

# UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)



## Evaluation of DPMU (Analytical Cell) - Koraput, Odisha - FINAL REPORT December 2012

**Cover Photo Credit:** © EKTA/Mr. Santosh Padhi

Source: Briefing paper Series : Innovations, Lessons and Good Practices - District Planning and Monitoring Unit - Data Knowledge Hubs for Convergent Planning and Monitoring

# Evaluation of DPMU (Analytical Cell) - Koraput, Odisha - FINAL REPORT

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	SECTION HEADING	PAGE No.
	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>7</b>
1	<b>EVALUATION BACKGROUND</b>	<b>14</b>
	- INTRODUCTION	<b>14</b>
	- SETTING THE CONTEXT TO THE EVALUATION	<b>14</b>
	- DPMU (ANALYTICAL CELL), KORAPUT: BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW	<b>16</b>
	- RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED STUDY	<b>19</b>
2	<b>EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>20</b>
	- PURPOSE OF EVALUATION	<b>20</b>
	- STUDY OBJECTIVES	<b>20</b>
	- KEY QUESTIONS AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION	<b>20</b>
	- STUDY APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	<b>21</b>
	- STUDY LIMITATIONS	<b>25</b>
3	<b>KEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSES</b>	<b>27</b>
	- OVERALL EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	<b>27</b>
	- RELEVANCE	<b>27</b>
	- EFFECTIVENESS	<b>32</b>
	- IMPACT	<b>52</b>
	- EFFICIENCY	<b>63</b>
	- SUSTAINABILITY	<b>70</b>
4	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>77</b>
	- FRAMEWORK FOR RECOMMENDATIONS	<b>77</b>
	- BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS	<b>78</b>
	- RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION POINTS	<b>80</b>
	- WAY FORWARD	<b>84</b>

<b>LIST OF ANNEXURES</b>		
<b>I</b>	<b>GLOSSARY</b>	<b>ENCLOSED AS A SEPARATE VOLUME</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>REALIGNED EVALUATION QUESTIONS</b>	
<b>III</b>	<b>LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED</b>	
<b>IV</b>	<b>INTERVIEW GUIDES</b>	
<b>V</b>	<b>LIST OF INTERVIEWS</b>	
<b>VI</b>	<b>DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>VII</b>	<b>BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS (2011-12)</b>	

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Deloitte Evaluation Team wishes to acknowledge the guidance, support and cooperation received from all the stakeholders of this study. Our gratitude to Dr. R.V Singh, Special Secretary, Department of Planning and Coordination; Mr. Sachin R. Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput; and Mr. Sanjay Kumar Nanda, Deputy Director DPMU, Koraput for guiding us in our engagement. We would like to thank all the respondents from the different government departments in Koraput and Nabarangpur, and from the civil society organizations, who took out time to share their insights with us.

Our special thanks to the research advisory group for their guidance and feedback on the study design; UNICEF for providing this opportunity to us; various specialists at UNICEF for sharing their insights and Mr. Rajesh Patnaik, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, UNICEF Odisha, for supporting us at each step of the study.

Last but not the least, our thanks to Mr. Akshay Limal, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist and Mr. Arun Kumar Hial, Planning and Documentation Specialist at the DPMU-Analytical Cell, Koraput, without whose support and cooperation this evaluation would not have been possible.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BCC</b>	Behaviour Change Communication
<b>BDO</b>	Block Development Officer
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organization
<b>CDMO</b>	Chief District Medical Officer
<b>COATS</b>	Council of Analytical Tribal Studies
<b>CPAP</b>	Country Programme Action Plan
<b>DD-DPMU</b>	Deputy Director- District Planning and Monitoring Unit
<b>DPC</b>	District Planning Committee
<b>DPMU</b>	District Planning and Monitoring Unit
<b>DPMU-AC</b>	District Planning and Monitoring Unit- Analytical Cell
<b>DPO</b>	District Planning Office
<b>DRDA</b>	District Rural Development Agency
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical Information System
<b>GoO</b>	Government of Odisha
<b>IAP</b>	Integrated Action Plan
<b>ICDS</b>	Integrated Child Development Scheme
<b>IDA</b>	Integrated District Approach
<b>IEC</b>	Information Education Communication
<b>IMR</b>	Infant Mortality Rate
<b>JSY</b>	Janani Suraksha Yojana
<b>KRA</b>	Key Result Areas
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MIS</b>	Management Information System
<b>MMR</b>	Maternal Mortality Ratio
<b>MNREGA</b>	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Guarantee Act
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NIC</b>	National Informatics Centre
<b>NRHM</b>	National Rural Health Mission
<b>PD-DRDA</b>	Project Director-District Rural Development Agency
<b>PRI</b>	Panchayati Raj Institution
<b>RMS</b>	Rapid Monitoring System
<b>SC/ST</b>	Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe
<b>SHG</b>	Self Help Group
<b>SSA</b>	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
<b>TSC</b>	Technical Sub-Committee
<b>TSI</b>	Technical Support Institution
<b>VIC</b>	Village Information Centre

