Knowledge for Action
Emerging experiences in child-focused
Social and Economic Policy

Selected Innovations and Lessons
Learned from UNICEF programmes
Knowledge for Action: Emerging experiences in child-focused Social and Economic Policy
Selected Innovations and Lessons Learned from UNICEF Programmes, Volume 2


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Acknowledgements
This compendium is a collaborative effort between UNICEF Country Offices and the Policy, Advocacy and Knowledge Management Section (Division of Policy and Practice). It has been reviewed and compiled by Neha Karkara, Ian Thorpe and Xavier R Sire. Design support was provided by Upasana Young. We acknowledge the following contributors and reviewers:

Original contributors
Sona Karapetyan, Cristina Roccella (Armenia); Selma Turkic (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Usha Mishra, Socheath Heng (Cambodia); Tinatin Baum (Georgia); Eduard Bonet, Subhash Misra, Juan Santander (Iraq); Zoran Stojanov, Biljana Lubarovska (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); Erika Strand (Mexico); Serghei Buruiana (Moldova); Lisa Kurbiel (Mozambique); Yoshimi Nishino (Myanmar); Aleksandra Jovic (Serbia); Remy Pigois (Senegal); George Lar- yea-Adjei, Nkechi Obisie-Nmehiele (South Africa); Augustine Agu (Trinidad and Tobago); Bernard Kennedy (Turkey); Natalia Astapova (Ukraine); Solrun Engilbertsdottir (Global)

Reviewers
Richard Morgan, Isabel Ortiz, Jingqing Chai, David Anthony, Rinko Kinoshita, Jennifer Yablonski, Solrun Engilbertsdottir, Natalia Elena Windsor Rossi, Deolinda Martins

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For further information on Lessons Learned and Good Practices, please contact:
Policy, Advocacy and Knowledge Management Section
Division of Policy and Practice
United Nations Children’s Fund
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
Email: lessonslearned@unicef.org

www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_56532.html
www.unicef.org/socialpolicy
UNICEF undertakes evidence-based analysis to build national commitment towards effective policies, laws and budgets that promote the rights and improve the lives of the most deprived children and women. This involves understanding the situation at country level by supporting and promoting child poverty studies, real time monitoring and the situation analysis of children's and women's rights. It opens the door for UNICEF’s participation in policy and budget debates on areas such as social protection and social budgeting that influence key policy decisions affecting the lives of disadvantaged children and their families.

Recently, in response to the food, fuel and financial crisis, UNICEF’s work has focused on building the capacities of key national institutions and strengthening policies that prioritize not only the reduction of structural poverty, but also crisis-related vulnerabilities. It is widely understood that progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), both in aggregate and for the most vulnerable populations, will be at risk if the right policies are not in place.

In order to improve knowledge sharing around child-focused social and economic policy, UNICEF is investing in documenting and sharing country experiences in this area. To this end, the first compendium on child-focused social and economic policy was released in July 2011. It is available at http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Social_Policy_Compendium_e-version(2).pdf.

As follow-up to this publication, we have compiled an additional 18 recent innovations and lessons learned from UNICEF supported initiatives which are featured here. These cases are illustrative examples of some of our work on social and economic policy and highlight UNICEF’s and its partners’ experience in making policy work a core strategy for reaching the most deprived. The cases highlighted in this publication are highly diverse examples - from design and impact analysis of a cash transfer programme in Senegal to development of an equity-focused child-centred methodology for situation analysis in Iraq; making visible the impact of the economic crisis on children in Mexico; ex-ante analysis of the impact of a proposed tax change in Serbia; shaping a child sensitive National Social Protection Strategy in Cambodia; and to scaling up of the social protection system in Mozambique, among others.

Documentation of key lessons and experiences facilitates their further application and is valuable for organizational learning. It is important to recognize that lessons gained through cooperation in one country or context are not necessarily transferable to the circumstances of another. However, we hope that this compilation will be useful in two ways: first, to provide a sense of the range of UNICEF’s work on social policy across regions; and second, to provide concrete examples of child-focused social and economic policy work that can inform and improve similar initiatives elsewhere.

Each of these pieces is a summary and more detailed information is available from the UNICEF Country Offices which provided the original material. If you are interested in learning more about a particular topic or featured innovation, or would like to make comments, please contact Policy and Practice in UNICEF Headquarters (lessonslearned@unicef.org or policyadvocacy@unicef.org).
DEFINITIONS

Innovations are summaries of programmatic or operational innovations that have or are being implemented under UNICEF’s mandate. These innovations may be pilot projects or new approaches to a standard programming model that can demonstrate initial results.

Lessons Learned are more detailed reflections on a particular programme or operation and extraction of lessons learned through its implementation. These lessons may be positive (successes) or negative (failures). Lessons learned have undergone a wider review than innovations and have often been implemented over a longer time frame.
Despite considerable progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on the basis of national averages, millions of women and children are still left behind – even in countries that have demonstrated improvement overall. Recognizing that poverty reduction lies at the core of any global development agenda, child poverty reduction is a central theme for UNICEF across all its work. The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities, launched by UNICEF in 2008, is part of that effort.

The Study aims to influence policies by providing an approach to place vulnerable and disadvantaged children at the centre of policy debates. In particular, the Study aims to influence economic and social policies that affect resource allocations, and to make children a priority in national programmes addressing: (a) the poverty of families raising children, and (b) the health, education and protection needs of children living in poor, vulnerable households, unsafe circumstances, and/or disadvantaged communities. The Study is built around four guiding principles including, national ownership; multidimensionality; equity; and the interconnectedness of child poverty to economic, social, cultural and environmental spheres.

The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities redefines the child poverty agenda.

**ABSTRACT**

In 2008, UNICEF launched a global initiative, the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities. The Study is built around decentralized research and analysis from 54 countries across seven regions, and more countries are likely to join. The country analyses serve as critical policy advocacy tools that identify the most vulnerable children and provide concrete recommendations on how legislation, policies and programmes could best support children’s rights. While the initiative is ongoing, within the last three years, the Global Study has resulted in the creation of new partnerships around the issue of child poverty; revised national development plans and poverty reduction strategies; strengthened social protection systems for children and has led to the development of a system of managing knowledge around child poverty and disparities. The initiative highlights the value of having a global effort to share expertise and to draw attention to a common problem worldwide, combined with a flexible nationally led approach to ensure that the project is responsive to local contexts and is sustainable. The Global Study provides participating countries with additional visibility to national study results; a stronger ownership of the findings; a platform for networking; and new ideas for research and innovation. The next steps focus on refining child poverty measurements that further contribute to UNICEF’s re-focus on equity; exploring new data sources; and multi-country analyses in regional or global contexts.
enjoys her/his right to survive, grow and develop; (b) how resource scarcity and deprivations directly impact children, as well as how they are experienced differently according to gender, age and social status at the family, household or country level; (c) childhood as a space that is separate from adulthood (life cycle approach); and (d) that children who are deprived of a safe and caring environment are also more likely to experience other deprivations.

In each participating country, a UNICEF focal point brings together experts in national statistics and policy to undertake evidence-based analyses and produce a country report. To this end, the focal point and the national partners build a two-part team comprised of national statistical experts (such as from the national statistical office) and national policy experts (for instance, from leading academic or policy centre). The team sets a plan for undertaking the Study and producing the Country Report that is appropriate to the local context, but still in line with the global guidelines around the Study.

The Statistics team works with a Statistical Template of child outcome tabulations and relevant contextual information; produced centrally using data from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), Demographic Household Survey (DHS) or other relevant national surveys. The policy team works with a Policy Template designed to assess existing national efforts aimed at reducing child poverty and disparities. When all the necessary data is collected; the statistical experts and the policy experts come together to construct the country analysis. The team analyzes poverty at three levels, at the child, family and national level. This helps to investigate disparities in progress toward the MDGs. The analysis, core tabulations and main findings are presented in Country Reports that follow a standard outline. The Country Reports are envisaged as building blocks for regional and global reports.

Support to the Study at the global level
At the global level, UNICEF provides central guidance to all the country teams participating in the Study; it gathers and manages knowledge; develops advocacy tools; builds capacity to influence policy; supports advocacy processes and networks to enhance learning and strengthen policy debate. The standardized Terms of Reference, conceptual framework, methodological templates and guidance which form the basis for each country analysis were developed at the global level.

In addition, globally the Study is supported by facilitating:
• peer reviews of child poverty studies by expert reviewers;
• The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities blog, the online home of the child poverty study, which provides up-to-date practical resources and information for countries undertaking study;
• The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities advocacy blog that provides policy advocacy resources to countries undertaking the study;
• The Child Poverty Network with over 1,200 members;
• The Child Poverty Insights, a bi-monthly publication series, that provides the field offices with the latest information on child poverty analysis and advances; and
• The Child Poverty Portal (to be launched end 2011) that includes child poverty briefs for 36 countries, containing disaggregated data, information on social budgeting and policy recommendations for each country.

In addition, technical assistance is provided to countries regarding child poverty analysis as well as the practical challenges of carrying out child poverty studies. Lessons learned and policy impacts from the child poverty studies are regularly documented, demonstrating how these studies can be used for generating policy changes for the benefit of children.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
In the three years since the launch of the Global Study, countries continue to join the initiative to produce national analysis. The initiative began with 39 countries in early 2008 and 15 additional countries have joined the global initiative. These 54 countries represent over 1.5 billion children, approximately 60 per cent of the 0-17 year old population in the developing world. As of July 2011, 26 national and one regional analysis from Latin America and the Caribbean have been published.  

1 Americas and the Caribbean: Bolivia, Brazil, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua; Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States: Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan; Eastern and Southern Africa: Burundi, Indian Ocean Islands; Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe; East Asia and the Pacific: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Viet Nam, Vanuatu; Middle East and North Africa: Djibouti, Egypt, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Yemen; South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka West and Central Africa: Cameroon, Chad, Congo DR, Congo, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo.
2 The country reports and the regional reports are available at sites.google.
The initiative is work in progress; however some of the documented results are presented below. These include:

- building of new networks and partnerships around the issue of child poverty;
- creating adjustments in national development plans and poverty reduction strategies, extending national poverty monitoring systems;
- strengthening social protection systems for children; and
- developing a system of managing knowledge around child poverty and disparities.

**National ownership/collaboration**: The Study has extended far beyond UNICEF to create momentum and advance work with partners who engage in and shape different aspects of the national policy making process. It has spurred a dynamic process involving government partners, academia, civil society and other stakeholders. In Thailand, for example, the child poverty study was administered by UNICEF in collaboration with the National Economic and Social Development Board. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Study was conducted by a senior researcher from the University of Kinshasa, together with a team of national consultants and UNICEF staff. The Ministry of Planning took the lead and managed the Study with the involvement of ministries of education, health, social affairs, budget and finance and the National Institute of Statistics. Additionally, several UN agencies participated throughout the process. In Nepal, the National Planning Commission was the lead government agency, and the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health, Central Child Welfare Board, Ministry of Local Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, Representative of Association of International NGOs were all represented in the Steering Committee.

**Influencing national development plans**: In several countries, the child poverty study analysis has led to adjustments in national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. The work around the child poverty study in China, for example, led to the first ever Child Poverty and Development Forum. Consequently for the first time child poverty will be included in the next Ten Year Rural Poverty Reduction Strategy (2011-2020).

National poverty monitoring systems have been overhauled in some of the countries to better measure child poverty and disparities. In Morocco, for example, the Child Poverty study led to cooperation between UNICEF Morocco, the national statistics office (Haut Commissariat au Plan) and the National Observatory for Children's Rights to collect, analyze and disseminate data related to children. In Ukraine, advocacy around the study’s results has led to the inclusion of the child poverty rate as a national MDG indicator and therefore part of the MDG achievement agenda.³

**Motivating policy interventions**: The child poverty study analysis has led to reform and expansion of social protection systems for children. In Mali, for example, the Study results ignited the first national forum on poverty in 2008, which in turn led to the formulation of an action plan on social protection. This led to the Government of Mali taking steps to establish mandatory health insurance for the poorest segment of the population.

**Knowledge management**: In 2008, UNICEF launched the Child Poverty Network, a Community of Practice that serves as a core, global network that now numbers more than 1200 experts in children's issues from over 150 countries. This includes country teams participating in the Global Study as well as development professionals from governments, UN agencies and other international organizations, academia, NGOs and research institutes. The wealth and diversity of this community has allowed for valuable and meaningful discussions, which in turn are useful tools for country teams as well as other practitioners and researchers. These discussions range from identifying advocacy strategies to promoting policies for children, impact of decentralization of social service provision for children among others.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

At the global level, the Study team regularly conducts progress surveys that will help in capturing lessons learned around conducting national child poverty studies. This experience highlights:

(a) the benefits of a global effort to address a widespread issue;
(b) factors that support national ownership of the Study; and
(c) importance of a process driven by individual advocacy.

**Benefits of a global effort**: Although the initiative is a global effort, it is primarily intended to produce a set of lo-

³ See related case on Ukraine’s experience around advocacy to reduce child poverty and disparities on page 46.
The most important task of the Global Study is, nonetheless, a global one, to highlight the notion of child poverty as a distinct problem and to sensitize policymakers to its importance. Undertaking a global initiative can provide much needed promotion, advocacy and awareness to national research. Since its inception, the Global Study has demonstrated value in being able to address a common problem worldwide. For instance, the Global Study provides:

- scope for relevant stakeholders to work in a focused and coordinated way to achieve the common goal of eradicating child poverty;
- additional visibility to national and regional study results and strengthens policy debates at the national level;
- participating countries with legitimacy, which may in turn lead to increased accessibility to various data;
- a quicker buy-in from the government regarding the added value of such an initiative;
- a platform for networking, harmonization and coordination between various stakeholders, such as research institutions, civil society, government, academia; and
- field offices with new ideas for research and innovation, including appropriate long-term research strategies.

National ownership: At the outset, the Study was meant to extend far beyond UNICEF to create a momentum and advance work with partners who engage in and shape different aspects of the national policy-making process. Therefore, each Study was set up and managed in a way which brought together the most relevant institutions and expertise related to the national context. Critical factors in building national ownership around the Study’s results include a) involving key stakeholders and relevant line ministries from the beginning (including establishing a focal point within each ministry); establishing a technical/steering committee comprised of key stakeholders to review the progress and endorse the final product; and ensuring credibility of the research team.

Advocates for the Study: A successful child poverty study requires motivated individuals who are advocates for the issue. Whether this is a UNICEF focal point, the team leader within a research institute, a government official, or someone else, matters less. What is important is that the process should be driven by individuals that believe in the importance of conducting a child poverty study, and believe in its potential to influence national policies for the advancement of children’s rights with equity.

Challenges
Coordinating an effort on such a large scale has led to challenges at various levels. At the national level, a key challenge has been around applying the multidimensional child poverty methodology based on severe deprivations of basic needs thresholds. This is mostly evident in middle-income countries where the severe deprivation thresholds do not fully capture the problems children are exposed to. As a result the severe deprivations thresholds had to be adjusted in some middle-income countries. Further, some of the participating countries have struggled with developing policy recommendations that best respond to the data analysis. Finally, it has often proved challenging at the global level to promote open knowledge sharing between countries participating in the Study. The Child Poverty Network and the Study blogs were both launched to address this challenge, and have proved to be useful tools in encouraging knowledge sharing between countries.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
At the national level, this initiative provides a practical tool to further advance the equity agenda in country programmes. By demonstrating that the most vulnerable children experience multiple deprivations, the multidimensional child poverty measure raises awareness of disparities among and within countries, regions, income groups, ethnic or other minorities. The presence of combined deprivations is particularly important for identifying the most vulnerable children.

At the global level, the model followed can potentially be applied to other programmes that see the value of embarking on a large scale global initiative, while maintaining national ownership. Initiating a Global Study may provide additional visibility to national and regional study results, and strengthen policy debates at the national level. The experience gathered in designing and implementing the Study can help inform similar interventions at the global level on other issues. The Global Study guide includes methodological templates, both policy and statistical templates, and guidance which forms the basis for each country analysis. Such a guide has proved useful to participat-
ing countries, and can adapted by other global studies by UNICEF, national partners and stakeholders working on children’s rights and equity.

**NEXT STEPS**

The next steps focus on multi-country analyzes in regional or global contexts; strengthening links with local networks built over the last three years; exploring new data sources and survey methods; and strengthening involvement of academia in solving theoretical and practical issues around conceptualizing, measuring and addressing child poverty and disparities.

Regional and global reports on multidimensional child poverty would provide additional visibility to national and regional study results and strengthen policy debates at the national level. Consequently regional offices have been encouraged to develop regional reports on child poverty. A first such report has already been undertaken in Latin America and the Caribbean.

More countries continue to join the Global Study. Some of the initial countries that undertook the analysis are considering a second wave of child poverty studies.

**RELATED LINKS**

The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities Blog
http://www.unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com/

Advocacy Blog for the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities
http://www.globalstudyadvocacy.blogspot.com/

The Child Poverty Network
http://sites.google.com/site/whatisthechildpovertynetwork/

Child Poverty Insights: Working Briefs
http://unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com/search?q=child+poverty+insights
ABSTRACT

Child poverty is a leading cause of exclusion and marginalization in Armenia, however it is not positioned highly on decision makers’ agendas. In 2009, using existing government data, UNICEF and the University of York conducted the first ever analysis of child poverty in Armenia. The analysis was used as the principal advocacy tool to ensure policy makers focus their attention on child poverty and improved budgeting for children. As an important milestone, the child poverty analysis methodology was adopted by the National Statistical Service (NSS) to analyze data focused on children. The NSS also included a first ever chapter on child poverty in its annual poverty analysis report in 2010. Using the child poverty analysis, UNICEF has been able to engage in a debate involving the parliament and agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on social protection coverage, effectiveness of social protection interventions, and equity of access for the most vulnerable population. The dialogue has laid the foundation for additional collaboration with international financial institutions in Armenia.

BACKGROUND

From 2008 to 2009, poverty in Armenia increased by nearly five percentage points, with 34 per cent of the population living under poverty line. Even though the Government has undertaken efforts to maintain its social expenditure during the economic crisis, the 2010 budget does not provide increased funds for social protection, or on other initiatives aimed at reducing poverty. Furthermore, in previous reports there has been a lack of specific information on the conditions of children in terms of absolute poverty and deprivation. Against this scenario, UNICEF proposed using the existing data from NSS to analyze child poverty in Armenia; the results of which could serve as a basis for policy development and increased budgets to alleviate child poverty.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Using existing data from NSS for child poverty analysis

Since 2004, the NSS annually conducts the Integrated Living Conditions Surveys (ILCS) in Armenia. The outcomes of the surveys are presented in NSS’s annual report, Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia. The report provides information on the social situation in the country, including poverty trends, access to social services and economic development. However there was a lack of specific information and data on children experiencing poverty in these reports.

The University of York, with proven expertise in child poverty analysis, was brought on board by UNICEF to take the lead in analyzing the data on child poverty available in the 2009 ICLS. Since no single measure captures child poverty sufficiently well, the analyses looks at multiple indicators including: (1) consumption-based poverty rates for children and the household characteristics that are associated with a higher risk of poverty; (2) material deprivation rates, based on household ownership/lack of durable goods; and (3) housing deprivation rates, based on household ownership/lack of housing amenities, the number of reported housing problems, subjective assessment of dwelling conditions, and the number of rooms per person. The subsequent analysis was based on the overlaps in various deprivation measures and children’s household characteristics that were associated with an increased likelihood of deprivation on each of these measures. The role of social security measures, such as old age pen-

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4 NSS, Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia, 2010

sions, family benefits and child benefits, in alleviating child poverty was also analyzed.

High level evidence-based advocacy
In May 2010, UNICEF presented the child poverty analysis to the National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Social Affairs. The event was organized within the framework of cooperation between UNICEF and the parliament. It focused on enhancing the promotion and protection of children’s rights in Armenia, as defined through a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two parties in 2009.

Using the child poverty analysis, the presentation made a case for the inadequacy of the current targeted social protection measures in achieving poverty reduction by highlighting the minimal coverage of families and the modest impact of the family benefits distribution. UNICEF’s proposal for a Universal Child Benefit model was considered with interest by parliamentarians, taking into account the difficulties in applying the current targeted method. However, further advocacy is required on the recommended programme, especially in light of the current economic crisis.

In addition, the data and analysis were presented to the social protection donors’ theme group, to advocate on issues of coverage and expansion of benefits to address child poverty. UNICEF produced budget requirement projections to support its social protection arguments. This has been critical to connect with and influence donors, especially the IMF.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
The child poverty analysis methodology has been adopted by the NSS to analyze data focused on children rather than families as the unit of reference. The stark results generated by the child poverty analysis itself have been a persuasive factor in NSS adopting the methodology. In addition, UNICEF highlighted that adopting the methodology did not add any extra workload to the NSS; it was only a matter of using the existing statistics to highlight an additional scenario. To this end, the University of York undertook a one day training workshop on the methodology for NSS. The university further suggested improvements to the questionnaire utilized for the ILCS by introducing child-focused deprivation indicators. The revised questionnaire is being used in 2011. The analysis generated has been included by the NSS in a separate child-focused chapter within the 2010 Social Snapshot and Poverty report. The new chapter provides data on poverty prevalence among children with various social profiles, consumption-based poverty, material deprivation and housing deprivation.

This has mainstreamed the focus on children in the annual poverty analysis, and has increased policy makers’ exposure to the issue.

Data on child poverty analysis was also presented to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister at a high level meeting organized in 2011. This high level engagement created a platform for further advocating for social services reforms in Armenia which were launched in 2010 and piloted with technical assistance from UNICEF.

In addition, using the child poverty analysis as a basis, the Country Office is currently working with the University of York on an updated and detailed model of Universal Child Benefit for further discussion and advocacy with the Government.

Further, UNICEF is exploring the possibility of preparing a joint presentation with the IMF and other donors to the Ministry of Finance (later in 2011) to focus their attention on poverty reduction strategies. After discussions with the Resident Representative, the IMF agreed to incorporate a textbox focusing on issues promoted by UNICEF in the Fund’s second quarter staff report in 2011 which has traditionally focused on macroeconomic analysis. The textbox highlights child poverty reduction and its close link to the reform of integrated social services. The discussion around child poverty also has the full engagement of the World Bank, a key partner of the NSS in the analysis of data on poverty.

INNOVATION
The child poverty analysis developed by UNICEF and the University of York – and the following child poverty chapter in the annual Social Snapshot and Poverty report – is the first report of its kind in Armenia. The analysis provides exclusive evidence on child poverty in the country and highlights children’s higher vulnerability compared to adults and families in general. It also highlights incidence of poverty on specific categories of children and provides evidence on the need to further focus attention on them.

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6 Including UNDP, UNHCR, World Bank, IMF, Open Society Institute (OSI), USAID, Save the Children, World Vision and other local organizations

7 The report is available at www.armstat.am/en/?nid=82&id=1202

8 Children with disabilities; children living with one parent or with a low level of education; children in female headed households and in families with three or more children
The child poverty analysis also contributed to the capacity development of NSS in addition to the improvement of a routine survey tool (ILCS questionnaire 2011).

**Key elements of success**
Generating poverty analysis on children using reliable and scientifically sound data is an effective advocacy tool to raise the attention of policy makers. The realization of the report was made possible as a result of the (1) existing capacity of NSS in collecting and analyzing poverty data systematically and efficiently; (2) the convincing methodology and its concrete results, that took into account the multidimensional aspect of child poverty; and (3) the strong cooperation between UNICEF and NSS.

Initial lessons learned on UNICEF’s engagement with IMF include the following:

- **Importance of building credibility**: The presentation of reliable data and evidence was critical in highlighting UNICEF as a key actor in discussions around social policies and budgeting for children.

