KEEPPING CHILDREN IN FOCUS

STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF DECENTRALIZED ACTION FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN (DACAW)
UNICEF NEPAL

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II Executive Summary

1 Introduction

Decentralized Action for Children and Women (DACAW) was established in 1998 by UNICEF Nepal in collaboration with the Government of Nepal as a partnership with the Ministry of Local Development (MLD). It is a community development program with a human rights based approach which seeks to ensure the progressive realization of the rights of children and women. The objective is to build the capacity of families, especially those from disadvantaged communities, as well as local bodies and other duty-bearers to plan, implement and monitor child-rights-based and responsive service delivery and local governance. Presently DACAW is in the middle of a three year plan which runs from 2008 to 2010 with a total budget of around 28 million USD.

2 Summary of Findings

Results

In the previous chapters it has been documented and described how the Community Action Process (CAP) has produced a large number and variety of results for UNICEF in Nepal both in terms of social mobilization and sector achievements. At the output level a large number of individuals have been recruited into a number of various community groups. Significant outputs have been achieved in the sectors of education, health and protection and valuable planning information has been produced in the form of DAG mapping using a local NGO. At the outcome level results have been observed in terms of changed behavior and attitudes in local communities as well as policy makers and bureaucrats at district and national level. Attitudes towards the socially excluded and towards violations of child rights have changed and people have changed their behavior in terms of addressing cases of abuse, neglect and discrimination, among others. At the impact level the CAP has resulted in both improved service delivery and community action in sector activities. DACAW has contributed to such achievements as increasing school enrolment, increase in the literacy rate, saving lives of newborns and under-fives, improved health status of children and increase in protection cases being addressed. However, as noted, while program outputs are being systematically reported based on a results based planning matrix, outcomes and impact are not recorded as systematically and comprehensively. In addition, it was reported that a lot of progress has been made on survival and development, while not as much has been achieved in the area of protection and participation. These points need follow-up and attention in the next phase.

Relevance

DACAW has a high degree of relevance both for the beneficiaries on the one hand, and for Government and donors on the other hand. The participatory approach to planning, monitoring and reporting ensures that the needs and priorities of the community members, women, boys and girls are relevant; to which extent is not clear though. The focus groups discussions revealed that the activities are to a large extent relevant to the beneficiaries, although there are important needs and priorities that have not been addressed, such as
support to livelihood and income-generating activities and to vocational training and employment for youth. Furthermore, it was found that DACAW apart from influencing Government policies as shown above, is in line with a number of Government and UN policies and priorities and is promoting the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). DACAW is also in line with the development policies of the main donor, the Norwegian Government, as well as other donors. The focus on participation and empowerment of (most) disadvantaged groups of children and women in order to improve the health status and education of girls and boys as well as prevent abuse and exploitation, among many other things, are priorities of the main donors.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

When it comes to effectiveness the picture is more mixed. In many areas achievements have been according to plan, while in others not. According to some informants too many of the expected results could not be reached and consequently, DACAW needs to lower its ambitions. This should be noted, especially when developing targets for the nine new districts which most likely will be more challenging.

Assessing the efficiency of DACAW is no easy task as it depends on which level of support it refers to; and it also requires awareness of realistic alternatives. We will therefore limit it to comments on some important aspects of efficiency related to implementation at the community level. The implementation of DACAW, CAP in particular, is largely based on the voluntary work of many individuals; community organization or group member, Community Mobilizers, Female Health Volunteers, Watch Group members, and other community members. Others who do get remuneration, such as the Village Facilitators, have to be considered as volunteering in part as their salaries are so low. Quite a number of these individuals are from disadvantaged households, and some are even from very poor households who take on this work in addition to subsistence labor and household tasks. It was inspiring to observe the energy and enthusiasm of these volunteers. However, they expressed a need to be compensated for costs they have when being away from work and for expenses during trainings, meetings, campaigns and travelling. It is important that the motivation for volunteerism is sustained by offering some kind of compensation or incentives. When that is said, it is our assessment that DACAW is efficient at the community level.

Sustainability

Many different initiatives have been taken to ensure sustainability. First of all, the high level participation and motivation of community members and groups is a precondition for sustainability. However, ensuring a broader stakeholder participation in the communities is important to sustain the momentum that has been created. It is therefore necessary to include men and boys to a greater extent, for example in Paralegal Committees and other community organizations where feasible. Local elites should be included for the purposes of advocacy and influence, not as direct beneficiaries as such. Sustainability of the CAP also hinges on the situation of the Village Facilitators and Community Mobilizers who have very challenging responsibilities. They need to be compensated for costs they have related to their work in terms of compensation and incentives, such as refresher training and exposure visits. The focus of CAP will be increasingly on the (most) disadvantaged groups and this
poses a challenge to sustainability. These community members are often in a position where they are struggling for ends to meet and therefore do not have much time and energy to put into DACAW supported activities. That is why livelihood and employment issues need to be addressed by linking up with income-generation programs and the like.

Organizationally, a number of steps have been taken to ensure sustainability. There is local contribution at all levels of DACAW entry points, from MLD at the central level to the Women’s Federation group at the village level. This creates local ownership, another precondition for sustainability. Ownership was observed by the Evaluation Team at the central level, the district level and the community level. At the central level, the MLD has been influenced by DACAW and taken on DACAW policies, for example the DAG mapping and CFLG. At the district level staff members have been assigned to follow-up on DACAW implementation and are involved at the village level. At the village level the members of VDC, school, health post, community groups and organizations showed a high degree of ownership by investing their time, money, energy and motivation into the implementation of DACAW. In several districts and VDCs leaders, officials and community members stated that they would carry on even if DACAW would phase out support. Finally, the DACAW systematic approach to phase-out and hand-over by developing a plan will increase the chances of sustainability. However, sustainability can only be determined in the future; the proof is in the pudding. Therefore, in order to learn more about the sustainability of results it is recommended for the next phase of DACAW to plan a study of the sustainability in the 5 districts that are being phased out.

The Human Rights Based Approach

DACAW’s approach is based on the human rights based approach (HRBA) which is integral to UNICEF’s mandate. DACAW applies the HRBA by promoting child rights and women’s rights in Government policies and practices; supporting awareness-raising of rights holders and duty bearers; supporting and promoting participation and empowerment of target groups, and the accountability of duty bearers.

A number of child-friendly Government policies and child rights have been developed and promoted through DACAW, most notably the DAG mapping and the CFLG, but also a number of others.

Awareness-raising has taken place at several levels. Government and civil society partners at central, district and village level as well as community members themselves have learned about human rights, child rights and women’s rights, about participatory methodology, harmful traditional practices, among others. The Triple A process (assessment, analysis, action) has developed the capacity of community members to assess their situation, identify and analyze their problems and concerns, and take action individually and collectively.

Children and women have increased their capacities and capabilities through community groups and have organized to claim their rights. They have demanded better services and held local governments and service delivery agencies accountable. Child clubs have been actively engaging in rights advocacy such as the right to quality education, improving school environments, improving health and sanitation, and challenging violence against children. The HRBA has also helped to improve the status of such excluded groups as Janajatis and
Dalits, addressing caste and ethnic discrimination at the same time. It has changed the perceptions and attitudes of people from non-disadvantaged groups in a number of DACAW areas, who have learned to appreciate the potentials that individual persons have irrespective of their social and economic background. Thus DACAW has contributed to the empowerment of girls and boys, young women and older women, disadvantaged and oppressed people.

Participation is an integral part of DACAW. Child participation in the child and youth clubs is significant as is the participation of community members in planning, implementation and reporting of DACAW activities. DACAW is clearly participatory at the community level, however, whether it is participatory at district, regional and central level is less evident.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

“DACAW allows us to approach the child at the community level in a holistic manner”. This is the key strength and uniqueness of DACAW. But there are other strengths. It can get significant results in a short time and for relatively small input at the community level. DACAW initiates and supports numerous innovative pilots and projects, some of which are later taken on by Government and civil society. It is relevant to many layers of society; local communities, local politicians, district and central Government and civil society. It facilitates community efforts and thus promotes community spirit and cohesion which is needed in Nepal today.

DACAW continues to remain highly relevant and effective. In many respects DACAW is also efficient and has taken significant steps to ensure sustainability. Over the past three years, the program has made important and impressive progress as documented in this report. It certainly is a show-case of UNICEF at its best. However, there is scope for improvements on a number of aspects both due to the context and the program modalities. The following are recommendations that UNICEF may consider in order to ensure that DACAW continues to make a difference to children and adapts to the ongoing changes in Nepal.

Community Action Process

• In order to enable DACAW-assisted community organisations to further grow as advocacy groups, an effort should be made to include local elites, men and boys in CAP as pressure groups and allies.

• While it is commendable that DACAW has been able to reach out to the (M)DAG, additional support is called for to improve the livelihoods of these households, in order that they will be in a better position to spend their energy on DACAW activities. UNICEF should link up with programs that can support income-generation activities in these communities.

• Village Facilitators and Community Mobilizers deserve attention in terms of better salaries, incentives, refresher training, and more abundant supply of visual aids and other materials for CAP. This is crucial in order to keep the frontline workers motivated and enthusiastic about DACAW. UNICEF should motivate VDCs to make provisions for adequate support to VFs and CMs through the VDCs’ regular internal resources and
their strategic partnership with other funds and programs such as the LGCDP, PAF, VDC block grant and LDF.

- It is desirable to mainstream CAP in the regular programming and budgeting of the central and local governments. This is especially important in the phase-out districts. The Local Governance and Community Development Program (LGCDP) presents an opportunity in this regard. UNICEF/DACAW should consider providing necessary technical assistance under the umbrella of LGCDP, for getting central and local governments to mainstream CAP activities in those districts.

- In the case of the nine new DACAW mid and far west hill/mountain districts, greater amount of time and effort will need to be spent on group formation, building the capacity of these community groups and to have a functional federation at the VDC level. This might require additional human and financial resources for social mobilization. Given the rugged geography and travel distance within the district, it is difficult for one VF to cover the entire VDC. More than one Village Facilitator per VDC should be considered for these districts.

**Service Delivery**

- DACAW’s District Coordination Committee (DCC) and Village Coordination Committee (VCC) should now be internalized within the established system of local governance. In the districts where DACAW is to phase out, DCC and VCC should be reconstituted as the sub-committees (for child rights and women’s rights) of DDC and VDC. This can be done through a decision of the District Council, which is in compliance with the Local Self-Governance Act (LSGA). This will give legitimacy to the DCC and VCC even when DACAW as a project phases out.

- It is important for UNICEF to continue supporting various relevant line agencies at district level to reorient their policies and programs so that they better address issues pertaining to children and women in an integrated manner.

- DACAW has been able to bring relevant sectors together at the district level under the aegis of DDC for the design and implementation of its activities. DACAW’s modus operandi at the district level should serve as an example of how sectors can converge to prepare an integrated district development plan.

- A more comprehensive strategy of linking DACAW with other livelihood programs, such as the Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) and the Local Development Fund (LDF) is required for DAG households to better benefit from the integrated sector approach. Efforts should be made at the headquarters level to enter into formal agreements with other agencies implementing livelihood programs.

- UNICEF should continue supporting the PLCs to enhance their legitimacy in their local context. There are at least three ways that such community groups can derive their legitimacy: a) from formal registration with local administration, b) through provisions in an official project document such as DACAW, or c) from trust bestowed by the general public.
• It has been relatively difficult to promote total sanitation among disadvantaged and landless communities, given their lack of resources that prevents them from investing their money for the construction of proper latrines, or drinking water facilities. Plans have recently been made by DACAW, in this regard, which should be implemented as soon as possible in as many CAP-supported areas as possible.

• The sustainability of the Out of School Programs in (Tulsipur and Biratnagar) municipalities and the transition of graduates to the formal education system will be greatly enhanced if institutional and policy mechanisms can be drawn to include OSP on the agenda of the District Education Office.

**Promoting Child Rights in Local Governance**

• There is a need to increase program activities and policy influencing on child protection and participation in relation to child survival and development. New plans to more closely connect PLCs and child clubs is a positive step in this direction.

• Community-level mobilization and advocacy should be linked with national-level initiatives such as the CFLG in order to deepen ownership of results, increase the relevance of advocacy activities and increase the likelihood of their being sustained in the long-term.

• UNICEF should establish a wider range of advocacy partnerships with other development stakeholders, particularly at the national level, for a greater pooling of resources, skills and information to promote child rights in local governance.

• UNICEF should adopt a more strategic approach to delivering on DACAW’s cross-cutting themes amongst others by i) further strengthening child club management practices, ii) adopting a gender approach rather than focus on women only, iii) further strengthening local support bases for social inclusion. Specific suggestions follow.

• Child clubs should be linked more closely to the other community groups and organizations, especially the PLCs, and VDC/VCC. At the same time UNICEF should together with partners explore other ways of enhancing child and youth participation than just through the club model.

• UNICEF should make an effort to link with other child rights agencies including international and national NGOs, to have a coordinated and strategic approach to the development and support to child and youth clubs in Nepal.

• UNICEF should collaborate with and support the Central and District Child Welfare Boards (CCWB and DCWBs) to strengthen the Village Child Protection Committees (VPCPs). This should be coordinated with other child rights agencies.

• DACAW should promote and support the linking of child and youth clubs as well as PLCs to the VCPCs.
• Ensure that child participation is consistently mainstreamed into DACAW’s CFLG programs and strengthen child participation in local and national level governance by strengthening coordination with other agencies through the Consortium of Organizations Working for Child Participation.

• Make further efforts to develop children’s leadership in Nepal by more exposure to development issues and concerns at district, national and international levels and supporting leadership training.

• The CFLG pilot is an innovative initiative which should be followed up by monitoring progress during the roll-out phase with focus particularly on the development of progress indicators.

• Gender analysis and gender training should be more systematically applied in planning, monitoring and reporting in DACAW.

• Take into account new emerging information on the status of exclusion in Nepal, from communities which have different categories and criteria, as well as in the context of new emerging national information such as WFP’s Nepal Hunger Index 2009, and consider this information alongside the existing DAG mapping information where relevant.

• Ensure that phase-out activities from 2010 onwards do not jeopardize DAG and MDAG communities, by either linking them up with other development programs in these districts or considering a more gradual phase-out of UNICEF support in the most needy areas.

• Strengthen national information systems in Nepal in order to ensure that they are increasingly disaggregated by gender, age, caste and ethnicity and make further efforts to encourage the use of the information that already exists.

• Further promote DACAW’s efforts on documentation and communications, particularly in the local languages of Nepal as a powerful means of influencing public opinion in favor of child rights.

DACAW Operational Structure and Programming

• It is recommended to undertake an analysis of the participatory training and planning that is being done in DACAW in order to find out how it is functioning and identify possible gaps and deficiencies. This should include how the needs and priorities of the community groups are followed through at the different levels of planning.

• DACAW reports on an impressive amount of results at the output level, although much less on the more long-term results. DACAW should include in its results matrix more reporting on outcome and establish regular reporting on impact. The reports should also include more comprehensive risk and problem analysis. “Before-after” reporting by target groups could be further highlighted in the future.
• There is a need for DACAW to push for Government to fully integrate planning and reporting for DACAW into the Government system. The LGCDP presents an opportunity in this respect.

• At the central level more needs to be done to link DACAW in a systematic manner to the sector programs. UNICEF may consider developing a simple guideline for this purpose. In this connection a review of the internal lines of reporting and communication should be reviewed.

• In the case of DACAW the district is the strategic level for program implementation and Government partnerships. UNICEF should therefore focus and prioritize sub-national presence at the district level in terms of staffing and budget allocation.

• In the new districts in the far-western region greater amount of time and effort will need to be spent on group formation, building the capacity of community groups, VDC and women’ federation. Additional human and financial resources should be allocated.

• UNICEF should lobby Government at central level to provide incentives and benefits to Government staff in these far-western districts in order to have qualified staff on a year-round basis.

• While flows of funds through DDC/DDF is a preferred mechanism that complies with the spirit of the Local Self Governance Act, an alternate mechanism for fund disbursement must be built into the system as a back-up.

• Since the level of physical infrastructure is relatively low in the far-western districts compared to the others, resources should be set aside for hardware and material support in those areas.

• There should be more consistent involvement of beneficiary groups and NGO partners in the process of phasing out and handing over DACAW activities, as well as phasing into new districts. In all cases district NGOs should be considered supported, but national NGOs should also be engaged if there are none available at district level.

• Although work has been put into planning phase-out and hand-over there are still a number of unclear aspects. DACAW needs to make decisions about which activities are going to be kept in which VDCs, and make a time-line for the different stages of the phase-out.

• UNICEF should make an effort to increase donor coordination in relation to achieving results for children.

• In order to gain knowledge about sustainability of results, it is recommended to plan for the next phase of DACAW a study of the sustainability in the 5 districts that are being phased out.
Aligning with LGCDP

- Given the fact that DACAW is an approach that needs to be followed for an indefinite period of time and extended to all parts of the country in due course of time, it is prudent to mainstream DACAW activities into LGCDP in those districts where DACAW program has been up and running for at least 5 years.

- UNICEF/DACAW program should focus on those areas such as mid and far west where LGCDP, because of its compulsion to cover across the country but thinly, might not be able to enter in big and concerted way.

- UNICEF has been able to influence the design of LGCDP and thereby introduce indicators relevant to DACAW in the LGCDP log-framework. This work should be followed up as LGCDP continues to develop.

- Similarly, UNICEF has been able to influence the VDC Block Grant guidelines and to ensure that a fixed portion of block grants be allocated to the activities relating to children and women. UNICEF should follow up on the implementation of the guidelines to ensure that the allocations to women and children happen as intended.

- Based on the DACAW experience UNICEF should provide technical assistance to the Government on sector convergence in the process of developing LGCDP.

- UNICEF should encourage donors in Nepal to apply a uniform definition of DAG groups with the framework of LGCDP.

- In aligning with LGCDP UNICEF needs to ensure that emphasis is kept on the value-added of DACAW, namely mainstreaming CAP, keeping children in focus, empowering women and reaching the most disadvantaged communities.

- The CAP process should be mainstreamed to the extent possible within LGCDP. How exactly transition and mainstreaming ought to be done should be dealt with in-depth. For this purpose a ‘DACAW-LGCDP transition design’ should be considered developed and conducted for the phase-out districts.
1 Introduction

Decentralized Action for Children and Women (DACAW) was established in 1998 by UNICEF Nepal in collaboration with the Government of Nepal as a partnership with the Ministry of Local Development (MLD). It is a community development program with a human rights based approach which seeks to ensure the progressive realization of the rights of children and women. The objective is to build the capacity of families, especially those from disadvantaged communities, as well as local bodies and other duty-bearers to plan, implement and monitor child-rights-based and responsive service delivery and local governance. Presently DACAW is in the middle of a three year plan which runs from 2008 to 2010 with a total budget of around 28 million USD.

DACAW is executed by the Ministry of Local Development drawing on the principles of the Local Self Governance Act from 1999 and the impending Devolution Strategy of the Government. As an integrated governance program, DACAW seeks to pilot test and illustrate viable governing policies, systems, procedures and institutional linkages at various levels for the protection and care of children. In operational terms, it seeks to put in place policies and institutions through community action that help deliver the following sector results: (i) increase access to quality basic education, specially for girls and DAG, (ii) protect children and women against violence, exploitation and abuse, (iii) improve maternal health, (iv) reduce childhood morbidity and improved management of illness due to acute respiratory illness, diarrhea and vaccine-preventable diseases, (v) improve care for reduction in child and maternal malnutrition, (vi) improve psychosocial and cognitive development of children, and (vii) reduce incidence of diseases from poor and inadequate sanitation and water supply, (viii) HIV and AIDS.

Four main strategies are utilized in the implementation of DACAW: strengthening community action processes; strengthening of local service delivery; strengthening of local governance in favor of children and women; and strengthening central level policies in support of decentralization. From covering only 7 out of 75 districts at the beginning, DACAW has expanded into a total of 23 districts at present. During the past few years significant efforts have been made to reach the most disadvantaged communities and most disadvantaged children. Through the active participation of women, children and other community members as well as Government response a whole range of positive results have been achieved during the past ten years.

The main implementing partners of DACAW are the MLD and the Department of Women’s Development (DWD) under the Ministry for Women, Children and Social Welfare. In addition DACAW engages with a range of other partners in the 23 districts including the National Planning Commission (NPC), the district and village development committees (DDCs and VDCs), municipalities, district level line agencies in health, education, water and sanitation as well as cooperatives, community based organizations and (I)NGOs.

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1 UNICEF. First Progress Report to The Government of Norway. Kathmandu, 2009
Several studies, surveys and reviews have been performed of different components of DACAW. In 2006 the major donor, the Government of Norway, carried out an independent review of DACAW. The findings and recommendations from 2006 provide a useful background and basis for comparison. However, since then significant changes have taken place on the political, social and economic scene which have influenced the implementation of the DACAW program. On the positive side, the Government has increased development spending in rural areas since 2006 including on health, education, and services benefitting children and women. On the other hand, the Government has been unable to hold local elections yet, and the security situation in some parts of the country remains tense. The ongoing discussions about federalism and decentralization are also significant for the future of DACAW. In particular, the new decentralization program adopted in 2008 by the Government, Local Governance and Community Development Program (LGCDP), which has developed into a national multi-stakeholder framework, is a new important development affecting DACAW.

In this context UNICEF Nepal commissioned an external strategic evaluation of DACAW. The Terms of Reference (ToR)\(^2\) calls for the evaluation to consider five different thematic areas which shape the outline of this report. The first part is on community mobilization through the Community Action Process (CAP) with a focus on the role and function of the community mobilizers (CM) and village facilitators (VF). The second part addresses responsive service delivery and to which extent the DACAW integrated community based approach has contributed to the improvements in service delivery in the targeted communities. The third chapter of the findings synthesizes the two first parts into a focus on the concrete results for girls and boys, and for women members of the communities as a result of strengthening the participation on the one hand and influencing policies in local governance on the other hand. The fourth part addresses the DACAW operational structure and implementation modalities with a focus on the link to the sector programs, differences between new and old areas of implementation, and issues of exit strategies and sustainability. The last part is forward looking and consider the strategic position of UNICEF and DACAW within the changing and uncertain political situation presently in Nepal.

## 2 Methodology

In order to answer the ToR the evaluation draws on two main sources of data, namely document study and field visits.

The main documents were provided by UNICEF to the evaluation team supplemented by additional ones from partners. These include DACAW program documents, relevant program surveys, reviews and tools, national policy documents and reports as well as background documents.\(^3\)

Relevant statistics were taken from documents and also collected during field visits.

