

Nigeria

Update on the context and situation of children

Newly released data show that the situation of children, adolescents and women in Nigeria has improved over the past years, but the pace of progress will have to be accelerated to reach Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets by 2030. All data in this section are from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 2021 and MICS 2016/17) unless otherwise noted.

With a population above 200 million Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, projected to grow to 375 million and become the third largest in the world by 2050.[1] About half the population is below 18 years of age, and every third Nigerian is an adolescent or young adult aged 10-24 years. The economy is in recovery with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 3.6 per cent in 2021 and 2.3 (year-on-year) in the third quarter of 2022.[2] Inflation continues to rise, reaching a soaring 21 per cent in November 2022 (year-on-year).[3] Monetary poverty is high, almost half of all children in Nigeria (47 per cent) live below the national poverty line of N376.5 per day.[4] Among children under five years, six out of ten are multidimensionally poor.[5]

Despite these profound needs, public spending as percentage of GDP is among the lowest in the world, though it increased from 11 to 13 per cent from 2020 to 2021. It is particularly low on social sectors, where public spending per person is US\$22 for education and US\$15 for health, equivalent to 1.2 and 0.8 per cent of GDP respectively.[6]

Insecurity continues to affect the well-being of children in Nigeria through high levels of domestic crime coupled with violent attacks by non-state armed groups in several regions. An estimated 9.3 million people, including 5.7 million children, are affected by conflicts in states in the northeast, northwest and north-central (Benue state) regions.[7]

In ensuring the rights of children to name and identity, Nigeria's birth registration efforts are showing progress with 57 per cent of children under five registered compared with 47 per cent in 2016/17. National data reveal no gender disparity; children are less likely to be registered if living in rural areas or in poor households. There is large variation across states, with birth registration rates ranging from 27 to 92 per cent.

The under-five mortality rate is 102 per 1,000 live births, a notable reduction from 120 in 2016/17 but still far from the SDG target of 25 per 1,000 live births. One third of these deaths (34 per 1,000 live births) occur within the first 28 days of life. While skilled attendance at delivery increased from 43 per cent in 2016/17 to 51 per cent in 2021, access to this important life-saving intervention is still very limited.

According to the preliminary report of the 2022 National Food Consumption and Micronutrient Survey (NFCMS), 33 per cent of all children under five are stunted. There is no recent NFCMS to compare with; the prevalence was 37 per cent in the 2018 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). Stunting is highest in the northwest (48 per cent) and northeast (35 per cent). Severe acute malnutrition affects three per cent of children under five (NFCMS 2022).

Access to improved water and sanitation is progressing. About 76 per cent of the population have access to an improved drinking water source, compared with 64 per cent in 2016/17. Use of improved sanitation facilities has increased considerably from 36 per cent in 2016/17 to 56 per cent in 2021. Many still do not have any facilities and open defecation is practiced by over 38 million people.

The out-of-school rate for primary level education has seen limited progress, from 27.2 per cent in 2016/17 to 25.6 per cent in 2021. There are vast differences between states: seven states have rates above 50 per cent and 15 states have rates below 10 per cent, nationally 58 per cent of children from the poorest households are out of school. The majority of school children, both boys and girls, transition to lower secondary school (84 per cent), a significant improvement from 67 per cent in 2016/17. Only 67 per cent of girls and 69 per cent of boys complete lower secondary education.

While many indicators on children's well-being do not display strong gender differences at the national level, Nigeria ranks as number 123 on the Global Gender Gap Index in 2022.[8] Adolescent girls face harmful practices and gender-discriminatory social norms that limit their agency and bodily autonomy. Nigeria has the third highest prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the world, with a national average of 15 per cent among girls and women aged 15-49 years. Adolescent girls lack modern employment skills and lag behind in internet access and use (21 per cent compared with 38 per cent for boys). Child marriage is declining; today one in three women aged 20-49 married before the age of 18, compared with 44 per cent in 2016/17. However, with Nigeria's population growth early marriage will still affect an increasing number of girls and young women in the years to come.

Children in Nigeria have an extremely high risk of exposure to climate and environmental shocks.[9] In 2022, the country experienced the worst flooding in a decade, affecting an estimated 1.9 million children in 34 out of the 36 states. In the northeast and northwest, the floods exacerbated pre-existing humanitarian needs.

