

# Evaluation of Promoting the Protection and Education Rights of Children Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra



## Summary Report

January 2009-December 2013

Evaluation conducted by



Evaluation commissioned by



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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABL	Activity Based Learning
AGG	Adolescent Girls Group
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
AWC	<i>Anganwadi</i> Centre
AWW	<i>Anganwadi</i> Worker
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
BDO	Block Development Officer
BEO	Block Education Officer
BLCPC	Block Level Child Protection Committee
Bt	<i>Bacillus Thuringiensis</i>
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCE	Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFS	Child Friendly School
CFSS	Child Friendly Schools & Systems
CLPRA	Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act
CP	Child Protection
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CRC	Convention on Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CTS	Child Tracking System
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
CWPO	Child Welfare Police Officer
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAP	District Action Plan
DCLAP	District Child Labour Action Plan
DCLTF	District Child Labour Task Force
DCPC	District Child Protection Committee
DCPU	District Child Protection Unit
DCU	Data Collection Unit
DCR	Directorate of Child Rights
DIET	District Institution of Education and Training
DISE	District Information System for Education
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
DSJ&E	Department of Social Justice and Empowerment
DWCD	Department Women and Child Development
DWHH	<i>Deutsche Welthungerhilfe</i>
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EWN	<i>Eine Welt Netz</i>
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FYP	Five Year Plan
GCERT	Gujarat Council of Educational Research and Training
GoG	Government of Gujarat
GoI	Government of India

GoM	Government of Maharashtra
GoR	Government of Rajasthan
GP	<i>Gram Panchayat</i>
GR	Government Resolution
GSCPCR	Gujarat State Commission for Protection of Rights of the Child
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
HH	Household
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ICN	India Committee of the Netherlands
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
IDI	In-depth Interview
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IF	IKEA Foundation
ILRF	International Labour Rights Fund
IPC	Interpersonal Communication
JJ	Juvenile Justice
JJA	Juvenile Justice Act
JJB	Juvenile Justice Board
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi <i>Balika Vidyalaya</i>
KP	<i>Kendra Pramukhs</i>
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MIS	Management Information System
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoL&E	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MPR	Monthly Progress Report
MPSP	Maharashtra <i>Prathamik Shikshan Parishad</i>
MRM	<i>Meena Raju Manch</i>
MSCERT	Maharashtra State Commission for Educational Research and Training
MSCPS	Maharashtra State Child Protection Society
MWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NCLP	National Child Labour Project
NCPCR	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPCL	National Policy on Child Labour
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOSC	Out of School Children
PEDO	People's Education and Development Organisation
PLCPC	<i>Panchayat</i> Level Child Protection Committee (Rajasthan only)
PRI	<i>Panchayati Raj</i> Institution
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
RSCPCR	Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Rights of the Child
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCLTF	State Child Labour Task Force
SCPS	State Child Protection Society
SDP	School Development Plan
S4D	Sports for Development
SHG	Self Help Group
SIERT	State Institute of Education Research and Training
SJE	Social Justice and Empowerment

SJPU	Special Juvenile Police Unit
SMC	School Management Committee
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SPS	Social Protection Service
SPSU	State Project Support Unit
SRP	School Readiness Programme
SSA	<i>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</i>
ST	Scheduled Tribe
STP	Special Training Programme
ToR	Terms of Reference
U-DISE	Unified-District Information System for Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VCPC	Village Child Protection Committee
VV	Village Volunteer
WCD	Women and Child Development
YASHADA	Yashvantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration
ZP	<i>Zilla Parishad</i>

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Context

Child labour, as defined by Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Children (CRC), is a violation of children's rights. The practice of child labour interferes with children's education and is associated with exploitation of children who often work in hazardous conditions harming both their physical and mental development.<sup>1 2</sup>

The States Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan rank among the highest for the proportional share of children aged 5-14 years engaged in child labour in India.<sup>3</sup> These regions are characteristic of cotton production where Gujarat and Maharashtra are among the top producers of cotton in India. A large number of children in these States working in cotton growing areas comprise a vulnerable population belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe and other marginalised communities.<sup>4</sup>

*It is estimated that 3.09 million children up to 18 years work in cotton growing (cotton picking) in the three States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan combined.*

*(Source: Study commissioned by IKEA Foundation 2008)*

The Project "**Promoting Protection and Education Rights of Children in Cotton Areas**" was implemented over the period 2009-2013 in two phases to address the issue of child labour in the three States of Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra in India. The Project sought a two-month no-cost extension from January to February 2014 for completing the intervention.

**The objective of the Project** was for children in the age group of 06-14 years in cotton seed production areas to not be working but go to school.

To achieve the objective, the Project worked on four components:

*1) creating and strengthening child protection structures to adequately protect children against exploitation and abuse; 2) improving the quality of education to increase enrolment and retention, 3) raising awareness and empowering families and communities so that they take collective action against child labour; and 4) addressing exclusion of vulnerable families to service provision and social protection schemes.*

**The Project was supported by the IKEA Foundation.** UNICEF facilitated the Project in partnership with the governments of Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra with implementation support from civil society organisations (CSOs). The Project builds on previous and ongoing IKEA Foundation support to the UNICEF Child Protection programme. **New Concept Information Systems (NCIS) was commissioned by UNICEF** to conduct an evaluation of the Project in all 11 Project districts in the three States.

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<sup>1</sup> National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. (2008). Abolition of Child Labour and Making Education a Reality for Every Child as a Right.

<sup>2</sup> Sinha, S. (2007). Chairperson Address on Child Labour in Agriculture at ILO Conference on 12 June 2007 Delhi. Retrieved 13 May 2014. URL:

<http://ncpcr.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=2&&sublinkid=157&lid=76>

<sup>3</sup> National Sample Survey Office 2009-10 data

<sup>4</sup> Burra, N. (2008). *Children migrating for work from Dungarpur district Rajasthan, to Gujarat: A Report*. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. Retrieved 13 May 2012. URL:

<http://ncpcr.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=2&&sublinkid=162&lid=81>

**The Project adopted a common strategy in all the three States** to create a protective environment for children to fulfil their 'rights to protection against exploitation and abuse' and their 'right to education and participation'. It employed the strategy of preventing children from working and migrating for labour through enrolling them in school. In addition, it collaborated with the State governments in strengthening existing child protection structures and establishing new structures mandated under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS). This approach helped to strengthen preventive measures for addressing the root causes associated with child labour in a synergised and systematic manner. The Project adopted advocacy for changes in legislation, creating a protective environment for children, strengthening institutional capacities and service delivery of quality education, and changing community attitudes and implementing strategies for poverty alleviation.

## Evaluation Purpose and Objective

**The purpose of the evaluation** seizes the opportunity to assess the extent to which the Project has achieved its objectives at the end of its implementation period. The evaluation endeavours to provide an understanding of the challenges faced during Project implementation and highlight key innovations under the Project. These will be used to inform recommendations for future programming. **The objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Project and to derive recommendations accordingly.**

## Methodology

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development–Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria for evaluation of development assistance were applied to frame the research questions to determine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the Project.<sup>5</sup>The comprehensive assessment of impact was not part of the remit of this evaluation and thus not focussed upon in the evaluation design.

The evaluation was based on a mix of secondary and primary research activities. A desk review of relevant documents obtained from UNICEF and those collected through field work was done. In addition, qualitative research approaches comprising in-depth interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with key stakeholders were adopted to probe quantitative indicators and inform findings. A master list of research questions was developed and used to prepare seven tools for conducting investigative interactions at the policy level, programme level, and community level. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to obtain views from a diverse range of stakeholders at these levels.

Geographical representation was achieved by including all 11 Project intervention districts in the study. This ensured that the Project's diversity in terms of socio-economic and geographic profile of the respondent groups was captured as part of the evaluation as well as the spatial spread of the Project intervention.

## Findings

The evaluation found that the *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability* of the Project were specifically addressed.

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<sup>5</sup>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee, 'Principles for evaluation of development assistance' (Paris, 1991).

## **Relevance**

The Project was found relevant to the child labour issues concerning India since it aimed at addressing the multiple factors prompting the prevalence of child labour. It was aligned with various international conventions and the national legislations meant to create an enabling and protecting environment reducing vulnerabilities of children. The initiation of the Project coincided with two key child-centered national legislation and programme, the Right to Education (RTE) and the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) which gave a positive thrust to the Project intervention and opportunity to leverage the change in policy environment to meet the Project objectives.

## **Efficiency**

A total of EUR 13,446,577 was made available by the IKEA Foundation for Project implementation activities. The actual expenditure incurred in the Project over four years (2009-2014) across the three States was about 7% more than the allotted budget at EUR 14,352,680. The additional cost was met by leveraging Government and UNICEF resources. The evaluation found the Project to be efficient even though it incurred additional cost under all four of its components. . This was so because the additional money was largely required for the effective roll out of the ICPS and RTE programmes which became effective in 2009. These programmes were in nascent stage and the mandated government structures were not in place. Building child protection structures, building capacities of human resources in the area of child protection and quality education, and conducting monitoring activities for efficient programme implementation required time, money and effort.

## **Effectiveness**

The Project succeeded in achieving its key objectives and exceeded the targets against all performance indicators across the four outcomes which indicate its effectiveness. The partnership approach adopted under the Project and the multi-pronged strategies designed suited to local needs effectively and complemented the Project objectives.

## **Sustainability**

A significant number of Project innovations and best practices served as models for adoption and replication by the three State governments. Model intervention of establishing child protection structures through government resolutions in Project districts has been scaled up to all other districts of the three States as these are in line with the ICPS and the Juvenile Justice Act. Similarly, the child protection structures established under the Project shall be sustained in the system. Training modules, guidelines, SOPs, various village-level database formats have been published and adopted by the State government

**The key findings from the evaluation are broadly presented for each of the four Project component areas:**

### ***Project Component 1: Creating and strengthening child protection structures to adequately protect children against exploitation and abuse***

The outcome under component one focussed on having child protection structures in place to address child labour issues. The Project contributed towards the creation of an entire child protection system that supports the implementation of ICPS by the GoI. The evaluation found that all targets as per the Project's logical framework were achieved by the end of the Project period in 2013 across all the three Project States despite various implementation challenges. Notifications were issued for the establishment of child protection structures along with the

formation and capacity building of the child protection functionaries at the state, district, and community levels, which contributed in facilitating a child protective environment. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the efficient recruitment process of child protection functionaries were developed. Challenges were faced in the establishment of DCPUs in each district; however, this was overcome through sustained advocacy efforts by UNICEF. The target for establishment of Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs) was considerably above target. UNICEF advocacy for legislative changes with the State government enabled the increase in child labour age from 14 years to 18 years in Rajasthan and the formulation of State Child Policy in Maharashtra, thus strengthening the governments' commitment to child protection. It was also recommended that the Child Labour Act be extended to prohibit child labour in agriculture as well.

### ***Project Component 2: Improving the quality of education to increase enrolment and retention***

As a measure of Project effectiveness, the findings of the evaluation indicated that the Project had achieved the majority of the planned targets. According to the Project's results matrix, the proportion of children in the age group of 6–14 years enrolled in schools was much higher than targeted, affirming an even greater positive trend in comparison with the baseline. The baseline figure at the start of the Project was 85% in Gujarat and 92.1% in Maharashtra. In Rajasthan, it was 86.4% for girls and 90% for boys in Dungarpur and 77.8% for girls and 91.1% for boys in Udaipur. The achievement in Gujarat was 95.7% against 95%; in Maharashtra it was 99.5% against 96% according to District Information System for Education (DISE) data, while in Rajasthan, it was 97% against 90%, as confirmed by Government data sources.

### ***Project Component 3: Raising awareness and empowering families and communities so that they take collective action against child labour***

The capacity of the community to address child labour issues and send children to school was strengthened under component three of the Project. The approach adopted ensured that the child protection system is strengthened at the village level with participation from the community as a key stakeholder. There was also the involvement of adolescent girls through formation of adolescent girls groups which led to their enhanced knowledge on the importance of education. Knowledge of three central pieces of legislation viz. Child Labour Act, Right to Education (RTE) Act, and the Child Marriage Act was disseminated to the community.

### ***Project Component 4: Enhanced access to social protection schemes for vulnerable families***

This component focussed on linking vulnerable families to social protection schemes (SPSs) and improving their income levels. The key intervention areas included mapping and identification of SPSs, explicitly targeting vulnerable families; increased awareness among these families on such schemes; and creating systems to monitor and link vulnerable families to SPSs. By the end of the Project, the percentage of vulnerable families availing benefits of at least one such scheme was 96% against the target of 57% in Dungarpur and 98% against the target of 51.7% in Udaipur, in Rajasthan. In Maharashtra, the achievement percentage was significantly high at 83% compared to the target of 10%, whereas, the updated data of Gujarat indicates a marginal under-achievement of 74% against the target of 80% families linked with at least one SPS.

## Conclusions

The Project has enabled the creation of a protective learning environment through the establishment of child protection structures and a focus on quality education in all the three intervention States by implementing four Project components that complement each other. Success has been achieved in accomplishing, in fact in many instances even exceeding, the targets that were set for the various outcomes and sub-outcomes. Qualitatively, the model of the Project has been largely successful with the implementation of many innovations, which have also translated into best practices that can be scaled up and replicated across the State.

## Lessons Learned

The evaluation noted that the Project experienced several difficulties and constraints in its implementation process. The Project devised appropriate methods to overcome these challenges in many cases that served as important lessons and milestones for mid-course corrections and added considerable value to Project interventions. In fact, while **child protection structures** have been successfully established under the Project, there is a continued need to strengthen them so that they are functioning at optimal level. Sufficient time needs to be allocated for conducting **training sessions** with refresher trainings taking place periodically. It was found that political will, especially at the State level, is an essential ingredient in developing **action plans on child labour**. This underscores the need for continued **advocacy** at this level.

To implement **child-friendly school (CFS)**, the evaluation findings across the three States indicated that the Project experienced initial reluctance and lack of commitment among teachers to adopt CFS activities. Also, strengthening **early child education** through school readiness programme was a challenge due to low education levels of the *Anganwadi* workers.

To **raise awareness and empower families and communities to take collective action** against child labour, the Project faced initial challenges. There was a lack of community support and misconceptions regarding child protection and child rights and these issues were also considered insignificant issues by the community. The Project developed effective and multiple communication strategies and campaigns and adopted mid-media activities suited to local needs for community awareness.

To **link vulnerable families with SPSs** to indirectly benefit children required identification and registration of such families with SPSs. This proved to be a challenging task due to the lack of efficient data collection systems. Door-to-door visits by NGOs in coordination with village level child protection structures helped in listing marginalised families. Seeking accurate family information was another constraint that was overcome by involving credible spokespersons from within the villages.

## Recommendations

### Policy Level Recommendations

- **Platforms for young people – provide opportunities for engagement**

The Project's social mobilisation initiative brought the community together and strengthened their capacities and participation in protecting rights of children. Of particular significance was the platform of **AGGs and women groups which demonstrated the power of collective in effective monitoring of child labour cases and mainstreaming children in school**. These groups must be further engaged while

implementing a community-based programme in all three States. Participation and role of the youth must therefore be considered as drivers of change. The approach of the government must not be linear and thematic but comprehensive, with constant dialogue with young people.

- **Increased inter-departmental convergence**

The Project emphasised the need for inter-departmental convergence for strengthening education and child protection systems to prevent and rehabilitate children withdrawn from child labour. UNICEF can play a significant role in facilitating inter-departmental convergence through continued advocacy efforts and providing technical support to the Government.

- **Data on out-of-school children and working children to be strengthened**

The evaluation found that data and information on actual numbers of children in labour and out-of-school was a weak area. There is an urgent need to improve data and information systems, especially in the area of CP, for effective planning and response.

- **Comprehensive planning at state and district level for quality education and child labour prevention**

There is need for comprehensive planning at the state and district levels to address bottlenecks in achieving quality education, especially in the tribal areas to prevent child labour. The Project demonstrated initiatives for quality education systems such as SRP and CFS which can be further replicated across States.

- **Trained professionals for implementation of ICPS and RTE**

Availability of trained and quality human resources on child rights was a matter of concern in all Project States. The lack of CP experts was encountered at Project inception since CP is a newly-emerged discipline. Building capacities of CP functionaries in a comprehensive manner through a single training round was also a challenge. Refresher training modules and implementation plans should be developed by States to ensure that capacity building of stakeholders at various levels under ICPS, education personnel including AWWs, teachers and SMC members; and CBOs and PRIs continue to effectively address CP issues. The Project indicated the need for training SMCs in utilising existing funds and grants available to schools more effectively and to ensure the ethos of child-friendly teaching.

- **Access to social protection for the most vulnerable—monitoring and data management required**

Towards a more holistic approach to providing social protection for children, there is a need to strengthen systems of education so that families who receive benefits of social protection have avenues to provide education for their children. Mapping of SPSs should be carried out at the state level. Area-specific compendia of SPSs should be kept at *panchayat* offices in coordination with local NGOs so that people have better access to schemes.

## **Project Level Recommendations**

- **Common strategy across the Project area to enable easier scale up**

Uniformity and commonality enables easier scale up of interventions. There needs to be a common strategy and a common thread that runs through the components of the programme in all States. Future Project interventions should aim at adopting common Project indicators and strategies across the implementation areas. This will enable easier scaling up and uniformity. However, State specific diversity needs to be considered.

- **Monitoring and evaluation framework to be developed at the inception of the Project**  
The evaluation concluded the need for developing a robust Project design including the monitoring and evaluation framework at the Project inception stage.
- **Cost effectiveness of the project**  
Systems of planning and monitoring costs should be devised at the Project inception stage for effective cost management. The Project of this nature should create a contingency to absorb costs involved in any mid-course correction. A cost-analysis exercise based on Project findings could be useful during future Project designing.
- **Inclusion of both girls and boys**  
The Project has worked extensively with AGGs which delivered valuable results in spreading awareness and dealing with issues of child protection. The evaluation found that involving boys would enhance the scope of community outreach on child protection and improve gender sensitisation and response to adolescent issues.
- **Improved mechanisms for data and information**  
The evaluation found that data and information about the population of 0-18 year olds was unavailable. Thus there should be an improved system for collecting authentic data and information on children for effective and targeted project planning and implementation.

## Community Level Recommendations

- **Enhanced involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions for long-term results**  
The involvement of the PRIs provided the much-needed impetus to the Project implementation by mobilising support from all community sections. Interventions focusing on communities must therefore seek strengthened involvement of PRI systems in planning and implementation and inclusion of child rights issues in their regular meetings and agenda.
- **Linkages between child protection committees and school management committees to be strengthened**  
Creation of VCPCs at the village level and establishment and strengthening of RTE Act mandated School Management Committees (SMCs) for monitoring school enrollment and retention were key project interventions for creating a child-protective environment. Establishing a close linkage between the two committees will further strengthen the process of establishing a child protective environment and leverage the common membership of the two committees.
- **Panchayati Raj Institutions to build awareness for access to social protection schemes**  
Strong community mobilisation is critical to ensuring long-term sustainable change. And behaviour change, though a time consuming process, has shown to give effective results. Since awareness levels about SPSs were found to be low among communities, GPs were advised to take the lead for disseminating information on SPSs in a planned manner. It is recommended that details on accessing SPSs should be disseminated in the *gram sabha* and *panchayat* meetings.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Context

India accounts for the largest number of child labourers in the world. According to the 2005-2006 National Family Health Survey-3 (NFHS-3), the percentage of working children in the 05-14 years age group was 11.8.<sup>6</sup> It is also estimated that two-thirds of child labour in India are engaged in agriculture. After ratifying the CRC in December 1992, India has been able to make considerable progress in addressing the issue of child labour in recent years. According to Census 2011, 10.12 million children in the age group of 05-14 years are engaged as child labour, which is a marked decline from the figures estimated by Census 2001 of 12.6 million.<sup>7</sup> However, there is an increase within these numbers of children working in urban areas. The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) of India estimated that five million children were

*Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines child labour as “any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, spiritual, moral or social development.”*

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engaged in work in 2009-10 as compared to nine million in 2004-05.<sup>8</sup> The Government’s Twelfth Five Year Plan states that child labour incidences have declined since the 1990s and active participation of boys and girls in the labour market has been falling commensurate to a significant increase in school enrolment due to the Right to Education Act (RTE). While this is a positive development, a significant

proportion of children in India have yet to be granted their fundamental human rights.

The problem of child labour is all-pervasive across sectors as children serve as a cheap and manageable source of labour. One of the areas where child labour is prevalent is in cotton growing fields and evidence indicates that their demand has been on the rise with the advent of genetically modified hybrid varieties known as *Bacillus Thuringiensis* (Bt) Cotton. It is in this context that the Project “Promoting Protection and Education Rights of Children in Cotton Areas in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan” was implemented by UNICEF with support of the IKEA Foundation (IF) and in partnership with the governments of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

## 1.2 Dynamics of Child Labour and BT Cotton

India has the largest area under cotton cultivation. In 2008, over nine million hectares of land were used for cotton production, which accounted for 22% of the world’s total cotton area and 14% of global production. The States of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra

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<sup>6</sup> Based on the total number of children (age 05-14 years) of 241,759,000 - as per population projection for 2006. The criteria used by NFHS for calculation of child workers are: children in the age group 05-11 years and children in the age group 12-14 years, who in the seven days preceding the survey, worked for someone not a member of the household (HH), with or without pay, or did HH chores for 28 or more hours or engaged in any other family work; or engaged in any other family work for 14 or more hours.

<sup>7</sup><http://labour.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Divisions/childlabour/Census-2001%262011.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> National Sample Survey Office, Government of India. Retrieved 12 May 2014. URL: <http://labour.nic.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Divisions/childlabour/NSSOEstimateofChildLabourinMajorIndianStates.pdf>

and Andhra Pradesh account for 88% of cotton grown in India. India has seen a quantitative increase in cotton production caused by a qualitative shift with the introduction of the Bt cotton seed. A research by the Foundation of Agrarian Studies found that cultivation of Bt cotton is very labour-intensive, particularly as it involves cross-pollination, weeding and picking. Research conducted on child labour in the cottonseed producing state of Andhra Pradesh showed that labour costs for hybrid cottonseed production account for approximately half of the total cost. Therefore, farmers employ children because they can make them work longer hours and are easier to control as compared to adult employees.<sup>9</sup> Evidence also suggests that these activities are predominantly performed by girl children, who are sought for their fast hand action and nimble fingers for the cross-pollination. This exploitation poses serious health problems for children as they also suffer from the harmful effects of pesticides commonly used in cotton production and due to long working hours of more than 12 hours a day, exacerbated by physical, verbal and sometimes sexual abuse.<sup>10</sup> General health problems reported by children include severe headaches, weakness, convulsions and respiratory depression. Few cases of deaths due to pesticide exposure have also been reported.

**Child labour in cotton fields** is endemic in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. A study commissioned by IF in 2008 estimated that 3.09 million children up to the age of 18 years work in cotton growing (cotton picking) in the States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. Gujarat and Rajasthan each account for approximately 8% of child labourers in the age group of 05-14 years, while the estimate for Maharashtra was 5%.<sup>11</sup> Gujarat and Maharashtra are consistently among the top producers of cotton in India. The cotton seed production areas in these States, in particular, are widespread especially with the usage of genetically modified varieties of Bt cotton seeds.<sup>12</sup>

There are reports which indicate that **the majority of children working in the cotton industry have either dropped out of school or have never been to school.** The study commissioned by IF reports that absenteeism from school during the cotton picking season (October-November) led to

*The 2009-2010 NSSO (66<sup>th</sup> round of survey) on child labour in India estimated that the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan have the highest proportion of children in the age group of 05-14 years engaged in child labour.*

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<sup>9</sup>Venkateswarlu, D.(2007).*Recent Trends in Employment of Child Labour in Hybrid Cottonseed Production in India*. Study jointly commissioned by OECD Watch, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (DWHH), India Committee of the Netherlands (ICN), Eine Welt Netz NRW (EWN NRW), International Labor Rights Fund (ILRF).

