UN Coherence in Action
Delivering Results for Children

Part of a living series of case studies

UN Coherence in action: Delivering results for children

We won't achieve our ambitious goals for children, or the Sustainable Development Goals more broadly, without working with our sister organizations in the UN. Outlined in this paper are some case studies that we can build on and learn from.

As UNICEF increasingly engages in UN reform, expands its partnerships with sister UN agencies and leverages broader UN processes, greater clarity is emerging on how the rights of all children are best positioned within various collaborations and more importantly within the wider UN mandate for reaching the SDGs for children.

Partnering for results – Coherently

While the previous generation of reform – exemplified by the first generation of Delivering as One pilots – was heavy on process, there is now a stronger push for reforms that are driven by results.

Results that are intersectoral and integrated across the pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

Results that draw on and bring together the comparative strengths of the full UN system – particularly the development and humanitarian pillars, but also the human rights and peace pillars where appropriate;

Results that strengthen the capacity of national governments to progress further on their journey to sustainable development, while at the same time meeting their promise to leave no one behind; and

Results that are maximized by achieving efficiencies in the way we do business, leveraging the efforts of UN partners wherever it makes sense.

Leveraging partnerships – Coherently

Our efforts to work as a system – recognizing and leveraging our collective strengths while celebrating our individual comparative advantages – are the mainstay of partnerships among UN agencies.

We've been gathering stories from UNICEF country offices about how UN Coherence is taking shape in the field and how it serves the purpose of promoting children's rights or placing the 'special concerns' with regards to children at the centre of the development agenda.

The different stories on UN Coherence and UNICEF presented in this publication showcase a variety of achievements such as:

1. the design of the 12th national plan within the context of SDGs in **Bhutan** supported by the United Nations with UNICEF adding value through Data Ecosystems Mapping;

2. the efforts of four UN agencies – International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNICEF – in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** to design and advance an agenda for equity and inclusiveness in one of the remotest cantons in the country with UNICEF leading the communication and advocacy charge;

3. the strategic positioning of nutrition within the **Cote d'Ivoire** national agenda and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) through joint advocacy and efforts of four UN agencies – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF – with each playing its complementary role as per its comparative advantage;

4. the development of the United Nations Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework (UN MSDF), an unprecedented move by UN agencies in the **Eastern Caribbean subregion** where the UNICEF office based in Barbados covers 12 small island countries and is part of two UN multi-country teams;

5. the efforts of the Government in **Ethiopia** together with the UN country team to address the unfinished business of gender inequality within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through the SDGs, with joint programmes by the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women, that promote a global vision for protecting women and children from violence and exploitation;

6. the recognition that vulnerabilities exist not just among Syrian refugee populations but also exist among the host communities in **Jordan** - leading to the Government spearheading a unified, resilience-based programme supported by the United Nations within which UNICEF has ensured that critical aspects of early childhood development and education are well placed;

7. the initiation of a pilot project on fleet management in **Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR)** where the six largest UN agencies are using innovative technology to achieve better efficiencies, reduce the ecological footprint and transportation costs and increase synergy and coordination in business operations;

8. leading on the business operations strategy (BOS), leading the operations, management team (OMT) and also leading one of the three strategic priorities of the UNDAF, UNICEF **Senegal** played a facilitating role in harmonizing agency systems and ensuring that efficiencies were achieved in the attainment of the results envisaged in the UNDAF; and

9. the development of the Operation Plan for One UN in the **Islamic Republic of Pakistan** leading to government recognizing the advisory role of the United Nations – including UNICEF in sectors such as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) – within the larger national development context in providing technical expertise, bringing in best practices and advocating for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

The stories present different aspects of what UN coherence means, different engagements in advancing sustainable development, different relationships with governments and national priorities, different approaches to ensuring equity and inclusiveness and different ways of doing business.

What they all have in common is their focus on transformative collaborations that have had ripple effects and the recognition that no one UN agency can support a government in achieving the SDGs individually nor can UNICEF achieve the fulfillment of the rights of all children on its own.

Creating synergies for success: UN support for an inclusive agenda in Bhutan

The Bhutan national vision

Unique in a world that measures progress by a country's gross domestic product, the Bhutan concept of Gross National Happiness includes not only the same socioeconomic indicators as do most countries, but also measures of good governance, respect for the environment and community vitality. This broad vision aligns almost seamlessly with the inclusive and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Protecting the rights of the most vulnerable populations in the country, five UN agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WFP) are supporting the Royal Government of Bhutan as it prepares its 12th five year national development plan (2018–2023). Special attention is being paid to it being focused, equitable and based on evidence, while at the same time aligned with international commitments and owned by all stakeholders.

UNICEF is a key partner in operationalizing the national plan as a member of the Project Board and the Project Task Force, while leading the outcome on 12th Plan and SDGs Communications and Advocacy, as well as co-leading the outcome on Data Ecosystems Mapping.

Bhutan readying for a take off

Bhutan is on the cusp of graduating from its status as a least developed country to a lower middle-income country, undergoing major demographic changes with rapid urbanization, socioeconomic development and population growth. With a population of nearly 800,000 people including an estimated 280,000 children, the country's human development index in 2015 – measuring a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living – placed Bhutan in the medium development category.

The country has achieved or surpassed targets within five Millennium Development Goals, most notably halving extreme poverty, reaching gender parity in primary education and significantly reducing maternal mortality rates. Yet significant disparities exist in Bhutan among different socioeconomic groups, between rural and urban and between western and eastern regions in child mortality, nutritional status, and access to delivery by skilled birth attendants.

The 2007 poverty index in Bhutan estimated that about 23 per cent or close to one fourth of the population was poor.

Rising to the challenge of fulfilling its commitment to all its people by 2012, Bhutan effectively halved the poverty rate to 12 per cent and nearly ended extreme poverty with less than 3 per cent of the people being subsistence poor.

The Government of Bhutan is committed to further reducing poverty to 5 per cent by 2018 in line with the SDG principle of leaving no one behind.

A coherent approach sets a strong foundation for the future of Bhutan

As the forerunner to the 2016 project, six UN agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WFP, WHO,) worked as One UN starting in 2008 at both the programme and operations levels to advance their relevance to the Government and their effectiveness and efficiency in delivering planned results.

With the One Programme document, they maximized their contributions with enhanced coordination, coherence and programmatic synergies.

And they spoke with one voice in consistently communicating key messages and advocating around key issues.

Enhanced integrated support by the UN System for SDG implementation

Targets achieved or surpassed within Millennium Development Goals

EXTREME POVERTY HALVED

GENDER PARITY IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

REDUCED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES

Disparities in Bhutan among different socioeconomic groups

CHILD MORTALITY

NUTRITIONAL STATUS

SKILLED BIRTH ATTENDANTS

The 2016 UN project that supports Bhutan in developing its 12th Five Year Plan

UNICEF, along with four other UN agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, WFP), now provides strategic and systematic support to the Government as it develops its 12th five year development plan (FYP), addressing key data gaps and integrating the SDGs.