The forthcoming presidential elections in February 2023 may disrupt basic social services and programme delivery in parts of the country.

[1] World Population Prospects 2022, UNDESA

[2] National Bureau of Statistics, Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report Q3 2022.

[3] National Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index November 2022.

[4] Monetary Child Poverty in Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning and UNICEF, 2021.

[5] Multi-Dimensional Child Poverty in Nigeria: Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA); Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2021.

[6] Nigeria Public Finance Review, November 2022

[7] UNICEF Nigeria HAC, 2023.

[8] Global Gender Gap Report, World Economic Forum, 2022.

[9] Children's Climate Risk Index, UNICEF 2021.

Major contributions and drivers of results

UNICEF Nigeria's contribution to child rights realizations was guided by the 2018–2022 country programme derived from the UN Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF), and the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan for Nigeria (UNOCHA).

In 2022 the focus was on post-COVID recovery, consolidation of programming, harnessing private sector partnerships, and applying lessons and innovations from the pandemic response with a longer-term vision towards 2030.

Nigeria faces challenges in quality service delivery and human resource capacity across sectors, against a backdrop of environmental shocks, violence, and armed conflict in some areas. This operating environment of shifting emergency and development contexts requires a flexible nexus approach. UNICEF consistently delivered results for children in both contexts, while responding across

the country to the worst flooding since 2012.

Below are major contributions made towards UNICEF key results for children (KRC) in Nigeria and the West and Central Africa region.

SURVIVE AND THRIVE

UNICEF applied a multi-pronged approach to increase immunization coverage within a strengthened health system, focused on primary health care (PHC); reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health (RMNCAH); and expanding access to underserved populations.

Penta-3 vaccination for children aged 12–23 months increased from 33 per cent to 57 per cent over the past five years, close to the KRC target of 62 per cent.[1] In 2022 alone, children under one year vaccinated with penta-3 increased by four percentage points. A Zero-Dose Strategy to reach underserved children was developed with partners for the 100 most deprived local government authorities (LGAs) in 18 states, laying the foundation for targeted intervention.

UNICEF supported the response to the circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) outbreak, which resulted in the decrease of cases by 84 per cent compared with last year and tripled the number of children vaccinated with nOPV2 (58 million). UNICEF supported the administration of over 90 million COVID-19 vaccines, bringing the total to over 63 million fully vaccinated.

Game changers for increasing immunization coverage were integrated delivery, community mobilization, and supply chain strengthening. Integrated routine and COVID-19 vaccines, Vitamin A, and birth registration campaigns were conducted in 25 states reaching over 30 million children. Support continued for transitioning polio volunteer community mobilisers to become health promoters at the community level, and expanding cold chain capacity to ensure availability of vaccines at all levels.

Ensuring access to quality healthcare for children and families in humanitarian contexts in the northeast was extended to the northwest to respond to the growing needs of displaced populations. The health programme also responded to the cholera outbreaks in northern Nigeria and floods across the country.

UNICEF supported the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) to scale up services nationwide under the premise “one functional PHC center per ward”. In 2022, UNICEF expanded the approach to eight new states, bringing the total to 14. Jointly with the Nigerian Governor Forum, UNICEF launched the PHC Leadership Challenge Fund providing an opportunity for all states to compete for performance awards.

In keeping with UNICEF's global nutrition strategy there was a continued emphasis on shifting focus from treatment of malnutrition towards prevention and its integration and scale. Vitamin A supplementation (VAS) is a key preventive intervention and for the first time in five years two rounds of VAS were successfully completed. Thirty-five million children were reached in round one, and 23 million received two doses of Vitamin A. While short of the KRC target of 31.6 million receiving two doses, this constitutes a massive change from the 9.8 million reached with one round of VAS in 2021. This achievement was made possible by bringing together stakeholders at different levels, leveraging campaign platforms and integrating VAS with immunization services.

The Zero Water Campaign contributed to increasing exclusive breastfeeding rates, and a pilot initiative focuses on improving complementary feeding through strategic behavior change. Ongoing multi-sectoral formative research on key child survival and nutrition practices in the first 1,000 days of life will shape the national Social Behavior Change Strategy.

