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# **INTRODUCTION**

The importance of administrative data is well recognized – as decision makers increasingly demand high-quality, highly disaggregated, and timely ("real-time") data in order to inform the planning and service delivery required for progress against national and international development targets. Routine data collection systems that are able to generate trusted and reliable data, without the need for additional high cost-high frequency surveys, must be a central component of a mature and well-functioning national statistical system.

The nature of administrative data and data systems is also changing as countries invest in digitizing key collections and integrating new technology to improve access and engagement. Many are also examining new opportunities for data linkage through unique identifiers and national identity systems. Leveraging these investments to ensure that "no-one is left behind" is critical if we are to effectively monitor progress against the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. These changes also create a critical need to support responsible and ethical data practices and encourage data access and use at the local level.

Administrative data was highlighted as a priority area for action in the 2017 Data for Children Strategic Framework. UNICEF has a long heritage of working with governments and partner agencies on sectoral administrative data systems – in areas such as health, social welfare and education. We are continuing to build up and scale these efforts, while also building stronger approaches to working across sectors and sharing and building on good practice examples. In March 2020, UNICEF held a side event in the margins of the 51st UN Statistical Commission to showcase the use of administrative data in supporting development outcomes for children. The twelve posters from that event are reproduced here, and highlight just a small selection of the work that is underway across the organization in this area.

# ADaMM: An administrative data maturity model

ADMIN DATA TASK TEAM, UNICEF

#### **SUMMARY**

Administrative data is widely recognized as essential for improving service provision, identifying and monitoring development outcomes. However, despite significant investments, many countries remain unable to report against key development indicators and data quality significantly limits the utility of much of the data that are available. At the same time, the data landscape is changing rapidly with new technologies and the expansion of national identity systems.

Many of the requirements for effective national administrative data systems are not sectoral, but rather the "foundational" elements of government data policy, use and supporting infrastructure. UNICEF is working closely with partners to develop a maturity model for administrative data systems to prioritize investments and needs across sectors, help donors assess the capacity to absorb proposed investments, and ensure impact for children. The model provides a framework for best-practice examples, and to highlight areas where additional guidance is needed.

The concept draws on the wealth of existing assessment tools and quality indicators for administrative data systems across sectors and organisations and is built on three main elements:

- It is child focused: putting the best interests of children at the centre of system design and operation.
- It is built from the community up: recognizing the importance of local engagement in supporting development outcomes for children and the collection of high quality data.
- It recognizes the need for strong cross-sectoral foundations at the national level to support the effective and sustainable functioning of administrative data systems.

Under each element, the outcomes that a mature administrative data landscape should deliver are defined, along with the system and landscape characteristics required to achieve these. The approach also places administrative data as part of a broader national data landscape – recognizing the importance of integrating multiple data sources to validate data quality, address data gaps, and meet national data requirements.

# **Developing the Maturity Model**

The model was developed in response to the growing demand for a cross-sectoral approach to administrative data and improving administrative data systems; building on the Data for Children Strategy released by UNICEF in 2018. It has drawn on the expertise of sectoral specialists across the organization and undergone a number of iterations prior to field testing. Key in the approach has been the recognition of existing assessment tools across key sectors such as health and education and the need to add value by linking to this existing work rather than creating a new approach in isolation.

The model was tested in Namibia in 2019, and was reviewed with government representatives from both the African and South American regions at the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data meeting on Admin data for the SDGs later that same year. Substantive changes were incorporated following this work to introduce clearer guidance on "where to start" by prioritising outcomes across the three lenses and creating a greater spread in the results. Maturity level three – was identified as a "functional" level of maturity – or a minimum that all countries should be aiming for, while the higher levels build towards an ideal or "fully mature" system that may be more aspirational in some cases.

A further field test is planned for Mongolia in early 2020 as part of their ongoing preparation work on a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics Stat prior to the release of the working document.



Healthcare workers enter data in the Health Information System in Egypt.

# **Key components of a mature admin data landscape**

The model consists of 20 key outcome statements across three key areas – children; community; and national data needs and systems - that define what we expect to achieve from a fully mature administrative data landscape.

Outcome statements have been grouped into broad maturity levels in order to provide guidance on "where to start" for countries that identify gaps in multiple areas.

Under each outcome statement the model unpacks into functional characteristics. These characteristics are considered necessary in order for the outcome statements themselves to be achieved.

DUTCOME STATEMENT	LENS
Maturity level 1 - Formation	
Core administrative data systems for children exist at national level, with national coverage.	National
Maturity level 2- Foundational	
administrative data is integrated as part of a broader national statistical system	National
systems create and recognise a legal identity for every child from birth, including provisions for those whose birth was either un-registered or who enter the territory and are unable to provide a legally recognised identity.	Child-focusse
administrative data systems and data use do not expose children to harm through their own operations/ functions	Child-focusse
Data required to support the realisation and protection of children's rights under the international convention and levelopment commitments are produced and available	Child-focusse
lational admin data systems provide timely data for national planning and accountability.	National
systems are inclusive; effectively monitoring that "no child is left behind", as well as providing the data needed for systems are inclusive; effectively address disparities where they exist.	ms Child-focusse
Maturity level 3- Functional	
systems engender confidence in the way data is collected, handled, and used across the data landscape, and trust in sublished data and results.	National
Data is actively used in national (and sub-national) planning, monitoring and evaluation	National
systems are both sustainable and resilient to "system shocks"	National
Data is used to identify local needs, and to inform and improve local services and programmes	Community
admin data specifically addresses key disaster preparedness and planning needs (at national and broad sub-national leve	el) National
Maturity level 4 - Flexibility and form	
systems are able to "flex" to changing community needs	Community
Cross-sectoral collaboration supports a holistic approach to data for planning, innovation, and service provision	National
nteraction with administrative data systems is simple, minimizing duplication and redundant data collection, as well as partiers to participation.	Community
systems are able to stay up to date and relevant, making appropriate use of new innovations and responding to changing ational priorities.	g National
flaturity level 5- Engagement	
Communities are actively engaged with the data that relates to them, and trust that the data represents their interests.	Community
Data is used to generate broader "public good"; contributing to research and knowledge generation on topics of benefit he community.	to National
Maturity level 6- Integration	
admin data can be integrated effectively with other data sources in decision making processes.	National
Supports a holistic approach to services and care to support better outcomes through coordination across programs, ocations, and sectors.	Child-focusse

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# Administrative data for improved community engagement at school level in low-literacy communities

**EDUCATION SECTION, UNICEF** 

#### **SUMMARY**

Education systems collect large amounts of data across the world. However, these administrative data are not always used in the most effective way to inform education system decisions. Community engagement for school level decision-making is an important lever for improving educational outcomes. Communities, informed by already available administrative data, will be able to hold school and district educational leaders in a more successful way. However, this can be difficult to achieve in a low literacy environment.

UNICEF under the Data Must Speak (DMS) initiative has designed and piloted community friendly school profile cards in three countries: Madagascar, Togo and Zambia. These profile cards use visual symbols to communicate current levels, trends over time as well as comparisons against other nearby schools for parents and members of communities who are usually illiterate. DMS has also piloted a community member training programme to help understand how to read the profile cards and interpret the data and information included in them.

DMS conducted two evaluations. The first – a multi-country formative evaluation – focused on the content of the profile cards and their relevance to local information needs. The second, evaluated a community training program to help members understand and interpret the profile cards in Zambia.

The evaluations found that:

- The profile cards should focus on actionable indicators that are relevant to local decision-making.
- School performance should not only be measured against historical data and local averages, but also against minimum standards.
- Communities that have been trained on the interpretation of the profile cards are more aware of their existence and are better informed about the school's resource constraints.

# **Background**

Education systems collect large amounts of data across the world. However, these large amounts of administrative data are not always used in the most effective way. If these data are shared and used more effectively they can help decisionmakers prioritize resources and support to the districts and schools that need them most; as well as increase community involvement and agency. User-friendly information enables communities to act and drive change through holding school leaders and district officials accountable.