Those UN agencies form an oversight inter-agency team (for efficient interactions and minimized transaction costs) and a project board (for overall decision-making). The board is chaired by the Director of the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC) and includes the UN Resident Coordinator, component managers (GNHC, National Statistics Bureau (NSB), UNDP, UNICEF) as well as heads of the five agencies.

The inclusive and results-oriented 12th Five Year Plan is managed by the GNHC and maps progress to advance Gross National Happiness, while also measuring impact on the SDGs.

A strengthened data ecosystem, managed by NSB, UNDP and UNICEF, will support evidence-based decision making to ensure that no one is left behind. The mapping of the data ecosystem in Bhutan includes statistical capacity at the national and subnational levels, legal and policy frameworks on open data entry points and obstacles for multi-stakeholder engagement, as well as monitoring and assessing alignment of the plan with the SDGs.

UNICEF is leading on the communications and advocacy strategy around the 12th FYP and the SDGs to ensure that all stakeholders – including policy makers, public, media and civil society – understand and own the upcoming five year plan. And what's more, they see how the 12th FYP links with the SDGs, and how they might contribute to the overall goal of Gross National Happiness.

The UN in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Reaching the least served first

Canton 10 is a remote region with a profile that makes it a candidate for intervention. Even a little action helps to initiate quick change in this part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is also the most underdeveloped region in the country, with high levels of unemployment and poverty and a population that includes more than 12,000 returnees and nearly 1,500 internally displaced individuals across eight municipalities.

With their parents, many children in Canton 10 live in poverty, without access to basic services.

"Could there be more important work than helping children who are marginalized and vulnerable feel a little more secure and feel like they are part of a community that cares for them and is willing to invest in their development?" says Geeta Narayan, UNICEF Representative, in describing why the project was something for the agency to take on.

Applying human security concepts in Canton 10

The commitment to human security is a commitment that all people will live: free from fear – of war, persecution, physical harassment; free from want – with access to good nutrition, education, jobs, natural resources; and free from indignity – assured of justice and equal rights.

UN agencies – IOM, UNDP, UNHCR and UNICEF – came together to implement a project in Canton 10, coordinated by UNDP. Designed to advance an agenda for equity and inclusiveness for the population there, the project developed and sustained subnational capacity to deliver basic services such as early childhood development, legal aid, health care, and employment and income generation. All of these services are integral to support progress towards sustainable development and Agenda 2030 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The project aimed to reduce community, personal and economic insecurities and to strengthen community solidarity and equality amongst all populations in the Canton. It focused on building local capacities; putting in place integrated services in communities; promoting peace and violence prevention in schools and communities; and supporting sustainable income generation and employment.

The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security – in partnership with the Government of Canton 10, the authorities of the eight municipalities of the Canton, the Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the municipal Centres for Social Welfare, health centres and local civil society organizations – supported the project with $2.5 million over a three-year period.

Results-based approach to ensuring human security

The approach was holistic and aimed at serving communities that were vulnerable and lacking in resources, opportunities and the means to live and enjoy

THE BENEFICIARIES

10,654 persons in 3,030 households gained **access to clean water**

385 households of 1,487 persons increased their average **monthly income** by about 50 per cent

1,413 queries by 671 beneficiaries were answered through **free legal aid** with 1,051 actions taken

Red Cross mobile teams provided 5,500 various services of aid and care to over 5,000 beneficiaries from 1,623 households

More than 3,000 children benefitted from services of the **Early Childhood Development program**

freedom without fear, want or indignity. The project did this by undertaking some very specific things such as distributing equipment and materials for developing agriculture, cattle breeding and small businesses and providing free legal services to vulnerable people. The Red Cross provided free mobile services and aid and care to the elderly, those with disabilities and children, and organized training for local authorities and civil society organizations.

UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina complemented these efforts by leading the work on education and early childhood development. The project created free, integrated early childhood development services at local

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Shared values, norms and standards

The commitment to human security is a commitment that all people will live:

FREE FROM FEAR

FREE FROM WANT

FREE FROM INDIGNITY

Schools in Canton 10

SAFER & MORE STIMULATING

FREE OF CHARGE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

300 TEACHING HOURS

levels, with a focus on the most vulnerable and socially excluded. In addition, it worked at the primary and secondary school levels to increase the knowledge of students, parents and school staff about how to deal with violence and how to prevent it. Thus, the project aimed at fulfilling current and immediate needs for learning and, at the same time, paving the ground for future stability and sustainability of the project's results.

Sustainable results

As the project ended in 2016, the impact on human security and capacity at the subnational level was visible. The Cantonal administration established the Cantonal Development Agency to take the gains forward and make them more sustainable. There are now mobile social service teams in four rural municipalities, and plans for expanding the infrastructure and water distribution network that had not existed before. With financing from the project, the municipalities prepared community safety plans and risk-reduction measures such as traffic calming and water chlorination.

Schools in Canton 10 are now safer and more stimulating places for a child's development. Early childhood services are functioning well in all municipalities reaching all children. Free of charge preschool education of 300 teaching hours now exists in all municipalities.

Commitment to the future development of the Canton has been achieved at the political level. The project leveraged the direct budgetary contribution from the Canton 10 Government through annual budgetary allocations for the new services, direct co-financing of project activities, and in-kind contributions.

Today, all the new permanent public services are integrated in public annual budgets to continue to provide services. The project leveraged annual budgetary allocations for the new services secured beyond project duration.

An evaluation conducted in 2016 highlighted the sustainability of the project's achievements as highly likely and concluded that there are strong prospects for the benefits to be sustained and even enhanced in the coming years.

UNICEF within a more coherent UN system

The experience of working with other UN agencies enabled UNICEF to consolidate its results in the Canton, developing subnational capacity and establishing local systems in the areas of social inclusion, health, education and child protection in deprived municipalities in Canton 10, thereby advancing the equity agenda for children.

Together with IOM, UNDP, UNHCR and government partners, and through strong joint advocacy, UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina mobilized multiple stakeholders at municipal, cantonal and state levels to deliver better quality services for children. By taking an inclusive and participatory approach to the work in Canton 10, UNICEF and other UN agencies were able to ensure the project's impact and sustainability across many sectors (for example, education, health, employment) as well as different levels of government (municipal, cantonal).

One of the challenges in working across four agencies is that each agency has a somewhat different operational approach and these needed to be reconciled. Through continuous dialogue and coordination, such differences were resolved in a respectful and timely manner.

Working with multiple agencies has given UNICEF the opportunity to leverage resources for children within the UN system and with local actors.

"Working together on this and other joint projects has also been an ongoing learning experience for us in Bosnia and Herzegovina and often a subject of reflection and adjustments by the United Nations country team," says the UNICEF Representative. "The project showcased the solid partnerships UNICEF has at all levels of the country's complex administrative structure, giving visibility to both UNICEF technical expertise and the issues of children."

