

## Algeria

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### Executive Summary

Following the solid progress made in 2014, UNICEF's work in Algeria, in partnership with national authorities and civil society partners, continued to achieve results for Algerian children and mothers in 2015.

A major milestone revolved around the elaboration and Government endorsement of a multi-year maternal mortality reduction acceleration plan. Structured through an analytical framework produced by national health experts around major causes of maternal mortality, the plan offers a structured way forward to prevent avoidable deaths, and pave the way towards a significant reduction in mothers' deaths throughout the country. The first operational strategy of the plan was the institution of a systematic internal audit mechanism to review each death, with a view to better understand where the health system could have acted more effectively.

Much progress was equally generated around the elaboration of Algeria's first national multi-sectoral Early Childhood Development Strategy. Following the excellent work of participating Ministry representatives from Education, Health, Social Welfare, Religious Affairs and others, the core substance of the strategy is now complete. The critical last steps focus on scenario planning and costing options for such strategy. This will allow all ministries accountable for provision of early childhood services to clearly anticipate the costs associated with each distinct policy option in terms of infrastructure requirements, human resources, and technical equipment to provide their services. This will then complete the strategy which planned to be presented formally to the Government for endorsement by mid-2016, providing much needed clarity of mandate, results-focused plans and associated budgets for early childhood care and development in Algeria.

This progress around early childhood development, inclusive of ambitious Government plans around generalized access to preparatory schooling for all five year olds in the country, plus more progressive steps for a similar universalisation of pre-schooling, will be the cornerstone of Algeria's efforts to improve the quality and efficiency of the education system as a whole. One key result supported by UNICEF in this area was the completion of a comprehensive training course for 500 school inspectors around the appropriate use of a pedagogical tool to optimize children's learning achievements from the competency approach-structured curriculum. A core team of trainers was subsequently identified within the group, and the subsequent Ministry of Education (MEN) internal training of all primary school teachers has commenced.

Building on the extraordinary response prompted by the #EndViolence campaign in 2014, UNICEF and partners pursued their advocacy efforts through a successful mass media campaign supported by posters and TV and radio spots. All national media outlets provided national outreach to the campaign through free broadcasting. This in turn boosted a range of local and national initiatives around the need to strengthen both the awareness around risks of violence for children and the urgency of strengthening the prevention and response systems against such risks at all levels. The Ministry of Solidarity and Welfare seized upon this momentum to initiate work around the establishment of an effective multisector referral system

around violence against children. Designed to provide an effective multi-sectoral response, the referral system will require strengthened cooperation and coordination systems across various ministries involved in such protection measures, including Ministries of Education, Health, Solidarity, Interior, and Justice. Using experience from other countries, a model was designed and will be tested in early 2016 before its rollout across the country.

Anticipated progress proved challenging in some programme areas during the year. One of such shortfalls related to the relatively slow progress around neonatal mortality reduction. Enthused by the conceptual clarity of the maternal mortality reduction plan, Ministry of Health authorities requested that a similar approach be used to elaborate a neonatal mortality accelerated reduction plan. However, the identification of appropriate and available Francophone expertise knowledgeable in the use of an equity framework in support to the neonatal mortality analysis proved to be a significant challenge. This will be a major focus of work for 2016.

Despite the successful and very high level signature of a tripartite MoU between Algeria, Mexico and UNICEF around strengthened expertise around monitoring and evaluation of social policies, progress remained relatively slow around development of policy options and supporting methodologies for making non-contributory social transfer schemes more effective.

## Humanitarian Assistance

In 1975, as a consequence of the conflict in Western Sahara, thousands of people fled towards south-western Algeria to settle in five refugee camps set up by the Algerian Government near the city of Tindouf. Since 1986, UN agencies have supported the Algerian Government in responding to what is now the second most protracted refugee crisis worldwide. 40 years after the outbreak of the conflict, 125,000 vulnerable refugees are still fully relying on international aid for their survival and their socio-economic development, as the harsh desert environment strongly limits opportunities for self-reliance. Of the population living in the five refugee camps, 70 to 80 per cent are women and children. Every year, UNICEF covers some of their most critical needs in terms of health and education, with the aim to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality and to enable each Saharawi child to have access to quality education.

UNICEF's emergency health care support programme in the refugee camps revolves around two axes: immunization and maternal and neonatal health. As of 2015, UNICEF remains the main vaccination provider in the Saharawi refugee camps, allowing all under five children to benefit from an Expanded Programme of Immunization against diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, meningitis, and other infectious diseases that represent the main causes of child mortality. In 2015, neonatal and maternal health care continued to be improved by UNICEF, through the last cycle of professional training on pregnancy and safe delivery provided to all professional midwives, which included theoretical and on-the-job training in some of the busiest and best-run maternity departments across Algeria.

With regard to education, in 2015, 32,000 primary school children as well as 7,000 preschool aged children were able to pursue their academic year with appropriate schooling supplies provided by UNICEF. Furthermore, UNICEF finalised an educational sectoral assessment which identified gaps and provides recommendations to address key weaknesses of the Saharawi education system in the future. The assessment found that the quality of, and access to, education, the condition of educational infrastructure, and the capacity for effective educational planning are aspects that need further improvement. Teacher's training session focusing on teaching child-centred methods will be provided to the Saharawi education personnel in 2016.

2015 also saw an unprecedented sudden vulnerability increase across the Saharawi refugee camps, when heavy rains flooded the camps for over 10 days in late October. The floods damaged completely or partially over 11,500 family dwellings, 30 per cent of the existing educational and health infrastructures, and 60 per cent of the corresponding supplies. UNICEF promptly activated an emergency response focused on women and children, by chartering a 50 metric ton payload of emergency infrastructure tents (large tents of between 42-72m<sup>2</sup>), schooling supplies, and large emergency health kits covering the needs of up to 10,000 vulnerable people for three months. Within three weeks from the disaster, 6,500 children were enabled to resume schooling and 30,000 refugees benefitted from emergency primary health care within temporary learning spaces and health care centres set-up and equipped by UNICEF. As a mid-term emergency response to the floods, UNICEF planned the light rehabilitation of some of the most damaged educational and health infrastructures, including a centre for children with disabilities, which will be undertaken in 2016.

To fund the emergency response, UNICEF launched different fundraising initiatives, including a joint emergency appeal with other UN agencies, and a visit of its two Goodwill Ambassadors to the Saharawi refugee camps to ensure visibility. Against the appeal over US\$1.6 million was received from Italy, the United States, along with emergency funds from the UN's Central Emergency Revolving Fund managed by the Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, plus internal UNICEF resources.

The flood emergency severely worsened the living conditions of the Saharawi refugee population, but did bring visibility to a largely forgotten refugee crisis. However, once the initial momentum fades, donor fatigue and diminishing humanitarian budgets are likely to continue to be a major challenge in providing future humanitarian assistance for Saharawi. It is therefore essential that rehabilitation efforts are carried out with attention to sustainability and resilience.

## Summary Notes and Acronyms

BCP - Business Continuity Plan  
CMT – Country Management Team  
CNES – Conseil National Economique et Social (National Economic and Social Council)  
CONEVAL – National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy  
CPD – Country Programme Document  
CPAP – Country Programme Action Plan  
CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child  
DCT – Direct Cash Transfer  
DRP - Disaster Recovery Plan  
ECD – Early Childhood Development  
EPRI - Economic Policy Research Institute  
GSS – Global Staff Survey  
GSSC – Global Support Service Centre  
HACT- Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers  
ICT – Information and Communication Technology  
MEN –Ministere de l'Education Nationale (National Education Ministry)  
MICS – Multiple Indicators Clusters Survey  
MODA – Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis  
MoH –Ministry of Health-  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization  
OOSCI - Out of School Children Initiative  
OR – Other Resources

OR-E – Other Resources-Emergency  
RR – Regular Resources  
SWOT - Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats

## Capacity Development

As found in various surveys, the knowledge and practices around infant and child rearing varies widely between wealth quintiles in Algeria, and is also strongly influenced by mothers' education achievements levels. One of the manifestations has been the low exclusive breastfeeding for under six months (seven per cent in 2006, 25 per cent in 2012) and unchanging stunting rates at around 11 per cent.