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\(^2\) See Annex 6.1 Terms of Reference

\(^3\) See Annex 6.4 List of Documents
Field visits were chosen which represent the variety in area and conditions in Nepal, and which present different sets of challenges and concerns in the DACAW implementation. Furthermore, the field visits have been selected according to the following criteria:

- a selection of old and new village development committees (VDCs)
- a mixture of most disadvantaged and other VDCs
- a mixture of ‘most successful’ and ‘less successful’ VCDs
- one trans-himalayan district and at least one ‘in-conflict’ VDC
- visit some districts/villages that have not been frequently visited
- communities/districts where people present (in view of national holidays)

Field visits were made to four different areas including the Eastern, Central, Mid-West and Western parts of Nepal. A total of seven districts were visited including Kaski, Tanahun, Udayapur, Saptari, Sunsari, Dang and Jumla. In addition visits to three municipalities were made: Biratnagar, Tulsipur and Pokhara. Thirteen VDCs were visited all of which were Disadvantaged Group (DAG) lowest categories three or four. Of these, five were classified as new VDCs, that is one-two years old, and eight were older ones. Two VDCs in the process of phasing out support from DACAW were visited. The various places and types of VDCs showed differences in results and partnerships, but also similarities and commonalities in approach, which will become evident in the findings below.

The field visits included interviews, focus group discussions and observations of activities which provided an opportunity to seek first-hand accounts from persons directly involved, see the actual activities and results as well as experience the environment and conditions of the program locations. For the interviews the semi-structured interview technique was applied. Interviews were done with UNICEF DACAW and sector program staff at central, regional and district level. Representatives of key government partners and counterparts at central, district level and village level were interviewed as well as NGO partners. A number of representatives of stakeholders were also interviewed at the local level. An interview guide was developed with separate sets of questions for the different groups of interviewees to ensure consistency in approach within the team and across districts and VDCs. The guide was modified during the course of the field work as more knowledge of the field and the activities and partnerships was gained.

Focus group discussions were held with groups of children/youth members of child clubs, students, parents, teachers, community health volunteers, village facilitators, community mobilizers, members of paralegal committees, women’s groups and watch groups. Question guides were also prepared for the focus group discussions, which were modified underway.

The analysis and recommendations are mainly based on the primary data from interviews, focus group discussions and observations. References are made to districts and VDCs, but seldom to groups or individuals in order to protect their anonymity.

The interaction with girls, boys, women and men at the community level and the government at the district level gave an opportunity for beneficiaries to share their experiences, voice their opinions and offer recommendations for the future. The experiences, opinions and recommendations of the other stakeholders are also being brought in and channeled through this evaluation. The evaluation is an opportunity for all stakeholders to be heard and participate, and consequently should be considered a participatory evaluation.
Visits at the local level are normally prepared beforehand, which is a methodological problem as there will always be a degree of ‘staging’ and showing off the most positive aspects. The field visits were indeed nicely organized, and some places very formal. The Evaluation Team did ask to go to ‘less successful’ VDCs in terms of less results or specific challenges some VDCs have faced, but it seems the Evaluation Team was mostly presented the ‘best’ VDCs. In hindsight the Evaluation Team with more time in the preparatory phase could have been more insistent on going to the less successful places as well as made one or two spontaneous visits, that is without prior notice. Spontaneous visits should be planned the next time an evaluation or review is done of DACAW. However when this is said, the Evaluation Team feels confident that this has not compromised the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

3 Recent Developments in Nepal

3.1 Political Context

A Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) was signed on 21 November 2006 which brought to an end a decade of armed hostilities between the CPN-Maoist party and the Nepali State. Thirteen thousand lives were lost during this time, and many thousands of people internally displaced (IDPs). According to the latest statistics, the internal conflict resulted in physical losses equivalent to Rs. 5 billion.

The CPA paved the way for a political settlement and the beginning of an overhaul of Nepal’s government institutions – the first time in more than 50 years. An Interim Constitution was agreed on 15 January 2007, and currently serves as the framework for governance until the Constituent Assembly (CA), elected through general elections on 10 April 2008, will promulgate a new basic law for the country by May 2010. While the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) emerged as the largest party in the CA they resigned from office in May 2009 due to political disputes. At present the Government comprises of a coalition of 22 parties represented in the CA but excludes the Maoists.

The terms of office of district, village and municipal level bodies elected in 1998 expired in 2002 and have not been replaced. VDC Secretaries, Executive Officers (EOs) and Local Development Officers (LDOs) have been standing in for the Mayors, District and Village Development Chairpersons at Municipal, District and Village levels. While this improvised solution has prevented governance at local and district level from coming to a complete standstill, it has certainly affected the quality and availability of services at local level as well as accountability and responsiveness of government institutions to a significant degree. Thus, in spite of the end of the conflict three years ago, Government expenditure has fallen well below targets – primarily due to the continued absence of the local government bodies. Elections to local government bodies are only expected to take place following the finalization of the new Constitution in May 2010, and after general elections are held.

At the same time, the Government is implementing the Local Governance and Community Development Program (LGCDP) to improve local governance, access to public goods and services and enhance participation in the local development process. This is a four-year joint
venture program of the Government and the donor community being implemented in selected District Development Committees (DDCs) and Village Development Committees (VDCs) since 2008 to be gradually expanded nationwide over the next few years. The number of DDCs and VDCs is not known yet as the design and magnitude are still evolving. Under this system, VDCs and DDCs that pass a screening of Minimum Conditions (MCs) and Performance Measures (PMs) receive additional “block grants” while select municipalities that qualify under a MCPM assessment will receive grants from 2009/10 onwards. The LGCDP is a basket fund of USD 463.1 million, in which the government has a share of USD 260.8 million.

The United Nations Mission to Nepal (UNMIN) is in office in Nepal until the end of January 2010 as a representative to the Secretary General. It expects to oversee particular aspects of the ongoing peace process, including the integration of Maoist combatants into the Nepali army and the reintegration and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons (IDPs). At the same time, the peace process has been stalled due to a deteriorating law and order situation since the end of 2008. Particular challenges are faced in the Tarai due to anti-government activities by armed groups. The continued absence of local elected government officials and a poorly-trained police force has made it difficult for the Government to better address security issues so far.

### 3.2 Socio-Economic Context

According to the most recent Nepal Living Standards Surveys, the poverty rate in Nepal declined from 42 percent to 31 percent between 1995-96 and 2003-04. At the same time, inequalities rose over the same period indicating that poverty reduction has not been uniform across all segments of the population. This trend is mirrored in social indicators which improved, vary when disaggregated by gender, social groups and geographical regions. According to UNDP’s Nepal Human Development Report 2009, Nepal’s aggregate HDI is 0.509. In terms of social group, this falls to 0.507 among Hill Janajatis and 0.383 among Madhesi Dalits. In terms of geography, the HDI falls to 0.461 in the Far Western Region and 0.452 in the Mid Western Region.

In education, improvements in physical access have contributed to increase primary net enrolment rate which stood at 89.1 percent in 2007 with improved gender parity. Among the total school going age, it is estimated that girls represent 48 percent, indigenous groups 38 percent, Dalits 18 percent and one percent disabled. At the same time, an estimated 11 percent of primary-age children are out of school.

In health, there have been positive developments at the policy level resulting amongst others in the abolition of user fees in health in early 2008. At the same time, increased infrastructure investment has improved people’s access to health services overall. According to Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2006, the Maternal Mortality Rate in Nepal has fallen from 539 per 100,000 in 1996 to 281 a decade later. Likewise, child, infant and neonatal mortality rates have fallen too. On the other hand, malnutrition is emerging as an unchanged problem in Nepal with an estimated 49 per cent of children under 5 stunted (20 per cent severely), 39 percent of children under 5 underweight (11 per cent severely) and 13 percent under 5 wasted. Malnutrition is compounded by high rates of food insufficiency in
Nepal: in 2008, the WFP estimated that 43 out of 75 districts were food insufficient. In the context of falling remittances as a result of the global financial crisis, food insecurity in rural Nepal is additionally in need of attention. Overall, it is estimated that Nepal is on track to achieve 5 out of 7 MDGs by 2015.

3.3 Policy Context

Rights of children and women have been included under the Interim Constitution’s section on Fundamental Rights. Women benefited from the electoral process of the Constituent Assembly through which a third of all parliamentarians are now women. Likewise, an ordinance passed in February 2009 prescribes for quotas in the recruitment of 45 percent of government staff from now on and will benefit not only women but all of Nepal’s excluded groups (Janajatis, Madhesis, Dalits and candidates from remote regions).


The Government is implementing a Three Year Interim Plan (2008-10) which is essentially a post-conflict approach emphasizing reconstruction, relief and rehabilitation. The UN system in Nepal is aligned to this Plan through the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF 2008-12). UNICEF works within the four UNDAF priority areas of consolidating peace, quality basic services, sustainable livelihoods and human rights, gender equality and social inclusion. Under its current Country Program Action Plan (2008-10) UNICEF operates 8 programs and 34 projects.

4 Main Findings

As a governance program DACAW focuses on policy reforms and institutional inter-linkages with the objective of creating an enabling environment for improved service delivery and subscribing to the core principles of “good governance” and the human rights based approach: participation of the people, ownership by the people and the local government, equity (adequate focus of disadvantaged groups -DAG), accountability (to the sovereign people) and transparency. The strategic framework of DACAW is woven around the four pillars:

• Community Empowerment through social engineering (that is the Community Action Process - CAP) and creating demand for services
  o Process: group formation and technology/knowledge/skills infusion
  o Result: (i) collective bargaining strength of disenfranchised people; (ii) articulate choices and voices; (iii) meaningful participation in decision making; (iv) agents of change; (v) aware of service needs such as maternal health and concurrent demand for such services; (vi) hold local governments and service delivery agencies to account.
• **Strengthening the supply side**: building the capacity of the service delivery agencies such as schools, health posts, hospitals to meet the demand

• **Policy and institutional reforms at the sub-national level** (DDC, VDC and municipality) that are more responsive to protecting and promoting child rights. This includes sector convergence, joint work planning and coordination, periodic and perspective local government plans responsive to protecting and promoting child rights, and so on.

• **Policy and institutional reforms at the national level** for protecting and promoting child rights: targeting and prioritization of resources on rights-based approach including DAG mapping; VDC block grant guidelines; sector devolution; convergence and integrated approach, among others.

### 4.1 Community Mobilization through Community Action Process

#### 4.1.1 Achievements Compared to the Plan

The Community Action Process (CAP) is the mainstay of DACAW. CAP is an interactive process that enables families and communities, through the Triple A process (assessment, analysis, and action), to develop their capacity to assess the situation concerning children and women, analyze their problems, and take action individually and collectively. CAP works through existing Community Organizations (COs) formed by various government and donor programs, notably the Village Development Program (VDP), the Integrated Women and Child Development Approach (IWCDA), NGOs and Small Farmers Cooperatives. The following are the overall procedures for promoting social mobilization through CAP exercises:

• Community Organizations (COs) learn to use various participatory tools and techniques, gender-sensitive tools, a Community Information Board (CIB), growth-monitoring charts, and meetings to facilitate discussions on issues.

• As a result, demand is created at the community level, which DACAW facilitates to match with service providers that are assisted and prompted to better serve the people’s needs in their jurisdictions.

• DACAW also assists in scaling up COs into women’s federations at the VDC level. It is a process of building up women’s collective abilities by organizing small groups into autonomous bodies that are able to assess and analyse their surroundings, and articulate their needs at the VDC and DDC level.

The DACAW Review conducted in 2006\(^4\) recommended that greater inclusion of deprived groups in CAP should be promoted through the identification of disadvantaged groups (DAG). As a consequence, a comprehensive study was undertaken to rank the VDCs within each DACAW-assisted district (Category4 being the most disadvantaged villages), and to classify all the households in each CAP-covered VDC (Most Disadvantaged, Disadvantaged, and Non-Disadvantaged).

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The following are the intended results to be attained by the end of 2010, which are stipulated in the Country Program Action Plan (CPAP) 2008-2010, and are of direct relevance to CAP.

1. Individuals and families of disadvantaged families will have enhanced knowledge and skills to achieve sector/process results in favor of children and women in 23 DACAW/QIP districts with CAP component;
2. 80 per cent of the most disadvantage group (MDAG) households in the DACAW VDCs will be covered by CAP;
3. 80 per cent of CAP COs will be functional;
4. 80 per cent of Category 4 VDCs and 50 per cent of VDCs in eight former QIP districts will be implementing CAP; and
5. Federations and networks of community groups will be actively advocating on child/women’s rights issues in DAG communities.

These results statements are accompanied by detailed, objectively verifiable indicators, a majority of which are quantified. For instance, in judging whether “80 per cent of CAP COs will be functional”, according to the CPAP, one is supposed to examine (a) if a CO has monthly group meetings, and update/use its Community Information Board (CIB) at least on a quarterly basis, as well as (b) whether 90 percent of the Village Facilitator (VF)/Community Mobilizers (CMs) working for a particular CO received training from DACAW.

The Evaluation Team did not compare the statistical data to these results statements, as it was outside the scope of the ToR. However, the findings from interviews with UNICEF staff members and from the field visits indicate that the CAP activities have been planned and implemented efficiently to produce the intended results as envisaged in CPAP, as well as in effectively in view of the DACAW’s objective of enabling families and communities through the Triple A process to develop their capacity to assess their situation. CAP has also proved to be relevant to children and women in local communities as it has been both welcomed and internalized by CO members in its target localities.

Instead the Team focused on interacting with girls and boys, women, and other local stakeholders in a range of selected areas (see Annex 6.2 Field Visit Program) to ascertain that what is at stake in CAP is not only the above results and goals, but also community-based advocacy of child rights and women’s rights, a process which is not necessarily measurable in quantitative terms at the output or outcome level, nor manifest in its full potential over a limited time span. On the contrary, it is a long-term process of building up knowledge, skills, and self-confidence of individuals, families and communities to claim their rights and thus have an impact, as described in the following sections.

It is therefore imperative to look into CAP’s achievements, from the viewpoint of long-term impact as well as its immediate results outputs, and examine how best to ensure that it continues to evolve on a sustainable basis.

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6 QIP (Quick Impact Program) is the modality of DACAW support for conflict-affected areas in Mid- and Far Western districts. Local development projects such as rehabilitation of schools and health posts, and installation of drinking water and sanitation facilities were implemented, in order to bring benefits to remote areas in conflict situations
4.1.2 Capacity-Building of Community Mechanisms

CAP is built on the principles of ‘collective bargaining through group formation’ and ‘getting organized’. It draws on the experiences of past projects which postulate that individually people are poor and vulnerable but when these people organize themselves in groups, they derive strength and are in a better position to articulate their choices and voices. Thus, ‘organizing people into groups’, a process generically known in Nepal as ‘social mobilization’ constitutes one of the key strategies for social, economic and political empowerment. It is considered to be an effective approach to poverty reduction and the government’s 10th five year plan (2002-05) and the current interim three-year plan (2008-10) have accorded importance to social mobilization.

Different people and organizations understand social mobilization differently. Depending on the purpose of ‘social mobilization’ institutions perceive it to be a process as well as a product. For example, mobilization (group formation) conducted with the objective of securing social empowerment or social cohesion, per se, consider ‘social mobilization’ as an ‘end’ in itself. However, it is only an institutional ‘means’ when economic or social empowerment is the objective. In case of the latter, it is necessary to build further capacity of the socially mobilized groups so that they can participate meaningfully in the development planning processes, acquire knowledge and skills to hold local governments and service delivery agencies to account and possess adequate leverage to effect policy changes.

From the perspective of DACAW, community mobilization is a multi-stage and multi-pronged process. Such ‘groups’, ‘clubs’ and ‘committees’ as are described below are the basic community-level institutions formed as part of CAP:

(i) formation of the Community Organization (CO) - a process conducted by the District Women’s Development Office (DWDO) through its IWCDA, or DDC through its VDP program wherein savings and credit are the integral component for ensuring group cohesion.

(ii) mobilization of the groups for protecting and promoting child rights and women’s rights through specialized interventions such as technical and knowledge infusions by the Village Facilitators (VFs) and the Community Mobilizers (CMs)

(iii) formation of the ‘Women’s Federation’ groups

(iv) mobilization of children to form ‘child clubs’

(v) mobilization of women to form ‘paralegal committees’

(vi) mobilization of women volunteer to form ‘watch groups’

As stated above, COs learn to use various participatory tools and techniques to regularly meet and monitor the situation of children and women. The key tools include 1) a Community Information Board (CIB) which records the status concerning such health- and education-related indicators as school enrolment and retention, childhood nutrition and morbidity, water supply and sanitation, and maternal health, and 2) a growth-monitoring chart that is intended to allow mothers to keep track of the growth of their children below three years of age.
This community-based monitoring system, developed through CAP, has allowed CO members to raise awareness of maternal and child health issues, as well as of the importance of appropriate care of their children. This has paved the way for various other community-based groups and activities to emerge, such as Paralegal Committees (PLCs), and Early Childhood Development (ECD), which complement the work of COs. The Community Mobilizers (CMs), who take the lead in CAP in their own COs, are often actively involved in those other activities in their communities. For instance, out of the thirteen ECD facilitators whom we interviewed in Raypur VDC in Saptari, five have also been serving as CMs.

CAP has not only contributed to the formation of these groups, but has also helped existing government institutions, such as schools and primary health institutions, by providing grassroots mechanisms that the service provides can draw on to better serve their target populace.

For example, according to the principle of one school in Thaprek VDC of Tanahun, which has initiated an ECD center with the support of DACAW, the members of the four COs operating in the catchment area have assisted the school by visiting the houses of out-of-school children, and convincing their parents/guardians to send them to school. The four COs have also been contributing their unpaid labor in maintaining the footpaths used by school-going children, and have assisted in collecting donations from the local populace to establish the ECD center.

In this way, CAP has helped to promote the participation of local people for the improvement in service delivery especially in the health and education sectors, which they had previously considered to be solely the Government’s responsibility. CO members have enhanced their capacity to assess the situations concerning their health and education status, and to take action accordingly.

DACAW has also been assisting Women Federations that usually draw members from those who represent COs at the ward level. Women Federations allow the CO members to join hands in requesting the VDC and DDC to allocate their resources for the cause of children and women. In CAP-assisted areas, it has almost become the routine that the local governing bodies allocate portions of their budgets for DACAW-supported activities. For example, in Tanahun all the CAP-covered VDCs provided funding for the ECD centers in 2008.

As COs evolve into solid federations, and forge dense networks with other community groups such as PLCs, the female members have come to address gender, caste and other social discrimination including harmful traditional practices, domestic violence and other concerns.

For example, in one VDC in Kaski, a member of the Women’s Federation, who is also actively involved in the PLC, stated that she even received threats as her group has started addressing violence against women and children which had been left ignored in accordance with the prevailing norm of impunity. In one VDC in Saptari, women have been struggling to bring to justice the protection cases arising from local dowry practices.

In order for DACAW-supported community groups to further develop as a platform for advocating on behalf of children and women, therefore, it is crucial for CAP to also include those stakeholders hitherto left out of the social mobilization process, especially local elites.
and men. They should be included not as beneficiaries, but as potential change agents of attitudes and behavior towards children and women. Broader stakeholder participation is the key to creating an even more conducive environment for community groups to work for the cause of children and women, as they may encounter quite a lot of resistance from those individuals and groups which have not been included.

4.1.3 Village Facilitators and Community Mobilizers

The Village Facilitator (VF) is the key person in CAP at the VDC level. S/he is not only responsible for moving forward the social mobilization process, but also for facilitating the linkage between community groups and various service providers. The following are the major responsibilities of the VF:

- Facilitate social mobilization process according to CAP, with the support of the Community Mobilizers (CMs);
- Assist COs and their federations to monitor the status of children and women in their respective localities, and report it to the VDC and the DDC;
- Facilitate the linkage between COs and their federations, and local governing bodies, line agencies, and other partners;
- Supervise and monitor the activities of CMs, and assist them to enhance their capabilities in promoting social mobilization;
- Organize monthly meeting with CMs to collect reports, review progress, and formulate future activities; and
- Present the monthly progress report on DACAW, to the DDC and the concerned governmental/non-governmental agencies.

The Community Mobilizer (CM) usually belongs to a particular community group, and takes a leading role in the CAP process in her own group. In some cases, CM takes on the facilitation of other neighboring groups, especially newly created groups that require outsider support. The role of the CM is to:

- Act as a facilitator at the settlement level for the initiation and implementation of CAP;
- Visit women from door to door to ensure all the households participate in the community-based monitoring of the status of children and women; and
- Address problems that arise during the course of the social mobilization process.

VFs/CMs have generally been able to fulfill their responsibilities, resulting in the overall success of the community mobilization process. The VFs and CMs have definitely contributed to the positive outcomes of the CAP and no doubt the training and follow-up refresher training of VFs and CMs has been key to their success.

In addition, the modality of regular monthly CM meetings has also served as a useful forum for them to thrash out issues and take ameliorative measures. As a result, in all the COs and federations the evaluation team visited, VFs/CMs were able to describe the CAP procedure, and present the evidence-based improvements in the status of children and women in their respective jurisdictions, using the Community Information Board (CIBs), and other presentation materials.
Moreover, the post of VF or CM, in itself, served as a means to promote social inclusion as DACAW has been endeavoring, whenever feasible, to encourage local people to hire from most disadvantaged groups and communities. A commendable effort in this regard is the case of Saptari where it was officially agreed at the district level to encourage underprivileged castes to apply for the VF’s post, by giving them additional marks in the selection process.

Many of these VFs/CMs from underprivileged backgrounds had little prior experience in leading social activities, especially DACAW-like activities that cut across socio-economic background. This has helped to change the perceptions and attitudes of local people, especially those from non-disadvantaged groups, who have come to appreciate the potentials that individual persons have irrespective of their backgrounds. In Dhikurpokhari VDC in Kaski, for example, according to a local informant, the positive performance of the two CMs from the untouchable caste led to changed behavior and attitudes in the community, where those from the untouchable background are now allowed to share plates and cups in meetings.

At the same time, a concern was raised in a number of places, in relation to the level of support that the DACAW has been giving to the CM, both in monetary and non-monetary terms. First, the CMs generally feel that their social mobilization tasks would become easier and more effective, if they had a set of ready-made materials to facilitate their target people to regularly attend meetings, and periodically monitor the status of their children and themselves. At the present moment, some CMs use their hand-written materials, while others have been seeking to convince people verbally.

Second, because CMs have been working on a voluntary basis, some of them find it difficult to continue working for their community groups. Their resentment derives partly from the fact that the Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) receive various allowances (that are not given to CMs), who similarly visit door to door to encourage people to receive services from the health posts and primary health institutions in their localities. DACAW has allocated a CM sustainability fund to each VDC, which, however, is only sufficient to cover the miscellaneous expenses of the monthly CM meetings.