- **Relationships matter**: UNICEF has maintained on-going dialogue with the IMF’s Resident Representative, which eventually led to the proposal of incorporating UNICEF’s inputs into IMF’s Staff Report and symbolized a step forward in this collaboration.

- **Engaging with IMF to engage the government**: UNICEF’s relationship with IMF is critical to increasing direct access to the Ministry of Finance and influencing the budgetary process. This relationship is also key to strengthening coordination with the World Bank and increasing capacity to negotiate on policy recommendations.

**POTENTIAL APPLICATION**

The learnings from this experience are potentially applicable in other contexts where existing data can be reanalyzed to renew dialogue on children’s issues. Replicating this advocacy experience requires analyzing decision making processes to identify opportunities and entry points. These opportunities (such as invitation to high level meetings in the parliament, existence of a strong social protection thematic group among donors) can be used to strengthen advocacy, create alliances, raise awareness and get the key messages across. Undertaking a similar advocacy effort requires gauging challenges in the external advocacy environment, especially in terms of political readiness towards innovative solutions.

**NEXT STEPS**

The child poverty analysis report will be used for promoting improved budgeting for children and leveraging the debate among decision makers and donors on possible solutions for the reduction of child poverty. A gender analysis will be included in the 2011 Social Snapshot and Poverty report. As a result of the revised questionnaire being used in 2011, the 2012 report will include an analysis of child deprivation. The on-going revision of the Sustainable Development Programme (including work around the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper [PRSP]), suspended due to the economic crises, will take into consideration the results of the child poverty analysis.

**RELATED LINKS**

Social Snapshot and poverty in Armenia, 2010
[www.armstat.am/en/?nid=82&id=1202](http://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=82&id=1202)

Child Poverty in Armenia: Analysis of the 2008 Integrated Living Conditions Survey
[www.unicef.org/armenia/resources_1425.html](http://www.unicef.org/armenia/resources_1425.html)
ABSTRACT

UNICEF Iraq’s newly developed child centred methodology establishes a conceptual framework for understanding children’s situation from an equity perspective. It further supports the development of equity-focused policies, programmes and advocacy towards reaching the MDGs in Iraq. The methodology has been developed in two stages. First, through the elaboration of Governorate Profiles, that provide a contextual analysis of the situation of children at the subnational level; second, through the development of child-level analysis at an individual level that incorporates a life-cycle approach. The methodology has been piloted using the MICS3 (2006) data. Initial results confirm that majority of the deprivations are concentrated on a certain section of children and that reaching multiply-deprived children makes substantial progress towards MDG and World Fit For Children (WFFC) targets. The results also confirm that the equity approach is efficient; has high impact and is cost-effective. In parallel to developing the methodology, an Equity-Analysis for Children Team (Equity-ACT) has been constituted with Government analysts. These analysts are being trained to gain the necessary technical skills to fully implement the methodology. Towards the end of 2011, the analysis will be produced using the latest MICS4 data, which will provide the basis for developing an equity-focused situation analysis in Iraq. Overall, this represents an innovative way of approaching the equity issue.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, in spite of the large amount of information available on the situation of children in Iraq, an equity-focused, comprehensive assessment of children’s situation and its determinants, based on recent UNICEF findings and guidance9 has yet to be developed. This situation limits the capacity of decision-makers, planners, advocates, media and general public to understand the inequities facing children (including its geographic, socio-economic and demographic specificities) and how to formulate appropriate policies. To improve this situation, national capacity for statistical analysis also needs to be substantially strengthened.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

UNICEF has identified three components to promote equity-focused development in Iraq. These components are: (a) developing an equity-focused methodology; (b) obtaining updated and reliable data; and (c) strengthening national capacity to develop equity-focused interventions.

Developing an equity-focused methodology

The equity-focused methodology developed by UNICEF Iraq includes a child-centred analysis (at the individual level) and a compounded deprivations approach to identify the most deprived children. This methodology builds upon the Bristol approach for measuring multidimensional child deprivations.10

The equity-focused methodology highlights deprivations (for instance, child labour, lack of access to safe drinking water and so on) faced by an individual child at one time; secondly, it highlights the characteristics of the children (and their households) facing these deprivations; and third, it highlights geographic locations of these children (such as in governorates, districts and communities). The methodology also helps in exploring relationships between compounded (concentrated) deprivations and multiple risk factors (such as poverty, gender, mother’s education, urban and rural areas among others).

As a first step, UNICEF together with the Government of Iraq and its partners, created Governorate11 Profiles to identify the most relevant issues and select indicators under the MDG and WFFC12 frameworks. The Governorate

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10 For more information, see UNICEF’s Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities: unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com
11 Iraq is composed of 18 Governorates (or provinces)
12 In 2002, the UN Special Session on Children culminated in the official adoption of its outcome document, ‘A World Fit for Children’. The new agenda
Profiles, produced using the MICS3\textsuperscript{13} data (2006), provide a contextual overview of the situation of children at the subnational level in four sectors: education, health and nutrition, child protection and water and sanitation. A list of 14 indicators from the frameworks have been consolidated with specific relevance to Iraq. Further, these indicators have been grouped by the relevant age-group, following a life-cycle approach\textsuperscript{14} as detailed in Figure 1 above.

With the list of indicators available to quantitatively measure the situation of children, the equity-focused methodology was applied to measure compounded deprivations. The traditional way to measure children’s deprivations is through an issue-centred approach. The issue-centred approach looks at each issue individually and therefore obtains results in silos. For example, if we took a specific age range from 6 to 11 years, we could say ‘20 per cent of these children are involved in child labour’ or ‘30 per cent of these children are out-of-school, or ‘40 per cent of these children face violent discipline methods’. But, how many of these children are facing more than one of these deprivations at the same time? With an issue-centred approach, it is not possible to answer this question as it measures each deprivation individually.

To identify compounded deprivations, quantitative analysis should undertake a child-centred approach. In Figure 2, following the issue-centred approach we know 30 per cent of children are out-of-school and that 20 per cent of children are working. But we don’t know how many of these children are both out-of-school and working. With a child-centred approach, we know which children are both out-of-school and working. In this example ‘Manal’ is both out-of-school and working, ‘Ahmed’ and ‘Amina’ are only out-of-school, and ‘Sahar’ is only working. The remaining six children are facing neither of these deprivations. A child-centred approach is concerned with compounded deprivations and therefore instead of taking each indicator and measuring every relevant child, it takes every child and measures him or her against every relevant indicator. It makes a count of how many areas a child is deprived in (and which ones), for every child in the sample, according to the issues relevant to the stage of a child’s life (for instance, exclusive breastfeeding is counted for an 8 month-old infant but not for a 12 year-old child). Moreover, since each child is measured individually, the methodology allows the capture of differences between boys and girls. This supports mainstreaming of gender into the analysis.

Obtaining updated and reliable data
By the third quarter of 2011, up-to-date and reliable MICS4 data will be available to support the equity-focused methodology. MICS4 was undertaken in 2010 by UNICEF, together with two Government statistical offices, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Kurdistan Regional Statistics Office (KRSO). The survey includes a sample of 36,500 households across the country. This is the largest sample size to population ratio undertaken for a MICS in Iraq.

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\textsuperscript{13} The Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) allow countries to better monitor progress toward national goals and global commitments, including MDGs as the target year 2015 approaches.

\textsuperscript{14} Infancy (0-11 months); Early Childhood (12-59 months); Primary Childhood (6-11 years); and Adolescence (12-17 years). All life-cycle stages have six indicators.
Strengthening national capacity to develop equity-focused interventions
The national capacity to develop equity-focused interventions is being strengthened by developing partners’ technical capacity to process and analyze the data, enabling them to obtain conclusions about the current situation, trends and determinants of children’s rights in Iraq. This work began in 2010 when the Government requested UNICEF’s support in building its capacity on statistical analysis, particularly in the light of the new MICS4 data. As a response to this request, UNICEF supported CSO and KRSO in creating and developing the capacity of a team of seven analysts (dedicated Government staff) named the Analysis for Children Team (ACT). When UNICEF launched a renewed focus on equity in mid-2010, Iraq country office included the newly developed equity conceptual framework and the equity-focused child centred methodology in the training of the ACT. The team is now known as the Equity-ACT team. Its capacity development plan includes an SPSS\textsuperscript{15} training, introduction and familiarity with priority children’s issues (CRC, CEDAW, MDGs and WFFC frameworks), and statistical analysis techniques to implement the child-level equity analysis.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
The equity-focused methodology has been completely developed and tested with the MICS3 data. The pilot results confirm that deprivations are concentrated in certain children, and are not randomly or evenly distributed. It also confirms that reaching the multiply-deprived children would make a substantial progress towards the MDG and WFFC targets; it is efficient, has a high impact and is cost-effective. In the case of Iraq, the results reveal 28 per cent of all children (approximately 4 million) face multiple deprivations\textsuperscript{16} and concentrate over two-thirds of all child deprivations in the country. Furthermore, 10 per cent (approximately 1.5 million children) are extremely multiply-deprived with all or almost all of the issues measured for their age-group. The results confirm that focusing on these children will accelerate progress towards the targets as solving problems faced by these children contributes to reaching multiple targets.

At the same time, it substantially reduces inequities across the population. In relation to gender, the pilot reveals that when multiply-deprived, both boys and girls are far worse off than the average child. Boys are more likely to be multiply-deprived due to child labour and girls due to being out of primary school.

With regards to capacity development, the training of Equity-ACT took place during September-October 2010 and February-March 2011. All seven analysts have been introduced to UNICEF’s foundational frameworks, recent research developments and findings.\textsuperscript{17}

INNOVATION
The initiative strives to bring the equity approach to building concrete evidence and results, contextualized to Iraq. This equity approach encompasses capacity building and national-ownership which is useful for policy, programme development and advocacy efforts around MDGs in Iraq. The comprehensive methodology recognizes the population averages, incorporates a life-cycle approach and also multiplicity of deprivations residing in an individual child. This is an innovative way of approaching the equity issue.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
The equity-focused child centred methodology can be adapted and used in any specific context or country. It is especially useful as a tool for equity-focused situation analysis in any UNICEF programme. Due to its complementarity with a per-capita expenditure poverty approach, the use of the methodology can help create synergies with the World Bank on poverty issues in Iraq within the framework of an inter-agency approach. The technical concepts of the methodology are based on already operational and UN-endorsed definitions of multidimensional deprivations. The process adopted in this case allows for the development of national capacity and ownership around equity-focused methodology, ensuring sustainability and facilitating its applicability as a policy and planning criteria.

NEXT STEPS
In October 2011, the country office together with UNICEF’s Middle East and North Africa Regional Office will hold a technical review and validation workshop of the equity-focused methodology, including life-cycle stages, indicators and deprivation threshold definitions. Additionally, the workshop will discuss qualitative analysis options to move forward a causality understanding of the results of the quantitative assessment. The workshop will include participation from UNICEF Iraq’s strategic Government counterparts and partners, Iraqi universities as well as international academic experts, UNICEF regional and global technical advisors, and other country offices in the region. By the end of 2011, with the availability of MICS4 data, UNICEF Iraq will produce updated Governorate Profiles. Finally, this process will contribute to development of a comprehensive equity-focused Situation Analysis for Iraq, including policies, legislative, budgeting and programming recommendations.

\textsuperscript{15} SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) is a computer programme used for survey authoring and deployment, data mining, text analytics, statistical analysis, and collaboration and deployment.

\textsuperscript{16} Percentages of multiple deprivation within each life-cycle stage are consistent with the overall average: 27 per cent for 0-11 months old children; 30 per cent for 12-59 months old children; 28 per cent for 6-11 years old children; and 24 per cent for 12-17 years old children.

\textsuperscript{17} UNICEF 2010, Progress for Children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity: \url{www.unicef.org/publications/index_55740.htm}; UNICEF 2010, Narrowing the Gaps to Meet the Goals: \url{www.unicef.org/media/files/Narrowing_the_Gaps_to_Meet_the_Goals_090310_2a.pdf}
BACKGROUND
In Georgia, the impact of the global economic crisis has been aggravated by the lingering impact of military conflict in 2008 and political turbulence in 2009. Empirical evidence generated during previous regional crises shows that deterioration of children’s condition usually outpaces that of the general economy. Increases in child mortality, malnutrition and early withdrawal from school are frequently observed during economic crises. More importantly, some of these setbacks in child survival and development outcomes cannot be reversed as quickly even when the economy returns to its normal path.

Prompted by the potential risk of decline in children’s well-being in Georgia as a result of the crisis, UNICEF together with the Institute of Social Studies and Analysis (ISSA) in Georgia and the University of York (UK) undertook a nation-wide Welfare Monitoring Survey in order to measure the impact of the global economic crisis on the welfare of Georgians. The purpose of the survey was to provide an in-depth understanding of how the crisis impacts Georgian children and their families and to inform policy decision-making processes by identifying key priority challenges.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
At the onset, the main purpose of the survey was to measure the impact of the global food crisis on vulnerable groups.

UNICEF planned to undertake this by conducting a panel survey on food security of households registered in the database of socially vulnerable families. At that point, UNICEF Georgia learned of the nationwide survey being undertaken in Turkey to measure the impact of the crisis. Upon consultations with UNICEF Turkey, the Georgia programme expanded the scope of the study, now known as the Welfare Monitoring Survey.

The survey was redesigned to cover the entire country instead of including only those households registered in the database. This aspect was considered critical in getting the Government’s and donors’ buy-in around the results of the study. In addition to food-security issues, the study was extended to include other indicators measuring various aspects of wellbeing such as income, consumption, employment and livelihoods, housing, material and subjective well-being and access to utilities, social services and benefits. The study also explored the strategies that households resort to in order to cope with the dual crises in Georgia (economic and conflict-related).

The Welfare Monitoring Survey was conceived as a panel survey staged to run in two consecutive years, 2009 and 2010. The first stage of the survey was completed between May and July 2009, which serves as a base-
One of the main findings of the WMS highlighted that around 40 per cent of poor households received no social assistance of any kind. Moreover, nearly 60 per cent of the poorest quintile had not applied for TSA. These findings prompted a follow-up study in 2010 exploring ‘Barriers to Access Social Services (BASS). This study explores the causal factors behind low social assistance coverage amongst the target group and thereby informs policies to increase the reach and effectiveness of social assistance. The BASS study particularly focuses on healthcare, health insurance, cash transfers, education, social work services, day care services and disability services. The study was undertaken by UNICEF and USAID’s Health System Strengthening Project together with ISSA. It was also supported by the Social Service Agency (SSA) of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs.

The sample for this study was drawn from the database of the Welfare Monitoring Survey. For this purpose, the WMS households were divided into five quintiles, according to their welfare level. The first quintile represented the poor-est 20 per cent of the households whose monthly expenses were less than 117.5 GEL (about USD 71) for one adult in the household. The total sample included 1,078 households which were distributed across all regions of Georgia.

The questionnaire for the study was designed on the basis of focus group discussions. In total, eight specific focus groups were convened including a) beneficiaries of SSA; b) applicants of TSA; c) social workers and social agents; d) principals and teachers of primary and secondary schools; e) representatives of civil registry agencies; f) representatives of insurance companies; g) representatives of the health care system; and h) representatives of local authorities. The draft questionnaire prepared by ISSA was field-tested with 20 households both in urban as well as rural settlements. After the piloting the questionnaire was finalized and interviewers were trained, the questionnaire was translated and published in three languages (Georgian, Armenian and Azeri).

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The Welfare Monitoring Survey highlighted that nearly a quarter of households in Georgia fall below the official poverty threshold. These poor households include 28 per cent of Georgia’s children. The difference in the standard of living indicates considerable inequity between various localities and population groups. The study draws attention to social transfers as an effective tool for the government to reduce poverty. It further found that pensions and TSA reduce poverty by 17 and 3 percentage points respectively.

The advocacy around the results of the survey has triggered an intensive policy dialogue around social assistance in Georgia. It has brought the situation of children and families to the heart of the debate on social protection and social exclusion. This was evident in 2011, when the Government established a small reference group to discuss the possibility of raising the weight of children in the assessment formula for TSA. This was in response to one of the findings of the survey that households with three or more children were more likely to be poor. Further, the policy dialogue also led to the World Bank including a reference to the Welfare Monitoring Survey in their econometric analysis on poverty trends in Georgia in 2011.

The results of the survey have also sparked an interest in IDP (Internally Displaced Peoples) communities. As of now, all people with IDP status receive social assistance; however there is a possibility of the Government moving IDP assistance under the purview of the SSA and making it means tested. Upon request from IDP communities, IDP related questions have been included in the second round of the Welfare Monitoring Survey.

In July 2011, the preliminary results of the BASS report were launched. The findings reveal that the SSA which...
provides state social assistance to the poor is well organized. However, many households do not benefit from the assistance, especially families with children. In early 2011, the preliminary findings were presented to USAID, the Minister of Labour, Health and Social Affairs and the Head of the Social Service Agency. The Government has expressed a strong desire to work around the study’s recommendations. The Ministry has already taken several initial steps. For example, they have translated all application forms into minority languages which the study showed was a significant barrier for poor Azeri and Armenian families. The World Bank also invited UNICEF to present the preliminary findings during the ‘South Caucasus Workshop for Knowledge Sharing’ on poverty monitoring in 2011.

INNOVATION

In context of the global economic crisis, this experience illustrates a successful social and economic recovery initiative in Georgia. By building robust evidence around the impact of the economic crisis on children and families, UNICEF Georgia has been able to strengthen the national policy dialogue around child-sensitive social protection. The Welfare Monitoring Survey, due to its nation-wide coverage, was critical in building the interest of the Government. The BASS follow-up study, by highlighting reasons that limit access to social services, further opened the space for debate around a set of alternative policy options for social and economic recovery.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

Although constructed as a tool to monitor the impact of the economic crisis on families and children, the Welfare Monitoring Survey and the BASS study can be framed as useful family and child poverty monitoring tools. In addition, the nation-wide household database generated by the surveys can be linked to any other survey or programme. In terms of replicating the surveys and policy advocacy around their results, support from higher levels of the government, political willingness and involvement of all stakeholders are key factors.

NEXT STEPS

The second round of the Welfare Monitoring Survey is currently underway. Its initial tabulations and the final report of the BASS study will be available at the end of 2011. This will support a deeper analysis of why families are not accessing their entitlements. UNICEF will continue to focus on directing public finances to families with children such as through the on-going negotiations around the weight of children in TSA calculations. As a follow up to the recommendations of the BASS study, UNICEF will be supporting the Government to undertake an awareness raising media campaign to increase the reach of social assistance.

RELATED LINKS


Press release: New survey on barriers to access social services: www.unicef.org/georgia/media_17542.html

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ABSTRACT
A lack of suitable costing and impact projections for the social protection sector has presented a major limitation for social policy dialogue in Senegal. In 2010, two simulation tools were identified to examine policy options, affordability and sustainability of a national cash transfer programme for children under five years of age. The combination of two tools – the ILO-UNICEF social protection costing tool, and the ADePT-SP World Bank tool – allowed the examination of short term and long-term scenarios for the scope and coverage of a potential cash transfer intervention. The simulation results suggest targeting mechanisms based on geographical and categorical methods including targeting all households with a child under five in the 15 poorest rural districts in Senegal. This targeting scheme will also be more effective than other government policies such as food and energy subsidies for the poorest population. This experience particularly recognizes the contribution of specific social protection costing tools that supports UNICEF, national policy practitioners and international partners to discuss and assess social policy options in Senegal.

BACKGROUND
Children represent over half of the Senegalese population with a majority of them being poor and vulnerable. According to the Demographic and Health Survey 2005, one in four children under five in Senegal lives in extreme poverty in rural areas while in urban areas, extreme poverty is only three per cent for children under five. Within the poorest quintile, 142 out of 1,000 children die before the age of five years, and one in four children are underweight and present delays in growth. Further, vulnerable children are highly exposed to a variety of shocks, including the recent food price increases, weather and health shocks that can have adverse effects on their development.

As highlighted in various recent reports, including IMF recommendations and a feasibility study for child-sensitive social protection, the introduction of a cash transfer programme as a mechanism to protect vulnerable groups represents a key priority for Senegal. Nevertheless, to date no well-defined and institutionalized social protection programme exists in the country. In this context, in 2010, UNICEF and national partners undertook a simulation exercise to explore the cost and impact of design options for a cash transfer programme, aimed at (1) reducing child poverty in the mid-term; (2) preventing the intergenerational transmission of poverty; and (3) improving health and nutritional outcomes, with a focus on rural children under five. Specifically, the study intended to explore the effectiveness of a mix of different categorical and geographical targeting options to best reach the poorest and most vulnerable children; explore the potential impact of each targeting option on poverty and inequality, and assess the fiscal costs and feasibility of implementing the different design options.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
The first critical step in this process was to create a joint consensus among the partner community through the social protection coordination group, led by UNICEF and government counterparts, on the urgent need to stimulate the costs of a cash transfer programme. The unanimous agreement among the partners has been essential to support debates on social protection with the Ministry of Economy and Finance. In addition, UNICEF initiated participatory discussions with the partners to identify existing tools
for such work. The discussion led to an agreement on the use of (1) the ILO-UNICEF social protection costing tool to enable macro simulations for long-term analysis, and (2) the ADePT-SP World Bank tool\(^\text{20}\) for micro simulations at the household level and short term analysis.

Further, a national institution, Consortium de Recherche en Economie Sociale (CRES), was identified with the relevant capacity to undertake the simulation exercise, together with technical support from UNICEF. An initial training on the two tools involving the World Bank, UNICEF, ILO and the national partners was also organized to further strengthen government’s participation in the simulation exercise.

**Data analysis**

The analysis included a comprehensive literature review on poverty indicators using the latest poverty survey, Enquête de Suivi de la Pauvreté au Sénégal (Survey of Poverty Monitoring in Senegal) [ESPS] 2005-2006, conducted by National Agency of Statistics and Demography (ANSD).\(^\text{21}\) The statistical analysis supported the exploration of categorical and geographical targeting options best suited to the Senegalese context. As the ESPS survey is representative at the district level and by urban and rural areas, it provides essential disaggregated data for the analysis. Up until now, other studies using the ESPS 2005-2006 data in Senegal had only used the data segregated at the regional level. This exercise was the first to make use of the district level disaggregated data available from ESPS.

Using results from the statistical analysis, feasible scenarios for programme design were determined. Micro simulations using the ESPS data were performed to estimate coverage, distribution of benefits, potential impacts and costs of the various programmes. Several programme designs were simulated to explore the potential impact on poverty and inequality, costs and targeting efficiency, using a combination of location and categorical factors (such as a household having a child under five, and for some simulations household size). The macro simulations allowed simulations until 2030 and revealed the costs over time for each of the different scenarios as a percentage of GDP.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

Simulation results suggest targeting mechanisms based on geographical and categorical methods prove to be very effective at reaching the poorest. According to statistical analysis, poverty rates are extremely high for certain geographical locations and categorical groups based on household size. For example, in rural areas in the Ke-Dougou and Tambacounda districts, the poverty rates for households having at least one child under five are 96 per cent and 91 per cent respectively. Moreover, large families in some rural locations have up to 30 per cent higher rates of poverty relative to smaller families. When combining household size and location in rural areas, some groups formed on the basis of these indicators reach a poverty rate as high as 100 per cent. The fact that poverty is highly linked to geographical and household size provides very strong arguments for using these to best reach the poor. Moreover, such a targeting method is simple to implement; does not require advanced institutional capabilities (which may present an important constraint in Senegal); is transparent and easily understood by community members; and has substantially lower implementation costs than for instance a proxy means test method.