The UN system in Cote d'Ivoire: Nurturing collaborations, ensuring the right to nutrition

Turning points in partnerships

In 2013, the Government of Cote d'Ivoire joined with 58 other countries in the Scaling-up Nutrition (SUN) movement, a global effort to end malnutrition in all its forms and protect the universal right to food and nutrition. This was a turning point for nutrition stakeholders in Cote d'Ivoire, a country of 23 million people, where some 1 million children children under five years of age (30 per cent of children in that age group) were stunted, typically below height and body mass for their age group, due to the effects of chronic malnutrition. The rates reach as high as 40 per cent in the poorest areas of the country.

"It took sitting together and talking it through," says Anne-Sophie Le Dain, the UNICEF Nutrition Manager. "We had worked with the Government and with each other over the years. But this coherence charge now meant something different."

UN agencies FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO and their partners placed the needs and rights of children to nutrition at the forefront of their successful advocacy with the national government to embrace the SUN movement and to push a national nutrition agenda forward. Commitment at the highest levels of leadership resulted in the establishment of a National Nutrition Council. The four agencies worked together, at national and decentralized levels, around both programmes and operations to improve nutrition for the country's children.

Because of national efforts since then, the prevalence of stunting in children under age five moved from 29.8 per cent in 2012 to 21.6 per cent in 2016.

But despite this movement and the positive statistical trend, one out of four children under five years of age in Cote d'Ivoire still show the impaired growth and development that is classified as 'stunted'. According to WHO, stunting in early life, especially in the first 1,000 days until the age of two years, can have adverse functional consequences as the child gets older, including poor cognition and educational performance, low adult wages, lost productivity and an increased risk of nutrition-related chronic diseases in adult life.

By 2016, as the Government and the UN system in the country made new promises around the 2030 development agenda, and as the problem of stunting continued to threaten the health and development of Ivorian children, the agencies reviewed the strategies and provisions to reduce stunting and reach the Sustainable Development Goals for nutrition.

With 18 resident agencies and 3 non-resident agencies in Cote d'Ivoire, and a national commitment for nutrition, this was a perfect country for testing how a dedicated partnership for nutrition among UN agencies would play out in real situations.

In short, Cote d'Ivoire was about to demonstrate how to create and nurture a successful collaboration that ensures the rights of every child to grow healthy and strong, while doing so effectively, efficiently and in line with national priorities.

Enhance national ownership and leadership

Nutrition central to the country's 2017–2020 UNDAF

ALIGNED WITH THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND THE SDG FRAMEWORK

UN Agencies in support of country nutrition efforts

UNICEF AS THE NETWORK LEAD

UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire has provided technical support for the development of the Strategic Plan and its costing, now successfully integrated in the National Development Plan 2016–2020. The plan defines how the national Government will work across sectors to ensure the scaling up of specific and sensitive nutrition interventions. In September 2016, the Government organized a round table of technical and financial partners with the support of UNICEF and partners such as the African Development Bank and World Bank, to mobilize the necessary resources to implement this promising plan.

From transactional to transformative collaborations

The landscape for nutrition in Cote d'Ivoire has been evolving and becoming transformative. By bringing people together in a shared space for action, ensuring a coherent policy and legal framework, aligning actions around a common results framework, and financing tracking and resource mobilization, the scene was becoming vibrant and energetic.

Together, the four agencies successfully advocated for the strategic positioning of nutrition within the country's National Development Plan 2016–2020, which in turn provided the vision for the strategic results of the UNDAF 2017–2020 as it aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals framework.

Upstream, the collaboration provided financial and technical support for the elaboration of the national nutritional strategy and national protocol for the management of acute malnutrition. And a joint programme was drafted for the implementation of the national nutritional strategy.

Downstream, the partnership provided financial and technical support for the scaling up of essential nutrition interventions, with WFP for the management of acute malnutrition and with WHO on the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative.

As a result, the UN Resident Coordinator established the UN Network for SUN in Cote d'Ivoire, with six agencies (FIDA and UNESCO joined the effort in 2016) and designated UNICEF as the network lead. Already, there is a mature architecture at the country level, where the network will consolidate progress to date, further strengthening the harmonization, coordination and effectiveness of the UN agencies' activities in support of country nutrition efforts, while aligning with and articulating UN nutrition efforts to those of national governments, other SUN networks and nutrition stakeholders at global and country levels.

To come next year is a joint programme in the north of the country to support the implementation of the national nutrition strategy.

Tipping points in achieving coherence

As the collaboration started, it was neither an easy, one-off discussion about coherence, nor a simple management exercise about relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. The key, according to Christina de Bruin, UNICEF deputy representative and Ms. Le Dain, the nutrition manager, was the willingness to: sit together and conceptualize what each agency's mandate looks like on the ground; change mindsets and attitudes; and identify duplications and synergies.

"Here's the thing," says Ms. de Bruin. "When one starts from a child-centered perspective, one can see that an integrated approach to the services that the child might need is truly what must be done. And when one layers on the accountability to protect the integrated rights of all children, one can see that no one agency, or sector can do that alone."

UN COHERENCE IN ACTION

effectiveness (improved results)

relevance (alignment with national priorities)

efficiency (reduced duplication and transactions costs)

DELIVERING RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

The UN in Senegal: Developing prototypes for greater business efficiencies, locally and globally

The UN in Eastern Caribbean: Many islands, one Vision 2030

The UN system in Cote d'Ivoire: Nurturing collaborations, ensuring the right to nutrition

The UN in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Reaching the least served first