The Data Must Speak (DMS) initiative began in 2014 and has worked in 10 different countries towards improving data and evidence use for decision making; and generating user friendly information for community engagement and empowerment (See figure 1). An important component of this work is its focus on producing community friendly profile cards (CFPCs). These profile cards have been designed with feedback from members of local communities. There goal is to use visual cues to inform community members of important information regarding their area schools in communities where there are high levels of illiteracy.

DMS has supported the design and creation of these simplified community friendly profile cards for schools in Madagascar, Togo and Zambia over the last few years (See figure 2 below for an example of the Zambia School Community Profile Cards). Each one of these school cards uses visual cues to inform community members who are illiterate. This requires that community members receive training to be able to read the profile cards. One such capacity

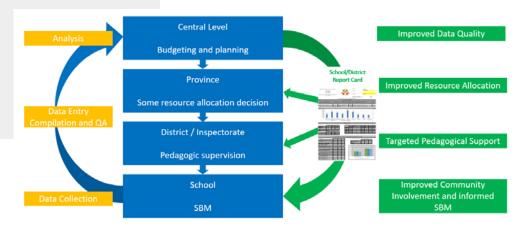


Figure 1: Feedback loop proposed by the Data Must Speak Initiative

building exercise was piloted in Zambia in order to determine its effectiveness. The approach was focused on direct training of randomly selected members of the community from the population who had primary school going age children.

#### **Methods and Results**

UNICEF has conducted two evaluations on the Data Must Speak programme. First, a formative evaluation was conducted of DMS work in the early stage of some of the programme's initiatives. This evaluation was done using documents reviews and key informant interviews.

The main findings of the evaluation are:

- School profile cards should focus on indicators that are relevant to decisions that can be made at school level; that are trackable over time; and they should focus more on learning.
- Performance indicators should be compared to standards and minimum expectations if these have already been set by ministries as opposed to comparison to other nearby schools.
- Second, the community training programme in Zambia was evaluated using a control group based experimental design.
   In the control groups, community friendly profile cards were distributed but no training was offered.

The evaluation found that:

- Parents in the intervention group were significantly more aware of information about the school.
- They were better informed about the school's resource constraints than the parents in the control group.

However, the evaluation was too soon after the beginning of the programme to determine the impact of the training and the availability of CFSPs on other indicators like student or teacher absenteeism and on school performance.

#### **Conclusions & Recommendations**

DMS has designed and implemented annually updated community friendly school profiles in Madagascar, Togo and Zambia. It has piloted various approaches for designing the profiles as well as training community members on how to read them. Evaluations of the programme show that:

 Sometimes the information shown in the profile cards may not relate to the decision making powers at the school level.

- While the profile cards measure school performance historically as well as against other local/regional schools, they do not take into consideration best practice and/or minimum standards.
- While the profile cards may be useful their success (awareness and usage) and usefulness is dependent on training of community members to use them.

Keeping these findings in mind, we propose the following recommendations:

- Further research into the impact of the use of school profile cards on the actual performance of schools.
- Piloting of revised community friendly profile cards that only include actionable indicators at the school level as well as comparison to national standards where they exist.

#### **COMMUNITY PROFILE CARDS**

Provides feedback from the Annual School Census and school examinations

Allows low-literacy communities to understand their school in comparison to district averages and over time

Uses visual cues to identify trends for school performance over time as well as comparison for current period against regional school averages.

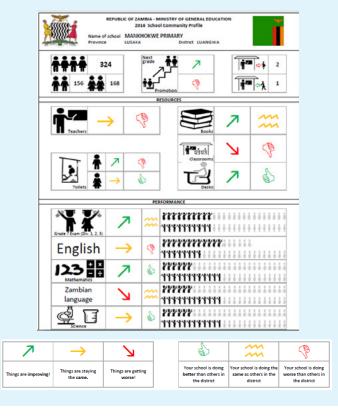


Figure 2: Example of a Community Friendly Score Card in Zambia

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# Child-friendly communities with real-time monitoring in West and Central Africa

DATA AND ANALYTICS - DIVISION OF DATA, ANALYTICS, PLANNING AND MONITORING

#### **SUMMARY**

Led by UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO), the Child-Friendly Communities with Real-Time Monitoring Project (CFC-RTM) is a multi-country proof-of-concept project based in West and Central Africa (Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Liberia and Togo) to understand the added value of "realtime monitoring" to the Child-Friendly Communities (CFC) approach to institutionalizing community health. The project combines the implementation of digital health tools with a broad strategy for community systems strengthening with a robust investment in monitoring and evaluation to understand the potential benefit of this approach and advocate/plan for future scale within and across countries with an ultimate objective of strengthening health systems and community systems to deliver results for children and vulnerable populations.



Photo 1: 13 Nov 2019, Bichobebe Village, Bassar Prefecture, Kara Region, Togo (Porth)

"The device helps me to know what services people need so I can ask the right questions and help them to get the care they need." [translation from Bassar]

-Madame Baba, l'agent de santé communautaire de Bichobebe

# **Background and Approach**

The Child-Friendly Communities (CFC) approach to strengthening community health systems through four main pillars:

- strengthening local governance and accountability
- integrating multisectoral community systems
- assuring quality services
- establishing effective local partnerships

The CFC-RTM project is testing the added value of a fifth pillar – "real-time monitoring" – in these five project countries to test the additional value of:

- Enabling real-time data collection and use of data at the community level by introducing digital registers and a community health worker (CHW) data use app
- Empowering local leaders and community health workers to use data for health programme planning and monitoring
- Ensuring accountability for data use and feedback mechanisms by leveraging existing community management platforms and structures
- Leveraging the community health system for multisectoral outcomes and data flows (e.g. nutrition, ECD, birth registration, WASH, etc.)

This RTM component could be achieved through analog and paper-based approaches, but for the purposes of this proof-of-concept, it has been aligned with the implementation of digital registers, largely configured in OpenSRP software and implemented through Android tablets and devices. In these devices, CHWs are able to collect data while going through their routine visits and have the data automatically aggregated, calculated and visualized in user-friendly charts and figures to assist the work of the CHWs and their supervisors. These The data visualizations in the app also play an important role in the review, coordination and accountability processes of local governments. The devices also facilitate the sharing of data to health facilities by using automated data exchange mechanisms in lieu of the traditional tallying of data from columns of dozens of paper registers.

In order to properly assess the achievement of the CFC-RTM objectives as well as the overall impact of the approach, a multifaceted M&E strategy has been established in each of the implementing countries in which implementing and non-

implementing districts have been assigned in each country and applies a range of data tools have been deployed to capture data to monitor and evaluated impact.

These tools include:

- Household surveys (baseline/endline)
- Health facility and community health functionality assessments (baseline/endline)
- Knowledge and attitudes surveys (baseline/endline)
- Community health registers (routine)
- Facility-based health data (routine)
- Data reviews and RTM performance monitoring

### **Current Progress**

Each of the five implementing countries have completed the baseline assessment activities, ensured government buy-in, sensitized communities and have begun training CHWs and their supervisors on the approach. In three countries (Guinea, Liberia and Togo) the CFC-RTM app has been configured and cadres of CHWs and supervisors have been trained on its use. The app is being fully used in Togo and roll-out is underway in Guinea and Liberia. Customization of the app is underway in Chad and Democratic Republic of the Congo with plans to being training and implementation in early 2020.

As the app is being implemented, efforts are being made to align the app to existing community mechanisms for decision-making, coordination and community engagement and feedback. Photo 2 was taken in Bawolessi village in Togo where the village chief spoke to the community about the birth registration data the CHW had shown him in the app, which led to a conversation on the financial and travel barriers that had prevented several families from registering the birth of newborns in the village.



Early results have been very promising with regards to CHW satisfaction. CHWs reported comfort in using the devices and felt that it made their work easier and shortened each household visit. Photo 1 shows how a CHW in Bichobebe village in Togo is using the app and how it is assisting her with the daily work in the community. CHWs, village chiefs and health facility personnel all noted that the access to data made them feel better equipped to identify gaps and barriers to community services, suggest corrective actions and monitor the implementation of follow-up activities. The data have also been feeding into quarterly and semiannual reviews and the district and regional levels to review uptake, results and sensitive other surrounding communities to the approach.