Unlike CMs, VFs have been receiving salaries. However, although some of the CAP-assisted VDCs have even offered to provide additional remuneration, using their regular budgets, a majority of VFs consider the level of their salaries inadequate as a reward for their day-to-day responsibilities. Given the rather ambiguous clauses in the “Roles and Responsibilities of Facilitators” in DACAW’s Program Operational Guidelines 2065 (2008)7 to “facilitate participatory planning process and good governance” and “Work closely with VDC representatives, VDC secretaries and other functionaries”, some VFs have even been requested by VDC officials to take on activities which are not directly related to DACAW, such as the accounting of VDC’s regular budgets. This is especially the case where VDCs cover the entire salaries of VFs, in line with the bilateral agreement between DACAW and the local bodies, or where VDC officials spend most of their time outside the villages due to security problems and other reasons.

Since DACAW was reoriented to focus more on disadvantaged group (DAG) areas/households in recent years, VFs have been required to spend more time on coaching CMs, and when necessary, to even visit DAG communities and households in person, to encourage them to participate in CAP. This poses a new challenge for VFs, which needs be dealt with by getting the VDCs to streamline VFs’ tasks and responsibilities, or by considering compensation for their added workloads. LGCDP is expected to introduce a performance-based remuneration system for VDC-level social mobilizers, whose salaries would then be determined by the score given by the local residents.

4.1.4 Sustainability

The sustainability of CAP activities is dependent on (i) the perceived benefits to the community members and (ii) incentives, both monetary and non-monetary, of VFs and CMs to sustain their zeal, energy and enthusiasm. In addition, it hinges on whether those who so far have not been part of the social mobilization process will be included in CAP. Almost all of the federations and networks of community groups have started actively advocating for the rights of children and women, and have found it necessary to enhance the awareness of those that are yet to appreciate the importance of working for the cause of children and women.

In a majority of the target areas, the CAP has contributed to changing the prevailing misperception that men are better at addressing issues of public concern. It has succeeded in forging a milieu in which women are considered to be equally or more capable of acting for the goods of society. At the same time, as described in the preceding section, women face resistance from local people, especially men content with the traditional norms and status quo. This is the case especially when children and women begin to address larger socio-cultural problems.

It is therefore crucial, if CAP initiatives are to be allowed to further grow on a sustainable basis, to expand its coverage to non-participants in local communities. A district-wide policy in Kaski is an outstanding model in this regard, where it is mandated that a Paralegal Committee (PLC) draws some of its members from men. In these cases, monitoring of the PLCs is very important to ensure that male members to not dominate or take over the PLCs.

Broader stakeholder participation is important also from the disadvantaged and most disadvantaged communities. In recent years, DACAW has been seeking to expand CAP activities in disadvantaged (DAG) areas and households. This poses a significant challenge for VFs and CMs, because it requires them to spend more time and energy in visiting DAG localities and people, who are usually too busy striving to make their ends meet, and not able to regularly participate in CAP activities. In addition, they have historically been excluded from the services provided by various government and non-governmental agencies, which may prevent them from feeling motivated or enthusiastic about the CAP initiative.

It is therefore imperative to create a working environment that is more conducive to the VFs/CMs, the frontline workers, in their tireless efforts to convince people to participate in CAP activities. As noted in the preceding section, the care should therefore be taken by the VDCs to scale up the support to VFs and CMs, both in monetary and non-monetary terms.
Even when DAG persons become motivated and start participating in the community-based activities, they are far more liable to encounter various hurdles in carrying on their involvement. For example, those living in a landless settlement, even when they become more conscious of the need to improve the hygienic and sanitary conditions, are often barred from constructing drinking water facilities and toilets or latrines, because they lack title to land. Mothers from DAG households do no have sufficient food to give to their underweight children, not only because of their meager level of incomes, but also due to their living conditions that compels them to earn daily wages away from home.

A key to the sustainability of the CAP therefore hinges on the improvements of livelihoods of the local community members. DACAW has been providing an equity fund for community groups to extend interest-free loans to DAG households, in order that they can start income-generating activities. Most of them, however, are neither prepared nor willing to repay, given their low levels of skills and knowledge required to generate earnings on a sustained basis. According to some of the VFs/CMs, DAG people, especially those from the most disadvantaged (MDAG), are liable to take a loan without even intending to repay it out of the misguided conviction that a foreign donor should be giving hand-outs. This was also pointed out in the 2006 Review.

A number of useful indicators are used to identifying DAG/MDAG households. However, DACAW does not in fact respond to all of them. The most glaring examples of this perhaps are the food security and employment indicators, which are crucial especially in enabling MDAG families to be prepared to participate in DACAW activities. It would therefore appear that UNICEF could consider ways of linking up with other (donor) agencies in order to address more of the needs and problems that communities identify in the DAG mapping exercise, especially regarding income-generation.

Since CAP is vital to sustain the sector results, it is necessary to mainstream CAP provisions in the regular programming and budgeting of the central and local governments. The Local Governance and Community Development Program (LGCDP) presents an opportunity for mainstreaming the CAP activities in the case of the phase-out and phase-down program districts. UNICEF/DACAW should provide necessary technical assistance to LGCDP in the operationalization of CAP activities in those districts. Furthermore, UNICEF/DACAW should ensure that focus is kept on children, on the most disadvantaged and on including girls and women as beneficiaries.

The success of a program or an approach is also gauged on the basis of its replicability to other areas of the country and the geographical flexibility it lends. A good program is one that can be replicated with ease to other parts of the country. The benefits will be skewedly distributed if there is no replication strategy. CAP has been tried and tested and the results achieved in terms of promoting and protecting child rights have been significant. From the national perspective, it is imperative that a successful program such as DACAW that is tried and tested in limited areas be replicated in surrounding and other areas. A good program yielding good results can create tension between those who access the benefits and those who do not in a community. If this phenomenon continues for an extended period of time, it can potentially exacerbate the tension. Therefore, from the national interest point of

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8 as informed by one DPO from the Eastern region, when the Evaluation Team was discussing the DACAW equity fund.
view, it is necessary to have a national plan to take the concept of DACAW to scale. It is best done by mainstreaming within government institutions and under the aegis of long-term government program as has recently been done under the LGCDP.

UNICEF should manage the knowledge it has in decentralized service delivery and CAP and help the government devise replication guidelines, facilitate the government to mobilize resources to mainstream the CAP and, based on its experience, UNICEF should provide technical assistance to the government on sector convergence as the nation (likely) introduces a federal I system of governance.

4.2 Strengthening Service Delivery

4.2.1 The Effects of CAP on Service Delivery

DACAW aims at strengthening service delivery and sector results for children and women at the local level. For this purpose, CAP raises people’s awareness of their rights, needs and priorities, thus creating demand for better services from the government agencies and other sources. DACAW helps to match their aspirations with service providers, and improve agencies’ capacity to serve the local areas of their jurisdictions.

Indicators of women and children in Dang tracked over a 10-year period since the initiation of DPCC/DACAW (table below) helps illustrate the positive results, attributable primarily to CAP, according to the Local Development Officer of Dang. The coverage of CAP VDCs are 19 out of 39. DDC recently decided to replicate 2 VDCs (DAG category 4) through its own resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NER primary level (6-15 years old)</td>
<td>56 percent</td>
<td>76 percent</td>
<td>88 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of children fully immunized</td>
<td>70 percent</td>
<td>87 percent</td>
<td>96 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of children malnourished (under 3 years old)</td>
<td>58 percent</td>
<td>39 percent (33 percent in CAP VDCs)</td>
<td>11 percent in CAP VDCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of drinking water coverage</td>
<td>43.5 percent</td>
<td>63.3 percent</td>
<td>70 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent of sanitation (latrin) coverage</td>
<td>8.6 percent</td>
<td>30.7 percent</td>
<td>34 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are the evaluation team’s assessments of the effects of CAP on service delivery.
Quality Basic Education

CAP has enabled the CO members to learn to appreciate the importance of giving their children quality education, and has thus been instrumental in creating demand for better educational services. This is attested to by the fact that a majority of CAP-assisted local communities have requested the District Education Office (DEO) to allocate resources of its various programs to their local schools, including the Child Centered Education Program (CCEP), and the Child Friendly School Initiative (CFSI).

As a result, there have been great improvements in the physical infrastructure of the schools, in the skills of teachers, and in school governance. Children are now able to study in a more child-friendly environment, that is, in fully furnished classrooms with decoration and paintings, which are also equipped with learning and play materials. Their teachers are conversant with motiveive teaching methods, while the schools have come to be managed with the participation of their parents, the local communities and the child clubs, thus increasing the transparency and accountability.

As a consequence, the schools have managed to bring about improvements in the retention/dropout rates of their students as well as increased enrolment. Some of the schools even managed to declare their catchment areas as ‘No Out-of-School Children’, including a primary school in Bharatpokhari VDC in Kaski. At the same time, there is considerable work to be done, given the resource constraints of the government. For example, in Saptari, the Child Friendly School Initiative (CFSI) has been able to cover 70 schools in the district as of 2009, but only the teachers of grade 1 and 2, as well as the head teachers, were able to receive training on child-friendly teaching methods.

Similarly, in a school in Dang a teacher explained to the evaluation team that subsequent to the introduction of CFSI, there has been significant reduction in absenteeism in grade 1. However, this could also be due to better school preparedness or better/increased access to ECD. He went on to explain that a special bond has been created between the teacher (of grade 1) and the students which has helped the students to overcome inhibitions and ‘school fear’. The school and DEO were both highly appreciative of the Initiative and suggested that more teachers ought to be trained to ensure smooth continuation over the school year.

CAP has also encouraged the local communities to request the provision of alternative education opportunities for out-of-school working children. In most CAP VDCs, and also in urban municipalities, there are a number of children, especially those from the most disadvantaged (MDAG) households, who are unable to exercise their right to education. They have been supported with non-formal education programs. At the same time, there is a significant challenge in enabling the out-of-school children to transit to the formal education system. They often have to perform household duties or engage in labor during school hours, and do not feel comfortable in sitting together with much younger classmates. Both parents and employers often resist sending the children to school as the parents depend on the income and the employers on the cheap labor.

The Out of School Program (OSP) has remained wholly within the jurisdiction of municipalities (Tulsipur and Biratnagar) with very little or no ownership by DEO. The
sustainability of the program itself and the transition of graduates of OSP to formal education system will be greatly enhanced if institutional and policy mechanisms can be drawn to include OSP as one of the agenda of the DEO.

Protection

A natural progression of CAP is that community members and groups develop a drive to take action for protecting children and women against violence, exploitation, abuse and harmful traditional practices. Accordingly, the Paralegal Committees (PLCs) have been established in all the CAP-supported VDCs as well as some non-CAP villages, which serve as pressure groups to challenge harmful practices, to raise awareness, and to seek to prevent and intervene in individual cases. There are a total of 482 PLCs in the 23 districts consisting of members of Women’s Federation members, Community Mobilizers, some Village Facilitators and VCC members in addition to women community members.

Child and youth clubs also address child protection issues and exist in both CAP and non-CAP communities. They engage in rights advocacy, such as the right of access to education, improving school environments, addressing health and sanitation conditions, challenging violence against children, child labor, child trafficking, child marriage and promoting child participation (see Chapter 4.3.5).

Both PLCs and child clubs face a challenge in changing attitudes and behavior. School-based child clubs have been benefiting from other service delivery programs, such as the Child Centered Education Program (CCEP), and the Child Friendly School Initiative (CFSI), referred to above, which provide awareness-raising orientation to the teachers, the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), and the School Management Committees (SMCs). In some places, the work of school-based child clubs has also been facilitated by the Teaching and Learning with Dignity Package, which promotes sensitivity of teachers to the psychosocial and learning needs of their students. Similar support is needed for PLCs to further develop as community pressure groups, which by themselves cannot uproot gender, caste and other discrimination. It is to be noted, though, that some PLCs are working very hard to address these issues and some examples of their work-in-progress are given in the recent evaluation of PLCs.

It was reported that there is no direct link between the child/youth clubs and the PLCs at the community level nor is there systematic contact with the District Child Welfare Board (DCWB). There is a need to support the development of a systems approach in the area of child protection. This can be done by on the one hand promoting a link between the child clubs and the PLCs (as well as other COs), and supporting the DCWB in developing a protection system at the village level. “Village Child Protection Committees” are in the process of being established in a number of VDCs which apparently will become part of the formal system under the jurisdiction of CCWB/DCWB. UNICEF should explore how DACAW could best support and link into this system as well as coordinate with other donor agencies.

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11 Save the Children Nepal, for example.
Issues relating to the identity and the legitimacy of PLCs were raised in the course of discussions with the PLC members. There are at least three ways that such community groups can derive their legitimacy.

1. Formal registration with local administration/government
   - Legality will be firmly established but will remain subjugated to the government and vulnerable to government's influence

2. Provisions in the Project Document (such as DACAW) agreed upon by the government as part of project/program approval
   - Legality and recognition will cease to exist after the termination of the project

3. People power
   - More than legality, it is the recognition based upon the trust bestowed by the general public as a result of demonstrated good work conducted in a political impartial manner.

This issue of formalizing the PLCs was raised in the 2006 Review and some progress has been made since then; some have been registered as NGOs and UNICEF has recently prepared a draft guideline for the second option, which is yet to be approved by the Government.

**Child/Maternal Health and Care**

CAP has been instrumental in promoting health-seeking behavior, especially among pregnant women and mothers with young children, who have become more aware of the benefits of regular maternal and child health check-ups and immunization. Community-based mechanism, promoted by DACAW, have also been effective in improving the health conditions of children and women, as well as in saving the lives of pregnant women and newborn babies. The CAP-assisted groups have been constantly monitoring the situation through regular meetings, and some have even joined hands with the Female Community Health Volunteers to run outreach services, and/or watch groups to facilitate the referral of mothers and children in need of public health services.

CAP has been playing a crucial role in providing up-to-date information on the health status of children and women, which health posts and other primary healthcare institutions use for planning their service delivery activities. At the same time, lack of the sufficient number of frontline health staff in government health institutions continue to pose a major constraint to providing quality health services.

The strategy of community mobilization shows the way to overcome the shortage in human resources. For example, the local Health Management Committee (HMC) of a Sub Health Post (SHP) in Sudarpur VDC in Urayapur requested, and was eventually given a matching fund of NRs. 400,000 by DACAW and 100,000 by the VDC, in order to facilitate the HMC to mobilize further resources from the women’s federation and the VDC office. As a result, it has been able to locally hire an additional Assistant Nurse-Midwife (ANM), and has also established a birthing center, where pregnant women are now able to receive 24 hours services at the SHP located in their vicinity. As a result the SHP is expected to be upgraded to a Health Post (HP) in the near future.

Such community mobilization is less likely in areas which are close to towns where there is easy access to private clinics, or in remote, hilly and mountain areas where settlements are
scattered and where households are difficult to reach. While DACAW should seek to replicate the above alternative service delivery, care should also be taken to develop special strategies for these types of localities where community mobilization is harder to implement in a uniform manner.

**Child Nutrition and Care**

Community-based growth monitoring, through which all children below three years of age is weighed on a monthly basis, is the entry point for CAP. The Community Mobilizers (CMs) weigh all under-threes in their respective settlements, and plot the children’s status on charts, which demonstrates how many are falling below the underweight line, and how the situation changes over time. This practice has helped the CAP-assisted COs to reduce child malnutrition, without recourse to outside help. CMs also facilitate discussion on the causes of malnutrition, and the need for the families and the communities to increase the feeding frequency and quality of feeding, as well as to improve sanitation and hygiene.

At the same time, DACAW experience shows that it is a great challenge to decrease the number of underweight children from the most disadvantaged group (MDAG) households. Although efforts have been made to provide emergency support to the poorest, such as the establishment of temporary feeding centers, these interventions are effective in helping to reduce malnutrition only temporarily, and in itself cannot address its underlying causes.

A more comprehensive approach is called for, including an intensified effort by DACAW to link CAP-assisted MDAG communities with other ongoing programs for alleviating poverty, or for providing safety nets for the poorest of the poor, such as the Conditional Cash Transfer funded by the Asia Development Bank. Further refresher training is also required for CMs, in order that, under the supervision of the Village Facilitators (VFs), they will be able to boost their back-up support for MDAG households, most of which find it difficult to improve the feeding frequency because they are busy earning an income during daytime. They are, however, in many cases, able to do so with the support of their neighbors who have more leisure time and thus can help feed the malnourished children. There thus exists scope for interventions by CMs, in reducing malnutrition among MDG families.

**Early Childhood Development**

The objective of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) program is to create an enabling environment for the improved care and development of children aged 3-5 years. CAP includes a module on the need for early childhood care and stimulation. The effectiveness of CAP on ECD is illustrated by the fact that a majority of the community groups have requested the District Education Office (DEO) for support to initiate their ECD centers, and they have been managing the centers successfully through their own management committees.

DACAW provided matching funds, in order to motivate and facilitate the community management committees to mobilize resources from their localities. At present the Government is providing the recurrent and capital costs for establishing ECD centers. UNICEF is complementing the Government efforts through training and the provision of toys and social mobilization. For example, the management committee of one school-based ECD
center, located in the Thaprek VDC in Tanahun, has succeeded in collective donations to construct the center building from various other local groups, such as forest user groups, water user groups, agricultural cooperatives, and one local business firm. The success of their local resource mobilization efforts is a testimony of the effectiveness of CAP in raising the local awareness of the need for ECD services. The VDCs have also provided resources to the ECD centers through their annual budget.

However, there is still a great need for the establishment of ECD centers, as they largely depend on local efforts for resources mobilization. As a result, a number of the ECD management committee are starting to feel their centers require larger space as they successfully attract increasingly more children. In a number of places, some parents allow their children under the age of three, to go to ECD centers. Further support is required for the ECD management committees to solve these challenges.

**Water Supply and Sanitation**

CAP has raised the awareness of CO members of the need to improve the inadequate hygiene, water, and sanitation in their localities. As a result, this has created a community-wide demand in every CAP-assisted community for improved water supply and sanitation. This has resulted in the successful implementation of such national programs as the School Sanitation and Hygiene Education Program (SSHEP), and the School-led Total Sanitation Program (SLTS).

As suggested by these program names, children have been taking the key role in improving the sanitation and hygiene conditions in their settlement as well as in their schools. The schools are equipped with safe, separate, and private facilities, such as toilets, latrines, drinking water, and hand-washing sinks, which allowed the children to improve their sanitation and hygiene practices. The improved environment at their schools has also had a positive impact on the enrolment and retention rates, especially those of girls.

More importantly, the child clubs in the target schools have been actively engaged in sanitation and hygiene campaigns in their own communities, as well as in vigilance against malpractices by the local residents. These activities have served to facilitate changes in attitudes and behavior in the CAP-assisted localities, some of which have managed to declare themselves as Open Defecation Free Zones. Some school-based child clubs, as one in Dhikurpokhari VDC in Kaski, have even undertaken outreach programs, visiting surrounding villages not covered by DACAW to encourage children and teachers to engage in similar activities.

It has been relatively difficult, though, to promote total sanitation among disadvantaged and landless communities, given their lack of resources that prevents them from investing money for the construction of proper latrines, or drinking water facilities.

### 4.2.2 Effectiveness of Integrated Sector Approach

Promoting the rights of children and women requires channeling diverse set of services in a harmonized manner. The service providers and the policy decision makers of each of the key service sectors are compartmentalized from the ministerial level down, that is, the Ministry
of Education, the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works (for WASH), the Ministry of Health and their line departments. Each of these ministries and their line departments and district offices prepare sector plans that are not necessarily harmonized to achieve optimal results for any specific group or theme, whether it be children, gender equality or for that matter specific disadvantaged groups or regions. Decentralized planning at district level began with the promulgation of the Local Self Governance Act (LSGA) in 1999. It is envisaged in the LSGA that DDC would be the manager of district development with support from the technical expertise of the sector line departments.

Government planning at the district level involves a two-pronged approach (see Chapter 4.4 and figures 2 and 3). One part emanates from the community level and works its way up to the district level through the VDCs. This process defines the projects and programs to be included in the VDC and DDC plans that are to be funded through VDC and DDC block grants and through DDC’s internal resources. This plan is discussed in the VDC and DDC Council for endorsement. The other part of annual planning is sector planning conducted by each of the line departments. It is mandatory that these plans be presented at the District Council through the DDC for discussion and endorsed by the Council. There appears to be ample scope for harmonizing sector planning and also harmonizing between sector and bottom-up planning. Inadequate capacity of the DDCs both in terms of leadership and technical competence to coordinate the planning processes have resulted in less than optimal use of resources.

DACAW’s District Coordination Committee (DCC) and Village Coordination Committee (VCC) which were established to ensure integration of children and women issues in local governance, have been addressing these institutional inadequacies to a large extent and have facilitated pooling and allocation of resources resulting in sector convergence. DCC brings together the major partners at the district level. The role of DCC has included (i) coordination and facilitation of DACAW program implementation in the district, (ii) district level policy and operational direction such as VF hiring, VF salary contribution, NGO selection, (iii) joint planning, resource allocation, program integration and approval from district council, (iv) program proposal and budget review and approval, (v) joint monitoring and review of activity work plan and progress and (vi) program review (mid-year and annual).

Because of the sector convergence at the district level, it has been able to prepare a joint DACAW district work-plan under the aegis of DDC. The ideal, which UNICEF should work towards though, is one Government integrated district plan that covers all sectors and programs and which is coordinated and put together by DDC in consultation with the involved sectors and programs. An important aspect of good local governance that DACAW has put in practice is the channeling of funds through the central treasury of the DDC called the District Development Fund (DDF) and onward transfer of funds to the implementing agencies with accordance to the approved work plan.

The institutional system that has been put in place, mainly DCC, joint work planning amongst the sector agencies, joint monitoring and fund flow should now be internalized within the established system. As DACAW phases out, DCC and VCC could be transformed as sub-committees of the DDC (for child and women’s rights) through a decision of the District Council. There is a provision to this effect with the LSGA. This will give legitimacy to the DCC and VCC and these institutions will derive official mandate to bring together sector actors
even when DACAW as a project phases out. A structure such as the one shown below is an example of mainstreaming within the DDC structure.

Figure 1

DACAW has succeeded in serving as a platform for the convergence of various sector activities in order to address cross-cutting issues such as the promotion of child rights and women empowerment, and the inclusion of DAG communities and households. Its integrated sector approach has been effective in addressing these matters concerning women and children in a holistic and comprehensive manner. Such an integrated approach has been crucial for motivating people to work to improve the live of children and women on a long-term basis. For example, parents who benefit from the ECD centers are generally pleased not only to note their children’s psychosocial, cognitive and linguistic development, but also to be able to devote themselves to household chores, or agricultural and other livelihood-earning activities.

DACAW support usually starts by CAP whereby the members of CO learn about the importance of respecting children’s and women’s rights, and encouraged to start community-based monitoring of the local situations. The efforts to go beyond the creation of local demands, to link them with various service delivery programs, allow the members of the community to feel they have been rewarded for their own initiatives, and thus become further motivated to continue. In this respect, DACAW is an outstanding example of the
human rights-based approach (HRBA), given that a majority of HRBA programs stop at the awareness-raising of rights-holders, without working on the capacity-building of duty-bearers.