<sup>10</sup>National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. (2011).*Gujarat Visit Report to Assess the Child Labour and Trafficking Situation in the Bt Cotton Seeds Farms of Gujarat*. Retrieved 13 May 2014. URL: <http://ncpcr.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=2&&sublinkid=210&lid=109>

<sup>11</sup> NSSO 2009-10 data estimates the total number of children in the age group of 05-14 years engaged in child labour in India is 4,983,871 children. The estimated number of child labourers in the age group of 05-14 years in Gujarat is 390,687 (166,432 male and 224,255 female); Rajasthan has 405,936 (136,239 male and 269,697 female) child labourers, while Maharashtra has 260,673 (120,600 male and 140,073 female) child labourers. Retrieved 13 May 2014. URL: <http://labour.nic.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Divisions/childlabour/NSSOEstimateofChildLabourinMajorIndianStates.pdf>

<sup>12</sup>Gruere, G. & Sun, Y.(2012).Measuring the contribution of Bt cotton adoption to India's cotton yields leap.International Food Policy Research Institute.Retrieved 13 May 2014. URL: <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/measuring-contribution-bt-cotton-adoption-india-s-cotton-yields-leap>

children dropping out of schools. This was particularly prevalent among migrant children.<sup>13</sup> In fact, seasonal migration and trafficking of children from Rajasthan to Gujarat to work in Bt cotton fields are a cause of concern. Interstate migration from the tribal belt of southern Rajasthan to Gujarat affects a particularly vulnerable population of tribal migrant workers. A large number of child labourers are from scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST) and other marginalised communities.<sup>14</sup> In spite of reports of increase in school enrolment of girls, the NSSO data of 2007-08 reveals that in addition to not being able to go to school because of having to work in the fields, they are also held back from going to school because of household and domestic chores, which forces their enrolment number to be even lower.<sup>15</sup>

## 1.3 Legal and Programmatic Safeguards

### Child Protection (CP) Legislations

India's commitment to tackle child labour is reflected in the Child Protection (CP) legislations. However, the legislative inadequacies and the gaps in enforcing the legislative provisions have fostered an environment that leads to child labour.<sup>16 17</sup>

The primary legislation for addressing child labour is the **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CLPRA), 1986**. The Act does not prohibit children from working in agriculture but only regulates their working conditions and restricts their working hours. Moreover, it is limited to children up to 14 years and does not protect children between 15-18 years working in exploitative conditions such as in cotton and cottonseed farms. Child labour in agriculture is also not covered under other relevant protective laws relating to trafficking, bonded labour and discrimination against SC and ST. In addition, implementation of the law is a huge concern.

The **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJA) (2000; 2006; 2011)** is a progressive and overarching CP legislation covering children in need of care and protection. It covers working children below 18 years. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006) addresses child vulnerabilities and attempts to secure protection for children. However, due to the lack of convergent mechanisms between the Ministries, vulnerable children often fall through the cracks and are not protected against abuse and neglect.

### Child Labour Rehabilitation

The Government of India (GoI) has taken measures for child labour rehabilitation and its prevention by initiating various programmes. The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL&E) has been implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) since 1988 for rehabilitating children withdrawn from work. The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) operationalised by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) since 2009 mandates the **creation of a CP safety net** through institutionalisation of essential services,

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<sup>13</sup> Project proposal - Promoting, Protection and Education Rights of Children in Cotton Areas, Revised, 09.07.2012, submitted to IKEA Foundation

<sup>14</sup>Burra, N.(2008).Children migrating for work from Dungarpur district Rajasthan, to Gujarat: A Report.National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.Retrieved 13 May 2012. URL: <http://ncpcr.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=2&&sublinkid=162&lid=81>

<sup>15</sup> XII Five Year Plan, 2012-17, Social Sectors, Volume III, page 134

<sup>16</sup>International Labour Organization.Retrieved 13 May 2014. URL: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/moscow/areas/ipec/causes.htm>

<sup>17</sup>UNICEF.(2012).International Day of the Girl Child.Retrieved 14 May 2014. URL: [http://www.unicef.org/eapro/factsheet\\_girl\\_day\\_east\\_asia\\_and\\_pacific.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/eapro/factsheet_girl_day_east_asia_and_pacific.pdf)

and establishment and strengthening of CP structures at state, district, block and village levels and enhancement of capacities at all levels. ICPS also includes the creation of a database and **knowledge base for CP services**, and strengthening CP at family and community levels and appropriate **inter-sectoral response** at all levels.

India has witnessed significant progress in improving **access to education** in recent years. The **Right to Education Act (RTE)** provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)*, the main programme under this Act, aimed at 'education for all,' and has achieved near-universal level of primary school enrolment. There has been decline in out-of-school children (OOSC) across gender and social categories, reduction in equity and gender gaps, and increase in school infrastructure and teachers under SSA. Despite these achievements, education in India faces numerous challenges, such as low mean years of schooling (5.12 years), which is much below emerging economies like China (8.17 years) and Brazil (7.54 years); inter-state variation in school enrolment levels; non-compliance to RTE norms by a large number of schools; untrained teachers; poor learning outcomes for children; weak teaching-learning processes and transactions lacking child-friendly and child-centred approach.<sup>18</sup> The issue of access now is not limited to increased enrolment but one of increased attendance, dropout reduction, and ensuring access to most disadvantaged sections of the society, quality education delivery and community involvement.<sup>19</sup>

## **1.4 UNICEF Intervention in Combating Child Labour in Cotton Areas**

The Project was implemented by UNICEF with support of IF and in partnership with Governments of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan, and the civil society organisations (CSOs). It was implemented from July 2009 to December 2013. The Project builds on previous and ongoing IF support to the UNICEF CP programme aimed at reducing child labour in the carpet belt in eastern Uttar Pradesh, cottonseed production in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, and the metalware industry in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh. This initiative aimed at expanding the coverage and impact of interventions for promoting children's right to protection and education.

UNICEF's work in the carpet and metalware industry has provided learning for other similar initiatives. It was seen that ***the issue of child protection cannot be seen in isolation to other rights of children***. Hence, a holistic approach to child rights is used as an entry point with communities. Convergence with various government departments as well as linkages to systems and government programmes was recognised as essential to making a difference and to understand the requirements as well as the numbers of out of school children (OOSC). Therefore, joint surveys were conducted by education and labour departments for OOSC. The project also builds on the learning from other projects that suggest that creating community structures is the only sustainable form of action. Therefore, the project worked through volunteer-driven mobilisation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) only as catalysts to ensure sustainable change.

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<sup>18</sup> XII Five Year Plan, 2012-17, Social Sectors, Volume III, page 48

<sup>19</sup> XII Five Year Plan, 2012-17, Social Sectors, Volume III, page 50

## 1.5 Project Objective and Design

*The overall aim of the Project is that 'in cotton and cotton seed production areas, children in the age group of 06-14 years are not working and are in school'.*

The Project was designed to directly benefit 4.926 million children in the age group of 06-14 years.<sup>20</sup> The Project was jointly conceptualised and discussed with a series of stakeholders including the government at both State and district levels. District magistrates, NGOs, civil society, members of the community and *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRIs) were also involved. Selection of the districts was based on

baseline data collected, which indicated the most marginalised communities. State offices also used secondary data and mapped blocks on the basis of social indicators and the blocks with the worst indicators were selected. A decision was made to target those beneficiaries who came from these communities.

There was also an emphasis on ensuring the rights of children with a **focus on the girl child and on adolescent girls**. Discussions were conducted on specific issues including child labour, need for quality education, access to schools including trained teachers through a participatory consultative process at all levels, whilst the framework was being developed. The process ensured representation of all groups.

*The Project's design comprised clearly-defined intervention components focusing on four planned outcomes, each having a set of sub-outcomes to measure the Project's success. The four Project components were inter-linked and they complemented each other to create and strengthen a protective environment for children and to provide them with education.*

## 1.6 Logical Framework and Theory of Change

A logical framework (*logframe*) with indicators was developed to guide and track the progress on planned outcomes. This framework outlined indicators for each outcome and sub-outcome

along with baseline and target figures and the method of verification for each (*please see Annexure 1 for Project logframe*). The framework was revised later with changes in indicators of some of the outcomes to make them more specific and measurable (*please see Annexure 2 for revised Project log frame*). The Project was designed based on the logical framework aiming towards children to be in school and not working and various inputs/ activities had to be in place to ensure the same.

*A Theory of Change model is a measurable description of a social change initiative that forms the basis for strategic planning, decision-making and evaluation. It is one of the most common tools used to map out a specific community's approach.*

Although the theory of change was not created from the beginning of the Project design, the existence of the logical framework allowed the programme staff to develop it at a later stage. The following figure illustrates the theory of change by which the inputs from outcome 1 are expected to impact the incidence of child labour and school enrolment (*please refer to Annex 15 for the theory of change for Components 2-4*). It also highlights

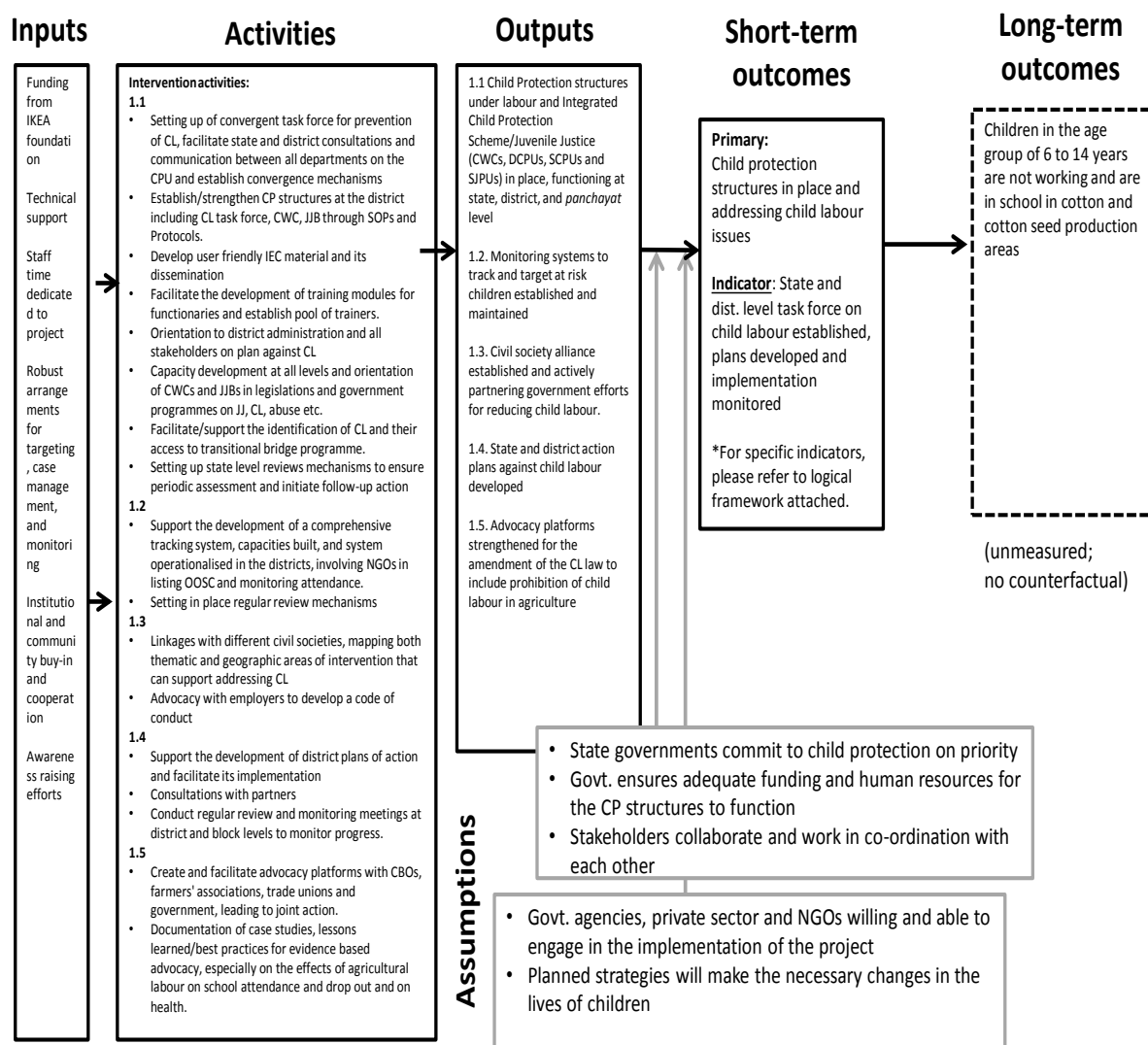
contextual and theoretical assumptions that underpin the extent to which the expected effects of the components will be realised and provides a possible explanation why those pieces are included and how they are interlinked.

<sup>20</sup> Revised proposal for extension until 2013-Child rights in three states, July 2009-2012, page 1.

**Figure 1: Key Programme (LogFrame) Indicators**

<p><b>Strategic result:</b> Children in the age-group of 06-14 years are currently in school and are not working</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of children (06-14 years) who are out of school is reduced</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 1:</b> CP structures are in place and are addressing child labour issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CP structures are in place and are functioning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 2 :</b>Quality education for all children in the age group of 06 -14 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of children (06-14 years) enrolled in schools</li> <li>• Percentage of children (03-05 years) enrolled in early learning programmes</li> <li>• Percentage of children (03-05 years) registered and attending early learning programmes</li> <li>• Percentage of children (06-14 years) ever enrolled in early learning programmes enter class 1 at an appropriate age</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 3 :</b>Families and communities take collective action for protection and development of children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of children (06-14 years) attending school</li> <li>• Increased awareness of harmful effects of child labour and importance of education</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 4 :</b>Enhanced access to social protection schemes for vulnerable families (out of school children and children without parental care)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of harmful effects of child labour and the importance of education</li> </ul>

## Theory of Change (Outcome 1)



## 1.7 Project Components

### Component 1: Creating and strengthening of child protection structures to adequately protect children against exploitation and abuse

The component aims to ensure that CP structures are in place for addressing CP issues. The Project views the issue of child labour within the broader context of CP. The approach, therefore, endeavours to strengthen the legislative and institutional mechanisms that protect children from exploitation and abuse.

### **Outcome 1: CP structures are in place for addressing child labour issues**

The five sub-outcomes under component 1 are as follows:

- 1.1. CP structures under labour and ICPS/JJA are in place and functioning at state, district, *panchayat* and village levels.
- 1.2. Monitoring systems to track and target children at risk have been established and maintained through village-level database.
- 1.3. Civil society alliance has been established and NGOs are actively partnering with District Administration for planning and review of child labour interventions.
- 1.4. State and district action plans against child labour have been developed and its implementation is being monitored.
- 1.5. Advocacy platforms strengthened (district-level meeting and recommendations provided) for amending child labour law to include prohibition of child labour in agriculture (Maharashtra only).

### **Component 2: Improving the quality of education to increase enrolment and retention**

Component 2 of the Project looks to deliver quality education available for all children in the age group of 06-14 years. Child labour is a significant driver for children's non-enrolment, delayed enrolment and early exit from school. Simultaneously, children not attending school are at risk of engaging in labour.<sup>21</sup> Lack of educational attainment is the most important non-economic factor, which continues to entrench child labour within the vicious cycle of poverty, even in the light of increasing economic well-being.<sup>22</sup> To ensure access to education and school retention of children who are vulnerable to labour and those who were formerly child labourers, education needs to become socially inclusive, of good quality, and involve a pedagogy that is child-centred. In addition, effective rehabilitation involves removing children from labour, ensuring access to adequate interim schooling and support to ensure that children catch-up on missed years of schooling and reach the correct learning level for their school grade before they join formal schools.

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<sup>21</sup>UNICEF Project Proposal to IKEA Foundation, 2009. Promoting Protection and Education Rights of Children in Cotton Areas – Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. Unpublished.

<sup>22</sup>National Commission Protection for Child Rights. (2008). Abolition of Child Labour and Making Education a Reality for Every Child as a Right.

## **Outcome 2: Quality education available for all children in the age group of 06-14 years**

The five sub-outcomes under component 2 are as follows:

- 2.1 All elementary schools in the Project areas are providing quality, child-friendly education. The RTE Act 2009 mandates 'child-friendly and child-centered' learning.
- 2.2 Special Training Programme (STP) for child labourers and other OOSC up to 14 years in place for mainstreaming children into formal education.
- 2.3 School Management Committees (SMCs) and PRIs monitor and support attendance and infrastructure improvement of schools.
- 2.4 Models of School Readiness Programme (SRP) established for children in the age group of 03-05 years.
- 2.5 Evidence-based advocacy for effective targeting and utilisation of resources for education of excluded children.

## **Component 3: Raising awareness and empowering families and communities so that they take collective action against child labour**

Component 3 of the Project focused on families and communities to take collective action for protection and development of children. This component aimed at changing the mindset and attitude of communities towards child labour. Key actors in society including children, parents and communities need to be convinced that child labour is a problem and educating children has long-term benefits. The belief that educating a girl is a poor investment, as she will marry and leave her father's house for her husband's, should be addressed. Parents who send their children to work as well as employers who hire children do not always recognise the harm caused to children, especially in the absence of any effective social or moral sanction against the practice. There is a lack of information about the health effects of exposure to harmful pesticides in cotton fields, the benefits of education and the future opportunities that a working child will be denied.<sup>23 24</sup> Hence, this component is linked with the other Project components since changing community attitudes on education and sending children to school requires both parents and children to see the benefits of quality education (component 2); and their engagement under CP structures in place at the *panchayat* and village levels and effective monitoring and resolution of child labour cases at the community level are linked with appropriate legislation and institutional mechanisms (component 1).

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<sup>23</sup>UNICEF Project Proposal to IKEA Foundation, 2009. Promoting Protection and Education Rights of Children in Cotton Areas – Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. Unpublished.

<sup>24</sup>International Labour Organisation. Retrieved 13 May 2014. URL: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/moscow/areas/ipec/causes.htm>

### **Outcome 3: Families and communities take collective action for protection and development of children**

The three sub-components under component 3 of the Project are as follows:

- 3.1 Families aware of harm caused by sending children to work and not sending their children to school.
- 3.2 Adolescents, especially girls and women, networked and empowered to monitor and tackle child rights violations and protect children's rights, especially the right to education and to protection.
- 3.3 Community leaders, including PRIs, take an active role in monitoring child rights issues and take action for preventing child labour.
- 3.4 Advocacy on child labour-free farming with farmers.

### **Component 4: Addressing exclusion of vulnerable families to service provision and social protection schemes (SPSs)**

Component 4 aimed at enhancing access to SPSs for vulnerable families. Households (HHs) adopt livelihood strategies and coping mechanisms to deal with poverty risks and shocks. Both HH vulnerabilities as well as their response mechanisms impact children. Social protection programmes for families in need help prevent a relapse of children into labour. Investment in SPSs is a cost-effective strategy to reduce child labour in the long term.

### **Outcome 4: Enhanced access to social protection schemes for vulnerable families (OOSC and children without parental care)**

The three sub-components under component 4 are as follows:

- 4.1 Social protection schemes mapped, reviewed and recommended for revisions to explicitly target vulnerable families, including those having children engaged in child labour and migrants.
- 4.2 Increased awareness among families on social protection schemes.
- 4.3 Systems set up to monitor and link vulnerable families to social protection schemes.

## **1.8 Project Strategy**

To achieve the four outcomes, the Project adopted a common strategy in all three States to create a protective environment for children in which their right to protection against exploitation and abuse and their access to education and participation were fulfilled. The strategy employed preventing children from working and migrating for labour by enrolling them into school. In addition, it collaborated with the state governments in strengthening existing CP structures and establishing new structures mandated under ICPS. This approach helped to strengthen preventive measures for addressing the causal factors associated with child labour in a synergised and systematic manner. This included advocating for changes in legislation, creating a protective environment for children, strengthening institutional capacities and service delivery of quality education, and changing community attitudes and implementing strategies for poverty alleviation.

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*Some of the state-specific strategies included:*

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- *strengthening the Early Childhood Education (ECE) quality in Gujarat;*
  - *using village-level microplanning, village information centres, life skills education for adolescent girls and youth volunteerism to address CP issues in Maharashtra; and*
  - *setting up of District Level Child Labour Task Force (DCLTF) and developing District Action Plans (DAPs) against child labour in Rajasthan.*
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## **1.9 Project Stakeholders and Convergence**

The Project was implemented with the support and partnerships of many stakeholders to further strengthen their capacities towards the collective objective of reducing child labour. The Project design inherently promoted convergence through coordination and undertaking joint initiatives in addressing child labour issues. The project focussed on ensuring that all the communities especially those which are most marginalised were included, particularly girls and women.

The Project was supported by the **IKEA Foundation** (IF) as the donor agency. It provided funding of EUR 13.4 million to UNICEF. An additional EUR 1.5 million was raised through other sources amounting to a total budget in excess of EUR 14.9 million (*please see Annexure 3 for Project budget*). UNICEF implemented the Project in partnership with **State Governments of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan** with implementation support from **CSOs and NGOs**. Community-based organisations (CBOs), including adolescent groups and PRIs, supported community sensitisation and mobilisation activities such as information dissemination on the harmful effects of child labour, importance of education and helped spread information on SPSs.

UNICEF provided technical expertise and support in all four project component areas. The UNICEF Chief of Field Office was the lead manager of the Project. Chiefs of CP, Education and Communication for Development (C4D), aided by the respective sector specialists, provided technical guidance to the Project. The UNICEF Country Office in Delhi was responsible for coordination with the relevant national-level ministries for issues related to policy, advocacy and programmatic response. UNICEF State Offices coordinated with the relevant state-level government departments and CSOs, community groups and local functionaries for issues related to Project implementation. The community groups included representation from women and adolescent girls.

At the national level, **Ministry of Labour and Empowerment (MoL&E), MWCD, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR)** were key stakeholders. At the State government level, functionaries under the **Department of Labour (DoL), Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD), Department of Education (DoE)/SSA, Department of Home (DoH) and Department of Social Justice and Empowerment (DSJ&E)** were primary stakeholders. In addition, locally elected government representatives played a crucial role in implementing the Project. CSOs, as project partners in each State, played a critical role in project implementation. The Project also worked with **media groups** to raise social consciousness and influence public opinion. In addition, **district-level task forces**, chaired by District Collectors and membership

of relevant line departments, NGO representatives, trade union leaders and UNICEF, were formed to plan and monitor the Project as part of their remit of work.

## 1.10 Project Beneficiaries

Children as rights holders are direct beneficiaries under the Project. Interventions targeted children in the age group of 06-14 years in 11 districts across the three intervention States with an expected coverage of **4.9million children at risk and vulnerable children** including

*The project covered a total of 13,780,420 children, 165,380 adolescent girls and 2,036,943 women and adults. Indirect beneficiaries covered include 30,770,000 children, including adolescents, and 178,346 community members.*

those out of school and in child labour, those working in cotton and cotton seed production as well as in other forms of labour. In addition, through strengthening of ECE, the Project sought to benefit **young children** (in the age group of 0-05 years) by mainstreaming them into formal education. The Project also benefitted **adolescents** by

creating youth networks to empower them.

The design of the interventions also served to benefit **vulnerable HHs** under component 4 by enhancing their access to service providers and SPSs. In addition, through capacity development under the various Project components, functionaries under ICPS, education personnel including teachers and *anganwadi* workers (AWWs), and members of CBOs expanded the scope of the beneficiaries.

*The Project primarily targeted children at risk of child labour and those engaged in child labour, those working in cotton and cotton seed production, and other forms of labour. By extension, it also focussed on OOSC.*

## 1.11 Human Rights, Equity and Gender

The issue of child labour and promoting education for children is congruent with international human rights framework viz., CRC to which India is a signatory. The Project is closely aligned with a number of articles in the CRC (*please see Annexure 4 for the pertinent articles in the CRC*) to ensure that a human rights perspective was thoroughly incorporated. This Project was formulated using a **human rights-based approach** where children are the rights-holders and the government, teachers, local administration, and parents are duty-bearers who are responsible for their protection to ensure that they go to school and are not working. The Project worked to strengthen the capacities of these rights-holders to make their claims and of duty-bearers to meet their obligations. The Project design was socially inclusive and sought to create and strengthen a protective environment for all children - irrespective of their socio-economic background, gender or type of labour.

The Project selected areas that comprised of marginalised communities (ST/SC populations) particularly vulnerable to child labour, particularly aligning with the Project's equity focus. By targeting geographical regions with reportedly high incidences of child labour particularly among ST and SC communities, vulnerable children and families most-at-risk were covered. The project also focussed on girls and women. It was designed with the understanding that child labour in cotton production affects boys and girls differently. The Project maintained a gender focus by linking with Women's Self-help Groups (SHGs) and creating Adolescent Girls Groups (AGGs) to empower women and girls at the community level to address issues of child labour and OOSC. These groups have been provided capacity development and training especially for the empowerment of adolescent girls under component 3 of the Project.