PRINCIPLES OF UN PARTNERSHIPS

National ownership and leadership

ACHIEVED THROUGH

Common monitoring and evaluation mechanism

KEY ISSUE OF REFORM

Efficiencies and increased quality

PRINCIPLES OF UN PARTNERSHIPS

Shared values, norms and standards
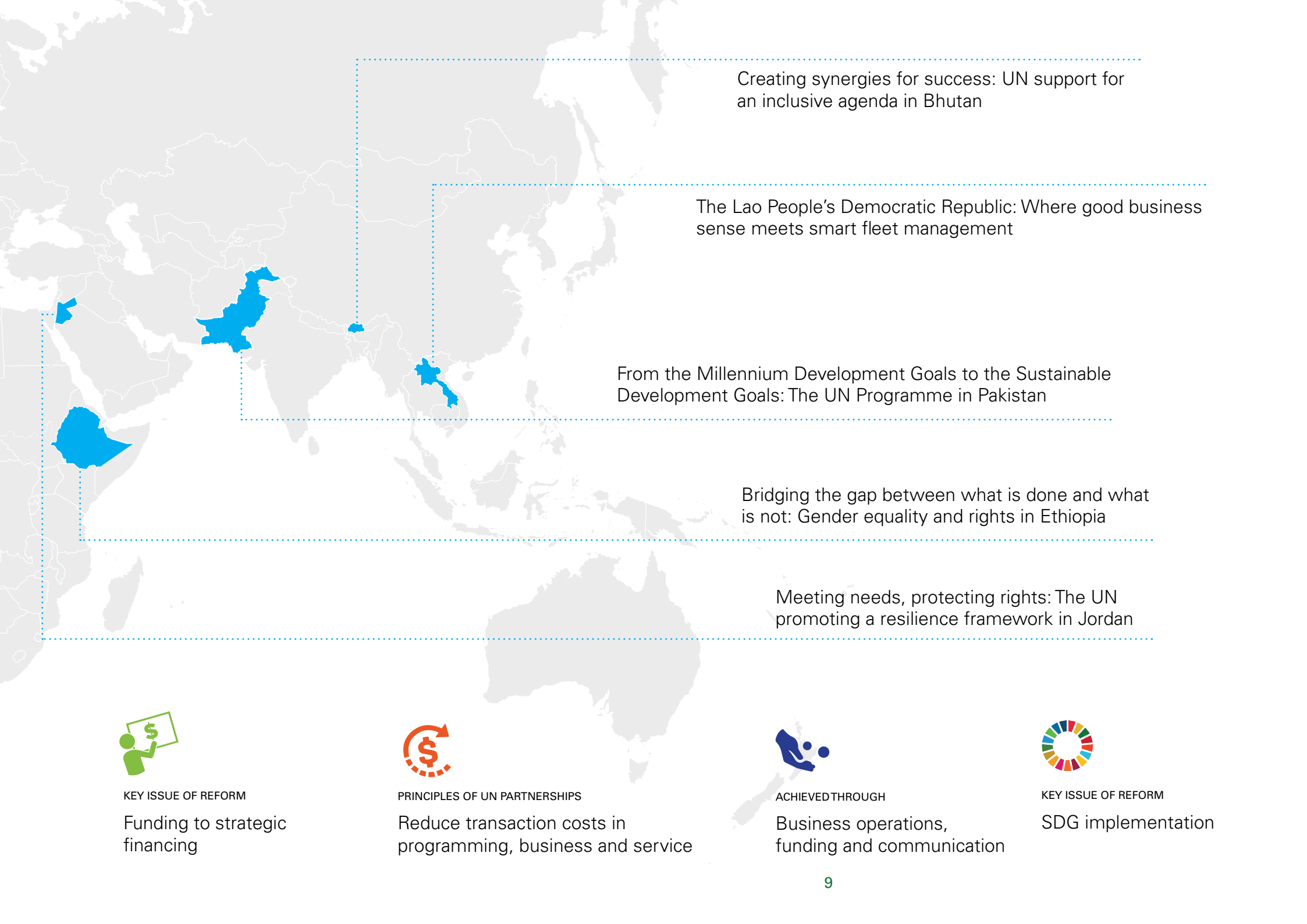
Creating synergies for success: UN support for an inclusive agenda in Bhutan

The Lao People's Democratic Republic: Where good business sense meets smart fleet management

From the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: The UN Programme in Pakistan

Bridging the gap between what is done and what is not: Gender equality and rights in Ethiopia

Meeting needs, protecting rights: The UN promoting a resilience framework in Jordan

KEY ISSUE OF REFORM

Funding to strategic financing

PRINCIPLES OF UN PARTNERSHIPS

Reduce transaction costs in programming, business and service

ACHIEVED THROUGH

Business operations, funding and communication

KEY ISSUE OF REFORM

SDG implementation

The UN in Eastern Caribbean: Many islands, one Vision 2030

Two languages. Four currencies. Twelve countries. This is the Eastern Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The UNICEF multi-country programme in this multi-island, sparsely-resourced office constantly watches for partnerships and collaboration to optimize its presence to achieve sustainable change for children. The office is ever ready and willing to work together with other UN agencies and a variety of partners in order to accelerate development for children.

Each of the countries and territories across the small island, middle-income, developing states that UNICEF covers has its own government, history, culture and economy. Each has a head of state and a governing body. Many of the small island countries are themselves made up of small islands. Trinidad and Tobago and St. Kitts and Nevis have two governing bodies. There are four currencies and two languages, English and Creole, in play.

> "Whatever is required for a country office, is multiplied by 12 for us."
> - Khin-Sandi Lwin, *the UNICEF Representative in the Eastern Caribbean Area*

The UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area (ECA) partners with several regional organizations, relates to two United Nations country teams and until last year, worked within two United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). It did 12 situational analyses, and submitted 12 different request letters for the Executive Board. When responding to UNICEF headquarters' request that every country office obtain a commitment letter for A Promise Renewed from their ministers of health, UNICEF ECA had to get eight, one for each independent state.

Risks and opportunities for children and adolescents

Many of the countries in the eastern Caribbean area are in debt, vulnerable to external shocks and natural disasters, and have low absorptive capacity. While progress for children has been made in child health, nutrition and primary education, there remains unfinished business in child protection, early childhood development, with particular challenges for adolescents.

Emerging issues related to the climate change that confronts small island states and disparities and inequalities buried within broader indicators measured at the national level increase the complexity of an already complicated situation. This challenges the agencies of the UN system to make good on the goal of reaching the marginalized and most vulnerable populations in new and innovative ways as they facilitate countries to advance towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

United Nations agencies working together

Seven UN agencies work for the development of these island countries – ILO, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNECLAC, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women – each with a representational footprint in the area, each with its own mandate and mission, all bringing their strengths to advancing inclusive and sustainable development.

To add another level of complexity, the agencies are based in different countries, covered by five Resident Coordinators/UN country teams. ECLAC Caribbean and ILO are in Trinidad; UNFPA and UNESCO in Jamaica; ITU, PAHO and UN Women in Barbados. Together they had five UNDAFs to match UNICEF ECA's two. UNICEF Jamaica and UNICEF Guyana and Suriname are also part of this UN System Network.

These agencies have embraced the imperative and necessity of working in partnerships. Given the multi-country context and the fact that different agencies have a remit for a different range of countries, programming is closely aligned with key regional bodies. These include the Caribbean Community, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency and the Caribbean Development Bank.

Reduce transaction costs in programming, business and service

UNICEF ready to accelerate development for children

United Nations Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework (UN MSDF) goals include becoming:

SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT

SAFE, COHESIVE AND JUST

INCLUSIVE, EQUITABLE AND PROSPEROUS

HEALTHY

United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework: A single, coherent sustainable framework

Following consultations across the subregion with governments and other stakeholders, UNICEF ECA along with sister agencies developed the unprecedented United Nations Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework (UN MSDF). Also unprecedented, the UN MSDF sets out the common goals – developed in consultation with all the countries and partners involved – for the agencies: a sustainable and resilient Caribbean; a safe, cohesive and just Caribbean; an inclusive, equitable and prosperous Caribbean; and a healthy Caribbean.

This is in line with the call in the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) 2016 for the United Nations to provide direct support and service delivery, particularly in least developed countries, countries in special situations (such as landlocked developing countries), small island developing states, and countries affected by conflict or at more risk to suffer the impact of climate change and disasters.

UN MSDF serves to integrate the work of all the agencies, allows each to draw on the comparative advantage of the others, and increases the over-all coherence and efficiency of the UN system. It does even more for Member States. UN MSDF provides governments with easier access to the expertise and experience of the UN System and enhances regional initiatives and cross-collaboration. What's more, it increases the possibilities for both the UN agencies and government partners of leveraging resources and decreasing transaction costs.