More specifically, analysis of the various programme designs simulated suggests that targeting all households that have a child under five in the 15 poorest rural districts in Senegal would result in a very efficient targeting scheme. For instance, such targeting would provide benefits to one in four children under five (approximately 534,000 children) while covering 37 per cent of all poor children under five, and 56 per cent of extremely poor children in Senegal. Further, the leakage rate would only be 11 per cent, a relatively small rate compared to social programmes implemented in other countries.

When comparing this targeting scheme to other government policies to help the poor, such as the food and energy subsides, the latter are considerably less effective at reaching the poorest. Policy measures to protect the poor from rising energy and food prices in 2007 had a cost of around three per cent of GDP, while being inefficient at reaching the poorest.\(^\text{22}\) On the other hand, the proposed programme would have a cost of 0.55 per cent of GDP, while 15 per cent of the benefits would go the households in the top 40 per cent of the welfare distribution,


\(^{21}\) Further details on the ESPS are available at http://www.ansd.sn/publications/rapports_enquetes_etudes/enquetes/Rapport_ESPS.pdf

\(^{22}\) Almost 55 per cent of benefits were received by households in the top 40 per cent of the welfare distribution
and 67 per cent would go to the poorest two quintiles of the distribution.

**INNOVATION**

This study is a first attempt in Senegal to analyse the cost and impact of social safety nets on poverty, especially focusing on children under five. The simulation exercise reveals that the design and implementation of child-sensitive social protection systems can be significantly enhanced with the use of tools and methodologies that assess financial sustainability and affordability of different policy options.

The combination of two different tools for social protection simulations, at the macroeconomic level (population and budget) and at the microeconomic level (household poverty impact), bring an added value to the exercise. Such combination permits analysis at two levels of impact (budget at the state level and household level), including both a one year impact and long term impact. Moreover, since the two tools were developed by various credible institutions (ILO-UNICEF and World Bank), it gives the results additional leverage and facilitates high level discussions and advocacy around their implementation. In particular, there is technical validation of the quality of models used for simulations.

Further, UNICEF’s position as the lead of the social protection coordination body in Senegal for the last two years has provided the organization increased visibility and credibility as a strong actor in the social protection sector and has supported the strengthening of its key partnerships. For instance, this helped to overcome an initial challenge related to the limited availability of data. The existing strong collaborations with the international development community - particularly the World Bank and ILO - and with the ANSD, made it possible to acquire the data needed for the research project.

**POTENTIAL APPLICATION**

The ILO-UNICEF social protection costing tool can be used in various contexts. For instance, it can provide direction to introducing a new benefit, enhancing an existing benefit or estimating the expected poverty gap reduction. For instance, in Argentina, the tool has been used to refine the existing social protection system. In Haiti, the tool is being used to determine available social protection options. In addition, the tool is being applied in Egypt, Tunisia and Madagascar.

Critical factors that support replicating the simulation exercise in Senegal include availability of the required data and the existence of a social policy dialogue among the relevant partners that support the design of the study and promote discussion around its results.

**NEXT STEPS**

The results of the simulations will provide key inputs to enhance policy discussion and options in the country. The findings will be the main input into a study on the impact of the economic crisis on children in Senegal being undertaken by CRES and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. UNICEF will continue the advocacy and dissemination of the results, mainly by presentation to the Inter-ministerial Committee on Social Welfare led by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and to the Consultative Committee of Technical and Financial Partners in 2011.

The Ministry of Family, in charge of the National Initiative for Social Protection, is currently working on identifying a national pro-poor households targeting system. Based on the results of the simulation exercise, UNICEF will provide technical assistance to the Ministry to identify beneficiaries and the targeting mechanism. Together with CRES, UNICEF is also developing a procedures manual which will provide step-by-step guidance on developing a targeting mechanism. Following UNICEF and World Bank’s discussion, the simulation results should also be included in World Bank’s Review of Social Safety Nets, currently under way.

**RELATED LINKS**

Information and documents related to Social Protection in Senegal: sites.google.com/site/senegalprotectionsociale/
ABSTRACT
To overcome the effects of the global economic crisis, the Serbian government considered a variety of fiscal reform measures, including an increase in Value Added Tax (VAT). An ex-ante analysis of the announced taxation reform was conducted by UNICEF in 2010, which highlighted the effects of the proposed changes on the most vulnerable groups, particularly families with children. The evidence enabled UNICEF to open a public debate that explored the possible costs and benefits of the proposed reform and called for submission of more evidence on the potential impact before proceeding with the reform process. The Serbian experience is a successful example of being able to raise children’s issues with the Ministry of Finance and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) in a middle income country. Moving beyond an exclusive focus on social expenditure and towards revenue generation as a key element of social policy represents an important step ahead.

BACKGROUND
In late 2010, as part of several measures to mitigate the negative effects of the global economic crisis, the Ministry of Finance, together with its team of experts, announced its intention to conduct a structural reform of the tax system in Serbia. The main purpose of the proposed reform was to reduce the burden of non-wage labour costs by abolishing social contributions that are used to finance state health care and unemployment benefits. In turn, these revenue losses would be offset through the adjustment of indirect taxation, namely by increase in VAT by almost four per cent.

From the outset it was clear that the reduction of wage taxes and contributions would benefit employed persons (and their families) to a certain extent (depending on tax incidence). Due to low employment rates among the poor and vulnerable groups there was a high probability that these groups would not benefit considerably from wage tax reduction. On the other hand, it was apparent that the increase in the VAT might discourage consumption of the entire Serbian population. In the medium term, it was possible to argue that these measures would increase employment. At the same time it was not realistic to expect an increase in employment of certain marginalized groups such as Roma, farmers, persons with disability, people living on pensions among others. Further, the proposed tax reform was not widely discussed nor was any research on its potential social impacts commissioned by the Government. At a time when poverty rates were increasing at an alarming rate due to the crisis, UNICEF’s concern was that families with children, who have consistently higher rates and depth of poverty than the majority of the population, would be the first to be hit by any negative effects of the potential reform.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
UNICEF Serbia commissioned the Centre for Liberal-Democratic Studies, a local think-tank, to conduct an ex-ante impact study of the proposed taxation reform in 2010. The study aimed to (1) assess how the poor segments of the population, especially families with children and members of other vulnerable groups, would fare should these tax changes be put into effect; (2) propose compensatory measures that would alleviate any adverse effect of the proposed tax changes on these groups; and (3) generate public discussion that would encourage decision-makers to view the reform with an equity lens, taking into account the perspectives of vulnerable groups before initiating the reform process.

A tax benefit micro-simulation model based on the Household Budget Survey in Serbia was used to compute the effects of the proposed changes in tax policy on individual
population groups. This model made it possible to analyse the effects of the relevant policies on the consumption of the population as a basic indicator for the standard of living and well-being of the population.

The findings of the study were used to stimulate a public debate, especially among eminent experts in this field, including representatives of the Ministry of Finance who were the authors of the reform proposal, experts from research institutions and think-tanks, including the IMF and the World Bank. Participants were invited to engage in a discussion on the recommendations of the report and to share their thinking on the proposed tax reform. The robust discussion led to the creation of a proposal highlighting the specific impact of the tax reform that should be explored before going further with the reform process.

After the meeting, discussion and vigorous debate continued via an e-mail group that included the Minister of Finance at that time, IMF and World Bank representatives. The participants split into two groups as supporters or opponents to the suggested reform and have continued development of arguments and evidence to document why certain positions are preferable. The discussion was not shared with the media owing to its technical and political nature. The issue became a much discussed topic among experts and while there was not necessarily agreement on the type of reform needed, all the key experts informally expressed appreciation for having an ex-ante analysis available.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The analysis revealed a number of potential negative effects for the living standards of the most vulnerable groups and predicted an increase in poverty for all age groups. The poverty of children aged 15 years and under in Serbia, whose poverty rates by age are the highest, would increase by 10 per cent. Overall, it was estimated that during 2010 the combined effects of the crisis and tax reform could increase the absolute poverty rate to over nine per cent. At the same time, there was no certainty that in the longer run the reform would bring about positive economic outcomes.

As of May 2011, more than eight months after the debate on the effects of the taxation reform, the proposed changes have not been carried out in the Serbian tax system. While the analysis and advocacy cannot be attributed as the main factors that prevented the implementation of the reform nor can it guarantee that any such reform will not take place in the future, the analysis was able to engage all relevant and affected stakeholders, including key institutional players, to have an in-depth discussion and take into account all aspects of the potential impact of the announced reform. UNICEF was able to capitalize on its convening power and its strong reputation in voicing the rights of children to bring together partners, conduct advocacy and make the policy process more participatory and consensual around the situation of the most vulnerable population.

**INNOVATION**

Moving beyond an exclusive focus on social expenditure and towards revenue generation as a key element of social policy and as a primary redistribution mechanism represents an important step ahead.

The Serbian experience is a successful example of innovative engagement in a middle income country which presents new and different sets of challenges for fulfilling children's rights. It shows the potential of engaging directly with the Ministry of Finance and IFIs – around issues that are not the expected domains of UNICEF's expertise – fiscal policies – but where nonetheless UNICEF is able to add significant value to the policy process.

**Key elements of success:** The Serbian experience reaffirms the power of sound evidence and research, even if all stakeholders do not necessarily agree with its specific content. This, in turn, highlights the significant gains that UNICEF can obtain by positioning itself as an authoritative knowledge organization. Fostering public discussion on an issue of vital importance for the nation can contribute to promoting a more consultative and evidence-based approach to policy changes that affect children.

**POTENTIAL APPLICATION**

Ex-ante analyses of the impact of policies on children from a perspective of equity and poverty could be replicated in any other country and applied to any other sector and policy. Demonstration of UNICEF’s ability to engage with the Ministry of Finance and the IFIs on politically sensitive issues such as taxation expands the potential for its further engagement with these key actors on other areas of critical importance for children. Eventually, fiscal policies can be a very powerful and efficient redistributive instrument, if well managed.
The case of Serbia highlights the potential in this area, especially in the context of middle income countries with large inequalities.

The successful replication of this experience requires regular monitoring of policy developments in order to recognize and seize opportunities to bring in the perspectives of children. Further, more efforts should be invested in capacity development of staff in the area of public finance management and availability of technical assistance that could support follow-up technical discussions.

It is important to recognize that measuring the impact of such initiatives may be difficult, as will clearly attributing the results to UNICEF. In addition, where there is a general lack of transparency around policy-making, it may be possible, in some cases, to miss the window of opportunity for similar analyses to be conducted before major policy decisions are made. In this regard, it is essential for UNICEF to quickly mobilize high quality technical assistance to carry out such projects.

**NEXT STEPS**

This experience has clearly demonstrated the value of ex-ante analysis of new policy proposals and will be applied more systematically in UNICEF Serbia’s work. It has also reinforced the practice of evidence-based policy making within the government. UNICEF will continue to advocate for this approach with its government partners. It will continue to pay careful attention to recognizing new policy development processes and assessing their impact on the most vulnerable children and families.
INNOVATION – SOCIAL BUDGETING

SOUTH AFRICA

Tracking public expenditure and assessing service quality in Early Childhood Development

ABSTRACT

The Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) of Early Childhood Development (ECD) is the first study of its kind in South Africa and the first PETS on ECD globally. The study is a pioneering attempt to come to grips with the magnitude, scope, quality and resources in the rapidly growing ECD sector in South Africa. The study demystifies whether public resources reach the intended beneficiaries (children) and are used effectively to achieve the intended objective, viz. the early development of children. The study’s design is of particular interest as it modified the internationally accepted methodologies for public expenditure tracking and assessing quality of service delivery, to suit the complex South African ECD sector. The results of the study highlight that the rapid expansion of ECD in recent years must be followed by a greater emphasis on quality of delivery and improving monitoring of services and finances. The recommendations of the study, coupled with evidence-based and timely advocacy by UNICEF South Africa have opened the doors for an ECD policy review.

BACKGROUND

The Government of South Africa has invested substantially in ECD since reforms took off in 1997. The ECD sector comprises of Grade R for children 5 to 6 years old and pre-Grade R for children 0 to 4 years old. The Government support for ECD has taken mainly two forms: (a) expansion of Grade R in public schools, funded by the Department of Education (DOE); and (b) subsidies by the Department of Social Development (DSD) to private community-based ECD facilities serving mainly children too young for Grade R.

Subsidies from the Government enabled a 2.5 fold increase in enrolment of children in community-based ECD facilities from 2003 to 2009. Enrolment in Grade R also increased. In view of this progress, it was essential to find out whether subsidies were being converted into services for children and the extent to which the marginalized benefited from them. It was also necessary to understand whether the benefits extended beyond basic care of children, for example, did the subsidies help to better prepare children for learning at school? Amidst this backdrop, UNICEF, DSD, DOE and the National Treasury commissioned PETS in the South African ECD sector in 2009.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Adapting PETS to the South African ECD context

PETS is concerned with tracking public expenditure through multiple administrative and political layers. In the context of the ECD sector in South Africa, the study required the design and appropriate modification of internationally accepted methodologies for PETS. Firstly, the institutional system for funding ECD in South Africa is quite complex, with the responsibility divided between DOE and DSD. Secondly, the funds are not allocated at the national level but rather at the provincial level, with a few provinces having further delegated responsibility to their own district structures to allocate funds to ECD.

This institutional complexity is further exacerbated as many Grade R children attend facilities in community-based institutions instead of public schools. In community facilities, Grade R children sometimes share classes with younger children (0 to 4 years). In addition, there are a small number of pre-Grade R children also accommodated in public schools. This makes public expenditure tracking in ECD facilities extremely difficult. To complicate matters further, provinces have different approaches to funding, levels of support, payment systems, monitoring and provision of learning materials. The PETS in South African ECD sector sought to
track diversion of funds within this complex institutional structure.

Further, given the type of intergovernmental arrangement for the delivery of ECD services in South Africa, where facilities receive funds directly, tracking the flow of funds must ascertain the final beneficiaries of the subsidies on ECD. Who is benefitting from the expenditure, children, or the owners of community facilities who receive the subsidies? In other words, are the subsidies really converted into services benefitting children? The usual PETS question about whether funds reach the facility without being siphoned off by other levels of government is investigated, in addition to investigating whether there is a possible ‘profit’ made by owners of community facilities. Therefore, the ECD PETS also tracked payments to other caregivers, payments for food quality and food volume, payments for learning and teaching support materials and consumables in the teaching process. This aspect of PETS is unique to the South African ECD context.

The study strategy and design
Managing the study process was critical. The emphasis was on building a trust-based relationship with key government departments to see the study through to the end, and more importantly, to ensure that the recommendations receive attention at appropriate levels of decision-making.

To that end, ability to manage complex relationships was core to the management of the ECD PETS. Formal structures, including a National Steering Committee (including mainly national managers) and a Reference Group (including national and provincial managers) were essential to resolving design and implementation problems. Informal links with senior government officials helped to strengthen trust among all parties. Validation workshops were organized at critical stages of the project to increase ownership of data and findings.

A joint communication strategy was also prepared with the government well before the study was finalized. The communication strategy maps out various channels of communication to effectively share the study process and findings.

The study methodology involved two steps, (1) collection of institutional financial and service data obtained from the three provinces and the National Treasury and (2) a facility survey on finance and service quality. The facility survey was carried out in three provinces which were selected based on their wealth status. Province 1 is a richer province, Province 2 a moderately poor one and Province 3 a large and very poor province. Hence the survey reflected the broad spectrum of experiences in ECD. Given the multiplicity of institutional contexts, funding structures and oversight mechanisms in different parts of the ECD sector, the survey comprised of three separate samples collected from a total of 700 facilities, including Grade R in 300 public schools, 300 registered community-based ECD facilities and 90 unregistered community-based ECD centres. Each facility had its own separate questionnaire. The project can thus be seen as three linked surveys. Questionnaires were designed by a team from the University of Stellenbosch, in cooperation with the survey team and the technical steering committee (comprising of UNICEF, DSD, DOE and the National Treasury). The facility survey contained elements of both a PETS and a Quality of Service Delivery Survey (QSDS), so as to track and measure resources, their use and transfers at various levels of the administrative structure and to allow an analysis of the types and quality of services offered.

During the project, several constraints had to be overcome in the implementation of the methodology. Firstly, sample provinces did not have adequate datasets on types of ECD facilities. UNICEF had to spend considerable time and resources to update and clean the datasets of provinces. Secondly, a change from a paper-based government accounting system to an electronic one meant spending a lot of time reconciling historical financial data. Thirdly, despite piloting of survey instruments, collecting financial data proved more difficult than anticipated because of very poor bookkeeping by ECD facilities. Accounting experts had to be brought in to validate the financial data. Data on quality of service delivery only provides a snapshot view. More qualitative approaches are required to fully capture the breadth of issues associated with quality of ECD services.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
The study has generated rich results that are supporting UNICEF to reframe the ECD policy dialogue in South Africa. The study concludes that the rapid expansion of ECD in recent years must be followed by a greater emphasis on quality of delivery and improving monitoring of services and finances. The government must continue to
complement private community-based provisions. It should monitor bookkeeping and disqualify ECD organizations who consistently fail to keep proper financial records from receiving subsidies. Formal community oversight mechanisms in community-based facilities should be encouraged and expanded. Further, regular audits must be undertaken to ensure that enrolment numbers used to determine subsidies are not inflated. In addition, the following key findings have emerged from the study:

• The ECD sector relies on a combination of government subsidies and fees. Subsidies considerably reduce the outlays of poor parents and thereby make ECD much more affordable. Without them, many facilities may not be able to continue offering these services. Incidence analysis shows fairly good targeting of subsidies, with the poorest three quintiles benefiting the most from the programme.
• More than a third of all total expenditure in community-based ECD facilities is not specified and potentially allows for expenditure diversion in the absence of detailed and precise bookkeeping.
• Poor quality of service, an indirect leakage, was observed in many facilities.

An analytical report on the study with an extensive executive summary has been developed and disseminated widely. To draw attention to the recommendations of the study, the National Steering Committee and the Reference Group, have been critical in raising the findings among several decision-making layers in the government. UNICEF worked closely with the government, including conducting several brainstorming sessions on the recommendations to create a buy-in around the results of the study. This has led to generation of an ECD PETS Action Plan agreed in the stakeholders meeting, involving senior government officials in the DOE and DSD. The Action Plan covers implementation of recommendations around the overall ECD policy; recordkeeping, financial management and facility management; community support and oversight; monitoring attendance; staff issues and organizational capacity; and infrastructure development.

INNOVATION
The study was a first attempt to come to grips with the scope, quality and resources in ECD in South Africa; and particularly to understand whether public resources reach the intended beneficiaries and were used effectively. It also allowed an analysis of the fiscal incidence of spending on ECD, i.e. whether public spending on ECD was reaching those most in need of it. The innovation aspects of the study relate to the modification of the usual PETS methodology to answer questions around benefits of subsidies to children (and not just facilities). In addition, the study successfully applied the PETS methodology to a cross-sectoral issue (ECD is administered by DOE and DSD in South Africa), the first such attempt in the country.

Key learnings from this process: The thinking around how to persuade the government to act upon the study’s recommendations began right from the beginning. It was critical to design a study process that facilitated governmental buy-in when the results became visible. Further, applying the PETS methodology to a cross-sectoral issue requires a combination of interventions managed at various levels. Additional qualitative approaches are required to fully capture the breadth of issues associated with quality of ECD services.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
This experience highlights that it is possible to track expenditure on cross-sectoral issues that have an implementation gap. The present methodology can be adapted to various sectors within South Africa and beyond. In applying the PETS methodology to ECD programmes in other countries, it is important to consider which sectors are responsible for the provision of ECD in that context. A clear institutional analysis of services provided per sector is necessary to design a robust study. This study can also be undertaken in other situations where there is a provision of direct subsidies by the government.

Other countries where social budgeting exercises around the ECD sector have been undertaken include Kenya, Malawi and Jordan, while Nepal and Tanzania have undertaken costing exercises around the ECD sector.
**NEXT STEPS**
The engagement with the Government has been carefully managed, opening doors for policy development around ECD. It has also created space for UNICEF to provide input in the next wave of ECD reform. The Government is currently developing an ECD Policy Review Paper, which will be presented in March 2012.

**RELATED LINKS**
Tracking public expenditure and assessing service quality in Early Childhood Development in South Africa:
http://www.unicef.org/southafrica/resources_8119.html

Additional literature on PETS

www.u4.no/themes/pets/main.cfm
ABSTRACT
Available data in Trinidad and Tobago reveals that investments in social development have been insufficient and are not yielding positive changes rapidly enough, especially for children. Further, in the context of the global economic crisis, children are at even higher risk of being neglected in policy responses. To address this situation, UNICEF commissioned a study on child responsive budgeting in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009. The study provides an overview of the condition of children in the country which supports the development of a framework on child budgeting. By applying international experience on child budgeting to the local environment, the study has been successful in drawing attention to a relatively new area of study in Trinidad and Tobago. The resulting paper has been successful in leading to the development of several other policy papers by igniting a national debate around children’s wellbeing and equity. At present, the policy papers are being used in the development of the National Poverty Alleviation Strategy. By advocating around the recommendations of the policy papers, UNICEF has been able to gain commitment of the Ministry of Health to analyze its financial allocation to children’s health starting 2012. As a next step, UNICEF is undertaking cost-benefit analysis of existing child-related programmes and policies to help identify priority areas for investment.

BACKGROUND
Trinidad and Tobago takes pride in being a high middle income country that has increasingly invested in social programmes and in children’s issues. However, development indicators continue to reveal sluggish progress or limited advancement towards reducing child mortality and delivering children’s basic needs in recent years. For instance, while under-five mortality rates decreased between 1990 and 2001, they remained constant through 2005, and started to increase in 2008. The infant mortality rate has also followed a similar pattern. Primary education indicators and education expenditure have also worsened in recent years.23

Available data reveals that investments in social development, especially for children, have been insufficient and are not delivering positive changes at a fast enough pace. There is often a lack of financial resources for programmes that either directly or indirectly impact on children, including a lack of prioritization and budget analysis of programmes. In response, UNICEF commissioned a study on child responsive budgeting in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009. Undertaking this initiative became even more important in light of the global economic crisis, which puts strain on public finances while increasing the vulnerability of children.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
The child responsive budgeting study was commissioned to the University of West Indies, under the guidance of renowned economist Professor Dennis Pantin (now deceased). The professor’s involvement in the study added great value as he had in-depth knowledge of governance structures and had access to national data that was difficult to obtain. He had also been the leading budget analyst of the Government’s annual budgets for several years. UNICEF believed Professor Pantin’s recommendations would have credibility with the Government and national policy experts. In undertaking the study, the professor was assisted by three Doctoral and several Master’s students in the Department of Economics.

The study was developed in two parts, focusing on (a) trends in child responsive budgeting in Trinidad and Tobago before and after the global economic crisis; and (b) policy and budgetary recommendations to safeguard the rights of children in the country after the global economic crisis. The first part of the study reviewed the present state of children in Trinidad and Tobago. It looks at demographic events together with national poverty trends, including health and education. The deprivations method of measuring poverty was applied specifically to assess the state of child poverty and health. The second part of the study involved an extensive review of international experiences in child budgeting such as in South Africa, India (in the State of Tamil Nadu), Jamaica, Viet Nam, Kazakhstan, Mozambique, Ecuador and Brazil. It also included an institutional analysis of the budget making process, including a description of ministries and other public bodies whose mandates exclusively or partially address child related policy issues and expenditure.

The study also includes a detailed analysis of expenditure on children from 2000 to 2009. The data for fiscal analysis was made available from draft estimates of the National Development Programme and the Recurrent Expenditure of the National Budget for the selected years. The study concludes with specific recommendations for addressing improvements in the status of children within a framework of a proposed child-responsive national budget system.