# **Next Steps**

As the configuration, training and implementation of the digital registers continues, we are also working to strengthen documentation and knowledge management of the project to ensure lessons are well captured to inform future scale within and across countries. This includes the documentation of good practices, barriers and challenges that would allow us to adjust implementation to meet evolving needs of the community, but also covers important contextual factors which will be critical to the interpretation of the routine data as well as the data from the endline evaluation. These contextual factors cover a range of possibilities from partner agency activities, political changes, disease outbreaks, natural disasters or humanitarian situations, and more.

Following two years of project implementation, the final endline evaluations will be conducted to determine the affect of the CFC-RTM approach to community systems strengthening. Based on these results, we hope to have evidence to advocate for institutionalizing routine data use in the efforts to strengthen community systems and would work with countries interest in implementing a similar model to this initiative to understand how best to model the implementation based on the results in these five implementing countries.

"Before this initiative, I didn't even know how many people were in my village. I didn't know if children had received their birth certificates or if they had not. Now I can know if people are receiving services and make sure they get the care they need." [translation from Bassar]-Chef de Bawolessi

Photo 2: 13 Nov 2019, Bawolessi Village, Bassar Prefecture, Kara Region, Togo (Porth)

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# Data eXchange Platform: connecting data systems for integration and triangulation

DATA AND ANALYTICS - DIVISION OF DATA, ANALYTICS, PLANNING AND MONITORING

#### **SUMMARY**

Although there have been considerable advancements in digital technology and data architecture, fragmentation of data systems at the global and national levels remains a critical challenge. This fragmentation is due to many causes, including the use of incompatible platforms and technology as well as a lack of data standards, and often results in insufficient data sharing across and within countries and regions. As a result, there is sub-optimal data utilization subnationally, nationally, regionally and globally and, therefore, sub-optimal programmes and results.

To combat the challenge of data fragmentation, UNICEF Data & Analytics is leading the development of the Data eXchange Platform (DXP). The DXP is a novel approach to data exchange and integration which uses an intermediary platform to enable the bidirectional exchange of data between national and global data systems to integrate national/subnational administrative and routine data with household survey data and population estimates.

This exchange and integration of data will facilitate the triangulation of multi-sourced data in countries' existing administrative data systems and opens up a range of opportunities for enhanced data use and analysis at national and local levels. In addition, this bidirectional exchange will also enhance the global databases and reporting on the SDGs, by improving the quality and depth of information available in national data systems, expanding country representation in these databases and potentially reducing reporting burden through automation of the data exchange.

UNICEF, in collaboration with WHO and DHIS2 and with support from USAID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is developing and testing this minimum viable product platform, using health data and SDMX/ADX standard as a test case, but with the intent to demonstrate political, financial and technological scalability, sustainability and cost effectiveness across sectors in order to advocate for a multi-sectoral platform to be managed by a multi-agency coalition.

### **Objective**

The objective of the DXP initiative is to demonstrate the political, financial and technological scalability, sustainability and cost effectiveness of using an intermediary platform to mitigate fragmentation in the health and development

data ecosystem. This fragmentation causes health and development professionals to rely on insufficiently varied data sources to inform their decision making.

All data sources have comparative advantages and limitations based on frequency, geographic granularity, reliability, equity/ disaggregations, and more. Leveraging multiple data sources allows you to take advantage of the comparative advantages of certain data sources to offset the limitations of others. This novel approach will not only allow this integration and triangulation of multi-sourced data, but will allow it to be accomplished in the existing platforms already being used to reduce the barriers to implementation, scalability, management, sustainability and training.

Once the multi-sourced data are integrated in the HMIS system, it opens up a range of opportunities to apply triangulation statistics to fill persistent evidence gaps and data quality challenges, including: more nuanced trend analyses, validation and/or calibration of intervention coverage estimates from routine data, estimation of local target populations (denominators), apportioning of national estimates to local levels, estimation of service coverage outside of health facilities and more. In addition, the effort will ensure bidirectional exchange capabilities, which has the potential to facilitate more frequent updates to global monitoring databases and greater alignment between global and national data systems, all while reducing the reporting burden on countries.

### **Design**

The DXP initiative is designed in a three-phased approach (see Figure 1).

Phase One, which is nearly complete, includes the development of an intermediary platform built in DHIS2 (version 2.33) aligned to standard data structures and definitions for both global monitoring data (based on population-based survey data and global estimates) and national/subnational routine health facility-based data. This platform has been connected to UNICEF's global data architecture (Helix) via an ETL script which leverages the Helix RESTful API to call data from UNICEF global databases into the DXP where it will be re-structured into the same data structure and standard used by 60+ Ministries of Health in

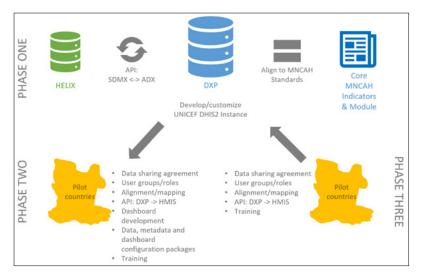


Figure 1. Overall design of the Data eXchange Platform approach

their national DHIS2 instances for HMIS. This connection enables the global data to be integrated directly into national HMIS platforms and visualized with the countries' routine health data.

In Phase Two, a data sharing agreement will be developed with national governments allowing them to customize the parameters of their data sharing, including how the data will be integrated and visualized within the existing HMIS, user access and privileges, and which triangulation methods will be applied to the multi-sourced data to fill relevant evidence gaps. When the data sharing agreement has been agreed, UNICEF global database data in the Data eXchange Platform will be pushed into the national HMIS, either through the installation of metadata, data and dashboard configuration packages or by using an API, ETL or the Data Import app. Once the UNICEF global database data has been integrated with routine administrative health data, custom visualizations and dashboards can be created to meet the specific use cases and data needs of that country (see examples in Figure 2).

In Phase Three, the data sharing agreement will again be referenced, and countries can opt to reciprocate the data exchange by pushing a limited set of administrative routine health data to UNICEF Data and Analytics for analytical support to global programmes as well as validation for inclusion in global monitoring databases, such as the UNICEF and SDG global databases. We will continue to work with countries and partner agencies to explore if this mechanism can be used to reduce reporting burden through automation and optimization of global reporting processes.

## **Next Steps**

The initial DXP prototype has been developed in DHIS2 and the Ministry of Health for the Lao People's Democratic Republic has granted permission to use a demo instance of their national HMIS platform to build out the first test case. The data from UNICEF global databases has been called into the DXP prototype and merged with the administrative data from Laos. This integrated dataset is being used to develop the first iteration of triangulation dashboards for data use and data quality checks.

Once the dashboards and corresponding configuration packages have been fully developed,

the next step is to identify the first countries for field testing and begin preparations for in-country implementation and customization as well as training of relevant in-country HMIS users. The goal is to test the implementation in 2-3 countries in 2020.

In addition, development of an ETL-based exchange mechanism will continue so as to enable data to be reported from national administrative systems for global monitoring purposes in a secure, private and potentially automated process.

Special thanks to and the Ministry of Health for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, DHIS2, WHO, USAID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



Figure 2. Example DHIS2 dashboards and applications from the WHO DHIS2 demo instance

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# Guidance for health sector managers on vital events notification

ADMIN DATA TASK TEAM, UNICEF

#### **SUMMARY**

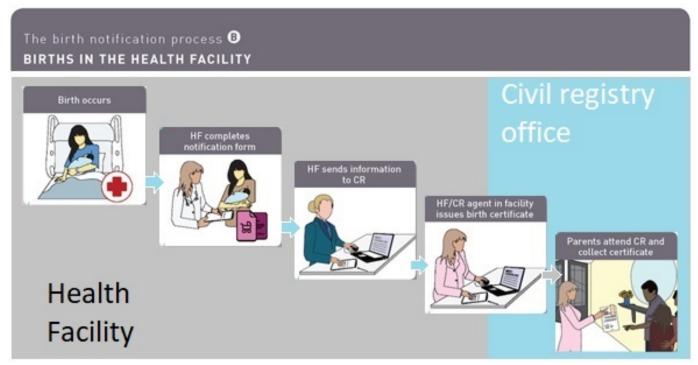
The guidance for health managers on vital events is jointly developed by UNICEF and the World Health Organization, with inputs from partners and countries, aims to bring health and CRVS stakeholders together in a joint endeavour in support of people's rights to civil registration.