In order for DACAW to build on the effectiveness of its integrated sector approach, at the same time, efforts should be stepped up to create a more conducive environment for the inter-sector linkages to continue growing in CAP areas, and expand to non-CAP localities. First, as stated in Chapter 4.1.3, VFs and CMs have been the key to the success in initiating CAP and bringing it to bear on various service delivery activities. Both VFs and CMs therefore merit better working conditions, in terms of monetary and non-monetary incentives.

Unlike non-DAG households, the inter-sector linkages are harder to establish among DAG communities and households, which tend to be preoccupied with their daily struggles to make ends meet. For example, according to the person in-charge of the Sub Health Post (SHP) in Sudarpur VDC in Udayapur, referred to above, its newly created birthing center is not used by women from DAG families, because they had nobody to look after their children at home. A more comprehensive strategy of linking DACAW with other livelihood programs is thus required for DAG households to better benefit from the integrated sector approach. Such attempts have been made by UNICEF field-level staff members, usually in vain, largely because those working for other programs are not in a position to help poor people belonging to DACAW-supported COs. Efforts should therefore be made at the headquarters level to enter into formal agreements with other agencies implementing livelihood programs.

4.2.3 Capacity Building of Service Providers

In response to the growing demand from the CAP communities to deliver better services, staff members of government agencies, who deal directly with the local people, have been prompted to enhance their capacity. Schools, for example, have turned into a workplace that requires teachers to become more accountable to their students and parents, thanks to the school governance reform mandating the enhanced participation of the Child Clubs, the School Management Committees (SMCs), and the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs). Teachers have also been given training on child-friendly pedagogy, and teaching methods that are more sensitive to psychosocial aspects and learning needs of children. The students have also been mobilized through their child clubs, to monitor and report whether teachers use what they have learnt in training. The physical improvements of the classrooms, which are equipped with decoration and paintings, as well as with new toys and learning materials, provide a more conducive environment for teachers to deliver classes in a child-friendly manner.

This is also the case with the staff members working at the health posts and primary healthcare centers, who have benefited from increase in health-seeking attitudes and behavior among the local people. They draw on the updated data concerning the status of children and women, which COs collect in their regular monthly meetings, in order to plan for immunization and other campaigns. Other community-based mechanisms, such as safe motherhood groups, and watch groups have been instrumental for raising people’s awareness and knowledge of the needs and benefits of receiving regular health check-ups and services. In many DACAW-supported areas the health services have been helping staff at
health posts and primary healthcare centers to undertake outreach services in a more
effective manner.

However, staff members from other service delivery agencies who do not interact with local
communities on a daily basis, and are rather immune to pressure from local communities,
have not been able to substantially enhance their capabilities to serve the local communities.
For example, in the education sector supervisors and the resource persons at the District
Education Office (DEO), who are in charge of monitoring and supervising local schools, are
given training by DACAW. It was found that the majority of them have, nevertheless, not
been actively involved in various capacity building activities for quality education, such as the
Child Centered Education Program (CCEP), and the Child Friendly School Initiative (CFSI).
Moreover, DACAW has hired local NGOs to deliver training for the teachers, children,
parents and local people, it was found that the DEO field-level staff members have yet to be
included in the training delivered by the NGOs. This arises from the high turnover rates of
the supervisors and the resource persons.

At the district level, the DACAW District Coordination Committee (DCC) has been established,
drawing its members from the concerned line agencies, such as DEO, the District Health
Office (DHO), the District Drinking Water and Sanitation Office (DDWSO), and the District
Women’s Development Office (DWDO). These and other district-based agencies have been
jointly undertaking the planning and monitoring of DACAW activities within the district. They
also directly implement DACAW activities in their respective areas of responsibilities, using
the funding disbursed from the District Development Fund (DDF) to their normal operating
accounts.

This joint planning and implementation modality has helped some line agency personnel
from those agencies participating in the DCC, referred to in the preceding paragraphs, to
learn more about the importance of the integrated sector approach to address issues related
to children and women in a holistic manner, in addition to addressing cross-cutting issues
such as child participation, gender sensitivity, and social inclusion. In general, however,
district line agency staff have not sought to build on their DACAW experiences to reorient
their other sector activities using the budget coming from their parent ministries and
departments. They remain accountable and responsible to their superiors at the central level,
which restricts this kind of initiative. A staff member from the DDWSO posted in one DACAW-
supported district, for example, lamented during the interview that he had not be able to
replicate the DACAW modality of giving drinking water packages free of cost to the most
disadvantaged communities due to a central office directive which did not allow it.

The mandate of the Department of Women Development (DWD), by contrast, overlaps with
that of DACAW, in that the Department seeks to promote the rights of women and children.
The capacity of its district-level office that is the District Women’s Development Office
(DWDO), has clearly enhanced in DACAW-assisted districts, since its clients, such as women’s
federations and District Child Welfare Board, have been activated through DACAW.

At the same time, DWDO has relatively low status and clout among district-level line
agencies. According to one informant in Kaski, many government colleagues in the district
derogatorily calls DWD the ‘Women’s Section’ (of a Ministry, rather than acknowledging it as
a fully-fledged Department).
4.2.4 Influencing Policy at Local and National Level

Nepal’s present governance structure only mandates central line agencies to delegate administration to their district-level offices, rather than devolving their power to local governing bodies, namely, DDC, VDCs, and municipalities. Overall, such district-level agencies as the DEO, DHO, and DDWSO, are not in a position to invent and execute district-specific policies programs, nor are they able to propose their headquarters, namely, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, to learn from local initiatives and reflect them in nation-wide policies. On the contrary, their district offices normally have to abide by the directives coming from their head offices at central level.

Some of the initiatives have, however, been adopted by the line agency counterpart at the central level. They include the Early Childhood Development (ECD), and the concept of community-based birthing center.

Unlike line agencies with sector-specific responsibilities, the Ministry of Local Development (MLD) has been actively seeking to implement its national policies and programs at sub-national level. Its initiative to promote ‘Child Friendly Local Governance’ that is being piloted in some selected DDCs and VDCs (see Chapter 4.3). As part of its endeavor to finalize the Local Governance and Community Development Program (LGCDP), MLD is in the process of revising its block grant guidelines in order that DDCs/VDCs are encouraged to spend portions of their grants specifically for children and women activities. MLD has decided to replicate the DACAW strategy for social inclusion through disadvantaged group (DAG) mapping, under the LGCDP.

Moreover, VDCs and DDCs which are under the jurisdiction of MLD, are generally receptive to DACAW, as a majority of them spend portions of their block grants for DACAW-related activities. For example, in Tanahun all the CAP-covered VDCs provided funding for the ECD centers in 2008. Some of the target DDCs have also adopted district-wide policies inspired by DACAW. In Kaski, for instance, it is mandatory that a Paralegal Committee (PLC) includes male members in order to better address issues related to gender equality and violations of women’s rights. In Saptari, the VDC must pledge budget support if a school within its jurisdiction is to receive support for the construction of proper, private, separate toilets for girls and boys.

While MLD and its affiliated agencies have taken on some of the initiatives of DACAW, it is also crucial for other line agencies to follow suit, which continue to control the majority of governmental resources in those sectors vital for the promotion of the rights of children and women. Federalism may result in ‘devolution’ of line agencies’ power to local governing bodies, which will provide a much more conducive environment for DACAW community-based activities to be reflected in the central Government at large.

The Government’s vision and action plans relating to decentralization and sector devolution that were initiated with great vigor and enthusiasm in the late 1990s have been stalled. In the absence of political will to follow through with the devolution strategies, the current environment does not lend itself to optimal sector convergence at the ministerial level.
Consequently, government programs at the district level suffer from “lack of coherence and convergence”. This is aggravated by the fact that the districts are deprived of strong elected political leadership. However, DACAW which was designed in anticipation of “Government’s devolution strategy and strong local governance”, has been able to bring relevant sectors together at the district level under the aegis of DDC for the design and implementation of its activities. DACAW’s modus operandi at the district level could serve as an example of how sectors can converge to prepare an integrated district development plan.

4.3 Promoting Child Rights in Local Governance

4.3.1 Improving Lives of Children

DACAW’s achievements in bringing about real improvements in the lives of girls and boys underlie its gradual expansion from a pilot program in 2002 to a medium-scale initiative covering a third of the country in 2009. While its sector-wise results have been documented above, highlights of the key trends demonstrating the benefits for children since the time of the review in 2006 can be listed as follows.12

Improvements in Child Survival and Development

i) Health

• Significantly more children have been birth-registered in CAP settlements compared to non-CAP settlements, and disadvantaged children in CAP settlements are now more likely to be birth-registered than disadvantaged children in non CAP communities.

• DACAW has been successful in reducing under - 3 malnutrition rates, and in some communities malnutrition rates as reported by the community growth monitoring system are found to have dropped from 40-50 percent to 16 percent.

• Children have benefited from UNICEF’s national immunization programs and supplementary initiatives on measles and polio across Nepal. In Udayapur it is estimated that measles coverage increased from 47percent in 2008 to 74percent in 2009 while immunization coverage increased from 66percent in 2008 to 92percent in 2009.

• With DACAW support in 2008, 84 water-supply points (target 63) and 136 tube-wells (target 320) were installed or rehabilitated, providing 25,000 children and adults with increased access to improved water supplies. Residents in 114 school catchment areas (target 117) and 5 VDCs were provided with access to sanitation facilities. Likewise, a total of 14,500 toilets were constructed for girls and boys.

• In eight districts, DACAW has been implementing the maternal and newborn project through which it has ensured that 94percent of primary health posts, 69percent of health posts and 11percent of sub-health posts provide 24-hour delivery services with

12 Reference to DACAW progress report of 2009, the UNDAF annual report 2008 and district-wise briefing notes provided to the Evaluation Team, among others.
skilled birth attendants which has improved the survival rate of newborn babies and their mothers.

ii) Education

• Girls’ enrolment increased from 87.4 percent in 2007 to 90.4 percent in 2008 at the national level, and from 86.7 percent in 2007 to 89.37 percent in 2008 in UNICEF’s focus districts. According to the DACAW brochure the increase in Dalit child enrollment has been found to be proportionally greater in DACAW districts as compared to non DACAW districts.

• DACAW has helped rural and urban out of school children improve their basic literacy, numeracy and life skills among disadvantaged children aged 10-19 years who do not attend formal school and it is estimated that more than 60 percent of these children are girls. In the 15 original DACAW districts, the target to reach 20 percent more out-of-school children has been achieved.

• DACAW has succeeded in raising awareness on the importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD) and has accelerated its attempts at increasingly making available ECD centers for 3-5 year old girls and boys. In the Eastern region alone it is estimated that the ECD enrollment of some 11,000 children has been facilitated. 43 percent (target 50 percent) of the ECD centers are located in the most marginalized areas in DACAW districts.

iii) HIV/AIDS

• Over 1,200 most at risk and vulnerable adolescents were provided with knowledge, relevant skills and referral information on HIV/AIDS with UNICEF support in 2008. As a result the number of children receiving Anti Retroviral Treatment (ART) nearly doubled from 61 in 2007 to 115 by 2008 end.

Improvements in Child Protection and Participation

• By establishing women-headed Paralegal Committees (PLCs) at VDC and ward levels, DACAW has filled a gap in the system by facilitating access to services or mediating disputes at the local level including detection, prevention and follow up. It is estimated that 80 percent of such cases are resolved by the PLC members themselves. A recent evaluation shows, though, that only a minority of the cases dealt with by the Paralegal Committees are related to children. However, the Evaluation Team found that a number of the ‘women cases’ also involve children. For instance, while UNICEF Briefing Notes indicate that child-specific cases dealt with in the Eastern Region in 2008 were few (41 cases of child labor, 33 cases of child marriage and 28 cases of child abuse) it seems likely that the much higher numbers of cases on social violence (1054) and domestic violence (792) were in part related to children. This should be further

studied and the issue of how to get PLCs more involved in children’s cases needs follow-up.15

• Since its inception, DACAW has continued to establish and strengthen child clubs in its areas of operation. In the original 15 districts, for instance, it is estimated that the number of functioning child clubs had increased from 4000 in 2007/08 to more than 5000 in 2008/09.

• DACAW has established mechanism for children’s participation in decision-making which affects their lives. Through the child clubs and network children are currently involved in community advocacy for child rights, in relation to protection issues and individual cases, as well as in the Constitution drafting process.

• Village Child Protection Committees (VCPC), supposed to become part of the Government structure in each VDC16, have been established in some VDCs. DACAW should promote and support the linking of child clubs and PLCs to the VCPCs.

Challenges

At the same time, DACAW achievements are not uniform across the districts:

• Health, nutritional and educational indicators among disadvantaged communities remain consistently lower than others while disparities also persist by gender. While these discrepancies are now well-recognized (for example in the Government’s Three Year Interim Plan) and being systematically addressed (for example UNDAF 2008-12) they will nevertheless take time to overcome.

• Service delivery achievements in new DACAW districts remain particularly weak. In Jumla, for instance, it is estimated that just 39 percent of households have access to toilets and only 16 percent of deliveries are performed in the presence of skilled medical personnel.

• Net achievements appear to be slanted towards child survival and development activities as opposed to child protection and participation issues. Given the past and present climate of political instability, however, it is possible that an increased emphasis on survival and development has been the more feasible course of action to take. DACAW should, nevertheless, emphasize child protection and participation in the future.

15 Refer to Chapter 4.3.5 on closer linkage between child clubs and PLCs.
4.3.2 DACAW Achievements in Policy Influencing

DACAW has been able to influence Government policy in at least five ways as follows:

i) Influencing of Government planning and investment decisions by piloting programs which are later incorporated into national policy

• As a result of DACAW initiatives the Government has included the piloting of child friendly initiatives in local governance (CFLG) and has committed itself to developing a national framework for child participation.

• At national level UNICEF was heavily involved in advocating for the inclusion of ECDs in the school sector reform plan which was launched in July 2009, and for an increased focus on disadvantaged children in early childhood development as well as increased resource allocation for ECDs in the plan.

• The Welcome to School model was successfully piloted in 15 DACAW districts and is now a national model for enrollment increased the number of children in primary school.

• UNICEF has influenced the Ministry of Education to increase fund allocation for toilet construction, operation and maintenance in primary schools.

• UNICEF has facilitated the development of a life-skills based curriculum which has now been approved by the MOE into the health curriculum for Grades 1 through 10.

• UNICEF has worked with the Government to develop a National Sanitation Policy and a National Policy on Arsenic.

• The incorporation of DAG experiences and approaches in the LGDCP has perhaps been the most significant demonstration of UNICEF’s policy advocacy impact while the MLD’s decision to develop a national framework and operational guideline to implement the CFLG concept as a part of the LGCDP has ensured that children’s and women’s issues will increasingly be prioritized in Nepal. In December 2008, UNICEF was able to influence MLD’s revised Block Grant guidelines to allow VDCs to allocate an amount of 25 percent of the block grant (up from 15 percent) for social sector spending provided that it is a child-friendly VDC, a least developed VDC or a violence-free VDC.

ii) Helping the Government to Formulate and Realize Policies

• UNICEF’s child protection team is working with other child protection agencies to support the Government to formulate and enact a child rights bill, a child protection policy and other initiatives related to child protection.

• The Government has requested for DACAW support to implement its National Safe Motherhood Program in eight districts. Through this partnership, the government provides inputs required for strengthening maternal, newborn health services,
including the construction of facilities provision of equipment and technical training while UNICEF helps coordinate these activities and fund social mobilization and training. Within this activity there has also been policy influencing. For instance, DACAW’s achievements have shown that providing 24 hour delivery services is feasible not just at the Health Post level but also at the Sub Health Post level.

iii) Mobilizing Children and Women to Influence Government Decision-Making

• Child clubs federated at district and municipal level have become increasingly active in policy influencing efforts. In Biratnagar municipality, which is not a DACAW district but in which innovative DACAW practices are being implemented, working children’s clubs have been established in all 22 wards including more than 2000 working children, mainly domestic, factory, restaurant and tea shop workers. The network has, among other things, assisted the municipal government in increasing birth registration rates in Biratnagar, has volunteered to run a measles campaign which reached a 96 percent coverage rate in 2008 and has also provided inputs in the development of the periodic plan for Biratnagar municipality. Consequently, the municipality has increased budget allocations on children and developed a child profile. Biratnagar is also the only municipality in Nepal that has as a target to become a child-friendly municipality by 2015.

• In another instance, a convention among child clubs from six districts in the Central region submitted the Damauli Declaration to the Prime Minister in early 2009 seeking his assurance that he would provide all Nepali children with free and compulsory education up to the secondary level, prevent child labor, child trafficking and sale of children as well as ensure uniformity among all child clubs across the country, amongst others.

• Through the common platform created by DACAW, PLC members take part in DWD initiatives at village and ward level in order to advocate on behalf of women’s protection concerns, for example to organize rallies on International Women’s Day.

• As documented above, DCCs and VCCs have allocated increased government funds for women and child related issues.

• 191 women parliamentarians have been trained and oriented on child rights and the importance of child participation during the process of Constitution building.

iv) Partnering with Development Stakeholders

• DACAW works with several NGOs that strengthen government institutions in its service delivery activities at the VDC level. It also draws in NGO expertise in establishing the District Resource Groups that guide and facilitate the work of the PLCs. At the national level, DACAW has worked with the Save the Children, World Vision and Consortium for Organizations Working for Child Participation (Consortium) in order to harmonize approaches to child and youth participation in Nepal. DACAW has also helped develop a set of NGO guidelines for MLD.
• DACAW has partnered with the private sector, the Chambers of Commerce offices in the districts, which is innovative and new among development programs in Nepal.

• DACAW has worked with multilateral donors including UNDP, UNFPA, WFP, ILO and more recently, the Asian Development Bank, in order to maximize the resource that are available for the program as well as its impact overall.

v) Communications and Outreach

Finally, DACAW has mobilized IEC material in order to raise awareness on the issues of children and women as well as influence public opinion in their favor. In this respect, its work with district and national-level media has been particularly effective, such as its partnerships with FM radio stations in the Eastern and Karnali regions as well as its initiatives to document best practices.

Areas of Improvement

National-level influence initiated through UNICEF’s technical and financial backstopping have been successful in part in being sustained nationally17 but this has taken time in most instances while in others, appear to be effective to the extent that they still receive UNICEF support even though they may be incorporated into national policy. For instance, it is unclear whether or not the DDC in Jumla really feels adequately prepared to take on the CFLG initiative at this stage since it is already implementing 38 other programs (see Chapter 4.3.4). Clearly, Jumla’s resource endowments are also significantly less than those of Biratnagar Municipality, which limits the capacity to fund the CFLG. In addition, generating a sense of ownership of DACAW among Government actors in Nepal’s current context of political uncertainty is a particularly difficult task to accomplish.

Finally, DACAW’s influencing efforts that have been performed through long-term, mutually reinforcing partnerships as opposed to just through service delivery contracts, particularly with development stakeholders at the national level, appear to be few in relation to the duration of the program and its coverage across 23 districts of Nepal. It also does not seem to have considered entering into more formal relations with the FNCCI (central-level Chambers of Commerce) as an alternative to individual, district-wise agreements. Were such ‘partnerships for influencing’ to proceed in a more strategic way from now on, in order to better pool resources, skills and information, they would very likely generate a multiplier effect.

4.3.3 Reaching and Benefiting the Disadvantaged

DACAW has come a long way in its efforts to reach out to and benefit disadvantaged communities in Nepal. In a context in which development stakeholders have become increasingly aware of the extent of social exclusion in Nepal, but less clear about how they should address it, MLD has replicated the DAG household and VDC mapping approach on which to base its LGCDP program and this marks a tremendous achievement for UNICEF in Nepal.

17 for example, the ECD program is now predominantly Government funded
Nepal’s disadvantaged communities fare poorly on both economic and social indicators, and the advantage of the DAG mapping is that it combines both into one overarching measure. In recognition of the particular conditions of historically disadvantaged caste and ethnic groups, DAG further prioritizes the situation of Janajati and Dalit communities in an effort to address issues of equity within the broader field of poverty reduction. Interestingly though, the District Education Office in Jumla suggested that within the DAG mapping, districts should also have some leeway within which to identify additional ‘excluded groups’ that are particular to their locations, for example Bhotes as opposed to Haliyas in the case of Jumla.

DACAW has adopted a three-pronged approach to the inclusion of DAG communities within its program operations. On the one hand, activities now increasingly “reach out to” DAG individuals at three levels: district-wise, VDC-wise and household-wise. Among a total of 371 CAP VDCs covered by DACAW in 23 districts, therefore, 68 percent are disadvantaged. Further, its program goals for 2010 are DAG-oriented, that is, all settlements of Category 3B and Category 4 VDCs according to DAG mapping will have ECD centers, severely malnourished children in 10 districts in the Mid and Far West will have access to care with community therapy, and so on. DACAW further disaggregates DAG communities into DAG and MDAG in order to increase the accuracy of its targeting.

The second strategy for DAG inclusion has been by re-designing specific activities so that they better address the needs of DAG individuals. For instance, reducing malnutrition in the most disadvantaged communities remains a major challenge for which DACAW has periodically set up feeding centers for underweight DAG children. In order to better benefit the Chamar (Dalit) community in Saptari, community-based ECD centers (as opposed to just school-based ECDs) have been emphasized and as a result, some 139 community-based ECDs are now operational in CAP VDCs there. Similarly, in order to ensure the economic empowerment of DAG women, DACAW has introduced provisions for “equity funds” for their benefit. The Nava Durga Women’s Federation in Sundarpur VDC of Udayapur district, for instance, runs an equity-based empowerment program through which loans are provided to non-DAG women at an 18 percent rate of interest, while DAG women are eligible for loans at a 12 percent interest rate. In an attempt to increase understanding of the importance of DAG targeting, the women organized a one-day importance training for all members. DAG women may also pay back their loans on an installment basis and are also granted special allowances in order to become cooperative share members. As a result of similar activities in Sunsari, it is estimated that the proportion of DAG women who had become cooperative share holders had increased from 29 percent in 2006 to 56 percent in 2008 there. Equity funds are also in the process of being introduced in the 9 CAP VDCs of Jumla.

The fact that PLCs are increasingly being expanded from VDC down to ward levels appears to be another strategy to ensure that DACAW activities are being brought nearer to women, a process which may benefit DAG women particularly, who have traditionally been excluded from community based initiatives.

Third, DACAW has also prioritized the need to work “with” DAG women, rather than just “for” them. In particular, emphasis has been placed to hire VFs, CMs and ECD facilitators

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18 On a scale from 1 to 4 where 4 is the most disadvantaged (MDAG).
from DAG communities by means of a program of affirmative action. In this way, this initiative seeks to address DAG women’s strategic as well as practical needs. Likewise, child clubs increasingly aim to include DAG children – some with a measure of success. In Tanahun, for instance, it is estimated that 54 percent of all child club members are from Janajati communities.