UNICEF focused dedicated efforts in the past two years to provide families with enhanced knowledge around appropriate child rearing practices and to increase their understanding of when to reach out to health or other child-focused services.

The means used to build such knowledge and capacity involved development of a community-focused, simple but practical, communication toolkit designed to reflect appropriate child rearing practices in behaviours practices. The tool, developed around succinct messages supporting powerful images, was then transmitted at decentralized levels by community-based Mourchidates across the country. The Mourchidates are public servants, employed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and initially trained to impart religious knowledge and act as a complement to the Imams, specifically towards women.

Following two years of work with the Mourchidates in communicating messages, UNICEF has reached over 75 per cent of the Mourchidates corps with dedicated training around the tool, and already more than 65 per cent of them confirm using it routinely at community level. Considering the success of the training and impact of the toolkit, the Algerian Ministry of Health (MoH) asked that a similar training module be provided to a first batch of 200 midwives to boost community knowledge around these important child rearing practices. A similar request was also made by Saharawi local health authorities.

## Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy

Whilst Algeria produces a large range of statistics across social sectors, available data are often not disaggregated by region, gender or income quintiles. As such, the "disparity mapping package" developed by UNICEF Algeria largely based on MICS4 data set filled a major gap in information for social researchers and public decision-makers.

A comprehensive MICS dissemination plan was subsequently produced, aiming to provide both MICS results and disparity mappings to youth, academia, policy leaders and civil society across the country to support advocacy and influence decision-making.

A key advantage of the production of comparable data sets such as MICS across several years was also highlighted through the production by UNICEF Algeria of a "Progress for Children" document. In this report, social trends related to children's education, health, protection and social inclusion showed the most significant progress and gaps over almost a decade, and were also used to track progress against MDGs' achievements.

Beyond the above dissemination efforts, the MICS data sets provided crucial for the development of UNICEF Algeria programme of cooperation 2016-2020. An extensive analysis of the data supported the identification of main bottlenecks hindering progress for children and

informed the planning and prioritization for the new country programme. In addition, the data informed the national Integrated Early Childhood Development Strategy, and will be used for the national analysis of multiple deprivations affecting children and offering a clear analytical framework for public investment adjustment for national and regional decision makers.

### **External Communication and Public Advocacy**

Building on the strong buy-in around the #EndViolence campaign in 2014, UNICEF and partners worked hard for the campaign to reach all corners of the Algerian society, to raise further the issues of violence against children, and stimulate social demand for stronger protection practices and institutional mechanisms for children at risk.

Significant renewed impetus was achieved with all national media partners airing free of charge powerful posters and TV and radio spots, which are still being viewed on YouTube. .

The campaign led to the inception of essential multi-sectoral work around the development of an effective referral system for children at risk of violence, aiming to define the duties and responsibilities of all service providers- institutional or individual – in preventing, reporting or responding to such risks.

Another important piece of public advocacy work stemmed from the production of a Child Rights booklet in cooperation with the Ministry of Solidarity and Welfare. Structured around key child rights, the booklet aims to provide a clear vision of what national legal framework is relation to each right, and the responsibilities and duties associated with national institutions delivering protection services.

Important communication efforts also revolved around the urgency of the vulnerability and needs of Western Sahara children living in refugee camps near the city of Tindouf after the massive floods which hit the camps in October 2015 and resulted in significant damages and losses in family dwelling as well as public infrastructure, notably schools and health centres.

### **South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

Following the UNICEF-supported mission to Mexico in late 2014, the Algerian National Economic and Social Council (CNES) formalized in May 2015 a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding with the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) supported by UNICEF technical expertise.

Signed in the presence of both countries' Foreign Ministers, this agreement will pave the way for much strengthened cooperation around the progressive creation of an evaluation culture in Algeria, supported by CONEVAL's tremendous experience in the domain.

It also aims to create new tools and national Algerian capacity around more systematic and systemic social equity analysis , through the creation of a social equity cell within the CNES in 2016, progressively branching out into a full-fledged National Equity Observatory over the coming years. In 2016, the CNES equity cell will produce a full analysis of deprivations affecting children in terms of access to quality services across the country - education, health, water, and protection - and will aim to provide a detailed visual mapping of where such deprivations overlap at decentralized level. The information will allow national and regional decision-makers to adjust social policy investments accordingly.

## Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation

As in previous years UNICEF Algeria interventions were guided by a human rights-based approach. In particular, the approach was at the centre of the development of the new Country Programme for 2016-2020. The objective of the new country programme is to support efforts by the Algerian Government in allowing all Algerian children to fully realise their rights to survival, development, protection and participation, and to provide them with inclusive, high quality social services while supporting them in reaching their full potential. Thus, specific actions promoting human development, inclusion of emerging vulnerable groups of children such as migrant children, issues related to disparities and niches of inequalities were at the centre of the policy dialogue between UNICEF and main institutional partners throughout the year. They are reflected in the Country Programme Document (CPD) as well as the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) which details programmatic implementation strategies for the 2016-2020 period.

Following up on a recommendation from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Ministry of National Solidarity requested UNICEF to lead a study around allocation and utilization of institutional budget to child protection services at central and decentralized levels. The objective was to gain a clearer understanding of the financial resources effectively allocated to cover children's protection needs through the Ministry of National Solidarity across the country. The findings of the study will be crucial for decision makers to efficiently re-orient public budgets towards children's priority needs and to more effectively address children vulnerabilities.

UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Education in organizing a "parliamentary day" giving voice and space to around 200 children to discuss and debate their rights with parliamentarians, along with several senior representatives of various Government ministries.

In addition, an attractive visual support to increase knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was developed. The guide provides social workers, teachers and public servants working with children a snapshot of children's rights, including the alignment of the Algerian Law with the CRC articles, and their own mission and duties against each right.

## Gender Mainstreaming and Equality

In 2015 UNICEF pursued its efforts towards gender equality, making sure that each intervention or opportunity was used to further leveraging gender issues as appropriate, including in humanitarian settings, policy dialogue, studies and data collection.

Notably, the gender component of the Out of School Children study clearly indicated that in Algeria the risk of dropping out from middle school is higher for boys (21 per cent) than for girls (nine per cent). Based on this gender data, qualitative micro-surveys determining the exact profile of these children will focus on understanding the underlying causes why more young boys are dropping out.

The same pattern was found within the routine statistical data collection around child protection issues. It appears that the phenomenon of violence touched more boys than girls: out of the 8,000 children who experienced a form of violence (physical or sexual) nearly 5,000 were boys. This trend is also confirmed with regard to juvenile justice, with 96 per cent of the 7,000 children in conflict with the law being boys.

The new MICS4 data launched in June 2015 created a significant media response, often focusing on gender disparities and raising concerns around specific gender issues such as the

disproportionate school dropout of adolescent boys.

However, whilst some affecting factors were clearly determined by societal-factors and practices such as keeping girls at home more than boys, others will need to be further investigated to sharpen and better comprehend the predominance of a specific gender issue.

The Ministry of Youth also requested UNICEF to provide technical assistance in conceptualizing a model youth centre which would provide services responding to youth expectations and needs and increased youth participation. The request took note of the fact that young girls are currently less likely than their male counterparts to access youth services, and requested UNICEF to reflect around ways to mitigate such access disparities.

