

## Voices from the Field

### **SMNet Evaluation – Evaluating a network of community mobilizers in India, by Misaki Akasaka Ueda and Vardhani Ratnala, UNICEF India**



The Social Mobilization Network (SMNet) was established by UNICEF in Uttar Pradesh in 2002 and expanded to Bihar in 2005 – the two Indian states with highest incidence of polio cases to generate community support for polio immunization. Under this initiative, more than 7000 community and district mobilisation coordinators were deployed to work with communities to encourage uptake of the oral polio vaccine.

In 2013-14, UNICEF commissioned an evaluation of this network. The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach. The methods used were: (1) Extensive literature review of published peer reviewed reports; (2) Secondary analysis of data from UNICEF state offices and Government data from the National Polio Surveillance Programme, Annual Health Surveys and District level Household Surveys; (3) In-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 317 stakeholders from intervention and non-intervention areas; (4) Value for Money (VfM) Analysis to measure the ratio of SMNet coverage for eradication of polio, to the expenditure incurred by UNICEF, and (5) Cross-temporal Meta-Analysis of relevant Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) studies to understand the composite outcome/effect of SMNet interventions on knowledge, attitudes, and practices about polio in the target communities. Data emerging from these methods was analysed and triangulated to answer the evaluation questions against the five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

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### **Evaluating Innovations, by Mirella Hernani and Sebastian Waisgrais, UNICEF LACR and UNICEF Argentina**

In 2015, the Latin America and Caribbean Region (LACR) reported 41 innovations. These innovations seek to find ways of delivering services that improve children's lives. Such innovations however should be tested to identify how they are improving reporting results for children.

UNICEF Argentina evaluated the “Escuelas secundarias en parajes rurales mediadas por TIC” (Technology-based Secondary Schools in isolated rural locations) program. This program supported the governments of Chaco, Jujuy, Salta and Misiones provinces to implement a pilot initiative where more than 600 students and teachers located in remote areas attend school using ICTs. The external evaluation assessed program impact, sustainability and scalability.

Key findings from the evaluation were that the program achieved its objective of providing learners with access to secondary education; the model is adaptable and can be used to monitor learning continuity and outcomes. Gender and ethnic differences in learning outcomes were noted. Boys had better results compared to girls. Local students did not perform as well when compared with other students regardless of gender. The evaluation also stated that the outcomes observed transcended education. The impact can be seen in the social, work and economic prospects of youth. It was recommended that authorities must; create a conducive environment for learning; provide adequate resources for continuity and scale up and also integrate the model into the formal educational system.

In 2016, UNICEF Peru implemented a pilot participatory monitoring program that uses Edu Track in schools in remote areas. The tool monitors selected indicators such as school infrastructure, timely arrival of learning materials and books, students' attendance, and teachers' attendance. Indicators are then shared and their performance discussed at three decision-making levels: community, provincial, and regional. It is intended that information

obtained from these discuss will be used to refine those indicators and improve education quality. The evaluation is expected to start at the end of 2016.

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