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

1.1 The District Planning and Monitoring Unit (DPMU) was established in the context of a policy environment which was inclined towards enhancing decentralization of planning systems. The DPMU was set up in Koraput due to its unique situation and existing socio-political vulnerabilities. The analytical cell in the DPMU of Koraput was set up by UNICEF (as a part of its integrated district approach) in partnership with the district administration to institutionalize an effective decentralized planning and community monitoring process, to improve the planning and monitoring of flagship programmes; and to strengthen evaluation and research at the district level. *UNICEF engaged Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Private Limited (Deloitte) to undertake a detailed evaluation of this analytical cell.*

## Rationale and Objectives of the Evaluation

1.2 The **rationale** for this evaluation is derived from two main areas:

- UNICEF's internal assessment of the outcomes and impact of its intervention in Koraput, especially to inform the process of its next phase of strategic planning for the country (2013-18).
- Eliciting learning from the current Koraput experience for scale-up and replication in Odisha and in other states, in the context of the proposed state-wide scale-up plan of the Government of Odisha to set up analytical cells in all the 30 existing DPMUs.

1.3 The **specific objectives** of the evaluation include assessment of the following parameters, as detailed in the Request for Proposal issued by UNICEF:

- **Relevance** - whether the design and interventions of the DPMU-AC were in line with the requirements
- **Effectiveness** - the extent to which the objectives of DPMU-AC have been achieved
- **Impact** - the extent to which the DPMU-AC has been able to change the planning process and service delivery in the district
- **Efficiency** - whether resources have been used economically and within the specified timeframe
- **Sustainability** - whether the institutional mechanisms put in place will ensure the continuation of the DPMU-AC

## Approach and Methodology

1.4 The evaluation followed a qualitative methodology, which implies that the focus was on participation of all relevant stakeholders, and not randomization; on inferences based on divergence and experience, and not on generalizations; and on changes manifested through processes, and not on quantifiable indicators. The three primary methods used were desk research, document review and participatory qualitative research.

- The **desk research** helped to set the policy context in the country and in Odisha, the socio-political context of Koraput, and the history and evolution of the analytical cell.
- The **document review** was used to understand the details of activities and their results for chronological and thematic analyses; information about human resources; organizational structure; and evolution and change over time. This also formed the basis for forming the lines of inquiry in designing tools for the participatory research.
- The **participatory qualitative research** involved in-depth interviews and group interviews with stakeholders. This was used to understand stakeholder perceptions about the analytical cell and the processes of change catalysed by it.

1.5 The **sampling plan** for the evaluation was developed to achieve maximum representation from all relevant stakeholders. This involved two phases – first, the selection of the comparison district (Nabarangpur) on the basis of a-priori matching criteria and existing intervention context, and the selection of two blocks each within the focus district Koraput and comparison district Nabarangpur (following the principle of maximizing divergence); second, the selection of stakeholders from these geographies to ensure representation from the government (at state, district and block levels), the civil society (at the district level), and UNICEF (at state and district levels). The total number of stakeholders covered through interviews was 38 across all categories.

1.6 **Data collection tools** - interview guides were developed based on the lines of inquiry informed by the desk research and document review. The collected data was collated and both **chronological and thematic analyses were undertaken for the lines of inquiry under the five parameters of this evaluation** – relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability.

## Findings and Analysis

### Relevance

1.7 The evaluation aimed to analyse the concept and design of the analytical cell as a complement to the existing government structure of planning processes and monitoring systems of on-going flagship human development programmes. The main findings and inferences related to the relevance of the analytical cell are as follows:

- The stated objectives in the original design of the analytical cell were relevant and strategically aimed to address the areas of weakness that were identified in programme planning and monitoring.
- The modalities followed for the operationalization and functioning of the analytical cell, including its structure and reporting relationships, have played an important role in helping the analytical cell meet its objectives.
- The design of the analytical cell and its stated objectives complement the planning and monitoring processes.