## Effective Leadership

Following recent audit recommendations, UNICEF Algeria built on past to focus on three specific areas to enhance management and efficiency:

1) The first related to identification of risks potentially impacting the office itself, the staff, or the effective implementation of programmes, and a strengthening of its risk management practices. A twice yearly review of the “risk library” was systematized, and action plans developed to prioritise mitigation against such threats. A regular review of its business continuity plan was also undertaken. The risk management culture was also strengthened around the identification of potentially risks around financially important programmatic interventions, as well the mitigating measures around such risks.

2) The second key area of effective management engagement focused around partners’ practices around financial management and reporting. Adhering to a range of new global guidelines relating to the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT), UNICEF Algeria undertook training all partners around these new tools and strengthening their skills in reporting on the impact of their activities against planned results and partnership objectives.

3) The last focus area related to the overall performance monitoring systems and culture. UNICEF Algeria developed an interactive performance management system looking at both progress against annual management and programme priorities, and the frequency of monitoring missions and their qualitative and quantitative findings.

These three main focus areas were monitored and discussed through regular governance meeting of the Country Management Team (CMT) as well as through the Joint Consultative Committee meetings of staff association representatives and management.

## Financial Resources Management

Manager’s dashboard alerts, budget implementation status and progress, and Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) liquidation status are permanent agenda items of the CMT, and are thoroughly reviewed to ensure continuous quality and effective programme implementation.

As part of the audit response plan, a peer review mission was organized to provide an external perspective on the adequacy of UNICEF Algeria’s practices on financial resources management and to review work processes with a view of streamlining them further to improve efficiency and performance. Revised work processes were presented and explained to staff to ensure common understanding and ownership.

UNICEF Algeria was able to utilise 100 per cent of Institutional Budget, 100 per cent of allocated Regular Resources, 100 per cent of Other Resources (OR), 99 per cent of OR-Emergency within the original life of funds.

Due to the significant flooding which affected the Western Sahara refugee camps near Tindouf in November, UNICEF Algeria received US\$1.6 million in emergency funding in the last six weeks of the year. As absorption of such amounts was impossible to achieve before the year financial closure, this lowered the overall ORE utilization rate to 18 per cent for 2015. All of these funds will be effectively utilized in 2016.

DCTs were under rigorous management by sections, with close monitoring by the CMT. No outstanding DCT of more than nine months was registered.

Bank accounts reconciliations were done according to set deadline with no error, and year-end closure activities were completed on time.

### **Fund-raising and Donor Relations**

UNICEF Algeria benefitted in 2015 from its past efforts around donor relations building, as well as quality assurance of donor reporting.

Over the 2012-2015 Country Programme, such efforts led the UNICEF Algeria team to raise its financial ceiling related to the OR ceiling on two occasions, due to the success in external fundraising.

UNICEF was able to raise a further US\$1.06 million in Other Resources in 2015 despite the fact that 2015 was the last year of the country programme and involved heavy planning processes for the UN system and UNICEF's next cooperation programme covering 2016-2020. By the end of 2015, UNICEF Algeria had been able to raise approximately US\$4.56 million, against US\$2.5 million initially planned in the 2012-2014 CPD (noting there was a one year extension of the country programme through 2015), with an absorption rate of over 90 per cent of the final approved OR ceiling.

In addition, UNICEF Algeria was able to raise a further US\$2.38 million of emergency resources in 2015 alone, in support to its interventions in favour of vulnerable Western Sahara refugee children located in camps near Tindouf.

A large part of such success was through the proactive and transparent interactions with all resource partners, as well as internal systems to ensure the quality of donor reporting.

A key challenge was the relative inflexibility of the OR, which was earmarked against set programmes. UNICEF has developed a comprehensive fundraising strategy for the new 2016-2020 country programme, which aims to widen the funding partners' base, from both the bilateral donors and the private sector.

### **Evaluation**

UNICEF Algeria invested in important efforts on programme monitoring and evaluation and in the implementation of the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, which in 2015 focused on a few important studies and evaluations, notably:

- 1) A summative evaluation of results obtained against set project objectives around "health

supported activities towards mother and child health in the refugees Saharawi camps of Tindouf". Designed to strengthen UNICEF accountability to the resource partners (the UNICEF French National Committee) in evaluating actual impact against funding provided, the evaluation will both assess final project results including a SWOT analysis of the planned interventions and inform, through its recommendations, the development of a new project proposal. The evaluation will be available the in first trimester of 2016.

2) A post-training assessment of competencies acquired by the religious leaders (Mourchidates) around mother and child rearing practices including inter-personal communication skills. The results of the evaluation, conducted in March 2015, involving over 360 Murchidates nationwide (74 per cent of the total number of Murchidates in-country) confirmed that 93 per cent had acquired new knowledge around appropriate child rearing practices through UNICEF-provided training and tools. These new knowledge and practices were further communicated and taught to 66 per cent of the families in contact with them.

3) An end-programme cycle evaluation of UNICEF's capacity to influence public policies in Algeria for country programme 2012-2015. The results of this evaluation were meant to inform the CPAP, while providing recommendations to anticipate or mitigate risks within the new programme of cooperation. Unfortunately, the evaluation had to be discontinued due to significant bottlenecks which prevented its completion in time to inform the country programme development. Key elements of the planned evaluation will nevertheless be carried out in 2016.

## Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

Cost savings was looked at carefully by UNICEF Algeria and all possible efforts were made to implement efficiency measures.

A cost saving initiative plan introduced in 2011 continued to be implemented, allowing substantial savings by negotiating preferred rates and signing long term agreements in many areas, including internet connection, telecommunication, transport, hotel usage, catering, office furniture, security services, and cleaning. Since 2011, the office has been able to maintain fixed prices with the most important providers - security, cleaning, and internet connection.

UNICEF has been sharing premises with UNAIDS since 2010 (cost sharing for rent and related expenses is 16.9 per cent) and with UNESCO up to October 2015 (US\$1300 per month).

## Supply Management

The downward trend in supply component seen in 2014 (- 53 per cent) was reversed in 2015, mainly due to the emergency response to the Sahrawi floods in October 2015. The increase was 58 per cent from 2014 to 2015, with the 2015 breakdown as follows:

UNICEF Algeria 2015	Value in US\$		
	Freight and Goods	Services	TOTAL
Operations	197,201	157,938	335,139
Programme	0	445,702	445,702
Tindouf	96,919	10,705	107,624
Tindouf emergency	457,577	0	457,577
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>751,697</b>	<b>614,345</b>	<b>1,366,042</b>

The overall supply component of the country programme represents 47 per cent of the total expenditures. While support to Tindouf, with a total of US\$565,202 represented the bulk of expenditure, UNICEF Algeria also invested US\$132,000 to reinforce security measures (see section on security for staff and premises).

The above table clearly reflects the way the Algerian Government is engaging with UNICEF, prioritising the provision of technical expertise and capacity building support, rather than supplies that the country is fully capable of providing. For the non-emergency programming, 81 per cent of the supply component was used for institutional contracting. In addition to institutional contracts, UNICEF Algeria also utilised US\$334,000 for the recruitment of experts and consultants in 2015.

The office does not have a controlled warehouse and supplies are handed over to implementing partners upon receipt.

### Security for Staff and Premises

The office was allocated additional security funds for a total amount of US\$119,526, which was used to enhance the safety and security of staff and premises. A number of security measures were established in 2015, including:

- Guard house for security guards;
- Reinforcement of anti-climb measures on front wall;
- Establishment of an emergency exit;
- Introduction of a progressive lock down system of reinforced doors creating a bunker/safe room system;
- Upgrade of the lighting system pertinent to access control;
- Changing the surveillance and access control system and the walkthrough metal detector;
- Replacement of the security door;
- Replacement of the biometric devices.