Specifically under component 4, vulnerable families (with OOSC and children without parental care) have been provided benefits of SPSs.

## 1.12 Geographical and Demographic Coverage

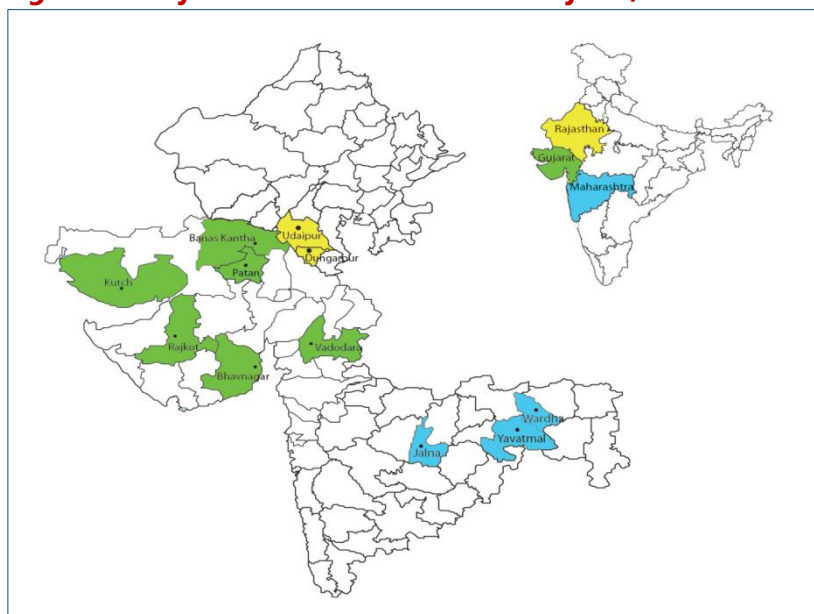
The Project aimed to cover 8,238 villages across 11 districts in the three States. A common implementation strategy was adopted for all three States; however, sub-outcomes were adapted to the state-specific context. The details of intervention areas in the three States are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: State-wise Intervention Area**

	Gujarat	Maharashtra	Rajasthan
Districts	1 Patan 2 Kutch 3 Vadodara 4 Bhavnagar 5 Rajkot 6 Banaskantha	1. Jalna 2. Wardha 3. Yavatmal	1. Dungarpur 2. Udaipur
Blocks	32	17	9
Villages	3,450	2,288	2,500

A limitation in the scope of component 2 is the target age group of children between 06-14 years of age as compared to the CRC, which considers children up to 18 years of age. Therefore, under Project component 2, service delivery of education for children in the age group 15-18 years of age is not addressed. However, the target age group of 06-14 years is aligned with the RTE.

**Figure 2: Project Intervention States - Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan**



## 1.13 Project Monitoring

The Project was monitored using a human rights and child rights lens. It was monitored to ensure that the objectives of the Project were being met and children were being tracked so that they were going to school. Regular monitoring was also used to ensure that teachers were trained to provide quality education for the retention of children so that they did not dropout to go to work.

One of the main Project strategies was to ensure that parents were made aware of the harmful effects of child labour and the importance of education.

*UNICEF has a rigorous monitoring system for all partners. Regular spot checks and programme monitoring are conducted and reports submitted. Annual progress reports are submitted along with financial statements. UNICEF has a monitoring system called **Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers**, also known as HACT. This ensures focus on delivering results for children and promoting child rights with clear and consistent partner selection criteria and view for cost effectiveness. This system ensures the following:*

- *Accountability to children*
- *Maximising results for children*
- *Effectiveness and Efficiency*
- *Accountability to donors*

*Training programmes are conducted for all partners to ensure rigorous financial monitoring using the HACT principles.*

# CHAPTER 2: EVALUATION DESIGN

## 2.1 Purpose and Objective of Evaluation

Evaluation is essential to assess the contribution of key strategies and activities implemented for achieving results, and whether they are sustainable and replicable. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether the Project, having reached the end of its implementation period, has achieved its objectives and the extent to which these were accomplished. The evaluation endeavours to understand the progress made and the challenges faced during the Project implementation and the operational constraints that may have caused impediments in the progress of the various interventions under the programme components. **The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Project, and to derive recommendations accordingly.** Findings and conclusions arising of the evaluation will be used by UNICEF to inform recommendations for future programming and replication of integrated models of working with children across the country in partnership with the government.

### Use of evaluation findings

- Understand the progress areas, output and gaps and utilise it for future programming.
- Replicate the integrated models of working with children, in other states and districts as well as with the Government.
- Inform similar projects addressing child labour, which is a priority advocacy area of UNICEF.
- Replicate Project innovations with potential for replication.
- Inform documentation of lessons learnt and good practices, and share them with National and State Governments.
- Prepare quality donor report focusing on the final project outcomes with evidence.

The evaluation will be shared internally within UNICEF so that various sections within UNICEF can use the programme strategies, findings and recommendations for developing similar projects in future. Lessons learnt from the project will be incorporated while replicating and scaling up of work related to child labour prevention. Efforts will be made to share the evaluation report with colleagues at network meetings, brown-bag knowledge sharing lunches, as well as via the intranet and internet sites with UNICEF colleagues from other countries, regions, and headquarter divisions.

Externally, the evaluation will be disseminated to the donor IF, NGO partners, the State Governments, and other stakeholders through bilateral meetings and national networking events so that results and learning from this project can be used at a wider level. Sharing the report at conferences or meetings on child labour internationally could also add value for other countries who potentially would like to work on similar issues. UNICEF India Communication Section can take advantage of its presence on social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter to share the report with a targeted audience who are involved in work to prevent child labour. Similarly, UNICEF India can also coordinate with the IF with the aim of disseminating the report broadly via its network.

## 2.2 Scope of Evaluation

The evaluation covers the entire Project period from 2009 to 2013 in all 11 intervention districts of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. **The evaluation is qualitative and supplements the quantitative data obtained from prior assessments** such as the midline survey, 2012, and other quantitative data obtained through the Project's internal monitoring mechanisms (*please see Annexure 2: means of verification column in revised project logframe and Annexure 5 for the Project Results Matrix*).

The evaluation sought to address the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Project by closely linking research questions on these domains to the four broad outcome areas and corresponding sub-outcomes as identified in the Project log-frame. The sub-outcome 3.4 related to advocacy on child labour-free farming with farmers and through the media, however, was not addressed as part of the evaluation, in accordance with the terms of reference (ToR) and due to logistical challenges of meeting the stakeholders within the proposed timeframe of the evaluation (*please see Annexure 6 for ToR*). Impact assessment, defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development–Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) as the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended, is also beyond the scope of the evaluation. The evaluation, however, did explore what could be done to make the project more effective to inform recommendations. While the evaluation addresses efficiency of the Project, a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis is beyond the remit of the evaluation due to constraints in time and resources. The evaluation is based on the revised logframe, 2012 (*please see Annexure 2 for revised log frame*).

## 2.3 Evaluation Criteria

OECD-DAC criteria for evaluations of development assistance were applied to frame questions and guide the design of the evaluation.<sup>25</sup> The criteria was selected on the basis that it best supports the objective of the evaluation as well as its wide-use among major donor agencies and other development stakeholders.<sup>26</sup> Specifically, the evaluation was based on the following research framework:

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<sup>25</sup>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee, 'Principles for evaluation of development assistance' (Paris, 1991).

<sup>26</sup>Alternative criteria such as DAC criteria in Evaluating Humanitarian Action was not deemed relevant for this evaluation.

## OECD-DAC Criteria and Research Framework

### Relevance

Relevance refers to the extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor. The evaluation seeks to address the following questions under *Relevance*.

- To what extent was the Project design relevant to the project objective of ensuring that children in the age group of 06-14 years are not working and are in school?
- To what extent does the Project design contribute towards creating an enabling environment towards promoting child rights, child protection and elimination of child labour?
- Given the change in the external environment due to new legislations and schemes were there any new opportunities or challenges?
- Did the Project complement the Government policies and strategies?

### Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives. The evaluation seeks to address the following questions under *Effectiveness*.

- Did the Project achieve the results in relation to the stated objectives and key performance indicators? How and why/why not? Were there any variations from the outcomes originally proposed? If so, why?
- What was the role of the key players and UNICEF and how did they contribute to achieving the results? If not, state reasons.
- Have the strategies used enabled the Project to meet its objectives? If not, what are the possible reasons?
- What have been the difficulties or constraints that the Project has experienced and how has it affected the results? What are the lessons learnt?

### Efficiency

Efficiency is a measure of outputs, both qualitative and quantitative, in relation to inputs. The evaluation seeks to address the following questions under *Efficiency*.

- To what extent were the resources utilised efficiently? Were outputs delivered on time?
- To what extent was the Project able to leverage Government resources and partner with the Government to enhance the efficiency of the Project? As compared to the budget outlays, was any review done to see how these were being utilised and were any changes made as per programmatic progress and linkages?
- To what extent did the activities cover the different population groups, especially the marginalised communities?

### Sustainability

Sustainability is a measure of whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. The evaluation seeks to address the following questions under *Sustainability*.

- To what extent can this model of change be replicable in other programme areas with similar needs?
- What were the interventions that have been replicated by the Government or likely to be replicated?

## 2.4 Methodology of Evaluation

The evaluation which draws on a mix of primary and secondary research techniques was conducted by New Concept Information Systems (NCIS) commissioned by UNICEF for the purpose.

### 2.4.1 Preparatory Phase and Desk Review

NCIS held several meetings with UNICEF to gain a thorough understanding of the evaluation study. The evaluation sample across the three Project States was also discussed and confirmed in consultation with UNICEF based on the list of Project districts, blocks, and villages received. Both UNICEF and partners provided feedback for the methodology of the evaluation in order to enhance the design and to resolve any issues arising..

Secondary research activities involved a desk review and an analysis of relevant secondary documents related to the Project and sources of evidence such as baseline survey, donor proposal and logframes, annual progress reports submitted to the donor, documents collected during field visits. The desk review and analysis of the secondary documents were conducted in a systematic manner using a format for compilation. This ensured that relevant information related to the evaluation was captured in a consistent manner across all three States. Initial findings from the desk review and analysis were used to inform or modify the development of indicators/ evaluation questions to be addressed. The inception report presented the roadmap to guide the implementation of the evaluation.

### 2.4.2 Data Collection Tools

Since the main focus of this study was to probe beyond quantitative indicators, primary research methods adopted a participatory approach, drawing on qualitative tools such as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and In-depth Interviews (IDIs) for data collection. These techniques were selected to maintain flexibility and probe into areas of interest and also because they are considered to be relatively cost-effective. The research tools employed in the evaluation were developed for each respondent group following the preparatory phase and desk review. Each tool was translated from English to Hindi, Gujarati, and Marathi, the local languages of the three Project States. The tools were shared with UNICEF for feedback prior to the pilot phase that was planned to pre-test the tools in the field. Given that the main focus of the UNICEF Project was child labour, children constituted a special focus in the evaluation study. This suggested that appropriate evaluation methods for working with children as a respondent group in the study were required. NCIS adopted the approach of conducting pictorial exercises with children as an ice-breaker to the informal FGD sessions. Children were asked to draw what they like about school, what they dislike, etc. and this helped in engaging them before the FGDs.

In accordance with the evaluation objective, a master list of research questions was developed to investigate the four areas of inquiry of the Project interventions and outcomes. Given the rigorous Project logframe, the master list was closely mapped to the outcomes, sub-outcomes and indicators outlined in it. The master list was used to create state-wise three-tiered stakeholder specific (policy-level, programme-level, and community-level) IDI and FGD tools. In addition, a FGD tool for discussion with the Project target group of children was developed. The master list and the stakeholder specific tools were developed and finalised in consultation with UNICEF (*please see Annexure 7 for the master list of research questions*).

## List of research tools

- 1 IDI with policy level respondents
- 2 FGD with policy level respondents
- 3 IDI with programme/implementation level respondents
- 4 FGD with programme/implementation level respondents
- 5 IDI with community level respondents
- 6 FGD with community level respondents
- 7 FGD with children (06-14 years)

Tools	Level	Respondents/Groups
<b>In-depth Interviews (IDIs)</b>	State	State Government Officials (Labour, DWCD, SJE, Education/SSA), UNICEF (staff and consultants), Police
	District	District Collector and CEO, Labour Officers, DWCD, Education officers, Police, NGOs, CWC/JJB, DIETs, DCPC, Consultants supporting implementation of the project
	Sub-District (Block)	Block development officers (BDO), Line department representatives, <i>Gram Panchayat</i> head, NGO functionaries, CRC
	Village	PRI, Teachers, SMC members, children
<b>Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</b>	District	Line Departments
	Block	NGOs
	Village	VCPC/PLCPC, SMC, village volunteers Adolescent groups/children's clubs, SHG members, community members/parents, teachers, children (rescued or benefitting from the programme)
<b>In-depth Interviews (IDIs)</b>		(SJE), Education/SSA), UNICEF (staff and consultants), Police
	District	District Collector and Chief Executive Officer, Labour Officers, DWCD, Education Officers, Police, NGOs, Child Welfare Committee (CWC)/Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), District Institution of Education and Training (DIET), District Child Protection Committee (DCPC), consultants supporting implementation of the Project
	Sub-District (Block)	Block Development Officers (BDOs), line department representatives, <i>Gram Panchayat</i> (GP) head, NGO functionaries, CRC
	Village	PRI, teachers, School Management Committee (SMC) members, children
<b>Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</b>	District	Line Departments
	Block	NGOs
	Village	Village Child Protection Committee (VCPC)/ <i>Panchayat</i> Level Child Protection Committee (PLCPC), SMC, village volunteers, adolescent groups/children's clubs, SHG members, community members/parents, teachers, children (rescued or benefitting from the programme)

### **Policy Level**

State and district government officials and representatives from the Departments of Education/SSA/District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) were the primary respondents in addition to the UNICEF staff and consultants in the three states. In Gujarat and Maharashtra, WCD officials were met, while in Rajasthan, SJE officials were interviewed. The other respondents included the Gujarat State Commission for Protection of Rights of the Child (GSCPCR), Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Rights of the Child (RSCPCR) and State Institute of Education Research and Training (SIERT), Maharashtra State Commission for Protection of Rights of the Child (MSCERT) and Yashvantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA).

### **Programme and Implementation Level**

For all three States, respondents included partner NGO project staff, head-teachers/teachers, block development/education officials, including block-level PRI representatives. In Maharashtra, interactions were also held with *Meena Raju Manch* (MRM) facilitators engaged in sensitising its member boys and girls in improving adolescent behaviour and Deepshikha<sup>27</sup> *perikas* (adolescent girl facilitators) engaged in conducting village surveys to determine the number of child labour.

### **Community Level**

Respondents in the three States comprised village representatives, PRI members, AWWs, head teachers/teachers, SMCs, AGGs, SHG members, and parents. In Maharashtra, the team met with police *patils*, a subordinate to the police department present in each village performing quasi-judicial and administrative functions. Respondents from SHGs/AGGs provided a gender perspective in the evaluation, with a special focus on women.

Children in the age group of 06-14 years were consulted in the evaluation reflecting the target age group under RTE. The inclusion of children in the evaluation recognises that children are social actors with a unique perspective and insight into their own reality. This is in accordance with Article 12 of the CRC which states that all children who are capable of forming their own views have a right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, with the view of the child being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, a mixed profile of children, including those who are in school and benefitting from the Project, and conversely, those children who migrate and otherwise constitute a vulnerable group, such as orphans or children from SC communities were included in the study.

Stakeholders and beneficiaries were asked to share their experiences of the Project including the manner in which Project activities have strengthened the protective environment for children at various levels and addressed the issue of OOSC and the challenges faced over the Project period. The extent to which the Project ensured sustainability particularly through capacity building efforts, scale-up, networking and convergence was probed. Stakeholders were consulted to provide recommendations that will help improve future project cycles. UNICEF Office in Delhi with support from State offices participated in each stage of the

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<sup>27</sup> *Deepshikha is a Life Skills Adolescent Empowerment Program initiated in a few districts in Maharashtra in 2008 by UNICEF, with the support of the Barclays Bank and in association with the State government and District administrations.*

<sup>28</sup> Shaw, C., Mai, L., & Davey, C. (2011). Guidelines for Research with Children and Young People. Research Centre, National Children's Bureau.

evaluation as well as being information providers (*please see Annexure 8 for list of interviewees and sites visited*).

#### 2.4.4 Geographical Sample

Geographical representation was ensured by including all 11 Project intervention districts in the evaluation. As a standard norm, two blocks per district were purposively selected to capture the Project's diversity, in terms of the socio-economic profile of respondent groups and the spatial spread of the Project intervention. The sample also reflected active Project areas to draw out successes and challenges faced by the Project. Similarly, five villages per district were selected based on the representative diversity of stakeholders and project activities. Table 3 below provides proposed and actual geographic primary sampling units (PSUs) for each State.

**Table 3: State-wise Proposed and Actual Geographic Sample**

PSU	Gujarat		Maharashtra		Rajasthan	
	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Actual</i>
District	6	6	3	3	2	2
Block	12	12	6	6	4	5
Village	24	24	15	15	10	9

#### 2.4.5 Data Collection Units

The sample of data collection units (DCUs) in each State was developed in agreement with UNICEF. Using the standard norm of DCU/state (see below), the sample of the total number of IDIs and FGDs per state was devised. The total DCUs covered in the study exceeded the proposed sample. Overall, evaluation in the three States included a total of 173 IDIs and 81 FGDs. Details and state-wise break up of IDIs and FGDs as conducted against the planned sample are tabulated in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: State-wise DCU Sample**

	Overall DCU Sample in Study States											
	Gujarat				Maharashtra				Rajasthan			
	Proposed		Actual		Proposed		Actual		Proposed		Actual	
	IDI	FGD	IDI	FGD	IDI	FGD	IDI	FGD	IDI	FGD	IDI	FGD
State	3	0	7	0	3	0	7	0	3	0	5	0
District	24	6	27	5	12	3	9	3	8	2	10	2
Block	24	6	24	5	6	3	11	8	4	2	5	2
Village	24	18	27	37	20	12	20	10	15	8	21	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>13</b>

It must be noted that Purposive sampling may introduce an element of bias into the evaluation with respondents purposively identified for their contribution of either favourable or unfavourable views of the Project. However, an alternative random sampling strategy that would limit bias was not deemed appropriate since a qualitative study requires respondents to provide sufficient information on specific areas of enquiry, which not guaranteed by random sampling. Bias has been controlled through a representative sample. Further, both primary and secondary research serves to triangulate information and strengthen validity of the findings.

### **2.4.6 Evaluation Management and Evaluation Team**

The evaluation was managed by the UNICEF Child Protection Section in Delhi, with support from the PPE and Education Sections. The UNICEF State Offices (sections: Education, CP and C4D Sections) were active in the coordination of the research with NCIS. A reference group comprising of members from five sections was formed at the Delhi Office which reviewed the terms of reference for the evaluation as well as completed a thorough review and feedback on the inception report and the tools used for data collection. The tools were finalised on the basis of this feedback and the data was collected accordingly. The process was monitored by the Child Protection Section on a bi-weekly basis through updates from NCIS and visits were made to the field sites by the Section as well as by state child protection and education colleagues.

The evaluation was led at the field level by state-level study coordinators in Rajasthan and Maharashtra with support of a three-member team comprising a supervisor and two investigators. In contrast, to facilitate data collection in six districts of Gujarat, two three-member teams were engaged under the supervision of a state-coordinator. The process of data collection was closely monitored by the Project Manager and Team Leader/Resource Person (*please see Annexure 9 for details of evaluation team*).

Training is an essential component to ensure quality and integrity of data as well as upholding ethical principles related to conducting research. In this regard, NCIS developed a training module for training of data collection teams. The evaluation teams underwent intensive training at the NCIS, Delhi Office on the evaluation protocol, the Project background and all the evaluation tools. All team members of Gujarat and Maharashtra could read, write and speak in Gujarati and in Marathi respectively, this was crucial to elicit rich data and create a conducive environment during data collection. Similarly, the Rajasthan team members could read, write and speak in Hindi. The training programme encompassed knowledge-related background information such as orientation to the evaluation study, its Project objectives, and adopted methodology and approach. This was complemented by developing the capacities of the team by building skills in the area of how to conduct best-practice field research, such as administering the research tools, effective communication with respondents, adhering to ethical guidelines, effective data management, and risk management. Understanding logistics of the primary research, reporting structure, monitoring and supervision including how to submit deliverables was ensured. For example, a detailed date-wise plan to avoid ambiguity was shared with the team. Training is an interactive exercise, and therefore, it employed the use of both presentation and classroom style approaches supplemented with role play and mock sessions. Since children were the key stakeholders and the ultimate beneficiaries, participatory group discussions were also organised with them.

### **2.4.7 Field Work, Data Collection and Analysis**

In Gujarat, data collection was completed in six districts first and State-level interactions were completed two months later. Two research teams worked simultaneously in different districts for a timely completion of data collection. In Maharashtra, data collection was staggered in two phases due to elections. In Rajasthan, data collection was completed in Udaipur first and then in Dungarpur. State-level interviews in Rajasthan were also conducted after completion of data collection in the two districts. The team collected documentary evidence such as handbooks, training manuals and formats related to the Project in the respective States for analysis (*please see Annexure 10 for list of documentary evidences*).

UNICEF consultants accompanied the research team and introduced them to the evaluation respondents, since the sampling was purposive. This process ensured interaction with stakeholders who could provide meaningful and relevant information to inform the evaluation. Information and data collected from interaction with the key stakeholders at policy, programme and community level was synthesised and summarised for each district. To capture the perception of various stakeholders the summary data was then analysed and triangulated for validation.

#### 2.4.8 Challenges and Limitations in Data Collection

**Elections:** The research teams encountered several challenges in data collection due to State elections in the three States. It was difficult to obtain interviews with government officials in district-level line departments as they were on election duty. An enforcement of a model code of conduct in Gujarat, for example, forced the team to postpone further data collection. In Maharashtra as well, to overcome this challenge, interviews were planned according to the time that was convenient to the respondents.

**Transfer of officials:** In both Rajasthan and Maharashtra, the transfer of relevant government officials at different levels made it difficult for the research teams to contact them and to collect much information from all the officials involved in implementation of Project activities. Some respondents interviewed were new in office and did not have in-depth knowledge of the Project. To overcome this challenge and elicit valuable data, telephonic interviews were conducted with officials involved in implementation of the Project. The team also relied on UNICEF partner NGOs implementing the Project activities for organising the FGDs and contacting the respondents as the NGO partners were capable and flexible enough to ensure the best conditions for these discussions. FGDs were held without any major difficulties. The atmosphere was conducive for information sharing; the respondents were fully engaged and provided very detailed information and useful comments that enriched the evaluation process.

**Timing of evaluation:** Since there was a 5-6 months gap between Project closure and the evaluation in Gujarat, the research teams were not able to find the child tracking system (CTS) data at village/*panchayat* level/CSO level/volunteer level and the teams could not engage with CSO members adequately.

**School vacations:** Due to school vacations, the research teams could not interact with many teachers and educational staff in Gujarat.

**Sample size:** Out of the six districts in Gujarat, data from five of the districts was collected as per sample size. However, in Kutch, the team was not able to collect data as per sample size due to a limited response received from district-level stakeholders.

#### 2.4.9 Ethical Considerations

To adopt the best-practice in carrying out research and recognising the duty of care towards people involved in the research activities, the team consulted the *WHO Standards and Operational Guidance for Ethics Review of Health-Related Research with Human Participants* to mitigate the possibility of any negative effects arising from the involvement of respondents.<sup>29</sup> Specific ethical guidelines for conducting research with children and young people were

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<sup>29</sup>World Health Organization (2011). *WHO Standards and Operational Guidance for Ethics Review of Health Related Research with Human Participants*.

additionally consulted viz., *Guidelines for Research with Children and Young People - Research Centre, National Children's Bureau*. The research team was also trained to adhere to ethical standards.<sup>30</sup>

All respondents provided informed consent and were informed of their right to withdraw from the evaluation and the data confidentiality. The research purpose and findings were further explained to respondents. After each session, respondents were provided an opportunity to ask questions or contact the research team if they so wished. Community-level field work was facilitated by local project partners. State, district and block level research was facilitated by respective UNICEF state-office specialists, officers and consultants (*please see Annexure 11 for a detailed list of project partners*).