It suggests ways in which civil registration authorities can tap into the widely distributed network of health workers, accepting information from them on births and death for the purpose of registration, or delegating certain tasks to the health sector. It enshrines the recording and sharing of information on births and death as a key responsibility of health workers when an infant is born or when someone dies.

The health sector can be a powerful ally in helping families overcome barriers such as the distance to registration points, direct and indirect costs, complexity to ensure the births and deaths of loves ones are registered of procedures, awareness on the importance or civil registration, and social and cultural factors.

## Birth notification/registration generic business process





# **RMNCH** opportunities across the continuum of care

#### **Antenatal Care**

#### **Delivery**

#### **Immunization**









# **Components of** the guidance

- Operational guidance for birth notification and registration
- Operational guidance for stillbirth notification
- Operational guidance for death notification and registration
- · Data items for birth, stillbirth, and death notification
- Processes indicators
- Considerations for data privacy and protection



# Death notification/registration generic business process



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# Harnessing administrative data for humanitarian response

DATA AND ANALYTICS - DIVISION OF DATA, ANALYTICS, PLANNING AND MONITORING

#### **SUMMARY**

The need to improve data to support effective response in humanitarian situations is well recognized; and there is a growing understanding that administrative data systems can be an important source of data in these contexts. However, government data systems are often overlooked due to access, speed or quality concerns, particularly in developing countries. New short-term systems are frequently established to respond to humanitarian data needs by international humanitarian actors and the procedures and platforms to support these systems are maturing. Resorting to alternative humanitarian information management systems may be necessary in some circumstances due to a collapse or absence of existing systems. However, parallel admin data systems often duplicate and risk undermining national systems, and can divert highly limited data resources which further hampers data systems recovery.

Routine government administrative data systems need to be both more responsive to changes in the environments and communities in which they are operating, including in the event of sudden shocks, hazards, threats that lead to humanitarian crisis; they also need to be resilient enough to remain operational and secure in such events.

UNICEF is proposing a series of case studies to explore what this means in terms of system design, operation, governance, and implications for preparedness. The case studies are intended to provide practical guidance for national governments and supporting agencies as well as feed into global guidance.

Preparatory work on the study starts in March, aiming to wind up in September. UNICEF is open to join efforts with interested partners on the case studies.



# **Background and Approach/ Methods**

The study builds on UNICEF ongoing work testing and refining an Admin Data Maturity Model which provides a reference on good practice in terms of outcomes for children, for communities and countries, and what features make this possible. This study explores further around features supporting resilience and responsiveness, asking:

- what is required for national and local admin data systems to be resilient i.e. remain operational and secure in the event of shocks, hazards that trigger humanitarian crises?
- what is required for them to be responsive i.e. able to shift focus, speed and scale to track life-saving and protection interventions and changing humanitarian needs of communities?
- how should humanitarian IM systems of international humanitarian actors shift to better connect to and support national and local admin data systems?

Like the ADMM, the study on resilience and responsiveness is proposed to span admin systems design, operations and governance, and will have both an inter-sector lens as well as a focus on key sectors that align to humanitarian action for children.

The analysis will also be contextualized in different types of humanitarian situation – initially two country cases, contrasting shorter-term seasonal disaster response with longer-term protracted humanitarian situations. Further cases will be added as budget allows.

In each case, the study will explore different uses of admin data systems supporting humanitarian response in different moments: initial humanitarian needs assessment; tracking progress of humanitarian response coverage and quality of services; and supporting analysis on longer term impacts – e.g. missed schooling, drops in vaccination coverage.

Findings will be drawn from global literature review and expert opinion, as well as country case studies based on desk review and key informant interviews to assess admin data use options in past and future humanitarian crisis scenarios.



### **Expected Results**

Preparatory work starts in March with the window for country case study work planned between May and September.

Preliminary findings are anticipated to be published towards the end of 2019.

The study is structured to provide immediate technical input at country level for national government, UNICEF country offices and other country level partners as relevant, to help identify promising initiatives or features supporting resilience and responsiveness of administrative data systems, as well as critical barriers and priority investments for systems strengthening, both short- and longer-term.

At global level the case studies will compliment work refining the Administrative Data Maturity Model and will help to identify supporting guidance and tools that exist and or are needed to support resilience and responsive admin data systems. The case studies will also feed into discussions at global humanitarian cluster level on efforts to strengthen data systems and national capacity development for humanitarian response.

# **Next steps**

UNICEF is seeking to collaborate with partners on exploring approaches to strengthen resilience and responsiveness of admin data systems for humanitarian action. Options include:

- Knowledge exchange on related studies, evaluations, or pilot experiences;
- Collaboration in undertaking case studies, possibly extending beyond the initial two planned by UNICEF;
- Collaboration in technical review of study design and products.

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# Namibia country experience of the administrative data maturity model



DATA AND ANALYTICS - DIVISION OF DATA, ANALYTICS, PLANNING AND MONITORING

#### **SUMMARY**

Namibia is a young country of 2.53 million people, of whom 1.09 million are children. The Government of Namibia identified key issues and priorities for children in the National Agenda for Children (NAC) 2018 – 2022). The Government has indicated a strong interest in data and is investing significant resources in this space.

In close collaboration with the Government, UNICEF as a historically strong partner in data related work in Namibia, field tested the administrative data maturity model. The approach taken for the administrative data landscape analysis was to understand key issues for the landscape seen through a children's lens. This encompassed critical cross-cutting administrative data issues that joint UN system can support Government in solving, as well as a range of interventions specific to UNICEF.

Strengths were identified in both the national admin data landscape for children that provide a strong foundation for future work. A few areas of cross-cutting concern for children's well-being also became apparent. Both sets of topics cross the boundaries and mandates of individual ministries and agencies and appropriately addressing them will require a multi-stakeholder approach.

Overall, field testing the maturity model in Namibia revealed its usefulness in developing a shared understanding of key cross sectoral issues and priorities to improve administrative data at the national level. It also confirmed that the core content and issues covered by the model were largely appropriate whilst highlighting how it can be improved.

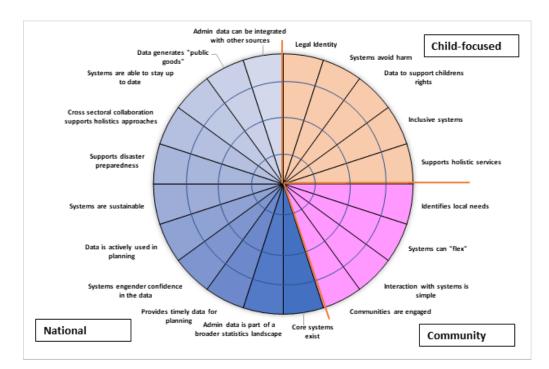
# **Background and Approach**

The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN), supported by its partners in UN system and UNICEF, has made important strides in using data to leverage results for its children. From investments in foundational identity systems to regular collection and analysis of education data, many elements of a successful data landscape are in place and supporting children to survive and thrive.

In September 2019, UNICEF conducted an analysis of the administrative data landscape in the country deploying for the first time the administrative data maturity model (ADaMM). The model consists of 20 key outcome statements that define what we expect to achieve from a fully mature administrative data landscape at the national level. These are presented around three key areas of focus - children, community, and national data and foundations as shown in the graph below. The approach taken for the landscape analysis was to understand key issues for improving administrative data seen through a children's lens, at both GRN and UNICEF country programme level. Based on a review of national priorities and interviews with government counterparts, UN and UNICEF colleagues, an action plan was formulated. It covers the most strategic entry points for using data to support the GRN in implementing the child-focused elements of Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5) between now and 2022, with a particular focus on administrative data.



