change interventions in vulnerable and poor LGUs with high incidence of child mortality and HIV. The programme will work to increase access to skilled birth attendance in seven regions with low rates of coverage and high underweight prevalence; and to reduce child mortality, improve nutritional status and increase access to fortified foods. It will also work to increase access to adequately iodized salt for 90 per cent of households in the poorest LGUs.

26. The programme aims to improve household knowledge on immunization, deworming and exclusive breastfeeding; improve government capacity for procurement services; strengthen policy and programming frameworks, such as for infant and young child feeding, universal salt iodization, community management of acute malnutrition and food fortification; increase access to safe water and basic sanitation services and improve hygiene behaviour, targeting municipalities with sanitation coverage of less than 45 per cent; and strengthen capacities of national government agencies and three LGUs to implement and oversee HIV prevention activities for children, young people and women most at risk.

27. UNICEF will work on this component with both international partners (United Kingdom Department for International Development, United States Agency for International Development, AusAid, European Union, UNFPA, World Health Organization, United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition) and national partners (Departments of Health, Education, and Interior and Local Government; Philippines National AIDS Council; non-governmental organizations; the private sector; and young people).

28. The focus of the second result is increasing access to ECCD and elementary education in the 15 most vulnerable LGUs. The programme will emphasize gender parity, policy adaptation for national legislation and higher budget allocations. Children aged 3 to 11 will receive special attention, with a focus on improving ECCD and elementary basic education. These interventions are expected to increase enrolment and reduce dropouts and to contribute to a 5 per cent increase in the national primary school net enrolment rate by 2015.

29. The programme will support evidence-based advocacy and development of national and local plans to scale up innovations to improve school readiness, completion rates and gender disparities. It will support peace efforts by assisting in development of the peace education curriculum and providing technical assistance to bring Islamic madrasas into the national education regulatory framework. In partnership with the CCT programme, UNICEF will also address health and nutrition, violence, discriminatory practices and disruptions caused by disasters, within the school context. It will encourage participation of children, teachers and communities in school improvement initiatives, such as adoption of child-friendly methods to improve learning.

30. Key partners include the Department of Education, Department of Social Welfare and Development, ECCD Council and LGUs.

31. The objective of the third result of this component is to improve national and local public sector institutional frameworks. This would increase access to well-coordinated child protection services for the most vulnerable children in at least five disadvantaged LGUs. This result is expected to improve policy, legislative and national institutional frameworks. Those in turn should enable the Government to ensure the child protection system is a well-coordinated core public service and to establish and improve access to child protection services in five disadvantaged LGUs.

32. UNICEF will support provision of high-quality technical advice on policy, legislative and institutional frameworks to relevant public sector organizations so they will have the capacities to establish a national child protection service. Support will be provided to enact laws and improve services by reinforcing capacities and accountabilities of public sector professionals and LGUs, particularly in high risk-areas targeted through the CCT modality.

33. Partners include the Council for Welfare of Children; Departments of Social Welfare and Development, Justice, Interior and Local Government, and Education; Philippines National Police; UNFPA, regarding gender-based violence; World Health Organization, on violence against children; and the International Labour Organization, on child labour.

34. **Social policy and risk mitigation.** This component focuses on improving human security and leveraging resources through strategic policy analysis, advocacy

and partnerships. The main objective is to contribute to government initiatives to mitigate risks arising from inequities, disparities, conflict and natural disasters, through three result areas.

35. The first result of this component focuses on strengthening knowledge, data and policy analysis to formulate equity-driven national social sector policies, social protection plans (e.g., CCTs) and budgets to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The programme will support the Government's strategy to put equity at the heart of the development agenda through incentives and performance-based mechanisms (specifically, matching grants based on improved social outcomes) for the most vulnerable LGUs. It will also work to ensure that child rights and gender equality receive priority, accompanied by fiscal allocations, in national and local policies, poverty reduction and social protection programmes. It will integrate child rights indicators into provincial and city government reports in targeted LGUs. This will be achieved in partnership with the National Economic and Development Authority and its regional planning centres, the Department of Budget and Management, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and public interest and political institutions.