### **Principles of Ethics:**

The evaluation design considered the four well-known moral principles that constitute the basis for ethics in research (*please see Annexure 12 for a detailed description of the principles*):

- 1) ***The Principle of Non-maleficence:*** Research must not cause harm to the participants in particular and to people in general.
- 2) ***The Principle of Beneficence:*** Research should also make a positive contribution towards the welfare of people.
- 3) ***The Principle of Autonomy:*** Research must respect and protect the rights and dignity of participants.
- 4) ***The Principle of Justice:*** The benefits and risks of research should be fairly distributed among people.

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<sup>30</sup> Shaw, C., Mai, L., & Davey, C. (2011). *Guidelines for Research with Children and Young People*. Research Centre, National Children's Bureau.

# CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS

This chapter presents evaluation findings which are discussed based on the OECD-DAC criteria for the four outcomes and sub-outcomes envisaged under the Project.

## 3.1 Relevance

One of the key purposes of evaluation was to ascertain the Project's relevance in meeting its objective of ensuring that all children engaged in cotton picking in the intervention areas of the three States go to school. The focus was to determine whether the Project design was conducive and to what extent relevant in addressing the problem areas proliferating in child labour and in maximising the legislative provisions for creating an enabling environment that promoted child rights.

The Project was found to be relevant to the project objective of ensuring children aged 06-14 years are not working and are in school. The alignment of the project with ICPS and RTE serves to strengthen the protective environment for children through the establishment and capacity building of child protection and education functionaries that will be sustained by each of the intervention States through implementation of the legislation and the scheme.

### 3.1.1 Relevance to the Issue of Child Labour

India's commitment to child labour elimination is reflected in the international conventions and policy and legislative framework adopted by it. However, considering the complexities of the child labour problem, it is imperative that the interventions that seek to address this issue must confront a multitude of factors. In India, a large number of NGOs and international agencies such as Save the Children and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are working on the issue of child labour. Committed to the issue of CP, UNICEF has provided support to improve the quality of education and address social inclusion in schools and conduct national and state level advocacy on the issue. It has worked with NCPDR and a consortium of NGOs to promote convergence between SSA and NCLP.

### 3.1.2 Alignment with Project Objectives

Evaluation findings based on endline data analysis and interactions with various stakeholders indicate that these Project interventions have been very relevant in achieving the larger objective of creating and strengthening an enabling and protective environment for children. The Project facilitated the setting up of Juvenile Justice (JJ) and ICPS mandated CP structures and mechanisms at the district and village level, which were missing or were inadequate prior to ICPS implementation by the States. These capacity building exercises strengthened the functioning of these CP structures and brought about significant attitudinal change towards the rights of children and their perspective towards child labour. Of particular significance is the building of local capacities in protecting the rights of children and the much needed change in the attitude and mindset of families and communities towards child labour. It also attempted to

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*In one of the cases experienced by a village Sarpanch: Four girls were enrolled in school in the village but after some time, the Sarpanch was informed that all four girls had left school and were going for domestic work. The Sarpanch visited the homes of the girls and linked their families with various schemes for their survival so that the girls could continue their studies.*

*-Community FGD, Sodvadra, Bhavnagar*

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improve age appropriate learning opportunities under ECE and strengthen the delivery of quality education in schools through child-friendly systems mandated under RTE. Since a child's best interest is served in family settings and a child's vulnerabilities are directly proportional to the vulnerability of its family, the Project worked on reducing the vulnerability factors such as low family income levels. It tried to link susceptible families with the SPSs through support of administration and NGOs. Attempts were made to mobilise and empower the community to monitor and track child labour and out of school incidences.

### 3.1.3 Alignment with Government's Commitment to CP

The Project is in line with the CRC and aims to build a protective environment for children across several States in India. The Project's commencement in 2009 had a very timely overlap with the introduction of two key child-centred national programmes and legislations, viz., the ICPS 2009 and the RTE 2009 by the GoI, whose implementation in the three intervention States was gradually gaining momentum. This conducive change in the external policy environment provided the Project with a strong head start and considerable opportunities to align and complement its interventions to strengthen as well as leverage government policies and strategies on CP. This was amply evident in the four Project outcomes, especially outcomes 1 and 2 on establishing CP structures and quality primary education for all children.

The Project roll-out period (2009-13) is representative of the implementation trajectory from nascent to progressive stages of establishment of CP structures in line with ICPS and the

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*"Because of registration we could avail benefits of SPS for which we were eligible. Our overall family conditions have improved. Our children are now in schools and we are happy. Due to bad economic conditions, we were compelled to send our children to work to earn a living. SPSs have provided us with the confidence that we can get some benefit from the Government. We are very thankful to PEDO (People's Education and Development Organisation) for linking us with social protection schemes and their benefits."*

- Statements recorded in a community FGD, Dungarpur

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implementation of RTE. This indicates that the launch of ICPS and RTE served as opportune milestones for UNICEF to work in close collaboration with the Government and respective departments on CP issues.

The Project viewed the child labour issue within the broader context of CP and sought for strengthened legislative implementation and establishment of institutional mechanisms as per outcome 1. Therefore, the project design was closely linked with Government systems and sought to strengthen the key CP related legislation and schemes in India viz., the

Juvenile Justice Act (JJA), 2000/ 2006/ 2011; ICPS; Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006; and Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 at the state, district, block and *panchayat*/village levels.

The Project complemented the Government's policy and strategy in child labour reduction in many ways. The Project has contributed in strengthening the policy and legislative framework for CP through policy dialogue. For instance in Rajasthan, UNICEF's advocacy efforts with the government led to increase in the child labour age bar from 14 to 18 years, which was in accordance with its objective of reinforcing legislative provisions for fortifying a protective cover for children in cotton farms and increased coverage prohibiting children from getting into child labour. The Project strengthened the advocacy efforts with the government of Rajasthan (GoR) and GoI for recommending amendment of the existing Child Labour Law to include prohibition of child labour in agriculture, which is expected to reduce employment of

children in agricultural work. The Project also strengthened Rajasthan's and Maharashtra's commitment to child policies with formulation of the 'Policy on the Girl Child' and 'State Child Policy' respectively.

Capacity building and knowledge dissemination to a number of relevant stakeholders at various levels on CP including child labour and child marriage issues, the importance of education and the legislative framework viz., Child Labour Act, Child Marriage Act, and RTE was successfully imparted. This strengthened law enforcement capacities and protective institutional mechanisms for children across intervention States.

Component 2 of the Project focused on access to quality education for all children in the age group of 06-14 years, as it considered that child labour is a significant driver for children's non-enrolment and early exit from school.<sup>31</sup> The Project specified the need for ensuring access to education and school retention of children who were vulnerable to labour as well as former child labourers, making education socially inclusive and of good quality, and promoting a child-friendly environment free from fear and eliciting child participation. It also sought an effective rehabilitation mechanism for removing children from labour and provide them adequate interim schooling to ensure that children catch up on missed years of schooling and reach the correct learning level for their school grade before they join formal schools. Thus, this component supports India's target of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2 to achieve universal primary education by 2015. It also serves to strengthen the implementation of the RTE Act and the GoI's educational framework through SSA and pre-school education under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)(*please see Annexure 13*).The Project was relevant in strengthening School Management Committees (SMCs) and child-friendly schooling which are mandated under RTE.

The Project focus on gender sensitivity and equity is also in accordance with various policy commitments. In fact, this component of the Project is also in line with the Twelfth Five Year Plan (FYP) which recognises that the education sector has a pre-eminent role in ensuring that all children in the age group of 06-14 years are in school and, therefore, envisages that stricter implementation of SSA and child labour regulations can ensure that child labour is eradicated from the country. UNICEF provided support to State Governments in developing several guidelines such as Child Friendly School (CFS) guidelines and Kasturba Gandhi *Balika Vidyalaya* (KGBV) implementation guidelines in a consultative manner. The Project design is thus relevant to the Government's objective of enhancing convergence, which is outlined in the Eleventh and Twelfth FYPs.

Component 4 aimed at enhancing access to SPSs for vulnerable families so as to prevent a reversion of children to child labour. The inclusion of social protection as a strategy to address child labour was in accordance with the National Policy on Child Labour (NPCL) 1987, which stipulates "the need to cover child labourers and their families under various poverty alleviation and employment generation schemes."<sup>32</sup>

### **3.1.3.1 Further Alignment with Government Policy and Legislation**

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<sup>31</sup>UNICEF Project Proposal to IKEA Foundation, 2009.Promoting Protection and Education Rights of Children in Cotton Areas – Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.Unpublished.

<sup>32</sup>UNICEF Project Proposal to IKEA Foundation, 2009.Promoting Protection and Education Rights of Children in Cotton Areas – Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.Unpublished.

The original Project period was from 2009-2012. However, UNICEF sought a 'no cost one year extension' of the Project till end December 2013. The extended timeline was primarily on account of (i) changes in the external environment, (ii) ensuring sustainability of the structures and systems established and (iii) developing innovations and best-practices with a potential of replication. The extension aimed at coping with considerable lag in implementation of RTE and the ICPS which were initiated in 2009 though they were rolled out much later in 2010. For instance, the RTE came into force in April 2010 while the ICPS came into implementation mode after memorandums of understanding (MoUs) were signed by the States with the GoI. In Maharashtra, the DWCD (GoM) signed the MoU with the GoI for implementing ICPS on August 13, 2010. Since the Project design was intricately linked to government systems, substantial time was also required for their effective implementation to enable the Project results to be in tune with the changed environment.

In 2012, the Project implementation was at a stage wherein the systems and mechanisms were in place and were likely to deliver the Project results. It was, therefore, imperative to maintain continuous engagement with key stakeholders through capacity building initiatives, have regular follow-ups to ensure that systems and mechanisms were functional and sustained even beyond the Project cycle. In addition, any positive changes observed would require a longer duration to demonstrate results than originally envisaged, as evidence for replication. The rationale behind the extension was also that towards the end of the Project's first phase, community mobilisation initiatives were showing results in terms of the community's readiness to track and deal the child rights issues. Moreover, the Project pioneered initiatives on child rights in the three intervention States which were in a nascent stage of implementation, and they required further mentoring and handholding. The extension also sought development of greater demonstrable models and innovations in support of anecdotal evidences for replication.

The Project strategies were also revisited with respect to changes in the external environment. Outputs and indicators pertaining to a select few outcome areas were revised during the first no-cost extension period to make them more relevant to the changed environment and made measurable for better monitoring and tracking of targets, in comparison to the baseline. The initial output under Project component 4 viz., '*Partnerships in place to link SHGs to economic and livelihood programmes*' does not feature in the revised logframe since other outputs under this project component were sufficient to adequately inform progress of the Project in this capacity (*please see Annexure 2 for the revised logframe*). It was considered that changes made to the Project logframe were appropriate to bring more focus to the Project. In the second instance, a two month no-cost extension was sought adjusting the Project period from January 2009 to February 2014 in order to complete implementation.

## **3.2 Efficiency**

The efficiency section analyses the resources and costs incurred by the Project. The evaluation found that the project was efficient despite incurring additional costs. The additional costs were largely required for the effective implantation and roll out of ICPS and RTE.

### **3.2.1 Project Budget Utilised and Resources Leveraged**

For promoting protection and education rights of children, the three intervention States were allotted EUR 13,446,577 by the IF for Project implementation activities. The actual expenditure incurred in the Project over the Project duration of four years (2009-2014) across the three

States of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan was about 7% more than the allotted budget at EUR 14,352,680. The Project incurred an additional cost under all four components and across the three States. These were met by leveraging government and UNICEF resources.

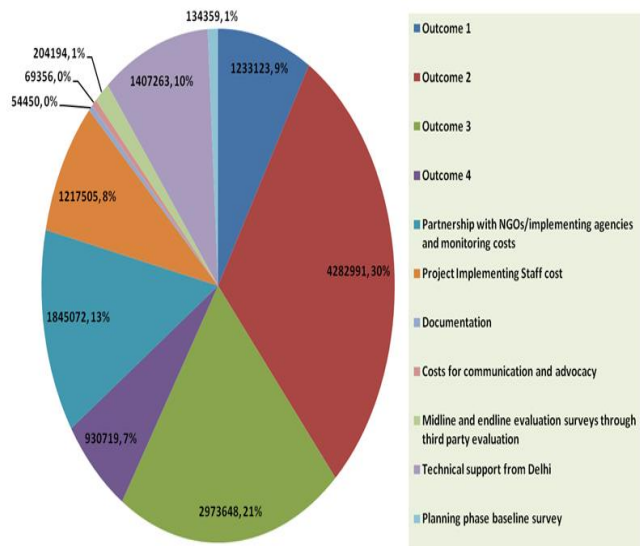
**Table 5: Final Financial Report (2009-2014)**

Expense head	Provided budget	Actual expenditure	Diff (Provided - Actual)	% of budget	% of actual expenditure
<b>IKEA Foundation transfer in EUR</b>	<b>13,446,577</b>				
<i>Outcome 1</i>	893,518	1,233,123	-339,605	-28	9
<i>Outcome 2</i>	3,664,387	4,282,991	-618,604	-14	30
<i>Outcome 3</i>	2,956,960	2,973,648	-16,688	-1	21
<i>Outcome 4</i>	740,478	930,719	-190,241	-20	6
<i>Partnership with NGOs/implementing agencies in the state, including their field monitoring costs</i>	1,442,506	1,845,072	-402,566	-22	13
<i>Project implementing staff-child protection specialist, district level coordinators</i>	995,577	1,217,505	-221,928	-18	8
<i>Documentation</i>	40,000	54,450	-14,450	-27	0
<i>Costs for communication and advocacy at field level, including production of printing and electronic materials and dissemination meetings</i>	122,556	69,356	53,200	77	0
<i>Midline and endline evaluation surveys for Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan through a centrally managed third party evaluation</i>	344,688	204,194	140,494	69	1
<i>Technical support from Delhi (Child Protection, Social Mobilisation, Partnership, Advocacy and Communication and Monitoring and Evaluation)*</i>	135,0423	1,407,263	-56,840	-4	10
<i>Planning phase baseline survey</i>	134,359	134,359	0	0	1
<b>Sub-total</b>	12,685,452	14,352,680	-1,667,228	-12	
<b>Indirect cost-6%</b>	761,127				
<b>Total</b>	13,446,579	14,352,680			
<b>Provided Budget-Actual Expenditure</b>	-906,100				
<b>Variance</b>	-7%				

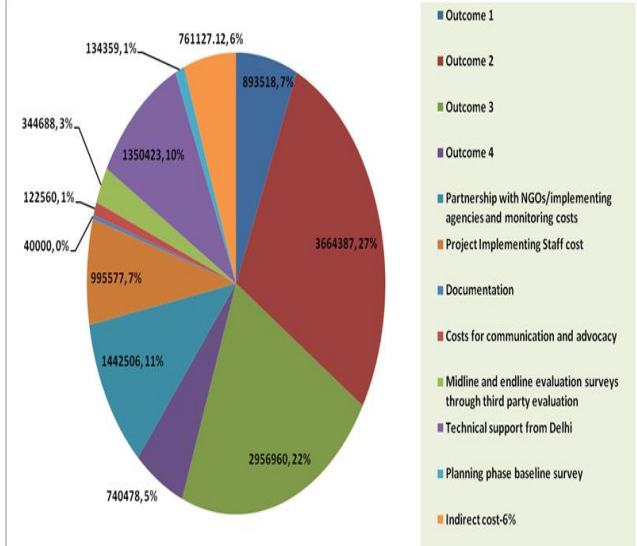
Source: UNICEF IKEA Foundation, Final Financial Report (2009-2014)

**Figure 3: Comparative Analysis of the Outcome-wise Planned and Actual Expenses Incurred**

Percentage distribution across different expenditure heads of IKEA Funds transfer (Actual)

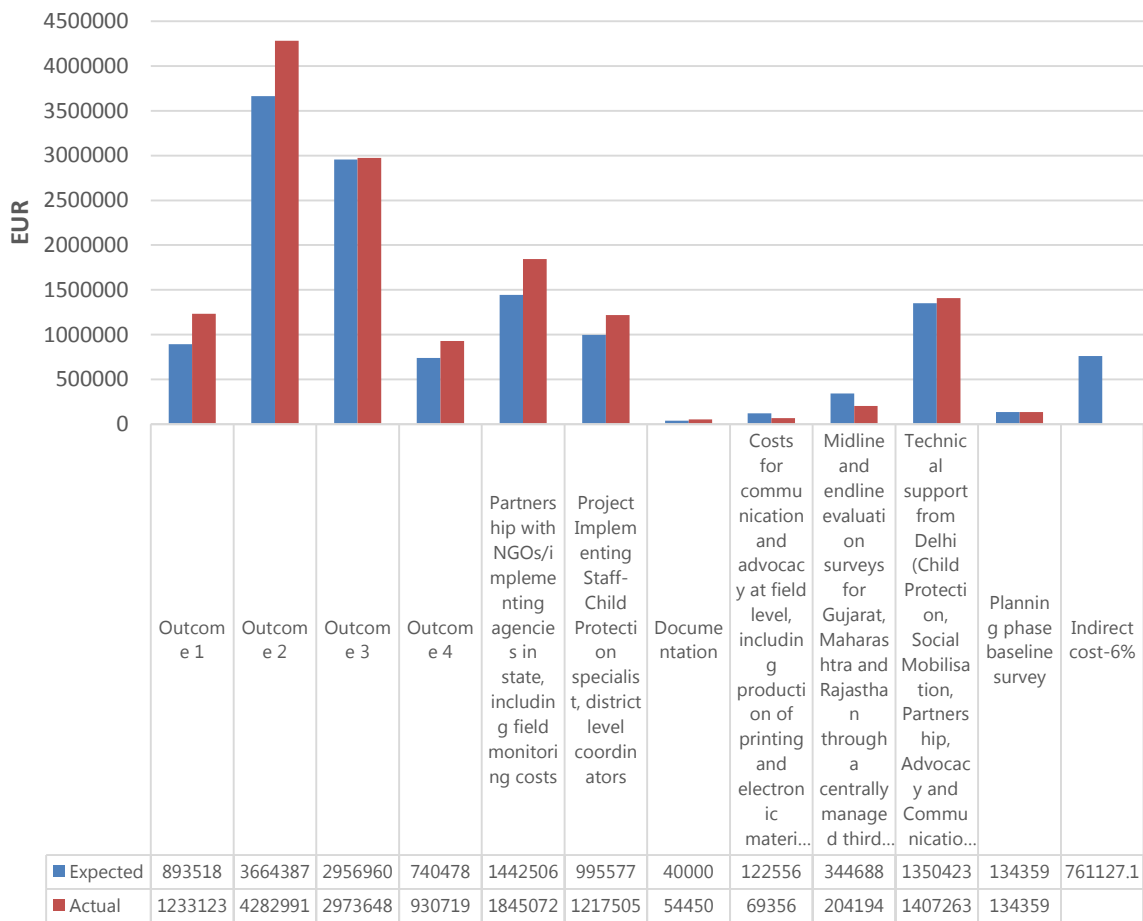


Percentage distribution across different expenditure heads of IKEA Funds transfer (Expected)



**Figure 4**

**Distribution of Budget vs Expenditure across Various Heads of IKEA Funds Transfer**



**The Analyses of Expenditures** under each Project outcome has been described below based on the IF final financial report submitted by UNICEF:

### **Outcome 1: Child Protection Structures in Place Addressing Child Labour Issues**

The Project invested EUR 1,233,123 compared to EUR 893,518 budgeted under outcome 1.

Government resources for capacity building and strengthening of CP structures made up for the shortfall. A skewed pattern of allocations in 2013 resulted in increased expenditures in the same year due to:

- a) start-up delays leading to low absorption of funds in 2009-10;
- b) delay in approval of no-cost extension leading to suspension of some planned activities; and
- c) roll-over of unutilised funds from previous years for full budget utilisation.

Another reason was additional costs incurred on the roll out of ICPS and the State Commissions during Project implementation, since these mechanisms were not in place during Project planning. Of the total Project expenditure, 9% was spent on outcome 1.

### **Outcome 2: Quality Education Available for All Children in the Age Group of 06-14 years**

There was an increase in spending for outcome 2, as compared to the initially allotted amount for similar reasons as stated under outcome 1. Also, there was increased expenditure on RTE activities after the start of the Project. Under outcome 2, EUR 4,282,991 was spent against an allotment of EUR 3,664,387. Out of the total expenditure incurred under the Project, 30% was used in outcome 2, making it the largest proportion of the Project expenditure.

### **Outcome 3: Families and Communities take Collective Action for Protection and Development of Children**

Under outcome 3, EUR 2,973,648 was spent against an allotted amount of EUR 2,956,960, representing 21% of total Project budget. There was an increase in spending for outcome 3 due to the fact that community mobilisation and engagement of stakeholders by using various methods such as folk media and life skills cost more than expected. Also, the change in strategy by employing the mass mobilisation approach in one of the States cost more than expected.

### **Outcome 4: Enhanced Access to SPSs for Vulnerable Families (Out of School Children (OOSC) and children without parental care)**

Against the allotted amount of EUR 740,478, EUR 930,719 was spent, amounting to 6% of the total Project expenditure. Though the variance in budget versus expenditure was the lowest under outcome 4, there was a focus on continuous utilisation of services that resulted in annual massive fairs for registration and review of quality utilisation by relevant government officials and CSOs.

### **Partnership with NGOs/implementing agencies in the state, including their field monitoring costs**

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*Low cost interventions and departmental convergence helped in efficient use of project budget and in leveraging government resources.*

*Securing free transportation by Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs) in Jalna for children to reduce non-attendance in schools, holding community meetings in AWCs and GP offices and volunteerism by volunteers and prerikas for community mobilisation as cost effective deployment of human resources were innovative cost effective practices.*

*Inclusion of child-friendly elements in State guidelines and their introduction in schools enabled efficient leveraging of SSA funds to the tune of EUR 7.5 million. GoM allocated Rs.16 crores for implementation of State Plan of Action developed with support of the Project and Rs.20 crores for fighting child labour in the State.*

*UNICEF, Maharashtra*

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Out of the total Project expenditure, 13% was disbursed for NGO partnerships. An amount of EUR 1,845,072 was spent against an allotted amount of EUR 1,442,506 as more NGO partnerships were required than expected to provide impetus to Project activities, resulting in a larger number of partner organisations/implementing agencies. This required additional monitoring and field visits. Additionally, the skewed pattern of allocations in 2013 mentioned above (under outcomes 1 and 2) was also a contributing reason.

**Project implementing staff: CP specialists, district-level coordinators**

Approximately 8% of the total Project expenditure was incurred on hiring Project implementing staff, including CP specialists and district-level coordinators. An amount of EUR 1,217,505 was spent against an allotted amount of EUR 995,577. The increased spending was attributed in part to the increased NGO partnerships, which in turn caused field monitoring costs to rise beyond expected levels. The skewed pattern of allocations in 2013 mentioned above also contributed to the increased expenditure.

**Costs for communication and advocacy at the field level, including production of printing and electronic materials and dissemination meetings**

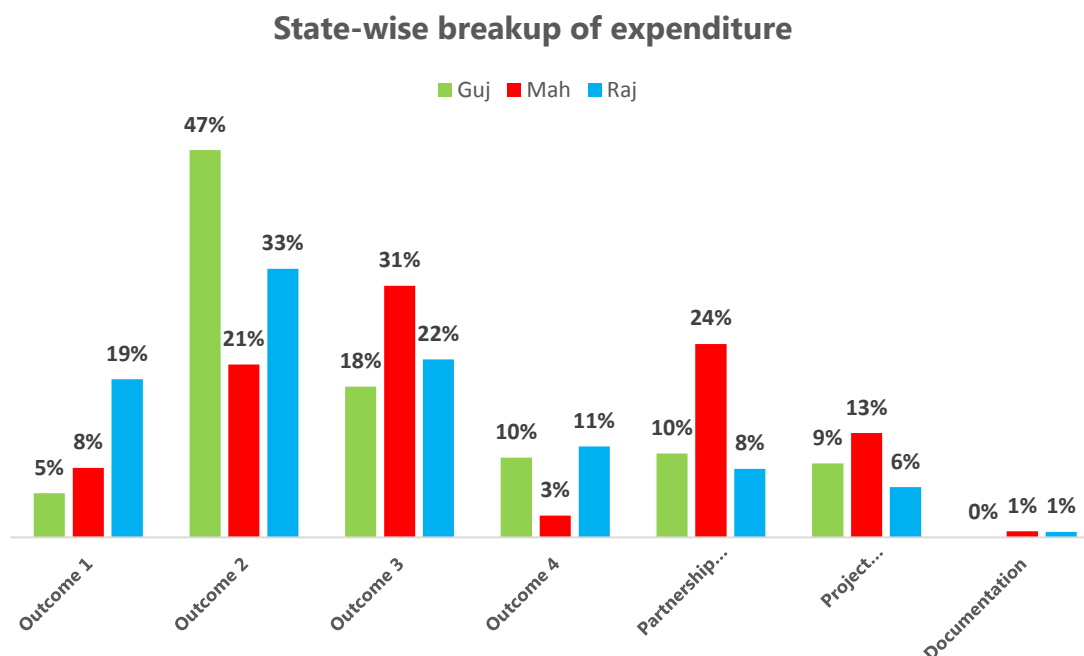
Costs for communication and advocacy at the field level were lower than the budgeted amount, with only EUR 69,356 being spent against an allotted amount of EUR 122,556. The primary reason for this was that both IF and UNICEF were defining the communication strategy for internal and external communication and a portion of the Project costs were absorbed into the strategy.