To take forward the recommendations of the study, as the chair of the UN MDG Theme Group, UNICEF undertook extensive advocacy with the Ministry of People and Social Development (MOPSD) and other key ministries. This resulted in the development of two UN joint programmes in Trinidad and Tobago, (a) poverty alleviation (MDG1) and (b) social statistics and data management. UNICEF continuously raised the issue of child poverty in the joint programme on poverty alleviation. However, the MOPSD was concerned about the lack of available data on this issue. Using the paper on child responsive budgeting as a base, UNICEF volunteered to develop a paper on child poverty in Trinidad and Tobago. At the request of the Permanent Secretary of MOPSD in 2010, the paper was broadened to focus on child wellbeing.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The child responsive budgeting study provides an overview of the condition of children in Trinidad and Tobago, which forms the basis for developing a framework on child budgeting. The study found that the existence of several ministries with child-related responsibilities created difficulties in coordinating management of a children’s agenda and led to fragmentation of resources. Although the Government had increased budgetary allocation on children’s issues over the years, most of it was being used on recurrent items (such as paying salaries). The study recommended increased engagement in targeting and tracking expenditure on children, following allocation of resources.

The child responsive budgeting paper has been successful in creating momentum leading to development of several other policy papers on children’s issues. The child wellbeing paper was presented in a joint UN, Government, university seminar in 2009. It is currently being used by the Government in the formulation of the National Poverty Alleviation Strategy, which has a strong focus on child poverty. In addition, the child wellbeing paper has led to the development of another paper ‘Achieving the well-being of all children in Trinidad and Tobago with an equity strategy’. This paper is in response to the equity agenda articulated by UNICEF in 2010. The paper was presented to the Inter-Ministerial Research Council of all Ministries, chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of MOPSD in October 2010.

This paper assesses the progress made by Trinidad and Tobago with respect to its children. Two human development and interrelated frameworks - the MDGs and the Deprivation model - are used to assess the situation using available data. The paper particularly highlights the situation of the poorest 20 per cent of the population. It proposes an equity-based strategy to achieve child wellbeing, for instance, by strengthening the national framework on children issues; undertaking qualitative analysis of the impact of all fiscal expenditure; and maintaining an up-to-date database on children. This paper is currently being used to inform the research, policy and programming agenda of the Ministry.

By highlighting the state of infant and under-five mortality using the evidence and analysis captured in various papers, UNICEF was able to raise children’s health issues at several meetings with the Government. During the elections in 2010, UNICEF also shared advocacy material detailing this issue with the political parties. On taking office, the new Government launched *The Children’s Life Fund* to provide emergency medical care and surgery for children for those medical procedures which cannot be accessed in Trinidad and Tobago. The goal is to raise approximately USD 17 million under the Fund. The Prime Minister personally focused on children’s issues during the election campaign and has committed to development of a decree on child protection. While this development cannot solely be attributed to UNICEF, the agency did contribute to raising national discussion around children’s health. In addition, during the stakeholder analysis part of the national situation analysis process in 2011, the new Minister of Health committed to refocus the Ministry’s efforts on

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24 Data was used from the Population and Housing Census, national survey exercises including the Survey of Living Conditions, the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MiCS) and the Continuous Sample Survey of Population.
analyzing financial allocations on children's health. The analysis will begin 2012.

The child budgeting paper has also led to the development of academic capacity in Trinidad and Tobago around budgeting for children. The involvement of the University of West Indies in the development of the paper has resulted in the Sustainable Economic Development Unit in the Department of Economics having three people with the capacity to continue the study and initiate similar work. Some of the Masters students who were involved in data collection and analysis are interested to explore child responsive budgeting as an academic theme which was previously not an area of investigation in the University. Some of the Masters students are currently involved in the preparation of the situation analysis of children and women in Trinidad and Tobago. The University has also committed to undertake a national situation analysis of children and women annually. Given the University’s involvement in the child budgeting study, their involvement will help create a sound cost-benefit analysis of children’s programmes and policies in the country. UNICEF and the University have also begun preparing quarterly policy briefs on resources for children.

**INNOVATION**

In the absence of complete national datasets, the study was able to apply international experience to the local environment and develop a realistic study on what is a relatively new area of investigation in Trinidad and Tobago. Further, the study was able to raise the equity issue by bringing in issues of children in the poorer quintiles to the fore, especially demonstrating that they have not been benefitting from increased financial allocations to children. The Government’s willingness to look into infant and under-five mortality highlights the emergence of a shift in political thinking on the issue of children’s health.

**POTENTIAL APPLICATION**

In replicating this experience, it would be beneficial to involve the Parliament and the Ministry of Finance at the outset, to deepen political ownership and also to maintain and broaden stakeholders’ involvement in decisions around child responsive budgeting. Depending on the context, media may prove to be an effective tool to influence the Government’s decision-making process on child budgeting.

**NEXT STEPS**

In June 2011, a new Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development was created, which has a direct mandate to work on children’s issues. UNICEF has already proposed interventions to the new Minister to deepen the current portfolio on child rights, child protection, education and advocacy. In 2012, UNICEF will particularly focus on assisting the new Ministry to build stronger links between child development strategies and budgeting. To this end, cost-benefit analysis of existing child-related programmes will be developed to help identify priority areas for investment. The cost-benefit analysis of the national ECD programme is underway. UNICEF will support the new Ministry to publish and disseminate annual progress reports on children with details of budgetary allocation and expenditure, a few months before the national annual budget presentation in 2012. This could serve as a crucial vehicle for accountability and transparency, enabling changes in policies or implementation approaches to deliver results for children.

UNICEF will continue to strengthen its partnerships with the Ministry of Health, the WHO and PAHO (Pan American Health Organization) to develop a robust strategic plan for children’s health using The Children’s Life Fund Initiative as a catalyst. As a first step in this direction, in 2012 UNICEF will undertake in-depth research on the situation of children and infant mortality in the country.

**RELATED LINKS**

The current and projected likely impact of the global economic crisis on Trinidad and Tobago economy


Child Responsive Budgeting Study

CHAPTER II
ADVOCACY FOR CHILD-FOCUSED POLICIES
INNOVATION – ADVOCACY FOR CHILD-FOCUSED POLICIES

MEXICO
Making visible the impact of the economic crisis on children and adolescents

ABSTRACT
2009 was a complex year for Mexico. Besides an increase in violence stemming from fighting between and against organized crime and the outbreak of influenza A (H1N1), the impact of the financial and economic crisis hit the country particularly hard. UNICEF was concerned that the impact on children in particular might be harmful and long-lasting, and yet the regular course of data collection (such as the census, national surveys among others) would not draw attention to these effects for another two years, since the next round was planned for 2010. Together with the national authority responsible for poverty measurement and social policy evaluation (CONEVAL), UNICEF designed and implemented a strategy aimed at assessing the impact of the economic and financial crisis on children and adolescents in Mexico, providing an evidence-based platform for advocacy and policy response. As a result, UNICEF Mexico has been able to participate in the national discussion of equity-promoting policies and has maintained a focus on children in the country’s response to the global economic crisis.

BACKGROUND
The impact of the global economic downturn was particularly severe in Mexico due to its strong linkages with the US economy, the openness of its financial system and the importance of migrants’ remittances for the national economy. While an economic downturn was already envisaged in the final quarter of 2008, the recession proved to be far more severe than expected. For 2009, Mexico’s real GDP dropped by 6.8 per cent25, four times the drop in the Latin American region.

In addition, the recession was compounded by a major influenza A (H1N1) outbreak in April 2009. A public health emergency was declared by federal authorities leading to precautionary measures such as schools closing for about two weeks, as well as the closure of all commercial and public venues in the country’s capital for an extended period. This disruption affected the tourism sector particularly hard.

Despite the fact that new poverty figures will not be available until mid-2011, it is likely that due to severe recession, poverty increased during 2009 and 2010. Between 2006 and 2008, the poverty increased by 4.8 per cent (from 44.7 to 50.6 million people). Of those, 22.9 million were children, including 9.8 million living in extreme poverty.26 Poverty continues to affect children and adolescents disproportionally (59.5 per cent of children compared to 47.4 per cent of adults).

Given the depth of the crisis, UNICEF was concerned that its impact on children might be particularly harmful and long-lasting. Yet the regular course of data collection would not draw attention to these effects for another two years. In light of the situation, there was an urgent need to focus attention on children’s rights and propose policy recommendations to reverse any harmful consequences associated with the crisis. In addition, the situation presented an opportunity for UNICEF to refocus the policy dialogue on children’s rights in general, leveraging strategic partnerships and ongoing work on child poverty.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
In this context, jointly with CONEVAL, UNICEF designed and implemented a policy advocacy strategy, the main components of which were:

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25 SHCP, Reports on the economic situation, public finance and public debt, Actions and results for the fourth quarter of 2009. Press release 004/2010. México, 29 January 2010. This report also mentions at the macro level there was a quick, albeit modest recovery of growth, rebounding to 5.3 per cent in 2010.
Convening an international forum on the impact of the crisis on children and adolescents in 2009.

Developing a nationally-representative household survey of families with children in 2009 that would be comparable to the methodology of the national household survey in 2008. This could then serve as a baseline to measure the impact of the crises on children and families.


Convening a follow-up international forum in 2010 to present the report and further discuss the impact of the crises on children and adolescents in Mexico and beyond.

The overarching policy advocacy strategy linked specific audiences to key messages and communication channels through which to transmit them. As a first step in knowledge generation, UNICEF developed a household survey and report in partnership with CONEVAL. This report was targeted at a technical audience, including government decision makers and other international actors with influence over social spending and public policies that impact children. Leveraging the technical rigour associated with CONEVAL, combined with the international credibility of UNICEF and the exchange of South-South experiences, the strategy was able to influence a range of actors in favour of children’s rights. At the same time, UNICEF and CONEVAL convened a meeting with government counterparts to present the results of the study bilaterally, in order to encourage a more candid and technical exchange on policy recommendations. Lastly, a media strategy prioritized key messages for the general public that were transmitted through media channels.

Knowledge generation: UNICEF, in partnership with CONEVAL, undertook a nation-wide survey to measure the impact of the crisis on families and children in 2009.

The sample consisted of 1,806 households with members less than 18 years of age. The survey included questions that were comparable to the larger biannual household survey on income and expenditure that is conducted by the National Statistics Institute. In particular, the study analyzed the changes in access to food and other goods, health, school attendance and child labour between 2008 and 2009, among children aged 0 to 17 years.

Partnership building and international exchange: To position children at the centre of the policy response to the crises and to promote debate, UNICEF and CONEVAL organized two international high level fora. In 2009, the International Forum on the Effects of Economic Crisis in Children brought together international experts from Chile, Brazil, and the UK to discuss child-related policy responses with Mexican academia, social institutions and government partners. In 2010, key participants from the Government of Mexico and academia came together with representatives from the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank during the II International Forum on the Effects of Economic Crisis on Children. The discussions centred around the most effective policy responses to protect children in a range of country contexts, with a special emphasis on the analysis of equity implications on crisis effects and policy responses for children.

Knowledge dissemination: Survey results were released in a joint report by UNICEF and CONEVAL in the framework of the II International Forum on the Effects of Economic Crisis on Children. Among the main findings of the survey was that from 2008 to August 2009, households with members less than 18 years of age experiencing severe food insecurity increased from 8 to 17 per cent. On a positive note, the survey reported, there were no changes in school attendance and a decrease in the number of working children between 5 and 17 years of age. It is important to note that more than half of the households included in the survey sample perceived a decrease in their income, and also reported difficulties in being able to afford food, health and education for children and adolescents.

Policy advocacy and dialogue: Besides the 2009 and 2010 high-level international events, UNICEF and CONEVAL presented the results of the survey to key high level counterparts from the Ministry of Health, Seguro Popular (a health insurance scheme for self-employed population), the National Welfare System (DIF) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in order to draw attention to the main findings of the survey and stimulate specific policy responses among decision makers.

27 www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/La_ninez_y_la_crisis_CONEVAL_UNICEF.pdf
**Media strategy:** UNICEF’s communications plan, which was closely coordinated with its partner CONEVAL, aimed to place children’s rights on the table during discussions of policy response. The communication plan targeted influential people and the general public, with the understanding that public interest can be an important tool or strategy in influencing decision makers. Depending on the intended audience, these messages were adapted and communicated through media channels, bilaterally to government partners, or to key people of influence in the policy arena, including other international organizations. In 2009, key messages highlighted the importance of the impact of the crisis on children and preserving critical social spending, while in 2010 they communicated the observed impact based on the survey results.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

As a result of these efforts, UNICEF contributed to the national discussion on equity-promoting policies. The comprehensive advocacy strategy centered on communicating key messages to the media and targeted decision-makers. As a result of this outreach, both international high level events and the joint report on the results of the survey conducted by UNICEF and CONEVAL achieved extensive media coverage, highlighting children’s issues during the crisis and positioning UNICEF as a knowledge leader in the area of child poverty analysis in Mexico.

In 2009, within the framework of the first International Forum, UNICEF and the other participants took the opportunity to reinforce their advocacy message to protect children by arguing against budget cuts to social expenditure and putting children and adolescents at the centre of national efforts to mitigate the impact of the crisis. In the context of this discussion, an intense budgetary debate in the Congress led to increased funds for Oportunidades\(^28\) and approval to expand its coverage to one million additional families in 2010. For the first time in its 12 years of existence, the programme will provide benefits to children from 0-9 years of age.

In addition, UNICEF’s partnership with CONEVAL has been strengthened by the success of the joint initiatives, facilitating on-going work and bringing UNICEF into discussions with other relevant partners concerned with poverty measurement and alleviation, such as the World Bank. The work on the impact of the crises facilitated partnership with the government in other areas of policy work not usually associated with UNICEF, such as child poverty analysis and social spending on children.

**INNOVATION**

The technical innovation included developing a survey especially designed to focus on the most urgent issues affecting children in context of the crisis, with questions linked to a pre-existing national survey. This provided a basis for comparing the results to a baseline that had already been established with similar methodology. Moving quickly to take advantage of a political window of opportunity, UNICEF was able to leverage existing alliances to shine a spotlight on how the crisis could impact children, and what the government should do to protect children’s rights. This was facilitated by putting in place an overarching policy advocacy strategy from the beginning that guided the communication of key messages throughout the engagement.

Working with CONEVAL was key to the success of this initiative as the institution is internationally recognized for its technical expertise in statistics and poverty measurement, and as an impartial actor in the field of policy analysis and evaluation. Influencing them to focus on the impact on children and adolescents was very effective in being able to direct the crisis impact debate on this group. The policy advocacy strategy that supported the report and both events included targeted media and communication work, highlighting the measured impacts of the crisis on children and the importance of considering this impact in designing policy responses.

**POTENTIAL APPLICATION**

The technique of linking a survey focused on measuring the impact of the crisis on children and adolescents to the pre-existing national survey data could be used not only to see the impact of crises on families with children, but also the impact of specific policies – or lack of policies – on children and adolescents. By adapting modules from existing survey instruments, this method ensures comparability and also saves the time and cost of a new survey design. This approach could be used among groups of extreme vulnerability (for example, indigenous families, families with high levels of marginalization) to measure impact among sub-sections of the population to ensure equitable

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28 Oportunidades is a government social assistance programme in Mexico. It is designed to target poverty by providing cash payments to families in exchange for regular school attendance, health clinic visits and nutritional support.
programme response. In the case of the crisis response survey in 2009, the project ensured nationally representative results, however, the sample size did not allow for disaggregation of sub-groups. It could be worthwhile in other situations to weigh the cost of a larger sample size against the ability to highlight impact on specific groups.

The success of the initiative hinged on the reputation of CONEVAL for being both technically competent and politically impartial. This allowed UNICEF the political space to disseminate key messages on the potential impact of the crisis on children, the importance of considering children in particular, and the survey results of observed impact translated into policy recommendations. In this sense, a first consideration of whether this innovation can be replicated in other contexts is whether there exists a partner with whom UNICEF could collaborate to increase credibility and ideally ensure that government does not dismiss or discredit critical findings. Another important consideration regards to South-South cooperation: does the country see itself as a leader in its region? Would the government therefore be motivated by comparisons on child rights issues? In the case of Mexico, would other Latin American countries, middle-income countries and/or other OECD member nations provide a basis for comparison - and also experience sharing - on child rights issues?

The final considerations have to do with communication, as the success of the advocacy strategy will depend in part on having a topic of media interest.

**NEXT STEPS**

As a result of the findings of the survey in particular and the partnership with CONEVAL in general, several lines of future action are currently being explored, such as the following:

- The release of the 2010 census in 2011 is allowing UNICEF and a wide range of academic and non-gov-ernmental actors to make available additional disaggregated data on the same issues to policy makers. In addition UNICEF will provide its own analysis of who and where the most disadvantaged children are in order to target policy responses to them.
- Since publishing the report on the impact of the crisis, UNICEF has established a relationship with the national statistics agency that is responsible for designing and collecting household surveys (INEGI). This will help in influencing data collection systems so that they reveal disparities faced by children.
- UNICEF’s ongoing efforts to promote transparency and accountability, particularly related to social budgeting and expenditure, can also be complemented by this type of methodology. UNICEF is now linking this discussion to its analysis on spending on children in general, in order to propose improved policies that secure maximum resources for children.

**RELATED LINKS**


BACKGROUND
As part of reforms that began in 2010 in Moldova, the national social protection system has changed from a category-based to an income-based social protection system. However, the new system has many weaknesses; for instance it does not target the lowest quintile of population, leaving the most vulnerable families deprived of social safety nets. At the same time, combined with significant increase in the price of energy (heating, electricity and gas), many families with children are at the risk of not being able to ensure adequate living conditions for their children. According to the Household Budget Survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics in 2009, nearly 48 per cent of the households had difficulties in paying for central heating and 18 per cent in paying for electricity. As a result of the global economic crisis, these figures increased to 60 per cent and 23 per cent respectively.

In 2010, the initial draft of the amendment to the Law on Social Aid stipulated that all households with an income less than 1.4 times the Guaranteed Minimum Income (currently 575 lei [USD 50] per adult per month) and which satisfy other eligibility criteria of social support (such as the proxy means test) will be eligible to a monthly payment of 130 lei (USD 12) per household. The initial draft also stipulated that the winter support would be provided in the months of March, November and December. Advocating that the winter support should be applied starting from the month of January instead of March. This is because January and February are the coldest months of the year in Moldova and as a result many children were at risk from lack of adequate heating, which could jeopardize the health and general development of the most vulnerable children.

A team of UNICEF experts on child protection, social protection and communications was formed. The group agreed to undertake a rather low-profile approach, partly dictated by the need to act quickly as the amendment discussions were underway and UNICEF had only about a week to influence the decision. The advocacy efforts were based on evidence available from several studies undertaken by UN agencies and the World Bank around the impact of the economic crisis on poverty and social exclusion.29 UNICEF met with Members of Parliament (MPs) involved in the amendment, as well as the World Bank and DFID (Department for International Development, UK) to stimulate a discussion around the issue. Letters were sent to the Parliamentary Commission on Social Assistance, Family and Health and to the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family detailing the evidence available to support the argument.

ABSTRACT
The recent increase in energy prices has left many Moldovan families unable to afford heating, electricity and gas in the coldest months of the year. The timely intervention of UNICEF Moldova with the Parliament and leverage from international partners ensured that a winter support index was added to calculations of social aid transfers, beginning in January 2011. This allowed a larger number of families with children to receive compensation during winter. By seizing critical opportunities, this experience reaffirms it is possible to influence social spending in favour of children and poor families with minimal resources.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
Upon learning of the suggested amendment to the Law on Social Aid, UNICEF embarked on an urgent initiative, advocating that the winter support should be applied starting from the month of January instead of March. This is because January and February are the coldest months of the year in Moldova and as a result many children were at risk from lack of adequate heating, which could jeopardize the health and general development of the most vulnerable children.

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The main challenge was to convince the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family of this recommendation. In Moldova, pensions and social allowances are annually recalculated in March, so retaining the winter support at that time would reduce recalculation of those eligible for social aid in the winter time. UNICEF’s strong relations with the Parliamentary Commission and active discussions with the Ministry, World Bank and DFID, backed by sound evidence, were critical factors in the Ministry and MPs taking the organization’s recommendation seriously.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
In December 2010, the Government approved implementation of the amendments on the Law on Social Aid and in particular the introduction of winter support from January 2011. The winter support is now provided during November, December, January, February and March.

By starting the winter support in January, a large number of households at the edge of the selection threshold qualified for the winter support. This is because many households dependent on seasonal employment (such as agriculture) have lower income in winter months. While the winter support is not a significant amount, it allows vulnerable families to reduce the burden of constant increases in energy prices. According to preliminary results of focus group discussions held with vulnerable groups (such as Roma households and households with large number of children) within UNICEF assisted projects, the greatest share of social aid received by families with many children is being used for the payment of utilities in the winter.

Further, in the recently hosted Regional Seminar for Parliaments organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and UNICEF in June 2011, the latter facilitated the participation of Moldovan MPs from all political parties. Using this platform, UNICEF stimulated a discussion around social protection of children in Moldova, and examined ways in which the targeting of social aid can be strengthened.

INNOVATION
This experience emphasizes the value of timely advocacy, decisive action and quick execution, even via small advocacy initiatives (such as sending letters to the Parliament and the Ministry and informal lobbying with the MPs). The case re-affirms that by seizing critical opportunities, even with minimal resources it is possible to influence policy debates in favour of children. Building alliances with MPs and development partners, engaging them in debate constructed around critical evidence contributed significantly to the success of the initiative. In the context of the economic crisis, where there is immense pressure on the Government to reduce public spending, this example re-affirms UNICEF’s role in advocating for special protection measures for children.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
In replicating this experience, and as with other advocacy efforts, the following critical elements should be considered:

- Regular monitoring of policy developments and the political environment are necessary to be able to recognize available entry points.
- The availability of timely, robust and credible evidence to make a case for children is imperative.
- Rapid action requires firm decision-making, mobilization of existing strengths (such as networks and alliances) and speaking with a unified voice; and
- Risks in advocacy and decisions regarding advocacy tactics and their arena will vary according to the situation and country context.

NEXT STEPS
By analyzing statistical data and through informal focus group discussions with vulnerable groups, UNICEF Moldova will continue to closely monitor the implementation of the winter support and also the extension and coverage of social aid for the most vulnerable. UNICEF will strengthen discussions with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, World Bank and IMF on the possibility to increase the selection threshold for social aid, improve its coverage for the most vulnerable and keep nominal compensation for families with a large number of children living in rural areas during winter.
ABSTRACT
In its 60th year of working in Turkey, UNICEF is increasingly playing an influential role as an advocate and policy advisor for children’s rights following an equity approach. To this end, in 2010, UNICEF Turkey was able to influence the content of constitutional changes put forward by the government and eventually adopted in a September referendum. The Constitution now explicitly refers to children’s rights and emphasizes the state’s duty to protect children, in addition to the family. This achievement was made possible as a result of the relations UNICEF built with Members of Parliament (MPs) through the Parliamentary Child Rights Monitoring Committee. The Committee itself was established as a result of UNICEF’s advocacy in 2008. Success in influencing constitutional changes encouraged UNICEF to engage with Parliamentarians on the legislative priorities of the Child Rights Monitoring Committee (ECD, budgeting for children, ombudsperson). In addition, in 2011, UNICEF advocated with political parties for the inclusion of strategic child rights issues in the programmes of the political parties ahead of the general elections. This work, which builds on earlier contacts between UNICEF and MPs, has started to generate lessons around how to maximize UNICEF’s influence at the political level in large countries where there is an exhaustive political agenda and several actors in the political environment.