36. The second result aims to advance peace by providing technical and other assistance to improve delivery of social services and collection and use of data. Conflict analysis will be improved and conflict prevention and peace-promoting initiatives will be mainstreamed into national and local development plans. These will include action plans led by UNICEF to demobilize and integrate child soldiers, as well as increasing access to basic social services in areas vulnerable to conflict. UNICEF will collaborate closely with the CCT programme and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process. Working with the United Nations system, particularly with Act for Peace initiative of UNDP, UNICEF will provide sustained support to the country's task force on monitoring and reporting on grave violations of child rights in armed conflict. This will include support for implementation of action plans and strategies with State and non-State parties.

37. Result three aims to improve the capacity of national and local public sector institutions to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of emergencies and hazards, using the cluster approach in line with the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. UNICEF will work with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council and its subnational counterparts in vulnerable provinces to improve national institutional and policy frameworks for implementing the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act. This will be achieved by mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in national and local development policies of vulnerable LGUs. This result will also contribute to improving implementation of the disaster management programme by building the capacity of staff of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office. This effort will emphasize local levels and partnerships to enhance advocacy in schools and communities prone to disasters.

38. **Cross-sectoral costs.** This component, which contributes to achievement of the other results, comprises advocacy communication, resource mobilization, partnerships and programme coordination, and monitoring and evaluation. Advocacy communication will capitalize on the vibrant civil society and media in the Philippines to ensure widespread participation in social change processes. Advocacy will capitalize on the growth of giving and corporate social responsibility, focusing attention on long-term relationships with individuals, businesses and the

public sector to invest resources in children and support their cause. UNICEF will continue to raise funds for emergencies through emergency appeals.

39. Expected results are that media reports and public mobilization persuade decision makers to take action to accelerate achievement of the Millennium Development Goals with equity. Through resource mobilization and partnerships, \$5 million is to be raised in support of the country programme budget, and at least two private sector partnerships are to be established. UNICEF will also support strengthened planning, coordination and implementation in support of programme results in line with government priorities.

Major partnerships

40. To address the areas in which the Millennium Development Goals are lagging, the programme will intensify partnerships with leading government policymaking bodies and regional planning bodies, especially those based in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Mindanao Development Authority and other coordinating bodies, as well as with the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, bilateral donors, academic institutions, local governments and the private sector. UNICEF will continue to coordinate with the Department of Foreign Affairs. Within the framework of the UNDAF, UNICEF will work with other United Nations agencies to leverage resources for children.

Monitoring, evaluation and programme management

41. The country programme will be guided by a National Steering Committee that includes major government agencies, NGOs and donor representatives. A smaller Executive Committee, co-chaired by the National Economic and Development Authority and the Council for the Welfare of Children/Department of Social Welfare and Development, will advise on operational and administrative issues at national, regional and local levels. It will also plan meetings of the National Steering Committee. A midterm review is planned in 2014, at which time achievement of the Millennium Development Goals will be assessed. In 2016, the country programme will be evaluated through an “equity lens”.

42. Strategic results-based monitoring will be centred on indicators identified through gap and vulnerability analysis, with baselines and annual targets. Reporting against indicators will use existing national systems where possible, including the national Millennium Development Goals monitoring system governed by the National Statistical Coordination Board and the National Economic and Development Authority. The local government performance measurement system under the Department of Interior and Local Government will be used for annual performance monitoring, in addition to information systems used by line departments. To monitor equity dimensions, UNICEF will collaborate with the National Statistical Coordination Board and sister United Nations agencies, as well as with academic and research centres. This cooperation will cover statistical analysis, survey data and small area estimation techniques to provide evidence on the impact of poverty reduction programmes.

43. Equity-focused interventions will be evaluated to inform UNICEF efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. UNICEF will also partner with the monitoring and evaluation department of the National Economic and Development Authority to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation network in the Philippines

and develop country-led systems and standards. National policies and guidelines on evaluation will also be reviewed with the goal of ensuring systematic evaluation of policies. Public advocacy work will also be evaluated to sharpen the focus of this important strategy.

44. UNICEF will maintain its office in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in view of the multiple vulnerabilities affecting children there, including severe lags in development, conflict, natural disasters and widespread child poverty.

45. Key findings, good practices and lessons learned will be widely disseminated through studies, reviews and evaluations of programmes relevant to an equity-focused approach. Such knowledge sharing will be used as a strategic element of South-South cooperation and in regional and national venues such as the Philippines Development Forum.