### **3.2.2 State-wise Breakup**

A comparison of the highest expenditure by States across the four outcomes concluded that Rajasthan spent 19% of its expenses on activities under outcome 1; Gujarat spent 47% on activities related to outcome 2; while Maharashtra spent 31% on activities related to outcome 3. Gujarat and Rajasthan spent similar proportions of their expenses on outcome 4, while Maharashtra spent 3% of its expenses on activities related to outcome 4. Maharashtra spent more of its expenses on creating partnerships with NGOs as compared to Gujarat and Rajasthan, and also spent more on hiring Project implementation staff. Both Maharashtra and Rajasthan spent 1% of their expenses on documentation, while Gujarat did not spend in this area (*please refer to Annexure 3 for detailed figures in Project Budget*).

In all the three Project States, expenditure on the four Project outcomes and the miscellaneous Project heads was more than the initial allotted amounts. But this was offset by leveraging government and UNICEF resources. Additional reviews were also conducted and a mid-course correction was made to ensure that the results were achieved as per the plans.

**Figure 5: State-wise Comparative Breakup**



Source:  
UNICEF IKEA Foundation, Final Financial Report (2009-2014)

### 3.3 Effectiveness

This section evaluates the Project effectiveness as a measure of level of targets met across the four planned outcomes and the achievements (planned and unplanned) and results attained in the course of its implementation.

*The evaluation revealed that the simultaneous roll out of the Government of India's (GoI) Right to Education Act (RTE) and ICPS during the Project implementation period successfully contributed to the achievements of outcomes.*

The evaluation found that the project has been effective in meeting the results as per the plans. The strategies and approaches used have complemented the partnerships in achieving the outcomes. The Project's results matrix signifies that under several sub-outcomes, the results had exceeded the stated targets confirming that the Project's design was effective in achieving desired outcomes.

### **3.3.1 Project Achievements, Strategies and Partnerships**

The Project adopted a partnership approach facilitated by UNICEF. The other key partners were the State Governments of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan, partner CSOs and the community in intervention districts. The Project covered the 11 districts across the three States reaching out to 3,450 villages in Gujarat, 2,288 villages in Maharashtra and 2,500 villages in Rajasthan as per the plan.

The evaluation found that the Project was successful in achieving all the targeted outputs against the key performance indicators across the four outcomes. The Project's Result Matrix signifies that under several sub-outcomes, the results had exceeded the stated targets. In this section, the evaluation examines how the Project contributed in achieving the results in terms of the four outcomes.

**Table 6: Key Project Results**

Results/Outcomes/Outputs	Indicators	Baselines			Targets			Achievements 31.12.2013			Method of Verification
		Guj	Mah	Raj	Guj	Mah	Raj	Guj	Mah	Raj	
<b>Strategic Result</b> – children in the age group of 06-14 years in cotton/cotton seed production areas are not working and are in school	OOSC in the age group of 06-14 years, reduced from X% to Y%	15%	7.9%	7%	5%	4%	3%	0.8%	0.5%	3%	<p><b>Rajasthan:</b> As per GoR, Child Tracking System (CTS)</p> <p><b>Maharashtra:</b> As per GoM, figures based on DISE 2013-14 and School Development Plan 2014-15</p> <p><b>Gujarat:</b> DISE data - in 2013 there were only 21,694 OOSC against the total population of 2,816,761 children</p>
<b>Outcome 2</b> Quality education available for all children in the age group of 06-14 years	Proportion of children in the age group of 06-14 years enrolled in schools	85%	92.1%	Dungarpur (86.4%-girls; 90% boys); Udaipur (77.8%-girls; 91.1% boys)	95%	96%	90%	95.7%	99.5%	97%	<p><b>Gujarat:</b> Source - DISE 2012-13</p> <p><b>Maharashtra:</b> This is as per GoM figures based on DISE 2013-14 and SDP 2014-15</p> <p><b>Rajasthan:</b> Government data sources</p>
<b>Outcome 3</b> Families and communities take collective action for protection	Children in the age group of 06-14 years are attending schools,	85%	92.1%	Dungarpur (88%) Udaipur (84%)	95%	96%	Dungarpur 90% Udaipur-90%	94.6%	***	97%	<p><b>Gujarat:</b> Source, DISE data</p> <p><b>Maharashtra:</b> Data is awaited from the Government.</p> <p><b>Rajasthan:</b> Data from CSO and <i>panchayat</i> level child protection structures in both districts</p>

and development of children	increase from X% to Y%										
<b>Outcome 4</b> Enhanced access to SPS for vulnerable families (OOSC and children without parental care)	X% of vulnerable families take benefit from at least one SPS in the project period	0	N/A	Dungarpur (47%); Udaipur (41.7%)	90%	10%	Dungarpur (57%); Udaipur (51.7%)	74%	83%	Dungarpur (96%); Udaipur (98%)	<p><b>Maharashtra:</b> Data is sourced from District Administration. The percentage indicates vulnerable families including OOSC linked to social protection schemes.</p> <p><b>Gujarat:</b> A total of 415,000 vulnerable families were identified and linked with SPS through the government's 'Gareeb Kalyan Melas.' Later the strategy was further refined to address families with specific vulnerabilities such as those with OOSC, child labourers and children without appropriate parental care. On the basis of a revised definition of vulnerable families and data filtration, a total of 21,651 families (74%) were linked to at least one SPS out of the 29,267 families identified. The families which were left out did not have necessary documents to be eligible for SPS.</p>

### 3.3.1.1 Outcome 1: CP Structures in Place Addressing Child Labour Issues

The Project's baseline data and design recognised that despite a strong legislative framework for CP in place, the required institutional set-up and supporting structures and mechanisms for its effective enforcement was lacking. The baseline data indicated that CP structures at the sub-district level were non-existent and the district level, CP structures were in the nascent stages of operationalisation. To address this systemic gap, the Project set targets for establishing CP structures and devised strategies to meet its larger objective of creating an enabling environment that ensured children were in schools rather than working in cotton farms. To achieve this objective, the Project focused on its key output indicators viz., issuing of notifications and Government Resolutions (GRs), capacity building of CP functionaries, strengthening monitoring and tracking mechanism for at-risk children, and advocacy to amend the existing child labour legislation and widen its protective net to include children engaged in agriculture.

#### **Government Notifications on CP Structures**

- To establish and operationalise the CP structures at state, district, block and village levels as envisaged under ICPS, Juvenile Justice Act (JJA) and Child Labour Act, the Project facilitated the issuance of required GRs and notifications. The evaluation found that in each intervention State, the number of notifications issued was more than targeted, viz., 28 in Gujarat against the target of 3, 18 in Maharashtra against the target of 7, and in Rajasthan it was 95 against the target of 6. These were related to strengthening the JJ systems, effective roll out of ICPS, improved implementation of RTE and social protection framework focusing on marginalised children. This over achievement across all three States is indicative of the Project's effectiveness in contributing to strengthening of institutional mechanisms for CP and education delivery. Officials across all States stated that UNICEF's involvement in drafting the notifications and leveraging its association with the Government was crucial in facilitating this process (See Table 7 for a State-wise indicative list of GRs issued and Annexure 14 for the State-wise detailed list of GRs).
- Interviews with Government departments across the three States confirmed that issuance of child rights notifications catalysed synergy and collective actions through team work, proactive participation and willingness of all concerned departments to collaborate and share responsibility with agreement on role distribution within the CP framework. To achieve this inter-departmental convergence, meetings and consultations with chief functionaries of respective departments were facilitated by UNICEF State teams to mobilise their support and government commitment that proved highly effective in getting notifications and GRs issued.

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*The Bhavnagar Collectorate issued a directive declaring UNICEF as the partner agency for child protection structures and Mahiti, a CBO as the implementing partner. The resolution was issued to all departments at the district level to provide them extended support in project implementation.*

*- Keshav Karnavat, UNICEF Consultant, Bhavnagar*

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*Making child protection a priority and inter and intra departmental convergence for issuance of related notifications by the government was not easy. UNICEF played a crucial role in state-level departmental convergence for getting notifications issued for establishment of child protection structures.*

*- Govind Beniwal, Member-RSCPCR*

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- According to interviews with the Maharashtra UNICEF State Team, the Project’s convergent approach favoured the issue of requisite GRs. Though the Project did experience some delay in the issue of GRs, primarily due to inertia within government systems, the substantial effort invested by the State teams helped in mobilising government support. This approach proved crucial in establishing VCPCs across the Project districts, which would not have been otherwise possible without the required government orders.
- Proactive involvement of apex bodies such as RSCPCR in issuing regulatory circulars to the concerned departments and institutions recommending measures for time-bound execution of establishing CP structures proved to be effective. At the district level, involvement of respective District Collectors for authorising roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, as well as streamlining the monthly review system ensured effective implementation of orders and notifications.
- The evaluation concluded that the issuing of GRs by all the intervention States resulted in government’s commitment and mandate to scale-up CP mechanisms to all districts in their respective States.

**Table 7: State-wise Key Notifications and Resolutions Issued**

Gujarat	Maharashtra	Rajasthan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ JJ Rules, 2011</li> <li>▪ Notification for establishment of DCPU, January 1, 2011</li> <li>▪ Formation of committee for recruitment at district level under ICPS, 2011</li> <li>▪ Formation of CTS 2012</li> <li>▪ Preparation of district action plan for protection of child rights, 2011</li> <li>▪ Providing materials to Special Training Programmes (STPs), 2010</li> <li>▪ GoR notification on RTE Act 2009, Feb 18, 2012</li> <li>▪ Request from SSA for providing printed copies of Education and ECE documents, 2012-13</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for CWCs, 2009</li> <li>▪ Increase in allowance to Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) for repatriation, 2011</li> <li>▪ Role at <i>Zilla Parishad</i> (ZP) level for Implementation of Special <i>Gram Sabhas</i> on Children's Issues, 2011</li> <li>▪ Implementation of the State Plan of Action on Child Labour and Role of DWCD, 2012</li> <li>▪ Maharashtra Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011</li> <li>▪ In unaided schools, 25% admission for weaker sections and disadvantaged group children 2012-13</li> <li>▪ Minimum qualifications for teachers, 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ JJ Rules 2011</li> <li>▪ Establishment of DCPU-2011</li> <li>▪ Establishment of adoption committees in each district, 2011</li> <li>▪ CWC monthly meetings, 2012</li> <li>▪ CWC discharge of functions, 2013</li> <li>▪ Executive order for setting-up of Block Level Child Protection Committee (BLCPCs) &amp; Panchayat Level Child Protection Committee (PLCPCs), 2012</li> <li>▪ Order on per child allocation of money in children’s homes, 2013</li> </ul>

### **CP Policy Exceeding Achievements**

The study findings establish that the Project provided a favourable environment for child policy and legislative initiatives which went beyond its mandated objective. It is evident that this significant and positive variance affirming a child protective environment was the direct outcome of UNICEF’s consistent advocacy initiatives across all the three intervention States for strengthening the CP framework. Some of the milestones achieved included the following.

- *Formulation and adoption of the State Child Policy in Maharashtra on November 14, 2013.* According to UNICEF, the Policy, which involves the concept of child-safe spaces and child and adolescent forum, is a significant step in strengthening a child protective environment. The Policy, an outcome of widespread State-level and divisional consultative meetings held during the Project period, was corroborated by the Deputy Commissioner, DWCD to have gathered inputs from rural and tribal organisations, children, adolescent girls, marginalised communities, government and political representatives. It indicates institutionalisation of the groundwork undertaken on addressing the issues of CP systems and child labour over the previous three years since Project inception.
- *Raising the upper limit of child labour age from 14 to 18 years, Rajasthan.* This was the result of UNICEF's persistent advocacy for drafting the amendment to the existing Child Labour Act for ensuring consistency with the JJA, which confirms the age of a child until 18 years through lobbying and raising the issue with the GoR. The GoR also declared its policy on the girl child and established the Directorate of Child Rights (DCR) which pioneered initiatives in the country.

### ***Establishment and Functioning of State, District and Village CP Structures***

- The Project succeeded in establishing ICPS-mandated CP structures at state, district and village levels across all the three intervention States as per the plan (*See Table 8 for CP structures established in the three intervention States*). It effectively utilised the positive change in the external environment due to the new RTE legislation and the launch of ICPS, both coinciding with the Project inception in 2009. In turn, this facilitated the effective implementation of ICPS that was still at a nascent stage at the start of the intervention. The Project effectively complemented Government policies and strategies and UNICEF could thus ensure that the sustainable CP structures were activated across all levels in the three States, in accordance with JJA and ICPS and the Child Labour Act. This was primarily achieved through partnerships forged among the key Project players, viz., UNICEF, the respective State governments, NGO partners and CBOs.
- In Rajasthan, the Project also facilitated establishment of CP structures mandated under ICPS at the State level and intervention districts, as well as in non-intervention districts, with the latter clearly exceeding the Project target to emphasise the positive result of strategic multi-stakeholder partnerships with government counterparts and CSOs.
- In Maharashtra, UNICEF played a significant role in establishing a tripartite body comprising UNICEF, DWCD, and the State Project Support Unit (SPSU) at the State level to draw up the ICPS implementation roadmap, post the MoU signing in 2010. UNICEF also effectively steered the preparation of the Memorandum of Association of the Maharashtra State Child Protection Society (MSCPS) to stipulate its rules and regulations, membership norms, along with corresponding functions and the roles and responsibilities of its functionaries. This led to the successful recruitment of MSCPS staff, as per ICPS guidelines.
- VCPCs were established with the concomitant setting-up of CP structures at state and district levels in all three States. The establishment of VCPCs was a positive step towards creating a child protective environment at the village level since there were no village-level committees on CP prior to the Project in any of the intervention States. The Project's NGO partnership was instrumental in laying the strong foundation for building VCPCs with community representation and ownership.

**Table 8: CP Structures Established in Three Intervention States**

CP Structures	Gujarat		Maharashtra		Rajasthan	
	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
<b>State-level</b>						
State-level Child Labour Task Force	1	1	1	1	1	1
State Child Protection Society	1	1	1	1	1	1
State Commission for Protection of Child Rights	0	1	0	0	0	1 (est. in 2010)
Directorate of Child Rights	0	0	0	0	0	1 (est. in 2013)
<b>District-level</b>						
District-level Child Labour Task Force	6	6	3	3	2	2
District Child Protection Unit* (key staff in place)	26	26	35	35	2	33
Child Welfare Committee notified and appointed	26	26 (est. in 2011-13)	35	35 (est. in 2011)	2	33 (est. between 2010-13)
Juvenile Justice Board notified and appointed	6	26 (est. b/w 2011-13)	3	35*	2	33 (est. between 2010-13)
Special Juvenile Police Units notified at district level	26	26	35	35	2	2
<b>Village-level</b>						
Village Child Protection Committee (VCPC)	3,450	3,450 (est. between 2011-13)	170	1,576	1329	1,329 (est. between 2011-13)
<i>Panchayat</i> Level Child Protection Committee (PLCPC)					0	450 (est. between 2012-2013 covering all 2500 Project villages)

Source: Project's Result Matrix

- The NGOs used the community forum of *gram sabhas* and the process of village micro-planning to facilitate social dialogue on child rights issues and mobilise interested community members to form VCPCs. NGOs in Maharashtra corroborated that the non-hierarchical approach of VCPCs had helped in gaining community buy-in and ownership, which had vitally strengthened its functioning. The mandate and positioning of VCPCs as community-level regulators also received formal impetus with the CWCs issuing notifications for the establishment of VCPCs in the State, further emphasised by occasional block-level visits of CWC members to interact with VCPC members. Such linkages and institutional coordination also empowered the VCPCs to establish direct communication with DCPUs when child labour cases were identified, while the latter referred such cases to the respective CWC. Thus, the forward and backward linkages employed by VCPCs created a communication continuum from the district to the village level, ensuring that CP actions were not restricted to the district-level bodies but had a strong resonance with ground-level community actions.
- The number of VCPCs established in Gujarat was 3,450 as per the target, while in Maharashtra the number was much higher at 1,576 as compared to the target of 170. In Rajasthan, 1,329 VCPCs were established at the Project inception through NGO partnerships. The VCPCs in Rajasthan were replaced by PLCPCs by an executive order of the Government dated December 4, 2012. However, UNICEF with its partner CSOs continued Project activities through the 1,329 VCPCs in 2,500 intervention villages during the entire intervention period. Local NGOs effectively capacitated the PLCPCs by obtaining relevant orders, conducting meetings with default members for bringing them on board, orientation and handholding in preparation of database and parental counselling, until the respective committees became capable of addressing CP issues independently. At the end of the Project, 450 PLCPCs had been established covering all the 2,500 intervention villages and were playing a critical role in tracking and acting upon rights violations as well as creating a protective environment for children. In Gujarat, awareness activities held by CSOs within the community created an enabling environment for children and helped in the smooth functioning of all the 3,450 VCPCs.
- The evaluation revealed that VCPCs were effectively handling cases of rehabilitation and linking vulnerable families to SPSs as mandated under outcome 4. This was confirmed by the endline data which indicated that the number of child labour cases addressed and documented were above target. In Gujarat, 35 cases had been addressed and documented instead of the target of 20. In Maharashtra, the number was 75 against the target of 50 and in Rajasthan, it was 225 against the target of 25. This increased awareness on child labour and CP enabled the community to develop proactive measures for

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*“Earlier we did not have any information on child rights and child protection issues; through this project we now understand the issue and are able to reduce child labour and child marriage.”*  
*Hareshbahai, VCPC Chairman, Malpara, Bhavnagar*

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*“We always wanted to go to school and study but our parents did not allow us to do so. They send us to take cattle for grazing or sometimes ask us to stay at home for other work. Now we are happy. If we are absent for more than 3-4 days, someone from our village comes to meet us. Also, they need a reason for our absence from school.”*  
*- A group of children during FGD at Kittauda, Girva block, Udaipur*

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stopping child labour. The number of child labour cases may well be above the figures reported in the Project's Result Matrix since the evaluation team came across several cases of community initiatives in mainstreaming child labour and OOSC.

*"I am illiterate and face many difficulties. Hence, I have a dream of making my village literate. As a Sarpanch, I wanted each child of my village to go to school. This project helped me attain my dream; now in my village, there is not a single out of school child."*

- ThakorMithajiSomaji, Sarpanch, Geshda

*"Earlier, we did not have any information about child labour; through this project, we understand the issue and are able to reduce child labour and child marriage."*

-Hareshbhai, VCPC Chairman, Malpara, Bhavnagar

## Training

### Changing the attitude of children towards going to school

#### Case Study: Radhanpur, Patan

While meeting all the OOSC during an activity, the partner CSO came across a 12 year old boy. He had studied until Class 4 and had not gone to school since the last 12 months. He did not appear for the final exam. As the youngest, he stayed in a small house located outside the village with his father, mother and seven siblings (five brothers and two sisters), all of whom were married. The CSO met his parents, and discussed his future. When the volunteer and CSO met him and tried to convince him about schooling, he was not ready to listen to anyone on this issue. At the time of celebration of CRC week, all OOSC were invited and many activities were organised to motivate the children towards education and mainstream them into education. The boy was one of the participants in the group. Initially, he refused to participate in any activity, but slowly he came forward to make some drawings. His drawings were appreciated, and this turned out to be an important step towards his future education. Through this activity, stakeholders developed a good rapport with him, following which they held several meetings with him and his parents to make him change his mind about education. In the course of discussions, one day he shared that his teacher had beaten him very badly and this incidence had created a fear for school in him. He carried a very dark and negative picture about school, teachers and education. After getting to know about this fact, it was much easier for the CSO members to convince the boy towards attending school. They took him to the school where he was surprised to see the changed attitude of the school teachers. He showed his interest in studying and agreed to attend school!

- The evaluation findings note the Project's strong focus on training and developing SOPs to ensure improved functioning of established CP structures for effective child protective mechanisms in the intervention States. The Project exceeded its targets of providing training in planning, implementation, and monitoring programmes addressing child labour and OOSC. A total of 125 members representing various established structures against a target of 84 members were trained in Rajasthan. In Gujarat 7,000 members were trained against a target of 6,900, while in Maharashtra, 3,733 members underwent training compared to the planned 400 members. Additionally, in Rajasthan, 900 child welfare officers from all 33 districts were trained on JJ and child-friendly policing.
- In Maharashtra, UNICEF developed a handy information kit for Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) members containing legal information, newsletters, relevant studies and contacts. JJB members were trained on CP issues, viz., sexual abuse and use of SOPs on missing children.

The JJBs met regularly, typically twice a week. The Boards discussed CP cases, a majority of which were sexual abuse cases.

- To ensure effective functioning of DCPU, awareness on ICPS, JJA, child labour and child trafficking, an induction programme was organised for trainees from various departments and CP structures at the Division level in Rajasthan. The District Collector was made

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*"Initially, our judicial staff was not aware about sensitivity needed while dealing with child-related cases; Through UNICEF, we were able to change the attitude of our staff towards child labour issues."*

-High Court Judge, Gujarat

responsible for ICPS implementation and training modules, guidelines, and SOPs were circulated across the State. In the last 3-4 years, trained personnel of DCPUs, CWCs, JJBs, and SJPU, in collaboration with CSOs, were able to make many villages child labour free in the two intervention districts.

- In Maharashtra, SOPs were developed by MSCPS with UNICEF support for missing children in accordance with the Track Child monitoring and reporting system of MWCD.

Training of JJBs in the use of these SOPs created a systematic and structured approach to their functioning. SOPs, for merit-based appointment of CWC members and its operation, improved CWC functioning manifold. The SOPs included legal provisions and implementation of JJA including other Acts, guidelines to deal with cases referred to CWCs,

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*"Before the Project period we were not aware of issues concerning CL and OOSC but now when we see the difference in our children, we strongly believe in STOPPING CHILD LABOUR."*

PLCPC members, Girwa Block, Udaipur

*"We learned the legal aspects of child labour and how to work on child labour and OOSC from partner CSOs."*

PLCPC members, Girwa Block, Udaipur

*"Because of the trainings imparted by CSO partners, we became empowered to perform our duties."*

-PLCPC Head, SaruPanchayat, Udaipur

and developing childcare plans for rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of children. UNICEF facilitated the formation of working groups for development of SOPs that drew CP expertise from across the government departments, CWCs, NGOs, alternative care institutions, adoption agencies, lawyers and experts in Juvenile Justice. The SOPs were issued as a GR in 2010, which ensured their compliance. Similar initiatives such as developing training modules,<sup>33</sup> and SOPs<sup>34</sup> and engaging local CSOs<sup>35</sup> for community mobilisation with UNICEF resulted in building capacitated, functional and effective CP structures at all levels in the intervention districts of Rajasthan.

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<sup>33</sup>Buniyad training module for PLCPCs, developed & published by Gayatri Seva Sansthan, Udaipur.

<sup>34</sup>Six booklets pertaining to ICPS - Components & Practice, SJPU, JJB, CWC and Adoption Developed by UNICEF & GoR joint efforts and published by Resource Institute for Human Rights - Jaipur.

<sup>35</sup>Gayatri Seva Sansthan, Unnati Sansthan, Kaivalya Education Foundation, GMKS, Mahan Seva Sansthan, PEDO

- In Gujarat, the training modules, guidelines, SOPs were circulated across the State. The notifications issued are mandatory for all districts and are indicative of the integration and long-term sustainability of the component within the Government system.
- The evaluation determined that training programmes of VCPC and PLCPC members held by UNICEF partner organisations were not reflected in any Project documentation. However, as these village and *panchayat*-level structures were established and made functional under the Project interventions, the actual number of total trained members of CP structures became much higher than targeted.