BACKGROUND
Although Turkey is an upper middle income country, it is considered to have large disparities by European standards, especially in relation to children’s issues. While Turkey has a long history of multi-party politics and is a European Union (EU) candidate member, it has continued to lag behind most OECD countries in terms of rights and freedoms and participatory democracy, including institutionalization of children’s rights and mechanisms for upholding them. Nevertheless, the existence of democratic institutions, a competitive political process and the desire of the government to pursue reforms, creates opportunities for change and for influencing change.

UNICEF has largely ended its ‘hands-on’ involvement in programmes in Turkey to provide basic health support and services. It is now aiming to play an influential role in Turkey as an advocate and policy advisor for children’s rights with an equity approach. In this respect, UNICEF benefits from a strong reputation given its 60 years of work in the country. However, its presence and resources are limited when compared with the size of the country, its economy and the large number of actors in the political system. In this scenario, accessing and influencing MPs, ministers, high level bureaucrats and political parties has required considerable and strategic effort. Previously, UNICEF had been involved in advocacy in the political arena on important occasions or when the opportunity had arisen. However, UNICEF is now moving towards a more systematic approach which includes maintaining channels of communication, setting priorities and identifying opportunities further in advance.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
Establishing relationships with MPs
In addition to its contacts with ministries, UNICEF has for some years been developing its relations with the Turkish Parliament. Foundations for a strong relationship with MPs were laid, notably, in the course of UNICEF activities in the areas of children’s participation and child rights monitoring. UNICEF has long supported the activities of Turkey’s provincial child rights committees, made up of children themselves. UNICEF supported the annual meeting of the committee representatives at a Child Forum held in Ankara to coincide with Children’s Day (20 November). In
2006, a number of MPs took up the invitation to attend the opening session of the Child Forum, and from then onwards it became a tradition for the children participating in the Child Forum to visit the Parliament for a dialogue (and a photo call) with their representatives. This was the first milestone that helped UNICEF to forge ties with the MPs interested in children’s issues.

Thereafter, a number of MPs attended a conference on child rights monitoring, held with support from UNICEF, the EU and the Turkish Bar Association in Ankara in April 2008. Several ombudspersons and ex-ombudspersons from European countries also participated in this event. The conference and accompanying activities did not immediately lead to progress in terms of the establishment of a child ombudsperson in Turkey. This is because a 2006 law establishing a general ombudsperson had been overruled by the Constitutional Court, implying that a constitutional amendment would be needed for any kind of ombudsperson to be established. Instead, UNICEF took the opportunity to advocate to MPs interested in children’s issues on the establishment of a Parliamentary Child Rights Monitoring Committee. Such a committee would to some extent fulfill the role of a child ombudsperson until such time this institution is established. The Committee would also give its members more regular access to legislators.

The establishment of the Parliamentary Child Rights Monitoring Committee as a sub-committee of the Health, Labour, Family and Social Affairs Committee, was announced during the 2008 Child Forum. In 2009, UNICEF provided the Committee with technical support in establishing an interactive child rights monitoring website. The website enables children and child rights practitioners to make direct contact with the Committee. Further, in September-October 2010, UNICEF organized a conference on the role of the Parliament in promoting and protecting children’s rights. By providing exposure to the MPs and several international experts on children’s rights, the conference was a catalyst in seeking the Committee’s commitment to key priorities. Overall, this experience led to UNICEF developing a solid relationship with the MPs, which supported UNICEF’s future advocacy efforts in the political arena.

Influencing constitutional amendments
In 2010, the Government undertook an initiative to make a series of changes to the Constitution. The idea was to make the Constitution more liberal in ways that would be in line with EU priorities and a section of public opinion. There was no formal consultative process however; UNICEF learnt details of the proposed changes from the MPs. The familiarity and trust which had developed between UNICEF and MPs during the course of their cooperation around the Committee made it possible for UNICEF to further approach the MPs with inputs into the proposed constitutional changes. The longstanding cooperation between UNICEF and MP’s ensured that the organization’s inputs were welcome and likely to be acted upon. This initiative resulted in inclusion of a reference to children’s rights in the Constitution.

Inclusion of children’s rights issues in programmes of political parties
Success in influencing constitutional changes encouraged UNICEF to advocate for the inclusion of selected, strategic child rights issues in the programmes of the political parties ahead of the general elections in June 2011. The general elections were identified as a major advocacy opportunity in January 2011. At this time, UNICEF also spelt out key advocacy opportunities and issues for the year, linked to its equity orientation and the goals of the new Country Programme of Cooperation (2011-2015).

A working group from various sectors was created to formulate the key strategies of the advocacy campaign around the general elections. The issues prioritized were (a) equity (with a focus on ECD/access to preschool); (b) budgeting for children; and (c) the establishment of a children’s ombudsperson in Turkey, in line with UNICEF’s overall organizational prioritizes. The advocacy tactics were discussed among staff with expertise in various sectors (ECD, education, child protection, social policy and communications) and the UNICEF operations team. For each of the three key issues, two-page fact sheets were drawn up stating very briefly and clearly the issue, the type of action needed, and the impact (benefits) of taking a specific action. A logo was designed to add visual impact. Among the options considered for approaching the political parties were a large-scale conference with representatives.

31 The Child Rights Monitoring Committee’s website: www.cocukhaklari.gov.tr/en
32 Other advocacy opportunities identified for 2011 included UNICEF’s 60th year in Turkey and the discussion of Turkey’s report within the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
tatives from political parties, bilateral meetings with each party, media advertising and publication of an open letter to political parties. At the end it was decided that brief letters and the fact sheets would be sent to all political parties. Four political parties with a good chance of getting representation in the Parliament (based on opinion polls) and senior politicians who are responsible for developing the party programmes were visited and provided with the fact sheets, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Innocenti reports around the three issues. Staff with varying expertise took part in the visits to the political parties, to be able to answer any specific questions which might be asked.

Where necessary, UNICEF called on members of various political parties known through their membership of the Child Rights Monitoring Committee to help expedite appointments. This rather low-profile approach was partly dictated by the need to act quickly once the date of the election had been finalized. In addition, there was some concern that UNICEF should avoid being seen as encouraging unproductive, acrimonious debates between political parties, or taking sides in party politics.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The conference on the role of the Parliament resulted in the Committee adopting a plan of action prioritizing efforts for the (a) establishment of a child ombudsperson; (b) the adoption of a draft law on youth; (c) the expansion of community-based ECD services and (d) the reduction of violence and abuse against children. This outcome owed much to UNICEF’s advocacy around the conference and the quality of the international experts who participated in the conference. This provided credible information and exposure to the MPs interested in children’s issues. The MPs were also introduced to the concept of budgeting for children. The Committee agreed to work towards becoming an independent, permanent standing committee reviewing all draft laws to ensure their compatibility with children’s rights and provide sufficient resources for children in annual government budgets.

Further, in 2010, UNICEF Turkey was able to influence the content of constitutional changes put forward by the government and eventually adopted in a September referendum. The Constitution now explicitly refers to children’s rights and emphasizes the state’s duty to protect children, in addition to the family. UNICEF’s advocacy in the area of constitutional change has contributed to the inclusion of the term ‘children’s rights’ in the title of Article 41 of the Constitution. It has also resulted in rephrasing of this article that obliges the state to protect the family, mothers and children, while also (a) upholding every child’s right to adequate protection and care, and to a direct relationship with his/her parents unless contrary to his/her best interests; and (b) obliging the state to protect children from all forms of abuse and violence.

UNICEF’s intervention provides a broad frame and a rights-based structure to the article, while ensuring it is based on international child rights language. A separate amendment, to Article 74, made the establishment of an ombudsperson possible, albeit without specific reference to a child ombudsperson. The government has subsequently drafted a legislation to establish an ombudsperson institution. This legislation has also been discussed in the Child Rights Monitoring Committee in the Parliament. UNICEF followed this process closely through contacts with MPs and visits to the Parliament. However, the ombudsperson bill did not reach the agenda of the full house before the election.

The changes in the Constitution are a concrete outcome which raises national awareness of and commitment to children’s rights; anchors future advocacy work for children’s rights and child protection; and provides leverage for all child rights supporters in the country. However, it is too early to measure the success of UNICEF’s advocacy with political parties for the inclusion of key child rights issues in their party programmes and election manifestos. Nevertheless, some progress and outputs can be reported. At the meetings with all four of the political parties visited, UNICEF was able to talk to senior party officials with responsibility for or influence over the development of party programmes. Some of the parties visited later requested further information.

When the major political parties started to publish their programmes in April 2011, it was observed that the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) had declared that it would establish a child ombudsperson and the main opposition Republican People’s Party (CHP) promised a child budget mechanism and equal opportunities for children, while also making this a theme of one of their television advertisements. The messages by both the political par-
ties were framed using the same language provided by UNICEF in its fact sheets and presentations.

In addition, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) requested copies of a booklet on children’s rights and information sheets used in UNICEF’s advocacy in order to distribute them to all their candidates. The election resulted in victory for the AKP, with the CHP and the MHP securing second and third places. The most recent version of the draft law on the establishment of an ombudsperson institution being prepared by the ruling AKP now mentions setting up a child rights ombudsperson mechanism.

LESSONS LEARNED

Using our strengths: In advocating within the political arena, UNICEF has built upon and utilized its existing reputation, making use of its technical knowledge, trustworthiness and impartiality.

Maintaining networks: The support provided to the Parliamentary Child Rights Monitoring Committee, by involving them in consultation on child rights, setting up its website, and supporting them to determine their priorities and goals has amply repaid itself, creating child rights advocates within the political system and establishing a channel of communication with influential politicians.

A clear voice: UNICEF has been careful to communicate with its target audience with one clear voice. During the process of amending the Constitution, it was important to make clear, simple and feasible recommendations. In the same way, it was important not to present the political parties with a wish-list for every sector but instead to get across a few memorable, overriding messages and to concentrate on priority issues for UNICEF where political decisions are needed.

A collective effort: The pre-election advocacy process was a team effort on the part of the Country Office. In this way, the political knowledge of all staff was put together which strengthened the impact of the advocacy efforts. UNICEF acted in accordance with its country programme, which places added importance on upstream work and is no longer structured on a sector-by-sector basis. Staff members learned to advocate on behalf of the entire country programme and not just within their own sectors.

Focus on political advocacy: It is important to consider political advocacy as a special area of advocacy to be conducted in parallel with other advocacy efforts, (such as media advocacy, sectoral advocacy, fund-raising advocacy) requiring different approaches and techniques. Expect key staff, regardless of their areas of specialization, to contribute to and be aware of political advocacy priorities and plans, and to be able to advocate on the priorities identified.

Risks in advocacy: Provided UNICEF remains impartial, risks associated with advocacy within the political arena can be minimized. None of the political agencies, the media or the civil society questioned UNICEF’s involvement in influencing domestic political processes. Political parties have not shown any resentment of UNICEF's contacts with its rivals. Given such circumstances, UNICEF is contemplating if it was overcautious in its advocacy strategy in two respects:

- Involving the media: By informing the media about its advocacy with the political parties, UNICEF might have increased its leverage, raised its profile and generated greater public awareness on the relatively new issues of equity, budgeting for children and a child ombudsperson. This could have been achieved, for example by holding a press conference, issuing press releases, inviting the media to its visits to the political parties and/or publishing its covering letter and fact sheets.

- Involving civil society organizations: UNICEF might also have benefited by joining forces with civil society organizations for its pre-election advocacy, subject to careful assessment of the risks. Examples of recent successful advocacy involving the civil society and a high profile media campaign include (a) the highly-publicized and perceived successful work of a coalition of women’s NGOs aimed at increasing the numbers of women candidates in the elections, and (b) the (ultimately successful) efforts made by UNICEF in 2009-2010 – publicly, and both independently and in contact with an NGO coalition – to bring about the repeal of amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Act which deprived children charged under the Act of their rights to child-specific treatment. UNICEF perhaps could have benefited from applying lessons from these

experiences in its pre-election advocacy with political parties. According to other viewpoints, however, the face-to-face, party-by-party approach worked well, and cooperation with civil society and/or media exposure might have caused UNICEF’s name to become associated with party politics.

Sustainability: Additional efforts are required to address the sustainability of such advocacy work in terms of flexibility of funding, staff time and integration into strategic documents and management processes, such as monitoring and evaluation plans or a written Advocacy Strategy. Without such arrangements, there is a risk that the above lessons learned are forgotten; work already done is not followed up consistently; and opportunities for achieving results through political advocacy are not fully recognized and exploited.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
UNICEF can be involved in political advocacy wherever politicians want to support children's issues and/or are in need of and open to new ideas for winning popular support. Opportunities to secure commitments from political leaders, parties and parliamentarians are not limited to election campaigns or debates on constitutional change. Opportunities may also be provided by local government elections, political party conventions, debates on relevant legislation including budgets, high-level international events, visits and anniversaries.

Country programmes which are involved in advocacy in the political arena at the national level can benefit from sharing experiences, including how to strategize and manage such activities. For instance, in December 2010, a delegation of provincial government ministers and UNICEF staff from Pakistan, who were on a study visit to Turkey to learn about child protection mechanisms - including protection of children living and working on the street - paid a visit to the Child Rights Monitoring Committee in the Turkish Parliament and were informed about its activities.

Risks and opportunities are likely to vary greatly from one context to another, and decisions concerning partnerships, publicity, issues such as how to remain impartial, will vary according to the situation and country context. Some basic principles such as using UNICEF’s strengths, maintaining networks and speaking with a clear voice are likely to be applicable in all advocacy situations. It is beneficial to consider political advocacy as a cross-cutting issue, involving a wide range of staff.

NEXT STEPS
UNICEF Turkey will continue to be available to – and to actively explore ways of working with – the Parliamentary Child Rights Monitoring Committee, and to advocate for its formalization. It will be important to ensure that the Committee is re-constituted as rapidly as possible now that the elections are over, and that new members are familiar with its commitments, the child rights perspective and priorities. UNICEF will follow up on whether the political parties (especially AKP, the election winner) adhere to their programmes in respect of equity, budgeting for children, and the child ombudsperson. It will engage also with the Planning and Budget Committee and other relevant committees of the Parliament, as well as ministries, to ensure that action is taken in line with the election manifesto of the AKP.

The organization will be ready to offer technical expertise for the adoption and implementation of the policies which it has recommended. Further, it will keep its key messages for politicians under review and periodically identify upcoming opportunities for political advocacy, which may include elections, further constitutional amendments, debates in Parliament, international events, visits and ongoing institutional changes.

Meanwhile, efforts will be made to promote that the Turkish Parliament and its members communicate and cooperate with other parliaments, parliamentary committees, ombudspersons and their organizations in other countries, especially in Europe, (including the Inter-Parliamentary Union). UNICEF Turkey is giving increased importance to the documentation of its work, and its collaboration with the Parliament is a key priority for further documentation.

RELATED LINKS
UNICEF Turkey’s work with the Parliamentary Child Rights Monitoring Committee:

Children get a voice in Turkey’s parliament: [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/Turkey_46601.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/Turkey_46601.html)


INNOVATION – ADVOCACY FOR CHILD-FOCUSED POLICIES

UKRAINE

Advocacy to reduce child poverty and disparities results in national MDG indicator on child poverty

ABSTRACT

Ukraine is one of the 53 countries participating in UNICEF’s Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities. The Ukrainian Study demonstrates that regardless of overall reduction in poverty, families with children still face high levels of multidimensional poverty, suggesting the need to refocus existing poverty reduction efforts among children and their families. As a follow-up to the Study, UNICEF used a mix of advocacy instruments to put child poverty and disparity-related issues on the policy agenda and mainstream them into the key national and international policy documents. As a result, child poverty reduction is gradually becoming a part of the broader poverty and inequality reduction agenda. This was evident in 2010 when child poverty rate for the first time became a national MDG indicator for Ukraine. Using a variety of advocacy platforms and tools has been critical in being able to advocate with limited resources for maximum impact. Overall, this experience has framed UNICEF as a credible actor for child-sensitive social policy. In the next phase of advocacy efforts, more emphasis will be placed on engaging with the Ministry of Social Policy (MOSP), given recent changes in the policy environment in the context of on-going administrative reforms in Ukraine.

BACKGROUND

For a long time child poverty and disparity related issues did not occupy a prominent place in Ukraine’s political and policy agenda. Significant progress in absolute poverty (from 32 per cent in 2001 to 8 per cent in 2005) was masking the situation of the most disadvantaged category: families with children. The incidence of income/consumption poverty and risk of poverty for this group has been much higher than for the population at large. Poverty in families with children is still high, with 32 per cent of families living below the poverty line (national relative poverty line). The greater the number of children in a family, the higher is the probability of the family falling into poverty. In Ukraine, the poverty rate in families with three or more children is nearly 54 per cent and in families with four and more children is nearly 72 per cent.

Although during the period 1999-2009 the incidence of poverty in families with children did not fall below 32 per cent (compared to nearly 18 per cent in the same year in childless families), child poverty has not been an explicit focus of poverty monitoring and reduction efforts in Ukraine. UNICEF’s Study on Child Poverty and Disparities, implemented by the Institute for Demography and Social Studies of the National Academy of Science in 2008-2009, carried out an in-depth analysis of various child poverty dimensions and generated policy recommendations to reduce child poverty more effectively.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

UNICEF developed an initial and an intermediate advocacy plan related to the results of the Child Poverty Study. The advocacy efforts were fuelled by the credible and comprehensive evidence generated by the Study and its existing partnership with the Institute of Demography and Social Studies, a key research institution in the field of policy analysis. Both these factors were critical in ensuring UNICEF’s voice in the discussions. A variety of advocacy tools and platforms were identified to demonstrate the acuteness of child poverty and to mainstream respective policy solutions into research and policy-

34 Poverty Update for Ukraine, World Bank, 2007
36 Ibid
37 Ibid
38 The Ukraine Child Poverty and Disparities Study Report is available at https://sites.google.com/site/ukrainechildpovertystudy/
Challenges faced in policy advocacy
The political and policy environment in Ukraine is very complex. Frequent changes in the Government and its priorities have been one of the key challenges for this work. In December 2010, administrative reforms were introduced which brought structural and functional changes in the policy decision-making process. As a result, the advocacy plan had to be constantly adjusted.

Moreover, since the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, the policy agenda has been particularly driven by finding ways to stabilize the national economy during and after the crisis. Working around this issue is both a challenge and a possible entry point to advocacy for child poverty reduction.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
There are several important policy changes resulting from this advocacy process. In 2010, for the first time, the child poverty rate became both a national MDG indicator for Ukraine and part of the MDG achievement agenda. This progress is critical for concentrating efforts of the Government and development partners on child poverty reduction. In addition, the National Plan of Action for Children to Implement the CRC (2010-2016) now mentions child poverty reduction as one of the key items. This policy document was also adopted as a Law of Ukraine in 2009.

Further, the Annual State Report on Children (2010) entitled 'Ensuring equal opportunities and child rights in conditions of growing poverty risks to the population' focused on child poverty and deprivations cites the UNICEF Study on Child Poverty and Disparities as one of the source documents. The Ombudsman’s Report on the Status of Implementation of Child Rights in Ukraine in 2010 also explicitly focuses on child poverty and disparities. Child poverty was also one of the highlights of the Resolution of the Parliamentary Hearings on Child Rights adopted by the Parliament of Ukraine in 2010. In addition, child poverty reduction has been cited as a recommendation in the 2011 Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to the Government of Ukraine.

Significant changes have also been introduced in the social protection system in line with the Study. Although these changes cannot be solely attributed to UNICEF’s advocacy, they are expected to significantly reduce poverty in families with children. These changes include a substantial increase in social assistance for children from low income families (starting December 2010) and a twofold increase in birth grants (beginning January 2011).

INNOVATION
By including the child poverty rate as a national MDG indicator for the first time in Ukraine and by mainstreaming child poverty into key national and international policy documents, UNICEF has been able to create a national momentum around reduction in child poverty and disparities. Using a combination of advocacy tools has allowed maximum returns while being relatively cost effective. For instance lobbying, working with parliament and media, capitalizing on advocacy events organized by partners has
required fewer resources but provided strategic platforms for advocacy. This experience reveals that while the policy-making environment can be constrained, strong partnerships (such as with the Institute of Demography and Social Studies) can facilitate entry into the process. By involving key policy decision-makers in the development of the study itself, their ownership of the project and its recommendations was facilitated. This was critical in being able to influence policy outcomes as a follow-up to the study. Generating quality evidence and analysis has also helped UNICEF position itself as expert in the field of child-sensitive social policy in Ukraine.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
This approach to policy advocacy can be applied to any issue within UNICEF’s mandate. Use of different advocacy channels, agents of change, and strategic partners maximize effectiveness of advocacy efforts and the impact of interventions. For the approach to be effective, however, its application requires (a) systematic work on the issue with the broad range of stakeholders; and (b) mainstreaming messages through every advocacy opportunity and their articulation on numerous advocacy occasions.

NEXT STEPS
Given the recent changes in the policy environment in the context of on-going administrative reforms in Ukraine, more emphasis will be placed on engaging with the MOSP to further strengthen its policy framework around the reduction of child poverty and disparities. Advocacy with the Parliament will continue with a hearing on family policy scheduled for September 2011. Poverty in families with children and further changes to the social protection system will be key issues addressed by UNICEF during the hearings. The former Rapporteur for Ukraine of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, with support from UNICEF is in the process of writing a letter to the President of Ukraine to draw his attention to the most pressing issues around children’s rights including child poverty, deprivations and inequity. This is expected to bring the highest visibility to the child poverty issue in the country.

Monitoring of child poverty and disparities will continue in the form of equity updates around different thematic areas (such as economic inequity, access to education, access to healthcare and access to social protection). The equity snapshot and policy solutions document (presently being developed) will summarize findings and present policy solutions around child poverty in line with the Study. These will serve as useful resources in the next wave of advocacy efforts.

RELATED LINKS
The Ukraine Child Poverty and Disparities Study Report
http://sites.google.com/site/ukrainechildpovertystudy/

MDG Report 2010, Ukraine

Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child 2011
http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.UKR.CO.3-4_en.pdf
LESSONS LEARNED – PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Strengthening child-sensitive integrated social protection and inclusion

ABSTRACT

In 2006, UNICEF together with the European Commission (EC), DFID (Department for International Development, UK) and the Government of Norway initiated a three year Social Protection and Inclusion System (SPIS) programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The programme has a strong focus on building institutions and policy frameworks; strengthening the evidence base; and piloting innovative approaches for social protection and inclusion at the local level. The SPIS programme has a robust monitoring and evaluation component which has been the basis for constantly adjusting the programme to lessons learned in the field. The programme has contributed to the development and implementation of a Social Inclusion Strategy (SIS) in one entity (Federation of BiH) and Brcko District. Despite a complex political structure in BiH, the evolving approach of the SPIS programme has also led to local ownership and institutionalization in the initial 10 project sites. The sustainability of the established structures and innovative services in targeted locations as well as the possibility to replicate the local model in other communities shape the SPIS programme in its next phase of implementation.

BACKGROUND

According to the UNDP Social Exclusion Index 2007, more than 50 per cent of citizens in BiH face some form of exclusion. Despite poverty reduction efforts, the recent Household Budget Survey reveals that the poverty rate in BiH has not been significantly reduced. Children and families with two or more children remain the most susceptible to poverty and economic exclusion. When combined with other dimensions of social exclusion such as ethnicity, race and disability, there is an increased risk of children’s exposure to a number of significant vulnerabilities, such as separation from their family, institutionalization, family violence, school absenteeism and potentially an increase in the rate of child labour.