Within UNICEF, the country offices in Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, and Suriname work closely with UNICEF ECA with common country programme results to engage as a 'Caribbean team.' Different offices have taken on a shared responsibility in leading or participating in the coordination

"It's early days yet to judge if this over-arching framework will streamline internal coordination for the UN system, or further complicate it if more coordination mechanisms get added," says Representative Khin-Sandi Lwin. "But the idea is about finding new and creative ways to work together so that we as development partners are not pulling these small, themselves relatively under-resourced, countries in different directions."

groups, which operate in addition to the respective country-based mechanisms.

Offices and agencies are meeting the challenges of learning new ways of reaching the most vulnerable, of ensuring equity, of advancing sustainable development. As they deliver results to national governments and local communities across the area, they are building a stronger UN, and strengthening its ability to speak for the universal human rights agenda, especially for the most vulnerable.

Good beginnings in this direction

The 2016 multi-country annual report states that comprehensive, equity-based situational analyses were completed for nine countries/territories in the subregion that identified children migrating with their parents (and those 'left-behind'), out-of-school children (mainly boys and those who fall out of the education, health and child-protection systems), pregnant teens and young mothers, and children from single-parent households as the most vulnerable.

"No one ever said UN Coherence would be easy," says Muriel Mafico, the Deputy Representative in the UNICEF ECA office. "But now, with each successful step towards delivering as one in the countries and territories that comprise the United Nations in the Eastern Caribbean Area, no one is saying it can't be done. It's our collective responsibility."

Bridging the gap between what is done and what is not: Gender equality and rights in Ethiopia

As agencies of the UN system take on the responsibilities of greater coherence across their progammes and operations, greater relevance to the priorities of their national governments, and greater effectiveness and efficiency in delivering on their individual mandates, they also continue to focus on and emphasize the greatest threats to sustainable development. By bringing in evidence on the status of gender equality, human rights and other development goals and supporting national governments with knowledge and expertise to enable the fulfillment of the rights of their populations, the United Nations work in Ethiopia is catalytic and critical.

There are 91.7 million people in Ethiopia, of whom 47,573,067 are children between the ages of 5 and 17 years, and 14,225,062 are children under age five. The country has met almost all the Millennium Development Goals it set for itself. It halved the proportion of its people living below the poverty line, significantly reduced the prevalence of hunger and undernourishment, reduced under-five mortality by two thirds, expanded access to education, narrowed the enrollment gap between boys and girls and significantly reduced the incidence of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

Almost all the development goals, but not quite

Most notably, Ethiopia has lagged in its commitments to promote gender equality and empower women (MDG 3), and improve maternal health (MDG 5).

Quite simply put, the needs and rights of the majority of mothers, women and girls continue to remain unfulfilled, leaving many still vulnerable to violence, exploitation, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage and discrimination.

A joint message from the executive directors of UNFPA and UNICEF on the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, 6 February 2017, states that:

"It irreparably damages girls' bodies, inflicting excruciating pain. It causes extreme emotional trauma that can last a lifetime. It increases the risk of deadly complications during pregnancy, labor and childbirth, endangering both mother and child. It robs girls of their autonomy and violates their human rights. It reflects the low status of girls and women and reinforces gender inequality, fueling intergenerational cycles of discrimination and harm. It is female genital mutilation."

Could there be a greater threat to sustainable development than the gender inequality and violence against women that runs through so much of the society in Ethiopia?

Equality and empowerment principles woven into the planning fabric

Ethiopia ranks 129th out of 188 countries in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index, indicating significant gender inequality throughout the country.

The unfinished business of meeting MDG 3 and MDG 5 is the focus on one of the five pillars of the Government's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II). Through aligning with GTP II, the UNDAF aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals. And it is that alignment that will now support the fulfillment of the goals within the 2030 Agenda in Ethiopia.

Within this framework and commitment, UNICEF Ethiopia promotes its global vision to create a protective environment, where girls and boys are free from violence and exploitation, where laws and practices minimize children's vulnerability and risk factors, and where children themselves are equipped to build their own resilience.

Shared values, norms and standards

Joint Programme in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

500 WOMEN RECEIVED LEADERSHIP TRAINING

23,495 WOMEN RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIPS

3,907 WOMEN BENEFITTED FROM THE REVOLVING FUND AND ASSOCIATED CAPACITY BUILDING TRAININGS

The Government of Ethiopia has committed to end by 2025:

CHILD MARRIAGE   FGM/C

Protecting the rights of women and girls together

Ethiopia is one of the 17 countries where the Joint Programme for the Accelerated Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation has been implemented since 2008. One of the first of its kind and due to end in 2017, the Joint Programme brought UNFPA and UNICEF together from the outset, at both the global and field levels, and is one of the standing examples of joint planning and action that has influenced legislation and public involvement on this issue.

UNICEF Ethiopia brought expertise in social and behavioral change to the Joint Programme, complemented by the technical guidance in sexual and reproductive health provided by UNFPA. Faith-based and civil society organizations were engaged in policy and community mobilization by both organizations.

As a result, in 2016, more than 2,900 communities, representing more than 8.4 million people living in countries where the Joint Programme had been implemented, declared their commitment to abandon the practice of female genital mutilation.

Also in roughly the same time period (2011 through 2016), six UN agencies (ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women) engaged in one of three flagship programmes for the UN Country Team in Ethiopia, the Joint Programme in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

The results: 3,907 women (vs the target of 5,400) benefitted from the revolving fund and associated capacity building trainings, 23,495 women (vs target of 22,800) received scholarships to complete their studies, and 500 women in the Amhara region received leadership training, including a greater awareness of gender equality in budgeting and programming.

In relation to violence, one of the notable achievements of the Joint Programme was the establishment and strengthening of one-stop centres in Addis Ababa, Adama and Dire Dawa cities. The centres provide comprehensive services to survivors of violence and harmful traditional practices.

Perhaps the most far-reaching result of the Joint Programme was the increase in community awareness of the issue of violence against women and positive action against it.

The Government of Ethiopia has committed to end child marriage and FGM/C by 2025. It will take a multisectoral approach including: incorporating relevant indicators in the National Plan and the National Data Collection Mechanisms to measure the situation of FGM/C and child, early and forced marriages; establishing a clear bench mark; engaging different actors to enhance the coordination of the National Alliance to End Child Marriage and FGM/C; putting in place a strong, accountable mechanism for effective law enforcement; and increasing financial resources by 10 per cent for addressing this issue.

"Violence against women, including harmful traditional practices, is widespread and highly tolerated by the society. For instance, the latest DHS (2016) showed that 63 per cent of women themselves believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife for one reason or another," explains Joshua Kakaire-Kibedi of the Programme, Planning and Monitoring unit in UNICEF Ethiopia. "Collaborative efforts must be intensified to bring zero tolerance to violence against women and girls by building the agencies of women and girls, involving men and boys as agents of change as well as putting appropriate response services in place."