The office is 100 per cent compliant with the Minimum Operating Security Standards.

### Human Resources

A comprehensive gap analysis was conducted to assess the adequacy of the current office structure and profile, and adjustments were proposed and endorsed at the UNICEF regional Programme and Budget Review held in November 2015.

The office continued to encourage an on-going feedback and coaching process where both supervisors and supervisees had an active role in sustaining successful and constructive performance discussions. This was further strengthened when the office was identified to be part of the closed pilot for testing the organisation's new Performance Management System ACHIEVE. It was a unique opportunity for local staff to complete their 2015 performance planning online.

UNICEF Algeria management and the Staff Association had preliminary discussions around the findings of the 2014 Global Staff Survey and agreed on deploying all efforts to ensure that the findings of the survey are taken seriously and that time is devoted to understand the concerns raised by staff. A thorough review of the results, facilitated by an external consultant that acted as an impartial mediator, was done in a very participatory manner, involving all staff members.

The UNICEF Algeria team took stock of important elements highlighted by the recent staff survey and developed an Office Improvement Plan, with concrete actions and realistic timeframes to address issues jointly identified as priorities.

A renewed focus around teamwork and cohesive team spirit was one of the office priorities in the Algeria 2015 Annual Management Plan. A long-awaited staff retreat was organized in October, aimed at strengthening inter-personal relationship, developing team spirit and improving communication and working skills of UNICEF Algeria staff.

A learning plan including individual and group trainings was established, based on office priorities and skill gaps.

### Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) function is governed by the CMT which ensures adequate ICT capacity resources and support services to promote and provide solutions to facilitate and improve programme delivery through secured, reliable, efficient and cost-effective systems and solutions.

The extensive use of the Office 365 features (especially Share-Point, sky-drive and outlook) strongly contributed to improve remote collaboration using both professional and personal devices, and improved cooperation within UNICEF, with partners, experts and UN agencies.

The Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) and Business Continuity Plan (BCP) ICT components were updated twice in 2015 (March and October 2015) and risks related to the discontinuity of business were significantly reduced since the transition to the Office 365 cloud, which resulted in lightening both BCP and DRP. Signed copies are shared with the Regional Office. ICT projects are implemented within given timeline. ICT physical security and in terms of electronic access are ensured.

### Programme Components from Results Assessment Module

#### ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

**OUTCOME 1** Access for vulnerable children and women, especially the most vulnerable, to high-quality community-based social services will be strengthened from an institutional perspective, particularly in poor urban areas, in the highlands and south.

#### **Analytical Statement of Progress:**

As in previous years the Government of Algeria continued to invest in social sectors, despite the reduction in oil prices and the impact on the economy. Such sustained investments have had a positive impact on social development, reflected in the fact that the Government has met, or even exceeded, almost all the Millennium Development Goals.

However, despite the significant progress, some additional efforts will have to be undertaken to reduce maternal and neo-natal mortality, in universalizing access to pre-school education for five year old children, keeping all school aged children in school up to 16 years old, in promoting youth employment and participation, and ensuring that more equity-oriented social policies focus on protecting the most vulnerable children.

The regional context was again marked by instability and the consequences of the conflict in

Syria was an increase in the flow of migrant populations seeking stability and better living condition in Algeria.

A crucial opportunity for strengthening the children's agenda and fostering partnerships around critical issues for children was provided by the new child protection law enacted in July 2015. It specifically refers to the establishment of a referral system for detecting and reporting violence towards children as well as, but not limited to, the promotion of mediation measures for minors in contact with the law. Furthermore, the engagement by the highest ministerial authorities around initiatives aiming at keeping children in school or at scaling-up quality standards for children living in institutions and including those with disabilities were strong examples of the result-focused collaboration and partnerships between UNICEF, line Ministries, and civil society.

In June 2015 the Ministry of Health launched the National plan for Maternal Mortality Reduction - elaborated with UNICEF's technical support - including several measures to reducing the number of mothers dying while giving birth. This was in line with the international initiative around "A Promised Renewed" which was signed by the Algerian Government in 2013. In terms of protection and prevention of violence the Ministry of Solidarity led the piloting in one region of the country, Blida, of the first-ever national referral system, with the objective of taking it to nationwide coverage.

In order to improve quality of education and access, while promoting pre-school education and development, the Integrated Strategy for Child Development was further strengthened with the development of costed scenarios of interventions to inform policy makers in the framework of universalizing pre-primary education for all five year old children. In addition, the renewed partnership with the Ministry of Youth, which was severely affected by the long-lasting reorganization of its personnel after a Government reshuffling, saw the replication of the UNICEF's supported training around the right to participation, targeting Algerian youth and adolescents. As a result of this Government initiative, more than 400 staff working with youth acquired additional knowledge and skills in relation to youth engagement and participation.

The emerging issue of migration was addressed with an *ad hoc* brief study, implemented in partnership with civil society and Government, to inform future actions which would ensure that all vulnerable children are included in policies and programmes addressing children's needs.

UNICEF was also one of the first agencies that responded to the flood emergency affected more than 50,000 Saharawi refugees hosted in southern Algeria. An aircraft was specially chartered to support the emergency response, with lifesaving health kits, education supplies and tents for re-establishing access to health centres and schools. The supplies reached the affected population just a few days after the floods which had temporarily transformed the Sahara desert into a lake.

Despite all of the great progress in so many areas critical to children's well-being and development, the pace of programme results remains constrained in a number of sectors, notably around social transfers adjustments, youth participation, and neonatal mortality reduction. Furthermore, national plans and programme strategic frameworks developed during the year with UNICEF support took time to be implemented at regional and sub-regional levels, notably around maternal mortality reduction and standards of care for children in institutions.

**OUTPUT 1** International norms and standards for mothers and newborns' healthcare are adopted in four pilot health zones in the Highlands, southern and urban areas in the north.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

To reduce maternal and child mortality significant investments are needed, along with the engagement of decision makers. As of 2014, the maternal mortality rate was of 60/100,000, with a hospital mortality of 54/100,000 live births and a total of 1,014,000 births. In the same year, 15,000 deaths at birth were registered, accompanied by a rate of 14.6/1,000 newborns' deaths during the early neonatal period. Neonatal deaths during this early stage account for more than 70 per cent of the child mortality rate of children under one year of age (21.4/1000). This picture shows that despite several reform efforts at the hand of the Ministry of Health, maternal and child mortality rates diminish at a very slow pace.

Since June 2015, however, Algeria has benefitted from a national plan for the accelerated reduction of maternal mortality, which responds to the global call to fight against preventable deaths of mothers and newborns through the campaigns "A promise Renewed" and "Every Mother and Every Newborn". It was elaborated with UNICEF's technical support, specifically structured around key bottlenecks in providing appropriate services and care to women during pregnancy and delivery. The plan is expected to ensure progress in reducing maternal mortality, particularly in the rural regions of the highlands and the deep south of the country.

As a consequence, the Government committed itself to carry out strategic and effective interventions - such as improving procurement and storage of drugs and blood bank - to improve healthcare for mothers before conception, during the pregnancy, and in case of complications during delivery.

The planned elaboration of a similar accelerated neonatal mortality reduction plan did not materialize in 2015 due to significant constraints in identifying appropriate Francophone technical expertise in using the bottleneck analysis frameworks.

In order to further strengthen and support healthcare for newborns and young children, UNICEF and the Ministry of Health revised a guide "for the integrated care of neonatal and child diseases" on the basis of UNICEF's global insights and expertise on international standards. This practical guide is intended to serve health personnel, and will facilitate and systematize the diagnosis and treatment of diseases that kill young children or severely affect their health. The guide also provides information on nutrition and psycho-cognitive development.

