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

Selected Innovations and Lessons Learned from UNICEF programmes
PUBLICATION

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


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FOREWORD

The realities facing children are rapidly changing in many countries, and changing the way development agencies do business. Children are also far more sensitive to and differently affected by poverty than adults. Therefore, over the past five years, and in order to remain at the cutting edge of child advocacy efforts, UNICEF has made significant strides in engaging in upstream policy work and in leveraging new partnerships and resources for the fulfilment of children’s and women’s rights.

With a primary objective of strengthening equity and reducing child poverty and disparities, UNICEF’s current approach to social policy is defined by four key areas of work: i) child-centred analysis, ii) policy-oriented, evidence-based advocacy, iii) support to programme interventions and iv) national capacity development for equitable child-focused policies. This highlights the need for 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 further facilitates UNICEF’s participation in policy and budget debates on areas such as social protection and social budgeting that influence macro-level decisions affecting the lives of disadvantaged children and their families. Recently, in response to the food, fuel and financial crisis in 2009, UNICEF’s work 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.

This document features 12 recent innovations and lessons learned from UNICEF programmes which are illustrative examples of our work on social and economic policy. Following the four levels of interventions mentioned above, these examples are presented to share the experience of UNICEF and its country level partners in applying upstream work as a core strategy to reach the most marginalized.

The cases highlighted in this publication are highly diverse examples – from developing a social protection strategy in Burkina Faso to Morocco’s efforts to institutionalize a multidimensional approach to child poverty measurement, lessons learned from district level MDG monitoring in Indonesia, to the experience of introducing a child budget analysis as a part of national budget reform in Jordan.

Documentation of key lessons and experiences facilitate their further application and are valuable for organizational learning. However, it is important to recognize that lessons gained through cooperation in one country or context are not necessarily valid or transferable to the circumstances of another. We hope that this compilation will be useful in two ways: to provide a sense of the range of UNICEF’s work on social and economic policy across regions; and to provide indications on where to look for emerging experiences which could engage the organization in upstream social and economic policy work for the fulfillment of children’s rights.

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).

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## 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.
BACKGROUND
Prior to the initiation of the Child Poverty and Disparities Study in Morocco, child poverty had never been analyzed in the country for two major reasons: firstly, it was not officially established that children experience poverty differently from adults; a child is considered poor when he or she belongs to a family living below the national poverty line; secondly, the monetary approach that is commonly used to measure poverty in Morocco does not assess the impact of poverty on individuals; it only assumes when a household lives below the national poverty threshold, all the household members are poor. Further, quantitative data on child well-being was not readily available in Morocco except for routine health data. Hence, given the situation, UNICEF began raising public awareness and advocating for child centred data collection and analysis.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
In late 2007, UNICEF Morocco partnered with ONDE to launch the first ever child poverty study in Morocco using the deprivation framework. Among some of the constraints identified at the outset was the nature and source of data needed to produce this analysis. The only comprehensive datasets available were household consumption and expenditure surveys, as well as household living standards surveys. However, a partial Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) had been conducted, and when merged with a youth survey of 2006, facilitated the child poverty study in Morocco. Conducting the study using the deprivation approach was a first step to initiate a public debate on alternative approaches to monetary poverty measurements in general and child poverty in particular.

In 2008-2009, UNICEF initiated dialogue with the Moroccan government through various channels on the importance of child centred data collection. This led to, for example, UNICEF signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Health regarding routine health data collection. The MoU clearly states that the Ministry of Health should share data collected with UNICEF. This created a precedent, although at a small scale, for future sharing of data.

The preliminary findings of the child poverty study were disseminated in May 2009 during the first Social Policy and Child Rights forum in Morocco. The forum marked a shift in the national debate on child poverty. The HCP was

ABSTRACT
Despite a high level of local capacity and vision in Morocco to address poverty and improve the wellbeing of citizens, children’s rights issues are often excluded from public debates and poverty measurements. In response to this situation, in 2010, Morocco’s statistics office, the High Commission for Planning (HCP), UNICEF and the National Observatory for Children’s Rights (ONDE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data related to children. This initiative is a key follow up to the Child Poverty and Disparities Study conducted in Morocco in 2007; the first ever study on child poverty in the country using the deprivations framework. The MoU will result in a follow up study using a multidimensional approach to child poverty measurement, in addition to a survey to assess the impact of migration and remittances on children; creation of an information system to improve monitoring of children’s situation and updated data on child labour within the national labour survey.
invited to present the official approach to poverty measurements. The subsequent debate highlighted how both approaches (monetary and non-monetary measurements) are complementary and can enable a better assessment of social policies on children, identifying gaps and informing future child friendly policies. The study findings have also been disseminated through the media.

The advocacy and leveraging efforts led to a partnership with the HCP on producing official child poverty estimates and making children visible in social policy and poverty reduction agendas. As a first step, UNICEF Morocco analyzed essential resources required for the study and presented the approach to HCP. Subsequently, a concept note was drafted outlining the multidimensional child poverty methodology, based on recognized good practices and lessons learned in other countries. The child poverty study in Morocco was based on a partial MICS as a result of which all the relevant child poverty indicators could not be developed. Therefore, the study team is currently undertaking a follow-up study, in close collaboration with the HCP using the latest government data available. This follow-up study will add significant value as it includes both monetary and non-monetary aspects of poverty, as well as additional analysis of child poverty at the community level.

Further research efforts on methodological issues related to poverty measurement has enabled the office to advocate with confidence for a child poverty research agenda. This was an important step towards institutionalizing child poverty measurement for a long-term impact on children’s lives in the country.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
The preliminary findings of the study were presented in 2009 and show, among others, that 17 per cent of Moroccan children suffer from at least two deprivations, while only 9 per cent are identified as income poor using the official poverty line definition.

Building on the experience, results and recommendations of the study, in May 2010, HCP, UNICEF and ONDE signed a MoU to collaborate in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data related to children. This has been a crucial step in institutionalizing multidimensional approach to child poverty measurement in Morocco.

The MoU is currently being implemented. The Moroccan government has agreed to undertake a follow up study on child poverty and disparities using a multidimensional approach, using the latest data, including the data that will be released from the National Demographic Survey (2010). In parallel, it is conducting a survey to assess the social impact of migration and remittances on children. A series of capacitation exercises have begun with the National Institute for Statistics to put in place an information system using a public database to better monitor the MDGs and the situation of children, including at the sub-national level.

As a result of the study and the MoU, child poverty estimates/analyses are being conducted in 2011 which will be incorporated into the national statistical system. A paper on multi-dimensional poverty was published by HCP in their May-June 2011 Cahiers du Plan (Planning Paper). After technical discussions on weights to be given to each deprivation indicator, the analysis is still on-going at the HCP level.

LESSONS LEARNED
While there is sufficient political will and a high level of local capacity and vision in Morocco to address poverty and improve the wellbeing of citizens, children are left out in public debates and poverty measurements. This is because of the pre-existing assumption that improvement in the family situation will improve the situation for children. Development of child centred tools and policy research agenda to produce evidence on what is required to fulfil children’s rights is an essential way forward. This is one of the key learnings from this initiative.

What makes this experience of interest is how established practices of poverty measurement can be challenged, not for their relevance, but in their limits of assessing the impact of social policies on poverty reduction. The monetary approach allows identification of the poor from a monetary perspective only. Apart from raising resources for poor households, it does not highlight what is required to tackle poverty in its multidimensional form. Further, it does not capture the simultaneous effects of the multiple deprivations contributing to poverty, and make direct linkages between poverty and different areas of deprivations (education, health, literacy, quality shelter, nutrition among others). These areas need to be addressed in the medium and long term to tackle the root causes of poverty. (For
further information, please see ‘UNICEF’s insights on a multidimensional approach to measure child poverty’

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

The child poverty study is being conducted in several countries; however, the strategies may differ significantly due to the different contexts. In Morocco’s case, building trust with the Government was crucial to gain their support towards a multidimensional approach to child poverty, to create their commitment towards long term sustainability around child sensitive public policy.

Morocco has exchanged information around the process and lessons learned during the child poverty study with other countries in the region, including Egypt which is also conducting the study.

NEXT STEPS

With regards to the child poverty analysis, UNICEF will identify capacity building and training opportunities to support HCP staff to further explore various techniques of child poverty multidimensional analysis and support its work in this area to ensure long term impact. The following activities are planned to take this forward:

• Conduct the second phase of the Child Poverty and Disparities study and disseminate it widely among policy makers;
• hold the second social policy and child rights forum in 2011 as a follow up to the first forum and identify specific policy interventions and ways to effectively implement them;
• explore how a sub-national analysis of child poverty can be performed to identify the most vulnerable populations, for example using a multidimensional approach to the poverty mapping technique; and
• update data on child labour within the national labour survey.

RELATED LINKS

Official website: Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities

http://unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com/

Agreement between the HCP, UNICEF and ONDE in the collection, analysis and dissemination of data on children:

4 www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index_57664.html
5 The Global Child Poverty and Disparities Study is being conducted in over 50 countries.
BACKGROUND
While the impact of the global economic crisis is still unfolding, the existing monitoring tools and surveillances are generally backward looking and suffer long time lags between data collection and policy uptake. Many Pacific Island Countries have Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in the Ministry of Education and Health Information Systems (HIS) within the Ministry of Health, but these systems are generally not designed for monitoring unexpected changes in education or health indicators during times of crisis. Similarly the information and evidence available on the impact of the on-going global economic crisis on children, young people, women and social service systems remain anecdotal and fragmented. This type of data is difficult to be compiled and analyzed to provide timely and quality data to policy makers.

Improving capacity for better informed policy-making is not a step that is usually pursued with vigour in emergency situations. However a sound foundation for policy-making becomes more important when resources are scarcer.

ABSTRACT
While there is still uncertainty about the scope and impact of the economic crisis in the Pacific region, it is clear that children and women in many Pacific Island Countries are likely to be amongst the most severely affected. The crisis further compounds the recent shock from high food and fuel prices. Responding to requests from Pacific Island governments, UNICEF together with other UN agencies and regional organizations has initiated a first ever real-time monitoring of the social impact of the economic crisis in the Pacific. The initiative helps to identify the impacts of the economic shocks on the most vulnerable children and women before they are exposed to further risks that affect their well-being. Further, the project informs just-in-time policy formulation and programme action.

The project has resulted in recognition of investing in real-time monitoring at the highest level of policy decision making in Pacific Island Countries. It has led to strategic partnerships with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on food and nutrition monitoring and with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on analysis of national budget allocation in relation to the economic crisis in the Pacific region. The first round of results has been shared with the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) team in May 2010 to inform the Global Pulse report. It is anticipated that the initiative will evolve into a Pacific Poverty and Hardship Alert System that has the capability to signal emerging social vulnerabilities in the region.

INNOVATION – CHILD CENTRED ANALYSIS
PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES
Real-time monitoring of the impact of the economic and food crisis to support policy and action for children (2009)

Policy makers are faced with a challenge of identifying vulnerabilities and finding ways to protect critical growth-enhancing spending, trim low-priority expenditures and ensure fiscal sustainability to protect the most vulnerable. Such decisions are made further difficult given that important sources of development finance in the Pacific – remittances, export and commodity demand, trust funds, aid and capital flows – are now being affected. Effective and consistent monitoring becomes essential to enhance understanding and reduce uncertainty as to how and when to act (early warning).

At a larger level, real-time tracking is especially important and timely given the nature of the current global crisis as, 1) the poverty impacts may be worse than previous crises because of the global nature of the current crisis (for instance export-led poverty reduction will be difficult); 2) it follows household shocks in food and fuel prices with major impact on the poorest population; and 3) aid and public expenditures are under threat with major poverty implications at the micro level.
Further, Pacific Island Countries are facing increasing monetization and urbanization, while traditional social safety net systems are beginning to erode. The risk and impact of various economic and ecological shocks on vulnerable people is becoming a reality as the crises pose additional pressure on the already strained social system. Therefore, it becomes increasingly important to understand the vulnerabilities that the marginalized households are facing, collect regular data that informs necessary targeted measures, track the effectiveness of such programmes and measure their impact. Careful consideration is required in crafting appropriate measures for each country which strengthens resilience without undermining the traditional social safety net systems.

**STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION**

**Inception**

After several scoping missions and discussions with Government partners, UNICEF together with WHO, ILO, UNDP, and UNFPA advocated for piloting sentinel site monitoring of vulnerable groups among six Pacific Island Countries which were particularly vulnerable to the economic crisis at the beginning of 2009. A coordinated initiative was developed to help countries monitor social indicators that have proved to be sensitive to economic downturn in previous crises. These indicators could then be used as tracers of the impact of current crisis on the health and welfare of children and women. The ADB had been assisting Pacific Island Countries to track various macro-economic indicators in real-time. However, the impact of macro-economic data on vulnerable groups at short interval was yet to be collected by any agency in the Pacific and therefore, the sentinel monitoring system was developed to fill this gap.

**Indicators and monitoring framework**

Indicators were selected based on the pre-determined criteria and monitoring framework. The objective of the monitoring system is to identify adverse changes occurring across the sectors at the community level, with a focus on the most susceptible groups. The monitoring framework captures the health and social effects of the economic crisis by looking at the micro-economic impact of macro-economic factors such as the decrease in remittances and exports or the increase in food and fuel prices. The negative impact of these factors on social services is translated into increased risk behaviours which in turn lead to negative outcomes among children, such as poor access to shelter, sanitation, safe water, information, food, education and health. The framework also reflects child poverty parameters which are based on the multi-dimensional definition of child poverty. At the heart of the system are the sentinel sites; defined as vulnerable areas where services such as health centres, schools, pharmacies, other social services and communities are monitored. There are three sentinel sites in each country, selected for their pre-existing vulnerabilities, including low income and employment levels and limited access to basic services such as health and education. The sites include urban squatter settlements, characterized by restricted land access and poor living conditions, and rural poor villages characterized with lack of access to basic social services due to, for instance, unpaved roads or open water.

The dimensions of vulnerability considered include (1) types of economic activity and main source of income in the area (such as tourism); (2) degree of integration in the formal economy; (3) total population and under-five and school-age children; (4) pre-existing level of poverty/hardship; (5) access to social service facilities; (6) access to improved water and sanitation; (7) access to credit; (8) vulnerability to natural disasters and rise in sea-levels; and (9) other types of vulnerability unique to the community that the National Steering Committee (NSC) is determined to track.

The impact on education, health, livelihood and protection services is monitored through facility-based surveys at together with administrative data already collected by the government. Impacts on families and communities are assessed by using a small-scale pulse household survey and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The pulse surveys and FGDs include opinions of children, young people and women and their perceptions in changes to household welfare, livelihood, illness, nutrition and community cooperation. The data recording and analysis is being done through DevInfo.

The sampling is done in four stages, namely, (1) identification of vulnerable areas within the country; (2) identification of vulnerable communities and villages within the selected areas, drawing data from the National Statistics Office (NSO) and additional sources; (3) identification of poor households with children of school age or/and under

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6 The six countries are Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.


8 January 2007 UN General Assembly Statement on Child Poverty and UNICEF Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparity

9 Conducted at facilities such as schools, hospitals, health centres/clinics, pharmacies/medicine retailers, food markets and police posts, serving the concerned communities.

10 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. Visit www.devinfo.org for more information.
five years of age; and finally (4) selection of 30 households within the pool. The final selection of 30 households was made based on the proportion of the vulnerable households in each site to the total number of vulnerable households. Depending on the country context, they were either randomly or purposively selected to target the most vulnerable populations for real time monitoring.

**Overcoming challenges**
A lack of availability of data at the national and facility level posed a challenge in the implementation of the project in the first round. This is an on-going issue that is being addressed by building a stronger ownership of the sentinel monitoring mechanism within the governments. By disseminating findings of the first round of monitoring with key ministries and discussing its implication on policy and budget, the governments are being encouraged to increase their support to the sentinel monitoring. This is expected to make it easier to obtain government data in the next round of monitoring. Working closely with the government will further support institutionalization of the project. Another challenge was the limited interest of households in a particular community to participate in the pulse survey which hindered effective implementation of the project. This was overcome by moving the survey onto other equally vulnerable communities. Overall, applying learning from experience of other Pacific Island Countries helped in finding solutions to various challenges faced in the project. This has also led to strengthening of south-south cooperation among the Pacific Island Countries and ensuring a shared vision of the initiative across various governments.