Meeting needs, protecting rights: The UN promoting a resilience framework in Jordan

Jordan is a lower middle-income country with a population of 9.5 million, with 63 per cent of the population under 30 years of age, and 40.2 per cent children.

The number of people living in Jordan has swelled since 2011. An estimated 2.5 million Syrians have crossed into the country since that year and nearly 1.3 million remained there at the end of 2016, with 660,000 registered as refugees as of August 2017.

The influx into Jordan of Syrian refugees, following earlier refugees from Iraq and Palestine, now threatens to undo the progress that the Kingdom had made in its development, as the sheer numbers of refugees and their pressing needs strain the provision of public services, with women and children being the most affected.

As the crisis continued, Jordan moved to a more comprehensive, resilience-based framework in 2015 – with a response plan (the JRP) that was supported by the Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis (JRPSC) – bringing together the Government's and partners' relatively shorter timespan in response to refugees and its longer timespan in response to development challenges.

When UNDAF dropped the 'D'

To support the Jordanian expansion in national focus and priorities to embrace those the King called his "Syrian brethren," the United Nations also shifted and adapted its traditional working arrangements to ensure UN Coherence in the new context. In 2014, the country team developed the United Nations Assistance Framework (UNAF) for 2015–2017, to supersede the UN Development Framework that had previously been aligned to the Jordanian National Agenda (2006–2015) and Executive Development Program (2011–2013).

Like the Jordanian Government, the work of the 14 resident UN agencies in the country increasingly emphasizes unified resilience programming for both the Syrians in Jordan and those Jordanian institutions, services, communities, services and individuals most affected by the crisis.

At the core of the Jordanian response to the Syrian crisis is the remarkable awareness that vulnerabilities exist – not only within the refugees, but also within Jordanians, their institutions and services – and that all involved need support in building their resilience capacity.

Strengthening resilience, building social cohesion

Throughout 2016, UNICEF in Jordan increasingly focused on the most vulnerable children based on their needs rather than their status and nationality, enabling the promotion of social cohesion across various communities.

"While the hospitality of the Government of Jordan to people seeking refuge from neighboring countries is unequalled, basic services like education, health and water are being stretched beyond their existing capacities," explains the UNICEF Jordan Representative, Robert Jenkins, "and children are being directly impacted with rise in school drop outs, child labor and early marriage."

The Government of Jordan, with UNICEF support, expanded access to education for refugee children, increasing double-shifted schools from 98 to 198, and launching the catch-up programme – a certified education pathway for children (aged 9–12 years) previously ineligible for formal education. Following concerted efforts, 126,127 boys and girls enrolled in the formal education system for the 2016/17 academic year.

Children benefitted from psychosocial support, informal education and life-skills training through Makani Centres, which provided an integrated platform that incorporated a mobile approach to reach children in informal tented settlements. The more than 200 UNICEF-supported Makani

Enhance national ownership and leadership

Focusing on:

CHILD PROTECTION

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Promoting Coherence in Case Management Services

INTER-AGENCY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

INTER-AGENCY REFERRAL PATHWAYS

CASE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

TRAININGS AND CAMPAIGNS FOR AND WITH FRONTLINE WORKERS

centres throughout the country provided various services to vulnerable children, irrespective of their nationalities. In addition, vulnerable Syrian children in host communities received a cash grant of $28 each month to cover child-specific basic needs.

Promoting coherence in case management services

Working with partners, UNICEF Jordan streamlined the provision of specialized and multisectoral case management services both in the camps in Jordan and in the country's host communities. This response coordinated the provision of (or referral to) appropriate services for girls and boys, including unaccompanied and separated children and other at-risk children.

The child protection sub-working group was co-chaired by UNHCR and UNICEF while the gender-based violence sub-working group was co-chaired by UNFPA and UNHCR.

An inter-agency programme, jointly funded by UNFPA, UNHCR, and UNICEF, with oversight and guidance provided by an inter-agency project management committee that included IRC, SCI, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and the National Council for Family Affairs was established. Focusing on child protection and gender-based violence, the committee prepared and adopted inter-agency standard operating procedures, created inter-agency referral pathways, established case management standards and conducted trainings and campaigns for and with frontline workers.

This collaborative work among agencies is in line with the provisions in the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). The UNAF in Jordan and the joint work undertaken by the UN agencies is in line with the resolution acknowledging the role that sustainable development plays in mitigating conflict, crisis and risk as it calls for cooperation and complementarity between development activities and humanitarian action.

Through this framework both humanitarian and development agencies work collaboratively on undertaking joint risk analysis and needs assessments and adopting practical responses within multi-year timeframes. The agencies offer complementary support for advocacy, technical assistance and strategic planning (among other supports) to benefit children and women in all settings.

"An inclusive resilience framework is critical for UN agencies and partners to effectively support the Government in ensuring that all children in Jordan get a fair chance in life to reach their full potential, irrespective of their background, gender, abilities or status, as stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child,"
- Robert Jenkins, *UNICEF Representative*

Providing Education, beyond borders

98 TO 198
DOUBLE-SHIFTED
SCHOOLS

126,127 SYRIAN BOYS AND
GIRLS ENROLLED FOR THE
2016/17 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Lao People's Democratic Republic: Where good business sense meets smart fleet management

Consider this possible scenario as it plays out in any country where the United Nations has a presence.

The Government calls for a multisectoral meeting including all UN agencies present in Lao PDR to discuss the latest situation analysis, which shows the impact of climate change on the health and well-being of the country's pregnant women, newborns, infants in their first 1,000 days and children under age five.

The meeting is set for 1 p.m. and is expected to last an hour. Six cars drive up. Each car has one driver and one UN health officer inside. The health officer gets out and goes into the meeting. The planned one hour meeting extends to 90 minutes. In the best-case scenario, the car motors have been off for the whole time and the cars' air conditioners have not been running. The health officers eventually come back to their cars and drivers. The cars drive back to the UN House, displaying an impressive auto parade.

What seems wrong with that picture?

When business practices directly impact on sustaining the environment

Keeping that image of the auto parade in mind, now consider the following from the 2016 Progress Report on the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Lao PDR.

"Lao PDR continued to experience the effects of climate change, with rural communities most affected… (It) has direct and indirect impacts on biological, psychological and social health of individuals and communities. Women, children and rural communities are most affected.

The adverse effects of climate change, specifically the prolonged drought and the floods, limit people's access to clean water and intake of nutritional food, and access to social services and education.

Moving together: Fleet sharing in Lao PDR, a smart move by the UN

Obviously, UN auto parades are not the sole cause or even a primary cause of climate change at the country level. But surely, any action that decreases fuel emissions (by decreasing cars driven per country each week) would make a contribution to environmental sustainability.

In addition, such an action would enhance efficiencies in operations by reducing costs and improving quality of services to the internal clientele thereby contributing to an effective and smart journey towards programme milestones.

"We have a rough estimate that in the country, the UN runs its operations with about 90 cars from 11 different agencies with vehicles in Vientiane Capital and others in provinces for projects," reports Doudou Luemba, UNICEF Laos Operations Manager. "Different agencies used to book cars in different ways: some by phone, some by email, and some by a whiteboard at the hallway. That's lots of time spent, lots of money spent."