In support of the national objective of eliminating the transmission of HIV from mother to child and establishing one HIV/AIDS referral centre per region, UNICEF continued to provide its assistance. This was through support for training of over 120 medical personnel on the use of the rapid testing, allowing HIV-positive mothers to be immediately and adequately taken care of, and on collaboration with established networks working with HIV-positive women. Nineteen reference centres are already functioning and serving pregnant women and future mothers.

**OUTPUT 2** Social protection programmes and social budgeting are oriented towards reducing the difficulties of access to healthcare and quality education for the most vulnerable women and children and, notably, those living in poor households and those without medical/health insurance.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

During 2015, Algeria continued to devote as much as 30 per cent of its public budget to social transfers, which play an important role in supporting the most vulnerable children and families. Despite these enormous efforts, two crucial issues remain to be considered and addressed.

The first concerns the lack of consistency in the targeting and management of these transfers, inducing high transaction costs and a social safety net in need of improvement. The second relates to the unclear sustainability of these transfers if the reduction in oil prices continues over the medium and long term, noting that revenue from oil products represents 70 per cent of Government's revenue. A long term reduction in oil prices could make it difficult to maintain the subsidies and social transfers at existing levels, and impact on the delivery of social programmes for children.

Issues related to effective social transfers taking into account differentials in child vulnerabilities remain poorly explored, with potentially negative consequences for the most vulnerable children, often coming from poor families and remote areas of the country. A policy of rationalization of social transfers is needed to allow appropriate adjustments, including better targeting of populations in need.

In 2015, UNICEF continued its strong advocacy for more inclusive and efficient social policies: specifically for more effective non-contributory social transfers, with the aim to promote mechanisms that are targeted towards children and equity-grounded. Within this context, UNICEF initiated a reflection with its partner CNES (National Social and Economic Council) towards the benefit of a formal South-South cooperation between Algeria and Brazil. The aim was to take stock of the Brazilian experience and facilitate a conceptualization of what lessons may be drawn to adjust social transfer frameworks within the Algerian context. However, due to the demand placed on CNES by the Government to focus attention on the impact of oil price reductions on the national budget and overall national economic outlook, the implementation of the South-South cooperation could not materialize in 2015. It is hoped that such cooperation may be reinitiated in 2016.

**OUTPUT 3** Quality education norms and standards, including those related to inclusive education and the prevention of natural disasters, are adopted in the targeted wilayas in the south, the Highlands and the poor urban north.

#### **Analytical Statement of Progress:**

The Algerian Government continues to strongly invest in education, to which the second highest portion of the country's public budget (15 per cent) is allocated. Meals are provided to nearly four million children and an equal number of children receive textbooks free of charge. To meet the continuously growing need for educational infrastructure, 2015 saw the creation of 263 new primary schools, 112 colleges, and 157 high schools, resulting in 338,000 new seats for children at school.

Mindful that the issue of quality teaching and appropriate learning outcomes must accompany such investments around infrastructure, the Ministry of Education has been working hard to finalise a newly developed curricula designed to support more than 400,000 teachers in accompanying the eight million children and students towards optimal learning outcomes. Since 2014 and continuing in 2015 UNICEF invested significant resources to support the MEN around a teacher-focused training programme relevant for improving education quality known as the "competency-based approach training package".

Following several batches of training through a team of high level technical experts, the knowledge acquired by more than 500 school inspectors trained in skills building, development and preparations of lessons and other key areas were tested with the teachers in the classrooms. The positive results encouraged UNICEF and MEN to select amongst the trainees 150 inspectors and, after sharpening the newly acquired knowledge through two intensive

additional weeks of training, to use them as trainers for all primary school teachers throughout the country. This will support Government's engagement towards the scaling up of the training to all relevant education personnel nationwide. Children will be the first to benefit from this training as they will receive better quality education from skilled teachers and this will also mitigate the risks related to drop-out and repetitions.

Beyond the matter of primary school norms and standards, the Education Ministry also identified preschool cycle as critical to the education system as a whole. The MEN thus devoted critical efforts at the highest level to bring together several ministries around the production of a first National on Early Childhood Development Strategy. According to the Minister herself "children at the age of five years are inclined to learn by playing, not rote learning, and their registration in first grade is not an effective educational solution".

In this context, the Ministry of Education stressed that the expansion of early childhood education is a task for all sectors. The national ECD strategy supported by UNICEF is multi-sectoral and strongly oriented towards multi-disciplinary responses to ensure that all aspects of children development are addressed through appropriate services and programmes.

The current year is being particularly important as UNICEF is supporting the development of a tool aiming at costing the strategy in order to provide decision makers with a choice of policy options adapted to the needs of the country and financially implementable. 2016 will be a crucial year for validation and operationalization of the strategy.

**OUTPUT 4** A child-centred community based justice and social work model is adopted which complies with international norms and standards, and is adapted to the regional specificities of the south, the Highlands and major urban areas.

#### **Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In Algeria, a little more than 8,000 children, of whom nearly 3,000 are girls, were reported to have experienced different forms of violence, including sexual violence. 1370 children are deprived of family care and live in institutions, and nearly 7000 children are in conflict with the law (96 per cent are boys). In addition, Algeria remains both a transit and destination country for migrants: it is estimated by the Government that Algeria currently hosts 52,000 migrant from sub-Saharan Africa and Syria of which the exact number of children, and including unaccompanied minors, is still unknown.

The Algerian Government's engagement in the reduction of childhood vulnerabilities is reflected in the Child Protection Law 15-12, adopted in July 2015. In support to the implementation of the Law the Ministry of Solidarity requested UNICEF to establish a referral system for children at risk or victims of violence and, as recommended by the Committee of the Rights of the Child, to lead a study on the budget allocated to child protection services for vulnerable children to provide a clear financial picture - including unit costs – of children's protection services. The recently initiated study will thus inform decision makers on the efficiency of budget allocated to children, including gaps and potential ways to better plan and fund children's services and needs.

UNICEF was able to mobilize high level international technical expertise for gathering and analysing the information related to children in danger and proposed the "future structure" of the referral system which will allow citizens and children to report potential violence as well as acts of violence against children. Children will be able to better protect themselves against violence due to the participation of Algeria in the 'Child Online Protection' project which - together with

the police forces, Ministries and private sector - will enable to tackle issues related to sexual violence and abuse which remain taboo subjects in some regions.

UNICEF, in partnership with SSI and the Ministry of Solidarity, continued improving social workers' capacities to accompany children deprived of parental care in their individual life-project through the introduction of quality standards for children living in institutions, putting the best interest of the child at the heart of all actions and services provided. Children with disabilities, representing 25 per cent of the children living in institutions, are also included as the lack of inclusive policies towards integration of children with disabilities is an issue of national concern.

The Ministry of Solidarity and UNICEF- in partnership with Doctors of the World – conducted a qualitative survey around a sample of migrant children, with a specific focus on their access to protection, education and health services. This assessment is a crucial starting point for reflection and potential future actions to support refugee and migrant children. The survey's findings are expected in 2016.

**OUTPUT 5** The skills of healthcare personnel and managers in terms of knowledge around immunization and maternal and neonatal health are reinforced and health facilities are provided with critical supplies needed for immunization and maternal and neonatal health programmes in the five refugee camps.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

With regard to immunization and maternal and neonatal health, the Saharawi refugee population continued to be fully dependent on humanitarian assistance. As of 2015, UNICEF remains the main vaccination provider for the Saharawi refugee camps. With the contribution of UNICEF's long lasting efforts, the immunization coverage of Saharawi refugee children has rapidly grown, with 74 per cent of children under one year of age fully vaccinated compared to approximately 32 per cent in 2009. UNICEF will continue to pursue its efforts with the aim of reaching over 80 per cent coverage in 2016.