Areas of Improvement

DACAW needs more time and effort in order to truly achieve its goal of becoming a fully inclusive program. Indeed, equity lies at the heart of Nepal’s development challenges in the years to come and DACAW is by no means alone in struggling to deliver tangible results on this front. The further success of its efforts on DAG inclusion will, amongst others depend on:

• The extent to which DACAW is able to manage its planned phase-out and hand-over operations in such a way that they do not detract opportunities from DAG communities and perhaps more so, MDAG communities. One means of addressing this would be to work to connect the target population in phase-out districts with development programs running in their areas. Another would be to consider a more gradual phase-out of UNICEF support in the most needy areas.

• The extent to which DACAW is able to further align development stakeholders in Nepal within a single and uniform targeting definition and approach to reach DAG communities. The fact that different donors use different methods for identifying disadvantaged communities is also a finding coming out of other recent reviews of donor targeting in Nepal undertaken in preparation of the launch of the LGCDP.

• The extent to which DACAW is able to identify and strengthen social mobilization organizations in the Mid and Far West, which in view of extremely low human development indicators coupled with scarce Government presence will be essential in order to reach out to DAG communities there. The notion adopted by MLD to promote district-level NGOs in social mobilization processes, as against national level NGOs, makes sense in terms of sustainability. However, it would also seem to be important for the Government to consider stop-gap measures until such a time that such organizations are established and strengthened to operate in the districts. In this context, it seems a pity that DACAW ended its agreement with DEPROSC in Jumla once it entered into a partnership with the DDC there; to the extent that the DDC does not appear to have even consulted with DEPROSC about follow-up activities on DAG mapping, child clubs and PLCs initiated by DEPROSC. At the same time, no district level NGO appears to have been selected to take over from DEPROSC.

• The DAG mapping exercise has found that as many as 98 percent of MDAG households are food secure for less than 3 months in a year. Among MDAG and DAG communities together, the percentage figure drops somewhat but remains high at 52 percent. Food security is not included in the HDI index but is in the WFP Nepal sub-regional food index which it released in 2009 and may be worth taking into account in future DACAW operations.
Apart from the DAG mapping exercise, UNICEF may wish to further strengthen other national information systems to ensure that all data in Nepal is increasingly disaggregated by caste and ethnicity in addition to gender and age. Furthermore, the data that is available should be better utilized in national, district and village planning processes.

More investment appears to be necessary to build the capacity of local organizations to produce IEC material in the local languages of Nepal since many DAG communities are not conversant in Nepali. This was a major recommendation coming out of consultations with UNICEF staff from the Central Region too.

4.3.4 Child Friendly Local Governance

DACAW is currently in the process of replicating UNICEF’s international experiences in promoting Child Friendly Local Governments (CFLG) in Nepal. In particular, UNICEF’s approach to CFLG is to:

- Enable local governments to deliver the ‘Four Gifts for Children’: i) a Local Development Plan for Children; ii) a Local Investment Plan for Children; iii) a Local Code on Children; and iv) regular reporting on the state of children.

- Promote monitoring of the child-friendliness of local governments.

- Assist local governments in mainstreaming child rights in local development planning.

Together with MLD, UNICEF is piloting CLFG in five districts/municipalities as of 2009; in Biratnagar, Dang, Jumla, Sunsari and Tanahun. For this purpose MLD has developed a draft National Framework and Operational Guideline to implement the CFLG concept as a part of the LGCDP according to which CFLGs will be scaled up nation-wide by 2015.

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Source: Draft Concept Note for CFLG, MLD 2009

The Biratnagar Municipality has gone ahead and developed its own concept note on CLFG in which it outlines its goals and approaches. Children’s issues have also been incorporated in the Municipal Periodic Plan and the City Action Plan while child clubs are regularly invited to Municipal Planning and Budgeting meetings. A partnership has also been formed with donors, NGOs, the Morang Chambers of Commerce and Industry in order to take the CLFG initiative forward. A Rs 233 million investment plan is in place for the coming 5 years.
Tanahun has initiated CFLG in 2 VDCs with Save the Children, political parties and the Government. The District Council has allocated resources to support the program and agreed to develop a basket fund for CFLG. In 2008 the DDC allocated Rs. 100,000 to the basket fund while in 2009 this amount increased to Rs 800,000. The initiative is about to publish a District “State of the Children” report while the District Child Welfare Board is undertaking a district-level mapping of stakeholders working on women’s and children’s issues. CFLG committees have been formed in the two VDCs and received training.

Of all the pilot districts, Jumla appears to be the least advanced in the process so far. It held a CFLG district-level orientation on the concept in November 2009.

Apart from understanding its broad strategic direction, it was not possible for the Evaluation Team to delve more deeply into the activity level progress made so far on the CFLG initiative. The CFLG pilot is an innovative initiative which should be followed up by a separate study of its progress, outcomes and impact during the next phase of DACAW.

4.3.5 Cross-Cutting Issues in DACAW

In addition to its sector commitments, DACAW also seeks to promote the cross-cutting issues of i) child participation ii) gender equality and iii) social inclusion through its operations.

i) Child Participation

At the central level UNICEF promotes child participation through the Consortium, which is a network of 57 national and international agencies promoting child rights and child participation. Recently, it has focused its work on two areas, one on developing policies and guidelines in relation to child-friendly governance and child participation and the other related to ensuring that children have a voice in developing the new Constitution. UNICEF with its close relationship to Government plays an important role for civil society in promoting child rights, but it was found that civil society actors feel they get little space within the UN. UNICEF should do more to promote space and role of civil society in the promotion of child rights in Nepal as well as improve the coordination with (I)NGOs.

Child participation is being promoted primarily by means of child clubs which currently number 3,848 in Nepal with a membership of 71,841 (46.45percent girls and 53.54percent boys) according to official statistics. They are being supported by UNICEF and other agencies, such as the international NGOs Save the Children Nepal and Plan International. UNICEF data indicates that in the 15 original DACAW districts the number of functioning child clubs increased from 4050 in 2007/08 to 5050 in 2008/09. This data discrepancy appears to arise from the fact that child clubs in Nepal do not always formally register with the Government. Child clubs are either school based or community based and consist of children across gender, ethnic and caste divisions. Children and youth in the clubs receive training on various themes including life skills, campaigning, advocacy and awareness raising on a whole range of issues, such as nation-building, the environment, the peace process, child rights, sexual and gender-based violence, sanitation/hygiene, reproductive health and

19 According to data from the Central Child Welfare Board
education issues. They are trained in ways of identifying and addressing child protection concerns. The members of the clubs in turn undertake training, advocacy campaigns, sports, cultural shows, street dramas and deal with individual cases. Through these activities they raise awareness and change behavior both among children and adults.

A whole range of results are reported by the child and youth clubs and it is clear that they are having an impact on their communities. Amongst others, it appears that:

- Child clubs are increasingly active in VDC and DDC decision-making, including in Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs), in SMCs and PTAs as well as in the Constituent Assembly itself through interactions with CA members.

- Child clubs are increasingly seeking to address disparities by gender, caste and ethnicity in their membership and in society through campaigning, fundraising and conflict-resolution activities.

- Child clubs are increasingly working across districts resulting in increased exposure to national and even international issues and concerns which helps build leadership. However, a number of members expressed a need for leadership training.

- Child clubs are increasingly skilled in advocating on issues which have policy implications at community, village, district and national levels including on issues of sanitation and waste management, school enrolment, child labor, elimination of child trafficking, the rehabilitation of conflict-affected children and increased public expenditure on children.

At the same time:

- Aspects of child club management remain haphazard in Nepal, with no clear understanding about how exactly they should be facilitated and sustained; a fact which a representative from the Child Welfare Board also reaffirmed.

- Child clubs are not fully integrated into the communities and are working somewhat in isolation. Children are still not perceived and respected as individual citizens with their own sets of rights. Links to the other community groups, especially PLCs, and VDC/VCC need to be strengthened and they need to be fully recognized as the important change agents that they are in society.

- There appears to be no overarching strategy in place that aims to move child club participation into broader, sustained child participation – or indeed, how child participation may be promoted without recourse in each and every instance to child clubs.

- The politicization of child clubs by political party elements remains an issue of concern in Nepal, and an indicator still of the tendency to “use” children to meet one’s own ends rather than genuinely work for their empowerment.\(^{20}\) Work therefore remains in

\(^{20}\) This issue emerged particularly in our discussions with children in Damauli, Tanahun.
terms of building public awareness on and sensitivity towards children’s issues in Nepal.

• Other agencies, such as Save the Children and Plan International, are also promoting and supporting child clubs. UNICEF should make an effort to link with these other agencies to have a coordinated and consistent approach to the development and support to child and youth clubs in Nepal.

ii) Gender Equality

Of all the cross-cutting issues, it is possible that DACAW has achieved most in terms of gender equality. In particular, programs are designed, targeted and implemented in ways that take into account the specific needs and interests of women and also support women’s capacity building through training. It is estimated that 98 percent of DACAW facilitators are women, increasingly from disadvantaged groups. Girls’ education has evolved into a high priority issue for the Government as evidenced in increased public investment in scholarship programs and an improving rate of gender parity in school enrolment. Furthermore, recent legislative changes have been positive for gender equality while women’s involvement in district and national politics has increased significantly during 2006-09. However, at the national level gender issues have not emerged among the Government’s major priorities. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare is expected to receive a mere 3.38 percent of the total budget during 2009-10.

Although this is the strategy on paper, the Evaluation Team found that DACAW still has more focus on women than on gender, as pointed out in the Review three years ago. DACAW should make a concerted effort to shift the focus from exclusively focusing on women’s empowerment to a gender equality perspective. Gender roles and relationships should be analyzed, that is gender analysis should be applied to a greater extent in planning, monitoring and reporting. This could lead to increased involvement by boys and men in a more systematic manner, which addresses a point made in Chapter 4.2. These findings are and suggestions are also in line with those of the recent UNICEF Gender Assessment.21

iii) Social Inclusion

Not only is social inclusion the newest of DACAW’s cross-cutting areas of concern, it is also a deep-seated problem with which all development stakeholders in Nepal are currently struggling. The fact that DACAW still has some way to go before it is able to claim to be a fully inclusive program is thus not necessarily unusual.

On the one hand:

• DACAW has now identified (M)DAG villages and households and aligned its activities in order to better address their needs.

• DACAW pays more attention now to meeting inclusion targets in terms of its human resources, particularly at community levels.

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• DACAW’s emphasis on DAG households is set to further intensify in the context of its plans for phase out and hand over in 5 districts and phase into 9 new districts.

At the same time:

• DACAW needs to ensure that efforts to bring about social inclusion include both economic measures, such as salary and loans, and behavioral and attitudinal measures in a process which is essentially long and complex. The extent to which this is being done and whether social inclusion methods are being mainstreamed into DACAW training modules and other tools, should be further followed-up and studied.

• In view of the extent of inequality faced by women and children in Nepal, DACAW’s emphasis on (M)DAG communities is highly relevant. While maintaining a DAG-targeted approach in planning of its activity and output level work, however, it would seem to be important to retain a community-wide perspective at the level of planned outcomes. For instance in order to attain the outcome of ‘strengthening local support basis for sustained social inclusion’ it may be necessary for DACAW to specifically involve non-DAG communities and members in its advocacy activities (refer to Chapter 4.1.4). In this context, it may be noted that the UNDP End Evaluation of the DLGSP (2009) finds that activities that encourage inter-community cooperation “may have advantages in catalytic roles and facilitation tasks”; though also cautions that such an approach should be adopted on a case by case basis depending on the particular power dynamics in each individual setting.22

• It appeared that children’s interest in and enthusiasm for building a ‘new and inclusive Nepal’ was greater than that of adults, indicating that children find it easier to internalize values of social inclusion than adults.23

### 4.4 DACAW Operational Structure

#### 4.4.1 DACAW Organization and Link to Sector Programs

Progress has been made over the past three years in how DACAW is conceptualized. The review in 2006 observed that there was considerable unclarity as to whether DACAW was an approach or a program. The findings suggest that there is general agreement and understanding among Government counterparts and partners that DACAW is both an approach and a program while there is still some uncertainty within UNICEF. On the one hand, DACAW promotes the human rights based approach which is key to UNICEF’s mandate. On the other hand, DACAW is a UNICEF program for practical intents and purposes with links to the sector programs.

DACAW is organized as a program with designated staff members at the central level and presence through UNICEF staff members at regional and district level. The DACAW Program

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23This issue emerged particularly in discussions with children in Biratnagar.
in Kathmandu is presently situated in the Social Policy and Decentralization Section and consists of three professional staff members. Only one of them has been permanent but in 2010 all three will be made permanent. There is a DACAW program manager (“DACAW Programme in Charge”) who reports to the Section Chief. At the three UNICEF regional offices UNICEF program officers have both geographical responsibilities as well as either sector or DACAW responsibility. In each of the regions one program officer has been appointed DACAW focal point responsible for coordinating the CAP governance. There are a total of 14 program officers at the district level and one additional one on a temporary basis which will be converted to permanent in 2010. In each of the new nine DACAW districts one consultant has been hired to work as a program officer under the DDC focusing specifically on DACAW. The district program officers are not only responsible for the CAP processes but also for following up on the sector results and the district level is thus where DACAW and the sectors converge.

Planning and reporting on DACAW activities is done annually. It is a two-way process between bottom-up input from the beneficiary groups and top-down guidance from UNICEF, government and other partners. The planning starts at the community group level; in the child club, the paralegal committee, the women’s group, the watch group. Partners and counterparts receive training from UNICEF on participatory planning methodology by which needs and problems are identified and prioritized. Through these processes the groups come up with their own proposed action plan detailing each activity and the expected results and costs. These plans go to the VCC and from them to the VDC which compiles them and put them together into one VCD proposal. This is forwarded to the district level, first to the DCC which forwards it to the DDC. The regional offices provide each DDC with the budget frame and targets for DACAW from the CPAP\(^24\). The CPAP contains the budget allocations by geographic region per year, expected results, output indicators and major partners. The DDC then goes through a process of prioritizing and compiling the VDC plans into one district proposal, the Annual Work Plan.\(^25\) A review meeting is arranged to discuss the proposed district Annual Work Plan for DACAW. After the DACAW review meeting at district level, the Annual Work Plan is sent to the MLD for approval and signature. A signed copy of it is sent to concerned partners at district level and to UNICEF.

Reporting happens along the same lines starting with the community groups submitting their compiled statistics and information which they collect on the Community Information Board (CIB) to the VCC which compiles and forwards these data to the VDC. The VDC sends a report to the DCC which in turn sends it to the DDC. The DDC prepares a standard progress report which is sent to the UNICEF Regional Office. It contains both a financial report and a report on results in a matrix format. The financial part shows donor source, funding source, how much has been requisitioned and disbursed. The results report shows actual results compared to plan by activity. The UNICEF Regional offices report directly to the Deputy Representative in Kathmandu. Figures 2 and 3 below show the DACAW planning and reporting process.

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\(^{25}\)Reference is made to UNICEF compilation of district-wise Annual Work Plans.
Main Issues

Participatory Planning

Clearly, participatory planning is taking place in the communities to a great extent. The Community Information Board was observed in all the visited communities and were actively used. This is a community friendly tool which has proven effective for discussing issues and concerns related to women and children. They contained detailed statistics on a whole range of issues related to health, education, protection, and the organization of the different groups (see Chapter 4.1). The groups also kept their own records of results and information about group formation and members. Through the focus group discussions it became evident that community group members had received training on participatory training methodology and how to make an action plan. From the results documented and examples given by the groups, it was clear that the needs of the beneficiaries were being addressed, however, it was less obvious to the team to which extent the needs prioritized by the beneficiaries were selected and followed up at the next levels, that is, by the VCC, VDC, DCC and DDC. This would require a more in-depth analysis of the participatory component of DACAW; how participation is promoted and what the results are. Is it so that the needs are actually followed through at all levels? And how are decisions made about prioritization? However, there is no doubt a high level of participation of all stakeholders, especially the community groups in implementation, monitoring and reporting of activities.
Reporting on Results

It was noted that both the CPAP and the district Annual Work Plan contain planned results with indicators mainly at the output level. The statistics and information recorded at the community level was also at output level, however, in focus group discussions and discussions with local government partners many examples were given of outcomes and impact of DACAW activities in the communities. These have been reported in the 2006 review and examples are also given in this report (see chapters 4.1, 4.2, 4.3). There is a need to make a more systematic reporting on more long-term results of DACAW; that is outcomes and impact of the activities, not only the outputs. It was also found that DACAW could improve on risk and problem analysis. The two most recent DACAW progress reports are strong on results outputs and contain useful analyses of constraints, but these could be developed into a more comprehensive and systematic risk and problem analysis.26

It was found that the reporting on “before-after” where community members compare progress before and after DACAW support started is very useful both for beneficiaries and other stakeholders. It is easy to understand and comprehend the importance of DACAW intervention for the beneficiaries and it provides results against baseline data for the receivers. This could be further highlighted and developed in the next phase.

Ownership of DACAW

The review three years ago pointed out that DACAW was UNICEF-driven and that Government ownership should be strengthened. Progress has been made in this respect, both at the central and local level. The MLD in Kathmandu, both old and new key staff members, showed a high degree of ownership of DACAW and its tools and components. For example, the fact that they have taken on the DAG mapping and applied it as a national planning tool is evidence of increased government ownership. However, at the district and village level, there is scope for improvement. It is still not clear whether the authorities regard this program as primarily Government owned or whether it is considered a UNICEF program. There are still parallel structures in the planning and reporting processes, although some efforts have been made recently to address this.27 The review meeting for DACAW planning at the district level is separate and there is also separate reporting to UNICEF. UNICEF still does reporting and also presentations for the government partners to a certain extent. Support to reporting and presentations can be important aspects of capacity building at certain stages of partnership development, however, there comes a point when these types of support should be discontinued. There is a need for UNICEF/DACAW to push for Government to fully integrate planning and reporting for DACAW into the Government system. The LGCDP will be an opportune vehicle for this to happen. It will also be in line with the evolving new role of UNICEF worldwide, moving away from the hands-on program implementation and focusing on policy advocacy and capacity building.


27 Reference is made to a recent planning alignment exercise with Government led by NPC representatives.
Significant progress has been made in strengthening the link between DACAW and the sector programs over the past three years. There is now more agreement and understanding of the benefits and value-added of DACAW. Most staff members responsible for sector programs saw the benefits of DACAW as an entry point and vehicle for achieving the desired results in their areas. Many examples were reported to the team. In the education sector DACAW was a valuable entry point for mobilizing the communities for the “Welcome to School” campaign. “Schools as Zones of Peace” was piloted through DACAW in two districts and is now expanding to 11. In the health sector there is a lot of activities related to mother-child health, such as growth monitoring that is done through the DACAW supported community organizations. In protection there is a clear link to DACAW through the Paralegal Committees which address protection problems of women and children. A mine awareness campaign has been done through DACAW. More recently, there have also been links in the area of media and communication through, for example, the radio program “Chatting with My Best Friend” which involves child club members. Inter-sector synergies have also been created with DACAW, such as the link between WASH and education. A survey found that the reason why girls were not attending school was lack of toilets for girls, which resulted in a collaborative effort between the two sectors to address the situation. Links and synergies between different sectors and DACAW is also clearly evidenced in the communities which have mobilized to have “open defecation free zone” where child clubs, schools, women’s federation groups and VDCs all have been involved in addressing health, sanitation and education aspects.

Findings suggest that there is still some tension between the sector programs and DACAW though; this was observed mainly at the central level while at the regional and district level DACAW and sector activities are more integrated. At the central level, however, our findings suggest that more needs to be done to link DACAW in a systematic manner to the sector programs and that there is scope for sectors to use DACAW more. One way of addressing this may be to develop a guideline or checklist on how to link sectors to DACAW more systematically at the central level. This would need to be followed up by management in terms of organizational adjustment.

Communication and Decision-Making

Although progress has been made in relation to integrating DACAW in the overall sector activities of UNICEF improvements could still be made in relation to the internal decision-making structure and communication between those with sector responsibilities and DACAW both in the field and in Kathmandu.

The team got somewhat conflicting information regarding the communication flow between the sector programs and DACAW at central and field level. Some staff members felt that DACAW is controlling both sector and CAP information, while others felt the information and communication flow to DACAW was not sufficient enough. A number of the District Program Officers (DPOs) expressed that some of the sector programs come and go rather unexpectedly, according to the convenience of the donor agencies. This interrupts DPOs’ tasks in coordinating and developing various sector programs. Communication between the central office, regional office and field could be improved in this respect.
UNICEF’s regional offices report directly to the Deputy Representative who receives district-wis data concerning sector achievements. The Team gathered from interactions with various UNICEF staff members that the sector reporting goes to DACAW as long as it is covered by DACAW (that is, the Community Information Board). However, the information gathered by sector programs does not go directly to DACAW in Kathmandu, but to the concerned section via the Deputy Representative. The regional offices also report directly to the Deputy Representatives. Sometimes this results in lack of timely information to the DACAW team. If DACAW is to genuinely serve as a platform for the convergence of sector activities (as is described in the Country Programme Action Plan), it is desirable that the DACAW team in Kathmandu receive all sector information directly from the regional offices in a timely manner. UNICEF should review the information sharing and communication lines between DACAW and the other sections and between central and regional offices and ensure it is efficient both for DACAW and the sector programs.

**DACAW Sufficiently Decentralized?**

From discussions with several DPOs it was found that DACAW could be improved by further decentralizing UNICEF’s operating procedures and budget in some respects. One is related to authorization of expenditure and budget allocation. At present the regional offices are only authorized to approve a “Small Scale Support” agreement (to hire NGOs to meet emerging needs in the field) for up to USD 10,000. Otherwise, the regional offices have to seek approval from the central office in Kathmandu, which usually takes several months. This means that every time a DPO needs to make an agreement of more than USD 10,000 time is spent on preparing additional documentation for the expenditure application. This presents an additional burden on the DPO as well as waiting for it to be approved. It is therefore recommended that the ceiling for expenditure without authorization from the central office is increased beyond USD 10,000 to reduce the workload of the DPO and partners and to facilitate a smoother implementation at the local level.

Another aspect relates to the involvement of partners at the district and village level in the planning and development of DACAW. The following example can illustrate this point. It was found that while the Child Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) is well received in its pilot DDCs and VDCs, a number of local stakeholders expressed that the initial observation tour to the Philippines should have been allotted also to some of district- and village-level leaders and activists who had been collaborating with DACAW. If DACAW is to seek decentralised solutions to the violation of children’s and women’s rights, it should also adopt a more decentralised approach to managing its own activities. There are a number of local partners which are ready and willing to contribute their ideas as to how best to further develop DACAW in Nepal.