In six states facing a humanitarian crisis in the northeast and northwest, UNICEF supported government and partners to scale up the family Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) approach at the community level. The pipeline for life-saving commodities was secured and almost 600,000 children were reached with life-saving nutrition treatment, achieving a 96 per cent cure rate for severe acute malnutrition. In 2022, two additional manufacturers of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) were approved for local procurement in Nigeria.

UNICEF leveraged its role as co-chair of the Development Partner's Group and member of the National Council of Nutrition to unlock financing, resulting in the release of US\$ 1.8 million by government in 17 focal states in 2022. During the country programme period, the total budget released was US\$ 17 million, surpassing the five-year target.

UNICEF supported the launch of the African Year of Nutrition; the event was held alongside the annual data conference where findings from the 2021 MICS and the preliminary report of the National Food Consumption and Micronutrients Survey were released. UNICEF also supported media roundtables by the National Council of Nutrition reaching approximately 150 million people with nutrition information. Other achievements in evidence generation include a barrier analysis on causes of low consumption rates of iron and folic acid.

LEARN

Among children of primary and lower secondary school age, 25.3 per cent are out of school[2], surpassing the KRC target of 26 per cent. Through UNICEF's system strengthening efforts, the national Government adopted an enrolment drive framework and localized the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education in five states. Thirty-three states and FCT have crisis and gender-responsive costed sector plans, 21 states and FCT have functional education management information systems (EMIS), and the Universal Basic Education Commission developed a national framework to reduce out-of-school numbers. UNICEF supported Nigeria's participation in the Transforming Education Summit, where the President reaffirmed his commitment to allocate US\$3.7 billion to education in the next four years and announced Nigeria's 2024 participation in the international learning assessment, Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (PASEC).

UNICEF has developed an evidence-based, scalable model on primary enrolment and retention, including community enrolment drives, unconditional cash transfers, improving infrastructure with school grants, foundational learning and peer education. A rigorous evaluation showed this approach as instrumental in bringing 1.5 million girls into school. Social norms on girls' education shifted, halving the rates of early marriage and childbearing in six northwest states. Alternate and distance learning have strengthened system resilience to shock, mitigated learning loss and supported school re-entry. Five million children continued learning via home-based materials, radio and television programming; 7,500 community learning hubs were established with CSOs in 16 states; and 14 states launched the Nigeria Learning Passport, a digital learning platform with 15,000 curriculum-aligned materials and over 120,000 users.

UNICEF supported 1.3 million conflict-affected children (659,000 girls) to access formal and nonformal education. In the three northeast states affected by conflict, 688 classrooms and 408 temporary learning spaces were constructed; 1.75 million children were supported with literacy and numeracy; and over 34,000 teachers were capacitated on psychosocial support reaching 2.7 million conflict-affected children. High level advocacy contributed to the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence Free Schools and safe school minimum standards and their implementation in 11 states, while the Ministry of Finance has established a plan for safe schools.

Nigeria is experiencing a severe learning crisis with 3 out of 4 children in basic education unable to read with comprehension or solve simple math problems.[3] The proportion of children in Grade 2-3 and 5-6 achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics was measured in 2021 at 23

per cent, short of the 2022 KRC target of 37 per cent.

UNICEF is expanding access to play-based, pre-primary education and has developed a cost-effective (US\$8 per child) and scalable model on foundational literacy and numeracy for Grade 1-3 and 4-6 learners that is now scaled to 13 states. An impact assessment showed that the percentage of Grade 2 girls achieving basic literacy in Hausa increased from 2.8 per cent in 2014/2015 to 22.8 per cent in 2022. Over the past five years, UNICEF trained 155,069 teachers on formative assessment; play-based, inclusive pedagogy; foundational literacy and numeracy; leadership; school records keeping; and psychosocial support through an increasingly teacher-centered model of mentoring and supportive supervision.

PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION

This year saw exceptional achievements in localizing the 2003 Children's Rights Act (CRA) at state level. The law explicitly prohibits all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation against children and was enacted in four additional northern states, some of which face humanitarian and security challenges. In total, 34 states have localized the CRA, a significant accomplishment given that only 19 states had passed it at the beginning of the country programme. Two important milestones were reached in advancing children's rights in humanitarian situations; the signing of the Handover Protocol to reduce detention of children encountered by military and security forces, and the launch of the Group of Friends on Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC).