The social protection and inclusion system in BiH is characterized by functional and participation gaps in legislation, policy, capacity, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, including a lack of collaboration between the various levels of Government. The legal framework for social protection and inclusion exists at all levels of Government in BiH. However, the implementation of legislation faces numerous challenges, mostly of a financial nature. Further, the approach to social protection varies at different levels of Government which is an obstacle to harmonized and equal protection of all children. As a response to this situation, in 2006, UNICEF along with the European Commission (EC), DFID (Department for International Development, UK) and the Government of Norway initiated a three year SPIS programme in BiH. The multi-faceted and multi-sectoral SPIS programme supports the Government in eradicating social exclusion, child poverty, discrimination and inequality in accessing basic social protection services in the country, as well as in meeting international obligations related to children’s rights.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The SPIS programme follows an inter-sectoral and integrated approach combining interventions in the areas of social protection and child protection, education, health, including children’s participation. The design of the SPIS programme is based on long term partnerships and cooperation between UNICEF, the Government, civil society partners and public institutions. It is currently implemented at the municipal and national level. At the municipal level, the programme focuses on the development of local-municipal SPIS implementation models to (a) enhance
multi-sector response at the community level, (b) improve existing services and (c) introduce innovative services to cover gaps at the local level. At the national level the programme focuses on developing policies and strategies, coordinating between various ministries and raising awareness. This also includes evidence based advocacy for changes in legislation which would enable equal access to services and cash benefits for all eligible children in BiH. With its initiation in 2009, the SPIS programme is currently in its third year of implementation. The following eight components constitute the SPIS programme:

1. **Institutionalization of the programme**

The programme has established strong partnerships with Government institutions\(^{41}\), agencies and municipal authorities in the pilot areas. The Government representatives are members of various project management bodies or working groups established under the programme. The three Working Groups at each entity level include representatives from entity, cantonal and municipal institutions that seek to develop technical and policy inputs in developing standards and mechanisms for social protection and inclusion (BiH is comprised of two political entities: The Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska). A state level Expert Group provides expert opinions and conceptualizes the programme inputs into the social protection and inclusion system.

2. **Mobilization and promotion of an integrated social protection and inclusion system**

To engage the general public and key decision makers on the issues of social protection and the inclusion of children in BiH, an action plan for social mobilization and advocacy has been developed. A public information and media campaign was designed including daily media monitoring and analysis. The overall topics include social inclusion, human rights, child poverty, social marginalization and integrated social protection. A public opinion survey on these areas was also undertaken. As part of this initiative, training sessions for journalists, students and civil servants on the above themes and training for NGOs with regard to communications and media relations have been undertaken.

3. **Analysis of the social protection and inclusion system within the global and national socio-economic reform context**

Following a situation analysis, a SPIS conceptual framework has been developed including elaboration of key target groups. As part of the situation analysis, a review of existing social inclusion frameworks has been conducted including analysis of the EU social exclusion and poverty criteria and available evidence on child exclusion and poverty. Thematic areas such as housing, economic context and legislative and policy reviews were also included as part of the analysis. It is the first time such aspects have been analyzed in relation to children in BiH. A policy dialogue was encouraged to reach consensus amongst different social sectors, particularly through interface of entity Working Groups and the state level Expert Group. These inputs influenced the development of the SPIS framework, which is being further elaborated through the implementation of the project. In addition, an institutional review has been conducted to strengthen the capacity of national partners to assess and analyze the impact of changes in state and entity level governing structures of the SPIS. This will ensure compatibility of the SPIS with the on-going public sector reform in BiH, as a way of facilitating long-term feasibility and sustainability of the system.

4. **Vertical and horizontal review**

A vertical and horizontal review of the programme and service-delivery functions across education, health and social protection sectors has been undertaken by entity Working Groups. The identification and analysis of the existing roles, accountabilities and gaps within the vertical system of social protection\(^{42}\) and inclusion supports further elaboration of the SPIS framework. This analysis and review contributes to developing a baseline study on the current SPIS system in BiH. The horizontal review further focuses on the levels of accountability that have a direct relation to service provision.

5. **Capacity development of policy makers and service providers**

The SPIS programme undertakes capacity development of policy makers and service providers through (a) the establishment of model demonstration sites, (b) the provision of innovative inclusive services and (c) trainings and workshops.

Ten municipalities in selected areas\(^{43}\) are piloting approaches aimed at improving the referral of child protection and inclusion services\(^{44}\) between health, education, social work professionals, the police and the judiciary. To this end, the SPIS programme has developed a municipal referral mechanism. This is facilitated by the Municipal Management Boards (MMBs) also established under the programme. The MMBs comprise of relevant social institutions.

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\(^{41}\) Government partners include the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and the Directorate for Economic Planning at the State level and Entity and Cantonal ministries responsible for social protection, health and education.

\(^{42}\) The vertical structure includes the following levels: state, entity, canton/region, municipality, service-delivery institutions at the community level and civil society.

\(^{43}\) The selection of the municipalities was based on the following criteria (a) strongly expressed general interest of the community, (b) socio-economic and cultural context, (c) currently existing services and specialists, (d) geographic location, (e) accessibility and internet connection, and (f) size of the municipality. The 10 pilot municipalities are Livno, Novi Grad Sarajevo, Novi Travnik, Sanski Most and Stolac (in the Federation of BiH) and Bileca, Kotor Varos, Laktasi, Novi Grad and Visegrad (in Republika Srpska).

\(^{44}\) The services include counselling, speech therapy and psycho-social therapy that were not previously available.
and professionals. The members jointly conduct situation analyses that lead to increased understanding of institutional competencies, roles and responsibilities as well challenges faced by them, including the potential for cooperation. Based on the evidence gathered from the analytical work, SPIS municipal implementation plans with referral mechanisms and services have been developed. Participation of children in community activities is also envisaged as part of these plans. In the first round of referral planning the municipal groups mostly opted to address the requirements of children with special needs. The second round of referral planning focuses on the issues of violence and abuse and on improving the identification and tracking of socially and economically vulnerable and at-risk children. Nine out of the ten municipalities are implementing a school enrolment grant, and a municipal database has been created in order to monitor the enrolment of all children of eligible age.

Another innovative service of the SPIS programme includes the development of Integrated ECD (IECD) centres, particularly in relation to addressing chronic poverty in BiH. The integrated approach to ECD focuses on the improvement of inter-sectoral cooperation and coordination between health, education and social protection sectors. Institutionalization of the centres, and making them financially independent from the SPIS programme support, are some of the key challenges facing this work. Further, the project invests in developing capacity of Government institutions and service providers through trainings, workshops and joint project activities, based on municipal needs assessment of relevant bodies. Training of Government officials concentrate on policy and programme development (with a special focus on budgeting for children), while the training for service providers focuses on recognition of vulnerable groups and on ways to work together with the community.

6. Legal review
Definition of priority legislative changes and the conducting of a legal review began at the end of 2009. As part of this work, an initial legislative review was conducted, a legal database was created and a birth registration legal analysis model was developed.

7. Financial and budgetary review
UNICEF engaged the University of Washington and other partners to develop training materials and tools for evidence and results-based budgeting for children in social sectors. The material contributes to the development of capacities of relevant Government institutions at all levels. The training modules are accompanied by budgetary analyses that inform the training while providing an overview of budgets for children in BiH. This component comes at the right time, when the country is undergoing a series of important public finance reforms and the introduction of the programme budgeting and strategic planning in the country.

8. Monitoring of the socio-economic status of children and evaluation of the impact of the social protection and inclusion system
Monitoring and evaluation are being streamlined into various activities in order to adequately document their effectiveness, relevance and efficiency. Collection of data and evidence at the community level is vertically transferred to the policy level through administrative systems and other less formal channels. The programme draws on already established models involving NGOs in the monitoring of the child rights situation of communities and children participating in action research and planning within schools and communities. Such activities improve the availability of relevant data at the community level and also ensure increased participation of community members in the assessment of the status of children. In addition, national surveys were conducted on the perceptions of community members about the quality and functioning of existing social services, as well as similar surveys among service providers. These provide a baseline to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the potential increase of the quality of social protection and inclusion services for children at national and community levels.

In parallel, the programme strengthens the formal system of data collection, monitoring and evaluation through training and revision of the systems. At the local level, systems for data collection and processing have been introduced to collect data on children aged 0-6 years, with a special focus on hard to reach populations. Collaboration with the Department for Economic Planning (DEP) and Agencies for Statistics on the establishment and adoption of DevInfo database has ensured collection and aggregation of

45 Such as municipal authorities, Centres for Social Work, health centres, educational institutions, law enforcement and relevant civil society representatives.
46 The integrated ECD centres offer a multi-sectoral model for families and child care, providing a wide range of services for parents and children, aged 0-10 years, with a special focus on the age group of 0-3 years.
47 Training needs have been identified in areas such as evidence based budget planning skills for staff from Centres for Social Work, Project Cycle Management for the Municipal Management Boards including ECD, inclusive education and participation.
48 DevInfo is a database system endorsed by the United Nations Develop-
data at the national level (by including data from all municipalities that are involved in various UNICEF projects).

A detailed monitoring plan for both municipal level activities as well as for the SPIS programme overall has been developed. During 2010, there were two programme entity annual reviews, three mid-term programme reviews (two at entity level and one at state level) and three donor monitoring missions. The results of the programme reviews influenced the third year of programme implementation (see the lessons learned section for more details).

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The SPIS programme has contributed to the development and implementation of the Social Inclusion Strategy49 as well as the World Bank reform of cash-transfer administration and capacity building within the social protection system. According to the EC and DFID reviews, the high value of the SPIS programme results from (a) its multi-pronged approach of building the institutional and policy framework for social protection and inclusion serving children and families in BiH; (b) the provision of innovative services for children at the local level, with piloting of new approaches for children’s social protection and inclusion; (c) its particular focus on hard to reach populations; and (d) strengthening the evidence base for social protection and inclusion, with the piloting of a comprehensive and inclusive approach to working jointly with the Government, civil society and public institutions for data collection on children.

In particular, the SPIS programme has resulted in building vertical and horizontal partnerships between institutions by building project structures at various levels. Municipalities have especially gained from such partnerships as they often struggle to connect and work with higher levels of Government in developing frameworks for social protection. According to the institutional analysis conducted in 2010, nine municipalities reported cooperation and mutual support had improved to a large extent, especially through data gathering and development of action plans under the MMB. Eight MMBs have been established as Municipal Commissions, which contribute to the sustainability of the interventions. The remaining two MMBs are currently in a process of transformation into Municipal Commissions. These decisions have been made based on an initial agreement with municipal authorities that UNICEF-supported MMBs will convert into permanent Municipal Commissions for Social Protection and Child Protection.

49 BiH Social Inclusion Strategy 2008-2013 has so far been adopted by the Federation of BiH and Brcko District. Republika Srpska has decided to develop its own Development Strategy, which will also to a large extent informed by the SPIS programme.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

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With regard to referral mechanisms, individual municipalities have signed Referral Protocols as a binding document defining functions, referral mechanisms and lines of communication between different institutions. The SPIS programme’s investment in the development of referral mechanisms from the establishment of multi-sectoral MMBs and working groups, culminating in the adoption of Referral Protocols is an important achievement of the programme.

The piloting of IECD centres under the campaign ‘The best start for every child’ has begun in four municipalities. In May 2011, both entity Governments developed policies on Early Childhood Development (ECD), within which the IECD centres are an integral part. This would ensure institutional and budgetary framework for this initiative. Further, the institutional analyses have resulted in support to small community projects resulting in improvements in the work of Centres for Social Work, schools, institutions for children with special needs and NGOs. This highlights increased inter-sectoral cooperation among various Government institutions and also among Government and non-Government service providers.

The evidence-based advocacy work has achieved success in raising the profile of the SPIS programme at different levels after a period of one year. Municipal Commissions are Government-owned and report to Municipal Assemblies on an annual basis. This approach has been recognized and promoted by the entity ministries of social policy and welfare. The Republika Srpska’s new Law on Social Protection,50 for example, foresees the establishment of such Commissions in every municipality.

50 Pending adoption due to a budgetary constraints
of Government (at state, entity, municipal and cantonal levels) of children’s rights and child protection, social exclusion and social protection in general. This has been evident as child specific goals in the draft SIS have been strengthened. The establishment of monitoring databases is ensuring a systematic approach to data collection and creation of baseline data on children. For instance, the common ‘primary school enrolment’ monitoring database systems have brought immediate results in ensuring all children are registered, with improved access to primary school.

LESSONS LEARNED
The SPIS programme is not a one-off intervention, but an approach that evolves over time. New policies and interventions are constantly being created, based on quality reflection on achieved results, challenges and acknowledged failures in the process. The SPIS programme is dynamic in nature, which is its greatest strength. Additionally, the programme reaffirms UNICEF’s comparative advantage in (1) strengthening data, policies, strategies, systems, and services, (2) bringing together all relevant partners from the Government, NGO and media sector around one strategic programme, and (3) promoting human rights-based and equity-focused approaches to programming.

Revision of the programme
Based on the lessons learned from various assessments, the SPIS programme has been recently revised. The programme - and its reform agenda – was initially too ambitious and unrealistic for the complex political and institutional framework of the country. Originally, eight sub-projects contributed to the programme. Following recommendations from monitoring missions, as well as three mid-term reviews, the project structure has been revised. These revisions were aimed at simplifying the project structure and prioritizing activities. The revised SPIS programme structure has been approved by the BiH SPIS Management Board in February 2011. Based on the lessons learned, key revisions include (1) replacing the sub-project approach with a unified approach including, three strategic directions51 and five specific objectives; (2) clarifying clear linkages between the SPIS programme and SIS development (the SPIS programme has been contributing to the strategy design and will support its prioritization and implementation); (3) strengthening the project governance structure through advocacy, provision of technical assistance and more focused activities; and (4) continuing to model innovative services for children in targeted pilot municipalities (with activities organized in phases so as not to overburden the municipalities).

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
The BiH approach to strengthen SPIS for children can be replicated to other countries, with adjustments based on local context. The methodology used allows local communities to tailor their actions in strengthening the local social protection and inclusion systems based on evidence as well as their available resources and potential. Experience reveals that working with local levels in a comprehensive way requires an investment of at least two to three years. Municipalities need extensive support throughout the first year of implementation. The SPIS municipal model therefore should be based on detailed capacity assessments. Some of the work with municipalities (such as IECD centres) has already been replicated into three non-SPIS municipalities.52 Dissemination of results is crucial for replication, as well for support and promotion by higher levels of government.

NEXT STEPS
The SPIS programme will be further developed based on the main principles and objectives as set out during the revision process. A major focus will be placed on service delivery at the local level and on the institutionalization of innovative services into the system. The next steps in implementation involve (1) using the baseline studies for advocacy with state and entity Governments for social sector reform; (2) further improvement of the SPIS local models and their replication in other municipalities; and (3) institutionalization of established partnerships and services at the local level. In addition, the SPIS programme will focus on revision of draft laws on social protection and child protection, with specific focus on introduction of equal cash benefits for all eligible children in the Federation of BiH (there are high discrepancies in the social protection system for children and families within the Federation of BiH, with different levels of benefits from one Canton to another). The SPIS programme will directly support the Federation’s Government in defining the legal and fiscal framework in order to establish an equal minimum threshold for child cash benefits. Further, the programme will maintain its technical assistance to the current 10 target municipalities; in addition to covering 11 new municipalities in the next phase of its implementation.

RELATED LINKS
Tools for Budgeting for Children: Children’s Budget Estimation, Cost and Workforce Analysis, Comparative Analysis of Payments, Cost and Workforce Analysis www.hspc.org/

51 The strategic directions are: (1) strengthening SPIS for children through improvement of existing public policy; (2) enhancing the management and coordination structures of SPIS for children at all governance levels; and (3) development of SPI of children municipal implementation models.

52 IECD centres have been established in additional three BiH Municipalities: Kiseljak, Tuzla and Foca.
BACKGROUND

Over the past decade, Cambodia has achieved significant economic growth. However, despite this the benefits of growth have not been distributed equitably: A third of Cambodia’s population still lives below the poverty line. Inequities and disparities between rural and urban areas, across provinces and among people with different educational levels and socio-economic status remain high. Much of the economic growth has been largely centred in urban areas. The difference in the share of consumption between the richest 20 per cent and the poorest reveals a persistent gap in wealth and well-being.

The food, fuel and financial crisis of 2008 have had considerable negative effects on the economy, particularly on the most marginalized and vulnerable populations. The crises made visible the country’s extreme vulnerability to external shocks mainly due to the country’s dependence on the global economy and due to the inadequacies of the existing social protection system. For instance, the implementation of Social Security Law (2002) has been slow and sporadic and covers only select sectors and workers, excluding those in the informal sector where many women find work. In addition, institutional and implementation constraints exist within the social protection sector, for instance, there is limited coordination among various social protection interventions; uneven geographic coverage and targeting; and poor monitoring of existing safety net programmes.

In recognition of the challenges resulting from the crises, including the limitations of the social protection sector, the Government revisited its national planning frameworks and rolled out a revised Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency – Phase II, which among other things aimed to broaden the benefits of economic growth. The integration of social protection into the National Strategic Development Plan Update (NSDP Update) 2009-2013, which is an operational plan of the Rectangular Strategy, further highlighted the Government’s commitment to developing a national social protection policy as a means to reach long-term poverty reduction goals and a short term emergency/shock response measure to

ABSTRACT

UNICEF played a key role in supporting the development of a comprehensive National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) in Cambodia, which was developed as a result of the food, fuel and financial crises in 2008. The purpose of the NSPS is to provide a framework for comprehensive and sustainable social protection in the country, leading into universal coverage of basic services, in line with the objectives of the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPFI). As part of the policy development process, a small core group consisting of UNICEF, development partners and the Government came together to advocate, analyze and formulate policies to feed into the NSPS. UNICEF’s participation in the development of the NSPS contributed to the integration of child-sensitive provisions in the Cambodian social protection sector, while strengthening an equity perspective. This is reflected in (a) recognition of age specific risks and vulnerabilities and inclusion of life cycle interventions in the NSPS; (b) early intervention programmes to reduce vulnerabilities such as a pilot cash transfer programme on maternal health and nutrition for children under two and (c) prioritization of reaching vulnerable groups within the social protection sector, for instance, through the expansion of the Health Equity Fund for poor households. In the next phase of its engagement, UNICEF will provide technical assistance, including the development of an investment framework for social protection, by estimating socio-economic and political benefits and costs of social protection instruments in Cambodia.

53 Cambodia’s GDP per capita increased 2.5 times from 315USD to 802USD from 2001 to 2010 (The World Bank).
54 Cambodia’s export oriented garment sector and the tourism sector contribute substantially to its GDP.
55 The Rectangular Strategy is five year development planning framework or the socio-economic agenda of the Government. The first phase was implemented from 2003 to 2008. Currently Cambodia is implementing phase II.
address the consequences of the crises. In addition, the
Government through the Council for Agricultural and Rural
Development (CARD) together with line ministries, stake-
holders and development partners, put in strong efforts to
develop the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) in
Cambodia. The rationale behind the strategy is to acceler-
ate progress towards the Cambodian Millennium Develop-
ment Goals (CMDGs) [which are being delayed due to the
crises] so as to reduce poverty and inequality, to achieve
socio-economic security for the population and bring co-
herence to policy formulation and implementation.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
A small core group consisting of high ranking Government
officials from CARD, the World Food Programme (WFP),
UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank, Asian Development Bank
(ADB), the Australian Agency for International Develop-
ment (AusAID) and the German International Cooperation
(GIZ) came together to advocate, analyze and formulate
policies and strategies for the NSPS. The development
of the NSPS was a result of a comprehensive consulta-
tive process with participation of line ministries both at the
national and sub-national levels, development partners
and civil society.

From 2008 to 2010, more than 100 consultation sessions
among the Government and development partners were
undertaken. The transparent and rigorous consultation
process ensured that the analytical and policy inputs went
through several rounds of discussion and were a result of
the combined efforts of all stakeholders. The consultation
resulted in policy notes around specific parts of the social
protection strategy, in order to build consensus on the
meaning of key concepts and the broad direction for policy
development. The policy notes also reviewed risks and
shocks56 faced by vulnerable populations and matched
them with coverage of existing programmes to identify
gaps and challenges in existing interventions.

Further, as highlighted in Figure 3 below, UNICEF used
evidence gathered from its programmatic experience,
various research and analyses including on child poverty
and disparities, and available national data to contribute
to evidence-based analysis and debate. In particular, by
providing disaggregated data, UNICEF played a key role
in making available equity-focused statistics and analysis
to feed into the NSPS formulation. Using its global experi-
ence and knowledge on child-sensitive budgeting UNICEF
was also able to make a strong case for investing in chil-
dren within the NSPS. Several briefs, analysis and topical
research papers which underscored the importance of in-
vesting in children were shared with development partners
and the Government to influence and inform the debate
and policy formulation.

In addition, UNICEF brought in the children’s agenda and
an equity perspective by ensuring high level participa-
tion of senior leadership and technical experts at various
levels of the NSPS formulation. UNICEF’s social protection
experts and chiefs of different sectors were co-chairs of
important sectoral Technical Working Groups on educa-
tion, health and decentralization. This helped draw special
attention to addressing disparities and strategies to reduce
the widening gaps, through a systematically integrated
social protection programme that follows a life-cycle ap-
proach.

Further, through its strategic position in the UN Country
Team (UNCT) and as a key member of the Interim Work-
ing Group on Social Safety Nets (IWG-SSN), UNICEF was
able to mainstream a child–sensitive approach into the dis-
cussions. The IWG-SSN is an inter-ministerial mechanism
whose principal mandate is to coordinate the develop-
ment of an integrated social safety nets system within the
NSPS framework. Using the IWG-SSN platform, UNICEF
contributed analytical inputs from the findings of the Child
Poverty and Disparities Study57 in 2009 to the NSPS pro-
cess. Further, as part of the NSPS dialogue, UNICEF in

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56 Such as situations of emergency and crises, human development con-
straints, seasonal unemployment and income insecurity; and health shocks.
57 More information on UNICEF’s Global Child Poverty and Disparities Study
is available at [www.unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com](http://www.unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com).
partnership with the World Bank and AusAID also initiated discussions on cash transfers, as a potential intervention to enhance nutritional and health outcomes for pregnant and nursing women and children under-two.

As a member of the IWG-SSN, UNICEF consistently advocated for the establishment of a Social Protection Coordination Unit (SPCU) as part of the NSPS. The SPCU was envisioned as a convening unit for coordinating dialogue among development partners, the Government, UN agencies, civil society and non-governmental actors. UNICEF was the lead voice in ensuring that nutritional outcomes for children receive attention of the highest officials from the newly created SPCU. UNICEF actively assisted the SPCU in establishing a Social Protection Core Group (SPCG) in which UNICEF is a permanent member. SPCG's core function is to facilitate greater effective functioning of the IWG-SSN through provision of technical support. UNICEF has used this strategic space to creatively engage in technical debates among a smaller group of key actors involved in social protection planning and implementation. The SPCG turned out to be an effective platform to ensure that technical suggestions and recommendations arising from dialogues among the SPCG members were elevated into the meeting agenda of the IWG-SNN.

The inter-sectoral collaboration, outlined above, presented some challenges along the way, such as ensuring coordination and a common voice among the various agencies involved in the process. However, the NSPS benefitted tremendously from the range of experience and expertise that the different agencies brought with them, making the strategy inclusive and comprehensive.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The NSPS was adopted by the Government in March 2011. The NSPS sets the long-term framework for sustainable and comprehensive social protection for all citizens. In line with the SPF, the NSPS aims to provide a framework for social protection, conducive to universal coverage of services, addressing the risks and vulnerabilities of the poorest sectors. Specifically, the NSPS includes basic social protection based on the social safety nets (non-contributory) provisions for the poor and vulnerable (such as public works programmes, cash for work or food for work, cash or in kind transfers, conditional or non-conditional and subsidies to access essential services) and expands the parallel contributory system (such as unemployment insurance, pension, health insurance and community-based health insurance).