### Effectiveness

1.8 The study involved an evaluation of the extent to which the analytical cell achieved its stated objectives through its activities; the nature of its partnership with government departments at the district level, and the mutual contributions of the analytical cell and the government departments/district administration towards the overall outcomes of DPMU. The main findings and inferences are as follows:

- The analytical cell has been involved in a wide range of activities over the years that have cut across multiple functional and sectoral areas to effectively meet its stated objectives.
- The objectives and activities have been evolving through the years and the focus has changed from strengthening decentralized planning to an increased focus on monitoring government programmes and schemes.
- These activities of the analytical cell have helped it to achieve its stated objectives to a reasonable extent.
- Despite an evident evolution of the objectives of the analytical cell, as reflected in its prioritization of activities and profile of human resources, the same has not been officially documented and neither has the original programme document been revisited during the existence of the institution for any strategic review.
- The analytical cell has been working closely with government officials in a collaborative manner. It is uniquely positioned with linkages with the District Collector, District Planning Office, DRDA, DPC, Zilla Parishad and with Line Departments. This strategic positioning has brought about convergence of activities and efforts towards better decentralized planning and monitoring in the district.
- While it has maintained strong relationships with most departments in the district, these relationships have not been formally documented through legal memoranda.

### *Impact*

1.9 While there have been early results, the analytical cell is still at a nascent stage and improvements in output indicators or quantifiable results are still to emerge. Evidence in the form of quantifiable data or causality for improvements in education, health, nutrition, rural development indicators is beyond the scope of this study. Further systemic changes take time to result in impact. Instead, change is manifested in the processes and systems being followed in the district as well as stakeholder perceptions. The analytical cell's impact is indicative in the conceptualization and implementation of innovations for strengthening decentralized planning and monitoring. Apart from unique innovations, the DPMU has also strengthened and improved existing systems and processes in place. The main findings and inferences are:

- While the analytical cell has been impactful in many of its activities related to its objectives, there is lack of conclusive evidence yet about the impact of the institution as a whole within the public system. The evidence of such impact is complex to establish, and often requires long term sustainability of interventions.
- The analytical cell has catalysed a number of innovations in Koraput, especially in the area of monitoring flagship programmes and undertaking research studies. Besides innovations, the analytical cell's impact is evident in strengthening existing systems and processes related to decentralized planning and monitoring viz. improving district information flow within and between departments and with the district administration, availability of quality data leading to better usage of data, strengthening monitoring mechanisms, filling any gaps felt by the district administration.
- In the area of decentralized planning, the impact of the analytical cell has been more indirect and facilitative through the provision of pertinent data that aids planning decisions at different stages – needs assessments, feasibility analyses, resource allocation and analysis support.
- In the area of monitoring, the impact of the analytical cell has been through the conceptualization and implementation of innovative monitoring mechanisms and initiatives across different flagship programmes. These activities, in turn, have had impact in terms of corrective action. However, these

activities/monitoring initiatives have not been followed up or regularized into systems – which are needed for sustained impact.

- Data generation and analysis emerges as the most significant role and area of impact of the analytical cell. However, the generation of data is determined to a large extent by requests from the respective departments, rather than a selected list of indicators that are published with pre-determined regularity and on the basis of standardized data sources.
- A significant area of impact of the analytical cell has been the process of bringing about convergence amongst different departments through the creation of forums like the Technical Sub-Committee Meetings and District Core Committee Meetings, as well as through initiating joint action on monitoring systems.

### *Efficiency*

1.10 This study evaluates the efficiency in resource management, financial reporting, monitoring and review mechanisms of the analytical cell. The main findings and inferences are:

- The analytical cell is fully funded by UNICEF till December 2012. The current budget allocation is reasonable for the activities carried out by the analytical cell indicating good financial planning. However, its funding has been decreasing over the years, keeping in line with its redefined role as a catalytic supporter.
- Routing the budget disbursement through the district administration is aimed towards increasing ownership and control of the analytical cell as a part of the government system.
- For financial reporting, the analytical cell maintains budget and expenditure details and these are shared with UNICEF on a quarterly basis. This is a strong and efficient system of financial management.
- While internal reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place and working efficiently, they have tended to become more informal over the years.
- There is a differentiation of programme budgets of the analytical cell from its organizational budgets. It will be important for the government to have visibility into the overall cost including the spending on programs activities at the time of takeover of the Analytical Cell of Koraput and during scale up and replication.
- With its lean staffing, there is efficient utilization of resources by the analytical cell. However, whether this is optimal to attain the objectives is doubtful. With the increasing dependence of the district administration on the analytical cell, and consequently, the increasing workload on the staff members, more human resources may be required to achieve the objectives of the analytical cell while at the same time maintaining quality.