The number of child survivors of violence reached with child protective services nearly doubled in 2022, totaling 116,573 children (41 per cent girls) including children in emergency situations. This is approximate to the KRC target of 120,000. Over the course of the five-year country programme, 226,263 children (44 per cent girls) received child protective services, amounting to 97 per cent of the target.

Over one million children in street situations (46 per cent girls) were traced across 13,172 Almajiri learning centers and identified as needing child protection services.

The Joint UN Spotlight Initiative strengthened state coordination, linkages with referral centers, and uniform registration of all cases of violence against children in the online information management system (Primero Version 2.0). The launch of the Movement for Good to end female genital mutilation (FGM) positioned Nigeria as one of the few countries globally to have initiated this approach, reaching over 300,000 online pledges, enrolling youth-led organizations as champions and building on previous achievements within the Joint UN Programme.

More than 3.6 million children (1.6 million girls), half of all children under one year in Nigeria, had their birth registered in 2022. While this achievement falls short of the ambitious KRC target of 84 per cent for 2022, it represents an increase over earlier years. Among children under five who are registered, UNICEF contributed directly to the registration of about 7.4 million children out of the total of 19.9 million. In 2022, UNICEF focused on developing an approach to accelerate birth registration. This included piloting an innovative digital enterprise eCRVS system in six states and integrating birth registration with primary health and nutrition interventions.

LIVE IN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

The contribution of UNICEF to the open defecation free (ODF) drive in Nigeria has led to substantive results in 2022, including the declaration of the first ODF state, Jigawa, and an additional 7.8 million people live in newly certified ODF communities, exceeding the KRC target of 5 million. During the 2018–2022 programme UNICEF support led to a total of an estimated 20 million people living in ODF-certified communities.

At the national level, access to basic sanitation increased from 41 per cent in 2017 to 43 per cent in

2022, with prevalence of ODF remaining constant at 19 per cent during the same period, above the KRC target of 17 per cent.[4]

UNICEF has championed strategic interventions for sanitation promotion, including innovative marketing approaches to community-led total sanitation (CLTS), construction of cost-effective toilets, and engaging youth in social and behavioral change. About 2.4 million people were reached with key hygiene messages for sustained behavioral change; UNICEF also supported Nigeria's Hand Hygiene for All road map and the successful first World Toilet Summit in Nigeria.

In 2022 over 2 million people (0.9 million female) gained access to basic drinking water services, while an additional 186,423 accessed safely managed water services. Both results contribute to the ongoing progress at national level, where access to basic drinking water increased by four percentage points from 2018 to 2022. To improve sustainability of water services, the national Village Level Operation and Maintenance (VLOM) strategy was launched with VLOM structures established in 12 states. UNICEF also provided access to gender-sensitive and climate resilient WASH services in 91 schools and 32 healthcare facilities using standard models that can be scaled up by the Government.

During the country programme UNICEF instituted the WASH National Outcome Routine Mapping (WASHNORM), and expanded the WASH Information Management System (WASHIMS) to 12 additional states. Government funding for the sector is a challenge; evidence-based advocacy has been successful in countering this trend in several states.

UNICEF strengthened government capacity for WASH in emergency coordination and cholera emergency preparedness and response at federal and state levels. Between 2018 and 2022, UNICEF supported the government in responding to cholera outbreaks, flooding disasters and conflict-induced humanitarian situations in 23 states, reaching over 2.4 million people in need with lifesaving WASH services and supplies.

EQUITABLE CHANCE IN LIFE

With the support of UNICEF and partners, Nigeria now has monetary and multidimensional child poverty measurements, both previously unavailable. UNICEF supported a trend analysis of Nigeria's public expenditure which revealed an increase in government allocation for social sectors from 2021 in both health (from 3.8 to 5.8 per cent of the total budget) and education (from 7 to 8.8 per cent).

The National Social Protection Policy was revised and validated, with a costed implementation strategy. With UNICEF support, 15 states have developed social protection policies and 24.7 million children (an increase of 10 percentage points from 2021) are covered in the National Social Register. Over 190,000 households were covered in UNICEF-led cash transfer programmes in six northern states.

EVIDENCE GENERATION AND PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

Across the country office and nine field offices, well-prioritized and evidence-based plans (including the Annual Management Plan, annual work plans and emergency preparedness plans) and monitoring and evaluation activities were developed with national partners to deliver results for children. A robust Performance Monitoring System was established to facilitate biannual programme review. A learning assessment of knowledge management (KM) strategies such as enhanced use of data visualization and digital systems and pilots embedding KM in programmes generated lessons learned that will be taken forward in the next country programme.