In September 2016, the six largest UN agencies in the country, (FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO), with support from the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, rolled out a fleet-sharing initiative that was to pilot better coordination of how agency cars are used, reduce transportation costs and inefficiencies and be more green.

This initiative was part of a global effort where UNICEF staff partnered with UNDP and UNFPA personnel to pilot a UN fleet-sharing initiative aimed at reducing transportation costs and inefficiencies among the three agencies. The pilot project, Moving Together (MoTo), was rolled out in five countries — the Lao People's Democratic Republic,

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Reduce transaction costs in programming, business and service

By the target year of **2021**, Lao PDR aims to have reduced:

COST BY
$161,000

KILOMETERS DRIVEN BY
10 PER CENT

FUEL COSTS BY
14 PER CENT

CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS BY
28 TONS

EQUIVALENT OF PLANTING
1,278 TREES!

Lesotho, Mongolia, Pakistan and Zambia — with a combined pool of 124 vehicles.

By opting into this pilot, the UN country team was also supporting those agencies that were smaller with no vehicles on the ground; they received the same services as the other agencies that were contributing vehicles to the pool.

"Let's go and let's do it."

The challenge in Laos, as it will be in other country offices, is to change staff attitudes and practices. Staff would need to plan ahead better, anticipate needs, optimize resources by connecting to meetings virtually, book cars online and share rides when necessary and useful. Apart from reducing the ecological footprint of the United Nations, fleet sharing builds the image of a coherent organization, one that manages the resources and assets at its disposal in a responsible manner along with treating nature and the environment with empathy and care.

However, changing mindsets is not always an easy thing to do.

Harmonized fleet management also allows the operations team to plan, reduce the number of cars needed, coordinate when and where cars are dispatched and attend to glitches and breakdowns systematically. The teams are also able to troubleshoot and provide alternative solutions. When necessary, there is built-in flexibility to deploy vehicles at short notice, including through a long-term agreement with external service providers for rented

"In the first seven months, the fleet-sharing initiative has not only contributed to reducing the number of cars in the UN system, it has also cut the fuel consumption of participating cars by over a third," reports Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator in Laos. "In times of reform, it will thus be important to scale up such initiatives to the global level, to realize economies of scale and make fleet sharing even better value for money."

vehicles, which decreases the need for any agency to buy and maintain additional cars.

Supporting UN country teams as they deliver on commitments made through the UNDAF, the UNDG business operating strategy (BOS) takes a strategic, results-oriented approach to planning, management and implementation of harmonized business practices.

"It was difficult for the first six months," says Mr. Myo-Zin Nyunt, UNICEF Laos Acting Representative. "But, with the support of the Country Management Team, we explained it to the staff members who were all willing to give it a try. We encouraged them: 'Let's go, and let's do it'."

"The fleet-sharing initiative has not only reduced the costs of our fleet, it has also decreased our carbon footprint (to date, the equivalent of planting 450 trees), increased our accountability, enhanced the safety of our staff, and brought the UN team closer together."
- Ms. Sarah Gordon-Gibson, *WFP Representative and Chair of UN Operations Management Team in the Laos*

Fleet sharing initiative to:

COORDINATE HOW UN CARS ARE USED

BE GREEN

REDUCE TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND INEFFICIENCIES

From the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: The UN Programme in Pakistan

More than a decade ago, Pakistan became the first and the largest of the eight countries in the Delivering as One UN pilot. In 2008, the country launched its first One UN Programme I (OP I, 2008–2012); in 2013, the country launched its second One UN Programme II (OP II, 2013–2017); and it is about to take on its third One UN Programme III (OP lll, 2018–2022).

OP I had paved the way for increased coordination among the 18 UN agencies in Pakistan, improved ways of working together across sister agencies and increased alignment with government priorities at the federal, provincial and district levels. OP II had been more results orientated, with an increased emphasis on results-based monitoring and reporting and a sharper focus on accountability for a more efficient use of resources. There was greater attention to capacity development at all levels, and management structures were rationalized with a move away from joint programmes to joint programming.

Now, OP III, building on what has been learned in previous years, will bring a sharpened focus to the partnership between the UN system and the Government to Deliver as One to achieve the SDGs, with a renewed and ever stronger commitment to protecting the rights of all its people. Prioritizing the most disadvantaged who live lives burdened by multidimensional poverty, the principle of 'leaving no one behind' will be the cornerstone of UN work going forward. For UNICEF Pakistan, this means prioritizing those children facing the most deprivations.

Over the long years that the United Nations has been in Pakistan, it has served as a trusted and impartial advisor to government at all levels, a fair and inclusive partner and a welcoming convener of all stakeholders. It is recognized for its ability to bring to the country international best practices, expertise in capacity building and technical assistance (especially in data ecosystems) and strong, unrelenting advocacy for the rights of all people, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. As an advocacy voice for promoting equity and child rights, UNICEF Pakistan has been constant and persuasive throughout.

The UNSDF in Pakistan – Aligning Pakistan's OP III with the SDGs

In October 2015, Pakistan was one of the first countries in the world to adopt the SDGs as its own National Development Goals. In 2016, the National Assembly unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

There was much to do. After being buffeted by natural disasters and crises over the previous years, Pakistan faced the unfinished business of the MDGs. As of 2015, Pakistan was on track to achieve the targets of 9 indicators (and in fact had achieved the MDG 7 target of access to improved sanitation); progress on 24 indicators was off track.

In support of the Government's commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs, and as part of the UN in Pakistan, UNICEF Pakistan helped facilitate national and provincial consultations on SDG 4 (education) and SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation (WASH)). In 2016 the country office worked with government, civil society and sister UN agencies to ensure that child rights for the most vulnerable remained central to the sustainable development agenda, with support for meetings and planning on SDG 2 (nutrition), SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

The results of these consultations are evident in the UNSDF priorities that reflect the needs of Pakistan and the comparative advantage of the UN: economic growth, decent work, health and WASH, nutrition, food security, resilience, education and learning, gender equality and rights, governance, and social protection.

Common monitoring and evaluation mechanism

One UN Programme promotes:

RESULTS-BASED MONITORING AND REPORTING

A SHARPER FOCUS ON ACCOUNTABILITY

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Results achieved through:

PARTNERSHIPS

MULTISECTORAL PROGRAMMING

"With the integrated nature of the SDGs, there is no way one sector's programming can meet any one goal alone and with the expectations that UN agencies will engage in more joint programming within a vibrant UN system in Pakistan, we are confident that together we will make a significant contribution to not only the achievement of SDGs but also to equitable results for children."
- Janette Shaheen Hussain, *Chief of Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting for UNICEF Pakistan*

In addition to these ten result areas, other areas of particular relevance to the country include youth and adolescents, population trends, urbanization, data, migration, culture and volunteerism.