**Sub-National Presence**

A recent study done on UNICEF decentralization efforts in six countries in the East Asia and Pacific region emphasizes the importance of sub-national presence. If present locally UNICEF can establish good relationships with local counterparts and local contacts; it is

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28 Atwood, Kelsey and Stephen Woodhouse. Decentralization and Taking Pilots to Scale in East Asia and the Pacific Region. Draft. UNICEF EAPRO. 2008
easier to ensure that programming is relevant to local realities and feasible to implement; and the possibility for policy leverage at the local level is much greater. Although Nepal was not one of the six countries in the study, the Evaluation Team found that these are also valid and important reasons for UNICEF to prioritize sub-national presence also in the future. Field presence is vital for the functioning of DACAW as the local level is where the main program activities and participants are located. The study recommended that UNICEF sub-national presence should follow the structure of the Government. In the case of DACAW, the district level is where DACAW and the sectors merge and where key partnerships with the Government are developed. UNICEF should therefore focus and prioritize sub-national presence at the district level.

4.4.2 Regional Differences in Program Modalities

DACAW’s modalities are based on the experiences derived from and built upon the successes of two other UNICEF programs:

- Decentralized Planning for Children Program (DPCP) and
- Quick Impact Project (QIP)

In a total of 14 districts (11 districts in the eastern and western regions and three districts in the mid and far west, namely Dadeldhura, Achham and Dang) the implementation modality of DACAW is based on the DPCP experience wherein the key implementing partners are DDCs and the respective line agencies in the districts. The program builds upon the groups and community organization formed by other programs such as DLGSP and IWCD and engages village facilitators and community mobilizers to pursue the community action processes (CAP). In these 14 districts, DACAW was one of the first programs to channel resources through the District Development Fund (DDF) and onward to line agencies in accordance with the provisions of the Local Self Governance Act. This instills a sense of ownership by local governments and also facilitates an environment of sector convergence at the district level by supporting the coordinating and managerial role of the DDCs. Capacity building of DDCs and line agencies to enhance service delivery are an integral part of the program and so is the capacity development of community organizations to assess, analyze and identify their needs and actions and to articulate them. Thus, the objective of supporting the local governance institutions (communities, local government, line agencies and civil society organizations) to create an enabling environment for promoting and protection child rights is well grounded. Further, the approach is in full compliance with the spirit of the Local Self Governance Act.

In contrast, DACAW implementation modality in the 9 districts of Mid and Far West (apart from the three districts mentioned above where DPCP was implemented), have been undergoing transformation from QIP – a program and a modality very much in contrast with those of the DPCP/DACAW. QIP was launched in these districts in November 2003 with the objective of providing immediate support to improve the lives of children and women affected by armed conflict. QIP was initially implemented through an INGO, World Vision until May 2005 and later through a national NGO, DEPROSC, from June 2005 till 2008/2009. QIP activities consisted of quality education and CC-OSP, child protection and micro-infrastructure projects such as health posts, schools and water supply and sanitation. MTR in March 2004 endorsed QIP and the NGO-implementation modality as appropriate strategies for addressing decentralized action for children and women (DACAW) under the prevailing
armed-conflict situation. However, after the Comprehensive Peace Accord was signed in November 2006 and with the emergence of the peace process, it was felt necessary to realign the QIP model into the DACAW model practiced in other parts of the country. This entailed shift from NGO implementation to DDC implementation, the ensuring fund flow mechanism through the DDF and introduction of CAP which was not there in the QIP approach. This change was effected since mid 2008 and at the current time execution by national NGOs, such as DEPROSC/SAPROS, have been disengaged, DACAW Program Officers and Village Facilitators have been recruited and CMs have been mobilized. The implementation modality in these nine hill/mountain districts in mid and far west now mirrors the DACAW implementation approach in rest of the country. However, there are a few concerns that need to be raised in relation to the operationalization of this modality. These are described as follows.

- **CAP builds on the community organizations that have already been formed by other programs/institutions.** In the case of the nine “new DACAW” mid and far west hill/mountain districts, it is likely that the groups have not been formed. Or even if they have been formed they are fairly young and weak. In the case of a CAP VDC in Jumla (a relatively advanced and developed districts among the nine) the community groups were very weak and there was no federation. The groups are not mature enough to undertake the Triple A process.

- **As such, greater amount of time and effort will need to be spent on “group formation”, building the capacity of these community groups and to have a functional federations at the VDC level.** This might need additional human and financial resources (for social mobilization).

- Given the rugged geography and travel distance within the district, it is difficult for one VF to cover the entire district.

- There are problems associated with service providers as well. One of the inherent problems in these districts is the “absenteeism” of the heads of line agencies. It was learnt that these officials have remained outside of their duty stations for 3-4 months at a stretch in the pretext of seminars/trainings, and so on.

- While flow of funds through DDC/DDF and onward to line agencies is a preferred mechanism that complies with the spirit of the Local Self Governance Act, an alternate mechanism for fund disbursement must be built into the system as a back-up.

- Since the level of physical infrastructure is relatively low in these districts compared to those in other districts, there should be more resources set aside for hardware and material support. For example, birthing centers must be well resourced (physical and human) and within accessible proximity; supply of “iron tablets”, etc. Creating demand through awareness creation and not being able to meet the increased demand could lead to frustrations.
4.4.3 Phasing Out and Handing Over: Sustainability of Results

According to the CPAP 2008-2010 UNICEF will phase out from the five DACAW districts with the highest HDI (Human Development Index) by 2010. UNICEF in consultation with the Government has decided to focus on the most disadvantaged districts and villages which means a shift to the Far-Western areas of Nepal, to the so-called Karnali zone. Nine new districts have been identified in that region. Consequently, phasing out of UNICEF support through DACAW and mainstreaming into Government structures has been a strategic priority for 2009. In the immediate future UNICEF needs to make a shift along two lines. One is the shift of phasing out in the five districts in order to be able to phase into the nine new districts. The other is a shift within the districts from the less disadvantaged VDCs to the most disadvantaged. Is UNICEF/DACAW doing enough to ensure sustainability of results when phasing out of some districts and villages and into others?

The Evaluation Team found that the degree to which the local partners are ready for phase out of UNICEF support to DACAW initiated activities and taking over with local ownership varied to a great extent. The Team visited two of the five phase-out districts, Kaski and Sunsari, and found that it was not necessarily the more well-resourced district which was most prepared for phase out, rather the opposite. In Kaski which is a relatively well-resourced district, they were less prepared for phase out and showed signs of expecting continued funding even though they had been told otherwise. They had started new activities without planning on discontinuing others. In addition, they were arguing for continued support, due to new emerging issues such as high unemployment and migration to the area, which were causing new emerging social problems. In Sunsari, by contrast, although a poorer district, there was evidence of higher degree of preparations for DACAW support to discontinue and district to take over. It was observed that the UNICEF staff had not consulted much or discussed the plan for phase out with district officials. More consultation and discussion with Government counterparts and partners needs to take place. It is also important to listen carefully and discuss the reasons for resisting phase-out.

DACAW has started working systematically with the issue of phase-out and hand-over. A workshop was held with field staff in May 2009 where criteria and indicators for phase-out were made and a phase-out/phase-in plan was made. Phase-out was discussed and planned at three levels: district, program, and operational level. Detailed indicators and steps to be taken were made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase-Out Indicators District Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Human Development Index HDI &gt; 0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80 percent coverage of Category 4 VDCs (functional COs in all settlements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 80 percent coverage of MDAG HHs in Category 4 CAP VDCs (participation of MDAG HHs in CO or CAP processes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 80 percent coverage of MDAG HH in Category 3B CAP VDCs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Phase out of Category 2 and 3A VDCs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• District periodic plan (review and update)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• VDC periodic plan of Category 3B and 4 CAP VDCs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• percent of Budget Allocation for Children and Women by Local Bodies</td>
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The Programmatic phase out indicators include 16 indicators for phase out from CAP VDCs and out of the 16 five of them were related to MDGs which were considered the most important. They were similar to the district indicators. For example, the programmatic phase out indicators included 80 percent of CAP COs functional, 80 percent MDAG household covered by CAP in CAT 4 VDCs, 80 percent Category 4 VDCs implementing CAP, schools will have formed SMC with proportionate representation, functional ECD centers in place, paralegal committees, federations and child clubs have expanded, and so on and so forth. The phase out indicators at the operational level are also similar, representing necessary steps to be taken in the process of pulling out. Some innovative activities would, though, continue as stand-alone activities, such as CFLG, PLC and HIV/AIDS.

These plans are detailed and practical and if they are followed should increase the chances of sustainability and ownership both with government partners and with the community groups. However, there are still measures which could be taken to strengthen sustainability of results when handing over to the districts and communities.

Main Issues

UNICEF’s CPAP 2008-10 points out that until recently, UNICEF has been less concerned about issues of sustainability in its operations in Nepal and that this is an area in which it seeks to improve its record. In this context, while progress has been made, more work remains. In terms of achievements on building ownership of DACAW and ensuring its sustainability it may be said that:

• A broad plan for phase out and phase down in particular districts has been determined with the Government.

• Efforts are underway to ensure that VDCs and DDCs increasingly have access to the resources that will be necessary for them to sustain DACAW activities on their own (through block grant influencing in particular).

• DACAW retains the option of further implementing particular programs where the need for them remains, even in phase-out districts.

At the same time, more work remains. Amongst others:

• The policy and political context remains uncertain not only in terms of policy direction 30, but it is still unclear how the State will be restructured. While most of the ongoing discussions on ownership and sustainability appear to be concentrated on matters related to local contribution it is important not to forget that ownership and sustainability will ultimate rest on having the “right” policy and politics in place. Having said this, local contribution has been impressive so far and is estimated to have been 61 percent of the total DACAW budget in the 15 original districts in 2008.

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30 The Three Year Interim Plan is currently undergoing its mid-term review and is in any case due to expire within a year.
Apart from a broad understanding that it will pull out of high HDI DACAW districts and focus more on DAG communities, UNICEF too appears to be unclear about the exact way in which it intends to restructure its operations and by when. For instance, it is not immediately clear on what basis it aims to decide which activities it intends to continue even in phase-out districts. In other respects, DACAW seems keen to enter into new areas of work including issues in urban areas, as consultations with UNICEF staff indicated. In other words, where the line is being drawn between a phase-in and a phase-out or phase-down of activities and themes is not immediately clear.

Our findings showed that there seems to have been little consultation with beneficiary groups on the phase out plans and it is unclear how much local Government partners have been consulted and involved. The child clubs, the women’s federation groups, the health volunteers, the paralegal committee members all need to be brought into the consultation and planning for phase-out in a systematic manner. Government counterparts and partners should also be consulted and involved in a more systematic manner.

The role of NGO partners is not prominent in DACAW, and it is our observation that the NGO partners should be brought more actively into the DACAW/UNICEF phase-out and phase-in planning. The NGOs are key as they can complement the Government in some roles; they can contribute both human and financial resources to the local communities in the future. NGOs can be instrumental in following up on capacity building of Government staff and lobbying Government to provide funding for the local community groups as well as advocate for policy change. NGOs can be involved in assisting Government with monitoring and reporting. UNICEF should include NGOs more and encourage a closer partnership at local level; rather than focus more or less exclusively on the Government. Closer and more strategic partnerships with NGOs will in general strengthen UNICEF and DACAW and will help UNICEF achieve objectives, targets and planned results.

As a result of the phase-out of five districts and phase-in of the new nine DACAW districts there needs to be a shift also in terms of UNICEF sub-national presence. It is vital for the success of DACAW to have sufficient human and financial resources at the district level. Resources in terms of field staff need to shift from the phased-out districts to the new districts. It is important that the nine consultants who have been appointed to the new districts have sufficient conditions and that they have Government counterparts and partners who are present year-round. The Government appears to still lack the necessary counterpart capacity required for effective sustainability of DACAW operations, especially regarding monitoring and evaluation skills and the lack of financial resources. Special incentives and motivation may need to be put in place in order to ensure that experienced and senior staff are transferred to these areas. There is also a need to advocate with Government to get qualified staff on a year-round basis, perhaps by giving them special incentives, such as tax cuts or bonuses for hardship postings. Since these new districts pose other and extra sets of challenges in the implementation of DACAW UNICEF should consider adding human resources (possibly transferring from phase-out districts) to the nine consultants.
Donor coordination to work together for joint results on children’s and women’s issues is still not as much as it should be and is a factor that may stand in the way of realizing the sustainability of DACAW activities and impact. According to trends, donor funding in Nepal tends to focus predominantly on infrastructure development. At the same time, the LGCDP is indeed one means of increasing donor coordination.

The security situation in parts of the Madhesh remains poor which stands in the way of guaranteed ownership and sustainability of DACAW activities there.

4.5  Way Forward

4.5.1  DACAW in Light of New Political Developments

During the times of armed conflict, DACAW had a two-pronged approach: (i) implementation through DDC and line agencies where development space existed and (ii) implementation through government to the extent possible and/or NGOs. The cessation of armed conflict in Nepal has lent an environment for greater engagement with government, both local and central, and in line with the Local Self Governance Act. It might be prudent to retain flexibility in the implementation modality of DACAW in the eastern terai districts given volatility and ethnic/criminal violence in such regions.

The ten-year long armed conflict coupled with community development initiatives have brought to the fore the erstwhile issue of social and geographical discrimination. As such there have been shifts in power balances in the center and at the grass-root levels. It is, therefore, necessary that program take in consideration the emerging need for social transformation and thereby define target groups more judiciously. In other words, the program will be judged by how accurately it has been able to attend to the issues of disadvantaged groups and to those whose rights have been violated the most.

In all likelihood, the nation will move towards a Federal system of governance. DACAW by its very nature possesses inherent characteristic in support of decentralized governance. However, in the days to come, it is necessary to bear in mind the transition of DACAW to suit the federal governance system. In preparation to the emerging state structure, it might be prudent to put in place decentralized planning guidelines and perspective plan preferably at the VDC level.

Lessons learned from DACAW and engagement at the grass-root level in the course of its implementation can inform the constitution building process and subsequent policy analysis.

4.5.2  Harmonization with LGCDP and Partnership with Other Donors

DACAW as a decentralized approach and as a pilot program has proved that it helps deliver desired results in key child rights areas and is therefore worthy to be replicated.

As the CAP process builds upon the groups and community organizations formed by other agencies, it is imperative that it tie up with those agencies that do the group formation
and/or community development. LGCDP has emerged as a multi-donor sector program on
decentralization that is also mandated to undertake community building through social
mobilization. As such, there is an automatic complimentarity between these two programs;
and the two programs (DACAW and LGCDP) are not mutually exclusive the way it is presently
conceived.

Harmonization can take two paths:
(i) clear demarcation of what LGCDP will do and what DACAW will do, retain the
sovereignty of both the programs but have a harmonized work plan and share and
experience;
(ii) divest the CAP and other component-activities from DACAW program and mainstream
them within the work plan of LGCDP; thereby granting the management control and
implementation responsibility to LGCDP. UNICEF’s role would be relegated to technical
assistance and quality assurance.
It is the latter that MLD has in mind.

The following considerations should be noted:

• Given the fact that DACAW is an approach that needs to be followed for an indefinite
period of time and extended to all parts of the country in due course of time, it is
prudent to mainstream DACAW activities into LGCDP in those districts where DACAW
program has been up and running for at least 5 years.

• UNICEF/DACAW program should focus on those areas such as mid and far west where
LGCDP, because of its compulsion to cover across the country but thinly, might not be
able to enter in big and concerted way.

• It is praiseworthy that UNICEF has been able to influence the design of LGCDP and
thereby introduce indicators relevant to DACAW in the LGCDP log-framework. This
work should be followed up as LGCDP continues to develop.

• Similarly, UNICEF has been able to influence the VDC Block Grant guidelines (guidelines
that determine resource allocation of LGCDP funds going into VDCs as block grants)
and to ensure that a fixed portion of block grants be allocated to the activities relating
to children and women. UNICEF should follow up on the implementation of the
guidelines to ensure that the allocations to women and children happen as intended.

• In aligning with LGCDP UNICEF needs to ensure that emphasis is kept on the value-
added of DACAW, namely keeping children in focus, empowering women and reaching
the most disadvantaged communities.

• Although alignment will take place, it is at present uncertain which pace and shape it
will take, and therefore plans should be made to continue and develop DACAW until it
has been determined to which extent the core components of DACAW can be
integrated into or merged with LGCDP. To which extent it is possible to keep the focus
on children and other key aspects remains to be seen.
4.6 Summary of Findings

4.6.1 Results

In the previous chapters it has been documented and described how the Community Action Process (CAP) has produced a large number and variety of results for UNICEF in Nepal both in terms of social mobilization and sector achievements. At the output level a large number of individuals have been recruited into a number of various community groups. Significant outputs have been achieved in the sectors of education, health and protection and valuable planning information has been produced in the form of DAG mapping using a local NGO. At the outcome level results have been observed in terms of changed behavior and attitudes in local communities as well as policy makers and bureaucrats at district and national level. Attitudes towards the socially excluded and towards violations of child rights have changed and people have changed their behavior in terms of addressing cases of abuse, neglect and discrimination, among others. At the impact level the CAP has resulted in both improved service delivery and community action in sector activities. DACAW has contributed to such achievements as increasing school enrolment, increase in the literacy rate, saving lives of newborns and under-fives, improved health status of children and increase in protection cases being addressed. However, as noted, while program outputs are being systematically reported based on a results based planning matrix, outcomes and impact are not recorded as systematically and comprehensively. In addition, it was reported that a lot of progress has been made on survival and development, while not as much has been achieved in the area of protection and participation. These points need follow-up and attention in the next phase.

4.6.2 Relevance

DACAW has a high degree of relevance both for the beneficiaries on the one hand, and for Government and donors on the other hand. The participatory approach to planning, monitoring and reporting ensures that the needs and priorities of the community members, women, boys and girls are relevant; to which extent is not clear though. The focus groups discussions revealed that the activities are to a large extent relevant to the beneficiaries, although there are important needs and priorities that have not been addressed, such as support to livelihood and income-generating activities and to vocational training and employment for youth. Furthermore, it was found that DACAW apart from influencing Government policies as shown above, is in line with a number of Government and UN policies and priorities and is promoting the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). DACAW is also in line with the development policies of the main donor, the Norwegian Government, as well as other donors. The focus on participation and empowerment of (most) disadvantaged groups of children and women in order to improve the health status and education of girls and boys as well as prevent abuse and exploitation, among many other things, are priorities of the main donors.

4.6.3 Effectiveness and Efficiency

When it comes to effectiveness the picture is more mixed. In many areas achievements have been according to plan, while in others not. According to some informants too many of the expected results could not bee reached and consequently, DACAW needs to lower its

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31 As described by UNICEF in the Country Program Action Plan 2008-2010 in Chapters 4.6 and 4.7 on page 9 primarily, but also in Chapters 4.8-4.40 pages 10-16.
ambitions. This should be noted, especially when developing targets for the nine new districts which most likely will be more challenging, as mentioned above in Chapter 4.5.

Assessing the efficiency of DACAW is no easy task as it depends on which level of support it refers to; and it also requires awareness of realistic alternatives. We will therefore limit it to comments on some important aspects of efficiency related to implementation at the community level. The implementation of DACAW, CAP in particular, is largely based on the voluntary work of many individuals; community organization or group member, Community Mobilizers, Female Health Volunteers, Watch Group members, and other community members. Others who do get remuneration, such as the Village Facilitators, have to be considered as volunteering in part as their salaries are so low. Quite a number of these individuals are from disadvantaged households, and some are even from very poor households who take on this work in addition to subsistence labor and household tasks. It was inspiring to observe the energy and enthusiasm of these volunteers. However, they expressed a need to be compensated for costs they have when being away from work and for expenses during trainings, meetings, campaigns and travelling. It is important that the motivation for volunteerism is sustained by offering some kind of compensation or incentives. When that is said, it is our assessment that DACAW is efficient at the community level.

4.6.4 Sustainability

Sustainability has been discussed in two parts of the report (see Chapters 4.1.4 and 4.4.3) which address different aspects. Many different initiatives have been taken to ensure sustainability.

First of all, the high level participation and motivation of community members and groups is a precondition for sustainability. However, ensuring a broader stakeholder participation in the communities is important to sustain the momentum that has been created. It is therefore necessary to include men and boys to a greater extent, for example in Paralegal Committees and other community organizations where feasible. Local elites should be included for the purposes of advocacy and influence, not as direct beneficiaries as such. Sustainability of the CAP also hinges on the situation of the Village Facilitators and Community Mobilizers who have very challenging responsibilities. They need to be compensated for costs they have related to their work in terms of compensation and incentives, such as refresher training and exposure visits. The focus of CAP will be increasingly on the (most) disadvantaged groups and this poses a challenge to sustainability. These community members are often in a position where they are struggling for ends to meet and therefore do not have much time and energy to put into DACAW supported activities. That is why livelihood and employment issues need to be addressed by linking up with income-generation programs and the like.

Organizationally, a number of steps have been taken to ensure sustainability. There is local contribution at all levels of DACAW entry points, from MLD at the central level to the Women’s Federation group at the village level. This creates local ownership, another precondition for sustainability. Ownership was observed by the Evaluation Team at the central level, the district level and the community level. At the central level, the MLD has been influenced by DACAW and taken on DACAW policies, for example the DAG mapping and CFLG. At the district level staff members have been assigned to follow-up on DACAW
implementation and are involved at the village level. At the village level the members of VDC, school, health post, community groups and organizations showed a high degree of ownership by investing their time, money, energy and motivation into the implementation of DACAW. In several districts and VDCs leaders, officials and community members stated that they would carry on even if DACAW would phase out support. Finally, the DACAW systematic approach to phase-out and hand-over by developing the plan described in Chapter 4.4.3 will increase the chances of sustainability. However, sustainability can only be determined in the future; the proof is in the pudding. Therefore, in order to learn more about the sustainability of results it is recommended for the next phase of DACAW to plan a study of the sustainability in the 5 districts that are being phased out.

4.6.5 The Human Rights Based Approach

In the introduction of this report it is stated that DACAW is both a program and an approach and furthermore that it utilizes a human rights based approach (HRBA). Throughout the report the basic elements of the HRBA have been referred to and this part will summarize how DACAW is promoting child rights and women’s rights in governance policies and practices; awareness-raising of rights holders and duty bearers; participation and empowerment of target groups, and the accountability of duty bearers.

We have seen throughout the report, but especially in Chapter 4.3.2 on influencing national and local Government policies that a number of child-friendly Government policies and child rights have been promoted through DACAW, most notably the DAG mapping and the CFLG, but also a number of others.