The sixth round of the Nigeria Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey was finalized in 2022. Three evaluations were also completed; i) Final Evaluation of Girls Education Program 2012-2022 in Northern Nigeria, ii) Formative Evaluation of Nutrition CPD 2018-2022; and iii) Evaluation of UN Joint SDGs Program (2020-2022) on Strengthening Social Protection in Nigeria.

Media content was produced and disseminated throughout the programme cycle to advocate for children's rights. In 2022, UNICEF Nigeria achieved 16,000 mentions in the news, social media platforms reached 100 million people. More than 20 million persons engaged with UNICEF's posts and tweets, while nearly 1,300 media appearances for senior management and technical specialists occurred locally and globally over the last five years.

[1] MICS 2016/17 and 2021.

[2] MICS 2021

[3] MICS 2021

[4]WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP)

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

UNICEF and UN agencies partner as One UN with joint strategies for common results and robust support to the Federal Government of Nigeria to accelerate SDG achievement. To prevent abuse and strengthen response systems for children and women, UNICEF and several UN partner agencies build on each other's efforts under the Spotlight Initiative. Working closely with UN partners, UNICEF supported Nigeria's participation in the UN Secretary General's Transforming Education Summit where commitments were made to recover learning loss during the COVID-19 pandemic and accelerate progress on SDG4. For improved nutrition and food security, UNICEF, FAO, and WFP continue to support the Government to implement the 2021 Food Systems Summit and Nutrition for Growth commitments.

To improve access and uptake of HIV services, UNICEF works closely with WHO, UNFPA, and UNAIDS through the Joint UN Team on AIDS for high-level advocacy and technical support at the national level. In 2022, the SDG Joint Fund Programme on Social Protection was completed successfully with UNICEF as lead agency. The programme is being considered for scale-up, taking into account lessons learned. Coordination fora between UNICEF, UN agencies and other actors active in the northeast and northwest ensure a concerted humanitarian response, where UNICEF plays a leading role in several areas. Beyond these examples of joint or coordinated programmes, UNICEF played a leading role in articulating the results framework for the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2023-2027), the agreement that brings together and holds accountable all UN agencies working to support the Government in progressing towards the SDG targets.

UNICEF partnered with development banks and other development partners to influence the agenda of the Government, support sector coordination, and increase financing for the social sector, particularly children, adolescents, and women. To advance child rights and the legal identity agenda, UNICEF, the World Bank, UN agencies, and civil society strengthened a harmonized approach towards digital birth registration and national identity systems in Nigeria. UNICEF supported international procurement, logistics and equitable distribution and administration of over 90 million COVID-19 vaccines for Nigerians together with Gavi, CEPI, WHO, Global Fund and development partners including as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. UNICEF remains strategically positioned as lead of the Scaling up Development Partners Group for Nutrition, and co-lead of the International Development Partners' Group on Social Protection to substantively advance policy, programming, and multi-sector legislative frameworks.

For social accountability, UNICEF works with partners such as the Nigerian Governors Forum to secure political will for the primary healthcare leadership challenge and the Presidential Committee on WASH through the Development Partners Group to promote effective management of WASH resources and innovative approaches to sanitation promotion.

UNICEF engages the private sector to become stakeholders in support of child rights and to galvanize support toward young people and the digital divide. The UNICEF Generation Unlimited Nigeria public-private-youth partnership with companies including IHS, Airtel, and Microsoft, in 2022 provided over 2.7 million Nigerian young people with internet data and digital access, skills and livelihood opportunities, towards reaching 20 million youth by 2030.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

Innovation and digital transformation are change strategies to accelerate achievement of programmatic results. For example, for birth registration UNICEF is piloting an electronic civil registration and vital

statistics (eCRVS) innovation that meets international standards and can handle Nigeria's large population needs as one component of a multi-sector change management and legal framework strengthening approach.

In 2022, UNICEF adopted a new framework for innovation, expanding focus beyond digital solutions. While lightweight, the innovation framework supports the decision-making process on where to focus the office's time and resources to efficiently scale up new solutions.