### *Sustainability*

1.11 An important focus area of the evaluation was to assess the sustainability of the analytical cell i.e. extent to which its institutional mechanisms, its modalities and their effectiveness for operationalization and functioning are sustainable; the sustainability of partnerships with government departments at the district level; and the assessment of need for the analytical cell to continue in the future. The key findings and inferences are:

- The concept of the analytical cell as an institution is sustainable in the current context where the public system acutely lacks the ability to generate robust data and analyse it for corrective action, monitoring, planning and reforms.
- The institutional mechanisms of the analytical cell in terms of its design, organogram and formal positioning within the government system are efficient and sustainable to continue. However the modalities followed for operationalization and functioning, changes in these modalities over time, or shifts between originally stated vision and practice has been largely informal in nature and mostly undocumented.
- The analytical cell's relationship with the district administration and various government departments has been largely individual driven, determined by current incumbents and leadership in these administrative positions. The lack of documentation or legal memoranda of understanding with government departments raises concerns about the sustainability of its roles and contributions in their respective flagship programs.
- To a large extent the performance of the analytical cell has been driven by its personnel. Given the small size of the unit, it also becomes difficult to isolate the performance of individuals from the institution. This calls for knowledge management to maintain continuity of learnings in the event of attrition.
- The financial support required to meet the salary and routine operational costs of the analytical cell is not high and should not be an issue for sustainability. However modalities for supporting the programme costs need to be clearly developed.
- The unanimous felt need amongst stakeholders for the analytical cell and the GoO's proposal for setting up analytical cells across the state are key drivers for sustainability. However strategies need to work towards ensuring a smooth transition without breaking the current momentum.
- While UNICEF has worked towards the sustainability of the analytical cell through gradually withdrawing from functional modalities, withdrawal of its funding at this stage would have serious negative implications for the sustainability and continuity of many of its initiatives. An interim strategy therefore needs to be worked out.

1.12 In summary, the analysis from the assessment indicates a clear relevance of an institution like the analytical cell, with planned objectives and a defined structure, in strengthening decentralized planning and monitoring in the district. Based on the evaluation findings, some key factors have been identified for the success of an intervention such as the analytical cell. The key learning is shared below to inform the process of scale-up and replication.

## Key Learning

1.13 The key learning from the Koraput model are:

Learning from the Koraput Model
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>strategic institutional positioning</b> of the institution along with <b>effective leadership</b> is crucial in determining its impactful functioning and sustainability.</li> <li>• The structure also has to provide for <b>effective linkages</b> with the District Collector, District Planning Office, DRDA, DPC, Zilla Parishad and with Line Departments which also need to be</li> </ul>

### Learning from the Koraput Model

**institutionalized.** Besides this, the analytical cell needs to maintain links with civil society.

- Many factors may independently, or in interaction with each other, contribute to a need for shifting the focus areas of an institution like the analytical cell such as, national policies, policy context in the state, development priorities, etc. However the institution has to be **flexible and dynamic** to respond to such changes. In doing so, the institution needs to ensure that it **remains relevant** – this is possible by being cognizant of the objectives and goals and ensuring that it serves the need of the end users.
- **Clear statement of goals and objectives** of the analytical cell is important, with institutional mechanisms to review these regularly against activities and changing policy needs.
- **Lean but optimal staffing** with right expertise is important to ensure quality of services which in turn is imperative for driving demand for services. While the desire may be to staff the cell with many specialists, availability of quality human resources needs to be borne in mind.
- **Balancing increasing demand while maintain quality** is essential to ensure value creation and sustainability.
- **Knowledge management** is critical along the life cycle of the institution - In order to protect the functioning and role of the analytical cell through change in leadership, human resources etc., it is important to have official documentation of the evolution and rationale of change along the project life cycle.

## Recommendations and Way Forward

1.14 Based on the above learning, possible recommendations/ action points for future programming and strengthening of the analytical cell in Koraput and in the planned scale up in Odisha are presented below.