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*“In the year 2013, our efforts resulted in 99 child labour free villages - declared by District Administration, Dungarpur.”*

*“Now after 3-4 years of sustained work in the same area for protection of children, less than 5% children are out of school.”*  
 PEDO, Dungarpur

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### **Monitoring Systems to Track and Target Children at Risk**

- The Project created several robust monitoring mechanisms to track progress and impediments in CP. These mechanisms not only served as a tool to map missing children and OOSC but they also instituted effective processes for tracking OOSC, which were absent prior to Project interventions. The Project enabled the creation of a targeted number of village-level databases with 3,450 in Gujarat, 2,288 in Maharashtra and 1,239 (later, an additional 450 GP databases were also operational after the GR of 2012) in Rajasthan. In Maharashtra, GP databases were also used as a source of information for updating the village database. In Rajasthan, the OOSC/working children databases were created with joint efforts of PLCPCs and CSOs, who conducted door-to-door visits to map all children below 18 years and verified with credible people in the village through FGDs. Women SHG members were also involved in data gathering since they had better access to families, in addition to the use of CTS data of SSA,<sup>36</sup> school enrolment register, drop-out data of SMC, *anganwadi* register, Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) register, Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) immunisation register to prepare the final database. These databases, prepared both ward-wise and village-wise with the help of ward-*panch* and *gaumeti*,<sup>37</sup> are maintained as child tracking registers and updated quarterly. The evaluation concluded that wider community involvement has instilled community ownership since all the listed children were mainstreamed in schools and were regularly tracked for their attendance by SMCs, and PLCPCs.

### **Development of Child Labour Action Plans**

- UNICEF positioned CP structures with a professional approach in Maharashtra. State and District Child Labour Action Plans (DCLAPs) were prepared, and review meetings were held to assess progress. Detailed job descriptions were prepared for members of CP structures so that quality human resources could be engaged.
- UNICEF supported the respective State Governments of the three intervention States to develop comprehensive and realistic action plans that could be achieved in a timely and

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<sup>36</sup> CTS of SSA – Child Tracking System of *Sarva Siksha Abhiyan*.

<sup>37</sup> *Gaumeti* is a person who spreads the decisions of the *panchayat* in the villages.

effective approach. For example, in Rajasthan, a State level task force was formed under the chair of RSCPCR to review and monitor implementation of existing state and district child labour action plans. State-level review meetings were held and a protocol and system established to plan and monitor elimination of child labour including rescue, rehabilitation and mainstreaming into schools. District action plans were developed and District Collectors made responsible for review of the whole process in their monthly meetings. Convergence of various departments (DCR, Labour, Police, Health, WCD, CWC, JJB, SJPU, etc.) was core to the successful execution of the DCLAPs facilitated by UNICEF. The Project provided various data sources where DCLTF had to intervene and technical support provided to execute rescue operations.

### **Establishing Government-CSO Alliance**

- Evaluation found that NGOs as Project partners played a key role in creating a child protective environment at the village level. Their role was integral in facilitating the establishment of the VCPCs and linking vulnerable families with SPSs as per the Project target through effective coordination with local government mechanisms, including PRIs and block level officials. Optimum use of their grassroots expertise in community outreach proved vital in mobilising community support and changing their mindset on adopting the concept of CP. The Project has relied heavily on the support of CSO partners, which included 15 NGOs in Gujarat, 17 in Maharashtra and 10 in Rajasthan, for its effective implementation. Their close coordinated support to the district-level CP system assisted in executing responsibilities and overseeing child-related programme implementation in the intervention districts. In Maharashtra, the NGOs supported in overseeing the child-related programme implementation in the entire district due to a dearth of human resources in DWCD district offices, thus enabling DWCD to reach out more effectively at village and community levels, whereas, earlier they were confined to the district level. The CSOs routinely liaised with Government officials and invited them for training and other community-level events of significance. However, according to both UNICEF and the partner CSOs, considerable time had to be invested in coordination with Government departments that required sustained follow up. According to an NGO counterpart in Jalna, initially there was inertia at the CEO's office that prolonged the time required to organise training and other events. This was overcome through repeated visits by UNICEF district and block coordinators and their continuous engagement.
- Engagement between the Government and these CSOs established under the Project is expected to result in extending and establishing long-term strategic partnerships. Government stakeholders and NGOs both have expressed their interest in sustaining these partnerships beyond the Project cycle. The majority (14 of the 17 NGOs) of these partnerships will be continued with Government programmes even after completion of the Project period. YASHADA has also indicated that it will continue to coordinate with these NGOs. The organisations are also coordinating with District Collectors to take the

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*“Now these CSOs are members of several District level committees and forums. The partnership has been established and sustained as observed in the last few years. As a social capital it is a proven key for behaviour change at the grassroots level in the present time. We always wanted to get assistance from their expertise.*

*- Ashok Sharma, Addl. Director, ICPS-DCPU, Dungarpur, Rajasthan*

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partnership forward. The District administration, with the help of UNICEF, identified CSOs and empanelled<sup>38</sup> them for future partnership on child rights issues. It is strongly recommended that the Government should partner with CSOs for the successful implementation of projects at the grassroots.

### **Establishing Advocacy Platforms to Amend Child Labour Law**

- The evaluation indicated that a total of four meetings as per target were held at the District-level to provide recommendations for amendment of the Child Labour Prevention Regulation Act (CLPRA) 1986. Consultation meetings held between a number of representatives from various Government ministries, UN agencies and children served to strengthen advocacy platforms for amendment of the law. Recommendations emerging out of the consultation meetings were provided to the NCPCR. These recommendations advocated that the Child Labour Act should be extended to prohibit child labour in agriculture.

### **3.3.1.2 Outcome 2: Improving the Quality of Education to Increase Enrolment and Retention**

Outcome 2 of the Project comprised various activities which focused on delivery of quality child-friendly education for all children in the age group of 06-14 years; implementing STPs enabling mainstreaming of all OOSC and drop-out children after attending STP; ensuring that SMCs and PRIs were actively monitoring the school activities and preparing the school development plan (SDP) and promoting school readiness programme (SRP) for improving learning habits among children in the age group of 03-05 years .

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*“Now going to school is fun for us. Learning tools are available in school and we are getting education through various activities.”*

*-Children FGD, Porana, Radhanpur, Patan*

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As a measure of Project effectiveness, the findings of the evaluation indicated that the Project had achieved the majority of the planned targets. According to the Project’s Results Matrix, the proportion of children in the age group of 06-14 years enrolled in schools was much higher than targeted, affirming an even greater positive trend in comparison with the baseline. The baseline figure at the start of the Project was 85% in Gujarat and 92.1% in Maharashtra. In Rajasthan, it was 86.4% for girls and 90% for boys in Dungarpur and 77.8% for girls and 91.1% for boys in Udaipur. The achievement in Gujarat was 95.7% against 95%; in Maharashtra, it was 99.5% against 96% according to DISE data, while in Rajasthan, it was 97% against 90%, as confirmed by government data sources.

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*“Child participation nurtures self-discipline in children hence there is no need to use the stick in our child-friendly school.”*

*-Headmaster, PS-Bankoda, Dungarpur, Rajasthan*

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*This project definitely supported in implementing and developing CFS materials which helped to break the barriers between teachers and students.*

*-Jagruti Bhatt, District Officer, DIET, Bhavnagar, Gujarat*

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By the end of the Project, the estimated number of teachers who were aware and informed on

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<sup>38</sup>Gayatri Seva Sansthan, Udaipur has been empanelled with the District Administration as a nodal agency for assistance on CP issues. In the same way, PEDO-MADA, Dungarpur has been empanelled with the District Administration as a member of review meeting pertaining to CP.

child-friendly processes to improve the quality of education in schools was much beyond the target in the two intervention States. It was 63,000 against 39,000 in Gujarat, and 10,800 against 3,300 in Maharashtra. The progress in Rajasthan was in congruence with the planned target of 12,000. The exceeded number of trained teachers was the result of the cascade method of training adopted for the purpose. This achievement is indicative of the Project's ability to sensitise and train teachers on the importance and aspects of child-friendly schools. The substantial increase in the number of teachers trained in Maharashtra was primarily due to the change in the original plan. Training was provided to all school teachers instead of the planned approach of orienting only one teacher per school in the intervention blocks in each Project district, to ensure improved learning levels.

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*"Now children when enrolled to class I do not cry and are happy to get promoted."*

- Khengarbhai, Sarpanch, Knnkhot, Kutch, Gujarat

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### **Quality, Child-Friendly Education in All Elementary Schools**

- The evaluation found that the number of teachers, head teachers and academic support trained in Child Friendly Schools (CFS) in Gujarat and Maharashtra was more than planned and in Rajasthan, it was in line with the Project target. The cascade mode of training helped in orienting a larger number of teachers than targeted with support of UNICEF, District Institution of Education and Training (DIET) and SSA.
- Training on CFS institutionalised CFS approaches to education in Maharashtra and the CFS guidelines proved effective as they provided official impetus for introducing CFS elements in schools. At the time of evaluation, guidelines recommending low-cost CFS elements were being implemented in 3,475 schools including local body government schools and some private schools.
- In Gujarat, 9,889 schools were demonstrating child-friendly elements such as reading corners, display boards and suggestion boxes which had resulted in increased school attendance. The number of schools reached in the Project was less than the planned 10,930. This was primarily due to the State's decision to merge schools which had less enrolment with neighbouring schools. During the evaluation process, the research team also visited the school buildings to corroborate the CFS activities. Based on the evidence, the team confirmed that the CFS components are now visible in the schools in the form of student's project work, student's introduction chart, suggestion boxes, *parthana sabha*, exposure visits, poster making, *balnatak*, library, and group work. Schools were now displaying a series of activities in the school on a daily basis. The field observations indicated that CFS guidelines and Activity Based Learning (ABL) booklets focusing on local needs and innovative teaching areas identified with UNICEF support, sharing of CFS best practices from across the state, inclusion of CFS as special agenda in monthly meetings of Education Department and SSA have facilitated a protective and child-friendly environment in schools. The response from Education Department indicated that CFS initiatives including *Bal Mela* for bridging the gap between teachers and students had significantly contributed in increased confidence and interest levels and attendance of children.
- From interviews with UNICEF teams in Maharashtra and from secondary Project documents, evaluation findings estimated that the UNICEF strategy in Maharashtra was to "bring all existing and planned State interventions for elementary education in line with the CFSS (Child Friendly Schools and Systems) strategy by encouraging all stakeholders to

review their role through the CFSS lens. Additionally, UNICEF promoted an evidence-based approach in its efforts to build a scientific approach in education for capitalising on successes identified and overcoming challenges. To actualise this strategy, the existing *Balsnehi* module of the State with budgetary guidelines was strengthened to establish an operational plan defining concrete steps. The Maharashtra State Council of Educational Research and Training (MSCERT) conducted a training programme for teachers called "*Balsnehi Shala*" (child friendly school) supported by a CFS handbook developed under the Project. The Maharashtra *Prathmik Shikshan Parishad* (MPSP) and UNICEF developed a school-level self-assessment checklist consisting of 44 indicators on RTE compliance, viz., school environment, learning environment and classroom processes for teachers to grade and assess their school's performance. One of the Project innovations was the MRM, which yielded positive results in gender sensitisation in schools and has been recognised by MHRD as a best practice. The launch of Sports for Development (S4D), gender resource centre and KGBV implementation guidelines were other initiatives towards strengthening quality and ensuring child-friendly education in the State.

- In Rajasthan, CFS training focusing on components of activity-based pedagogy was done. The trainings included the method of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) to make classroom processes more engaging and for monitoring transformation in each child. Cluster-level meetings of master trainers for assessing students' learning levels and problems in weekly nodal school meetings were some of the key strategies adopted to ensure child-friendly schooling.
- In Maharashtra, training of *Kendra Pramukhs* (KPs) or cluster heads was advantageous as corroborated by the Education Officer in Yavatmal since they were then able to track the progress of each school using school feedback formats. Training equipped them in inspecting RTE compliance. The KPs supported teachers in implementing CFS elements, by using the checklist and also trained them on developing the SDP for schools to implement CFS methods.

### ***STP for Child Labour and OOSC up to 14 years***

- STP (also known as a condensed course in Rajasthan), was developed to bridge the learning gaps of child labourers/working children and OOSC for mainstreaming them into formal schools in all three intervention States. Evaluation findings revealed that in Gujarat, the percentage of children attending STP was slightly lower at 70% as compared to the target of 80%. This was primarily due to the fact that post identification of OOSC, many families of these children migrated, while some children became over-age.
- In comparison, results were much better in Rajasthan and Maharashtra with over-achievement of targets, viz., 100% against 50% in Maharashtra and 70% against 17% in Rajasthan. This substantial increase was due to successful civil society interventions in enrolling more children than planned. In addition, effective tracking by CP systems and vigilant police check posts ensured that many children, who were engaged in out-of-state labour, were unable to travel to their work destination to Gujarat, and instead got enrolled in schools at their home sites.
- Even though the STP was introduced very late in Maharashtra, the involving of community members including SMCs, village volunteers, and local teachers to link OOSC with STP proved effective in achieving the required results.

### ***Monitoring Attendance and Infrastructure by SMCs and PRIs***

- According to evaluation findings, the number of schools having SDPs and SMCs monitoring school attendance and infrastructure was higher than the target in Maharashtra and Rajasthan. UNICEF took the lead in creating the desired policy environment for SMCs, developing activity-based training modules and handbook on RTE for volunteers in coordination with the Departments of School Education and Sports with phased training and on-site monitoring support by NGOs and volunteers. These were significant steps for strengthening SMCs in Maharashtra. Similarly, over-achievement in Rajasthan was primarily due to UNICEF's advocacy with the State Government for making it mandatory for SMCs to develop SDPs. This was made effective with the twin approach of (i) technical support to SMCs by partner CSOs; and (ii) development of SMC training module with details of its functions and roles and responsibilities by UNICEF.
- In Gujarat, as targeted, 9,851 functional SMCs have developed SDPs and are monitoring school attendance and infrastructure of 9,851 government primary schools. In addition, there are 37 KGBVs in six districts and one school managed by the Department of Education without SMC. The SMCs established under the Project in the neighbouring primary schools oversee the functioning of KGBVs and the school managed by the Dept. of Education, making a total out of 9,889 schools covered by SMCs.

### **Model School Readiness Programme for children in the age group of 03-05 years**

- Interviews with UNICEF teams across the three intervention States during the evaluation confirmed that the SRP in *anganwadi* centres (AWCs) had exceeded the implementation targets, viz., 120% against 80% in Maharashtra, 106% against 87% in Gujarat, and 87% against 50% in Rajasthan. Maharashtra covered more AWCs on specific request from the Government. In Gujarat, the achievement was more than the target due to two reasons, firstly the increase in the number of AWCs and secondly providing of quality ECE. This led to increased awareness among the community and a larger number of children getting enrolled at AWCs. Over 13,734 AWCs are equipped with ECE kits and implementing SRP benefiting more than 400,000 children in Gujarat. With UNICEF support, activity books and new curriculum have been developed for the Project districts. The curriculum has been shared with all the AWCs in the State. The percentage of children in the age group of 03-05 years enrolled in early learning programmes and entering Class I at an appropriate age was 93.90% against the target of 90% in Maharashtra. However in Rajasthan, the figure attained was only 60% against the planned 80%. The low performance in Rajasthan is attributed to the lacking in skills of AWWs and inadequate training due to time and budget constraints.

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*“STP and CFS are important for child labour reduction. They help to develop children’s confidence which ultimately helps in age appropriate admission in school. Through SSA, STP guidelines have been implemented across Gujarat which a commendable initiative by the Government.”*

**- Pushpa Joshi, Education Specialist, UNICEF, Gujarat**

*“I am a 14 year old daughter of a migrant family. Earlier I was not able to attend school and did not know about school. After attending STP camps, I was very excited to go to school.”*

**- Yasmin, STP student, Kutch, Gujarat**

### **Evidence-based advocacy for effective targeting and utilisation of resources for education of excluded children**

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- Evaluation findings revealed that one of the most commendable results of UNICEF advocacy in Maharashtra was in establishing DISE as the only valid and reliable education data source and system for data collection on education. In addition, Government Resolutions (GRs) are issued to make DISE effectively binding in all schools. This was achieved through evidence-based advocacy by UNICEF with the highest state officials of the Education Department and through effective presentation of DISE data analysis to overcome challenges in RTE implementation. State-level workshops on DISE and booklets on U-DISE produced in 2012 demonstrated government buy-in, which can be attributed to UNICEF's technical support and training in understanding educational indicators, estimation of indicators, disaggregated analysis, and use of analysis tools (MS-Excel, DevInfo and SPSS). The accuracy of the data has improved with time and validation of DISE as the only verified data source has been extremely useful, since the problem of conflicting numbers from various sources has been systematically removed. Overall, this has strengthened State Education Department publications and helped concerned educational stakeholders such as research institutions, NGOs and academic institutions in obtaining uniform state-level data.

### **3.3.1.3 Outcome 3: Families and Communities take Collective Action for Protection and Development of Children**

The overall focus of the Project outcome 3 was to ensure that families and communities take collective action for protection and development of children, measured by increased school attendance of children in the age group of 06-14 years in the intervention areas. To achieve the planned results, the Project focused on:

- a. increased family awareness of the harmful effect of engaging children in work;
- b. networking with adolescent girls and women and empowering them to monitor child rights violations and protect children's right to education and protection; and
- c. active involvement of PRIs and community leaders in monitoring child rights issues and taking collective action for preventing child labour.

As per baseline data, under outcome 3, the percentage of children in the age group of 06-14 years attending schools was 92.1% in Maharashtra, 85% in Gujarat, and in Rajasthan it was 88% in Dungarpur and 84% in Udaipur. Evaluation findings estimated that by the Project end, the achievement level in Gujarat and Rajasthan was 94.6%<sup>39</sup> and 97%<sup>40</sup> respectively, as against the targeted 95% and 90%. The updated government figures for Maharashtra were awaited from the government at the time of the evaluation. However, according to the available data, the Project succeeded in achieving 96.3% of children in the age group of 06-14 years attending schools in 2012, which was above the target of 96%.

#### ***Families aware of harm caused by child labour***

- At the end of the Project, all the targeted villages, community-based structures (CPC, SMC, PRIs, *gram sabhas*) and community-based groups across the three States were effectively reached and sensitised on the importance of education, the appropriate age of school enrolment and the adverse impact of child labour and child marriage. . . The evaluation confirmed the significant role of NGO partners in achieving sensitisation targets through

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<sup>39</sup> Source: DISE data

<sup>40</sup> Source: CSO and *Panchayat* level Child Protection Committee data

the adoption of locally-suited methods and strategies devised in congruence with the diverse state conditions.

- In Gujarat, sensitisation activities were held in all the targeted 3,450 villages. However, instead of the planned 13,000 activities, only 10,350 community-based structures were sensitised on promoting school enrolment since the number of SMCs had decreased after merging of schools. UNICEF facilitated NGO partners in adopting innovative approaches, viz. extensive folk media campaign through professionally trained folk artist troupes. They used public holidays as sensitisation opportunities in addition to the *gram sabhas* and village-level meetings, organising dramas, *bhavai*, and screening documentaries late at night or at hours that were convenient for the community. For greater effectiveness, CBOs have used locally adapted methods such as distribution of pictorial leaflets by YMC organisations in Kutch, considering the low literacy level in the district and songs in the local dialect to sensitise a greater number of tribal people in Banaskantha. These proved to be effective methods in sensitising the larger community on CP issues in the targeted villages of these districts. The findings indicate that the results are evident in the increased realisation among parents regarding the importance of education in improving their children's future.
- Sensitisation activities in 2,288 villages in Maharashtra were dovetailed with the core processes of micro-planning and community events such as child rights week and special days. It focused on reaching out to specific groups like farmers, VCPCs, ZPs, PRIs and SHGs. Evaluation findings revealed that sensitisation was conducted both at the micro (through interpersonal interactions) and macro levels to build a conducive child protective environment at the district and village levels, which proved suitable for sustained reinforcement of CP messages in the large geographical expanse of the Project. A range of sensitisation activities were commissioned in the State that included various communication materials, outdoor media and mid-media, observing child labour week, rallies and campaigns. 'Phulel Majha Jag' campaign (My World Will Blossom) rolled out in 625 Project villages in 2012. It was a successful initiative with high respondent recall on the value of the posters, stickers and pamphlets, and the various communication aids used to reach out to the community members. Findings indicate that collaboration with Directorate of Information and Public Relations has helped in scaling-up of the campaign in 2013 to all Project districts, which points to the need for such effective collaboration in such interventions. Interaction with the Maharashtra UNICEF team established that mid-media proved to be a more effective communication medium for this outcome than interpersonal communication (IPC). At the end of the Project, the number of community-based structures oriented and were actively promoting enrolment of OOSC was 6,359 in Maharashtra, which was considerably higher than the target of 4,978. This target could be achieved through the involvement of UNICEF, Government departments and partnership with 17 NGOs across 17 blocks. Through their close ties with the community, NGOs were an effective channel to guide local CBOs including VCPCs, SHGs and village volunteers on community engagement and utilising UNICEF communication materials. Building on the

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*"Partner NGOs have played a crucial role for effective implementation of the Project. A few years ago, people did not understand the seriousness of child protection issues and the importance of education but now they think of child rights and education, which is a significant achievement under the Project."*

**-Manoj Sharma, Chairperson-CWC, Dungarpur, Rajasthan**

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micro-planning process, NGO partners leveraged the rapport developed with communities to carry out community awareness in a more focused manner. This resulted in increased awareness of over 400,000 families on the harms of child labour. Participation of adolescent boys and girls was brought about by providing them with space for articulation and addressing their concerns through group discussions.

- The campaign “*Nanhe hath kalam ke sath*’ (children with pens in their small hands) which had a multi-pronged approach and mid-media activities also proved effective in wider community sensitisation in the 2,500 Project villages of Rajasthan. Partner NGOs developed plans under which orientation was organised according to availability and suitability of the community, the majority of whom were engaged in daily wage labour. In Rajasthan, evaluation findings revealed a change in strategy, wherein it was decided to also involve the existing community groups instead of sensitising only the new community-based structures established under the Project. This shift from the earlier plan envisaged the creation of a larger and more organised community force on CP, which led to an increased number of 6,381 sensitised community-based structures against the targeted 2,560. The partners capitalised on the sensitisation initiatives held during the establishment of CP structures and involved these bodies in community mobilisation, facilitating school

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*“After sensitisation activities, when we came to know from a 13-year-old girl’s grandmother that the girl was going to be married, and we received the invitation card, the VCPC and the community members visited her house and informed the parents about the child marriage law. Due to this intervention, even the girl refused to marry and her parents cancelled the wedding.”*

*-Rukhiben, Village Volunteer, Bhadiya Village, Patan, Gujarat*

*“The community has been sensitised against child labour and child marriage issues. We received a note from one Project village, written by a small child informing that a child marriage was going to take place in her village. Having been notified, we were able to stop that child marriage.”*

*-DCPU, Rajkot, Gujarat*

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enrolment and disseminating CP information on the role and significance of CWC and Childline services.

### **Monitoring child rights violations by adolescent girls and women’s network**

- The evaluation revealed that the number of adolescent groups formed in Rajasthan had exceeded its target, whereas in Gujarat, it was 100%. Alternatively, in Maharashtra, the target achieved was 98% since only one adolescent group could be formed in smaller villages where the number of adolescent girls was few. However, the total number of adolescent girls and women sensitised on CP issues and the importance of education has exceeded the target across all the three States, which underlines the Project’s effectiveness.
- Engaging adolescent groups, sensitising them on CP issues and legal provisions and ICPS, and ensuring their effective participation have collectively empowered girls to track child labour and OOSC and stop child marriages in Gujarat. These groups, with support from VCPCs and Vanchit Vikas Sansthas (VVS) have been addressing child rights violations. In a few intervention districts, adolescent groups prepared a suggestion box for CP issues that was facilitated by VCPC and VVS. The queries and suggestions from the suggestion box were discussed in the presence of VCPC and SMC.
- In Rajasthan, 1,825 adolescent groups were constituted in place of 500, since existing

groups of the NGO partners in Project areas were also capacitated to have a larger critical mass of trained adolescents. This was guided by the objective of sustaining the results of the Project in the long run. Extensive outreach was facilitated by UNICEF's proactive decision to link and orient active SHGs under the partner NGOs.