In 2015, neonatal and maternal health care also continued to be addressed by UNICEF, through the last cycle of professional training on pregnancy and safe delivery for all midwives (approximately 150) which included theoretical and on-job training in some of the busiest and best-run maternity departments across Algeria. Some progress was seen in the increased percentage of assisted deliveries occurring with the assistance of a midwife, estimated in 2015 at nearly 65 per cent against only 36 per cent for the same in 2011. This means that mothers have increasingly gained trust in more qualified health personnel. According to the Ministry of Health, at least 40 per cent of women are appropriately followed during pregnancy, with three prenatal visits and with the necessary care and health checks. While there is clearly still space for improvement, this percentage has doubled since the start of UNICEF's project, when less than 20 per cent of women benefitted from appropriate monitoring of their pregnancy.

Additionally, sensitization campaigns raised awareness among women around good health practices, enabling mothers to reduced-risk pregnancies and deliveries, and to take care of the newborns in the best manner for their healthy development. These campaigns are supported by specifically dedicated radio programmes created and animated by 12 different journalists trained with the support of UNICEF, to diffuse messages on good child rearing practices.

Unfortunately, the massive flood emergency that hit the Saharawi refugee camps in October 2015 severely impacted the health care services for refugee mothers and newborns. More than

30 per cent of health infrastructures where pregnant women are cared for and where newborns are vaccinated were severely damaged, along with 60 per cent of their equipment. UNICEF's emergency health response quickly ensured resumed primary healthcare services for refugee mothers and children within a month from the onset of the emergency, by setting-up and equipping emergency health care spaces. The reconstruction work of damaged hospitals and health centres was also planned together with the other actors of the humanitarian communities; though final results will mainly depend from funding availability.

**OUTPUT 6** The educational skills of preschool, primary and intermediate school teachers are upgraded and the educational, cultural, recreation and hygiene conditions conducive to a protective school environment are reinforced in the five refugee camps.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

More than 38,000 children aged 3-16 go to kindergarten, primary and low middle secondary schools in the refugee camps. UNICEF has been the main supplier of school materials for a number of years, enabling refugee children to benefit from basic pedagogical supplies that are essential for their education.

In order to efficiently monitor the distribution of school supplies and ensure that all children timely receive their school supplies package, an innovative software package was developed. The software evaluates the total needs of school supplies and facilitates the organization and monitoring of distribution activities, and was enthusiastically welcomed by the Saharawi education authorities.

In addition to the continuous need for educational supplies, crucial gaps in terms of quality of education persist. To identify specific gaps, in 2015 UNICEF carried out a qualitative evaluation of the education sector to identify specific weaknesses that impair the quality of the Saharawi education system. The main weaknesses in terms of teachers' pedagogical methods, coordination, performance management of the education system, and the suitability of learning spaces were identified and way forward discussed at local level.

Sahrawi refugee camps were hard hit by torrential rains that fell for ten consecutive days during October, causing widespread damage. Most of the houses, health structures and schools were affected. According to the data provided by the local Education authorities, the approximate total number of affected students is 12,000, which corresponds to 30 per cent of all school-age children. Of the 67 existing educational institutions, 35 were damaged (52 per cent) by the rain to certain degrees, effectively leaving up to half of the Sahrawi education system unavailable. Some 20 per cent of the Sahrawi schools are situated in Dakhla camp, where the floods were most severe, making schools and educational materials completely unusable.

UNICEF Algeria promptly activated an emergency response to the floods and airlifted tents and educational materials to set-up and equip emergency learning spaces that allowed as many as 6,500 children to quickly resume essential schooling activities. In total, 57 tents were erected by UNICEF's partner Triangle Generation Humanitaire across all five camps, while more than 4300 most vulnerable children benefitted from the distribution of new educational materials to replace the supplies that were destroyed by the floods. This distribution was kick-started during an UNICEF's supported "Back to School" campaign.

UNICEF Algeria's mid-term emergency response aims to rehabilitate part of the damaged schools, with a focus on Dakhla camp, where all schools and kindergartens will be rehabilitated. UNICEF has established a partnership with Triangle to undergo rehabilitation activities, and

presented a list to all Ministries of schools that will be rehabilitated. Rehabilitation activities will thus be a priority in 2016.

**OUTPUT 7** Adolescents and young people in the five Sahrawi refugee camps acquire relevant life skills, notably on participation and HIV/AIDS protection.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

No progress in the implementation. However, UNICEF deployed important fundraising efforts which lead to obtain funds for a pilot youth project expected to be implemented in 2016.

**OUTCOME 2** Evidence-based knowledge of the situation of children, including adolescents and women, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, will be available and accessible.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Despite the achievements in social sectors in Algeria where the Government has sustained its levels of investment through national budget yearly allocations, the logistical challenges remain to ensure equitable human development in a country that is largest in Africa by area.

The success story around Algeria's capacity to reach the vast majority of the Millennium Development Goals hides a more complex social reality which is mirrored by strong evidence - highlighted by the recent MICS4 results - showing substantial disparities in terms of access to and quality of social service provision.

The analysis of several studies conducted over recent years suggests that inequalities are due to structural factors linked not only to the country's geography but also to institutional and sociocultural factors. In addition, and despite the country's large body of statistics on the situation of mothers and children, the data available are not always disaggregated by region, gender or income quintile. For this reason, the findings from household surveys such as the MICS 4 were important, and highlighted that these disparities primarily affect the southern and highland regions, vulnerable populations living in urban and semi-urban areas, and particular categories of children with specific needs, especially those with disabilities.

The Government engagement towards the fight against such disparities was clearly underlined during the MICS launch where the Ministry of Health representatives highlighted prevailing inequalities and cited several mechanisms and actions in place to address them. The work undertaken with UNICEF support around knowledge generation, including the MICS and other studies and surveys, have contributed to significantly overcoming the gaps in disaggregated data in relation to children and women. At the same time, their dissemination amongst sector professionals and decision-makers supported significant shifts in national policies and response plans at central and decentralized levels.

The pairing of international expertise with national research centres proved particularly important in the area of research and analysis. This is evident in two major programme thrusts: around the recently initiated budgeting analysis for child protection services, as well as the establishing of an effective multi-sectoral referral system. Issues of national concern such as maternal mortality were also comprehensively researched and analysed through two important studies, allowing the identification of weaknesses in pregnancy monitoring and care, and ensuring expanded understanding of the causes of continued maternal deaths at delivery stage.

2015 saw a persistently low oil price. Despite the country's national financial reserves, the low oil price could potentially impact the economy and generate additional vulnerabilities, especially

amongst children. In order to understand this possibility, UNICEF mobilized technical expertise in collaboration with EPRI, to strengthen the capacity of staff from six Government institutions in measuring multidimensional poverty. One specific outcome of this capacity development will be the production of a first National Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (N-MODA) equity analysis, which will help sharpen and orient the strategic choices of policy makers in the coming years.

**OUTPUT 1** Knowledge management is reinforced around the areas of child wellbeing, child and adolescent rights, child protection, child poverty, and socio-economic, geographic and gender disparities.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In recent years, Algeria has been prioritizing the generation of evidence and data in order to gain a better understanding of the situation of children and women in the country. Particular efforts are still needed for assessing poverty in its multidimensional nature and in the evaluation of social policies.