Awareness-raising has taken place at several levels. Government and civil society partners at central, district and village level as well as community members themselves have learned about human rights, child rights and women’s rights, about participatory methodology, harmful traditional practices, among others. The Triple A process (assessment, analysis, action) has developed the capacity of community members to assess their situation, identify and analyze their problems and concerns, and take action individually and collectively.

This report has highlighted how children and women have increased their capacities and capabilities through community groups and organized to claim their rights. They have demanded better services and held local governments and service delivery agencies accountable. Child clubs have been actively engaging in rights advocacy such as the right to quality education, improving school environments, improving health and sanitation, and challenging violence against children. The HRBA has also helped to improve the status of such excluded groups as Janajatis and Dalits, addressing caste and ethnic discrimination at the same time. It has changed the perceptions and attitudes of people from non-disadvantaged groups in a number of DACAW areas, who have learned to appreciate the potentials that individual persons have irrespective of their social and economic background. Thus DACAW has contributed to the empowerment of girls and boys, young women and older women, disadvantaged and oppressed people.

Participation is an integral part of DACAW and we have highlighted the achievements and importance of this component of the HRBA several places in the report.\textsuperscript{32} Child participation

\textsuperscript{32} Primarily in Chapters 4.1.1, 4.1.4, 4.4.1, 4.3.5.
in the child and youth clubs is significant as is the participation of community members in planning, implementation and reporting of DACAW activities. DACAW is clearly participatory at the community level, however, whether it is participatory at district, regional and central level is less evident.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

“DACAW allows us to approach the child at the community level in a holistic manner”. This is the key strength and uniqueness of DACAW. But there are other strengths. It can get significant results in a short time and for relatively small input at the community level. DACAW initiates and supports numerous innovative pilots and projects, some of which are later taken on by Government and civil society. It is relevant to many layers of society; local communities, local politicians, district and central Government and civil society. It facilitates community efforts and thus promotes community spirit and cohesion which is needed in Nepal today.

DACAW continues to remain highly relevant and effective. In many respects DACAW is also efficient and has taken significant steps to ensure sustainability. Over the past three years, the program has made important and impressive progress as documented in this report. It certainly is a show-case of UNICEF at its best. However, there is scope for improvements on a number of aspects both due to the context and the program modalities. The following are recommendations that UNICEF may consider in order to ensure that DACAW continues to make a difference to children and adapts to the ongoing changes in Nepal.

5.1 Community Action Process

• In order to enable DACAW-assisted community organisations to further grow as advocacy groups, an effort should be made to include local elites, men and boys in CAP as pressure groups and allies.

• While it is commendable that DACAW has been able to reach out to the (M)DAG, additional support is called for to improve the livelihoods of these households, in order that they will be in a better position to spend their energy on DACAW activities. UNICEF should link up with programs that can support income-generation activities in these communities.

• Village Facilitators and Community Mobilizers deserve attention in terms of better salaries, incentives, refresher training, and more abundant supply of visual aids and other materials for CAP. This is crucial in order to keep the frontline workers motivated and enthusiastic about DACAW. UNICEF should motivate VDCs to make provisions for adequate support to VFs and CMs through the VDCs’ regular internal resources and their strategic partnership with other funds and programs such as the LGCDP, PAF, VDC block grant and LDF.

33 Informant in one of the interviews.
• It is desirable to mainstream CAP in the regular programming and budgeting of the central and local governments. This is especially important in the phase-out districts. The Local Governance and Community Development Program (LGCDP) presents an opportunity in this regard. UNICEF/DACAW should consider providing necessary technical assistance under the umbrella of LGCDP, for getting central and local governments to mainstream CAP activities in those districts.

• In the case of the nine new DACAW mid and far west hill/mountain districts, greater amount of time and effort will need to be spent on group formation, building the capacity of these community groups and to have a functional federation at the VDC level. This might require additional human and financial resources for social mobilization. Given the rugged geography and travel distance within the district, it is difficult for one VF to cover the entire VDC. More than one Village Facilitator per VDC should be considered for these districts.

5.2 Service Delivery

• DACAW’s District Coordination Committee (DCC) and Village Coordination Committee (VCC) should now be internalized within the established system of local governance. In the districts where DACAW is to phase out, DCC and VCC should be reconstituted as the sub-committees (for child rights and women’s rights) of DDC and VDC. This can be done through a decision of the District Council, which is in compliance with the Local Self-Governance Act (LSGA). This will give legitimacy to the DCC and VCC even when DACAW as a project phases out.

• It is important for UNICEF to continue supporting various relevant line agencies at district level to reorient their policies and programs so that they better address issues pertaining to children and women in an integrated manner.

• DACAW has been able to bring relevant sectors together at the district level under the aegis of DDC for the design and implementation of its activities. DACAW’s modus operandi at the district level should serve as an example of how sectors can converge to prepare an integrated district development plan.

• A more comprehensive strategy of linking DACAW with other livelihood programs, such as the Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) and the Local Development Fund (LDF) is required for DAG households to better benefit from the integrated sector approach. Efforts should be made at the headquarters level to enter into formal agreements with other agencies implementing livelihood programs.

• UNICEF should continue supporting the PLCs to enhance their legitimacy in their local context. There are at least three ways that such community groups can derive their legitimacy: a) from formal registration with local administration, b) through provisions in an official project document such as DACAW, or c) from trust bestowed by the general public.
• It has been relatively difficult to promote total sanitation among disadvantaged and landless communities, given their lack of resources that prevents them from investing their money for the construction of proper latrines, or drinking water facilities. Plans have recently been made by DACAW, in this regard, which should be implemented as soon as possible in as many CAP-supported areas as possible.

• The sustainability of the Out of School Programs in (Tulsipur and Biratnagar) municipalities and the transition of graduates to the formal education system will be greatly enhanced if institutional and policy mechanisms can be drawn to include OSP on the agenda of the District Education Office.

5.3 Promoting Child Rights in Local Governance

• There is a need to increase program activities and policy influencing on child protection and participation in relation to child survival and development. New plans to more closely connect PLCs and child clubs is a positive step in this direction.

• Community-level mobilization and advocacy should be linked with national-level initiatives such as the CFLG in order to deepen ownership of results, increase the relevance of advocacy activities and increase the likelihood of their being sustained in the long-term.

• UNICEF should establish a wider range of advocacy partnerships with other development stakeholders, particularly at the national level, for a greater pooling of resources, skills and information to promote child rights in local governance.

• UNICEF should adopt a more strategic approach to delivering on DACAW’s cross-cutting themes amongst others by i) further strengthening child club management practices, ii) adopting a gender approach rather than focus on women only, iii) further strengthening local support bases for social inclusion. Specific suggestions follow.

• Child clubs should be linked more closely to the other community groups and organizations, especially the PLCs, and VDC/VCC. At the same time UNICEF should together with partners explore other ways of enhancing child and youth participation than just through the club model.

• UNICEF should make an effort to link with other child rights agencies including international and national NGOs, to have a coordinated and strategic approach to the development and support to child and youth clubs in Nepal.

• UNICEF should collaborate with and support the Central and District Child Welfare Boards (CCWB and DCWBs) to strengthen the Village Child Protection Committees (VPCPs). This should be coordinated with other child rights agencies.

• DACAW should promote and support the linking of child clubs and PLCs to the VCPCs.
• Ensure that child participation is consistently mainstreamed into DACAW’s CFLG programs and strengthen child participation in local and national level governance by strengthening coordination with other agencies through the Consortium of Organizations Working for Child Participation.

• Make further efforts to develop children’s leadership in Nepal by more exposure to development issues and concerns at district, national and international levels and supporting leadership training.

• The CFLG pilot is an innovative initiative which should be followed up by monitoring progress during the roll-out phase with focus particularly on the development of progress indicators.

• Gender analysis and gender training should be more systematically applied in planning, monitoring and reporting in DACAW.

• Take into account new emerging information on the status of exclusion in Nepal, from communities which have different categories and criteria, as well as in the context of new emerging national information such as WFP’s Nepal Hunger Index 2009, and consider this information alongside the existing DAG mapping information where relevant.

• Ensure that phase-out activities from 2010 onwards do not jeopardize DAG and MDAG communities, by either linking them up with other development programs in these districts or considering a more gradual phase-out of UNICEF support in the most needy areas.

• Strengthen national information systems in Nepal in order to ensure that they are increasingly disaggregated by gender, age, caste and ethnicity and make further efforts to encourage the use of the information that already exists.

• Further promote DACAW’s efforts on documentation and communications, particularly in the local languages of Nepal as a powerful means of influencing public opinion in favor of child rights.

5.4 DACAW Operational Structure and Programming

• It is recommended to undertake an analysis of the participatory training and planning that is being done in DACAW in order to find out how it is functioning and identify possible gaps and deficiencies. This should include how the needs and priorities of the community groups are followed through at the different levels of planning.

• DACAW reports on an impressive amount of results at the output level, although much less on the more long-term results. DACAW should include in its results matrix more reporting on outcome and establish regular reporting on impact. The reports should also include more comprehensive risk and problem analysis. “Before-after” reporting by target groups could be further highlighted in the future.
• There is a need for DACAW to push for Government to fully integrate planning and reporting for DACAW into the Government system. The LGCDP presents an opportunity in this respect.

• At the central level more needs to be done to link DACAW in a systematic manner to the sector programs. UNICEF may consider developing a simple guideline for this purpose. In this connection a review of the internal lines of reporting and communication should be reviewed.

• In the case of DACAW the district is the strategic level for program implementation and Government partnerships. UNICEF should therefore focus and prioritize sub-national presence at the district level in terms of staffing and budget allocation.

• In the new districts in the far-western region greater amount of time and effort will need to be spent on group formation, building the capacity of community groups, VDC and women’s federation. Additional human and financial resources should be allocated.

• UNICEF should lobby Government at central level to provide incentives and benefits to Government staff in these far-western districts in order to have qualified staff on a year-round basis.

• While flows of funds through DDC/DDF is a preferred mechanism that complies with the spirit of the Local Self Governance Act, an alternate mechanism for fund disbursement must be built into the system as a back-up.

• Since the level of physical infrastructure is relatively low in the far-western districts compared to the others, resources should be set aside for hardware and material support in those areas.

• There should be more consistent involvement of beneficiary groups and NGO partners in the process of phasing out and handing over DACAW activities, as well as phasing into new districts. In all cases district NGOs should be considered supported, but national NGOs should also be engaged if there are none available at district level.

• Although work has been put into planning phase-out and hand-over there are still a number of unclear aspects. DACAW needs to make decisions about which activities are going to be kept in which VDCs, and make a time-line for the different stages of the phase-out.

• UNICEF should make an effort to increase donor coordination in relation to achieving results for children.

• In order to gain knowledge about sustainability of results, it is recommended to plan for the next phase of DACAW a study of the sustainability in the 5 districts that are being phased out.
5.5 Aligning with LGCDP

• Given the fact that DACAW is an approach that needs to be followed for an indefinite period of time and extended to all parts of the country in due course of time, it is prudent to mainstream DACAW activities into LGCDP in those districts where DACAW program has been up and running for at least 5 years.

• UNICEF/DACAW program should focus on those areas such as mid and far west where LGCDP, because of its compulsion to cover across the country but thinly, might not be able to enter in big and concerted way.

• UNICEF has been able to influence the design of LGCDP and thereby introduce indicators relevant to DACAW in the LGCDP log-framework. This work should be followed up as LGCDP continues to develop.

• Similarly, UNICEF has been able to influence the VDC Block Grant guidelines and to ensure that a fixed portion of block grants be allocated to the activities relating to children and women. UNICEF should follow up on the implementation of the guidelines to ensure that the allocations to women and children happen as intended.

• Based on the DACAW experience UNICEF should provide technical assistance to the Government on sector convergence in the process of developing LGCDP.

• UNICEF should encourage donors in Nepal to apply a uniform definition of DAG groups with the framework of LGCDP.

• In aligning with LGCDP UNICEF needs to ensure that emphasis is kept on the value-added of DACAW, namely mainstreaming CAP, keeping children in focus, empowering women and reaching the most disadvantaged communities.

• The CAP process should be mainstreamed to the extent possible within LGCDP. How exactly transition and mainstreaming ought to be done should be dealt with in-depth. For this purpose a ‘DACAW-LGCDP transition design’ should be considered developed and conducted for the phase-out districts.
6  Annex

6.1  Terms of Reference

UNICEF Nepal
Decentralized Action for Children and Women Strategic Review
Terms of Reference

Deadline for applications: 12 August, 2009

1.  Background

In 1998 UNICEF Nepal adopted a decentralized approach through the Decentralized Action for Children and Women (DACAW) programme as a partnership with the Ministry of Local Development (MLD). DACAW was then seen as a way to support the implementation of government policies and plans in a way appropriate to local needs. Towards improving the situation of women and children in Nepal, DACAW combines community mobilization and empowerment with improving basic services and the local governance structures providing basic services.

DACAW is based on a Human Rights Based Approach to programming and includes four key strategies: (i) strengthening community action processes, (ii) developing responsive local services, (iii) strengthening local governance, and (iv) strengthening central level policies in support of decentralization. Nepal is divided administratively into 75 districts; DACAW initially covered seven districts, expanded to 15 districts by 2002 and expanded further for the 2008-10 Country Programme into a total of 23 districts.

Decentralization has been a key component in the Government of Nepal (GoN) policy for a number of years. The 1999 Local Self Governance Act (LGSA) set a framework for devolution and community led development. While decentralization efforts were hampered by the conflict, many local civil servants and governance structures have been able to continue to function, including with the involvement of community mechanisms in DACAW districts. The November 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord marked a new phase in Nepal’s social, political and economic development, including in the area of decentralization. More recently, the April 2008 Constituent Assembly election and the formation of the Constituent Assembly have created a new political landscape, including the expectation that some form of federalism will be adopted by the new Constitution scheduled to be promulgated in May 2010.

DACAW has been one of a number of decentralization programmes supported by the GoN and by different donors over the years. More recently, in the post-conflict context, MLD designed the “Local Governance and Community development Program (LGCDP)” which was approved by the Cabinet in July 2008. LGCDP is now a national, multi-stakeholder framework within which the Nepal’s development partners, including the UN, will provide support to the government for decentralization. To align with LGCDP, UNICEF along with UNFPA, UNDP, UNCDF and UNV have signed a joint program on Decentralization. The DACAW programme is thus in a phase of aligning with LGCDP.

2.  Justification

Over the past years, several studies, surveys and reviews covering different parts of DACAW have been carried out. In 2007, the major donor of DACAW Programme, the Government of
Norway carried out the independent Evaluation on DACAW. However, no broad-based comprehensive evaluation has been carried out. In parallel, there is a need to explore UNICEF’s comparative advantage in making a difference for children and women through the decentralization process in the context of a changing external environment with the new LGCDP program and prospect of federalism under a new Constitution.

UNICEF Evaluation Policy calls for periodic independent evaluations of its policies, programs and projects and operations of the programme during the Country Programme cycle. The results contribute to better informed decision-making, foster an environment of learning by doing and promote greater accountability for performance. This evaluation was recommended to ascertain results to date for use in determining optimal strategies for future, given evolving context, environment and decentralization policy of the country.

The DACAW strategic review will also be used to provide strategic inputs into the Mid Term Review of the current 2008 – 2010 GON and UNICEF Nepal Country Programme and provide strategic directions for adjustments for the planned bridging programme taking the Country Programme to 2012.

3. **Objectives and specific evaluation questions**

Thus there is a need for an in depth assessment which (i) assesses progress made towards the achievement of results at the output and outcome and levels of the overall DACAW programme, (ii) assesses to what extent the human rights based approach to programming including child participation and addressing of gender mainstreaming issues are incorporated, (iii) assesses to what extent DACAW programme has contributed to policies on decentralization and looks forward on how to strategically position UNICEF within the emerging new decentralization context of Nepal and iv) provides lessons learned from DACAW implementation.

To cover the four strategies of DACAW, as outlined above, the changing context of decentralization in Nepal and the operational aspects, specific evaluation questions for the review are as follows:

3.1. **Community mobilization, Community Action Process (CAP)**

The evaluation will look into how the key community mobilization strategy of “community action process” (CAP) has strengthened the capacity of community groups to be empowered decision makers. It will also look at the evolution of the community based mechanisms within the program - paralegal committees, watch groups, child clubs, and women’s federations - and how these structures have been able to address sectoral and cross sectoral issues for children and women.

- What results have been achieved through CAP and how has this contributed to the outcome in target village development committees34 (VDCs)?
- Has the CAP methodology been effective in building the capacity of community mechanisms and organizations (women’s groups, child clubs, paralegal committees, watch groups) to advocate for children and women issues at the local level, claim their rights, demand better services and hold local governments & service delivery agencies accountable?
- What steps should be taken to better ensure the longer term results and sustainability of these community based mechanisms/structures?
- How effective and sustainable are the village facilitators (VFs) and community mobilizers (CMs) in initiating and facilitating the CAP process and in their roles in empowering

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34 Administratively in Nepal, VDCs are the lowest level of governance. Nepal has 75 Districts and 3,915 VDCs. As noted above, DACAW covers 23 Districts and within Districts, targets the most disadvantaged VDCs for the CAP work/strategy.
communities and influencing local government and service providers to address the priorities and concerns of women and children. Are the training, refresher and regular meeting modalities of VFs and CMs cost-effective, well-structured and contributing to impact?

• In particular regard to child clubs and networks, how effectively have their capacities been strengthened and to what extend has their participation led to local governance structures being more inclusive and responsive toward issues related to children.

3.2 Strengthen responsive service delivery

The evaluation will assess the results of DACAW in strengthening service delivery and sectoral results for children and women at the local level. This aspect of the review involves analyzing how UNICEF’s sectoral work and partnerships with other line Ministries converges in the DACAW districts; thus how converging with the community mobilization work enhances MDG results for children and women.

• What has been the relevance and effectiveness of community-led demand (CAP) on service delivery, national service delivery programmes?
• How effective are the sectoral linkages in DACAW (as an integrated community-based approach and in terms of partnership modalities) and what improvements can be made? What are the sectoral results achieved through DACAW?
• Is there evidence of results in terms of changes in the lives of women and children (time series of result statements).
• To what extent has the capacity building of service providers led to improved service delivery for children, women and disadvantaged groups?
• To what extent have the community based mechanisms (e.g. women’s federations, Watch Groups) and structures (e.g. birthing centers, outreach clinics) been effective in improving service delivery by line agencies at district and local level.
• To what extent have innovations initiated through DACAW influenced sectoral work, gone to scale and influenced national policies? (e.g. Welcome to school initiatives, school-led sanitation and “open defecation free”, paralegal committees, ECD, etc.)

3.3 Strengthening local governance and national policy in favor of children and women

In addition to influencing sectoral results and basic service provision, through the CAP process and policy work, DACAW seeks to strengthen the role and participation of women, children and disadvantaged groups in local governance and decision making and at the national policy level. The strategic evaluation is expected to respond to the following questions in assessing these aspects of the DACAW programme and approach:

• What is the impact, relevance and effectiveness of DACAW in strengthening the participation and in raising the voice of children and women in local governance systems and structures?
• How efficient and effective have these structures been to address issues of children and women? (This will include analysis of the VFs and CMs noted above and of the District and Village coordination committees – DCCs and VCCs - established by DACAW.) How can the coordination committees and other mechanisms be replicated and aligned with new national level decentralization directions, such as LGCDP?
• What have been some of the most effective strategies of DACAW to promote participation of children and young people in the various local governance structures?
• To what extent does DACAW evidence sustainability and ownership by MLD and local bodies and line agencies to prioritize issues for children, women, the disadvantaged and their participation in decision-making? (Anticipated examples include allocation of budget at DDC, VDC level, sectoral plans, set aside fund for CLFG, block grant guidelines, etc.)
• What ‘exit strategy’ steps is DACAW effectively undertaking and/or should take? For example, assess the relevance of the various strategies for VDC level responsibility for the VF salary.

• What has been DACAW’s contribution and influence to mainstream issues related to children and young people, disadvantaged groups, and gender issues in the district planning, budgeting and monitoring processes? (This includes District periodic planning, annual planning, the DDF decentralized funding mechanism and DMIS/DPMAS monitoring system work.)

• Distil the lessons learned and strategic opportunities where DACAW experiences have most contributed to influencing national level policy and programs in favor of children, women and disadvantaged groups. (Examples to draw from replication of DACAW approaches and guidelines into LGCDP, the VDC block grants, Disadvantaged Group (DAG) mapping35 and child-friendly local governance (CFLG) initiative.

• How effective have DAG mapping and other strategies been in reaching the most disadvantaged? (The review should look at reaching the disadvantaged in sectoral activities as well as in the community-based mechanisms.)

• Distil lessons learned from the strategies/actions undertaken to address and mainstream cross-cutting issues of gender, social exclusion and child participation in local governance processes, service delivery and community structures.

• Highlight indicators of how DACAW has made an impact on the behaviour and practices of local decision-makers in regards to child participation, women’s rights and social inclusion?

3.4 Vision and strategic position of UNICEF within the changing decentralization context

As noted, the new national LGCDP programme presents opportunities to replicate DACAW experiences nationally, but also presents challenges in aligning DACAW to the harmonized, multi-stakeholder framework. The UN joint programme for LGCDP, UNDAF and prospect of the new Constitution adopting federalism also present a changing environment into which DACAW will need to adapt and be strategically positioned. As such the review will include analysis on:

• The new political landscape and its consequences for decentralization policies (including anticipating consequences of federalism).

• Ongoing challenges in the context of peace-building and political violence

• Aligning DACAW with the Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP)

• In the context of LGCDP, which MLD envisions as becoming a SWAP on decentralization, how will UNICEF and DACAW relate to evolving devolution and sector-wide initiatives in the key sectors (health, education and WASH)?

• How can DACAW optimize partnerships and opportunities in the context of UN harmonization/joint programme and UNDAF, MDG goals?

3.5 Operational structure and implementation modalities

While DACAW is a partnership with MLD, DACAW brings together a number of structural aspects – central level staff focusing on policy level work and CAP, cross-sectoral linkages, field

35 Following a review in 2006, the DACAW programme initiated a methodology, “DAG mapping”, to map the most disadvantaged households and VDCs as a way to select the most disadvantaged communities for CAP and other programme investments. For the VDC level mapping, this resulted in a methodology ranking the VDCs as category 1 – 4 with 4 being the most disadvantaged. UNDP joined UNICEF support to MLD to apply the DAG mapping methodology nationally so that now every VDC in Nepal is ranked and the designation of being a category 4 VDC, or most disadvantaged, is used to target ‘top up’ block grants and other assistance targeting.
staff and budget processes - for UNICEF that require review and recommendations. Reporting on this part of the review should include a separate document oriented to UNICEF internally. Key questions include:

- How effective is the link and logic, roles and responsibilities between DACAW and sectoral programmes? Similarly, between DACAW, sectoral and field staff roles and responsibilities? Should alternative mechanisms be considered? Review the efficiency of the planning and budget allocation work-streams between field, sectoral and Kathmandu staff roles and responsibilities. Have stakeholders been actively and meaningfully involved in project design, implementation, redesign and monitoring?
- DACAW has recently expanded the number of Districts to prioritize the Mid and Far-West region in view of priorities in the context of child poverty, key MDG indicators, social exclusion, etc. Are the new implementation modalities and partnerships relevant and effective in terms of the additional human resources and coverage needed? In particular in regards to partnerships, is the right balance being achieved in capacity building to government partners with the role of NGOs/civil society?
- While DACAW is prioritizing the most-disadvantaged areas, are the steps being taken to transition, graduate or “exit” DACAW from better-off areas effective, both in terms of sustainability of results for women and children by local government and community mechanisms in terms of shifting UNICEF resources?