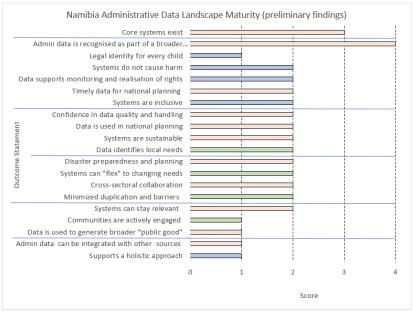
Validation of the administrative data maturity in Namibia of September 2019 revealed that children born to parents without legal status face significant barriers due to lack of formal legal identities



Components of a mature administrative data landscape piloted in Namibia

#### **Results**

There are a range of key administrative data collection systems in Namibia although the publication of data from these systems is variable. Namibia's administrative data landscape can thus be said to be at a foundational level of maturity. In other words, while core systems exist and are operational, there are several key issues that currently limit the ability of the data landscape to deliver on essential data needs for children.



- ☐ Child focused outcome
- Community focused outcome
- National outcome

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Overall, the Namibia field test of the model highlighted its usefulness useful in developing a shared understanding of key cross sectoral issues and priorities to improve administrative data at the national level. It also confirmed that the core content and issues covered by the model were largely appropriate.

A number of key changes were proposed in order to:

- Improve the clarity of questions/ language
- Provide a greater prioritization within the model so that countries that have gaps in multiple areas are better able to select where to start
- Introduce "scores" for individual outcome statements and restrict the use of the term maturity to overall performance to engage better with decision makers
- Split outcomes focused on availability and quality of data to improve ability to assess these characteristics
- Define the roles of UNICEF at HQ, RO and CO levels in rolling out the model.

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# Standardization of community health service monitoring

HEALTH- DIVISION OF IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH AND DELIVERY SCIENCE

### **SUMMARY**

A new guidance for community health service monitoring should be released in June 2020. It is aligned with existing M&E frameworks, and presents different modules to be adapted to each country context. Each module details standardized indicators with their metadata. The domains included are:

- · Reproductive health
- Maternal health
- Newborn health
- · Child health
- Adolescent health
- Nutrition
- Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
- Malaria
- HIV
- Tuberculosis
- Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)
- Civil Registration and Vital Events (CRVS)
- Child Protection and Interpersonal Violence
- Immunization
- Early Warning

Indicators should be chosen for monitoring community health services on the basis of the tasks and reporting burden of Community health Workers (CHWs) in the country, the maturity of the Community Health Information System (CHIS), considering also data quality, data use and equity.



ANALYSIS AND USE OF COMMUNITY DATA

Guidance for community health service monitoring

# **Background, Approach/and Methods**

A major obstacle to delivering services of good quality to children and their families at community level is the dearth of data on community level care (i.e., all the data collected on service provision, management of supplies, etc.) or how it is managed and used. The absence of standardized health services indicators still limits the development of well-functioning Community Health Information Systems (CHIS), their integration within broader Health Information Systems (HIS), data analysis, benchmarking and comparison of results across and within countries and implementers.

A new guidance for community health service monitoring is developed under the umbrella of the Health data Collaborative (HDC) (Fig. 1. Methods). The objective is to strengthen country health monitoring systems, address fragmentation, harmonize monitoring tools, and build consensus and alignment between countries and partners around common standardized global goods. The current guidance provides a modular list of standard community health indicators aligned with global strategies (e.g. SDG, EWEC...)., flexible enough to be adapted in different country contexts and CHIS maturity levels. Modules are divided between two types of activities provided by Community health Workers (CHWs):

- Household Assessments (usually done one or twice a year)
- CHWs consultations

This guidance details a dynamic iterative process to choose indicators (Fig. 2. How to use the guidance) and a modular list of possible indicators with their metadata.

#### **Way forward**

The guidance is currently going through a revision process with multiple organizations.

A validation meeting co-organized by UNICEF, WHO, The Global Fund and USAID is planned in April 2020, including country representatives. After final revisions, the guidance will be published in June 2020, and then translated in French. DHIS2 metadata packages should be released later this year. Discussions on implementation of this guidance are planned with interested countries.

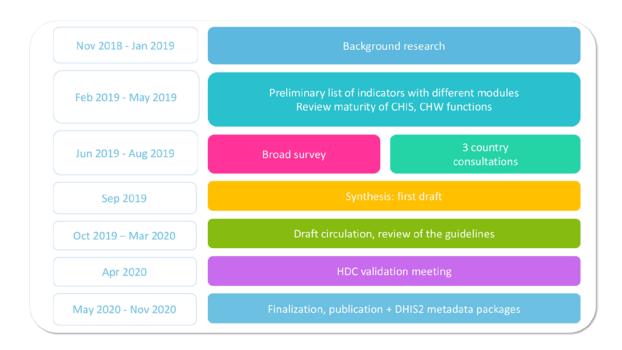


Fig. 1. Methods for the development of the guidance for community health service monitoring

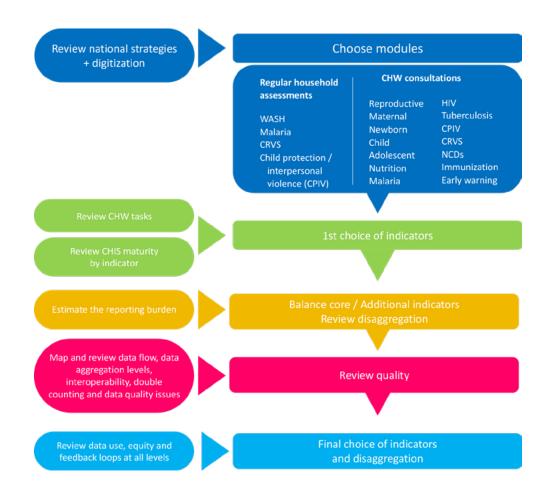


Fig. 2. How to use the guidance

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# Strengthening administrative data systems to close gender data gaps

DATA AND ANALYTICS - DIVISION OF DATA, ANALYTICS, PLANNING AND MONITORING

#### **SUMMARY**

Gender data, and the gender statistics derived from them, are essential for assessing how effectively we are achieving equitable outcomes for boys and girls. Not only do they help us track progress, but they also identify gaps – telling us where more work and focus are needed.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development explicitly recognizes the critical role of gender data in monitoring progress toward all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yet, gaps in gender data, vis-à-vis availability, granularity, timeliness and adherence to international standards, compromise the ability of countries to design gender-responsive policies. At the same time, there is growing recognition that disaggregating data by sex alone is not sufficient for identifying which women and children are most vulnerable to being "left behind" due to the intersecting inequalities they face base on gender and other axes of discrimination.

Administrative data systems are increasingly recognized as an important source for filling gender data gaps and informing intersectional analysis, but there has been limited unpacking of what it actually means to use administrative data effectively for these purposes or what investments are needed to improve administrative data systems to meet these demands vis-à-vis: 1) prioritization; 2) restructuring data flows to ensure data can be appropriately disaggregated; 3) how data needs can be best supported within current systems structures; and 4) key opportunities for national statistical offices and gender specialists to engage administrative data systems.

With a primary focus on the core data and systems relevant to UNICEF's mandate to "leave no child behind," the work aims to identify the specific opportunities, challenges and value of using administrative data more effectively to improve gender-equitable development outcomes and to translate this into practical guidance for national statistical offices and line ministries. While focused primarily on developing countries, the intent is to understand these elements across contexts and levels of system maturity; and will complement UNICEF's work program on developing an understanding of administrative data maturity.

# **Approach**

UNICEF recently developed a gender data strategic framework, Every Child Counts: Using Gender Data to Drive Results for Children, which identifies the need to assess the extent to which administrative systems can both yield relevant gender data for children and satisfy growing demand for data simultaneously disaggregated by sex and other key characteristics given the increased demands placed on statistical systems to produce gender data. UNICEF is leading this work as chair of the Advisory Group on Strengthening Administrative Systems to Close Gender Data Gaps under the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS). The coordinating body of the United Nations Global Gender Statistics Programme comprising national statistical systems and international agencies, the IAEG-GS is mandated by the UN Statistical Commission to examine emerging and unaddressed key gender issues and related data gaps with the aim of developing proposals on how to fill those gaps.