Further alignment between national goals, the SDGs and the UN in Pakistan can be seen in the commitment made in OP III to human rights based approaches, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

UNICEF Pakistan within One UN: An active participant and partner

UNICEF Pakistan has been a steady and purposeful partner within the UN system promoting coherence in these collaborations.

It co-chaired the Programme Management Team with UN Women until 2016. As the chair of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Group, UNICEF Pakistan supported the Resident Coordinator's Office in the Common Country Assessment and development of One Programme III and the setting of clear measurable results aligned with SDGs and other national development goals such as Vision 2025. It also provided technical assistance to both the Mid Term Review and the evaluability assessment of OP II.

UNICEF Pakistan co-chaired the UN Operations Management Team (OMT) for several years with UNDP until voluntarily stepping down in March 2016. Under their joint leadership the UN system had developed a Business Operations Strategy (BOS) to support Delivering as One Strategic Priority Areas. The UNICEF country office was appointed to Chair the OMT working group on Business Continuity Planning; and for the first time in its history the UN system in Pakistan now has a common business continuity plan.

UNICEF Pakistan retained leadership of the One UN Human Resources Working Group, achieving cost savings through the joint recruitment web portal and talent management system that saw an increase in job postings and applications.

Towards an effective transition from MDGs to SDGs

The Parliamentary SDGs Secretariat and UNICEF Pakistan share and work on common objectives to promote the welfare of children and women in Pakistan. To strengthen this mutual partnership, a Letter of Agreement with a joint workplan was signed in March 2017 between the Secretariat and the Pakistan Country Office. This partnership will help to strengthen the oversight role of parliamentarians through evidence-based policy making and stronger accountability to achieve the SDGs and facilitate an even stronger role of parliamentarians to improve the lives of children and women in Pakistan.

The One UN approach in Pakistan has demonstrated the effectiveness of multisectoral programming, which may be even more relevant when programming for the SDGs.

Promoting the welfare of children and women

The UN in Senegal: Developing prototypes for greater business efficiencies, locally and globally

What do these headlines have in common?

FROM UNFPA

Nutrition Intervention and UNFPA partner to improve women and adolescent girls' health

Investing in adolescent health, education, could bring tenfold economic benefit

FROM UNICEF

Breaking the silence on gender-based violence in schools

In Senegal, innovative vaccine campaign reaches remote communities

FROM WFP

25 African governments to attend global nutrition forum to strengthen school meals

School meals at risk for 1.3 million children in West and Central Africa

Behind every headline is a story. Behind every story is a child of Senegal. Standing beside every child of Senegal is UNICEF, committed to protecting the child's right to live and grow in health, working within a UN country programme that includes 28 UN agencies, all under the same UN Development Framework.

Harmonizing programmes, creating efficiencies across operations, advancing sustainable development

As in most countries, partnerships among UN agencies in Senegal are fluid, coming together in different configurations around different thematic areas, opportunities and commitments under UNDAF, with different funding on different cycles and timetables.

Supporting that Framework are the business services essential to the UN country programme – procurement, human resources, information and communication technologies, logistics and facility services including common premises – as it delivers on the commitments of the UN agencies to that Senegalese child.

Further, there is frequent and targeted joint advocacy among the UN agencies in Senegal for increasing awareness about the SDGs – centering them within national development plans and strategies – among decision makers and the public. This in turn links strongly to issues specific to children and women, such as the Demographic Dividend; the importance of the 1000 days; ending child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting; and addressing gender-based violence.

All UN agencies in the country come together in a broader group of technical and financial partners (G50) to have a common voice in dialogue with the Government, thus ensuring alignment of the work of the partners vis-à-vis the national priorities.

Additionally, as part of the G50, UNICEF Senegal has participated actively in advocating and arriving at a consensus in establishing harmonized DSA and transport rates and other considerations for implementing partners, which are being used by all G50 members in coordination with the respective ministries.

"The implementation and monitoring of the UNDAF and formulation of annual workplans has offered a special opportunity for the Government to strengthen its engagement and coordination role both globally and within the different sectors. This is where UN Coherence has become more visible not only to the Government but also to other partners."
- Laylee Moshiri, *UNICEF Senegal Representative and Chair of the UNCT Operations Management Team*

Enhanced efficiencies through business operations

Business services essential to the UN country programme

 PROCUREMENT

 HUMAN RESOURCES

 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

 LOGISTICS

 FACILITY SERVICES

Business operations strategy initiated to:

 REDUCE TRANSACTION COSTS

 TRACK AND REPORT ON BUSINESS PROCESSES

A domino effect on business operations

And then there's BOS, a business operations strategy that was initiated to complement the UNDAF with its package of common services to reduce transaction costs by avoiding duplication of the development effort at the country level and to enhance quality of services by facilitating access to tested practices in other countries.

Flexible and scalable to local needs, BOS is a tool for enhancing the ability of the Operations Management Team (OMT) operating as one to meet its responsibility to track and report on business processes (addressing where they are redundant) and ensuring that UNCTs do a regular and strategic review of operations.

BOS started in Senegal in 2017 and the UNICEF Representative, as chair of the Operations Management Team, was selected as the logical leader of the process. And lead she did from the start, building ownership of the strategy with each agency or group of agencies given responsibility over one of the streams.

The BOS team organized itself into task teams with clear timelines and deliverables. Finding the right place for the strategic interplay of the OMT and Programme groups was important to ensure that the OMT was adequately addressing the needs of the UNDAF from the outset.

Involving the monitoring and evaluation focal point at the UN Coordination Office was useful in the formulation of a results-based BOS workplan with appropriate monitoring indicators that clearly measured the contribution the BOS would have in the effective delivery of results for the UNDAF.

The UNICEF Senegal Country Office hosted all the planning meetings. Same place, same day, same time. The team members worked intensely and even had some fun while they were at it. When one major agency did not readily come on board, with time and with proof of the work produced by the task teams, they eventually joined in full force bringing in five people. There was regular reporting to the UN country team on the team's progress, the emerging challenges and the next steps that were being planned.

Leading on BOS, leading the OMT and also leading one of the three strategic priorities of the UNDAF, covering four of the eight outcome areas, UNICEF Senegal has played a facilitating role in harmonizing agency systems and ensuring that efficiencies are achieved eventually in the attainment of the results envisaged in the UNDAF.

Contributing to a robust BOS inventory at the global level

UNICEF Senegal, using its experience in leading the BOS in its country, was invited to contribute to the development of a global strategy by the UNICEF Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC). The Centre has assumed a proactive approach to providing global support, guidance, capacity building and facilitation for this initiative across the organization.

One of the key goals of the global initiative is to create a robust BOS inventory status and maturity model, by country, for reporting on progress made by UNICEF against each business area. A second key goal: Firmly anchor the country level BOS discussion in measurable benefits, including cost reduction, efficiency gains, risk reduction, better quality and improved programme effectiveness.

"What is important in all of this is showing the Government and other partners that this is how we work and should be working as One UN and that we are strong because of what we can bring to the table collectively."
- Laylee Moshiri, *UNICEF Senegal Representative and Chair of the UNCT Operations Management Team*

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