4. **Deliverables**

- An inception report and workplan. The inception report should detail the methodological approach including the instruments and tools for data collection and analysis. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and tools are recommended such as questionnaire interviews and Focus Group Discussion
- A presentation of summary conclusions (annotated outline)
- A draft report delivered for comments
- A final report including an executive summary (estimate 50 pages excluding annexes)

5. **Methodology**

- Desk-review of key documents (UNDAF documents; CP documents; DACAW documents, including recent studies, reviews, and surveys; LGCDP documents and other government/decentralization legislation and policy documents; etc. and lessons learned from other UNICEF programmes.)
- Interviews: key government officials, UN agencies, key donors, key INGOs, NGOs, etc.
- Field visits, including interviews and focus group discussions at district and community levels with local government, service providers, partners, and front line workers and community based structures - women federations, watch group, FCHVs, paralegal committees, child clubs)
- Presentations, discussions and validations with groups of key-stakeholders
- Standard evaluation criteria will be used (efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact, sustainability, Human Right based approach to programming and Gender Mainstreaming)

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36 Some discussions for this review TOR suggested that focused studies or a “follow up survey” be done on particular indicators or sectoral areas. This is not feasible within the scope of the strategic review, but the review team may recommend such focused studies as follow up steps or propose involving national consultants to undertake more focused review activities as part of their bid for the overall strategic review.
6. **Draft timetable**

In order to feed into the MTR the review would need to be finalized by end October 2009.

- **July 2009:** consultant team selected
- **August – September 2009:** review carried out
  - Background work (data collection – by national consultant? - literature review, etc.)
  - Field work with full review team resulting in draft summary conclusions (annotated outline) shared with key stakeholders
  - Report writing
- **15 October 2009:** draft review report delivered
  - Main findings, conclusions, lessons learned, recommendations presented for comments
- **1 November 2009:** Final review report delivered

7. **Qualifications**

UNICEF is looking for a consultancy institution or team of consultants with a strong record of conducting evaluations related to development assistance, with preference for experience in South Asia and Nepal. The institution must provide CVs for the proposed candidates/consultants. The consultant team should comprise members with experience and expertise in the following areas:

- Community mobilization methodologies and sustainability, with preference to addressing women and children’s rights and issues of social exclusion
- Participatory local governance and decentralization policy and processes
- Capacity-building efforts with government and community-based structures
- Community-based integrated, multi-sectoral programming
- UNICEF programme management and field operations
- Evaluation at the community and policy levels.

All consultants/team members must also have the following qualifications:

- 8-10 years of increasingly responsible professional experience in programme evaluation
- Strong experience in the design, management and implementation of development programmes with a human-rights approach, with preference to particular experience in children and women’s rights
- Strong qualitative data collection and analysis skills
- Strong experience and skills in facilitation of group work processes and communication of evaluation findings
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English
- Experience in OECD/DAC, UN and UNICEF standards on evaluation and evaluation reports

In selecting additional team members that may be locally recruited, they should have similar experience and qualifications.

8. **Background reading, key documents will include:**

Country Programme documents:

- 2008-10 UNDAF, 2002-2006 and 2008-10 CPD and CPAP

Situation analysis

- CCA, 2006 Situation Analysis, UNDAF, MDG reports
DACAW:  
- DACAW Programme Review 2006, (Kanta Singh, Krishna Hari Thapa, Henry Ruiz and Kate Halvorsen), December 2006
- DACAW Update Survey, (UNICEF), December 2006
- UNICEF and Decentralizations in Nepal (The Development Resource Mobilization Network), 2004
- DAG mapping study, updates and summary report (2006 -2009)
- Nutrition impact study -2009
- DACAW operational guideline

Government policies and programmes:
- Decentralization legislation, policies and programmes; relevant documents on new Constitution and federalism and ‘Three-year Interim Plan’; and LGCDP programme document and related assessments (such as capacity assessment, social mobilization review and GE/SI strategy)

9. Submission details and conditions:

The consultant team/institution will be expected to arrange it’s travel, with some support from UNICEF for in-country road travel and reservations, and to bring their own laptops, basic working equipment.

Any institution interested in submitting a bid for this review must provide:
- Institutional profile, summary of expertise and value-added provided
- CVs of consultants/team members
- Proposed methodology and review procedures/process
- Budget

Submissions, expressions of interest and queries should be directed to the following:
Beth Verhey: bverhey@unicef.org
Anjali Pradhan: apradhan@unicef.org
Sharad Koirala: skoirala@unicef.org

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37 Some DACAW key documents are only in Nepali, such as training materials and guidelines, and thus it is recommended that the review team include national consultant(s).
### Field Visit Program

**DACAW Strategic Evaluation**

**Agenda**

Field Visits: Eastern, Central and West and Mid and Far West Regions

**Dates: 3rd Sept-24th Sept**

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<th>Consultant</th>
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<td>Mr Masaki</td>
<td>Arrive in Kathmandu</td>
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<td>4th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>DACAW Doc Review and Signing of Contract</td>
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<td>Briefing by Anjali Pradhan</td>
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<td>Briefing by Sunita Kayasta</td>
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<td>5th</td>
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<td>6th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Travel to Central Region</td>
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<td>Arrival in Pokhara</td>
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<td>Interaction meeting with UNICEF staff of CWR</td>
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<td>Night Stay in Pokhara (Trek Otel)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Visit Kaski</td>
<td>09.00-18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Night Stay in Pokhara- Hotel Trek Otel)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Visit Tanahu</td>
<td>7.30-16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Night Stay in Pokhara- Hotel Trek Otel)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Visit Kaski</td>
<td>09.00-17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Night Stay in Pokhara- Hotel Trek Otel)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Visit DDC Office</td>
<td>08.30-10.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fly back to Kathmandu</td>
<td>15.20-16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Fly to Biratnagar</td>
<td>07.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrive in Biratnagar</td>
<td>08.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Travel and visit Udayapur</td>
<td>8.30-16.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Night Stay at Sundarpur Village</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Further Visit Udayapur</td>
<td>09.30-16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Travel to Saptari</td>
<td>16.00-18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Night Stay in Rajbiraj)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhya</td>
<td>Visit Saptari</td>
<td>08.00-16.30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Eastern Region
### Saptari

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name(s)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhyya</td>
<td>Saptari Visit&lt;br&gt;Travel to Sunsari&lt;br&gt;Travel to Biratnagar from Saptari</td>
<td>08.00-11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms Masaki and Mr Upadhyya</td>
<td>Travel to Biratnagar from Saptari&lt;br&gt;(Stay in Kathmandu)</td>
<td>11.00-12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Masaki and Ms Upadhyya</td>
<td>Team's Meeting with SPD/PME (Summit Hotel)</td>
<td>15.00-16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen and Mr Adhikary</td>
<td>Meeting with Norwegian Embassy</td>
<td>15.00-16.00</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Kathmandu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name(s)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>All Consultant Meet</td>
<td>Meeting with SPD Section (UNICEF Hall) Agenda Briefing</td>
<td>8.15-8.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with PME Section (DPMAS)</td>
<td>8.30-9.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with UNICEF Program Sections (UNICEF hall)</td>
<td>09.00-10.30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with UNICEF Health and Nutrition Section (UNICEF Hall)</td>
<td>10.30-11.30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Program Communication Team (UNICEF Hall)</td>
<td>11.30-12.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with World Vision / Consortium (CYP/CFLG)</td>
<td>12.00-1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th</td>
<td>All Consultant Meet</td>
<td>(National)Evaluation and SPD Team meet at UN Building&lt;br&gt;Meeting with Gillian&lt;br&gt;(Breakfast at Gillian’s residence)</td>
<td>7.30&lt;br&gt;8.00-9.30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Ex MLD Officials (at Hotel Summit)</td>
<td>9.30-10.45</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with MLD Officials</td>
<td>11.00-12.30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Department of Women Development (Ministry of Women and Social Welfare)</td>
<td>12.30-13.30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Protection Section</td>
<td>13.30-14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th</td>
<td>Mr Masaki</td>
<td>Mr Masaki Meeting at UNICEF (SPD)&lt;br&gt;Courtesy Meeting&lt;br&gt;Mr Masaki Travel back to Japan</td>
<td>8.30-9.30&lt;br&gt;10.00-11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen Mr Adhikary and Ms Upadhyya</td>
<td>Travel to Biratnagar&lt;br&gt;Travel to Kathmandu</td>
<td>07.50-8.30&lt;br&gt;17.20-18.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Mid and Far Western Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name(s)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen and Mr Adhikary</td>
<td>Meeting with Education Section</td>
<td>9.00-10.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th Sept</td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen and Mr Adhikary Travel to Dang</td>
<td>09.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stay in Ghorahi, Dang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th Sept</td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen and Mr Adhikary Travel to Phulbari VDC Dang</td>
<td>09.00-10.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel Back to Ghorahi</td>
<td>16.00-17.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stay in Ghorahi, Dang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st Sept</td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen and Mr Adhikary Travel to Shreegaun Dang</td>
<td>08.00-09.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel back to Ghorahi</td>
<td>17.00-17.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd Sept</td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen and Mr Adhikary Travel to Tulsipur</td>
<td>08.30-09.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel back to Ghorahi</td>
<td>16.30-17.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Night Stay at Ghorahi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23rd Sept</td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen and Mr Adhikary Meetings In Ghorahi</td>
<td>09.00-11.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Night stay in Ghorahi</td>
<td>17.15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel Back to Nepalgunj</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel Back to Ktm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24th Sept</td>
<td>Ms Halvorsen, Mr Adhikary, Ms Upadhya and Mr Masaki Team Members Meet</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Debriefing Meeting (Summit)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 October to 1 November; Field Visit to Jumla by Ms. Upadhy and Mr. Adhikary
6.3 List of People Met

6.3.1 Meetings in Kathmandu

Anjali Pradhan, Program Specialist (DACAW), UNICEF Kathmandu
Misaki Ueda, Chief of Planning, M&E, UNICEF Kathmandu
Indira Koirala, Project Officer, UNICEF Kathmandu

Beth Verhey, Chief of Social Policy, UNICEF Kathmandu

Gillian Mellsop, Country Representative, UNICEF Kathmandu

Einar Rystad, Minister Counselor, Royal Norwegian Embassy
Camilla Røssak, Counselor, Royal Norwegian Embassy

Misaki Ueda, Chief of Planning, M&E, UNICEF Kathmandu
Pragya Shah Karki, Project Officer, HIV&AIDS Section, UNICEF Kathmandu
Bhanu Paltak, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Sumon K. Tuladhar, Education Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Deepa R. Pokharel, Chief of Programme Communication, UNICEF Kathmandu
Ashok Vaidya, M&E Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Sudhir Khanal, Child Health & Survival Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Parnaj Mehta, Chief of Health and Nutrition Section, UNICEF Kathmandu
Ashma Shrestha Basnet, Communication Officer, UNICEF Kathmandu
Indira Koirala, Project Officer, UNICEF Kathmandu

Milan Dharel, Chairperson, Consortium/CWISH
Kughum Sharma, Program Manager, Consortium
Deepish Paul Inakur, Advocacy and Public Policy Officer, CZOP/Consortium

Ganga Dutta Awasthi, Ex-Secretary, Ministry of Local Development (MLD)
Surya Acharya, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population (and ex-MLD)
Mukund Ghimirey, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology (and ex-MLD)

Mandira Poudyal, Director General, Department of Women’s Development
Keshab Regmi, Joint Secretary, DWD

Shyam Mainali, Secretary, Ministry of Local Development (MLD)
Som Lal Subedi, Joint Secretary, MLD
Ganesh Padel, Under Secretary, MLD
Mohan Marasin, Section Officer, MLD

Joan Doucet, Chief of Protection Section, UNICEF Kathmandu
Danee Luhar, Protection Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Bhanu Pathak, Protection Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Sumit Shah, Protection Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Radha Gurung, Protection Specialist, UNICEF Kathmandu
Mohanraj Adhikari, Senior Program Officer, DEPROSC  
Pitambar Prasad Acharya, Executive Director, DEPROSC  
Kailash Rijal, Deputy Director, DEPROSC  
Narayam Sapkota, VDRC  
Shubha Kayastha, Kadambari Memorial College  
Pranita Bhushan Udas, Kadambari Memorial College  
Shamkar Paudyal, Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Project, IIDS

6.3.2 Visit to Central and Western Region

I KASKI DISTRICT

Meeting with UNICEF Central and Western Region  
Sundra Gurung, Head Of Regional Office  
Anu Paudel, DPO Kaski  
Purnima Gurung, DPO Tanahu  
Rudra B Lhadka, DPO Chitwan  
Shiva Dongal  
Pradeep Shrestha  
Devendra Gauchan  
Gyanu Bhujel  
Sunda Gurung, Head Of Regional Office  
Anu Paudel, DPO Kaski  
Purnima Gurung, DPO Tanahu  
Rudra B Lhadka, DPO Chitwan  
Shiva Dongal  
Pradeep Shrestha  
Devendra Gauchan  
Gyanu Bhujel  

Dhikurpokhari VDC

Meeting at a school  
1 headmaster, 2 teachers, 1 chairperson of School Management Committee, 1  
chairperson of Parent Teacher Association, 3 parents, 12 members of school Child Club,  
2 NGO trainers, 1 DACAW VF, a1 DADAW SM: total around 55.

Meeting at women’s federation  
1 president, 18 federation members, 6 paralegal committee memebrs, 2 NGO trainers, 4  
voluteers.

Durga Bhawani Community School  
Rabindra Prasad Adhikari (principal)  
Pitamber Adhikari SMC  
Krishna Prasad Adhikari teacher  
Bishnu Bhandari teacher  
Maya Adhikari parent  
Sabitri Adhikari FCHV  
Nirmala Adhikari CM  
Approximately 20 child club members

VCC  
Narayan Prasad Adhikari VDC Chair  
Radha Kunwar (PLC)  
Chandra Adhikari VF  
Binu Pariyar (CM)
Nirmala Pariyar (CM)
Dilbahadur Bhattarai Machhapuchere Development Organization (MDO)
And about 5 other members

District HQs

Meeting with the District Child Welfare Board:
1 president, 3 members, 1 accountant, 2 child club representatives, 1 DWDO child rights officer
Ramesh Karmacharya, Pokhara Chambers of Commerce and Industry
Ramesh Ghimire, Manager of PCCI Child Labour Elimination Project
20 children attending the Child Contact Centre at Bagar 1, Naya Galli

Bharatpokhari VDC

Meeting at a school

1 principal, 1 teacher, 1 president of School Management Committee, 1 member of ECD Management Committee, 3 members of Wi.Wa.Sa.Sa, 2 members of Wa.Sa.Sa, meber of Shi.A.Sa.Jha, 1 member of Shi. Bha.Sa.Sa

II TANAHUN DISTRICT

Thaprek VDC

ECD Management Committee, Anarastriya ECD including the Principal, parents and the facilitator

Kairenitar VDC
VDC Secretary Buddhi Man Shrestha

Tanahun DHQrs
Meeting with District Child Club Network,
Mr. Hari Singh Gurung (child rights activist), and 17 child club representatives
DDC Social Development Officer Raghu Raj Kafle

6.3.3 Visit to Eastern Region

I UDAYAPUR DISTRICT

Sundarpur VDC

Meeting at a school:
1 head teacher, 7 teacher 1 ECD facilitator, 1 office helper, 1 representative/1 member of School Management Committee, 1 parent, 20 members of school child club

Nava Durga Women’s Federation
Approx. 25 members including the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Vice Secretary
Musi Tole Sunaulo Bihani Women’s Group
18 members
VF Renu Chaudhary
Kusum Sada CM

Meeting at a sub-health post
1 in-charge, 1 village health worker, 2 ANMs, 7 community health volunteers, 1 representative/1 member of health management committee, 6 local leaders, 2 CM Satyanarayan Hujdar, VDC secretary

Ms. Manju Wagle, Project Officer, UNICEF Udayapur
DDC Udayapur Programme Officer, Social Sector Raj Kumar Khadka

II SAPTARI DISTRICT

Rayapur VDC

Meeting at school
1 principal, 1 teacher, 1 member of School Management Committee, 2 members of Parent Teacher Association, 10 NGO trainers, 1 DACAW VF
District Education Officer; Kedar Tiwari
District Water, Sanitation, Sewage and Drainage Officer, Promod Kumar
DDC, Project Officer; Nawaraj Khadka
DDC, Supervisor; Jitendra Shah

Dihababa Women’s Group
Some 20 members
Including Sarita Yadav VF
Babita Ram CM and ECD facilitator
Hamsa Ram CM

Out of School Education Programme at Saraswati ECD, Harikha
Om Prakash Mahota Class Mobilizer
Saraswati Kumari Chaudhary Facilitator
15 Children

Bahuna Devi ECD
Lakhan Ram Chair
Dukhanidevi Yadav Vice chair
And 8 other members of ECD management committee

ECD Facilitators from across Saptari, met at Bahuna Devi ECD
11 women ECD facilitators with Ms. Sabita Bhujel ECD trainer from Seto Gurans

Bakduwa VDC

PLC
Kusum Acharya PLC Chair
and Some 18 women members
also: Dharmendra Prasad Yadav HUPEC (NGO Supporting the PLC)
Uma Pokharel HUPEC

**Saptari DHQrs**
LDO Bishnu Raj Dotel
Mr. Govinda Chhetry, DPO, UNICEF Saptari

### III SUNSARI DISTRICT

**Meeting at DDC**
Prem Prasad Bhattarai, Local Development Officer (LDO)
Arun Kumar Mehta, Programme Officer
Bhgwat Mehta, Supervisor
Yadav KC, Emergency Response Coordinator, UNICEF

**IV DEBRIEFING MEETING AT UNICEF REGIONAL OFFICE**
Bipul Singh Head of Regional Office - in - Charge
Uma Rai, DPO Health and Nutrition

### 6.3.4 One-day Visit to Biratnagar

**Biratnagar Child Club Network**

21 youth aged 14-19, of which 15 girls and 6 boys

**Urban Out-of-School Class, Hatkhola**

13 students between 8 and 13 years old; 8 boys and 5 girls (out of class of 16 total; 10 boys and 6 girls)
One female teacher

**Biratnagar Municipality**

Dilip Chapagin, Mayor, Biratnagar Municipality
Shatimal, Social Section, Biratnagar Municipality
Tara Nath Niraula, Social and Food Safety Officer, Biratnagar Municipality
Bipul Basnet, Regional Project Officer, UNICEF

### 6.3.5 Mid and Far Western Region

**Nepalgunj Regional Office**

Surindra Rana, Head of Regional Office, UNICEF
Anita Dahal, Program Officer, UNICEF
Ani Rudra Charma, Program Officer, UNICEF
I DANG DISTRICT

Sathbarya VDC

Community meeting with Community Mobilizers, Village Facilitator, members of Paralegal Committee and Women’s Federation, around 35 total

Meeting with Child Club: 16 girls and 8 boys, total 24 children

Meeting with ‘DAG group’ of women: 12 women

Tulsipur Municipality

Urban Out-of-School Class: 10 girls and 6 boys, total 16

Meeting at Center of Municipality: Head of Municipality and 6 youth students

Dikpur VDC

Community meeting with Community Mobilizers (11), Village Facilitator, Chair of VDC, 3 representatives of political parties, around 12 child club members, 2 members of Child Club Network, around 20 women members of Women’s Federation and Paralegal Committee, 1 representative from the Women’s Development Office, 1 representative from District Handicap organization; total around 50.

Dikpur School Visit

3 teachers, 2 NGO trainers, 3 facilitators, 1 member of District Education Office, 14 members of school Child Club: total around 25.

Meeting with District Development Committee (DDC), Ghorahi

Ganesh Bahadur Thapa, Division Chief, WSSDO
Tilak Neupane, Engineer, WSSDO
Parbati Rang, WDO
Subhash Gautam, HD Officer, Tulsipur Municipality
Reba Adhikari, Supervisor, WDO
Narayan Paudel, DEO
Hari Prasad Pandeya, Executive Officer, Ghorahi Municipality
Toynarayan Subedi, Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Officer, DDC
Bal Krishna Khanal, Social Development Officer, DDC
Modhun Sundar Donhyal, LDO, DDC
Rajesh Sadu Manju, Project Officer, UNICEF
Anita Dahal, Program Officer, UNICEF

Sishaniya VDC

Visit at Health Post and Birthing Center.
Meeting with Chairperson of Management Committee, 3 members of Management Committee, 5 female and 1 male health volunteers, 5 Community Mobilizers, 1 Village
Facilitator, Chairperson of Women’s Federation, 1 female and 3 male Senior Health Workers, Chief of Health Post

DEBRIEFING MEETING AT UNICEF REGIONAL OFFICE

Saraswati Khanal, DPO
Anirudra Sharma, DPO Health and Nutrition
Amir Rajbhandari, DPO Emergency, M&E
Tek Chhetri, Finance
Suresh Shrestha, Program Assistant
Radhika Tumbarangphey, DPO Education
Uddhab Khadka, DPO Humla
Bishow Raj Bhatt, DPO Dadeldura
Surendra Rana, Head of Regional Office

II JUMLA DISTRICT

District HQrs
Mr. Indra Pant, Programme Officer for DACAW, DDC
Mr. Jeet Bahadur Shah District Education Officer
Ms. Ramsila Adhikari, Officer, DWD
Dr. Jeet Narayan Yadav, Head, District Health Office
Mr. Brish Bahadur Shahi, Public Health Office, District Health Office
Mr. Chhetra Bahadur Budthapa, DACAW Focal Person, DDC
Mr. Resham Bahadur Shahi, Deprosc Nepal

Chhumchaur VDC

PLC
10 women members including the Chair, Secretary, Vice Chair and Treasurer

Lali Gurans Womens Federation
30 women
VF Lalita Rawat

6.3.6 Debriefing Meeting in Kathmandu 24 September

6.4 List of Documents

Atwood, Kelsey and Stephen Woodhouse. Decentralization and Taking Pilots to Scale in East Asia and the Pacific Region. Evaluation report for UNICEF EAPRO, November 2008


United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). Norms for Evaluation in the UN System. 29 April 2005