**South-South Cooperation**
The sharing of experience across the countries was requested by the six governments involved in the project. UNICEF led the process of organizing a regional workshop in Fiji in June 2010, bringing together representatives from NSC of each of the countries to discuss the findings, process, challenges, good practices and lessons learned. Among the six countries, there is diverse difference in how the sentinel monitoring has evolved though all of them use the same monitoring framework and tools. The regional workshop resulted in improving the monitoring framework and in identifying a more refined way of data collection in the next round.

**Revision of sentinel site selection process**
Attribution of the social impact observed on the ground to the global economic crisis, was one of the key issues that emerged from the regional gathering. By the beginning of 2010, greater evidence and research began emerging from the ADB and World Bank among others that analyzed the transmission channels specific to the Pacific (such as increase in import prices, decrease in export prices, reduced remittances and tourism). Therefore, in order to strengthen the attribution of social impact to the global economic crisis, all countries revisited the sentinel sites selection process. Some countries also decided to change the sites to more relevant areas where the impact of the economic crisis transmission is considered to be highest. As the first round was initiated in a short time frame to capture the opportunity available for monitoring the social impact, it became necessary to make adjustments in the project design at a later stage.

The monitoring framework was also revised, with changes in the Household Pulse Survey questionnaire components. The revisions have led to enhanced sensitivity of the monitoring to the short-term behavioral changes that vulnerable households adopt in times of increased hardship.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**
In January 2010, the first round of data collection revealed 73 per cent of the vulnerable household respondents in Tonga and 52-55 per cent in Solomon Islands and Tuvalu were not able to buy sufficient food from their usual food budget. In Tonga, the decrease in income was cited as the main reason while in Solomon Islands and Tuvalu increase in food prices was the main issue highlighted by the respondents. The impact was also seen in education. Children from the most vulnerable households particularly adolescents at secondary school level were found to be dropping out of school while being forced to work to supplement the household income as illustrated below.

“Only reason why I stayed away from school is that we cannot afford to pay the school fees and related expenses for schooling. I was thinking of going back to school. My mother told me to stay home, but I knew it wouldn’t help me. But right now I got a job (making ice blocks). The work I am going to do is basically to help my family with meeting basic needs. I feel that assistance should be given by the government to pay my fees so that I can go back to school.”

—A 15-year-old Tongan girl explaining how the situation has changed since 2009\(^1\).

The findings were presented and discussed during the session of the Pacific High Level Conference on Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis held in Vanuatu in February 2010. This resulted in recognition of investing in real-time monitoring at the highest level of policy decision making in Pacific Island Countries.

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The second round of data was collected late 2010, which provided evidence of an increase in food prices among imported and domestic agricultural foods even prior to the FAO warning on global food price increases. Preliminary results from second round reveal families are resorting to eating fewer meals and cheaper and less nutritious food as a result of an increase in food prices. The urban vulnerable families with limited land were found to be the hardest hit. Parents continued struggling with costs of sending children to school resulting in non-attendance and early drop outs. Secondary schools boarding facilities also reported shortage of food for children.

During 2011, an in-country workshop targeting CEOs was completed in Tonga, Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu and potentially Tuvalu will organize similar workshops. Further, UNICEF advocated at the FAO sub-regional workshop to discuss policy action to the food price increase in April 2011. This is expected to lead to a strategic partnership with FAO on food and nutrition monitoring among the vulnerable populations in Pacific Island Countries. An analysis of national budget allocation in relation to the economic crisis has also commenced through a partnership with ADB and the Pacific Finance and Trade Advisory Centre (PFTAC).

Partnership with regional academia was initiated in late 2010. This brought in academic expertise to improve tools and methodology related to socio-economic poverty analysis and climate change impact analysis. A regional synthesis report for sentinel monitoring has been commissioned to the University of South Pacific.

Media interest in the results of the sentinel monitoring has been high with prominent coverage in major media outlets in the region. The ability to produce timely evidence on topical issues has enabled UNICEF to position children’s issues at the centre of media concerns.

However, challenges remain as despite the success of setting up the sentinel monitoring system, the link between data collection and policy-making is often tenuous. Committing resources to new real-time data collection during a period of fiscal constraint is an even lower priority than in normal conditions. Leadership of the NSO remains a challenge in some Pacific Island Countries already facing limited capacity.

Presently, monitoring has been put on hold in Samoa while the country recovers from the 2009 tsunami. Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) were also put on hold due to the funding constraints among the UN partners leading the joint presence in the countries.

INNOVATION

This is the first time sentinel real-time monitoring specifically collecting data on social vulnerabilities has been initiated in the Pacific region. The project’s focus on the vulnerable population helps in filling the data gap resulting from the existing data collection systems such as the Household Income Expenditure Survey and the Demographic Health Survey.

The NSC, an inter-ministerial committee led by the NSO has strengthened the project’s leadership and capacity to gather relevant social statistics collected by other government statistics units. This has resulted in creating national ownership of the project. In addition, this coordination mechanism led to an increased understanding among the NSOs on the perspectives of end users of statistics such as policy makers in various ministries.

The project has been developed as a joint UN initiative involving WHO, UNFPA and UNDP under the leadership of UNICEF. A UN sentinel monitoring team/network was formed and convened whenever necessary to discuss technical and coordination matters. Bringing in various UN agencies resulted in increased funding for the project as well as technical expertise. In addition, the Joint UN initiative is exchanging ideas with the Poverty and Economic Policy Research Network on Community-Based Monitoring System12 that tracks the impacts of various economic reforms and policy shocks on vulnerable groups. The lessons learned from the implementation of the CBMS may prove useful for the Pacific region as well.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

Pacific Island governments and development partners have shown strong interest in the real-time monitoring approach which, if it proves useful, could be transformed into an early warning system—a Pacific Poverty and Hardship Alert System—with links to the Global Pulse13 now being developed under the direction of the United Nations Secretary-General.

Involvement of the NSO in various countries is fundamental to long-term success of this project as it supports institutionalization of the initiative. Depending on the Government’s capacity there are various ways to make sentinel real time monitoring system a part of its routine data collection system. Some of the indicators can be absorbed within the existing data collection system such as the

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12 For more information, visit www.pep-net.org
13 Recognizing both the urgent need for more timely and actionable information and the unparalleled opportunities, the UN Secretary-General called on the UN system in April 2009 to establish a monitoring system, GIVAS, (Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System) to better track the impact of compound crises on vulnerable populations. In June 2010, GIVAS changed its name to ‘Global Pulse’. For more information visit www.unglobalpulse.org
EMIS. In Vanuatu, for instance, the NSO may internalize all sentinel monitoring indicators within Ministry of Health or Ministry of Education, in addition to initiating an annual permanent survey with the same indicators. Furthermore, active NGOs and community organizations and networks – through enhanced community vigilance and awareness – can contribute to sentinel monitoring data collection. This will further support institutionalization of the project.

Some of the challenges involved in scaling up or replicating this approach beyond the original context include the following:

- The Governments must have capacity to undertake data collection and analysis. Reliable results can only be achieved if appropriate indicators are selected and data collection is managed effectively and transparently. There must be an alignment of frequency of sentinel monitoring and data collection unit with the existing data collection system.
- There must be caution in reporting the data as real-time monitoring does not provide nationally representative estimates of prevalence. There is danger that media and other users may interpret data as representing a national scenario.
- There are no international guidelines available yet on definitions of vulnerability and for determining sample size and indicators.

**NEXT STEPS**

It is anticipated that further rounds of sentinel monitoring will highlight critical indicators that capture the impact of climate change and natural disasters. This information is expected to support impact, research and assessment of climate change in the Pacific region, being undertaken by UNDP and the Council of Regional Organizations for the Pacific (CROP).

It is also envisaged that part of the sentinel data collection process will be digitalized and data turnaround time improved once the government counterparts are well trained in the interface and use of the DevInfo. Overall, the future rounds of data collection will continue focus on institutionalization of the project in the Pacific Island Countries.

Further, the real-time monitoring project will be thoroughly tested and refined over the next two years, and if governments and other partners continue to be supportive, could evolve into a Pacific Poverty and Hardship Alert System. The objective of this system could be to provide early indications of how an external shock, like the current economic crisis, is affecting the economic and social welfare of the most marginalized populations and countries within the Pacific. By analyzing both exposure and resilience of Pacific Island populations to the changing environment, the Pacific Hardship Alert System might also have the capability to signal emerging vulnerabilities. If such a system becomes operational it could produce regular monitoring reports to inform policy makers.

In addition, UNICEF has initiated collaboration with FAO in discussion with Pacific Island Countries on policy responses to the global food (and fuel) price increase in the Pacific. Currently, collaborations are being sought to improve accuracy of tools and methodology for (1) nutrition impact monitoring of food price increases within the sentinel monitoring system and (2) coordinated targeted interventions for improving nutrition among vulnerable children and mothers. Efforts are being made to link to the lessons learned from a model piloted in Malawi, where SMS technology has been used to report the nutrition status of children.

**RELATED LINKS**

**Reports and working papers**

Voices of the vulnerable in the Pacific – Summary Note

Protecting Pacific Island children and women during economic and food crisis

Situation monitoring: Food price increases in the Pacific Islands
[www.unicef.org/pacificislands/FINAL_SITUATION_REPORTING2.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/FINAL_SITUATION_REPORTING2.pdf)

**News stories**


**Additional information**

[www.unicef.org/pacificislands/media_15793.html](http://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/media_15793.html)

[www.unicef.org/pacificislands/overview_15282.html](http://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/overview_15282.html)
BACKGROUND
Burkina Faso has seen its recent gains in economic growth worn away as the recent global economic crisis unfolded. GDP growth declined from 5.1 per cent in 2008 to 3.5 per cent in 2009 (World Bank). Given that population growth is 3.4 per cent in 2008-2009 (World Bank), such a decline in national economic growth is likely to have a critical impact on people’s lives as average per capita incomes stagnate. However, prior to UNICEF’s simulation work, the effects of the crisis on the country’s economic and human development had not been analyzed, making it difficult to judge the local impact and the required policy response.

Burkina Faso receives a substantial proportion of aid as budget support yet has persistently high levels of poverty and growing inequity. This makes it imperative for UNICEF to strengthen its role and position in national policy debate. As a part of the regional policy research initiative, UNICEF carried out an analysis of the impacts of the economic crisis on child well-being and assessed the effects of a range of policy responses. The aim was to feed the results from the analysis into national policy development, including the drafting of the National Action Plan for Tackling the Economic Crisis, the third Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and sectoral policy reforms in health, education, gender, and social protection.

ABSTRACT
Protecting children, women and poor families during financial and economic crises requires a clear understanding of the channels of ‘crisis transmission’ and how these could be mitigated through different policies. Recently, two crises affecting Burkina Faso presented a challenge to understand the complex interaction of aggregate shocks, namely the international food price shock in 2008 and the global economic crisis that spread in 2009. In order to help provide timely and evidence-based analyses of the potential economic and human costs of the crises, a series of rapid simulations on the impact of the global economic crisis on child poverty were conducted in three countries in Africa. The main objective was to assess the impact of the crisis on children as well as potential policy options to minimize harm. The impact simulations also provide information to prompt timely and effective policy responses from policymakers. The key analytical tool used was a macro-micro simulation; an innovative methodology which equipped Burkina Faso with a replicable model of the economy.

This case focuses on the country-specific experiences of how the study fed into the on-going national policy dialogue and follow-up process in Burkina Faso. Further, this initiative demonstrates UNICEF’s potential to help advance children’s rights through strong evidence-based policy advocacy.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
Partnership and collaboration
The broader collaboration for the multi-country analyses involved Laval University, the Innocenti Research Center, UNICEF HQ, UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office and the three UNICEF Country Offices in the region (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Ghana). For Burkina Faso, the study was carried out in partnership with Ouagadougou University. UNICEF Burkina Faso promoted a dialogue with the Ministry of Finance throughout the study. The ministry in turn facilitated contact and debate with a range of government partners, particularly with other ministries in the social sector.

The study was overseen by the Director of Macroeconomic Forecasting in the Ministry of Finance who was also leading the development of the government’s National
Action Plan for Tackling the Economic Crisis. This enabled UNICEF to have a direct, evidence-based input into a new national development policy during its drafting.

**Methodology**

The study involved a macro-micro analysis, using a Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model to complete a macroeconomic ex-ante simulation of the impacts of the crisis on trade, aid, transfers and investment. The macroeconomic analysis was then linked to a microeconomic analysis of household behaviour. The results therefore presented an overview of the likely impact of the crisis on children’s well-being, specifically on their monetary poverty, nutrition, education, health and child labour status.

In addition, the study team consulted with the Ministry of Finance on a range of potential policy options that could be put in place to address the estimated impacts. These policy options looked at the possible impact of two different food subsidies and three different cash transfer schemes.

**Dissemination and advocacy**

The Director of Macroeconomic Forecasting chaired a steering committee comprising of directors from a wide range of ministries, including other directors from the Ministry of Finance. The timing of cross-governmental discussions on the study findings, facilitated by the steering committee, coincided with the government’s drafting of their new action plan to tackle the economic crisis. In addition, UNICEF followed up the inter-ministerial discussions using the preliminary results of the study as an entry point for dialogue on the development of the action plan.

Following governmental discussion of the study’s preliminary findings, the results were widely presented globally (twice in Dakar, in Nairobi and in London). This contributed to global advocacy and evidence on the impacts of and response to the crisis. The feedback provided contributed to the finalization of the report which will be presented in Burkina Faso along with a recently completed UNDP study with a similar objective.

Parallel to the development of the action plan, UNICEF Burkina Faso has positioned itself as the focal partner on social protection, coordinating bi-monthly meetings with all partners and organizing a national workshop on social protection. It has also provided technical and financial support to the establishment of the national inter-ministerial committee on social protection. Further, the support of the Ministry of Finance has led to a development of a roadmap and a decision to elaborate a national policy on social protection.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The analysis found that child poverty could increase by estimated 4.7 percentage points in 2010, which is equivalent to more than a quarter of a million additional children being pushed into poverty. It also found that the crisis could have an important impact on pulling several thousand children out of school and requiring them to go to work.

The analysis contributed to wide discussion and global debate on the crisis and led to social development concerns being integrated into the government’s economic planning. The Ministry of Finance’s National Action Plan for Tackling the Economic Crisis was initially expected to focus solely on economic and financial policy aimed at managing the impact at a macroeconomic level. However, the final version of the national policy contained three sections: one indeed on economic policy and the second section on financial policy, but with an additional section on social protection (Refer to an additional case from Burkina Faso on page 16 in this publication).

The section on social protection seeks to reduce vulnerability and poverty arising from the crisis by strengthening social protection, particularly through improving access to social services and improving nutrition. More specifically, the chapter brought together a number of initiatives that are in place across sectors, clarifying their importance within national policy – for example, the section highlighted the importance of obstetrical subsidies and school can-teens – and proposed new policy options, such as free prenatal consultations.

**Challenges**

Some of the new policy options proposed in the section of social protection are potentially complex and still vague, such as a statement regarding food price regulation. Other challenges include a current lack of funding to implement all recommendations, inadequate understanding of social safety nets, and limited dialogue between ministries to ensure that government-wide opinions are taken into account.

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14 A CGE model is a multi-market economic model of a country’s economy put together using the available economic data in order to produce equations that simulate the behaviour of actors in the economy and their impacts. These models are generally then used to estimate the impact of specific shocks or policy changes.
INNOVATION
The study and the accompanying process are innovative for the following reasons:

• The study is the first micro-macro analysis in Burkina Faso, developing a computable general equilibrium (CGE) model that ties together macroeconomic (aggregate national) data with microeconomic (household survey) data. The objective of the study was to determine how an aggregate shock such as a global economic slowdown will affect the economy and in turn impact children’s lives.

• The study results led to important contributions to national development policy, by strengthening the evidence base for advocacy on vulnerability of children during the economic crisis. By facilitating the study and other initiatives in the country, UNICEF Burkina Faso was able to open up a channel to discuss policy options with government partners, primarily with the Ministry of Finance. This discussion has since led to the inclusion of social protection in the new National Action Plan to tackle the effects of the economic crisis.