The objectives of the NSPS include (a) addressing the basic needs of the poor and vulnerable in situations of emergency and crisis; (b) reducing the poverty and vulnerability of children and mothers, enhancing their human development (by improving nutrition, maternal and child health, promoting education and eliminating child labour in its worst forms); (c) addressing seasonal un- and under-employment and providing livelihood opportunities for the poor and vulnerable; (d) promoting affordable health care for the poor and vulnerable; and (e) improving social protection for special vulnerable groups (such as orphans, single women with children, people living with disabilities, people living with HIV among others).

Overall, UNICEF’s contribution to the NSPS development has resulted in improved child-sensitive social protection provisions and a strengthened equity perspective in the strategy.

**Child-sensitive social protection**

UNICEF’s engagement in the policy process resulted in the recognition and adoption of life-cycle interventions to enhance development and protection outcomes for children in the NSPS. For instance, the NSPS focuses on different social protection interventions to cater to children’s needs during various stages of their life, including age-specific risks and vulnerabilities. These interventions include the provision of a Health Equity Fund that ensures ante-natal care, institutional delivery and postnatal support for poor households; planned cash transfers to ensure nutritional, health and educational outcomes among children and reduction in child labour; support in developing skills among youth; livelihoods and income support through public works and finally pension support in old age.

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58 Recognizing the strategic importance and necessity of ensuring universal social protection, in April 2009 the UN adopted the Global Initiative for a Universal Social Protection Floor as one of nine initiatives in response to the global economic crisis. The Social Protection Floor concept promotes nationally defined strategies that protect a minimum level of access to essential services and income security for all in the present economic and financial crisis and beyond. For more details, see here: [www.socialsecurityextension.org/pages/ShowTheme.do?tid=1321](http://www.socialsecurityextension.org/pages/ShowTheme.do?tid=1321)

59 By contributing to the general household living standards, old-age pensions can help reduce child poverty rates.

60 The Health Equity Fund is a health care subsidy where a third party purchases health care services for the poorest households at public health facilities. It is an instrument to promote the use of priority public health services among the poorest by lowering the financial barriers to access.
Further, UNICEF’s strong contribution to national policy formulation exercises (such as the NSDP, National Policy on Youth Development among others) has been central to the recognition and formulation of discussions around cash transfers for mothers and children. In close collaboration with SPCU, UNICEF, the World Bank and AusAID are currently designing a pilot cash transfer programme to contribute to improved outcomes in maternal health and nutrition for children under-two. This programme will draw upon knowledge and learning in this area available globally, including from the Oportunidades programme in Mexico. UNICEF has been leading the design especially around the supply side of health and nutrition services while also informing the debate on the amount of transfer. Further, as a result of UNICEF’s advocacy in this area, a national committee on social protection and nutrition is being set up, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister (also the Finance Minister) to ensure that the social protection agenda and other instruments are progressively expanded in a sustainable manner.

Equity perspective
UNICEF’s engagement led to an increased focus on equity in the NSPS. Over the years, UNICEF has been contributing to analysis in the health sector by supporting secondary data analysis of the Cambodia Socio-Economics Survey (CSES) and Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS) results. Health outcomes and health service utilization rates in different socioeconomic groups highlighted the need for stronger attention to equity issues. In particular, critical concerns about the uneven distribution of emergency obstetric neonatal care services across the country indicated the need to increase the quality of the continuum of care in this area. By providing crucial evidence, UNICEF and development partners were able to advocate for the expansion of the Health Equity Fund (to ensure poor households have access to quality health care and financial protection in case of ill-health) and community-based health insurance (for the nearly poor).

Further, as a result of UNICEF’s engagement with the SPCU, the Government adopted a programme-based approach to development at the Government Development Partner Coordination Committee meeting in 2010. Following this approach, under the NSPS, coverage of existing programmes will be reassessed and better aligned with poverty and vulnerability levels of provinces and districts. This will promote and prioritize investments for the most vulnerable, maximizing their chances of accessing the benefits of the sustained growth in Cambodia’s economy. This confirmed UNICEF’s effective and strategic engagement to advance progress towards achievements of MDGs (Cambodian MDGs) with equity.

The implementation of the NSPS
The NSPS’s Implementation Plan (NSPS-IP) is currently being developed. UNICEF is closely involved in the design of the implementation plan by providing technical inputs and procurement of technical assistance as and when required. UNICEF was a key player in identifying principles of implementation with an emphasis on outcomes for vulnerable households and children. Subsequently, UNICEF and SPCU signed an annual work plan (of more than USD 300,000) in support of the NSPS implementation. As part of this cooperation, international technical assistance is being mobilized to support the SPCU in developing its knowledge and communication strategy to support transparency, participation and accountability of all relevant stakeholders. Additionally, UNICEF is supporting an ongoing project around institutional arrangements and capacity development of SPCU as part of the annual work plan. This includes (a) the Social Protection Research Exchange Initiative to help strengthen the national knowledge base

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61 Oportunidades is a government social assistance programme in Mexico founded in 2002, based on a previous programme, Progresa, created in 1997. It is designed to target poverty by providing cash payments to families in exchange for regular school attendance, health clinic visits, and nutritional support. Oportunidades is credited with decreasing poverty and improving health and educational attainment in regions in which it has been deployed.

62 The Government of Cambodia has tailored its own development targets to reflect the particular situation of the country, which are called the MDGs or Cambodian MDGs. For more information, see www.un.org.kh/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=44&Itemid=56.

63 The NSPS-IP will (a) outline guiding principles for harmonization, sequencing, design, implementation and coordination of policy options under the NSPS; (b) provide a framework for the involvement of line ministries in planning and implementation of social protection programmes, building on their current mandate and activities in social service delivery; (c) identify institutional arrangements at national and sub-national levels that support the development of a social protection system; (d) identify joint mechanisms to support the development and harmonization of new and existing social protection interventions; and (e) align identified implementation arrangements with a sustainable financing framework that allows the provision of social protection in the short and medium terms.

64 The Social Protection Research Exchange for Cambodia will provide a convening platform for informed discussions and sharing of knowledge and experiences of social policy research initiatives. It will be a space where relevant stakeholders from the Government, development partners, UN agencies and NGOs will have the opportunity to share similar concerns and interests. This will bring them together to better capture evidence; share good practices and challenges; and suggest new initiatives that will improve policy formulation and implementation of social protection, with a special focus on children and women.
and policy dialogue around design and implementation of effective social protection measures; and (b) initiation of various research to help strengthen coordination, oversight role and leadership in formulation and implementation of social protection instruments (for instance, estimation of socio-economic and political benefits of social protection instruments is a key piece of planned research).

INNOVATION
The value added of UNICEF’s participation in the NSPS development is reflected in the increased focus on equity and inclusion of child-sensitive social protection provisions in the strategy. For instance, by using its comparative strength in child-centred analysis and advocacy, UNICEF’s efforts led to the:
(a) recognition of age specific risks and vulnerabilities of children in the NSPS, and adoption of social protection instruments focusing on life-cycle interventions;
(b) development of early intervention programmes to reduce risks, such as the pilot cash transfer programme on maternal health and nutrition of children under two; and
(c) prioritization of the most vulnerable households, through the expansion of the Health Equity Fund for poor households and adoption of a programme-based approach to implementation of the NSPS which would ensure coverage of existing and emerging programmes for the most vulnerable provinces and districts.

In particular, this experience highlights the benefits of partnerships with government and non-government actors. Each agency brought a range of technical expertise to the policy-making process which enriched the exchange of knowledge around children’s issues. The partnerships helped to widen networks, increase access to policymakers and build a long-term coalition of development partners on social protection in Cambodia. In addition, UNICEF’s credibility and capacity as a sound technical advocate, ability to use evidence strategically and participation of senior leadership during the advocacy process have been critical to the success of the initiative.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
Lessons from this process and participation can be applied to UNICEF’s engagement in national policy processes with multiple partners and in multiple agency contexts. In replicating this experience, developing national commitment is essential to strengthen ownership, resources and implementation of the strategy. However, involvement of multiple partners and stakeholders in a national policy process may lead to competing and contradictory incentives and interests. In such contexts it might be more realistic to follow a systematic and iterative process of consultation among the development partners, facilitating development of a shared understanding and agenda. It is important for UNICEF to contextualize this experience to the prevailing political landscape. This will help shape a discourse which is inclusive and mutually beneficial for various stakeholders.

NEXT STEPS
The next steps are being shaped under the leadership of the Government, with support of development partners, including UNICEF, the World Bank and the WFP. UNICEF will continue to provide technical support in the development and roll out of the NSPS-IP. Further, in support to NSPS-IP, UNICEF will continue assisting in the development, design and implementation of cash transfers to promote maternal health, nutrition and ECD among vulnerable groups. Within UNICEF’s support package, there is a clear recognition of the need to enhance sustainable financing and national ownership including the support of the Ministry of Finance. Related to this is the planned study on socio-economic and political benefits and costs of social protection instruments, which will provide an overview of the financial responsibility and investment framework for social protection. This study will be available by early 2012. Meanwhile, a secondment of a national consultant is being planned to support capacity development of SPCU officials in implementing the knowledge and communication strategy and the roll-out of NSPS-IP.

As part of the cooperation with SPCU, UNICEF is working with partners to facilitate organization of a National Social Protection and Nutrition Conference in October 2011 and a Nutrition Congress in November 2011. These events are a follow up to a UNICEF-led paper ‘Worrying nutritional results in the context of high prices’. In addition, UNICEF continues to remain engaged as a key partner of SPCU in steering the strategy through its course and gathering lessons for its revision due in 2013.

RELATED LINKS
Cambodia’s National Social Protection Strategy
www.socialprotection.card.gov.kh/tt_files/documents/Social%20Protection/English/Consolidated%20final%20draft%20of%20NSPS%202012%20May%20ENG.pdf
ABSTRACT

The child care services in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are administered by Centres for Social Work (CSW) that provide social services and administer social benefits (cash assistance). Prior to 2010, all the records in the CSW were maintained manually without a unified record keeping system, leading to inaccurate data on beneficiaries. In 2010, the World Bank initiated the development of an electronic data collection system for the administration of cash assistance in CSWs. UNICEF complemented this initiative by supporting the data collection system for social services and by developing capacity of CSWs in using the system. By linking two crucial sets of data, i.e. users of social services and those receiving cash assistance, social protection of the most vulnerable beneficiaries will be improved. This will provide a new stimulus to the equity agenda in the country. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MOLSP) is expected to use the accurate number of recipients in both sectors as a basis for policy making, for reforming the CSWs and the broader social protection sector. As a means to ensure sustainability, UNICEF successfully advocated with the MOLSP to include the development and adoption of the rulebook on mandatory electronic data collection by the CSWs in their 2011 annual work plan. The development of the rulebook in this area will be crucial in securing Government resources for this initiative.

BACKGROUND

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, child care services are administered by 30 CSWs. These Centres provide social services, including counselling, case management, legal services, rehabilitation and reintegration support for children and adults from various backgrounds (such as street children, people with disabilities, victims of violence). The Centres also administer social benefits (cash assistance) such as child allowances, cash assistance for the first newborn, subsidies for education expenses and special allowance for children with disabilities. According to the State Statistical Office, in 2009, about 22,000 children received some form of social protection in the country.

Prior to 2010, CSW collected and kept records on the users of social services and cash assistance manually, without a unified electronic record keeping system. The CSW sends this data to the (a) Institute for Social Activities that uses it to develop standards for service delivery; and (b) to MOLSP that uses the data in policy making.

In 2006, ISA undertook a brief analysis of data collection by CSWs. This exercise highlighted the out-dated data collection system that was yielding unreliable information on the situation of children receiving social services and cash assistance. The data collection process was being managed under the regulations enacted in the 1970s. The data collection tools (questionnaires) were incomplete and standard guidelines for using the tools were lacking. This led to incomplete, inconsistent and inaccurate data. For example, double counting of beneficiaries that received two or more services was a common practice; some CSWs recorded the beneficiaries without asking for their identification; and at times household members of the beneficiaries were counted as beneficiaries too. Moreover, there was no linkage between the data on the recipients of social services and those receiving cash assistance. The data was neither linked to case management nor to a monitoring plan.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Amidst this background, in 2010, the World Bank initiated the development of an electronic data collection system for
the administration of cash assistance in CSWs. This system will support management of the entire cash assistance process, including registration and categorization of users, recording submitted documents, approving payments and disbursement of allowances. UNICEF complemented this initiative by supporting the data collection system for social services. As a first step, UNICEF initiated communication with the World Bank to coordinate efforts; to share information and knowledge around technical specifications and development of forms for the electronic data system; and to optimize the use of resources and ensure compatibility and interface between the two databases.

A working group composed of the MOLSP, ISA, UNICEF, World Bank and IT experts was established in order to plan, provide technical support and monitor every phase of the process. The infrastructure (IT equipment, internet connection, central server room) for the project was provided by the World Bank. The World Bank also took the lead in developing the software on cash assistance. UNICEF focused its support on developing software for social services and providing training to CSW staff. Additional consultations were held between the two agencies to ensure that data collected on social services and social benefits were compatible. For instance, an IT company was brought on board to develop consistent software solutions for managing data for both social services and cash assistance. Compatibility also was ensured by giving access to identification information of both users to the CSW employees.

The success of the initiative has been largely dependent on the endorsement of the Government. The project was included in the joint annual work plan and was developed together with the ISA. The experts at ISA were actively involved in the selection of the IT company, development of forms and monitoring of the software development. UNICEF provided technical assistance to ISA and select CSW staff to enable them to provide training for all Centres. UNICEF also supported a staff position in the ISA, to undertake training and monitor the data entry progress in the CSWs. UNICEF is currently advocating with the MOLSP and the Ministry of Finance to provide resources for the continuation of this position. A regular field monitoring team was constituted that visited the CSWs to gauge the progress and constraints in migrating to the electronic database system. The MOLSP was kept informed of the project development at the most senior level. The issues concerning development of the database were also a standing item in the UNICEF Representative’s meetings with the Minister.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The process has resulted in two separate databases, each for a different purpose (social services and social benefits), but they are compatible and able to exchange data needed by both systems. The databases will provide reliable data on the number of users of social services and benefits, the number and types of social services and benefits most frequently requested and provided, and the need for additional services and benefits. This will have a two-fold impact. First, the two databases will improve the performance of the Centres by helping them to manage and monitor the cases more effectively and efficiently. It will provide CSWs with a better insight on the situation of the users of social services and benefits; ensuring improved social protection is provided to the final beneficiaries. Secondly, such data will allow policy makers to have a thorough situation analysis to develop evidence-based policies and plans. The cooperation between the two projects will particularly benefit the most deprived, as the main beneficiaries of cash assistance and social services.

UNICEF has provided three rounds of training for all staff in 30 CSWs working on social services. The trainings were conducted by ISA and a group of CSW staff. The three rounds specifically focused on building basic skills to use the database, entering existing data and creating new files. To date, 19,000 files have been entered in the database, representing more than 70 per cent of the total volume.

The databases will be completely maintained and supported by MOLSP and ISA. The MOLSP will be responsible for software maintenance, while ISA is already providing training and will continue to support CSWs in data entry. The databases are already part of the national social protection system, having been installed in and being used by the CSWs.

Further, as a result of UNICEF’s advocacy efforts, the development and adoption of the rulebook on mandatory electronic data collection by the CSWs was included in the MOLSP annual plan for 2011. The development of the rulebook in this area is a crucial step forward towards

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66 Government’s manual of regulations
the sustainability of this initiative. The ISA with UNICEF’s support is providing technical assistance in developing the rulebook. Following the development of this project, in 2010, the MOLSP included revisions in the National Social Protection Programme. This strategic document now articulates the need for CSWs to use the databases and establishes clear roles and responsibilities for staff managing cash assistance and social services.

**INNOVATION**

This initiative links two crucial sets of data related to the most deprived population, i.e. users of social services and benefits, for the first time. By turning the outdated manual data collection into an electronic system at the national level based on standard tools and procedures, the initiative has linked social policy with child protection data management, policy and planning. It has also optimized the use of resources of the two agencies, with the World Bank covering the cost of infrastructure and software development of social benefits, and UNICEF supporting software development for social services and staff training. The two databases will enable MOLSP and ISA to produce disaggregated data on the most vulnerable people using cash assistance and social services simultaneously. This in turn will support UNICEF to strengthen the equity agenda in the country.

**POTENTIAL APPLICATION**

The approach and specific steps used in this project could be easily replicated in similar situations where development agencies are working on developing IT solutions or data systems in related fields. Communication, exchange of information and solutions and clear division of roles between the agencies were crucial in making two components of one system compatible. In addition, the ownership of the government is necessary to ensure sustainability.

**NEXT STEPS**

The data entry for social services and benefits will be completed by the end of 2011. The functionality of the report generating module of the software is currently being tested. Work around data exchange and compatibility of the interface will continue to be monitored as the databases are rolled out. A joint launch of the two databases is being discussed with the World Bank and MOLSP. The accurate number of users in both sectors will be used as a basis for policy making and reforming the CSWs and the broader social protection sector. This will result in a clear division of labour, roles and responsibilities between those handling cash assistance and social services. Advocacy with the new minister of MOLSP will continue around the sustainability of the initiative.
MOZAMBIQUE

Strengthening and scaling up of the social protection system

BACKGROUND

More than 80 per cent of the Mozambican population survives on less than one USD a day. In 2010, the Government announced that, despite strong and steady economic growth, the percentage of people living in poverty was unchanged between 2002 and 2008. According to a recent study, chronic under-nutrition remains very high, with 44 per cent of children under five suffering from inadequate physical and cognitive development. The impact of intergenerational childhood poverty is also evidenced by poverty's proven role as a barrier to accessing social services. Large inter-provincial disparities exist in terms of poverty rates, human development, access to social services and budget allocations. Mozambican households are also extremely vulnerable to shocks such as loss of an income or crop failure due to droughts or floods.

As a response, in 2008, the Government introduced fuel and food subsidies following violent riots brought on by rising food, fuel and utility costs in urban areas. Efforts to phase out these subsidies in 2010 were met by more urban unrest, resulting in 12 deaths in Mozambique's capital. The Government invested 1.5 per cent of GDP in fuel subsidies and 0.3 per cent of GDP in wheat subsidies in 2010. Despite these efforts, the cost of bread and other urban household food items rose by almost 25 per cent in one year and led to riots which cost an estimated USD 3 million in lost revenue and damaged property.

However, in general, the Government's attitude and response towards social protection has been marred by budgetary constraints, lack of political support and human resource capacity challenges. Throughout UNICEF's initial work on social protection, particularly towards approval of the Regulation for Basic Social Security in December 2009 and the National Strategy for Basic Social Security (ENBSS) in April 2010, negative attitudes regarding cash transfers persisted among higher levels of Government, particularly within the Ministry of Finance. Social protection seemed to survive within the limited sphere of Ministry of Women and Social Action (MMAS). There was limited participation by the Ministry of Planning and Development.
GDP was allocated to social protection in 2008.72 Government data indicates that only about 0.5 per cent of programmes cover only 8.3 per cent of poor households.71 This resulted in an annual budget bottleneck for the funding of such programmes. At present, national social protection programmes cover only 8.3 per cent of poor households.71 Government data indicates that only about 0.5 per cent of GDP was allocated to social protection in 2008.72

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Despite important advances in the policy framework, UNICEF acknowledged the lack of political buy-in among key ministries beyond MMAS. This was seen as the main obstacle to a broader implementation of social protection and financing of a revised national social protection strategy. In response in 2010, UNICEF and the PARPA Social Protection Working Group comprised of UN agencies and donors, embarked on reviewing and supporting the implementation of the ENBSS. To this end, UNICEF Mozambique has worked around the following areas:

Initial costing exercise

UNICEF Mozambique had developed a social protection strategy in 2007 focusing on the role of cash transfers for children affected by HIV and AIDS and other vulnerable children. Taking this further, in 2010, with the support of Oxford Policy Management (OPM), an internal paper was developed. The paper was grounded in evidence-based research to re-ignite advocacy efforts with the Government for expansion of social protection programmes. The paper undertook a pre-feasibility study and costing analyses of three social protection reform options. The policy options included a) scale-up of the cash transfer amount to account for inflation; b) the expansion of potential beneficiaries receiving the transfer such as child headed households, and c) the option of a conditional cash-transfer or public works programme. These policy options strengthen UNICEF’s engagement across the sectors by particularly looking at health user fees, education expenses, school feeding and cash transfers, within the context of the Government Five Year Plan 2010-2014. The review was built on recent analyzes of the MICS (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey) 2008, National Household Survey 2009 (the IOF), Census 2008 and the evaluation of the National Cash Transfer Programme (PSA) datasets.

The paper provides useful information to the Government through concrete costing of different social protection policy options that link any suggested programmatic response to required resources. The cost-benefit analysis addresses the frequent disconnect between desired programmes (that are possible with the existing institutional capacity within the MMAS) and spending decisions (proposed by the Ministry of Planning and Development [MPD] and Ministry of Finance) that focus primarily on maintaining fiscal and macroeconomic stability.

Engagement with IMF

The pre-feasibility and costing analysis report presented the opportunity to brief the new IMF Mozambique Country Director on the corresponding social protection options in Mozambique. The IMF expressed considerable interest in transferring spending from the expensive and politically charged fuel subsidy programme to more progressive social protection programmes. Subsequently, the IMF requested information on the social protection programmes in the region, including scale, targeting, and impact in preparation for an upcoming IMF mission to Mozambique. The provision of a policy brief on conditional cash transfers developed by UNICEF in April 2011 and its internal strategy paper opened the door to fuller engagement with the IMF. Jointly with other UN agencies, it also led to an opportunity to brief the IMF mission team and provide an equity and child-sensitive approach to social protection for the IMF’s Memo on Economic and Fiscal Policies (MEFP).73

The Social Protection Floor Initiative

Given this growing momentum and Mozambique’s subsequent nomination as a pilot country for the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPFI) as one of its nine key priorities to cope with the current global crisis. For more details visit www.socialsecurityextension.org/gimi/gess/ShowTheme.do?tid=1321

71 Data from PARP Chapter, Objective 3 (Draft)  
72 Ibid
tion Floor Initiative (SPFI) in 2011, UNICEF proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the key agencies, including the IMF and the World Bank. This model of engagement for an enhanced social protection floor in Mozambique supports the national policy dialogue, particularly to inform the Government around policy options related to the implementation of the ENSSB. The joint work includes (a) a review of the Basic Social Security programmes and Social Protection Expenditure in the country and (b) an estimate of the cost of income security provisions which would complete the income security component of the social protection floor in Mozambique.

UNICEF together with ILO and the World Bank, undertook the review of the Basic Social Security programmes and the Social Protection Expenditure Review. This exercise contributes to improving decision-making around social protection by informing of (a) specific risks and vulnerabilities of the population by age group and gender; (b) gaps and overlaps within the social safety nets relative to such risks and vulnerabilities; (c) benefit incidence of selected programmes; and (d) inputs for the prioritization of Government action regarding basic social security.