The guidance being developed for countries is informed by:

1) the technical expertise of the IAEG-GS Advisory Group\*;

2) a desk review of previous work examining the suitability of sourcing gender statistics from administrative systems;

3) a short survey of all countries represented in the Advisory Group on challenges and best practices in using admin data systems for gender statistics; and 4) two to three country case studies reflecting varying levels of administrative data maturity, to further unpack practical issues of generating, publishing and using gender-related data from existing information systems with a range of sectoral specialists in both line ministries and statistical agencies.

\*IAEG-GS Advisory Group members are Brazil, Canada, Ghana, India, Jordan, Morocco, Uganda, Zimbabwe, ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, ILO, OECD, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UNSD, UN Women and World Bank.

# **Guiding questions**

- To what extent are administrative data suitable for closing gender gaps in SDG reporting? What challenges do countries face?
- Are there specific challenges for generating statistics from administrative data that are unique to, or more pronounced for, gender statistics?
- What other data can administrative systems provide (or aim to provide) to inform the broader gender data landscape for local programming and planning?
- What specific investments are needed to ensure that administrative data systems can yield needed gender statistics?
- How do we leverage the broader field of work to improve admin data and data systems so that they deliver on this potential?

### **Emerging themes**

Although this work is still in progress, a number of key themes on barriers to sourcing gender statistics from administrative data systems are beginning to emerge, including the following:

There is a mis-match between SDG gender indicators and the administrative data available to monitor them. Countries note that national and international indicator definitions often do not align, while many of the international indicators were constructed around the data known to be available – primarily drawing from standardized surveys.

Gender data needs are poorly defined or not well understood – especially within the line ministries that are the primary sources of the data. In the absence of national gender policies or SDG-localization efforts, there is a lack of clarity around which gender data are needed, particularly at the national level. Much of the demand for gender statistics is seen as an 'external' requirement, leading line ministries to often view gender as an 'additional' (and cumbersome) reporting requirement, rather than as an essential one.

Encouraging effective use of sex-disaggregated administrative data is easier when gender data needs are clearly prioritized. Particularly for mature systems which generate a lot of high quality administrative data and where nearly all data can be disaggregated by sex and cross-tabulated, the volume of data presented can be overwhelming – and line ministries need guidance on which data should be shared in key reports and platforms to inform gender-responsive policy and programming.

The continued use of paper-based data collection tools in less mature administrative data systems poses a considerable barrier to sourcing gender statistics from admin data. While data are not always collected at a sufficient level of disaggregation for gender analysis, the lack of digitization at the lowest levels of data collection often means that even when data are sufficiently disaggregated, NSOs only receive aggregate tally records, which are difficult to integrate with other data sources and make cross-tabulation impossible.

If gender-sensitive information beyond sex is needed, it is challenging to amend or include new questions in admin forms. Changing administrative forms to collect new data often requires legislative change, which is an onerous process. For agencies that cannot see the direct benefit of the change, this makes the task even more difficult.

Unless specifically serving gender diverse populations, admin systems lack the ability to capture non-binary genders or trans persons. For countries with mature administrative systems, new challenges are emerging as they move toward non-binary gender classification – with the associated difficulties of introducing methodological changes into administrative systems to capture these subpopulations.

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# United Nations Legal Identity Agenda



FULFILTHE PROMISE TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

#### **SUMMARY**

Hundreds of millions of people worldwide lack proof of legal identity – 166 million are children under 5 who were never registered at birth.

Legal identity for all – starting from birth – is a gamechanger to close the global identity gap & fulfil the promise to leave no one behind and realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

# What you should know about UN Legal Identity Agenda

WHAT: The United Nations Legal Identity Agenda 2020- 2030 (LIA), backed by the Deputy Secretary-General, was launched as a One UN approach to support Member States building holistic, country-owned, sustainable civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems.

HOW: Efforts focus on closing the global identity gap and, in turn, providing Member States with the vital statistics and demographic information needed for socio-economic gains, better public administration, planning & monitoring.

The UN Legal Identity Task Force in support of the UN LIA advocates for a holistic system for legal identity that:

- covers the life-cycle,
- is universal, and
- addresses equity.

Through the LIA Task Force members have committed to work together as "one UN" across the UN Development System, and strengthen collaboration with the World Bank, to achieve the SDG Target 16.9 [legal identity for all, including birth registration].

Country level implementation: ongoing initial assessments for 13 priority countries in Africa will evaluate how best to accelerate progress towards the LIA, respectively.

 Once the assessments have been concluded and reviewed, an initial 2-3 countries will be selected for the initial phase of LIA implementation at country level.

A Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for the UN LIA is being established. This MPTF will:

- Facilitate a cohesive approach across the UN systems to respond to Member States' requests for support to strengthen their legal identity policy & programming at all levels.
- Allow major funding & development partners supporting efforts across the UN system to pool resources & maximize investments.





A nurse registers
baby Wunn Yan Kha in
Naypyidaw, Myanmar, in
2018. It is now possible
to register children up to
age 10 in the township.
Previously, only children
younger than one were able
to receive a birth certificate.

# The UN Legal Identity Agenda Task Force

The UN Legal Identity Task Force [formerly known as the UN Legal Identity Expert Group (LIEG)] was first established in September 2018 at the request of the UN Secretary-General and backed by the UN DSG.

**UN LIATF Structure** 

(14+ UN Agencies and 2 Regional Economic Commissions) Co-Chairs: UNICEF, UNDP, UNDESA

### Members include:

- DOCO, IOM, ITU, OCHA, OHCHR, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDESA, UNDP, UN Women, UNODC, UNSD, WFP, WHO.
- UNECA and UNESCAP are designated representatives of the Regional Economic Commissions.





### For further information:

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# Toolkits for assessing the availability and quality of administrative data on violence and justice for children

DATA AND ANALYTICS - DIVISION OF DATA, ANALYTICS, PLANNING AND MONITORING

#### **SUMMARY**

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest among governments and international development partners in exploring ways to better utilize existing administrative data for monitoring and reporting. This has translated to many areas of work, including child protection.

To support governments and other stakeholders to strengthen the collection and use of records on violence against children and children in contact with the law and improve monitoring and evaluation, UNICEF's Data and Analytics section conducted an in-depth review of administrative data systems. The piece on violence against children included a desk review of 10 countries and in-depth case studies in 5 countries (Indonesia, Jamaica, Morocco, Nigeria and Uganda). The piece on justice for children focused on 5 countries (Canada, Jordan, Montenegro, Tanzania and Uruguay).

These exercises aimed to deepen understanding of gaps in the systems while also extracting good practices. The review revealed that many government agencies have limited resources and capacity to build or improve data management systems for research and statistical purposes. Sometimes agencies were found to be data rich, but information poor, owing to the low prioritization of improving information systems and the limited use of administrative data. The review also uncovered promising examples of some sound, simple yet strategic investments that have been implemented to address persistent gaps in the collection and use of routine administrative data.

These reviews led to the development of two Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkits to assist countries with assessing their current level of administrative data maturity with respect to violence against children and justice for children. It is hoped that these tools can be used by countries: to establish baselines and evaluate progress over time; build national capacity of key stakeholders; build consensus on the current state of the country's system; identify needed improvements and priorities for investment; and mobilize technical and financial support for strategic action.

#### **Background and methods**

Despite the known challenges with administrative data, in some areas of child protection where international standards and guidelines and solid data collection methodologies and tools are still lacking, administrative records might be the only (or best) source of data. Strengthening the quality and coverage of such records is therefore an important and useful

investment. Additionally, administrative records can be a good source of data in those countries with well-developed and functional administrative systems; such is often the case in upper middle-income and high-income countries. In addition, by working more systematically with administrative data, the limitations that are specific to each country can be identified. This, in turn, can be used to inform efforts towards systems strengthening.