• It cross-fertilized UNICEF’s programming and advocacy efforts related to reaching vulnerable groups. For example, by underlining the impact of the crisis UNICEF significantly strengthened its arguments and advocacy on social protection.

• The partnership underpinning the study was also innovative in several ways; 1) it involved close collaboration across different levels of UNICEF, offering a chance to tap expertise in economic analysis, monitoring, advocacy and social policy formulation across different parts of the organization; and 2) it also involved work with a network of Southern researchers and institutions, namely the Poverty and Economic Policy (PEP) Research Network (http://www.pep-net.org/) which allowed to build longer-term and more sustainable partnerships with and capacity of academics and policy researchers in these countries.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
The initiative is conceived as a demonstrative model. The same analytical tool and a similar collaborative model can be used in other regions and on other topics. A key challenge in replicating such an initiative in another context might be how to successfully ensure effective collaboration and advocacy so as to positively influence the policymakers. In this sense, learning from the Burkina Faso experience is useful in terms of understanding resources needed, strategies used for engaging partners, potential challenges in the actual technical analyses and in bringing the results from the analyses into the policy process.

NEXT STEPS
Following the finalization of the study report, results will be presented to a wider audience within Burkina Faso alongside the new government policy to tackle the economic crisis so as to further develop the national debate on the impact of the crisis. This will be done in collaboration with other development partners, particularly with UNDP which has recently completed a complementary study on the impact of the crisis. There is a need to further develop and promote evidence-based advocacy to improve the impact of national policy especially in Burkina Faso where efficiency and equity continue to be substantial challenges.

RELATED LINKS
BACKGROUND
There was a lack of national consensus, guidance and coordination on social protection in Burkina Faso prior to 2009. Programmes were implemented in isolation from each other; databases and documentation on social protection did not exist, and institutional mechanisms were not in place to coordinate or improve implementation. Although social protection was included in the second PRSP, it was marginally developed and in practice, largely focused on small scale indirect social projects (such as training for associations and donations to orphanages). No attempt was made to summarize the lessons learned across the range of sectors. In early 2009, UNICEF Burkina Faso began working with the government and partners to fill these gaps by providing support to social protection dialogue, capacity and coordination.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
UNICEF undertook the following strategies to strengthen social protection in Burkina Faso:

- Advocacy with the government to improve their national coordination of social protection, particularly with the Ministry of Finance and also ministries of social action, social security, education and health;
- review of all existing safety nets in Burkina Faso jointly with the World Bank (late 2009-early 2010);
- establishment of a joint partner group on social protection including all donors and NGOs engaged in social protection such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Food Programme (WFP), European Union (EU), Save the Children and others. Since October 2009, UNICEF leads the meeting every two months;
- support to the establishment and functioning of the government’s inter-ministerial committee on social protection, comprising all 12 ministries involved in social protection (March 2010);
- design and implementation of a training workshop on social protection for ministries involved in the committee on social protection, with contribution from key partners such as WFP and International Labour Organization (ILO) (January 2010);
- support to development of key actions on social protection in the new PRSP and its positioning as the central driver to human development and pro-poor growth;
- establishment of UNICEF as the lead partner for the Social Protection Floor Initiative in Burkina Faso;
- design, planning and execution of the National Workshop on Social Protection with the Ministry of Finance (April 2010). This resulted in a Framing Note on Social Protection in Burkina Faso and a proposal of a roadmap towards a National Social Protection Policy. The workshop was delivered in coordination with the Ministry of Social Action, Ministry of Social Security and partners including ILO, World Bank and WFP;

ABSTRACT
Prior to 2009, a national social protection policy or a national household transfer programme did not exist in Burkina Faso. In recent years, social protection has increasingly gained national support and has been integrated as a key principle into several government sectors since its inclusion in the last Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Key programmes include subsidies for obstetrical services, removal of primary school fees and the testing of new innovative transfer programmes (a coupon transfer and a cash transfer). Since 2009, UNICEF has led the coordination of development partners working on social protection and has played a key role in promoting national dialogue, research and coordination to strengthen social protection. UNICEF together with the World Bank, executed a review of all existing safety nets in Burkina Faso, established a joint partner group on social protection, supported the inter-ministerial committee on social protection and developed its capacity. As a result in 2010, for the first time in Burkina Faso social protection was integrated into a government policy as a response to the economic crisis, and was developed as a central focus of the newly released PRSP. A national social protection policy is currently under development.
• design and launch of a website on the workshop which the government has requested that UNICEF maintains as the communication tool on social protection (see related link below); and
• execution of a study with the Ministry of Finance on the impact of the economic crisis on child poverty and simulation of various social protection responses.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
The initiation of dialogue between partners and the government on social protection in 2009 resulted in an improved evidence base, dialogue and coordination on social protection. This substantially enabled Burkina Faso to position social protection as a central principle of government policy.

The key results of this initiative are as follows:
• Successful, evidence-based advocacy resulted in the integration of equity and pro-poor growth in the government’s new growth-focused PRSP;
• integration of social protection into the new PRSP as central to human development but also as key to promoting pro-poor growth;
• inclusion of social protection in the government policy, and development of the economic action plan for tackling the effects of the economic crisis;
• initiation of the development of a national policy on social protection;
• development of a clear understanding on the current state of social safety nets in Burkina Faso;
• significant development and strengthening of UNICEF’s capacity and role in national policy dialogue and as a lead organization on social protection;
• strengthening of UNICEF’s relationship with the IMF, World Bank and other partners to facilitate national dialogue on social protection;
• strengthening of UNICEF’s relationship with the Ministry of Finance in technical policy contribution; and
• establishment of a national coordination mechanism on social protection, an inter-ministerial committee, which UNICEF participates in and supports.

A key challenge in this work is the cross-sectoral nature of social protection, making ownership and capacity difficult to foster. It limits ministries’ ability to learn across programmes and to have a clear understanding of current coverage and impact.

INNOVATION
UNICEF has developed strong relationships with key partners and played an active role in convening the government around social protection, promoting capacity building and organized national workshops on social protection. This work has made a significant contribution to policy development and a focus on social protection in Burkina Faso.

A number of key lessons during the process were noted:
• UNICEF can take the lead on social protection and facilitate genuine national debate to respond to a lack of national coordination;
• it is important to undertake a coordinated national approach, in partnership with key ministries and organizations in order to ensure a consensual process to build government capacity and dialogue; and
• the UN initiative on the Social Protection Floor can be used to add weight and coordination behind what needs to be a nationally-owned agenda.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa are in the process of developing social protection frameworks and/or policies at the national level. In October 2008, the Social Policy Framework for Africa was adopted by the African Union (AU) ministers responsible for social development. It was endorsed by the AU Executive Council of Ministers and Assembly of Heads of States and Governments in January 2009. The framework outlines the key roles and responsibilities of the main stakeholders, specifically AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, development partners and civil-society organizations, which further reinforce its implementation.

The process for policy engagement and development of social protection in Burkina Faso was presented at the regional UNICEF Social Policy Meeting in November 2009. Since then, supporting information and documentation has been shared with several countries in the region in order to learn from it and apply it in their own countries. This includes examining background documentation such as Terms of Reference and concept notes, learning from challenges and opportunities that arose and drawing on the results such as the training course.

NEXT STEPS
• UNICEF’s financial and technical support to the inter-ministerial committee on social protection will support the development of the National Social Protection Policy and implementation of the social protection actions in the new PRSP;
• UNICEF will strengthen evidence on social protection policy and programming and its communication, including promoting child-sensitive social protection and supporting a feasibility study on cash transfers led by the World Bank; and
• dialogue and coordination will continue with partners to improve collaboration in this area.

RELATED LINK
Social Protection in Burkina Faso: http://sites.google.com/site/protectionsocialeauburkinafaso/
ABSTRACT

The district level Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) monitoring project, implemented in selected areas of South and West Sulawesi in Indonesia since mid-2006, has driven and supported the development of systems to monitor district level progress towards the MDGs. Before the project, various sectors and organizations collected data on a range of indicators in an uncoordinated way, often leading to non-comparable data. As a result of the project, district level authorities now have reliable and timely district and sub-district data on 45 out of 60 global MDG indicators to help plan and target improved social services and monitor progress towards the MDGs. Further, it allows them to debate persuasively for policies and programmes that prioritize the rights of children and women and promotes evidence-based planning and resource allocation. Through the implementation of the project, valuable expertise, experience and practical guidelines have been developed to replicate a district level data management system countrywide.

BACKGROUND

Indonesia’s decentralization laws, in force since January 2001, involve the transfer of power, management authority and funds for the delivery of basic services from the national government to around 489 districts and municipalities. In the overall context of decentralization, greater authority has been designated to sub-national governments particularly concerning resource management and basic social service delivery for children and women. However, these new authorities had limited capacity for planning, management and implementation, lacked participation, transparency and accountability and had limited reliable data for evidence-based planning.

The National Socio-Economic Survey (SUSENAS), undertaken annually by Indonesia’s Central Statistics Office (BPS) has been a major source of data for the majority of MDGs indicators. It also provides a mechanism for monitoring many of the MDGs at the national level. However, they did not produce reliable disaggregated data for monitoring at the district level, or any estimated data for levels below the district such as at sub-district levels or in health centres. National averages and aggregations could be misleading, especially in a country as large and diverse as Indonesia. District authorities were therefore unable to track indicators to conduct evidence-based planning and resource allocation to improve the quality of social services. Similarly, national authorities did not have reliable district level data to guide resource transfers from the centre to districts.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The local government has developed and managed an integrated electronic database using DevInfo to monitor MDGs. The local staff undertakes data entry using the Census and Survey Processing System (CSPro), a public domain statistical package. Data is then compiled into the integrated district database using a DevInfo template developed by BPS and UNICEF. At the national level, BPS has established a prototype of the online database (http://mdgs-info.bps.go.id/) using web-based DevInfo implementation. In addition, a one-stop database compiling all survey data conducted by BPS has been produced using DevInfo.

The main strategies of the project are as follows:

- Promote and familiarize local stakeholders with the concept of MDG concepts through meetings;
- agree on the MDG indicators available at district level based on the global indicators;
- advocate with and mobilize key actors and decision makers in districts;
- increase the demand for disaggregated data at all levels;
- develop replicable approaches and models using results-based evidence;
systematically build capacity to implement these new models and approaches; and persuade district decision-makers to commit their own budgets to the initiative.

Advocacy and mobilization
Advocacy and mobilization of decision makers, key stakeholders and the public focused on three messages: 1) why is it important to take action on issues related to MDGs; 2) what can district governments do to develop data-driven systems and approaches; and 3) success stories from the district governments implementing the project. Apart UNICEF-led advocacy in South Sulawesi and at the national level, a ‘marketing package’ consisted of five books (covering study results, data collection, data analysis and local voices) has been developed and will be distributed to all district decision makers in South and West Sulawesi. This is specifically designed to disseminate the approach, and encourage its adoption to other partners and local governments across Sulawesi and Indonesia.

Roll out the district data management system
Following initial advocacy activities, a core team was built in each district made up of people committed to capturing good data, robust analysis and practical use of the data/analysis. In Bone, for example, these were key staff from the District Statistics Office, the District Development Planning Board, the District Health Office and the District Education Office. This team worked with UNICEF to promote the project to the District Parliament (DPRD) and its head. A variety of approaches were used to popularize the issues such as arguments related to ending of child malnutrition. District-specific data flows were then mapped (including identifying gaps, bottlenecks and failures) and a range of options were developed and presented that allowed the districts to make technically sound decisions within their limited budgets.

Capacity building and sustainability
Often, existing survey mechanisms, such as SUSENAS, were adapted to MDGs indicators and local needs. This involved reviewing and simplifying forms, rationalizing information flows and agreeing on calculation and denominator use. Training material was then developed, tuned to local capacities and skills; trainers were trained to further train enumerators and personnel for data entry, processing and analysis; and logistical and mentoring support was offered on the ground.

Trained staff in pilot districts are applying the standard statistical methodology and updating information in the district database as a baseline in development planning. Furthermore, they have applied web-based DevInfo in producing the online database and standard statistical software packages for statistical data processing and analysis. Moreover, awareness and commitment of the district governments in the pilot sites to the initiative has increased as the project costs are being shared among them.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

Increased resource allocation to poverty reduction
The project has influenced local social services agendas in a relatively poor area of Indonesia. In Takalar district, for example, MDG data used in the District Poverty Reduction Strategy resulted in an increase in budget allocation for poverty reduction (from 6 per cent of the total budget.

Results obtained in the Bone District
With an approximate population of 800,000, Bone is the largest district in Indonesia’s South Sulawesi Province. Prior to the project, the district had strong relations with the District Development Planning Board and BPS. This was one of the reasons for its selection in the early implementation of the project. Key results obtained from the project include the following:

• Improved representativeness of data collected through sub-district household surveys by increasing the sample size from 758 to around 11,000 (300 - 500 samples from each of 27 sub-districts);
• village-level socio-economic data collected from all 372 villages in the district which was not available before the project;
• a survey questionnaire design is being refined; statistical methodologies are being improved and sectoral databases and survey data are being further integrated in their district database;
• initially the health office sent data to the provincial capital on paper by post. Now data can be entered and accessed electronically at both provincial and district levels;
• many errors in existing institutional data have been identified including unreliable population denominators;
• requirements have been identified increased capacity, enhanced statistical interpretive skills and the incorporation of qualitative and quantitative indicators; and
• the district integrated the MDG data in the 2008-2013 District Medium Term Development Plan. A presentation was made in late October 2009 to the district parliament (DPRD) in Bone, advocating for an allocation from the district budget to support the project in the next financial year.
in 2007 to 19 per cent in 2008). In Polman, Mamuju and Bantaeng districts, the MDG data were used by rights-holders for strategic planning. In Polman district, the data has been used in revising strategic planning for education. In Bantaeng district, the use of MDG data contributed to district government allocating Rp 1 billion (approximately US$111,669) per village in 2009 for poverty reduction.

Development of a replicable data management and utilization model
A model for data management and using data for development projects at the district level was put in place. An MDG website (http://mdgs-dev.bps.go.id/) with guidelines on improving the database system in the local language was launched at the annual review between UNICEF and the government in 2009 to advocate for replication of the system nationwide. All districts including the provinces which are currently not a part of the project have received the guidelines to use the guidelines as reference materials to assist the local governments with improving the database system. Districts interested in replicating the activities are encouraged to learn from the package and also seek assistance from the trained facilitators. So far, at least eight districts in four provinces have expressed an interest in replicating the model with their own budgets.

Sustainability
Four out of five pilot districts¹⁵ have made allocations to support the continuity of the MDG monitoring project from their local budgets. Further, institutional cross-sector linkages have been developed or strengthened in support of enhanced sustainability.

At the outset, at the national level, UNICEF had a close working relationship with the BPS, the National Development Planning Agency, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and locally with the district Development Planning Board. The project was implemented in consultation with all these stakeholders and line ministries. As the project evolves, institutional cross-sectoral linkages have been developed or strengthened in support of enhanced sustainability and ownership.

Capacity building
In total, 5,300 people have been trained in MDG data collection; 360 district staff has been trained in IT and database use; and 165 district staff have been trained in database management. Computer equipment and intensive follow-up training were provided to districts which led them to commit their own budgets. Before the project, data were only collected at the district level and analyzed and used at the national and provincial levels. As a result of the project, BPS has produced guidelines on sampling methodology and questionnaire development. It has also been conducting training on enumerators, managing household surveys in the field, interviewing respondents and processing and analyzing data.

Strengthening of evidence-based planning
Sub-district level data is used to design and support evidence-based interventions from the village level upwards. For example, the Head of the District Planning Board of Bone District has demonstrated strong political will and commitment in the project implementation. The board has applied the results of the monitoring to support evidence-based planning processes from the village level up to the district level. Local budget has been allocated to all 372 villages to develop and update village level databases. The results will be used in village planning processes channelled through the village level Development Planning General Meeting.

Increased data collection and utilization by sectors
The use of data by sector institutions has increased and standard datasets are now collected across different sectors. For example, the health department previously collected data on a single type of child immunization. Now, using MDG indicators, data on all types of child immunization are captured and analyzed to guide future action. The education department too incorporates population data into school enrolment measures. Previously, school records did not capture data on children not attending school. According to information collected through interviewing district staff who use the software, there has been significant increase in the local use of DevInfo and SPSS.