Further, with ILO and IMF, UNICEF developed an additional/expanded set of costing tools to support ministries in determining the cost of implementing the basic elements of social protection under the SPFI. In undertaking this exercise, UNICEF and its partners combined three sources of evidence (a) household micro-data on demographic composition and wealth from the latest nationally representative IOF; (b) population projections by age and sex constructed by the National Institute of Statistics on the basis of the 2008 Census; (b) projections of the macroeconomic scenario and fiscal aggregates, produced by the IMF. By combining these three sources, the costing model simulated the cost of a series of alternative policy options for 2012-2015. The model provides flexibility to compare alternative scenarios for eligibility, targeting, value, periodicity of the transfer and so on. The costing tool has two versions: a flexible version in data analysis software for internal background use and a simpler user friendly Excel version to facilitate future planning and analysis.

### PROGRESS AND RESULTS

The costing tool has supported the Government, and particularly the MMAS, in the design and costing of a holistic social protection system in line with ENSSB 2010. The costings were the main technical inputs that UNICEF, along with partners ILO, WFP, IMF and World Bank provided to the Naamacha Conference in May 2011. This conference was requested by the Ministries to provide a forum to discuss the design of the national social protection programme. In particular, UNICEF, ILO and WFP provided technical inputs with regards to cash transfers, productive safety nets, costing models, fiscal space and linkages of social protection to other economic, social and child protection services.

The development of the costing tool has enhanced the capacity of MMAS to engage with the Council of Ministers and particularly with the Ministry of Finance. Direct engagement by the Minister of MMAS and her senior cabinet members in considering the various policy options and their cost has allowed the Ministry to understand the budgetary implications of this initiative. In September 2011, the Council of Ministers approved MMAS’s petition to expand the scope for implementation of the ENBSS to include child headed households and alternative care families as direct beneficiaries in its social protection cash transfer programme. This would also result in an increase in the overall subsidy, including an increase to the amount per dependent (i.e. per child living with the elderly transfer recipient, up to a maximum of four children) as well as an indexation mechanism for the adjustment of the benefit on a regular basis to compensate for loss of purchasing power due to inflation. This is a significant step forward for social protection in Mozambique, which highlights enhanced political interest and commitment towards sustainable poverty reduction measures.

The strengthened capacity of MMAS has also been noticeable, including in media coverage of the Minister’s engagement on the issue of vulnerable children and their families. At the same time, informal information sharing and dialogue between UNICEF, the IMF and the Ministry of Finance about the ongoing costing efforts has helped create an enabling environment for these delicate discussions. Donors have taken notice of this enhanced engagement as well. The Government of Sweden has committed USD 7 million for 2011-2012 for continued systems strengthening and the gradual scaling-up of sustainable social protection initiatives. This will be done through a UN Joint Social Protection Programme involving UNICEF in partnership with ILO and WFP.

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76 Calculations were undertaken according to a global protocol genuine to Rapid Assessments done worldwide, with flexibility to accommodate national accounting standards, the possible options already taken under the ENBSS and limitations of the available national data.

77 The policy options were presented via three approaches to highlight the cash transfer choices available to the Government: (i) coverage to a larger percentage of the population with a lower transfer value; (ii) coverage to fewer beneficiaries but with a higher transfer amount and (iii) more balanced coverage with both the value and coverage as intermediate options.
Further, in March 2011, when the Government unexpectedly announced a Cesta Basica subsidy on food and transportation for urban workers under a certain wage level, UNICEF Mozambique was able to immediately offer the MPD support in applying the costing tool to the proposed subsidies. The Cesta Basica was being commonly referred to by Government as a social protection measure to help urban workers and students overcome shocks from increasing fuel and food prices. However, UNICEF and its partners quickly recognized the proposed instruments as a costly and potentially unsustainable impact mitigation measure that did not effectively target the poor. Using the tool to cost out the Cesta Basica allowed for easy comparisons with the costs of other potential social protection interventions, and opened discussions around the expansion of the current cash transfer programme (the PSA), implementing the public works programme (the Strategic Plan for the Reduction of Urban Poverty or PERPU), and productive safety nets (through investment in agriculture and increased access to credit and markets).

This technical assistance was highly valued by the Government as it provided MPD with evidence to substantiate arguments, including easy comparisons with the costs of other potential social protection interventions. By July 2011, the Government announced the Cesta Basica would not be implemented, bringing social protection into the political mainstream and opening up a political space for constructive debate and policy engagement.

INNOVATION

The value added of this initiative relates to the applicability of the costing model to deter Government investment in an inefficient food and fuel subsidy and towards consideration of other social protection programmes. Using its strategic position in the SPFI in Mozambique, UNICEF is able to influence national social protection programmes in favour of the most vulnerable children. This has particularly been made possible due to strong partnerships with key ministries, UN agencies and donors. These relationships proved invaluable as the political environment changed and opportunities for high level advocacy emerged, as a result of the economic crisis.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

In replicating this experience to other contexts, consideration of broader macro-economic areas for social investments to raise overall living standards (such as in agriculture, food security and employment-generating activities) rather than on specific child benefits, may prove to be essential entry points into expanded social protection. In addition, seeking engagement of other influential ministries (such as the Ministries for Planning and Finance) and looking beyond the obvious child-oriented ministries (such as the MMAS) can open doors for a broadened social protection strategy. This can be done by linking social protection advocacy to the realities faced by the Ministry of Finance by addressing the issue of fiscal space directly. For instance, costing analyses can provide actual budget numbers that feed directly into Government planning and budgeting processes.

NEXT STEPS

UNICEF and its partners will continue to provide technical support for the implementation of social protection programmes through MMAS and productive social safety nets through MPD. Dialogue also continues with the Government around alternatives to the Cesta Basica and how best to use the fiscal space opened up by the proposed reduction of the fuel subsidy.

Opportunities to compare and contrast the Mozambique experience within the context of the SPFI for enhanced advocacy are also being explored. In discussions with the IMF and World Bank, UNICEF is considering bringing global leaders to Maputo to speak on social protection and fiscal space, as well as on the role of the extractive industries for equitable social development in Mozambique.

RELATED LINKS


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78 In March 2011, the Mozambican Government announced it would cut the subsidies paid to fuel retailers and subsidise a basket of basic foodstuffs (cesta basica) for formal sector workers below a wage cap of 2500 metical (approximately USD 83 per month) in the country’s 11 provincial capitals. Additional transport passes would also be made available for the same workers as well as students. The cesta basica was not an actual basket of food items but a subsidy that would activate when the cost of an identified amount of household food items exceeded 282 meticals (approximately USD 9). Participating stores would then provide the designated items to those eligible via a voucher system, including oil, eggs, beans and sugar, for the 282 meticals and be reimbursed the difference by the Government.

79 The Strategic Programme for the Reduction of Urban Poverty, 2010-2014 (PERPU), announced in March 2010, provides cash transfers for public works as a means to address poverty in urban areas. Unlike pre-existing social safety net programmes in Mozambique, the PERPU enjoyed a corresponding budget line in the national budget via the Medium Term Expenditure Framework – a significant indicator of its political support, given the limited resources allocated to other currently implemented programmes.

80 In June 2011, economist Jeff Sachs, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Director of the Yale Columbia Center on Sustainable Development (A Joint Center of Columbia Law Center and The Earth Institute of Columbia University) presented their analysis: ‘Resource Based Sustainable Development in the Lower Zambezi Basin, to Government and donor partners in Maputo.
ABSTRACT
In 2009, for the first time, UNICEF Myanmar undertook a direct cash transfer project, as a part of its post-disaster response after Cyclone Nargis resulted in widespread devastation in the country. The project helped families to restore their means of livelihood in order to mitigate vulnerability of their children. The project comprised of a one-time cash grant combined with training on small business development. Overall, a large number of beneficiaries reported improvement in socio-economic conditions allowing them to provide more care and support to their children than before. The project also resulted in strengthening community based child protection mechanisms. Strong monitoring and evaluation of the project has led to availability of rich lessons learned. These will help influence design and implementation of emergency cash transfer programmes in the future, in addition to social protection initiatives for children in Myanmar.

BACKGROUND
On 2 May 2008, Cyclone Nargis struck the Ayerwaddy Delta of lower Myanmar, severely affecting the lives of approximately 2.4 million people. An estimated 140,000 people were killed or went missing, about 800,000 people were displaced, 450,000 homes destroyed and substantial amount of food stocks, livelihood-related equipment, infrastructure and paddy were all lost in what was considered the 'rice bowl' of Myanmar.81 In the cyclone affected areas, many households lost both primary breadwinners and economic assets. In the absence of social safety nets, vulnerable households, particularly those with many children, landless, and/or those headed by the elderly or young people, had limited capacity to re-establish sustainable livelihood activities. This often forced families to rely on unfavourable coping mechanisms which had a gradual negative effect on the wellbeing and protection of children. For instance, children were dropping out of school to go to work instead; children were migrating to towns in search of work and were not being cared for by family members. These factors were making children more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Hence, in responding to this emergency, UNICEF and its partners decided to strengthen protection of vulnerable children by providing livelihood support to the cyclone survivors, particularly the most vulnerable households and families. One year after the cyclone, protection and restoration of livelihoods became a top priority in the cyclone affected area.82 Economically empowering the affected families was recognized as a way of creating an enabling environment for protecting children.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
From July 2009 to March 2010, UNICEF Myanmar was involved in the delivery of Livelihood Cash Transfers (LCT) in 79 communities in Laputta and Bogalay townships. The UNICEF-funded project provided a one-time cash grant of USD 150 each to 4,515 direct beneficiary households. UNICEF designed and implemented the project, together with Pact Myanmar and five partner agencies83 involved in its child protection work. The CSGs were established by UNICEF in the post emergency phase, to involve local communities (including local elders, teachers, village and community leaders) to monitor, prevent and respond to abuse and exploitation of children in the post disaster areas. The CSGs of targeted villages were involved in most phases of the project, from selection of beneficiaries to monitoring the use of grants.

82 Interagency Real Time Evaluation of Response to Cyclone Nargis, UNOCHA & IASC, December 2008
Selection of beneficiary households

The criteria for selecting the communities included, low coverage from other agencies; high impact from the cyclone; large number of deaths resulting in large number of vulnerable children and a perceived strong need to begin activities to prevent secondary separation of children due to economic hardships within families. Among the selected communities, UNICEF and its partners, together with the CSGs and the local authorities ensured that livelihood cash grants were targeted for households meeting the following pre-determined selection criteria: large families with more than five children; landless/mobile families; families who had never received any income generation support after the cyclone; single headed households; elderly headed households; child headed households; households with orphans and; families with children not going to school. Priority was given to families of vulnerable children already registered with the Child Protection programme and being supported through interactions with the CSGs.

Business related trainings

Through small business development trainings delivered by Pact Myanmar, grant recipients learned how to develop business plans, and basic bookkeeping skills and as a result started small businesses based on their submitted plans. The business plans were based on their current livelihood experience and knowledge, such as in fishing, sewing, farming, livestock raising and setting up small retail operations. In some project sites, local authorities did not allow the provision of cash, hence livelihood items such as fishing nets and livestock were distributed. After the businesses were established, progress was tracked through close monitoring and supervision by CSGs and project staff from PACT and partner agencies.

Monitoring and supervision

Supervision and monitoring of the LCT project took place at the project management level and at the community level.

At the project management level, UNICEF and Pact were primarily involved in designing the monitoring and evaluation systems. Together the agencies designed and conducted a baseline survey, an indicator framework and a post intervention assessment and evaluation of the project.

At the community level, partner agencies, CSGs and local communities played an important role in tracking the grant utilization status. They made regular visits to the beneficiaries’ houses to ensure the cash was being used for the agreed business plans. One of the strengths of the project has been involving and building the capacity of local CSGs to conduct monitoring and supervision work at the community level. This proved to be an essential exit strategy for UNICEF and its partners on completion of the project as its aids sustainability of this work.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

The project implementation took eight months from August 2009 through March 2010. A post-intervention evaluation was conducted four months after the project ended. The main objectives of the evaluation of the LCT project were to assess its achievements, to document key lessons learned and to generate evidence in the Myanmar context aiming at supporting UNICEF in designing and advocating social policy initiatives in the future. A mixed method study design was applied combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The standard evaluation criteria, in particular relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability were used.

Overall, the evaluation reveals the livelihood cash transfer was successful in mitigating effects of the emergency on children. All expected outputs were achieved among the beneficiaries with 4,515 households demonstrating enhanced business skills. The project turned the daily casual labourers into livelihood asset owners, thus benefiting the most impoverished. The livelihood cash transfer helped the families with additional income for clothing, food, health care, housing, school expenses and pocket money for children. With improved living conditions, beneficiaries could provide more care and support to children than before. Some households reported sending dropped out children back to school. A few households were able to send their children to the middle schools in nearby villages. The beneficiary families are able to contribute their monthly fees towards the salaries of teachers hired for the primary schools. Migration for work by household members has also been reduced by half from 16 per cent to 8 per cent.

As a result of participating in the LCT project, CSGs became more united and active throughout the intervention and after. Through their active involvement in the trainings and frequent monitoring visits to recipient households,
interaction between CSGs and villagers became more frequent and meaningful, benefiting the primary function of CSGs which is awareness raising of child protection issues in the community. On the other hand, CSG members and beneficiaries also gained increased awareness on the socio-economic status of their village, livelihood activities and limitations.

The evaluation also reports progress on attitudes and opinions of households around child protection issues, particularly corporal punishment of children and around marital discord. The number of respondents considering it acceptable to hit children was almost halved between the baseline and the endline. The number of physical attacks between husband and wife was also reported to have been diminished. However, care has to be taken in attributing this change conclusively to this project.

LESSONS LEARNED
The post-intervention evaluation has resulted in several key lessons learned from the LCT project. Involving local community support groups in selection of target groups, trainings, and supervision of business activities, promotes ownership and sustainability in the long run. The selection criteria should be specific and sensitive and must be tested to effectively target the vulnerable families and avoid overlaps. It should be organized in a transparent, participatory and inclusive manner making all villagers aware of objectives and selection criteria.

The business trainings in rural villages should be designed and tailored to language, literacy and education status of the beneficiaries. Moreover, the training content should be adapted towards prevailing livelihood opportunities of the target population. Overall, tracking of grant utilization, supervision of business development and monitoring and evaluation of the project at different implementation level have been critical elements of the project.

This experience also suggests that in providing support to preparing business plans, it is important to conduct a market analysis to determine potential demand and purchasing power of the community to avoid over-concentration of some businesses in small villages. Further, the project time frame should be flexible and long enough to allow for effective planning and coordination.

While an improved socio-economic status for a vulnerable household usually results in improved situation for its children, improvement in child protection issues was rather a by-product of the project than one of its central elements. Yet, this objective of the project could have been made clearer to all partners, CSGs and beneficiaries at the beginning, which would have further strengthened the links between improved income and improved situation of children.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
The lessons learned identified can be applied in designing and conducting similar social transfer programmes either in a post-disaster or in the development context to mitigate vulnerability of children and families. Attention should be given to contextualizing the business skills training and business plans to local business types and patterns, to provide sufficient support in formulating business options and plans, and to ensure that monitoring and supervision involves local community support groups or similar groups. More importantly, for any livelihood support programme, success and sustainability largely depend on the availability of the market for the livelihood support recipients for which market analysis should be done during the planning stage.

NEXT STEPS
In early 2011, UNICEF discussed key aspects of the project with the Inter-Agency Working Group for Social Protection of Children (IAWG) in Myanmar. As a follow-up, lessons learned from the project will be presented to the IAWG later this year. The documentation of these experiences will support the application of these learnings in future social protection initiatives in Myanmar.
ABSTRACT
In 2010, UNICEF provided support to the Institute for Social Protection in Serbia to define social protection indicators that would enable better monitoring of the implementation of the new law on social welfare (adopted in 2011). A process of national consultations around the selection of social protection indicators helped crystallize ideas on what should be monitored. It also increased the awareness of administrators and service providers on the importance of evidence-based policies in social protection. Overall, the initiative has helped build stronger foundations for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the social protection system by triggering a revision of data collection instruments to provide disaggregated data; and by developing the capacity of the Institute and relevant government authorities for data analysis. As a result, the Institute will produce its first analytical report with evidence-based policy recommendations by the end of 2012. By supporting the development of a sustainable monitoring and accountability mechanism within the national social protection system, UNICEF Serbia has shown an innovative way of strengthening a child-sensitive social protection framework in a middle income country.

BACKGROUND
In 2011, Serbia adopted a new law on social welfare resulting from eight years of reform in the social protection sector. The law brings many benefits for children, for instance, (1) it bans institutionalization of children under three years of age and requires transformation of residential institutions; (2) secures national financing of community services for less developed areas; (3) increases the coverage and nominal value of cash benefits to the poor; (4) brings private service provision into the formal system (through standards and licensing); and (5) strengthens institutional and professional accountability of service providers, by introducing obligations on M&E around social protection. Overall, the law provides a strong framework to further develop monitoring of the national social protection system.84

Defining and agreeing on a set of indicators to monitor the implementation of the new law was seen as a prerequisite to strengthen the entire social protection system in Serbia. This would in turn strengthen child-sensitive social protection policies and instruments in the country. Prior to this initiative, administrative data was collected by various institutions within the social protection system, without translating it into clear indicators to feed into the policy making process. For instance, the Institute for Social Protection85 collected a large quantity of information which was presented in its annual report; however the information was not usable as it often contradicted itself. The lack of disaggregated data by age, sex, ethnicity and disability among others, also limited conclusions. For example, children were not observed separately but within a category of children and youth. It was also preventing the monitoring of inequities among different groups of clients, resulting in a lack of emphasis on the excluded groups in social policy and programmes.

In addition, data were collected through instruments that hadn’t been revised since the new policy directions in social protection were introduced. As a result the data collection instruments were not able to facilitate monitoring of the achievement of strategic objectives (such as placement of children into alternative care instead of institutions, deinstitutionalization of children with disability, availability of community services for children among others).

84 Serbia has a fully developed social protection system including insurance-based pensions and unemployment benefits, social assistance and child allowances, and increasingly diverse social services. Since social protection helps to prevent, identify and respond to violence and abuse of children, through the reduction of poverty and by addressing discrimination and social exclusion, social protection and child protection are intrinsically linked in the Serbian context.

85 The Institute for Social Protection is mandated by the government to collect, store, transmit, analyze data and monitor and report on social protection in Serbia.
STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

In 2010, UNICEF provided support to the Institute for Social Protection to lead the process of defining core (necessary) and secondary (desirable) social protection indicators. These indicators would provide a basis for monitoring the new law on social welfare (that was still a draft at that time) as well as the social protection system in general.

The entire exercise around defining indicators was new for the staff of social protection and child protection institutions such as Centres for Social Work, residential institutions and some parts of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. These institutions generally reported on inputs and results of administrative procedures prescribed by the law that they were implementing (for instance, number of requests, number of solved requests, number of clients for which they are getting funds from the government and so on). Higher levels of the government were never required to report on results achieved within the social protection system. Hence, the first step with many institutions was to raise awareness of the role and importance of a monitoring system and the use of outcome/impact indicators as tools within it.

This was done by organizing a series of national consultations bringing together representatives of the Ministry, the Republic Statistical Office, service providers, institutions, experts and NGOs. UNICEF together with the Institute for Social Protection took the lead in supporting the consultations. To this end, four focus groups were organized corresponding with the four domains envisioned by the new law, based on various types of services. These were (a) financial assistance, (b) services for children and youth, (c) services for adults and the elderly, and (d) services of Centres for Social Work (CSW). The focus groups were responsible for identifying, defining and approving the indicators under each of the domains.

Further, at the national consultations it was acknowledged that by strengthening the overall social protection monitoring system, children, as one of the main group of clients, would attain greater benefits as well. As a result, selection of indicators for all age groups was undertaken. This approach was key in gaining support of the Ministry and other relevant government authorities as they recognized this initiative as an opportunity to improve the entire social protection monitoring system.

As a second step in the process, a revision of data collection instruments has been initiated. Previously a questionnaire with three different formats was being used to collect data focusing on (1) residential institutions for children, (2) residential institutions for adults and (3) Centres for Social Work. To support data collection for the new set of indicators, these instruments are currently being revised by the Institute for Social Protection, supported by UNICEF. The new instruments will be available by September 2011.

The initiative highlighted significant capacity gaps among public servants responsible for data collection, processing and usage of data for analysis and decision making in social protection. As a result, UNICEF is training the Institute, Ministry, Centres of Social Work and residential institutions to collect data in line with the new instruments. Trainings are also being held with the staff of the Institute and the Ministry to develop analytical reports with policy recommendations using the newly collected data.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

The process of defining social protection indicators, revision of data collection instruments and subsequent capacity development of the government in data collection, processing and usage is helping to build a more solid foundation for the monitoring and evaluation of the social protection system in Serbia.

As a result of the consultations, a portfolio of 46 core and secondary indicators, disaggregated by gender, age, ethnic affiliation and disability have been produced. These indicators have been developed for each of the four domains. In particular, the indicators will help in understanding the number of children receiving formal care, incidence of disability among them, services for children in municipalities, coverage of children by cash transfers and their inclusion in the education system, allocation of resources for children, among others. The portfolio also includes mapping of accessibility and suitability of data for each of the defined indicators, including information on sources of data, institutions in charge of data collection, comparisons and harmonization of the defined indicators with the existing ones and their definitions.

Further, this initiative has resulted in additional plans for a Protocol of Cooperation and data transfer between the Institute for Social Protection and the Statistical Office. The Protocol will go into effect in early 2012. Through this...
cooperation, using data presentation systems, and particularly the DevInfo database\textsuperscript{86}, the main social protection indicators, including those related to children, will become available to a wider set of users at the national and municipal levels.

\section*{INNOVATION}

By developing a stronger and sustainable monitoring mechanism within the national social protection system, UNICEF has supported the development of a child-sensitive social protection framework and monitoring policy. This innovation illustrates the kind of accountability mechanism that UNICEF aims to support in middle income countries such as Serbia. Further, in Serbia where the number of development cooperation partners engaging on social protection issues is progressively declining, this initiative highlights UNICEF’s ability to strategically assist unfinished reform agendas and direct them towards the best interests of children.

\section*{POTENTIAL APPLICATION}

This innovation has the potential to be replicated in terms of the (1) process used to gather different stakeholders around a critical issue and (2) the actual structure and design of the monitoring system and indicators set up to monitor the performance of social protection programmes and entities. At the outset, the project recognized that the selection of the social protection indicators was only an initial step in the revitalization of the social protection monitoring system. Hence, UNICEF ensured resources to support further steps related to the revision of data collection instruments and capacity building in reporting and data analysis. Government partners were therefore confident that their commitment to embark on a complex reform process would be supported on a long term basis.

This experience highlights that strengthening technical aspects of the system requires efforts to raise awareness on the importance of evidence-based decision making among staff at various levels of the social protection system. This ensures good data quality as well as its efficient use at local and national levels.

\section*{NEXT STEPS}

UNICEF will continue to support the revision of data collection instruments and capacity building of staff for data collection, analysis and reporting through the end of 2011. All social protection institutions will take part in trainings to be held in October-November 2011. By early 2012, data collected with the new instruments will be available. The Institute for Social Protection and staff from the Ministry will be trained in report writing and data analysis during this time. Using the new data, the Institute has committed to produce analytical annual reports starting towards the end of 2012.

\textsuperscript{86} DevInfo is a database system endorsed by the United Nations Development Group for monitoring human development. It is a tool for organizing, storing and presenting data in a uniform way to facilitate data sharing at the country level across government departments, UN agencies and development partners. (www.devinfo.org)
For further information on lessons learned and good practices, please contact:
Information and Knowledge Management Unit
Policy, Advocacy and Knowledge Management, Division of Policy and Practice
United Nations Children’s Fund
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
Email: lessonslearned@unicef.org

www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_56532.html