To begin addressing this, the Data and Analytics section of UNICEF, with support from the Child Protection section, completed in 2017-2019 desk reviews and in-depth assessments of administrative data on violence against children (VAC) and justice for children (J4C). The objective of both reviews was to generate an improved understanding of available administrative data and their potential uses, as well as an assessment of opportunities and investments needed to strengthen available information systems. More specifically, the reviews cover the following main components:

- Desk review of salient issues pertaining to the collection, compilation and use of administrative data on VAC and J4C, including a description of the characteristics and qualities of an ideal system; identification of a recommended core set of indicators, building off existing frameworks;
- In-depth country case studies for a subset of countries; and
- Guidance on how to build or strengthen administrative data systems on VAC and J4C.

#### **Review of administrative data**

This review yielded important results of practical value in relation to the following five components:

- Existence of relevant indicators
- Data collection and reporting processes and quality assurance
- Data flow and feedback
- Monitoring and evaluation structures and coordination mechanisms
- Data analysis, dissemination and use

Some of the persistent gaps and challenges identified through the review included: insufficient legal frameworks; a lack of adequate financial and human resources; insufficient quality assurance mechanisms; ineffective or weak coordination among sectors; and limited capacity of relevant staff to analyze and use data. The review also uncovered promising examples of some sound, simple yet strategic investments that have been implemented to improve the collection and use of routine administrative data.

# **Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkits**

To assist countries with assessing their current level of administrative data maturity, UNICEF has developed two toolkits with respect to violence against children and justice for children.

#### Structure of the Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkit on J4C

The Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkit on J4C consists of 119 questions about how administrative data are captured, collated, analyzed and reported on in the area of justice for children. The questions are grouped into eight thematic areas and each can be evaluated on its own.

The tool contains one national level assessment (to be completed by a multi-stakeholder group) and four sectoral assessments (for the Police, Prosecutors, Courts/Judiciary and Social Welfare/Corrections Services). Separate tools allow each sector to assess its own administrative data system both in terms of strengths and areas for improvement.

For each question in the tool, respondents select one of four hypothetical scenarios that is most closely aligned with the country situation. There is a numeric value attached to each scenario which permits a total score to be obtained within each thematic section, as well as a total score across all sections. The resulting scores can be matched against a rating table to indicate the level of data maturity on a spectrum from 'not functional' to 'well-functioning.'

#### Structure of the Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkit on VAC

The Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkit on VAC is divided into two parts and presented in tabular form.

#### Part 1 includes:

- National Diagnostic and Scoring Tool to be completed by a representative from the national steering committee or technical working group on violence against children
- Education Diagnostic and Scoring Tool to be completed by the Ministry of Education
- Health Diagnostic and Scoring Tool to be completed by the Ministry of Health
- Social Welfare/Child Protection Diagnostic and Scoring Tool – to be completed by the Ministry of Social Welfare/ Child Protection

- Police Diagnostic and Scoring Tool to be completed by the Ministry of Interior/Police
- Justice (Prosecution and Courts) Diagnostic and Scoring
   Tool to be completed by the Ministry of Justice

Part 2 includes an Overall Diagnostic and Scoring Form that should be used to generate total scores from each of the national and sector-specific diagnostic and scoring tools.

Total scores from both the national and each of the five sector-specific tools will be totaled in an overall table that will allow for Member States to evaluate their overall scores in terms of level of development and maturity of their administrative data on VAC.

#### **Conclusion**

The reviews of administrative data systems on VAC and J4C illustrated the potential for sound, simple yet strategic investments that improve monitoring of a country's child protection and justice systems, and thus the experience of children. Many government agencies have limited resources to carry out their core mandates related to justice or providing services to children who are victims of violence, and even more limited resources to build or improve data management systems for research and statistical purposes. Other agencies may be data rich, but information poor, owing to the low prioritization of improving information systems and the limited use of administrative data.

The Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkits on VAC and J4C are a first step to address bottlenecks affecting the availability and quality of data on VAC and J4C and the outreach of services for prevention and response. They are designed to assist Member States in reviewing and assessing their current efforts and capacities to collect administrative data across sectors and ministries/agencies. Further investigation may be required to assess the type and quality of administrative data that is collected across sectors and by different ministries/agencies, commissions and nongovernmental service providers. Inter-agency consultations may be required to review the type and quality of administrative data and data sources that exist across sectors, and to identify issues that may affect the quality of data collected.

At a later stage, the Diagnostic and Scoring Toolkits can be used to monitor and report on actions taken to strengthen administrative data on VAC and J4C, and efforts to strengthen legislation and policies that define indicators and data collection.

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# Humanitarian Cash Transfer Management Information System

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PROGRAMME (EMOPS)

#### **SUMMARY**

In recent years UNICEF has been increasing the volume of Humanitarian CashTransfers (HCT) delivered to achieve its programmatic objectives with more than 8.5 million children reached in 2019 through this assistance modality.

With HCT gaining a prominent role in UNICEF assistance, the organization started to require a reference information management solutions for household and individuals data to ensure adequate quality standard across its programmes and ensure consistent data protection standard and financial risk mitigation measures.

After a feasibility analysis carried out in 2018, UNICEF started developing a HCT Management Information System (MIS). UNICEF is leveraging an ecosystem of solutions to perform the various functions required while developing an application capable of addressing the remaining information management gaps.

The HCT MIS development is led by the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) with technical support from Information and Communication Technology Division (ICTD) and the Division of Administration, Finance and Management (DFAM).

This system will be capable to (i) collect and manage household and individual data, (ii) perform complex computational targeting queries, (iii) create, approve and authorize payment lists (iv) send payment instructions to Financial Service Providers (FSP) and receive relevant reconciliation information, (v) integrate payment verification information and (vi) aggregate grievances and feedback received as part of the various programmes.

The scope of the HCT MIS is to provide a rapidly deployable ecosystem of solutions to be adopted by UNICEF and its partners to implement programmes with Humanitarian Cash Transfers assistance. While government will be included among UNICEF partners who could access the services of the HCT MIS, UNICEF will continue to support governments to develop localized solutions for the long term MIS needs of Social Protection systems.

The HCT MIS is developed with an open source language and will represent a public good for the humanitarian community. A Minimum Viable Product (MVP) of the HCT MIS shall be available to UNICEF country offices and its partners in 2021 first quarter.

# **Background and Approach/ Methods**

UNICEF is increasingly distributing cash transfers in crisis settings, in line with its global commitment to scale up cash transfers as part of the Grand Bargain. In 2019 UNICEF reached approximately 8.5 million children with 241 million USD in cash transfers across 30 different countries.

UNICEF does not yet have a standard suite of information management tools to deliver cash programming. The programmatic steps to deliver cash are largely standard, but the tools used across country offices are not. Some country offices have developed custom HCT management information systems (MIS) in-house, others use a combination of tools to comprise their MIS, some free, others bound by licenses, while still others do not have an MIS, instead relying on unintegrated solutions (e.g.: Excel or Open Data kit) to manage their beneficiary data.

Considering the magnitude of data protection, programme quality and financial risks resulting from the absence of such MIS, UNICEF hired an independent consultancy firm to perform a feasibility analysis to compare what existing solutions are aligned to UNICEF business needs and what requirements remain unmet.

This analysis resulted into a year long work to consult country offices with existing cash interventions, fellow UN agencies with reputable corporate MIS as well as the variety of existing internal and external actors managing solutions capable of addressing the various data and information management needs of UNICEF Humanitarian Cash Transfer (HCT) interventions.

Thanks to this analysis UNICEF decided to fulfill its MIS needs by shaping an ecosystem where existing solutions were leveraged while developing an application only for the identified gaps. Box 1 below presents the overarching requirements and components of the HCT MIS ecosystem.