CHALLENGES

- In some cases, matching the global MDG indicators to local indicators has been difficult. For example, the proportion of population below US$1 (Purchasing Power Parity) per day, an indicator for poverty, is not applicable at the district level and a proxy indicator had to be developed (district poverty line estimated by district statistics office).

- There are difficulties co-ordinating different sectors including health, education, social services, forestry, environment, family planning and religion. Many of the sectors had separate data/information systems and diverse perceptions on how a new system should be designed and what benefits it would bring. Also, generating long-standing commitment from all partners was a challenge, given the extent of the work required over a long period.

- Co-ordination between BPS and the District Development Planning Board is reported to be remarkably good in some districts like the Bone District. However this does not extend to every location as the BPS is centralized and their office at district level is not part of the district government system.

- Government policy of zero growth in civil service staffing constrained recruiting new personnel with the relevant expertise while most of the trained staff is promoted to other offices just after they attended the training. Instead of recruiting new staff, the project now suggests ensuring transfer of knowledge from the trained staff before their promotion to another unit.

LESSONS LEARNED

Local ownership and sustainability
Advocacy and involvement of district level stakeholders helps advance local ownership and sustainability of the project. One of the fundamental ideas underlying the advocacy effort was that existing data management systems should be strengthened rather than creation of new systems. Another central idea was to ensure that the ownership of the systems resided with the local government, and that the funding should be allocated through the local budget mechanism. Further, the advocacy efforts stressed that data was not being collected for its own sake, but in order to provide empirical evidence to support improvements in the quality of decentralized social services.

Demand-driven approach
Since the beginning, the project aimed to fulfil demand for reliable local-level data and analysis by developing a replicable model for data management. The project invested on capacity development of local staff and focused on increasing the political commitment to support replication of the project results. As a result, the project has strategically increased attention of decision makers and line ministries on benefits of strengthening statistical management and ensuring that indicator definitions and data disaggregation follow international standards. Further demand for use of reliable and disaggregated data must be created from decision makers and line ministries, and this requires continued advocacy efforts to introduce the concept of poverty monitoring and promote evidence-based planning at this level.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

By using the experiences and lessons learned from the pilot project, the government can replicate a similar system in other districts. Beyond Indonesia, lessons learned can be applied to any country or region which faces similar challenges to Indonesia in terms of lack of reliable data and data management systems at a decentralized level. Lessons learned may also be relevant to the countries which are currently implementing a decentralized monitoring system for national development plans such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and MDG action plans.

NEXT STEPS

Continued advocacy is required at all levels to introduce the MDGs and the concept of poverty monitoring to promote their importance and to advocate the use of data and analysis in evidence-based planning. Partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs has helped to formalize the replication process at district level across Indonesia and its integration into a national regulation. Following this, team of facilitators at the national level will be established and trained to provide technical assistance in applying the MDG monitoring approach model at the district level. The ultimate objective is to have a district level MDG monitoring system running consistently across the country.

Results of the project are being linked with ASIA (Analisis Situasi Ibu and Anak), a situation analysis for women and children at the local level. This is a collaborative effort
between UNICEF and the Government to promote human rights based approach to development. In preparation of ASIA, the Ministry of Home Affairs has circulated a letter to all districts suggesting that they should conduct a situation analysis of children and women as part of their development planning process. To conduct the analysis, all districts will need to have a district level database based on MDG indicators. Upon receipt of positive responses by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the development of an integrated database can begin in all districts.

Further, ‘Target MDGs’, a collaboration between UNDP and the National Development Planning Agency (focusing on pro-poor planning, budgeting and monitoring evaluation at the district level) has expressed interest in using the project as a model on MDG monitoring. In addition, the World Bank’s SOFEI (Support Office for Eastern Indonesia) has contributed US$50,000 to support the project in Mamuju and Polman Districts.

RELATED LINKS


BPS website on MDG monitoring (in Indonesian) http://mdgs-dev.bps.go.id/
BACKGROUND

Despite progress in the situation of children in Jordan, there are persistent and emerging issues related to children and women that must be addressed. Jordan is a lower middle-income country with a strong commitment to human and child rights; however, gaps still exist in the fulfilment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Constitution of Jordan promotes equality, civil freedom and protection of all citizens including children. Nonetheless, it makes no reference to health rights, the restriction of child labour or improvements in social services and child protection. The rights of the child in Jordan would gain a higher profile and stand more chance of being fulfilled if they were included in the Constitution.

In Jordan, child specific activities and targets were not always identifiable, while ROB was also not in operation. However, since 2008 the national budget has been restructured into programmes with budget indicators and child specific activities that can now be tracked. This made the timing conducive for introduction of CBA at the initial stage of the budget reform process.

ABSTRACT

In 2009, UNICEF initiated a child budget analysis (CBA) in Jordan. It is the first research project in the country to analyze the Government’s commitment to provide services for children as reflected in the budgets. The CBA looks at policies, plans and budgets to provide information which can be used to advocate for the fulfilment of children’s rights. The study provides a baseline for the ongoing and future child budget monitoring in Jordan. The CBA study has provided an opportunity to develop a disaggregated framework that allows the analysis and monitoring of the budget by child-related sub-programme and activity levels, along with clear indicators and targets. The study took place as a part of the ongoing national budget reform through which Results-Oriented Budgeting (ROB) was adopted for the first time in Jordan.

Based on the recommendations of the CBA, a five-year child budget engagement plan was finalized by the Government in 2010 for further implementation. As a part of the continued efforts for capacity building of the Government, a training manual on Budgeting for Better Results for Children was developed. A team on child friendly budgets has been created among the General Budget Department (GBD). Pilot ministries have been trained who will serve as national trainers on child friendly budgeting. To ensure the ownership of the training, the training module on child friendly budgeting will be integrated into the existing Government’s training materials on ROB.

INNOVATION – PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

JORDAN

Introducing the child budget analysis as a part of the National Budget Reform (2009)

Further, UNICEF Jordan’s gradual shift in focus towards policy dialogues, advocacy and in providing high quality technical support in selected areas has led to a strategic transformation of UNICEF’s engagement with the Government. The new engagement strategy was developed through the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) middle income country (MIC) exercise. Budgeting for children was identified as a key component of the MIC analysis/learning process in order to achieve greater impact.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of CBA is to provide a baseline for the ongoing child budget monitoring in Jordan. The CBA adopts a rights-based approach to analyzing the Government’s commitment to children. The study involves a mapping exercise which traces children’s right from the Government’s constitutional, legal and governmental programme levels and identifies the exact amount of money allocated to specific child focused activities. However, the previous aggregated budget structure did not identify spending at the
activity level which made it difficult to make direct linkages to the specific activities in the analysis. The CBA exercise has provided an opportunity to develop a disaggregated framework that allows the analysis and monitoring of the budget by child-related sub-programme and activity levels, along with clear indicators and targets.

The study observes Government’s budget commitments and delivery targets for the future, which provides a baseline for monitoring programmes in areas such as education, health, social development and in the concerned labour ministries. The primary source of financial data was the General Budget Law 2009. Information on legislation and policy was collected from each ministry, while specific sector information was gathered from existing studies and through interviews with ministry officials. As part of the CBA, training was provided for the local research team, the reference group and other relevant parties in the Government. Participants also examined the methodology of the study developed by an international consulting company in partnership with a local research team.

_PROGRESS AND RESULTS_

The CBA study recommends making amendments to the budget format and budget process since it was difficult to identify budget allocations to specific child-related activities in the 2009 budget. The study discovered that ROB had not been fully implemented and thus recommended that the GBD focus on defining sub-programmes and activities related to children. Secondly, it recommends capacity building programmes and activities on children’s rights for ministry officials and members of Parliament should be carried out to ensure that child rights activities are accommodated in the budget structure.

The CBA also recommends capacity building programmes for members of Parliament in the following areas: understanding child rights; how to ensure that budgets cater for child rights during budget approval debates; and budget analysis techniques specifically for assessing child budgets to ensure parliamentary engagement.

In 2009, UNICEF Jordan in cooperation with its partner National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) organized a four day training workshop for the Government and civil society organizations. The training focused on budgeting with a child rights lens and in examining the preliminary results of the CBA. It resulted in identifying ways in which the CBA could be used as a base to develop policy proposals and an engagement strategy around child friendly budgeting.

The policy proposal and a draft engagement strategy discussed during the workshop suggests focus on four areas: monitoring, advocacy, making the parliament more focused on children’s rights and setting up a child rights committee at the national and ministerial level to influence budget allocations. Each area has either one or several objectives and key performance indicators. The information, observations and recommendations in the study provide evidence for lobbying and advocacy initiatives around children’s rights.

The report further details four different budget monitoring and analysis methodologies, when and how they can be used, the key features of each and their potential impact. Further, the report recommends three activities that can help ‘market’ children’s rights in Jordan such as organization of a high profile national and regional child rights summit; the establishment of a national level child budget committee; and the presentation of CBA at an international conference.

Based on the recommendations from the CBA study and the subsequent workshop, the Government in cooperation with its partners, GBD, UNICEF and NCFA, finalized a five year Budget Engagement Plan in 2010. Furthermore the GBD’s budget circular for 2011 includes instructions and forms on child friendly budgeting. A training manual for public finance management Budgeting for Better Results for Children has been developed and is available in English and Arabic. A training course was organized for a team from the GBD and pilot ministries on child friendly budgeting and on prioritizing children’s rights and issues in ROB.

The entire process of the CBA study has made the national budgeting process more transparent given that a) government officials were seconded from their jobs to specifically perform the analysis; and b) government officials were engaged in and created interim ministry-level committees to review and discuss on the CBA report and further work with UNICEF and NCFA to develop the engagement plan.

_Key factors for success_

All research stakeholders were involved in the drafting of the framework and the Terms of Reference for the study. This was a key factor promoting expectance of the CBA in Jordan. Although UNICEF had appointed international
consultants and local researchers, they adopted an open-minded approach to allow the Research Workshop (held in March 2009) as a place to collectively build concepts and finalize the methodology of the study. The consultants did not impose a methodology or conceptual understanding upon the local partners. Some of the original concepts were changed during the workshop for practical and logistical reasons. For example, child justice and policy were the preferred areas of research within the study, but due to the complexity of the programmes in terms of budget structures and range of organizations involved, the stakeholders agreed to avoid these areas in the initial study. All aspects of the CBA involve a partnership with the counterparts including the Government, NGOs, civil society and local researchers. Child rights organizations partnered with the Government, which resulted in the researchers gaining access, information and resources for the study. Key ministries such as Ministry of Finance played an important role in the finalization of the study and in making commitments to use the findings towards a larger goal of making budgets available for fulfilment of children’s rights. As a result of the initiatives around the CBA, UNICEF Jordan has developed direct linkages with the Ministry of Finance.

INNOVATION

The CBA study is the first social budget analysis focusing on children’s rights in Jordan. It was undertaken by a team of researchers involving national and international experts. The analysis looked at the international treaties, the constitution, policies, programmes and budgets, through a child rights perspective. The study further evaluated whether these were translated into programmes, and whether budget allocations for such programmes were tapped into and spent adequately. The study looks primarily at the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), the Government’s commitments and delivery targets with regards to their focus on children’s rights. This provides a base for future monitoring of budgets for children.

The CBA took place as a part of the on-going national budget reform through which ROB was adopted for the first time in Jordan. Thus the environment in which the CBA study was undertaken adds to the innovative approach. It adds value as the CBA and ROB have become an entry points to a long-term engagement strategy which could influence programmes and monitor spending for children according to child-specific activities and indicators. The CBA could pave the way for a law or policy reform by building the Government’s capacity to look at the broader policy issue from a child focused budget perspective. Through this process, UNICEF has become instrumental in linking the ROB roll out with the child budget engagement strategy.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

In Jordan, the CBA framework can be used as a monitoring tool for annual child focused budget allocations and actual expenditure with a particular emphasis on regional comparison and actual service delivery.

Many UNICEF offices including Brazil, China, South Africa, Kenya and Mozambique are now implementing child rights and human rights budgeting projects. The experience of implementing CBA in Jordan can be used as a resource for these countries. Since social budgeting for children including analysis of national budgets has been selected by UNICEF’s MENA regional office as one of the research areas for 2010, Jordan’s experience in CBA is particularly valuable for further application in the region.

NEXT STEPS

The immediate next steps include the final revision of the CBA study by the reference group before printing and dissemination of the report. The dissemination is planned for June 2011.

To further raise awareness on child-friendly budgeting and spending on child rights-related activities in the Government’s programmes, in 2010, UNICEF and partners developed policy briefs targeted at policy makers and the broader public. The results from the CBA and the development and roll out of the engagement plan were featured through these briefs.

The 2011 Annual Work Plan of UNICEF Jordan and the GBD prioritizes the following activities:

- Piloting ministries’ strategic plans, strategic objectives, programmes, activities, as well as 2012 budget allocations reflecting a focus on children’s programmes;
- integrating child-friendly budgeting into the existing ROB training materials and budgeting practice within the GBD and in pilot ministries; and
- learning from another country experience in consolidating ROB in connection with a child budgeting initiative, and highlighting changes to the budget preparation process.

RELATED LINKS

www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index_58380.html
ABSTRACT

Since March 2007, UNICEF together with the European Union (EU) has supported the Government’s efforts in addressing the challenges posed by the orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) in the context of HIV and AIDS, poverty and food insecurity. The key strategies included strengthening of social welfare systems and establishing mechanisms for delivering a social cash transfer programme to reach OVC. The Department of Social Welfare (DSW), in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, launched the first payment under the Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) in April 2009. The CGP supplements the income of poor households caring for OVC, including child-headed households, with cash grant of M 360 (US$52) disbursed on a quarterly basis.

The CGP has played a lead role in establishing a comprehensive social protection system in Lesotho by creating synergies between social assistance programmes through the establishment of a National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA). A major lessons learned in the implementation of the CGP is the importance of a preliminary assessment of systems and structures for programmes with a similar complex nature. As the implementation of the CGP began, the use of an iterative approach allowed the programme to gradually expand and develop, while testing and adjusting tools and processes in parallel. An impact evaluation of the programme is planned in 2011 to assess the results obtained to date and feasibility of a national scale up.

BACKGROUND

Lesotho is a small, mountainous, landlocked country with limited natural resources as well as a narrow production and export base; its economy is closely tied to that of South Africa, by which it is completely surrounded. The country encounters many challenges; it has the third highest HIV prevalence worldwide (23.2 per cent) in addition to extreme poverty\(^1\) and acute food insecurity. Children remain at the epicentre of the HIV epidemic with constantly increasing numbers of OVC\(^1^7\).

To improve the conditions of OVC and counteract the afore-mentioned social problems, a component of small grants was envisaged under the partnership UNICEF signed with the EU in March 2007. It was believed that much of the support for OVC at the community level would be provided through existing or newly formed caregiver groups, which would be supported and strengthened by the programme’s interventions. Basic needs of OVC would be addressed through the disbursement of small grants to vulnerable children through school structures and caregiver groups. Despite the effort, due to limited capacities at various levels and knowledge gaps among stakeholders, the achievements were only minor. The results improved in 2008, when the small grants programme was transformed into a social cash transfer programme which is now called the Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP).

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

In April 2009, CGP was initially launched as a pilot programme in three community councils (CCs). This pilot was later expanded to six CCs from three districts (two CCs per district), referred to as Round 1A of the CGP pilot. In Round 1A there were two basic eligibility criteria of CGP: 1) a household must have lived in the targeted pilot area for at least 12 months prior to the launch of CGP; and 2) a household must have at least one child less than 18 years old.

\(^{1}\) According to poverty headcount of 2003, 56.6 per cent of the population lives below the national poverty line (Source: World Bank: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.NAHC/countries/LS\?display=graph)

\(^{1^7}\) According to the 2006 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) there are 221,403 orphans out of a total population of 1.9 million in Lesotho.
Further identification of beneficiaries took place with community based targeting, an approach in which dedicated community members select households eligible for the programme.

Until mid-2009, approximately 1,600 households, caring for over 4,000 OVC were selected and subsequently supported by the programme. Although the community based targeting has several advantages, it posed some limitations such as time requirements, political influence, potential tension amongst community members and a subjective selection of eligible households. These concerns led to an adjustment in the design of the programme.