- On a similar count, the number of cases addressed and documented on child labour, OOSC and child marriage was found to be higher than planned in all three States. In Rajasthan, the number was significantly higher, which indicates the high awareness level on child rights issues.

### **Monitoring and preventing child labour by PRIs and community leaders**

- To ensure effective monitoring of child rights, a larger number of community leaders (40,000) were sensitised on the need for child labour prevention against the target of 17,500 in Gujarat. Evaluation findings confirmed positive changes in community attitude and their active involvement. For instance, the community now deliberates on child rights issues in the *gram sabha* meetings. They have also taken the initiative to pass a resolution on age appropriate marriage in the Project villages. PRI members make surprise visits to schools to check for child-friendly activities, despite his not being under planned monitoring. At some places, they have even provided financial assistance through *panchayat* funds and public donations for improving school infrastructure.

- Under the Project, 14,775 community leaders including PRI members were informed on child rights issues and the need for prevention of child labour and OOSC in Maharashtra. This achievement was considerably above the Project target of 10,556 and was the outcome of concerted efforts of NGO partners. The strategies that contributed to this achievement were IEC activities held at the community level and multi-stakeholder CP training programmes at various levels forging convergence and collaborative efforts to address child labour and child marriage issues, and promote the importance of education among the community. The Project was effective in activating the non-existent *gram sabha* through community support and succeeded in holding 5,671 meetings on child labour issues and children's education. This initiative has enabled the inclusion of CP in the agenda of *gram sabhas*. The evaluation revealed that various community-level respondents have confirmed marked improvements in community attitudes towards addressing issues of CP and education. A significant number of villages (435 out of 2,288) have pledged a "no" to

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*"Discussions are constantly held in the Panchayat Samiti about the rights of children. Officials themselves pay attention."*

Block Coordinator,  
SwarajGraminVikasPratishthan NGO,  
Maharashtra

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*"If our group members obtain information that some children are not going to school, they pass the information to teachers or drop a message in the suggestion box."*

-Meena AGG member, Bhayli,  
Vadodara, Gujarat

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*"With this survey, a large number of families have been listed. From the project's viewpoint, filtration was done to prioritise work. Hence, during the second phase of the project, the definition of vulnerable families was changed to "only those families whose children are OOSC and child labour should be considered as vulnerable families", and accordingly those families were provided the benefits of SPSs."*

-Dinesh Pandya, Project Coordinator,  
Mahiti Organisation, Gujarat

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*“We realised that a greater number of SC-ST children are in child labour, hence, we drew a caste-wise picture to track them. We made it mandatory that each SHG member’s children should be in school. We also assigned them the responsibility of mobilising five families residing close to each member. We followed it up very regularly.”*

*-Devilal, Director, People's Education and Development Organisation (PEDO), Rajasthan*

*“We did not know about SMC, VCPC or any committee, but we knew Sadhana Didi and Shilpa Didi from PEDO organisation. A few years back, children used to roam around or worked in tea stalls. But now our parents also want to send us to schools. Now there are more children enrolled in our school.”* -Children FGD, Medala Village, Simalwara Block, Dungarpur, Rajasthan

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child labour. However, while child labour has not been eradicated completely in these villages; there has been a significant reduction in child labour in agriculture.

- In comparison to the target of 11,000 in Rajasthan, 20,000 community leaders, including PRI members, were oriented on child rights issues and the need for prevention of child labour and OOSC to support the Project objective and better outreach. The Project achieved its planned number of community meetings (3,000) to discuss CP issues in the intervention villages. The sensitisation process was augmented by involving religious leaders and using the various community meetings to discuss CP concerns.

### **3.3.1.4 Outcome 4: Enhanced Access to SPSs for Vulnerable Families**

Since child labour is seen as a manifestation of poor and vulnerable family conditions, Project outcome 4 focused on linking vulnerable families to SPSs and improving their income levels. The key intervention areas included mapping and identification of SPSs; explicitly targeting vulnerable families; increased

awareness among these families on such schemes; and creating systems to monitor and link vulnerable families to SPSs.

The baseline data under this outcome was available only for Rajasthan, according to which 47% families in Dungarpur and 41.7% families in Udaipur were benefitting from at least one social protection scheme at Project inception. Evaluation confirmed that by Project end, the percentage of vulnerable families availing benefits of at least one such scheme in Rajasthan was 96% against the target of 57% in Dungarpur and 98% against the target of 51.7% in Udaipur. In Maharashtra, the achievement percentage was significantly high at 83% compared to the target of 10%, whereas, the updated data of Gujarat indicates a marginal under-achievement of 74% against the target of 80% families linked with at least one SPS. It is vital to note that the decrease in percentage is due to the revised definition of vulnerable families.<sup>41</sup> The consolidated data of the first two years indicated that 4,15,000 families were identified and linked to the schemes, however, after the revised definition of vulnerable families, which included OOSC, child labourers and children without parental care the numbers were reduced to 21,651 (74% families) of a total of 29,267 identified families.

### **Mapping SPSs explicitly targeting vulnerable families**

- The Project achieved 100% target by mapping 600 schemes in Gujarat and 90 schemes in

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<sup>41</sup>At the Project’s inception, the definition of vulnerable families meant all those below poverty line. This definition was found to be imprecise and covered a large number of families; hence, it was changed to include families with OOSC, child labourers and children without appropriate parental care.

Maharashtra. The Project facilitated coordinated efforts of village volunteers and other key persons including VCPC, SMC and PRIs for conducting HH surveys to create a village database of vulnerable families in both the Project States. Considering the changed definition of vulnerable families, the out-of-school village data was used efficiently to identify and link eligible families to relevant SPSs in Gujarat. In Maharashtra, GP data carrying details of families availing schemes was analysed to identify and link vulnerable families with SPSs. The micro-planning process provided disaggregated information of various categories of vulnerable children and proved useful in community mobilisation, establishing village database and obtaining information on OOSC. The process has served as a useful tool spanning all outcomes and received Government acclaim. The DWCD, GoM is using the strategy for identifying children in need of care and protection. The State Government is also using the same strategies to map GPs for implementing its flagship programmes at the State level. Partner NGOs played a supportive role for identification of families, administrative verification and facilitation in the community for availing schemes.

- Similarly, in Rajasthan, 200 schemes were identified against the target of 50 due to active UNICEF involvement in mapping schemes including those focusing on the girl child. Due to its technical expertise and strategic partnership, the State government took UNICEF support in formulating the State Girl Child Policy. One of the objectives of the Policy is to create a conducive environment for children, especially girls, which contributed to the identification of girl-child-centric schemes, resulting in an increased number of schemes being recognised. After several rounds of review and coordination with *panchayats*, a list of eligible families and 15 need-based schemes were shortlisted. Awareness campaigns were also used to ascertain vulnerable families for linking them with the various SPSs.
- In Maharashtra, the *Bal Sangopan* Scheme, a non-institutional scheme was assessed and reviewed by an expert committee comprising DWCD and UNICEF to identify operational gaps and make it more holistic with clear roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders. UNICEF's advocacy effort has resulted in adoption of the recommendations into a GR and issue of guidelines by the DWCD. Likewise, in Rajasthan, 80% recommendations on the *Palanhar* Scheme, including insertion of many other categories of vulnerable children, have been incorporated through various executive orders. The initial government reluctance to include more categories and also to invest more money for foster care was addressed through several rounds of advocacy at various levels by UNICEF as well as recommendations by district collectors and DSJ&E.

### ***Increased family awareness on SPSs***

- All the targets of ensuring increased awareness among families was achieved across the three intervention States. While the achievement was 100% in Gujarat, over-achievement of targets was confirmed in Maharashtra and Rajasthan. In Maharashtra, mobilisation of 6,395 CBOs including CPCs, PRIs and special *gram sabhas* held twice a year on CP led to exceeding the initial Project target of mobilising 1,695 community-based structures, resulting in 375% achievement against the target set. BDOs affirmed that micro-planning data had helped to identify beneficiaries by name and reach the most vulnerable sections of society. This achievement also highlights that CBOs are suitable medium for information dissemination activities on the issue of social protection and should be utilised as a resource for conducting such activities at the village level. For enhanced community awareness, NGOs in Rajasthan developed posters on SPSs and displayed them in *panchayat* offices. Kits comprising relevant scheme formats were provided to village

volunteers for sharing during their community visits. These methods were effective in mobilising community support and in linking vulnerable families to social protection. Bimonthly fairs (*Vikas Mela*) and mid-media activities were effectively leveraged for enhanced community awareness in the two intervention districts of the State.

### ***Village-level database of vulnerable families and registration with SPSs***

- The Project succeeded in creating the targeted number of databases on vulnerable families across all three States. In Maharashtra, the training of various CBOs prevented 1,681 families in Jalna district from migrating by linking them to various SPSs, and ensuring that children remain in school and are prevented from entering the work force. The Wardha district database is being used by the District Administration for online monitoring. In Gujarat, the influence and scope of middlemen has been reduced due to awareness and access to information to provide direct benefits to vulnerable families. VVs trained on SPSs, survey methods and the registration process proved effective in this process. They also confidently presented the forms of vulnerable families in front of government officials, which facilitated the effective linkage and registration process for availing scheme benefits by these families.

## **3.4 Sustainability**

This section analyses the Project's sustainability in terms of the replicability of model interventions and sustainability of partnerships established under the Project. The evaluation has found that a significant number of Project innovations and best practices have served as models for adoption and replication by the three State Governments. This has resulted in state wide implementation and scale up of the programmes and therefore are sustained within the system.

### **3.4.1 Replication of Model Interventions**

Evaluation findings indicate that the Project's key achievement centred on securing government buy-in of the interventions since they fostered government mechanisms and commitment for a child protective environment. This resulted in achieving the majority of the planned and some unplanned initiatives under all outcomes across the three intervention States. This conclusion is supported by the significantly high achievement of desired outcomes at Project end compared to the baseline and the progress during the span of the Project.

A significant number of Project innovations and best practices served as models for adoption and replication by the three State Governments. The following key interventions adopted by the respective Governments indicate the sustainability of Project interventions.

- Model intervention of establishing CP structures through GRs in Project districts have been scaled up to all other districts of the States. Since these

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*"We had a limited outreach at the community level, so we could not reach vulnerable families. In such cases, NGOs provided their database of vulnerable families, who required livelihood training and financial support from the bank. All such families were trained through Mangalam Mission Programme of GoG. Need-based training programmes for families have also been developed with the help of the NGO database, which was very helpful."*

**-AJ Joshi, Director, DenaBan-RSETI, Patan, Gujarat**

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are in line with the ICPS and JJA, the CP structures established under the Project are self-sustained in the system by law.

- Training modules, guidelines, SOPs, various formats (village-level database format) have been adopted by the government. These materials have been published using government budget at several places. The SOPs developed for CWCs in Maharashtra are being used nationally by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) which demonstrates its replication. The State governments have accepted the village database format in Rajasthan, thus, there is a strong likelihood that these formats will be replicated in other districts across the State. The colour-coded database registers developed in the initial Project phase in Bhavnagar district in Gujarat were replicated in the entire state by joint efforts of UNICEF and SSA.
- In Maharashtra, the *Deepshikha* training module for adolescent *prerikas* (facilitators) developed by UNICEF during the course of the Project has also been shared with the gender cell at YASHADA for conducting trainings.
- The CFS checklist developed under the Project has been adopted by GoM for all 35 districts. The State government has also approved the introduction of CFS elements into schools in line with the RTE Act and directed schools to use available funds for this purpose. CFS guidelines were issued by the State on May 6, 2013 and are being implemented in all local body government schools.
- Protocols and guidelines developed for classroom processes, building teacher's capacities and monitoring tools under this Project, have now become part of the quality initiatives undertaken by the GoR.
- GoI has approved the Maharashtra model of SMC module and training method and has declared that in the future, RTE compliance of schools will depend on SMCs.
- GoM has plans to incorporate and upscale ECE intervention and training in the entire state. Whereas ECE related advocacy by UNICEF at the highest level in the State has led to inclusion of chapters on ECE in the curriculum of Primary Teachers Course at the Gujarat Council of Educational Research and Training (GCERT).
- Through advocacy efforts of UNICEF, the GoM has issued a GR declaring that DISE will be the only system for collecting educational data so that the data is reliable and can be verified and periodically updated.
- The Cluster and block approach demonstrated in the two intervention districts of Rajasthan has been very successful, hence the Government has adopted this in its overall strategy for teacher education. At present, this approach has been scaled up to 74 blocks with the aim of covering the entire State of Rajasthan by 2017.
- SIERT and ICDS have also developed a toolkit of SRP material which is solely funded by ICDS. This kit is being distributed in all districts of Rajasthan. Components of head teachers training demonstrated during the course of the Project have been adopted across the State.

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*"Partnership with UNICEF and the Government proved that joint efforts can accomplish any target. Because of this partnership, there was a behavioural change at all levels, from state to village."*

- Dharmendra Kumar, Project Coordinator, YMC, Gujarat

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- A system of monitoring and linking vulnerable families to SPS has been sustained in Udaipur in Rajasthan, where protocols developed in 2012 on mapping of vulnerable families for SPSs were implemented in three blocks in collaboration with the ZP.<sup>42</sup>

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*“People are now aware of SPSs, so they directly inquire with Sachiv or Ward for any related information. We are sure that there is no further requirement of complementary efforts to continue awareness. It has already been sustained within the community.”*

- Marjoree, Head, UnnatiSansthan, NGO, Rajasthan

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## Contribution of Project Partnerships in Long-term Sustainability

- During the intervention period from 2009-2013, the Project developed wide ranging partnerships for effectively operationalising its

planned interventions. UNICEF’s role has been pivotal as Project facilitator in guiding the Project’s course and in achieving the Project’s strategic objective of reducing child labour in cotton growing areas and mainstreaming children in education. The organisation liaised at the highest government levels to promote inter-departmental convergence for facilitating the Project’s processes. Its advocacy and technical support extended to strengthen government mechanisms and create an enabling environment for children has further promoted its partnership with respective State governments. With UNICEF as the strategic government partner, the association nurtured under this Project is expected to be leveraged in other state-level interventions as well in the future.

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*“The DWCD and other departments have taken up the issue of child protection, so that every WCD office is an institution, on the same level as the State level sessions. Training was conducted for all District Officers. Maharashtra have thus been developed to provide benefits of the Scheme. As such, UNICEF has been able to move at various levels, for the Government to take further speeded up protection structures. Various notifications, orders, circulars have been issued from district and block offices for the establishment of CP structures in continuation of State notifications and orders in a time bound manner which is appreciable.”*

Bahul Mera, Deputy Commissioner, DWCD, Maharashtra  
 Deputy Commissioner, DWCD, Maharashtra

Mandhata Singh Ranawat,  
 Deputy Director, DSJ&E, Udaipur, Rajasthan

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- It is envisaged that policy decisions taken by the Government will contribute to the continued creation of an enabling environment for children’s development. In fact the Project

has influenced the formulation of the Girl Child Policy, increasing the age of child labour from 14 to 18 years, articulating Government’s no tolerance to child labour of any kind and the National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). All these initiatives will sustain CP efforts.

- Convergence between various departments (WCD, DSJ&E, Police, DCPU, District Administration and Health) on issues related to children has proved very fruitful and the functionaries are thus empowered to address various matters concerning children that can be dealt with in a systematic approach guided by inter-departmental consensus, thus, indicating sustainability of Government-level convergence achieved under the Project.
- The Project has confirmed that NGOs effectively and efficiently complement Government efforts at the community level by using their outreach skills to reach the most marginalised children and families. This successful partnership between Government counterparts and

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<sup>42</sup>ZillaParishad – District level local self-government head office.

CSOs under the Project has opened up many more possibilities for such partnerships in future. The CSO-Government partnership has long-term possibilities as most of the CSOs<sup>43</sup> under the Project have been empanelled with the District Administration to assist with child related issues in Rajasthan. Interactions with NGOs in Maharashtra and Rajasthan indicate that though they are committed to take forward the child rights initiatives in their respective areas of operation, signing of MoUs with the respective Government departments will sustain the activities and partnership even beyond the Project period and strengthen the reach of Government schemes at the community-level.

- Recommendations adopted by the State governments regarding SPSs have been sustained in the system. This will sustain the best practice of review of existing schemes by the Government.
- Successful community sensitisation interventions and handholding support provided by CSOs to the CBOs has elevated the community confidence in these CSOs. Findings from community-level stakeholders indicated that *panchayats* and *gram sabhas* have been empowered through the Project to take forward social protection activities at the community level, pointing to enhanced community ownership. These forums have included awareness on CP and social security entitlements in their agenda. At some places, GPs have plans to issue circulars with information on social protection to the community using the medium of *gram sabhas*. Sensitisation and training of CBOs/PRIIs on issues of CP and importance of education has served to build the capacity of these bodies to continue to successfully address such issues at the village-level, thus promoting sustainability. CBOs and PRIIs have expressed the intention of continuing to address these issues with their community beyond the Project period.

## CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS

The Project has enabled the **creation of a Child Protection apparatus and environment** in all three intervention States. Success has been achieved in accomplishing, and in most of the components, exceeding the targets that were set for the various outcomes and sub-outcomes. Qualitatively, the model of the Project has been largely successful with the implementation of many innovations which have also translated into best practices and innovations that can be scaled up and replicated.

The Project contributed to **strengthen the child protective systems in the States**. It has revitalised the political space for child rights issues, especially the focus on CP in the development agenda, specifically evident from the policy initiatives which went beyond the Project target and the institutional mechanisms developed in some of the States during the Project period. The Project facilitated effective **inter-**

**departmental convergence and linkages** and developed relevant networks and structures for CP. However, the evaluation has confirmed that this required sustained efforts and

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*“CSOs as social capital are proven as key to behaviour change at the grassroots level in present times.”*

- AD-ICPC, Ashok Sharma in Rajasthan

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<sup>43</sup>Gayatri Seva Sansthan, Udaipur has been empanelled with the District Administration as a nodal agency for assistance on CP issues. In the same way, PEDO-MADA, Dungarpur has been empanelled with District Administration as a member of review meeting pertaining to CP.

technical support by UNICEF and NGOs through a series of consultative meetings with government officials positioned at the state and district levels.

**Capacity building of different stakeholders** with the primary focus on reducing child labour and ensuring that children were in schools created a pool of resources with the knowledge and skills to curb child labour in States. SOPs and guidelines were developed to detail out roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders under CP structures. Adoption of **innovative approaches for teachers' training and ICDS functionaries** created a resource pool of trained functionaries who were closely engaged with children. **Child-friendly schooling** received impetus under the Project through greater teacher engagement and development of low cost and simple child-friendly participatory measures which has further strengthened teacher-student relations and enhanced confidence among children.

Establishing **partnership with CSOs** to mobilise community support and create CP awareness for establishing village-level CP structures and databases on OOSC and their involvement and handholding support has enabled the linkage of vulnerable families with SPSs and also established a sense of ownership and right to their entitlements.

The Project addressed equity issues by **focusing on marginalised areas and population and involving adolescent and women's groups**, and engaging them in consultative processes in policy formulation. By creating and strengthening groups of adolescent girls and boys at the village level, the Project addressed the participatory and gender focus according to CRC principles.

The Project faced several challenges, many of which were effectively dealt with during the implementation process, such as inadequate human resources and transfer of officials, which slowed down the momentum of initiatives and loss of institutional learning. Monetary and human resource support by UNICEF was critical in operationalising the DCPUs in a few Project districts. Lack of funds under ICPS for emergency situations and setting up police check posts and patrolling cars were challenges in combating child trafficking for labour. Alternatively, the optimum functioning of DCLTFs headed by the District Collectors established under the Project was usually challenged by the non-availability of these functionaries as they headed several committees at the district level.

# CHAPTER 5: PROJECT CONSTRAINTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The evaluation noted that the Project experienced several difficulties and constraints in its implementation process. The Project devised appropriate methods to overcome these challenges in many cases that served as important lessons and milestones for mid-course corrections and added considerable value to Project interventions. This section provides a glimpse of the Project's key challenges and lessons as derived from the evaluation.

## 5.1 Outcome 1: CP Structures in Place Addressing Child Labour Issues

- The establishment of child protection structures at the state, district, and village levels is at a relatively nascent stage since the ICPS and the project were implemented in 2009. While child protection structures have been successfully established under the project there is a continued need to strengthen the structures so that they are functioning at optimal level. Sufficient time needs to be allocated for conducting training sessions with refresher training taking place periodically. It was found that political will especially at the state level is an essential ingredient in developing action plans for child labour. This underscores the need for continued advocacy at this level.
- Securing departmental convergence for issue of GRs was a challenge since it required their proactive involvement and agreement on defined roles and responsibilities. To overcome the challenge, convergence meetings and sustained consultative meetings with department heads by UNICEF were held, which aided in mobilising cross-departmental support. To further facilitate the process, UNICEF contributed by providing technical support and involving experts in drafting notifications, orders and circulars aligned with State policies as was evident in the process of consultations with secretaries and directors of CP departments of the GoR.
- Involvement of state-level departments in Project implementation right from inception proved instrumental in scaling up of effective strategies by the Government (advocacy documents describing the Project and expected outcomes). Hence the Project suggested that sustained Government engagement and dialogue is crucial for Government buy-in of Project approaches and strategies which seek their involvement.
- Lack of CP experts at Project inception was an area of concern in effective implementation of the Project across all States. To deal with the issue, UNICEF trained district functionaries and CSO representatives as master trainers to facilitate further training down the line. UNICEF, in association with 'Save the Children', trained a group of 22 child rights professionals to address some of the gaps. A compendium of FAQs on CP was also developed which helped in learning various aspects and issues related to CP. Similarly, in spite of notifications issued for speedy setting-up of CP structures under the JJ Act and ICPS, their effective functioning was a challenge due to the dearth of trained and quality CP professionals. Lengthy processes of appointment and gaps in recruitment policy aggravated this problem in Rajasthan. This gap was addressed by hiring contractual staff through UNICEF for facilitating setting-up and functioning of DCPUs. Through persistent advocacy by UNICEF, staff recruitment received momentum in the last three to four years

and addressed human resource gaps to a large extent. Similarly, in Maharashtra, lack of CP human resources was countered by UNICEF through pitching for higher pay scales for quality professionals, which spearheaded Project implementation. The SOPs on recruitment and selection systems proved effective in appointment of CP staff. These also helped in dealing with issues of political appointments in CWCs faced in all three Project States. Therefore, there is a need to implement CP activities in a professional manner with mechanisms for creating a quality resource pool with accountability in place.

- Being a new concept, CP measures required considerable efforts and sufficient time in adoption. It was found that a single training session was insufficient to cover all CP topics in a comprehensive manner. UNICEF recognised that a single training session was insufficient to address the issue of drop-outs during training and for new appointments such as AWWs and ASHAs to pass on the learning. Refresher training programmes were essential to build institutional capacities for updated information on redressal of sexual abuse cases which had been emerging as a key concern in child rights' violations in recent years. UNICEF and partner NGOs dealt with this challenge through persistent efforts and sensitisation activities. Regular training and refresher training will be important in future interventions on child rights.
- Apart from human resources, financial constraints also created difficulty in functioning of CP structures. The evaluation found that CP structures lacked funds to deal with emergency situations. For instance the police did not have funding provisions for setting up check posts and providing patrolling cars to combat child trafficking. These challenges were overcome through UNICEF support in ICPS implementation which provided monetary assistance and expert manpower at the district level to bridge the gap. However, the issue of sustaining these still remains.
- Establishment of VCPCs was a critical intervention under the Project for creating a child-protective system at the grassroots level. However, initial difficulties were faced in mobilising default members of VCPCs due to lack of PRI support, negative community perceptions marking VCPCs as mere tokenism or having a political agenda in States such as Rajasthan. Such challenges and misconceptions underscored the vital need for community support and sensitisation to increase their buy-in of Project objectives. VCPCs were established and made functional through proactive follow-up processes supported by capacity building, training and supportive supervision.
- Creation of a database on out of school and working children to meet the larger objective was a challenging task due to lack of authentic disaggregated data on 0-18 year old children, and obsolete CTS data of SSA across all Project States. Involvement of the wider community, PLCPCs, SMCs and key village functionaries to collect data through household surveys helped in creating databases across the three States. The micro-planning process was found to be an effective tool for data collection for establishing village-level databases since when compared to other data sources, this method provides proxy indicators to track OOSC. In Gujarat, data collection by Community Resource Persons covering 40 villages was a challenge that was overcome by involving AGGs and children's groups that also helped in building community awareness.
- Regular updating of the list of vulnerable families surfaced as a challenge across all States due to the absence of defined procedures. This issue has been addressed by maintaining relevant data in the *Panchayat* office and updating it in coordination with SMCs and VCPCs in a majority of the Project districts.