2015 saw UNICEF's evidence generation enriched by the results of the fourth Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS4), carried out in partnership with the Ministry of Health. The MICS4 brings to light the situation of children and mothers in relation to multiple domains, such as nutrition, education, health, and protection. This survey, which is at its fourth edition, allows for comparatively analysing improvements, stagnation, regressions in the situation of children and mothers, as well as geographic, economic, and gender disparities. This survey was able to overcome gaps in the availability of quantitative and qualitative disaggregated data in relation to children and women. Its dissemination reached a large spectrum of users, allowing strong advocacy in favour of children on the basis of empirical data and evidence.

UNICEF, in partnership the National Economic and Social Council initiated a National Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis which will measure multidimensional poverty affecting children and women by using the recent data provided by the MICS4. It involves the participation of main institutional sectors including the ministries of Education and Health, the Office of National Statistics, amongst others. The equity cell that was established in 2014 in the CNES back in 2014 also benefitted from the organization of an intensive technical training session facilitated by the Economic and Policy Research Institute around the implementation of the MODA approach. In total, seventeen participants representing six different institutions acquired the required know-how for developing the first ever national report on equity, expected in 2016.

Within the framework of a perspective of exchange of good practices and knowledge sharing, the South-South cooperation promoted by UNICEF witnessed a crucial development in 2015 with the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the CNES and the CONEVAL of Mexico. This focuses on the evaluation of social policies and the measurement of multidimensional poverty, within a dynamic of development. After the signature of the MoU some delays around the development of a specific plan of action around main axes of cooperation have affected the implementation of concrete actions. Despite these challenges, in 2016 Algeria is expected to host a technical mission from Mexico for sharing evaluation protocols and compare poverty measurement mechanisms, and to optimize local choices around the operationalisation of equity in social policies.

**OUTPUT 2** Knowledge management on social and institutional resources directed towards adolescents teenagers (boys and girls) in terms of accessibility, involvement and development, is strengthened.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

The implementation of the youth programme planned for 2015 by the Ministry of Youth was considerably delayed by several ministerial changes until July 2015. Nevertheless, in the last quarter of the year the structure and organogram at institutional level was defined and UNICEF and Government initiated an extremely important survey, mapping all available youth services in country.

The findings of the study, expected in 2016, will allow the Government to advocate within the youth population around the options for accessing services, and proposing constructive and positive ways that young people can use their free time. To make this mapping more youth friendly, the students from the UNICEF-supported Innovation Lab will produce a digital version in 2016.

**OUTPUT 3** Research-action on the quality of education informs national programmes and policies on school dropouts, repetition and low levels enrolments in targeted regions of the south, Highland and poor urban areas.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Significant progress has been made following the Government's policy on ensuring access to compulsory education to all Algerian children between six and 16 years. However, some students continue to drop-out from school, hindering their possibilities to education and a successful future.

The Ministry of Education and UNICEF focused on the phenomenon of school drop-outs and are committed under the Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI) to conduct micro surveys to better identify the profiles of children who run the risk to drop-out from school and to remain marginalized from education possibilities. Thus, intensive investigations were initiated in the regions having the worse indicators in terms of repetition and drop out. The findings will be available during the first semester of 2016.

The OOSCI study results prompted a priority response from the highest levels of the Education Ministry and leveraged a range of remedial actions and plans at national level along with a demand from the Minister directly that all regions develop their own plans around drop out mitigation and remediation.

**OUTPUT 4** Research-action on health around early childhood development and nutrition for women of child bearing age inform national programmes and policies in targeted regions of the south, Highland and poor urban areas.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Despite continuous efforts, in 2015 mothers continue to die while giving birth. The Ministry of Health estimates that for each 100,000 births, 60 maternal deaths occur (2014), 10 per cent of which take place at home. This national rate is only a linear estimation and was based on 117 maternal deaths each 100,000 births in 1999 according to the national survey. Since 90 per cent of women do monitor their pregnancy in the prenatal period, the root of the problem lies in the quality of prenatal monitoring and care.

. The case-analysis audit study

In order to understand the circumstances in which maternal deaths occur, UNICEF and the Ministry of Health operationalized an auditing system for maternal deaths. 242 maternal deaths were analysed to understand why the mothers died in the act of giving life, and enabled experts

to elaborate the first recommendations and corrective measures with regard to the care provided to mothers during delivery, with the ultimate aim to reduce preventable maternal deaths.

The global findings of this extremely important report will be shared in January 2016.

In addition, in partnership with the National Institute of Public Health and the Ministry of Health, UNICEF supported two studies on maternal mortality to assess real progress in the field of maternal death reduction and to evaluate the quality of the services offered to future mothers in terms of pregnancy monitoring. They will enable the identification of weaknesses in pregnancy monitoring and care and to explain maternal deaths, which is essential to reorient strategic interventions and to ultimately improve maternal and child healthcare. The results will be disseminated in January 2016.

**OUTCOME 3** The knowledge of families around maternal health and nutrition, early childhood development, child protection as well as specific needs targeting participation and of adolescents will be enhanced with a view a positive and long-lasting behaviour change.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Despite the increasing number of youth and adolescents having access to information and technology (with internet users increasing from 2.3 million in 2013 to nearly 10 million in September 2015) families and local communities continue to play an important role in the education and fulfilment of children rights.

This is particularly visible in remote and disadvantaged areas where in many cases, social norms and behaviours negatively impact on children's and adolescent's lives and development. The persistence of harmful practices or attitudes have many causes, including a lack of knowledge, the poor quality of communicated messages, along with the fact that information sometimes does not reach the faraway communities.

Changing individual and community behaviours is a long lasting process and UNICEF has worked for many years to support increased knowledge of mothers and children using locally contextually appropriate strategies to diffuse good practices such as breastfeeding, maternal and child health and nutrition, child rearing and adolescent and youth participation. In partnership with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, 360 female religious leaders (Mourchidates ) volunteering as community outreach have acquired the required skills on maternal and child health and improved their interpersonal and communication skills in order to improve families' daily behaviour.

Following several years of capacity development, 2015 has seen the first evaluation of these religious leaders and results were very encouraging. They showed that 93 per cent of the trained Mourchidates acquired the provided knowledge and information, and that this knowledge was further spread to 66 per cent of the families in contact with them. The behaviour change at family level will be measured in the next household survey in 2017 (MICS6).

UNICEF will continue using communication and communication for development as a critical strategy to address the required changes in local behaviours, norms and issues still considered as taboo in remote areas of the country.

Violence against children was addressed through a strong communication campaign, better known as #ENDVIOLENCE campaign, diffused across more than 10 public and private TV

channels, the national radio, and some of the most influential newspapers, reaching and sensitizing millions of people.

2015 saw the organization of a parliamentary day to provide children with the space to learn and debate about their rights. As many as 200 children took part in this event in the presence of the President of the National Assembly and a number of Ministers of the Algerian Government, who were impressed by the spontaneity of children while expressing their needs and wishes in terms of better education quality or access to services that are more child-friendly.

**OUTPUT 1** The families and children targeted by the communication strategy around health, maternal nutrition and early childhood development in the targeted regions are reached through local actors and channels of communication such as television, radio, mosques, health centres, ICT and schools.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Families and parents are essential in the formation of individuals' behaviour in terms of social and health practices. Within Algerian households, women particularly play a crucial role because they tend to have the closest relation with children and to be responsible for setting nutrition patterns and guaranteeing personal hygiene. However, the social, hygiene, and health practices that are inherited within the family environment from mothers and grandmothers do not always reflect scientific information.