In March 2010, UNICEF completed a comprehensive study to redesign the component of small grants into a social cash transfer programme, which would in turn serve as an entry point to a robust child and gender sensitive social protection system in Lesotho. Following the recommendations of the study, in June 2010, fifteen additional CCs from 5 out of 10 districts were selected to participate in the pilot under a new improved design. The improved design was further divided in two phases, Round 1B where around 3,400 beneficiary households in five CCs were selected (one CC per district), and Round 2, in which additional 10,000 beneficiaries in five additional CCs (two CCs per district) will be included in the programme.

Improved design for Round 1B and Round 2
The new design included the following improvements:

- Establishment of NISSA which aims at creating a registry of all households at the national level. NISSA classifies all households according to their welfare level using a proxy means test formula (PMTF);
- improved system for beneficiary selection, including both NISSA classification and a community validation process;
- improved system for enrolling beneficiaries;
- improvements in the current payment system;
- introduction of a case management and a monitoring and evaluation system; and
- establishment of a management information system (MIS) for NISSA and the CGP.

To populate the NISSA, household data is collected through a census approach, aiming at interviewing 100 per cent of households in the selected CCs. In Round 1B, information of approximately 20,000 households within the selected CCs (70 per cent of coverage) was captured on paper-based forms, which were subsequently forwarded to the central data entry site after a first quality check. All information was entered into the NISSA MIS which verified whether the information was complete and consistent. The system then automatically ran the PMT formulas to classify the households into five categories, from ‘ultra-poor’ (NISSA 1) to ‘better off’ (NISSA 5).

Revised targeting methods
To select CGP beneficiaries, two main eligibility criteria were established under the improved design Round 1B and Round 2: 1) households must be classified in either NISSA 1 (ultra-poor) or NISSA 2 (very poor) and 2) households must be caring for at least one child less than 18 years of age. The CGP MIS connects to the NISSA MIS automatically searches for the two conditions among all households classified in NISSA, and generates a list of ‘MIS eligible households’. The list is ranked in descending order, according to a CGP score and by a NISSA category. This means that between two households in the same NISSA level, the one with the higher CGP score will be ranked first.

The list of ‘MIS eligible households’ according to the CGP score is then sorted out by village, and validated locally by a Village Assistance Committee (VAC). The VACs are local structures created to facilitate community participation, which is a pivotal characteristic of the CGP. There is a VAC per cluster of 50 households, each one comprised of the councillor, village chief, prominent community members and the DSW Auxiliary Social Welfare Officer. Previous to the validation, VACs are trained on the particulars of the NISSA classification, the CGP, the programme eligibility criteria and the methodology to validate ‘MIS eligible households’.

Once the community has identified the households they perceive as eligible, the VAC and the MIS generated results are matched. A quota is assigned to each CC according to resources available. Finally households that are

18 The CGP Ranking Score grades the vulnerability of a household given by the following criteria: number of household members + number of children under 6 years + number of orphans under 18 years + number of people with disabilities within the household.
positively identified by both MIS and the community and which fall within the assigned quota are called for enrolment as ‘potential beneficiary households’. On enrolment, they become CGP beneficiaries and are included in the payment list.

**Introduction of mobile researcher technology**

In the current Round 2, adjustments based on experiences in the previous rounds are under implementation. While the targeting methodology remains unchanged, mobile researcher technology (MRT), a state of the art technology for data collection has been put in place. Filters that minimize inclusion errors have been designed, both in the questionnaire, as well as in the actual operation of the mobile phones. With the use of the MRT, information on households is sent automatically to the NISSA MIS, avoiding human error in the data entry process, which also contributes to minimize the inclusion errors.

Further, MRT integrates the global positioning system (GPS) which locates each household and registers a photo of the interview respondent and the dwelling where the interview took place. MRT allows real-time supervision to enhance data quality and general efficiency of the data collection process. Further improvements in Round 2 include alternative payment and reconciliation methods, which are also being assessed and will be subsequently tested. Options such as saving accounts or pre-paid smart cards in less remote areas are observed and would be tested at a small scale to assess their feasibility, cost-efficiency and satisfaction amongst beneficiaries. A baseline survey for impact evaluation is also being conducted in Round 2.

**Social mobilization**

Underlying the CGP is an extensive community development component through social mobilization. It focuses on social and behavioural change through family education and awareness-raising. Households are sensitized to use the money in the best interest of children, such as investments in education, health, nutrition and their overall well-being. Attention is paid to the development of local management systems, facilitating case management as well as referrals. Since the programme has been developed for OVC in the context of HIV and AIDS, special attention is paid to child protection issues and ways in which they can be addressed at the local level since services vary among village, community council and district levels.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

Since its launch, CGP coverage has increased from less than 150 beneficiaries to currently 4,753 households, caring for 14,397 OVC. The CGP’s design and implementation has improved continuously, by building capacity and knowledge, developing tools and by introducing new technology and innovations. Anecdotal evidence gathered during monitoring field visits reveals more than 80 per cent of the beneficiaries are utilizing the cash transfer for the benefit of children, such as meeting their costs of food, clothing and school uniforms. In some cases the cash grant also allowed for savings and productive investments.\(^{19}\)

The implementation of the CGP has strengthened the capacity of the DSW and the Government to deliver a large and complex cash transfer programme. Some of the key factors that facilitated this capacity development include the re-structuring of the existing organizational structure of the DSW, clearly defining responsibilities within the department, hiring additional personnel, providing training on CGP (such as on the targeting methodologies) and improving IT equipment and tools.

Further, the CGP is envisaged as an entry point to establish a comprehensive child and gender sensitive social protection system in Lesotho. It seeks to strengthen the entire social protection system by its in-depth assessment of institutional capacities, economic analysis and development of overarching structures such as NISSA which creates synergies between existing and future social programmes. Building on the experiences of implementing different phases of the programme, the CGP now provides referrals and links to other complementary social assistance programmes, supports selection of beneficiaries and assures a more equal distribu-

\(^{19}\) Information gathered at community level meetings.
tion of social assistance. The implementation of CGP has led to the systemization and coordination of the existing government social assistance interventions. For example, the NIS-SA securely captures and analyzes household information that would assist other complementary social programmes in their selection of beneficiaries. This has proven to be time and cost effective since data does not need to be collected independently by each programme and it avoids beneficiaries receiving multiple benefits.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The major challenges experienced in the design and implementation phase include the following:

- Incomplete or weak institutional structures and capacities, especially at the district level;
- Shortage of staff and an oversized workload at the DSW;
- A difficult and time-consuming targeting process due to geographical challenges such as extremely remote and hard to reach areas;
- Lack of physical infrastructure such as roads, electricity and coverage of financial institutions and mobile phones which makes a more demand-orientated payment system (i.e. beneficiaries can receive or withdraw money according to their needs) cumbersome; and
- High initial investment costs to follow the holistic and future orientated strategy.

Lesotho, due to its various challenges, offers many lessons to share with other countries which are implementing or may implement a similar programme. Over the course of the programme implementation it became apparent, that before initiating a new and complex intervention such as the CGP, a preliminary assessment and analysis of the requirements to implement such an intervention should be thoroughly conducted. The preliminary assessment should include an overall implementation plan, a preparatory stage (12 to 18 months) to pilot test and complete the design as well as to put in place the required systems and structures. It is important to consult technical experts from the onset and to share expertise with other programmes within or outside the country. Further, it is indispensable to continuously advocate with and sensitize the key stakeholders at all levels to create a favourable environment. A strong communication strategy needs to be developed to share specific information with key stakeholders on critical design parameters at every stage of the programme.

Another valuable lesson in the Lesotho context has been the use of a staggered or an iterative approach, which allows for simultaneous design and implementation while gradually expanding from the pilot phase to scaling up. The CGP went through several rounds of piloting with continuous expansions, adjustments and improvements. In the absence of the minimum requirements to implement the CGP, a trial and error approach was chosen in which several activities can be carried out in parallel. Thus, lessons learned from one implementation step are used to adjust the core design which would simultaneously improve the on-going processes. In this approach the design, instruments and processes for data collection and management are defined, tested and adjusted at each stage. This has allowed for dynamic development of methodology and tools and a comprehensive piloting which assures that all elements would be ready for a nationwide expansion. Furthermore it has led to a faster implementation, which, under the tight timeframe of CGP, was a major advantage.

Further, in developing a social assistance programme, special attention should be paid to the following parameters:

- Establish a core management unit within and between the implementing partners, exclusively responsible for the programme with clear roles and responsibilities as well as required human resources with technical knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications;
- Build rapport with all stakeholders including decision makers, opinion leaders, implementing partners in order to ensure ownership and long term sustainability;
- Develop a comprehensive capacity building strategy at all levels with a detailed implementation plan (focusing on resource requirement, availability, gaps and timeframe);
- Build partnerships with civil society organizations that
have a major role in community development, setting clear roles and responsibilities along with standard guidelines to bring in objectivity;

- establish linkages with similar programmes to create synergies, increase efficiency and avoid duplication;
- provide a comprehensive computer-based MIS based on participatory monitoring and evaluation systems; and
- develop and strengthen local management systems (such as village or community-based grassroots institutions). This should include case management and referral systems particularly for the services that are offered by other independent agencies to ensure a holistic and integrated response.

**POTENTIAL APPLICATION**

As similar programmes have been developed and implemented in various countries in Africa and beyond, the experience from implementing the CGP in Lesotho may offer a possibility of replicating lessons learned or adapting similar strategies. For example, the use of iterative approach has proven its effectiveness in other countries such as Kenya and Tanzania. A central database such as NISSA has been implemented in Pakistan, Ecuador, Columbia, Brazil, Mexico and other countries in support to the existing national social assistance programmes. Infrastructural, cultural, organizational and political circumstances may hinder application of lessons learned in other countries. The enabling environment must be assessed prior to applying them to other countries’ designs, strategies or tools.

**NEXT STEPS**

The Government of Lesotho is in the process to strengthen and systematize the design of the CGP so that it can rapidly be expanded to a total of 15,000 households (around 45,000 OVC) by the end of 2011. As actual and official data on the number of OVC are not available cur- rently, a situation analysis of OVC has been planned which will provide a baseline for vulnerable children.

The national scale up of the CGP depends on the results of the impact evaluation and availability of financial resources. The baseline for the impact evaluation will be carried out in 2011 and will capture treatment and control groups from 10 CCs of Round 2.

As a result of the financial crisis, Lesotho lost 60 per cent of its major source of revenue from the South African Customs Union (SACU). This makes it all the more essential to undertake extensive high level advocacy to secure the programme’s continuation. The Government and UNICEF are working closely to raise funds and resources for phase II (as the current pilot project expires in December 2011) from potential partners.
ABSTRACT

Working on Public Finance Management (PFM) system is a means to better understand how national institutions, administrative processes and financial systems operate. As such, it complements UNICEF’s work in social sectors by grounding them in a broader discussion of accountability, ownership and sustainability of development assistance. If national PFM systems are functional, social sectors also tend to perform well. If PFM systems fail, repercussions will be visible everywhere. The realization of children’s right to health, for example, is contingent upon a complex decision-making process that determines how scarce productive resources are allocated and health services distributed in a particular society. Failure to understand this system-wide environment— and the trade-offs involved— may not only delay the achievement of results but make them unsustainable in the long term.

Strengthening PFM systems is also a goal in itself. This case looks at four PFM focus areas directly supported by UNICEF in Mozambique, namely: (1) increasing transparency and participation of civil society and parliaments in PFM dialogue; (2) strengthening domestic accountability around PFM issues; (3) supporting government capacity-building for evidence-based strategic planning and budgeting; and (4) supporting aid coordination. The experience highlights several critical lessons. Working on PFM requires moving beyond small ad hoc projects and focusing on a larger development agenda. Against this background, a child-exclusive discourse may not be very persuasive. Instead, focus placed on evidence, with attention to child development indicators is more effective. Engaging in PFM goes beyond aiming for increased budget allocations. Legislation, enforcement, overall capacity, economic growth, as well as demand-side constraints, all play a role in the realization of children’s and women’s rights. In a world of scarce resources, taking the most effective and efficient route to development is as important as the final destination.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, Mozambique has embarked on major public administration and finance management reforms. The decentralization process, which began in 1997 with the establishment of 33 municipalities with financial and administrative autonomy, triggered a shift in planning and management of public resources. The 2002 Public Finance Management Reform (SISTAFE) law replaced the colonial administrative and financial systems from 1901, updating and harmonizing the rules of public administration and finance applicable to all State institutions. These reforms brought more transparency, clarity, regulations and improvements to a number of PFM related issues.

Despite the reform, many challenges remain. Reliance on foreign aid (44 per cent of the 2011 State budget is financed by external resources) tends to lead to a donor-driven PFM dialogue and a shift in government accountability. In addition, without internal demand and lack of constant monitoring by domestic actors, PFM reforms may not be sustainable over time. Institutional problems also exist. National plans, policies and priorities, for example, are not always linked to evidence-based information or adequately reflected in the State budget.

The decentralization process has also been slow and a large amount of external aid often bypasses the government, creating parallel systems. Finally, poverty has stagnated over the years and the fiscal space for increased
investment in human capital and poverty reduction strategies is limited. These contexts and scenarios have direct implications on the effectiveness of pro-poor policies and thus, the realization of child rights.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
UNICEF Mozambique’s approach to PFM reforms is based on the understanding of how public finance and administrative systems operate as a means to ensure the effective implementation of equitable, sustainable and pro-poor policies and interventions. Thus UNICEF Mozambique’s upstream engagement in PFM indirectly complements and strengthens the traditional work done in social sectors (namely health, education, social protection, water and sanitation) by making them more responsive to the country context and realities. Without this system-wide approach, good sectoral policies may not be properly implemented because systemic obstacles and institutional bottlenecks are endemic. If national PFM are functional, social sectors also tend to perform well.

This approach draws on a long-term take on development which is grounded on human rights principles of accountability by strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to promote and fulfil human rights through sound and efficient public systems. It also supports the capacity of rights-holders (i.e. represented by civil society) to monitor the implementation of public policies and the allocation of public resources in a way that enables the progressive realization of their rights, poverty reduction strategies and good governance. Thus, sustainability and ownership underlie UNICEF’s approach to PFM.

The multi-faceted approach involves three components:

- Various engagement strategies including advocacy, capacity building and partnerships;
- different technical entry points of PFM engagement (applied budget work, evidence-based planning, capacity development and aid coordination); and
- use of various instruments of analysis, such as the State budget, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) or Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

In collaboration with different actors, from the Ministry of Finance to civil society organizations, the initiative aims at:

- Increasing transparency and participation through applied budget work;
- strengthening domestic accountability in general, and specifically around PFM issues;
- strengthening government capacity by mainstreaming evidence-based strategic budgeting and priority-setting; and
- promoting aid coordination.

Increasing transparency and participation: Applied budget work
‘Meaningful’ participation has always been an elusive concept. In the context of PFM, this is made more difficult because budget and planning instruments are either hard to understand or not easily accessible. If people cannot understand these documents, or have access to them in a timely fashion, they cannot engage in any technical dialogue needed for monitoring and advocacy in relation to different issues in PFM.

In response, UNICEF has been producing the Budget Brief series (now in its fourth year) in collaboration with the Foundation for Community Development (FDC), a national non-governmental organization. The purpose of the briefs is twofold. First, they translate complex information into reader-friendly documents to foster public debate and participation of civil society, parliaments, line ministries and other stakeholders on PFM-related issues. Second, they offer an analytical overview of trends in resource allocation and execution rates overtime for contextualized understanding of budget proposals.

In addition to demystifying the budget and its related processes, the budget briefs also unveil the importance of moving beyond advocacy messages that call for increased budget allocations to social sectors. They emphasize, for example, issues related to efficiency (what is the absorption capacity of ministries to manage increased allocation of funds?) and equity (are resources reaching the most vulnerable groups?). Often, the briefs compare these trends in resource allocations against human development indicators and the multi-dimensional aspect of poverty across provinces.