- Evaluation findings indicate that limited geographical outreach of CSOs in Rajasthan was a concern which created difficulty in covering all Project districts. This created the need to partner with several CSOs to address district-wide issues. Occasionally, CSOs employ their own method of addressing specific issues, which is at times not in line with the priorities of the district administration, and therefore need consistent guidance to match the government focus. Sustaining the Government-CSO partnership established under the Project for taking forward CP activities in the absence of MoUs has been found to be a challenge. The district administration in Rajasthan has attempted to strengthen this partnership by empanelling the NGOs for future partnership.

## **5.2 Outcome 2: Improving the Quality of Education to Increase Enrolment and Retention**

- Evaluation findings across the three States indicate that the Project experienced several challenges in implementing CFS components, the most significant being initial reluctance and lack of commitment among teachers to adopt CFS activities. At the outset, scheduling CFS training proved to be a challenge due to teacher's disinterest and lack of willingness to attend CFS training. At Project inception, adopting CFS components was perceived as a daunting task by teachers due to its long list of activities including CCE and detailed paper work that required greater time and involvement. The Project assessed that achieving long-lasting attitudinal change among teachers was not possible through singular training programmes, instead it required consistent efforts. The challenge was dealt with by conducting regular training programmes in collaboration with DIET and UNICEF. In Rajasthan, work involved convincing teachers on CFS usefulness in school activities and the importance of implementing the CFS model and guidelines for betterment of schools. Issues of operational lag in CFS implementation were faced in Gujarat which were effectively dealt with by taking up the matter and operational difficulties in various forums, viz., monthly review meetings of head teachers and DIETs, bi-monthly review meetings of block officials by DIETs, quarterly district review meetings under the chairmanship of the District Magistrate attended by the District Education Officer, Block Education Officer, Resource Persons and the DIET Principal. CFS was also included as an agenda item in monthly meetings of the DoE and SSA. CFS training was made more engaging by focusing on activity-based learning and how to make classroom processes more interesting through motivation exercises that helped in overcoming the initial resistance to adopt CFS. Teacher resistance in Maharashtra was overcome by conducting training programmes which presented CFS in a non-daunting manner. This helped in convincing them of the relevance of CFS.
- Despite the GR stipulation, some schools in Maharashtra are not yet wholly RTE-compliant, since it will take time for CFS concepts to take root, as corroborated by both policy and programme-level informants. Interviews at the policy-level confirmed infrastructural gaps in even though there was no shortage of funds under the SSA. Nevertheless, the issue of proper and effective fund utilisation remains integral in implementing CFS techniques and mechanisms in schools. Shortage of teachers in schools was also found to be inhibiting CFS implementation. Single-teacher schools and their inability to comply with CFS norms entirety were found in Rajasthan, wherein 30% schools are still functioning with a single teacher. Such issues will need to be addressed at the outset for effective implementation of CFS.

- The Project faced several difficulties in implementing STP and ensuring attendance of OOSC children. Issues like discrete habitations and lack of transportation facilities created problems for children in attending STP classes across all the three States. UNICEF's advocacy with the district administration helped in providing transport vouchers to students in Rajasthan. However, this was for a short period of time.
- Other challenges faced included lack of policy for opening schools for OOSC and child labourers, delay in approvals for holding residential camps requiring minimum 15 children, retention of children in a non-residential set-up due to lack of focus and inadequate capacities of teachers posing multiple challenges in effective implementation of STP. Similarly, constant migration creating difficulty in retaining children enrolled in STP; identifying *Bal Mitra* as per RTE norms and a lack of resources under SSA were challenges in STP implementation. Interviews with SMC members in Rajasthan contested the token amount of INR 40 for attending training on monitoring school attendance and infrastructure as it was perceived inadequate to forego their one-day earning as daily wage labourers. Therefore, interventions focusing on mainstreaming child labour into education must focus on operational modalities.

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*“It was not very difficult to disseminate information after receiving training. Books/information booklets received during training helped to conduct discussions in a facile manner in the gram sabha and by putting up the banners, stickers and charts in prominent places in the village; we created awareness among people about the issue of CP. Because of this, people obtained more information about the right to education.*

*- Sarpanch, Maharashtra*

- Empowering SMCs was an important Project intervention aimed at creating quality education system and enhancing retention of children in schools. The Project focused on strengthening SMCs through capacity building. However, disinterest of members and opposition from teachers and government officials to hold SMC meetings, lopsided focus on budgets and funds rather than assessing the best way forward for school development and lack of interest and contribution of parents were formidable challenges experienced across intervention States. Some of these were addressed through subsequent trainings. Illiteracy of SMC members and their training in large groups created difficulties in developing the required understanding of school development issues in Rajasthan.

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*“In the beginning, while imparting training to SMC members, due to their low education levels, difficulties were faced in explaining the importance of SDPs to them”*

*- Sarpanch, Maharashtra*

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- To address such constraints, a pictorial-based colour-coded checklist was in the process of development at the time of evaluation. This was to raise awareness among illiterate community members about CFS components and the required process of monitoring the implementation at the school level.
- SRP implementation was a challenge under the Project in spite of UNICEF's capacity building programmes for training ICDS supervisors as master trainers for training AWWs due to the latter's low educational levels. The Project adopted methods of training AWWs in clusters to strengthen the pre-existing rapport with supervisors for helping in the effective implementation of SRP. To deal with low skills and capacities of AWWs in Rajasthan, the Project team invested more effort for advocating with supervisors to organise repetitive training programmes and supervision of AWWs in implementing SRP techniques. Convergence between ICDS and MSCERT for the purpose of developing the ECE package in Maharashtra was a challenge due to difference in areas of operation. Through persistent efforts and policy-level advocacy by UNICEF, this challenge could be

overcome and both these departments contributed their technical expertise in actualising the ECE package.

### **5.3 Outcome 3: Families and Communities take Collective Action for Protection and Development of Children**

- The Project faced initial challenges such as lack of community support and misconceptions to embark on CP and child rights, as they were considered insignificant issues by them. The Project developed effective and multiple communication strategies and campaigns with the C4D collaboration and adopted mid-media activities suited to local needs for community awareness. Awareness-building in intervention villages of Rajasthan where a majority were engaged as labourers was a challenge, as they left home early morning for work and returned late in the evening. However, with an effective strategy and committed efforts, the Project team effectively dealt with the issue by organising sensitisation activities at night according to availability of the critical mass of stakeholders. At the macro-level, State-wide campaigns proved to be fundamental in creating an enabling environment around CP and establishing good practices among communities.
- The role of Project partners has been crucial in community awareness and mobilising their support on child rights issues through effective utilisation of existing community rapport and leveraging community activities, such as the micro-planning process. Persistent NGO efforts, sensitisation activities, discussions and periodic visits to establish community rapport sustained Project momentum with CP now being on the minds of community members. CP was also discussed at the *gram sabha* level across all States.
- Behaviour change and transformation in mindset is a long-term process and demands continuous dedicated efforts. The Project had to adopt several levels of sustained sensitisation processes for motivating local communities to agree to send their children to school. Involvement of community leaders, PRIs and CBOs to send messages in support of children's education enabled creation of a child-protective environment within Project villages. Involvement and engagement with AGGs and women networks have proved crucial to the success of the Project. The evaluation findings underscore the critical need for wider community engagement for successful social interventions.

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*“With the help of the Panchayat, duplicate copies of required documents for availing SPS were issued for those who did not possess them.”*  
- UnnatiSansthan, NGO, Rajasthan

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### **5.4 Outcome 4: Enhanced Access to SPS for Vulnerable Families**

- Outcome 4 focused on linking vulnerable families with SPSs to indirectly benefit children by improving family incomes. This required identification and registration of such families with SPSs, which proved to be a challenging task due to lack of efficient data collection systems. Door-to-door visits by NGOs in coordination with village level CP structures helped in listing of marginalised families. Seeking accurate family information was another constraint that was overcome by involving credible spokespersons from villages, which instilled confidence among reluctant vulnerable families and enabled sharing of personal information.
- Lack of community awareness on SPSs and their low confidence in government mechanisms posed challenges in SPS linkage. This problem was dealt with through joint

efforts of village *panchayats* and NGO representatives who approached families to motivate them for attending SPS meetings. Selection of relevant schemes catering to family needs was difficult. Home visits by NGOs to disseminate SPS information proved helpful in gaining community buy-in. The involvement of VVs was of particular significance in enhanced access to SPSs by families. The Project used *gram sabha* and *panchayat* meetings as effective fora for community sensitisation and disseminating SPS information. These forums also included awareness on social security entitlements in their agenda. These strategies collectively succeeded in achieving the target of families linked to and benefitting from SPSs.

- Low literacy levels among villagers created difficulty in filling of forms and submission of paperwork. The number of such families was large; hence, providing assistance to them by *panchayat* members, SHGs or PLCPCs proved to be a challenge. Involvement of VVs and provision of SPS kits with scheme-related information and forms by NGOs in Rajasthan during home visits proved instrumental for eligible families in filling forms.
- Readiness for social protection requires considerable ground work within target communities in addition to being time consuming. This aspect of the project could have been strengthened if there was more time in the project cycle. NGO partners had to continue providing information to people about various schemes. However, the Government's willingness to cover families under social protection has been encouraging and this is evidently picking up in intervention areas.
- Earlier, families received direct benefits but now bank accounts have been made mandatory, which has posed a difficulty for community members who find the documentation process for account-opening very cumbersome. NGOs have played the required facilitating role in opening of bank accounts and overcoming this challenge in Rajasthan.
- Lack of necessary documentation available with vulnerable families was a common challenge across the three Project States. This was effectively overcome through PRI support.
- Limited technical support at the district level in providing timely scheme benefits was overcome by leveraging prior engagement with government officials and with NGO support at the community level.
- Absence of institutional-care infrastructure in Kutch and Patan districts of Gujarat created a difficulty in registering children recovered from child labour under government schemes. They thus had to be transferred to nearby districts with child-care facilities. Rigid eligibility criteria for SPSs became a significant challenge which excluded many needy vulnerable families. This issue needs to be effectively addressed for enabling all children to access their rights to care and protection.

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*"Follow up on SPS was extremely challenging in the absence of necessary documents and bank accounts. During the campaign 'Nanhe haath kalam ke saath', we completed one village in a day. Half a day was dedicated for going around the village with information on documentation and the remaining half for a meeting where we could talk about SPS and fill forms."*

**- Devilal, Director, PEDO, NGO, Rajasthan**

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# CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation has generated several recommendations derived from IDIs and FGDs held with various stakeholder categories across the three Project States. Some of these recommendations have been suggested by respondents who were closely associated with Project implementation. Certain other recommendations have been made based on lessons arising from the Project. These recommendations are critical from the point of view of designing future interventions in child protection and education and for scale-up and replication of the Project for enhanced results. For convenience, recommendations are being presented under the heads of policy, project and community.

## 6.1 Policy Recommendations

### 6.1.1 Platforms for young people—provide opportunities for engagement

The Project's **social mobilisation** initiative brought the community together and strengthened their capacities and participation in protecting rights of children. Of particular significance was the platform of **AGGs and women's groups** which demonstrated the power of collective in effective monitoring of child labour cases, mainstreaming children in schools and in awareness building of communities. This emphasises the need for defining greater role and regularising the concept of AGGs and women's groups across programmes. These groups must be further engaged with while implementing a community-based programme in all three States. **Youth volunteers** played a vital role as drivers of change since they formed the link for communities and children with schools and government mechanisms. This link needs to be recognised by all stakeholders and nurtured by the government.

**Participation of communities and role of the youth must therefore be considered as drivers of change.** The approach of the government must not be linear and thematic, rather it should be comprehensive. They need to engage in a dialogue with the young people and adolescents on issues related to health, empowerment, protection, education and not with a pre mandated plan. The ICPS at present does not focus on the energies of the youth; this needs to be relooked at by the government.

### 6.1.2 Increased inter-departmental convergence

The Project emphasised the need for inter-departmental convergence for strengthening education and child protection systems to prevent children from entering the workforce and rehabilitate children withdrawn from child labour.

Interviews with government departments indicated that to achieve this aim, convergence between the departments of Education, WCD and Labour was necessary at all levels. The Project envisaged establishment of JJ and ICPS mandated structures through issuance of government resolutions and notifications. Facilitating this process required convergence between departments which was a challenge initially. However, the convergent nature of the Project and UNICEF's advocacy with concerned departments and technical support brought requisite synergy among them and enabled issuance of notifications for establishment of CP structures. These contributed in defining departmental roles and responsibilities and ensuring effective functioning of the structures. After Project completion, **it is recommended that the government should issue orders/circulars regarding any relevant changes every year or periodically in line with notifications issued in Project intervention years to ensure inter-departmental convergence.** UNICEF can play a significant role in facilitating inter-departmental convergence through continued advocacy efforts and providing technical support to the Government. In fact, convergence meetings with the highest level of state government officials will be of value. UNICEF can continue to leverage its association with the government in fostering this process.

### **6.1.3 Data on out-of-school children and working children to be strengthened**

The evaluation found that data and information on actual numbers of children in labour and out-of-school needed improvement. **There is an urgent need to have more robust data and information systems, especially in the area of CP, for effective planning and response.** For strengthened data the government should consider adding columns in the Census formats for disaggregated data related to the population of 0-18 year olds as it would serve to create relevant policies for children. The Maharashtra DWCD has undertaken a survey of children who fall in the category of children in need care and protection (CNCP). This is a positive outcome and the survey can be conducted on a yearly basis or once every two years in all other intervention States.

### **6.1.4 Comprehensive planning at state and district level for quality education and child labour prevention**

There is need for comprehensive planning at the state and district levels to address bottlenecks in achieving quality education, especially in the tribal areas to prevent child labour. The Project demonstrated initiatives for quality education systems such as **School Readiness Programme (SRP) and Child Friendly Schools (CFS) which can be further replicated** across States. This would require a strong government buy-in for scale up of these initiatives.

SRP, which proved effective in overall child development and mainstreaming of children in formal education, should continue to be implemented. **Recurring capacity building of AWWs in ECE** should be held. The ToT model of training (with ICDS supervisors training AWWs) should be institutionalised since this strategy had strengthened the ability of supervisors to monitor ECE service delivery by AWWs. It is recommended that **convergence between ICDS and SCERT** should be sustained. Handbooks developed for AWWs should be updated and revised every two-three years. Yearly stock-taking exercises should be conducted for AWCs implementing the ECE programme and lessons learned from this exercise should be incorporated into the revision.

The CFS guidelines, indicators and several innovative approaches developed by the Project complemented CFS under RTE. CFS components proved very effective and efficient for quality education and ensuring retention of children by developing a sense of partnership in school activities among children. CFS guidelines and indicators and low-cost innovative approaches may be considered by various State governments for replication through cross-learning.

Towards mainstreaming children into Education, the School Training Programme (STP) is a significant approach. However the geographical constraints of discrete housing, migration and lack of transportation facilities made the implementation of STP challenging. There needs to be continued advocacy and efforts made to provide transportation facilities for children to attend STP, supportive policies for opening schools for OOSC and child labour, approval in holding residential camps, capacity building of teachers and adequate resources for improving the implementation of STP. Issues such as migration also need to be addressed in order to retain children in STP and thus bring out a strong action plan for mainstreaming children withdrawn from work.

### **6.1.5 Trained professionals for implementation of ICPS and RTE**

Availability of trained and quality human resources on child rights was a concern in all Project States. During FGDs, CP functionaries under ICPS and JJ in Rajasthan pointed out that lack of CP experts was encountered at Project inception since CP was a newly-emerged discipline. Building capacities of CP functionaries in a comprehensive manner through a single training round was also a challenge. UNICEF helped in operationalising CP mechanisms by providing technical support in helping to identify suitable functionaries, developing terms of reference and developing training modules for capacity building.

The government will need to develop a **strengthened CP training mechanism to create a resource pool of CP professionals for implementing ICPS**. Refresher training modules and implementation plans should be developed by States to ensure that capacity-building of stakeholders at various levels under ICPS, education personnel including AWWs, teachers and SMC members; and CBOs and PRIs continue to effectively address CP issues. It was suggested by a programme-level NGO counterpart that **refresher training for all stakeholders** should be held every three months to ensure optimum effectiveness. Training modules such as 'Buniyad' developed for PLCPC training in Rajasthan under the Project should be institutionalised and used for training purposes in other districts across all States. The Project developed **SOPs for strengthened recruitment and selection process** of CP personnel with relevant educational qualifications, adequate years of experience and practical knowledge. Standardised terms of reference are required to be developed to ensure better quality appointments and trained professionals.

Creating quality education system was a concern due to lack of trained education human resource. The poor education and knowledge level of AWWs affected the implementation of SRP across the three Project States. Recurrent training of AWWs helped in overcoming this issue to some extent. Such initiatives should be institutionalised for creating a **strong cadre of AWWs for implementing ECE**. The cascade model of teacher training to deal with their initial reluctance and further invigorate their motivation for CFS implementation proved to be an effective method in reaching out to more teachers per school. This model of creating

resource persons and training teachers/head teachers at the district, block and school levels can be adopted under education programmes for strengthened implementation of CFS. The Project indicated the need for **training SMCs in utilising existing funds and grants** available to schools more effectively. They must be taught to appreciate the ethos of child-friendly teaching that does not require large expenses and can be implemented through simple and effective low-cost methods.

A large number of SMC members were found to be illiterate; hence, pictorial-based colour-coded check lists were being developed under the Project by UNICEF to inform them about the CFS component and monitor their implementation, which must be institutionalised as soon as possible. Training of SMC members held in large groups created chaos and difficulty in understanding; hence, it is suggested that these training sessions must be conducted in a group of less than 40 people. Stakeholders across States indicated the need to revisit the token money of INR 40 provided to SMC members, who are daily wage labourers and have to forgo a day's wage to attend the training. The honorarium must be re-considered and sufficiently provided to compensate daily wages. There is no institutional mechanism for capacity building of SMCs and CPCs, hence external support is constantly required. **Institutional mechanisms for capacity building of SMCs and CPCs** must be considered.

### 6.1.6 Access to social protection for the most vulnerable—Monitoring and data management required

Towards a more holistic approach to providing social protection for children, there is a need to strengthen systems of education so that families who receive benefits of social protection have avenues to provide education for their children. This reinforces the Project model with the implication that all four interventions of the Project need to be carried forward for optimum gains in all four outcomes. **Mapping of SPSs** should be carried out at the state level. Area-specific compendia of SPSs should be kept at panchayat offices in coordination with local NGOs so that people have better access to schemes.

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*“Visits by some retired persons on a voluntary basis or on payment of honorarium through government funding, for providing assistance and information on social protection schemes to people coming to Panchayats would be a good way to sustain activities.”*

- Community FGD, Rajasthan

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The State government can issue directives to GPs for awareness generation. The government should provide a booklet about schemes at the GP level and also monitor registration for the schemes with the *gram sewak* reviewing the process. It will prove effective if the **gram panchayat takes the lead in information dissemination**. Information about SPSs can be disseminated during community events and beneficiaries can be registered with the leadership of the *sarpanch* and *gram sevak*. This will impart an official nature to the proceedings and families will not feel as if NGOs are registering people selectively. **NGO partnership** needs to be carried out so that paperwork for beneficiaries can be completed in an appropriate manner. They can be engaged in monitoring and facilitating community's access to SPS in coordination with PRIs.

Strong and active **alliance of the government and CSOs** at the State, district and community levels has proven very effective in creating an enabling environment for ensuring child rights through extensive campaigns and outreach. The government should consider this model while

developing policies on social welfare. Policies must be formed in light of local perspectives to ensure effectiveness, which cannot be possible without the participation of CSOs. MoUs should be signed for continued collaboration. All this will ensure that the momentum gained under the Project in collectively addressing issues of child labour and child marriage is maintained and further consolidated beyond the Project period.

## 6.2 Project Recommendations

### 6.2.1 Common strategy across the project area to enable easier scale up

Uniformity and commonality enable easier scale up of interventions. There needs to be a common strategy and a common thread that runs through the components of the programme in all States. Future **project interventions should aim at adopting common project indicators and strategies across the implementation areas**. However, diversity of the state should be considered.

### 6.2.2 Monitoring and evaluation framework to be developed at the inception of the project

The evaluation concluded the need for developing a robust Project design including the monitoring and evaluation framework at the Project inception stage. Considering the complexity of this Project in terms of components and outcomes, **the theory of change developed at a later stage should have been developed during the Project design along with the Project's Logical Framework** with clearly defined indicators to track the process, output, outcome and impact. This would have enabled smooth monitoring and the process of evaluation of the Project.

### 6.2.3 Improved mechanisms for efficiency

The Project was efficient but required improvement as it utilised additional resources for implementing the Project interventions. Hence, **systems of planning and monitoring costs should be devised at the Project inception stage** for effective cost management. The Project of this nature should create a contingency to absorb costs involved in any mid-course correction. The Project planners should undertake a cost-analysis exercise based on Project findings and use it for future Project design.

### 6.2.4 Inclusion of both girls and boys

The Project has worked extensively with AGGs, which delivered valuable results in spreading awareness and dealing with issues of child protection. The evaluation found that **involving adolescent boys would enhance the scope of community outreach on child protection as well as improve gender sensitisation and response to adolescent issues**. Formation of boys groups in Maharashtra led to their mobilisation as active bodies spearheading community sensitisation and addressing issues related to child labour/OOSC and cases of child marriage.

### 6.2.5 Improved mechanisms for data and information

The evaluation found that **data and information detailing the population of 0-18 year olds** was unavailable. For instance data on number of children who are outside the ambit of education and children who are engaged in work was lacking. Partner NGOs of UNICEF prepared this data for intervention villages through door-to-door surveys and collation of various village-level data available with the AWW, ASHA, ANM, schools and *panchayats*. There should be an improved system for collecting authentic data and information on children for effective and targeted project implementation.

## 6.3 Community Recommendations

### 6.3.1 Enhanced involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions for long-term results

The involvement of the PRIs provided the much-needed impetus to the Project implementation by mobilising support from all community sections. Interventions focusing on communities must therefore seek **strengthened involvement of PRI systems in planning and implementation and inclusion of child rights issues in their regular meetings and agenda**.

Community leaders, at times, themselves have varying notions about child labour and child marriage and since they influence community awareness, activities must be held to improve their knowledge levels on the particular issues. It is important to educate them through IPC and official means. **The roles and responsibilities of the sarpanch can be expanded to include advocacy against and monitoring of child abuse** including child labour and child marriage. They can be engaged from the inception stage to develop programme ownership for long-term results. This will ensure that village-level CP does not depend on/is hindered by individual views of community leaders.

### 6.3.2 Linkages between child protection committees and school management committees to be strengthened

Creation of VCPCs at the village level and establishment and strengthening of RTE mandated SMC for monitoring school enrollment and retention were key project interventions for creating a child-protective environment. The VCPC through collaborative efforts and coordination with community groups were effective in identifying children vulnerable to child labour. The evaluation concluded that **wider community involvement has instilled community ownership** since all the listed children were mainstreamed in schools and were regularly tracked for their attendance by SMCs and VCPC/PLCPCs. Establishing a close linkage between the two committees will further strengthen the process of establishing a child protective environment and leverage the common membership of the two committees.

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*“Under SSA, information was collected at the village level but that information is quite outdated and does not mention OOSC clearly. Volunteers, who have been trained, collect information at the village level in a logical and organised manner.”*  
-Sarpanch, Maharashtra

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### 6.3.3 Panchayati Raj Institutions to build awareness for access to social protection schemes

Strong community mobilisation is critical to ensure long-term sustainable change. And behaviour change, though a time consuming process, has given effective results leading to eventual attitudinal shifts. Since awareness levels about SPSs were found to be low among communities, **GPs can take the lead for disseminating SPS** information in a planned manner. SPS information with details on processes of accessing them should be disseminated in the *gram sabha* and *panchayat* meetings.