#### BOX.1

Overarching HCT MIS requirements

- · Rapidly deployable
- Compatible with UNICEF internal systems (i.e. Vision, Rapid Pro...)
- Interoperable with external systems (WFP-SCOPE, UNHCR-Cash Assist)
- · Core system standardized across countries,
- Biometrics capable
- To be accessed and used by Partners and Governments
- HQ oversight, risk management, & quality assurance to inform global tracking & reporting

#### **HCT MIS components:**

HQ AND COUNTRY DASHBOARD	Database Overview
REGISTRATION DATA IMPORT	Import and deduplicate population data
PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT	Link Programmes to population and payment
POPULATION	Visualize household and individuals
TARGETING	Applies targeting criteria to population data
PAYMENT MANAGEMENT	Creation, approval of payment list, connection to FSP
PAYMENT VERIFICATION	Consolidate data on recipients receipt of assistance
REPORTING	Fulfill country reporting needs
USER MANAGEMENT	Manages user roles and privileges
GRIEVANCES & FEEDBACK	Consolidates, assign and tracks grievances and feedback s

#### **Results**

In August 2019 UNICEF started developing its Humanitarian Cash Transfer (HCT) Management Information System (MIS) aiming to achieve a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) by 2021 first quarter. This MIS functionalities and their linkages to existing solutions is presented in the diagram below.

The HCT MIS will allow UNICEF country offices and their partners, to collect, manage and use data for their cash transfer intervention in a safe and accountable way. The HCT MIS has been designed to be agnostic concerning the source of its data. Beneficiary information can come from existing sources (UN agencies, partners or government) or can be collected through third party solutions like the Kobo toolbox which the HCT MIS aims to support.

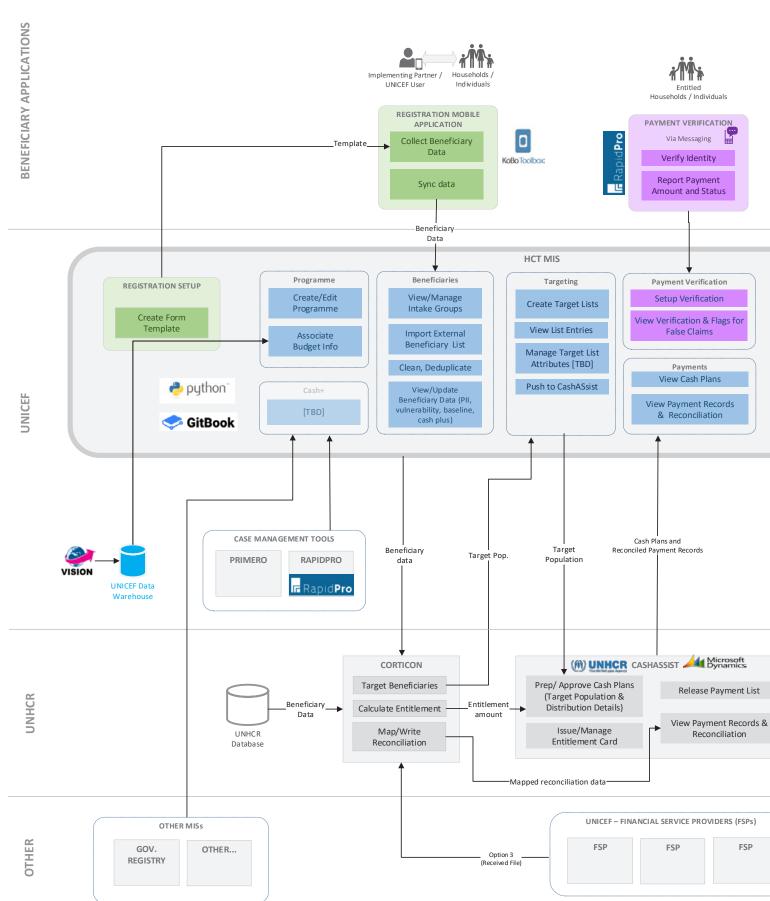
As part of this initiative a MoU was signed with UNHCR to enhance the functionalities of its payment management solution Cash Assist to meet UNICEF business needs. Cash Assist will allow UNICEF to create and approve payment lists as well as sending this data to Financial Service Providers in compliance with segregation of duties principles as well as best practices in terms of data protection and information security.

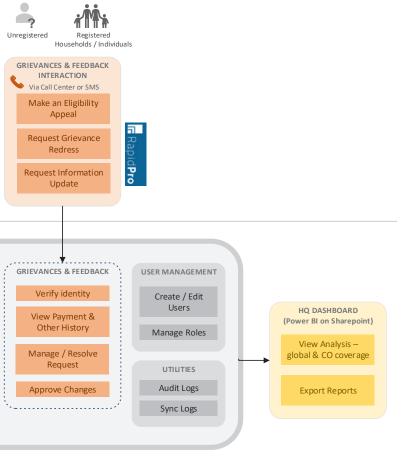
UNICEF real time monitoring solution – Rapid Pro – will be leveraged by the HCT MIS for payment verification purposes as well as one of the communication channels for grievances and feedbacks.

UNICEF comparative advantage in delivering HCT complemented by basic services (a.k.a. Cash+) has been carefully considered in the design of the HCT MIS. The Cash+ workstream covers all UNICEF sectors of expertise (Nutrition, Health, WASH and Child Protection). This breadth of activities calls for a staged approach to the development of ad-hoc information management solutions for each type of Cash+ programme. This work is foreseen to start after the achievement of a MVP.

# Humanitarian Cash Transfer Management Information System

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PROGRAMME (EMOPS)



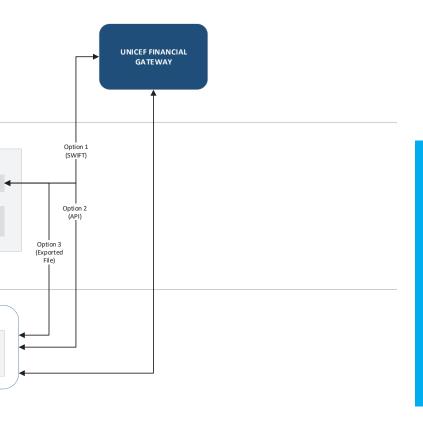


#### **Conclusion**

The HCT MIS is an important milestone to ensure UNICEF capacity to deliver humanitarian cash transfers with adequate risk management and quality assurance. This system will also allow UNICEF to participate into the forthcoming interagency data hub with WFP and UNHCR as part of the UN Common Cash System initiative.

Despite leveraging some existing proprietary solutions for some of specialized tasks (payment management through Microsoft Dynamics), this MIS is developed in an open source programming language (Python) hence contributing to the creation of a public good for the whole humanitarian community.

While government shall be able to use and access the HCT MIS should they require such a tool, UNICEF will continue to support governments to develop localized solutions for the long term MIS needs of Social Protection systems.



### For further information:

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# NEXT STEPS and CONTACTS

Administrative data will continue to be a priority for UNICEF over the next few years. Support tools such as ADaMM – the administrative data maturity model featured here will continue to be tested and move toward roll out at scale, with the intent for this work to be made publicly available for all to use. Similarly there will be an ongoing focus on scaling projects – such as those presented here in education and health - that support the development and strengthening of administrative data systems that support strong engagement and data use at the community level, recognizing that it as this level that many of the key efforts are needed in order to achieve the SDGs and that data quality is closely connected to the value that is placed on the data systems by those who use them for data collection on a day to day basis.

We are also moving forward with a range of work intended to strengthen our support on broader data issues that relate closely to our work on administrative data. These include the Responsible Data for Children initiative (www.rd4c.org) which aims to provide practical guidance and support to assist UNICEF, partners, and governments to apply best practice around the protection and use of data on children; support for developing data action plans for country offices; as well as examining the use of new technologies in administrative systems – including the collection and use of biometric data for children (www.data.unicef.org/resources/biometrics).

UNICEF works closely with many partner organizations on administrative data issues, with work such as the Legal Identity Agenda (presented within this document) providing both unique opportunities for new areas of data linkage and risks that need to be addressed. These partnerships will continue to be an important part of the administrative work program moving forward.

Further information on any of the projects here can obtained from individual project contacts as listed on the posters, or by contacting the Data Use Unit as below. We look forward to working with a broad group of partners, governments, and communities as we continue to take this work forward.

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