Putting PFM work in the Mozambican context
Working on public finance management is somewhat different from child friendly budgeting or gender responsive budgeting. PFM is a broader field. It involves all phases of the budget cycle, but is not limited to them. It consists of a broad set of laws, regulations, procedures and institutions that govern public financial and administrative systems in a given country. In addition, its immediate goal is not to necessarily influence increased budget allocations for children or women. Instead, the purpose is to strengthen and enable government systems to implement equitable policies in a sustainable, efficient and effective way.
The briefs are accompanied by an ambitious dissemination strategy. Over 10,000 documents are distributed each year and multiple presentations and media conferences are held for stakeholders from civil society to ministers in social sectors.

**Strengthening domestic accountability: The role of ‘watchdogs’**

In order to strengthen domestic accountability, access to simplified budget information is coupled with capacity building of NGOs and the parliament.

UNICEF has supported the creation of a Civil Society Budget Monitoring Forum which was established in early 2010. The Forum brings together over 20 NGOs and media representatives and is led by four national civil society organizations. The objectives of the Forum are threefold: (1) strengthen capacity of civil society around PFM issues for evidence-based advocacy; (2) serve as a hub for information sharing; and (3) act as an identifiable civil society coalition capable of engaging in dialogue with donors, government and the parliament on budget-related issues.

UNICEF supports these goals in two ways:

- An expert consultant provides regular capacity building training on PFM-related topics selected by the Forum. Sessions are short (half-day) but regular (three times a month) – a recognition that ad hoc capacity building sessions on these complex themes simply do not work. Topics have ranged from decentralized planning and budgeting processes to public procurement and aid modalities.
- The Forum is linked with different stakeholders. Capacity building sessions invite speakers from the Ministry of Finance, the parliament and donors.

In collaboration with UNDP, UNICEF has secured a partnership to provide technical support to the Parliamentarian Plan and Budget Commission. Once again, ad hoc trainings are avoided. Instead, focus is placed on monthly specialized advisory services to the 15 members of the Commission and its four technical staff. This support focuses on on-the-job assistance geared towards understanding and analyzing the State Budget and national plans proposals before their approval by the wider parliament. Budget literacy is coupled with continuous dissemination of evidence-based information about the situation of children and women in the country. A field monitoring guide was created, for example, to support members of Parliament during their field trips to gather data on whether resources are in fact being used efficiently and effectively.

The regularity of these expert services is made possible through use of long term agreements (LTAs). These flexible contract modalities ensure the availability of a pool of expert consultants under fixed price agreements for a range of technical PFM services, which can simply be requested by emails and paid through submission of invoices. This contractual modality has reduced UNICEF staff time spent on developing individual and ad hoc contracts and incurred significant cost savings for the organization.

**Evidence-based budgeting and priority-setting plans: National capacity development**

An official partnership with the Ministry of Finance began in 2010 with the endorsement of a work plan by the National Directorate of the Budget (DNO). The partnership aims at strengthening the capacity of this institution to implement a more equitable and evidence-based pro-poor budget in line with national priorities. In addition, support has been provided to DNO to strengthen linkages and synergies with social sectors and the Ministry of Planning and Development (MPD).

An economist was hired to support DNO in all areas of budget preparation. The consultant has also been tasked to support social sectors (i.e. education, health, social action and water and sanitation) in the formulation of more realistic budgets and evidence-based programme classifiers, with a focus on programmes involving children.

The bridge between Ministry of Finance and MPD, as well as social sectors, is critical. Often, social sectors end up preparing unrealistic budgets that are neither well-planned nor evidence-based. Similarly, increased synergies are needed with MPD, which is responsible for developing key planning instruments which are (or should be) directly linked to the State Budget, namely, the annual Economic and Social Plan and the MTEF.

This work is anchored on data analyses, studies and evaluations based on the latest data available, such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 2008), which are disseminated through presentations (often done by the National Institute of Statistics), workshops and sharing of informational materials. The idea behind it is to ground the development of these important planning and budgeting instruments on evidence since in a context of scarce fiscal resources, priorities and trade-offs have to be made.
Aid coordination

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agenda for Action highlight the need for increased simplification, harmonization, alignment and transparency of aid disbursements, practices and procedures. Particular focus has been placed on two indicators from the Paris Declaration, namely, being on-budget and increasingly using government systems.

In terms of transparency, parliament and civil society organizations should have a full picture of the State Budget, including where funds come from and what they are earmarked for. It is extremely important given the country’s aid structure. High levels of off-budget aid (external aid without reporting to the government), partial disclosure of information on financial commitments and execution rates, late disbursements of aid, use of parallel systems (such as procurement procedures) end up obstructing the supervisory roles of both civil society and parliament.

To strengthen aid coordination, UNICEF Mozambique focuses on four areas of interventions:

1. **Strengthening the capacity of the government in the aid coordination process.** A consultant was seconded to MPD to work on aid coordination issues. In addition, UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Finance and donors in the development of guidelines and tools to improve the way external resources are registered on the State Budget and MTEF. This is meant to improve the accuracy of aid data captured on budgeting and planning documents to address the vast amount of off-budget in the country.

2. **Internal commitment to alignment and harmonization.** UNICEF has long reported its financial assistance on government planning and budget instruments. This involves reporting commitments to the MTEF (i.e. being on plan); the State Budget (i.e. on budget); and the State Budget Execution Reports (i.e. on report). While time-consuming for UNICEF staff, these on-plan, on-budget and on-report procedures are critical to ensure transparency, public access to information and accountability both from UNICEF towards government, but also in relation to all implementing partners receiving funds from UNICEF.

Information on UNICEF disbursement rates, for example, is compiled on a quarterly basis. Tables with detailed expenditures by sectors and implementing partners are shared with line ministries for improved oversight of programmes and with the Ministry of Finance for inclusion in the Budget Execution Reports. At UNICEF Mozambique, compliance with these internal reporting practices is measured and assessed through annual management indicators directly linked to the performance of the representative.

3. **Contribution to sectoral common funds and participation in sector wide approaches (SWAps).** UNICEF also channels funds through three common funds, namely PROSAUDE (health), FASE (education) and PRONASAR (rural water supply and sanitation). The latter was recently established under the leadership of UNICEF. These common funds and implementation mechanisms can be seen as an entry point for greater alignment and coordination among different stakeholders and donors and are especially relevant to Mozambique where the aid structure is extremely complex. The UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office is currently assessing the effectiveness of this engagement.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

Although the work in support to PFM systems is strategic rather than output-based, results can nevertheless be identified. Results obtained under each strategic component of the direct PFM engagement are:

**Improved transparency and participatory processes**

The Budget Brief series have contributed to increased transparency in the PFM dialogue by producing and widely disseminating budgeting and planning information using simplified language and informative analyses. These documents – and accompanying presentations/workshops – also enhance participatory processes around PFM-related topics among various stakeholders. In 2010, for example, separate presentations on the main findings of the budget briefs were held to the Ministers of Education, Health, Social Action and Public Works (for Water and Sanitation). The ministers welcomed the information and analyses and urged closer collaboration with UNICEF on recommendations on how to tackle some of the bottlenecks identified. In the case of the Ministry of Women and Social Action, for instance, the minister appointed the sector’s budget and planning personnel to participate in the UNICEF-spon-
sored PFM course with technical staff from the Ministry of Finance (see further below).

**Strengthened domestic accountability**

Having access to reader-friendly information on PFM issues is not enough to ensure meaningful participation in PFM dialogue. This is an area where regular capacity development of both NGOs and the parliament is required. In the case of the former, the establishment of a civil society Budget Monitoring Forum has contributed to ensure that a network of national NGOs is strategically positioned to influence policy-makers towards better decisions on PFM issues. For the first time, both Forum and parliament met to jointly review the State Budget proposal for 2011. In addition, the main concerns of the Forum regarding Government’s plans and priorities for 2011 were acknowledged and addressed in a written statement by the Ministers of Finance and Planning.

**Bringing planning and budgeting together under an equity and evidence-based framework**

A four-day workshop on the fundamentals of PFM was organized for 40 technical staff responsible for the preparation of the State Budget, the Economic and Social Plan and the MTEF. The workshop brought together staff from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, which were a single ministry until 2004. The workshop was facilitated by consultants and led by Government staff responsible for developing those key instruments. To ensure the perspective of the social sectors, technical staff from the Ministry of Women and Social Action also participated in the workshop. This enabled the participants to identify obstacles and opportunities in these planning and budgeting processes, from the perspectives of the Ministry of Finance and sectoral ministries, in order to make these instruments more cohesive, strategic and based on national priorities. The workshop also served as a channel to disseminate trends from latest data collection and analyses (MICS 2008). All group exercises, examples and case studies during the workshop were data-based, ensuring that participants would learn how scarce resources could be allocated with an equity focus.

**Supporting the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action**

Since 2008, UNICEF Mozambique has achieved 100 per cent compliance with self-imposed reporting procedures on its financial assistance. This information helps the Government have a realistic overview of expenditures and develop more rational plans and budgets. In addition, a toolkit documenting these good practices was developed and endorsed by the Government and the UN Country Team for further dissemination and adaptation.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

**Go beyond UNICEF-centric programmes**

Working in PFM requires an understanding that the goal of development assistance is not the implementation of UNICEF-supported interventions per se. Rather, the goal is to make government, through their public financial and administrative systems, more equipped to fulfill the rights of its population. This support is done in a very upstream manner, moving beyond small ad hoc projects and focusing on the ‘bigger picture’ This requires an understanding of where UNICEF-supported programmes can be more strategically placed to ensure efficient and effective results. A comprehensive knowledge of national government systems is required.

**Child focused (based on evidence) but not child-exclusive**

A change in approach is needed when engaging in PFM. Preserving macro-economic stability is a key concern for the Ministry of Finance, for example. That requires maintaining fiscal balance, in addition to promoting stable economic growth, keeping inflation low and encouraging full employment. Against this background, a child-exclusive discourse may not be very persuasive. Instead, focus is placed on evidence, with attention to child development indicators. For instance, mentioning that Mozambique has the 22nd highest under-five child mortality in the world or citing that almost half of its children’s population suffers from malnutrition provide very strong arguments when discussing policy and budget allocations to the health sector.

**It’s not always about increased allocations**

When advocating for more funds for the education sector, for example, attention should be drawn to whether the ministry has the adequate absorptive capacity to manage increased funds. Efficiency of scarce resources is critical. One should also try to propose where these additional funds would come from. Finally, it’s also im-
Important to acknowledge that lack of money is not always the problem. Other elements – legislation, enforcement, overall capacity, economic growth, as well as demand-side constraints – all play a role in the realization of children’s and women’s rights. Looking at PFM systems as a whole helps frame these advocacy interventions in a more cohesive way, while understanding the importance of macro-economic stability and fiscal space constraints.

Engaging in PFM requires comprehensive and concurrent interventions

Focusing only on budget analyses, for example, is not enough to even begin tackling the many inter-related elements of social budgeting work. Two areas that are often neglected are aid coordination and national planning processes and instruments. The former is critical in ensuring the comprehensiveness and predictability of the national budget – and this is also an area where the responsibility for action lays with donors and the UN, and not necessarily with the government. Planning is also important as it provides (or should provide) the strategic foundation to decide on priorities and trade-offs required for efficient budget allocations. To ensure sustainable reforms, civil society organizations and the parliament should be included in this dialogue.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

The approach and lessons learned described here can be replicated to other offices and adapted to country contexts, particularly if there is work already being done in budget analysis. Offices interested in beginning engagement in this area should consider conducting an initial needs assessment to map the level of work done by partners in support to PFM to avoid duplication of interventions and programmes. A briefing on national PFM systems should be made available to all UNICEF staff as an entry point to provide an overview of how Government systems are operationalized and to identify bottlenecks and opportunities for policy interventions. From there, more specific programmes can be developed, if needed. The use of LTAs for hiring PFM experts is also recommended to reduce time spent in contractual processes and transaction costs.

NEXT STEPS

With regard to the PFM initiative, UNICEF Mozambique’s priorities for 2011 include the following:

- Develop a pilot initiative for use of the Government Single Treasury Account for funds disbursement. Use Government programme budgeting classifications in UNICEF planning (such as in Annual Work Plans).
- Strengthen collaboration and coordination across UNICEF sectors around PFM, sector financing and policy issues, particularly through the creation of an internal policy/PMF working group.
- Advocate with donors to report their financial assis-
tance on the Government budget, particularly those with significant amounts of off-budget aid.
- Provide technical support to the Civil Society Budget Monitoring Forum to forge regional and international coalitions with NGOs doing similar work. Similarly, the Forum will concentrate on specific applied PFM research around topics selected in collaboration with the parliament to ensure more clarity before the approval of the State Budget.
- Encourage greater involvement of the parliament in its oversight role for aid coordination and approval of the MTEF.
- Together with the Ministry of Finance and the Civil Society Budget Monitoring Forum, promote transparency, particularly around timely access to public PFM documents.
- Provide support to the Ministry of Finance to develop guidelines on aid coordination.
- Advocate for the development and approval of equitable criteria for budget allocations across provinces based on child development indicators and levels of poverty incidence.

RELATED LINKS

Civil Society Budget Monitoring Forum
www.fordham.edu/academics/programs_at_fordham_/international_politif1/unicef_collaboration/international_data-tab/africa/mozambique_profile_76519.asp

Engaging in the PFM- A perspective of the UNICEF Mozambique Country Office

Budget Briefs (Portuguese)
www.unicef.org/mozambique/resources_4770.html
BACKGROUND

Over the last decade, six major floods and three droughts have intensified food and health crises in Niger, affecting millions of people. Most analyses of the humanitarian needs and responses in Niger show that it is mainly structural problems that lead to the chronic food insecurity with extremely high rates of both chronic and acute malnutrition. In 2010, as a result of poor quantity and distribution of rainfall, 47.7 per cent of households, representing about seven million people, were confronted with a situation of moderate to severe food insecurity. Consequently, the prevalence of acute malnutrition among children aged from 6 – 59 months increased from 12.3 per cent in 2009 to 16.7 per cent in 2010. According to Nutrition Cluster estimates, 384,000 children were affected by severe acute malnutrition and 1,215,000 by moderate acute malnutrition in 2010.

ABSTRACT

In June 2010, UNICEF launched a new kind of emergency nutrition cash project with a link to social protection in Niger. The project, ‘cash transfer to protect blanket feeding’ was a direct response to the growing evidence that blanket feeding rations distributed to children of 6 to 24 months of age in food insecure communities were consumed by all household members. The effectiveness of the blanket feeding to reduce the extremely high acute malnutrition among young children was thus challenged. The purpose of the cash transfer project was to protect the rations for the children less than two years of age by covering the nutritional needs of other household members.

The project is the first of its kind at this scale in the country. It has demonstrated that in times of emergency, cash transfers can be an appropriate and effective tool to improve the nutritional condition of children. The strategy has proven to be effective as it incurs lower logistical costs than those linked to the distribution of food rations. In addition, it responds to the exact needs of the beneficiaries by giving them the freedom to make up their own basket of food items. By strengthening the food security of the households, the project aims to prevent malnutrition for children under two years of age, in context of the food crisis.

INNOVATION – PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

NIGER

Cash transfers improve nutrition among children affected by emergencies (2011)

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The selection of beneficiaries of the cash transfer project at community level was linked to the targeting of the blanket feeding distribution plan. The project targeted 35,000 households in the departments of Tessaua in the Maradi region and Koni and Illéla in the Tahoua region. The areas were selected based on the following criteria:

22 Blanket feeding rations are improved food formula intended for all children under two years of age in Niger.
23 WFP, first blanket feeding Post Distribution Monitoring, June 2010
• Regions with a global acute malnutrition rate greater than or equal to 15 per cent,
• Communes selected for blanket feeding,
• Existence of functional markets in a distance that will allow the supply of food for cash beneficiaries. To avoid disruption of markets, interventions are not concentrated in one department or municipality, and
• Availability of experienced operators (such as NGOs and local traders) for cash transfer.

The villages selected for blanket feeding but that did not get selected for UNICEF’s cash transfer interventions received protection rations directly from WFP. To ensure consistency, the amount of 20,000 FCFA (about US$40) per household was determined for the unconditional cash transfer, which corresponded to the value of the protection rations for each household.