The negative consequences of misinformation are clearly illustrated by the example of breastfeeding practices. In Algeria, women do breastfeed, but they do not do so soon enough after the child birth and not for long enough for a proper development of the child. Only one-third of the newborns in Algeria receive breastfeeding within the first hour of their existence; and continued breastfeeding rates grow at a very slow pace, remaining at approximately 46.6 per cent for breastfeeding for 12-15 months and at 24.4 per cent for breastfeeding for 20-23 months. Importantly, it is the richest of the Algerian population who breastfeed the least. For example, only 30 per cent of children born in families belonging to the richest quintile are breastfed within the first hour of birth, while the percentage raises to 37 per cent for children belonging to the poorest quintile. Misinformation and widespread availability of breast-milk substitutes thus seem to have created a tendency to prefer milk substitutes when families can afford them, on the contrary of what would be the optimal choice for a child's healthy development.

Changing maternal behaviour in favour of breastfeeding and diffusing other good practices on key health issues requires a communication strategy that can reach families with women as a specific target. To improve families' daily behaviour, UNICEF provided 360 female religious leaders known as Mouchidates with improved knowledge on maternal and child health, including breastfeeding, and improved interpersonal skills through training enabled by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Through the training, UNICEF reached 74 per cent of the total number of Mouchidates in the country, who have the societal authority to change behaviour and spread good practices, particularly among women.

In addition to its scale, this project had a significant impact, as it was confirmed by trainings' evaluations carried out across the country. According to the evaluation, 93 per cent of the participant Mouchidates acquired new knowledge that replaced the practices that they had learned within a family context with scientific information. These new scientifically-based practices were further spread to 66 per cent of the families in contact with them.

As the promotion of breastfeeding remains a priority within the national programme for maternal and child health, UNICEF provided the Ministry of Health with technical support to design a national action plan for 2016-2018 and a communication strategy for the promotion of breastfeeding. The UNICEF-supported action plan and communication strategy were adopted by the Ministry of Health during the celebration of the national breastfeeding week in November 2015, to ensure future efforts to change families' behaviour in the best interest of children.

#### **OUTCOME 4** Cross-sectoral costs

##### **Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In terms of cross sectoral issues the year was marked by three main actions: the development of the new 2016-2020 country programme, the conception of several programme monitoring tools, and the implementation of the HACT procedures.

The strong focus on monitoring responded to the increased partnerships with civil society organizations largely developed within the protection programme, as well as the successful fundraising allowing a prompt emergency response to the floods that hit western Sahara refugees living in five refugee camps around Tindouf.

Three main monitoring tools were put in place with the aim of tracking progress of interventions towards expected results, and for regular follow up on agreed recommendations and actions for both humanitarian and upstream interventions. The tools enabled rapid and informed shifts and adjustments in programme design and implementation, thus enhancing the impacts of interventions and efficiency.

The important analytical work in generation of knowledge around women and children through studies, surveys as well as the MICS4 were used for the development of the new Country Programme 2016-2020 and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).

UNICEF Algeria is HACT compliant and all partners were trained on procedures for fund transfers and liquidation.

2015 also saw a significant engagement of UNICEF Algeria's two Goodwill Ambassadors, who took part in several events not only in Algiers but also in other parts of the country, including the Saharawi refugee camps near Tindouf thus maximizing the visibility of UNICEF's work in Algeria and providing an opportunity for effective advocacy on children rights and fundraising.

With regard to digital presence and online visibility, UNICEF Algeria's web page has become more active in terms of publishing information about programmes, activities and international issues. The page received 48,000 visitors in 2015, with approximately 85 per cent returning visitors. An increase was also registered in the number of Facebook fans.

**OUTPUT 1** The planning of activities, both sectoral and cross cutting, is based on efficient coordination, increasing the leveraging effect of the programme.

##### **Analytical Statement of Progress:**

2015 is the last year of UNICEF-Algeria cooperation programme and it was marked by the preparation of the new Country Programme Document and on-going work over the Country Programme Action Plan. The overall goal of UNICEF Algeria 2016–2020 country programme will be to support the efforts made by the Government to allow all Algerian children to fully exercise their rights to survival, development, protection and participation, and to provide them

with inclusive, high quality social services to support them in reaching their full potential.

The CPD will revolve around three key programme results:

Child development and education aimed at improved care and learning opportunities promoting the survival, development and inclusion of children, especially those living in regions with high inequalities; Child protection and participation for preventing and managing cases of violence against girls and boys and; Social inclusion for an improved policy environment and social protection for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and adolescents, underpinned by knowledge and data which focus on equality.

A large amount of the crucial data and information gathered and generated around the situation of women and children, mainly through the MICS4 and from equity and progress analysis documents underlying disparities and inequalities, were used to inform the CPD and the CPAP.

UNICEF Algeria will continue strengthening capacities in analysing key bottlenecks impeding the fulfilment of children rights and the “bottleneck analysis” approach will be again used as framework for identification of the causes associated with neo-natal mortality. As per request of the Ministry of Health this will serve as base for developing a national plan to accelerate its reduction, in order to head towards the achievement of the concerned Sustainable Development Goal.

Communication for development and capacity development continues being a key strategy to support programme implementation, particularly in the health and early childhood related sectors.

**OUTPUT 2** Progress around the results of the programme components is systematically measured through evaluation and monitoring tools, the success of the programme is assured through periodic strategic adjustments.

#### **Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In 2015, UNICEF Algeria adopted two new tools to monitor, evaluate and follow up the progress of the country programme activities, providing each month a snapshot of programme implementation. Two interlinked communicating dashboards inform timely potential shifts and adjustments enhancing impacts of interventions and efficiency through a coloured traffic light system showing whether expected progress versus results are on track or constrained.

The absence of a joint Government-UNICEF steering committee dedicated to coordinate, monitor and evaluate actions under the country programme of cooperation remained a constraining factor, and UNICEF will continue to advocate for its establishment for the new Country Programme 2016-2020.

A specific tool adapted to the Saharawi emergency response enabling planning and monitoring of distributed education school supplies was developed and shared with local education authorities. The tool was warmly welcomed and appreciated, as it facilitates education planning in emergency setting in addition to its monitoring function.

Data and knowledge produced by UNICEF were also used in the process of a UN system Common Country Assessment.

**OUTPUT 3** Advocacy, visibility and partnership

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

The #ENDVIOLENCE campaign continued to be a crucial communication and advocacy campaign for UNICEF Algeria. After its launching in 2014, it was essential to maintain the dynamic created with different partners and as such a strengthened strategy was developed to maximize the diffusion of messages around children's rights to protection against violence, with the general public as the main target.

The mobilization of 10 public and private TV channels, the national radio, and some of the most influent newspapers ensured the campaign's visibility. Moreover, the campaign was presented in the headquarters of the wilaya of Oran in the presence of local authorities, NGOS, and local youth, leading to partners' commitments to continue efforts to eliminate violence against children.

2015 also saw a significant engagement of UNICEF Algeria's two Goodwill Ambassadors, who took part in several events not only in Algiers but also in other parts of the country, including the Saharawi refugee camps near Tindouf. This triggered the attention of several media and of different actors working for children, thus maximizing the visibility of UNICEF's work in Algeria in general and in the Saharawi refugee camps in particular, and providing an opportunity for effective advocacy on children rights.

With regard to digital presence and online visibility, UNICEF Algeria's web page has become more active in terms of publishing information about UNICEF programmes and activities and international issues. The page received 48,000 visitors in 2015, with a percentage of approximately 85 per cent returning visitors, and with about 36 updates over 2015 (three per month). UNICEF Algeria's Facebook page, launched on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2014, is also becoming more active. The number of fans has constantly increased, reaching 4150 people in mid-December. The growth rate since December 2014 is about 360 per cent, with a total reach of 135,199 Facebook users, and an engagement score of 8.2 per cent for the same period.

UNICEF Algeria commenced testing a newsletter that is sent once a month to the email database from UN, NGOs and journalists to ensure the continuation of partners' engagement. Most of the readers are redirected to the Facebook page or website.