UNICEF leveraged the COVID-19 prioritization of and investment in oxygen systems to address the chronic oxygen gap for RMNCAH needs. UNICEF Oxygen System Planning software was piloted and adopted nationwide to inform placement of procured oxygen equipment, as well as investment plans at the national level and in 14 states. In 2023, UNICEF will assess oxygen plant and power supply product innovations as part of the model to increase oxygen access.

Over the past five years, UNICEF with state partners has invested in integrating foundational literacy and numeracy into Qur'anic schools. By training school facilitators, rehabilitating infrastructure through small grants and providing instructional materials to learners, foundational literacy improved from 4 per cent in 2017 to 29 per cent in 2022, outperforming children in public schools.

An Individualized Learner Unit Record Information Tracking System (LURITS) was piloted across 18 LGAs in four northwest states in 2022. This tracks admission, attendance, movement and progress and will be replicated in 2023 and advocated for scale-up. In addition, UNICEF and government are co-designing a blended modality for upskilling teachers through the Nigeria Learning Passport (NLP) referred to as Learning Labs, to be field tested in three states in 2023.

UNICEF is harnessing innovation to deliver results with and for adolescents and young people through partnerships. With over 65 million young people aged 10–24 years, Nigeria has one of the youngest populations in the world and represents an extraordinary opportunity for development and growth. Through the UNICEF Generation Unlimited Nigeria partnership, twelve private sector partners including Jobberman, Google, and Facebook have upskilling and youth engagement opportunities on the Youth Agency Marketplace (YOMA) digital platform.

UNICEF U-Report polls provide Nigerian youth with an opportunity to share their opinions, needs and aspirations and direct young people to the skills and engagement opportunities on the YOMA platform and youth-friendly HIV prevention services as part of Yah Naija, formerly U-Test. In 2022, 1.1 million new U-Reporters were registered, a massive growth bringing the total number of U-Reporters to just over five million. Currently 38 per cent of U-Reporters are female, and 53 volunteers were recruited for the Young Person's Action Team at state level to mobilize adolescent girls and young women aged 10–24 years.

Working with the private sector UNICEF supported increased digital access through expanding broadband internet coverage to over 400 underserved communities, connecting 207 schools to the internet, and getting the Nigerian Learning Passport and YOMA whitelisted by IHS Towers and Airtel. With improved access, the current users of the digital learning and skilling platforms, Nigerian Learning Passport (122,000) and YOMA (115,000), are expected to grow significantly. Connectivity and digital access are enablers of the new adolescent girl strategy and initiatives such as 'Building Back Equal' being undertaken in the northwest to address the gender gap for digital and financial inclusion and advance both education and child protection strategies, girls' agency and leadership.

UNICEF pioneered innovative financing for construction of improved toilets by the private sector in two states. This resulted in the construction of an estimated 95,113 improved household toilets with over US\$1.2 million mobilized from sanitation revolving loans, sanitation pool funds and household

self-financing. Lessons from this innovative approach to financing results for children are assessed for replication including in other sectors.

Preparations have been completed for a 2023 assessment called MICS PLUS, a new longitudinal real-time data collection tool for population data gaps that are best measured with high frequency, and which change seasonally. The aim of MICS PLUS is to compliment MICS and provide policy makers with time-series information on selected indicators to inform their programmatic and management decisions.

UNICEF has enabled and expanded private sector partnerships for the local production and procurement of RUTF. To address 2022 production challenges, UNICEF is applying lessons learned from nascent industries to advocate and coordinate pre-financing mechanisms to ensure a ready supply of raw materials and an uninterrupted flow of RUTF. UNICEF will invest in end user monitoring to quantify access, application, product quality and caregiver knowledge.

The creation of a budget code for child-related public expenditure (ages 0–18) in Lagos is an innovative approach to address data gaps regarding public expenditure for children and the extent to which children are directly benefitting from public spending. Adoption beyond Lagos will be explored.

In the coming years UNICEF will position itself to continue delivering change for children and adolescents in Nigeria, as the country faces pivotal issues such as rapid population growth accelerating the already very young population; high levels of child poverty affecting children's outcomes across sectors; and climate change driving another unstable layer of tension and conflict in the country.

Moving forward, UNICEF will strengthen programme integration across sectors and linkages between development and humanitarian programmes, while continuing to focus on the most underserved areas towards leaving no one behind.