Implementation of the project was based on the following key approaches:
• In partnership with the WFP and INGOs, UNICEF undertook an advocacy campaign directed to the Government and other partners on the need to protect the blanket feeding rations. Further, UNICEF aligned its policies and strategies with those defined by the Government and its partners in response to the 2010 food and nutritional crisis.
• UNICEF partnered with WFP to provide the rations and support market monitoring for the entire implementation period. Distribution of cash was implemented through a partnership with CARE and Save the Children. In collaboration with community leaders, Save the Children and CARE invested in a revision of the blanket feeding beneficiary lists to exclude obvious inclusion errors. Save the Children ensured that beneficiary lists did not include households already benefitting from their other cash distribution activities.
• The project included regular monitoring of cash distribution and the use of cash for various purposes by the beneficiaries. A total of 1,200 households (including an equal number of households receiving protection rations and households receiving cash) were sampled in the two project areas for PDM survey. The three PDMs were carried out by INS using questionnaires that were based on the ones used in other similar projects. Results of the survey provided key information to the project team on what needed to be improved.
• National ownership of the project was ensured through (i) use of the national steering committee on the World Bank’s social safety net project for overall project coordination and (ii) a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Statistical Institute (INS) and the Agricultural Marketing Information System (AMIS) to ensure post-distribution monitoring (PDM) and market behaviour monitoring. The National Scheme for the Prevention and Management of Food Crises (DNPGCA) structures at central, regional levels and the three sub-regional committees from the target departments received training aimed at building their capacity for coordination, targeting and monitoring of cash transfer transactions in an emergency situation. Ten national NGOs received a primary level of training on cash transfer transactions in emergency situations as a means of building the capacities of the national implementation agencies.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS
An independent final evaluation of the project took place in December 2010 which revealed the following major results:
• The project fully achieved its target of providing 35,000 households (with at least one child between 6 to 24 months), including 4,500 pregnant and breastfeeding women, three payments of cash transfers. This covered about 40 per cent of the total households in the three departments in the project area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups within the Household</th>
<th>TAHOUA</th>
<th>MARADI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 to 24 months</td>
<td>All children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Cash distribution</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM 1</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM 2</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM 3</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data collected during the PDM
The cash distribution has had a significant impact on the exclusive use of the blanket feeding for the children of 6 to 24 months in both project areas with a steady improvement, particularly after the second distribution. This may be explained as during the time of the first round of distribution, household assets were almost completely depleted and the cash would likely have been used for the most critical household expenses. At the second round of distribution many households had started to recover from a food crisis after a good harvest. The survey showed that consumption of the blanket feeding by the whole family decreased sharply when the household food security improved, indicating that when the blanket feeding is shared among all household members it may not be because of lack of awareness but rather because of food insecurity and need. During the second and third round of distribution, the data clearly reveals the targeted children received the intended food rations.

During the focus group discussions with community members, participants highlighted that the blanket feeding and cash operations had significantly improved living conditions in the beneficiary households. The beneficiaries reported improved health of children; greater use of health services, especially for antenatal and childhood immunization, increase in school attendance of children and a decrease in household debt. The decrease in the household debt is particularly important as the PDMs showed that more than one third of household expenditures in Tahoua were used for repaying loans while it was one quarter of household expenditures in Maradi. The PDMs, though, indicated that these expenditures remained stable throughout the three rounds of distribution.

CHALLENGES
The cash transfer project was utilizing the same target base as the blanket feeding plan which was challenged with low level of birth registration and general lack of baseline data (for example, out-dated census information). The collection of timely and reliable data and use of the information generated by the PDM should be optimized. While there is a need to conduct qualitative studies for an in-depth understanding of household food behaviours, use of a shorter questionnaire should be considered for routine monitoring as an alternatives to lengthy questionnaires. This is particularly important since the project is an emergency operation and reliable data should be provided in a timely manner to inform strategies as they are being implemented.

INNOVATION
Innovative elements of the project include the following approaches:

• UNICEF’s value added was to quickly scale up existing cash projects (implemented by different NGOs) to respond to the nutrition crisis, and bring together and coordinate among different partners such as WFP, NGOs and the Government. UNICEF was able to achieve this by developing common standards and harmonizing the different approaches to emergency cash distribution.

• Diversification of a range of possible interventions in periods of crisis.

• Positioning of the cash transfer initiative as a new alternative for the protection of blanket feeding rations in the context of Niger in 2010.
POTENTIAL APPLICATION

In 2010, more than 20 cash based interventions (such as cash for work, vouchers) were implemented by UN agencies and NGOs in Niger in response to the food security crisis. This further strengthens the need for a solid national framework for cash assistance to ensure coordination among different stakeholders. At the same time, capacities of national actors to initiate, implement, and monitor cash initiatives needs to be developed.

Further, the implementation of this project demonstrates such an intervention can be used on a large scale in periods of crisis based on the context. In 2010, in the case of Niger, cash turned out to be easier to deliver in a timely manner, with less operational costs and wide beneficiary coverage.

During October to December 2010, the WFP adopted a similar ‘cash for protection rations’ intervention. As this period coincides with the harvest season, cash distributions safeguarded agricultural markets from any disruption compared to food rations distribution.

NEXT STEPS

An independent final evaluation of the project was completed in March 2011 and the findings have been shared with the Government. Based on available funds, the results of the evaluation may lead to development of another similar project in Niger for 2011. The experience from the project is also supporting the development of UNICEF Global Guidelines on Cash Transfer in Emergencies, which will be available in 2011.
**ABSTRACT**

The policy environment in the Eastern Caribbean is complex: a combination of economic, social, cultural and political influences unique to each country hold implications for their progress towards sustainable development. The social policy toolkit was developed to help strengthen the capacities of different stakeholders in the region in understanding, monitoring and improving social policies affecting children’s rights. It facilitates the development of child-friendly and gender-sensitive legislation, policies and budgets and monitoring of policies using strategic data and information systems. The value added is in providing a cost-effective platform for increasing knowledge and raising awareness among regionally dispersed stakeholders on social policy issues. The toolkit has recently undergone online testing and a revised version will shortly be available at [www.oecs.org](http://www.oecs.org).

**BACKGROUND**

A major challenge to the promotion of sustainable human development in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has been the absence of a coherent and well-articulated framework to shape the evolution of social policy. Without a framework, policy interventions will largely be on ad-hoc basis and reactive to the unfolding domestic and external situation. A strong emphasis on social policy in UNICEF’s multi-country programme 2008-2011 and the lack of awareness among partners was a primary catalyst for the development of the social policy toolkit. With limited resources available to the multi-country programme and the broad area (including 10 countries) covered by UNICEF Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean office, sustainable outcomes were needed at a relatively low cost.

**STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The toolkit provides policymakers with practical guidance on how to tackle the complex social policy issues that are specific to the East Caribbean region. Drawing on available information, practical experiences and global good practices, it provides a practical guide to assist practitioners in the region with analysing, designing and implementing social policies that fulfil children’s rights.

The toolkit is structured around six modules, (1) overview of social policy; (2) poverty and vulnerability; (3) other sources of vulnerability; (4) monitoring and evaluating social policies; (5) budgets for social policy and (6) children’s rights and challenges in the Eastern Caribbean.

**Module 1: Overview of Social Policy** defines public policy and social policy, their relationships and identifies a number of social policy sectors and themes. It presents a generic policy process and the Eastern Caribbean policy context, in addition to some thoughts on evidence-based social policy. This first module concludes with rights-based social policy, an introduction to human rights, rights-based policy advocacy, a comprehensive list and links to international and universal human rights instruments and summaries of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

**Module 2: Poverty and Vulnerability** introduces the concepts of vulnerability and poverty and the two main approaches to measuring poverty – economic and multi-dimensional. The three main groups of economic poverty indicators (national income, income poverty line and income inequality) are discussed generally and are applied to the Eastern Caribbean context. It also includes multi-dimensional approaches to measuring poverty such as the human development index, human poverty index and the child poverty approach.

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Module 3: Other sources of vulnerability begins with an overview of the MDG goals and targets and the indicators for monitoring progress, noting that many are not applicable to small island developing states (SIDS) such as in the Eastern Caribbean. The module discusses various sources of vulnerability such as age, gender, geography, disability and family background. The section on geographic vulnerability highlights the situation in the Eastern Caribbean.

Module 4: Monitoring and Evaluating Social Policies defines and discusses types and sources of data, types of indicators and evaluations. It includes a link to the indicators of child well-being available at www.childinfo.org.

Module 5: Budgets for Social Policy raises issues related to analyzing and understanding budgets, the budgeting process, approaches to government budgeting, analysis of expenditures and various approaches to social budgeting.

Module 6: Children’s rights and challenges in the Eastern Caribbean provides details on trends in relation to the survival, development, protection and participation rights of children.

The toolkit does not explore the complexity of policy issues; rather, it focuses on concepts and techniques for social policy analysis and provides an introduction to related issues and terminologies. Intended audiences are people who currently work in government, civil society organizations and the media in the region. The toolkit is not restricted to the Caribbean in terms of concepts and definitions of social policy. However, it situates vulnerability and its relationship to poverty, budgeting and monitoring and evaluating social policies in the small islands context.

Development of the toolkit: The toolkit was initiated through a consultancy in June 2009. A consultant provided an outline which was reviewed and finalized with OECS and UNICEF. The toolkit was then developed over the course of the following year.

Dissemination: Online access is provided to the outline of each module with supporting materials such as links, searchable documents and databases. Sharing information via the internet assumes access to a certain level of IT equipment and facilities and the assumption that the target audience is motivated to access and use the information provided. Although majority of partners in the region have access to the internet, a CD-Rom based copy of the toolkit is also available.

Functions: The web-based toolkit does not require registration, since its immediate focus is learning and information sharing. Discussion platforms (such as blogs) are not yet built in. However, as the tool is more widely used, functions to facilitate the development of a community of learning and practice will be considered as part of the toolkit. The toolkit will be updated periodically to ensure that information available continues to respond to the changing social, political, economic and cultural environment in the Caribbean and consequently meets the needs of policy makers and implementers.

Funding: The total cost for developing the toolkit (hiring of a consultant), hosting it online and developing recommendations for further training was around US$31,000. Its cost-effectiveness becomes apparent when compared to face-to-face training in various countries in the sub-region and considering that many more stakeholders (Government, civil society organizations, media, academia among others) can benefit from the knowledge and resources provided through the toolkit.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

The finalized toolkit became available for online testing in June 2010. The toolkit is currently offline after a testing phase to incorporate user feedback and suggested changes. The revised toolkits will envisage (1) testing and certification for learners who complete all modules; (2) built-in tools to measure number of visits and characteristics of visitors to the site and get feedback on the user experience and areas for improvement; and (3) an interactive electronic platform for sharing knowledge and information among users. Interactive functions will be built in through the use of graphics and videos. UNICEF is currently reviewing the existing social policy training materials and online courses managed by other organizations to draw upon international good practices.

INNOVATION

The toolkit is one of the first initiatives to develop learning material in social policy at the sub-region level, as part of the multi-country programme in Eastern Caribbean. The initiative has subsequently evolved as one of the strategic focus areas in social policy in a middle income environment. The toolkit has a strong social policy thrust with a corresponding emphasis on upstream work in view of UNICEF’s limited funding and the diverse needs of children and women in 10 widely-dispersed countries in the region.

The toolkit provides a cost-effective platform for sharing knowledge and raising awareness among regionally dispersed stakeholders on both global and region-specific issues in social policy. It could also serve the interests of partners in other countries as the majority of the core issues discussed are applicable to different contexts, with the exception of Caribbean-specific examples.
POTENTIAL APPLICATION
A web-based tool containing information on a particular area of programming can be a cost-effective way to share information and increase awareness. The toolkit can be adapted to other countries or sub-regional level settings in regular or emergency programmes. A web based platform can be helpful especially where partners or stakeholders are scattered within a region. As the toolkit evolves, there is potential to develop a community of practice, learning and a discussion forum.

NEXT STEPS
The web-based toolkit is currently owned and managed by UNICEF. However, issues of ownership and sustainability are being discussed with the OECS Secretariat. On completion of the current testing and refinement phase (on-going as of April 2011), the OECS website will host the toolkit. This will promote sustainability of the initiative. Discussions with OECS are underway to define responsibilities in managing and maintaining the web-based toolkit.
ABSTRACT
In 2009, UNICEF Egypt's successful advocacy and outreach led to the development of a Diploma Course on Public Policy and Child Rights. The development of the course was guided by a consortium of eight universities and higher education institutes from the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region and Europe. For the first time in the region, a university in Jordan is now offering this advanced professional post-graduate university training, while two others in Egypt and another university in Jordan are to follow starting September 2011.

The Diploma has been established in response to the urgent need for developing capacity of practitioners on the issues relevant to fulfilment of children’s right. The Diploma aims to build a cadre of researchers, activists, members of Parliament, social workers, national and local planners and local NGOs capable of advocating for and implementing public policies and legislations from a child rights perspective. The consortium, responsible for developing the Diploma, was brought together based on their comparative advantage in specific fields that are being taught and their value added in the design and the implementation of the Diploma course. The strategic selection and partnership with these universities and academic institutions will ensure sustainability of the course beyond the project’s lifetime. The initiative has further inspired UNICEF Egypt to initiate work on a Diploma course on Research and Evaluation.

BACKGROUND
Egypt experiences persisting levels of poverty – one fifth of households with children live below the national poverty line in spite of significant economic growth, globalization and an increased awareness on children’s well-being. Fulfilment of children’s rights is pivotal in advancing human development and achieving the MDGs. As children’s issues and violations of their rights increasingly acquire attention in Egypt, there is still an absence of child friendly policies based on solid evidence and with a focus on respect, protection and promotion of children’s rights.

The inter-disciplinary systematic study around children’s rights in Egypt is limited. The situation of children in education, law, health and nutrition, inclusion and empowerment, representation and media access, as well as young people’s engagement in policy making, are marginal issues in mainstream social sciences faculties at national universities. The initial assessment of similar courses and university level training programmes in Egypt revealed none of the training programmes included a combination of children’ rights, child development, public policy, economics and finance for a professional audience. While many practitioners working with and for children are passionately committed to their cause, they are not always qualified with skills and knowledge on policy and children’s rights to enable them to become strong advocates for children. There is an urgent need to build holistic capacity around children’s rights issues in Egypt.

STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION
Initial implementation (pilot phase)
In early 2008, UNICEF and Cairo University (Faculty of Economics and Political Science [FEPS]) deliberated on initiating a training course on children's rights and public policy. The aim was to establish an institutionalized university level post graduate training on this theme. Initially, it was agreed that a single course would be developed...
and integrated into an existing one year graduate Diploma on Civil Society and Human Rights in the academic year 2008-2009. At the same time, there was an understanding that both groups would strive to develop a full one year Diploma.

In 2008, the Cairo University accepted to replace an existing course within the on-going Diploma on Human Rights with a course on public policy and child rights. The faculty was drawn from various departments at Cairo University and the American University in Cairo to cover a wide range of topics. The course was tailored to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to map and advocate for children's issues in the public sector (such as law making, policy making, budgeting, and local administration within the frame of decentralization) as well as the public sphere (civil society). The course was well received and the number of students registered for the course at least doubled compared to the previous years. As a result, FEPS decided to continue the course for the following academic year 2009-2010.

**Partnership and funding**
Partnership with universities and academic institutions within and outside of the region has been central to the development of the Diploma. Potential partner universities and institutions were identified based on a preliminary research on the existing masters or other training programmes on the subjects related to public policy and children's rights. The two universities in Jordan were identified together with UNICEF Jordan, building on the existing partnership with these universities. UNICEF Egypt then contacted these potential partners and presented the project as an opportunity to establish a unique diploma, highlighting the benefit they would derive from it too.

In April 2009, a consortium of eight universities and academic institutions26 submitted a three year proposal to the European Union’s (EU) TEMPUS27 programme to implement the one year Diploma in Egypt and Jordan in the academic year 2010-2011. In October 2009, the EU provided Euro 1 million to cover the project for the entire duration. Currently, the consortium members are developing the course content and new teaching techniques.

Partnership with universities in Europe has also been developed and was strengthened through the funding opportunity through TEMPUS. As a result, the Diploma curriculum will benefit from international expertise and students will have the opportunity to use their academic credits at higher educational institutes in Europe. For example, international student seminars and research workshops will be organized as a part of the Diploma.

**Objective and content of the Diploma**
The Diploma aims to build a cadre of practitioners working with and for children that effectively use their skills and knowledge to influence adequately funded, evidence-based and child rights oriented public policies, programmes and practices. For a long term, it seeks to create a culture in Egypt where children’s rights are respected, protected and fulfilled through improved policies and practices. The Diploma will be a one year full time study programme consisting of eight courses. The curriculum is currently being developed by a multidisciplinary team of scholars in Egypt, Jordan and the EU. It will be developed to closely link theory and practice. Human and children’s rights and their core principles will determine the overarching approach for the design of the Diploma. The programme composition was agreed on by the consortium as following:

1. Growing up in the Arab World
2. Children’s Rights and the Law
3. Public Finance and Social Budgeting
4. Children in a Changing Economy
5. Improving Services for Children (case studies)
6. Researching children (Methodology)
7. Monitoring and Evaluation of Child Policy

**Target audience**
The primary teaching language of the Diploma is Arabic while all teaching material is provided in English and Arabic. The Diploma is primarily targeting mid-career professionals (such as policy makers, civil servants, NGOs, front line professionals, journalists, activists) with five to 10 years work experience and a first degree. Indirectly the Diploma targets high level decision makers and members of Parliament, all those with whom the students will work to influence public policies for children. In this way, the students will act as multipliers of the knowledge acquired through the Diploma in their respective work environments. Classes will be held in the evening.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**
Monitoring and evaluation exercises have been conducted for the course on public policy and child rights (integrated into the existing Diploma on Civil Society and Human Rights) at the Cairo University for the academic years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010. The progress of the course has been monitored through regular meetings between the

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26 Cairo University and Assuit University in Egypt; The University of Jordan and Hashemite University in Jordan; International Academy for Innovative Pedagogy, Psychology and Economics (INa), Freie University of Berlin in Germany; Bristol University and Research in Practice in UK; and Maastricht University and International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

27 TEMPUS is an EU programme supporting the modernization of higher education in partner countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region.
Cairo University and UNICEF, as well as through on-line discussion groups for the course. Administration of questionnaires is the principal means of verification for evaluation, complemented with selected in-depth interviews and additional qualitative information such as documented interaction during the course. Furthermore, the following monitoring and evaluation exercises were conducted to measure the direct outcomes of the course:

- Pre-training baseline and post course impact knowledge tests
- Post-training survey on satisfaction with the quality of the course
- Follow-up after six months on the application of knowledge and skills gained from the course into students' fields of work
- Survey on impact on ability to do work after one year
- Establishment of alumni network for continuous information gathering.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

The Diploma course has officially commenced at the Hashemite University in Jordan in February 2011. Three additional universities (Cairo University and Assuit University in Egypt and the University of Jordan) will follow in September 2011. The curriculum development of the Diploma is currently being delayed mainly due to the revolution in Egypt and the civil unrest in other countries in the region. To date, curriculum and study materials for four out of eight courses of the Diploma have been finalized. The rest of the four courses will be finalized in time for the next semester starting in September 2011.

For the course on public policy and child rights which was integrated in the existing Human rights and civil society diploma at the Cairo University, 70 students were enrolled for the academic year 2008-2009 and only five (7 per cent) failed. For the academic year 2009-2010, 36 students were enrolled in the same course and all except one student passed the course. One of the possible reasons for the decrease in the number of students is that the admission of students was more restrictive for the second year.

Based on the qualitative data, students from both academic years were overall satisfied with the performance of the lecturers in regard to pedagogical teaching methods, interactivity between students and lecturers and flexibility.

For the academic year 2008-2009, a follow-up of a small sample of students for six months after the course revealed only few of the participants had the ability to apply what they have learned in the course in their work in the field. This was attributed to the fact that only few of the participants worked in the field or a position that gave him/her the opportunity to apply what they had learned.

Unlike the students of the academic year 2008-2009, some of the students from the academic year 2009-2010 reported that they were able to connect theory (what had been taught in the course) and practice. For instance, some of the participants initiated the process of establishing an association on children's rights together with their colleagues. Others adopted a project concerned with the rights of children in the slums. Two participants were honoured in their field of work which they attribute to applying what they had learned during the course.

The initiative has further inspired UNICEF Egypt to initiate work on a Diploma on Research and Evaluation. Various other UNICEF offices have asked for information on this successful experience.

**INNOVATION**

Research of university level teaching programmes and training courses in Egypt revealed a lack of institutionally recognized programmes that offer a combination of children's rights, social development, economic development and public policy. The Diploma is therefore expected to fill a vacuum in Egypt's academic programmes and potentially beyond to the region.

The initiation and the roll out of the Diploma course demonstrates successful collaboration between the eight universities and higher education institutes from the region and Europe, brought together in a consortium. The partnership has resulted in sustainability of the Diploma beyond the project's lifetime.

Key factors resulting in successful development and implementation of the diploma course are as follows:

- Identifying and networking with relevant counterparts in the Government and at local and European universities to advance the idea;
- strategic selection of partner universities based on their comparative advantage and value added in the design and the implementation of the initiative;
- development of a long-term plan with clear objectives for each phase of the initiative;
• willingness to take risks and investment of UNICEF funds at the initial stages of the project;
• conducting monitoring and evaluation of the course even at the initial stages of the project: this has proven to be effective in re-structuring the course in its second year based on the feedback.

According to the evaluation of the single course, the application of what has been learned in the course depends upon the individual student’s area of work and context where they return after the course. Further, the evaluation process itself should be less labour intensive and more functional. The initial tools that were used for the evaluation and the frequency of evaluations (after every lecture and after every semester) appeared to be too heavy. These lessons learned will be considered when determining the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the full Diploma.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION
Since the Diploma on Public Policy and Child Rights is the first course of its kind in the region it has the potential to attract academia from universities other than those participating in the current project. The Diploma will be widely promoted in the universities of Egypt, Jordan and across the region via mailing lists of both national and the regional partners such as NGOs working with children, relevant ministries (Education, Social Justice and Health) and national councils and organizations working for children’s rights.

In Egypt, the project has chosen to include a partner university from Cairo and Upper Egypt (Assiut University) in order to also offer the Diploma to students that do not live in the capital city. Further, TEMPUS funding will ensure multimedia teaching, including on-line and e-learning, as well as facilitate purchase of crucial teaching and reference material. It will also permit for exchange of students and teachers between EU and MENA regions.

NEXT STEPS
All eight courses and accompanying study materials will be made available by September 2011. By the end of the academic year 2011-2012, the first graduates will complete the full Diploma course. The consortium is using online Blackboard facilities, which facilitate secure online spaces to exchange information, to finalize the curriculum. For the monitoring and evaluation of the academic year 2011-2012, similar methodology and tools that were tested for previous academic years will be followed although the process will be less intensive and more functional.

RELATED LINKS
Diploma Public Policy and Child Rights (DPPCR) website: http://dppcr.wordpress.com/
The decentralization process which began in 2002 in Peru has significantly empowered sub-national governments with the authority and resources to improve the lives of their citizens and develop their regions. However, due to limited experience, technical and institutional capacity for formulation of evidence-based policies, plans and projects and for results-based budgeting, investments that directly benefit children remained significantly low. By the end of 2008, 88 per cent of the functional authority had been transferred to the decentralized governments. This includes social sectors directly related to child wellbeing, such as health, education and social services. As the decentralized governments acquired more authority, the share of the public budget allocated to regional and municipal governments increased from 17 per cent of total public budget in 2002 to 38 per cent in 2008.

The decentralization process, however, is not accompanied by an effective transfer of technical and managerial capacity. As a result, there is a huge gap between available funds and implementation levels. For example, the execution rate of public investment projects was 50 per cent for regional governments and 43 per cent for municipal governments in 2007. Moreover, almost all PIPs were ostentatious infrastructure projects with limited interventions to improve the quality and availability of social services. Observing the capacity gap for the formulation of the public investment projects oriented for child wellbeing, and the absence of capacity building initiatives to strengthen technical capacity of social sectors especially at sub-national levels, UNICEF in 2007, identified capacity development in this area as a great opportunity. In addition to the other interventions that UNICEF has undertaken to improve the financial allocative efficiency of local governments, the Diploma course was developed as a unique opportunity to influence and leverage significant public sector investments in favour of children and other vulnerable groups.

**STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Between 2007 and 2010, the MEF, USAID/ Project of Decentralization (PRODES) and UNICEF, in alliance with local universities and regional governments implemented the Diploma course. By the end of 2010, the course had been offered 17 times in 10 departments of the country. In 2011, four additional courses are confirmed to be delivered.

**Objectives and contents**

The objective of the course is to develop capacity of government professionals at sub-national levels to formulate public investment projects oriented for improvement of child wellbeing in the most marginalized situations. It consists of four...
modules; (1) Human and Child Development, (2) Identification of the problems, (3) Formulation of public investment projects, and (4) Evaluation of alternative interventions. Each module is divided into three phases, starting with the investigation phase which includes reading assignments and site visits; the second phases consists of a three-day workshop, while the third phase requires applying the acquired knowledge on project formulation. An evaluation of the contents of the Diploma course is conducted together with the partners including the MEF, USAID/PRODES, and local universities on an annual basis in order to incorporate necessary changes in the course content.

The course places strong emphasis on site visits and vulnerability assessments in order to analyze human rights violations among vulnerable and excluded populations. The results of the analysis are reflected in the formulation of public investment projects which are directly oriented towards improvement of the quality of public services targeting children. This reinforces the human rights-based approach (HRBA) in formulation of public investment projects. In addition, at the final stage of the course participants have to defend their projects to specialists from the MEF and the regional governments. The duration of the Diploma course is approximately six months, equivalent to 422 hours. The participants receive the Diploma certified by the MEF only when they achieve 70 per cent of the total qualification, which is a combination of the scoring notes of the four modules and the quality of the public investment projects presented at the defence session.

**Partnership**

UNICEF’s partnership with USAID was critical to the success of the Diploma course. UNICEF initially contacted various institutions which had capacity building programmes for elaboration of public investment projects. Instead of developing a new course, UNICEF identified the capacity building programme developed by USAID/PRODES as a basis for developing curriculum for the Diploma course with a specific focus on children. This increased the cost effectiveness of the initiative by reducing the duplication of work in creating a new curriculum altogether. In 2007 as a result of the alliance with USAID/PRODES, UNICEF was able to influence their existing capacity building programme to include a human development and child wellbeing focus. Further, the new capacity building programme included an exclusive module on human and child development. The initial partnership between UNICEF and the MEF was also established through USAID/PRODES, as they had already had a close relationship.

Another strategic element was the involvement of local universities from the beginning of implementation, which enhanced the attractiveness, credibility, quality and the sustainability of the course. The local universities had roles both in academic and administrative aspects. In terms of the academic aspect, the Diploma course was accredited by the universities and participants of the course receive university diplomas. The university professors that participated played the roles of co-trainers and co-facilitators, with the purpose of transferring the capacity to the university. The universities also managed the administration and logistics for the organization of the face-to-face workshops, with the aim of strengthening their capacity in this aspect as well. As a result, the National Universities of Ucayali and Peruvian Amazon have decided to implement the Diploma course as a part of their post-graduate programmes.

**Funding**

The running cost of a Diploma course is approximately US$35,000. Around 45 participants are included in a course, making the cost per alumni approximately US$780. It is co-financed by UNICEF, regional governments, and through other co-operations such as with USAID and local NGOs. The participants are required to pay a small portion of the fee which varies from US$100 to US$180 per person depending on the location of the course. The fee is feasible for the participants to pay and is symbolic of their commitment to the course. It could be paid in two or three instalments if necessary. For each Diploma course, an executive committee is formed at the local level with participation of a representative from the university, regional government, NGOs and UNICEF. The executive committee defines the contribution of the each institution in the development of the course. It is also in charge of promotion of the Diploma course and later the selection of the participants, as the number of applicants usually exceeds the quota. Preference is given to the professional staff directly in charge of formulation or evaluation of public investment projects.

**PROGRESS AND RESULTS**

Between 2007 and 2010, 608 officials of the sub-national government were trained through the courses and 93 public investment projects were developed in areas such as health, education and child rights protection, amounting to more than US$30 million. All the projects were presented to regional and local governments for their approval and many of the projects have been approved and funded. Quantitative data will become available upon the completion of a follow-up study which is currently being conducted. Technical teams from ten universities were trained on course organization and implementation.

The Ministry recognizes this approach to be effective for the quality of all types of public investments that improves the standard of living of the target population. For this reason, the MEF has certified the Diploma as a recommended course for formulation of public investment projects. The MEF is also involved in dissemination of the course material (such as the manual for organizers, training modules and assignments in Spanish) to the wider public and is looking at scaling up its implementation at the national level.
INNOVATION

The most significant innovative element is the initiative’s high leveraging effect in securing investments for children. As a result of systematic advocacy by UNICEF and civil society actors over the last few years, the government, both at the national and sub-national levels, has made clear commitments to improve child wellbeing, especially in areas of health, nutrition and education. However, child oriented policies have not been adequately matched by required budgets and technical capacity. In parallel, with an increase in government’s income from the mining industry in recent years, additional funds generated have been legally bound to be allocated for public investments. This created an important opportunity to influence the allocation of funds towards improving child wellbeing already prioritized by the government, by creating public investment projects focused on children.

Further, the stringent regulations laid down by Peru’s National System of Public Investment made it difficult to implement public investment projects with the present technical capacity. The continuous rotation of public servants, including as a result of the local elections in 2010, adds to the need for on-going and long term capacity building. Initial evaluation reveals that building capacity in this area has resulted in an increase in the public budget and investments for children. The Diploma course has also obtained the commitment of public officials to undertake social development initiatives for the benefit of children.

Assuming that the trained officials will continue formulating policies and projects, incorporating the HRBA after completing the Diploma course, its impact is even greater in the medium and long term. According to initial evaluation results, several alumni of the course are now placed in influential positions in the government where they are in a better position to leverage investments for children. This finding has surpassed the objectives of the course. For middle income countries like Peru with high levels of disparities and limited capacity to mobilize external resources, it is indispensable that the government – and more so local governments – invest more to meet the needs of the most vulnerable.

The alliance with sub-national governments and local universities made it possible to implement the project through co-financing; for the Diploma course implemented in 2009 the cost covered by UNICEF was 40 per cent, and the rest was financed by the regional governments, universities and other local counterparts. Given the high acknowledge-ment received by the course, in many instances NGOs are beginning to implement and finance the course without UNICEF contributions. This in turn strengthens the local ownership and sustainability which will support scaling up the Diploma course in due course.

Another innovative element is the development of a strong partnership both at national and local levels. At the national level, a strategic alliance was fostered with the MEF through the co-design and co-implementation of the Diploma course. This partnership was crucial in maintaining high standards of the course. The certification of the Ministry received upon completion of the Diploma has added strong value to the course. The partnership with other cooperation agencies such as USAID made it possible to implement the course in four departments in addition to six departments in Amazon and Andean regions prioritized by UNICEF due to their vulnerability in terms of child-related indicators. Further, USAID is rolling out a revised capacity building programme with a child focus in their interventions areas.

POTENTIAL APPLICATION

The MEF is investigating the possibility of scaling up the implementation of the Diploma course nationally. As a part of advocacy, a public event is being organized by the MEF, UNICEF and USAID, where the outcomes of the Diploma course will be shared. The event is also expected to result in the identification of more universities for implementation of the course, as well as other cooperation agencies to share the cost. The Diploma course can be applied in other countries in the region such as Ecuador and Bolivia, as well as Central American Countries since they face common capacity gap issues. These countries have a similar system of formulating public investment projects as Peru, which are regulated by their respective National System of Public Investment.

NEXT STEPS

In order to scale up the implementation of the Diploma course at the national level, strengthening the capacity and number of trainers will be critical. Due to the nature and contents of the Diploma course there are limited numbers of trainers who are able to train on how to effectively incorporate the HRBA into public investment projects. In this regard, UNICEF will organize a training course for trainers together with the MEF and USAID in 2011.

Public dissemination events both at both national and sub-national levels will be undertaken, aiming to involve more universities and cooperation agencies in implementation. Some adjustment to the course contents is envisaged in order to incorporate the focus on result-based budgeting. An additional course on Project Management will be designed and implemented, since some weaknesses have been identified in the implementation of public investment projects targeting child wellbeing. Results from the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the Diploma course are expected to become available by May 2011.
For further information on Lessons Learned and Good Practices, please contact:
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