### *Recommendations for scale-up and replication*

- Strategic institutional positioning of the DPMU
- Objectives and role of DPMU must factor in specific needs and context of the district
- Analytical Cell must be a flexible and dynamic institution
- DPMU must have formal linkages with line departments and with block level administration
- Analytical Cell must have strong linkages with other units of the DPMU
- Regular capacity building of staff should be conducted to ensure knowledge updation

### *Recommendations for the Analytical Cell in Koraput*

1.15 Based on the analyses, and observations presented above about the key learning, the following main recommendations are put forth by this evaluation study in three areas – a) institutional and policy change, b) structural level, and c) operational level.

### *Institutional and policy level*

- Continue and replicate the DPMU
- UNICEF should extend interim support while District Administration takes up ownership of the analytical cell in Koraput to ensure continuity of service

- The objectives of the analytical cell should be fine-tuned based on contextual needs and should reflect specific needs of the district
- Maintain a balance between flexibility to respond to contextual needs and focus on larger goals

### ***Structural level***

- Staffing of DPMU should remain lean but optimal to work load and human resources should be organized in alignment with core objectives
- Need to formalize linkages with line departments, create linkages with block level administration and strengthen linkages with other units of the DPMU

### ***Operational level***

- Need to make objectives and KRAs specific and undertake strategic reviews to ensure alignment of activities to objectives and goals
- Need to strengthen reporting and monitoring mechanisms and strengthen performance reviews
- Need to undertake formal financial reviews to provide district administration scope for budgeting activities, and for prioritization of activities and utilization under different core areas.
- Ensuring an appropriate mix of activities between routine and ad hoc activities based on requests from stakeholders
- Strengthening Knowledge management at an institutional level
- Ensuring regular capacity building of staff for knowledge updation
- Ownership and absorption of DPMU- AC activities into the regular government system

## **Conclusion**

1.16 The findings from the assessment indicate clearly the relevance of an institution like the analytical cell, in strengthening decentralized planning and monitoring in the district. Despite an evolving role, the DPMU-AC has been effective in planning and monitoring activities for flagship programmes of different departments, and the impact of the cell is manifested in process outcomes of these programmes. Along with the perceived value expressed by stakeholders, this establishes a sound case for the analytical cell to continue in Koraput, and for elements of the model to be replicated across the state. The fact that it is a small unit with relatively low operating cost supports this case. Having seen the positive experience in Koraput, the district administration needs to prepare a time bound action plan for taking the ownership of the analytical cell. During the interim period, UNICEF may consider an extension of support to avoid discontinuation of activities. The state needs to integrate the learning from the Koraput experience while prioritising the development of the model for scale-up of the Analytical cell.

## SECTION 1

# STUDY BACKGROUND

### Introduction

1.1 The District Planning and Monitoring Unit – Analytical Cell (referred to as the analytical cell and/or DPMU-AC/ DPMU interchangeably in this report) was set up in Koraput by UNICEF in partnership with the District Administration to institutionalize an effective decentralized planning and community monitoring process, to improve the planning and monitoring of flagship programmes and to strengthen evaluation and research at the district level. *UNICEF engaged Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Private Limited (Deloitte) to undertake a detailed evaluation of the DPMU-AC.* This report presents the evaluation findings and recommendations.

### Setting the Study Context

*The need and importance of decentralized planning has been well acknowledged*

1.2 Traditionally planning in India has been a centralized activity with the involvement of only the centre and the state in decision making. However, this had a lot of inadequacies. Besides being uncoordinated and compartmentalized, where states were required to prepare sectoral budgets, the financing ended up being largely normative rather than responsive to the needs and local realities. Several efforts have been focused towards making *planning more responsive to the actual ground level requirements*. The 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution<sup>1</sup> identified the district as the key unit in multi-level planning. They also *mandated the devolution of powers* to the village, block and district levels as the local governance bodies responsible for preparation and implementation of plans for economic development and social justice.

1.3 The 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment mandated the formation of *District Planning Committees (DPC)* for preparing and consolidating plans across the district in a consultative and participatory manner and to function as a body independent from state and central control. However, as the District Planning Manual (2008)<sup>2</sup> highlighted, *the establishment and functioning of DPCs remains a challenge till date*. In places where the DPCs had been set up, they *lacked the capacity to contribute to the planning process due to scarcity of appropriately qualified personnel and adequate resources*.

1.4 The mid-term appraisal of the Eleventh Five Year Plan *emphasized the need for a comprehensive support system for DPCs* highlighting that the skills required are often weak or missing. It was recommended that to support the proper functioning of DPCs, there is a need to position

<sup>1</sup> 73 Amendment Bill 1991 and 74 Amendment Act 1992

<sup>2</sup> Manual for Integrated District Planning by Planning Commission, Government of India - 2008

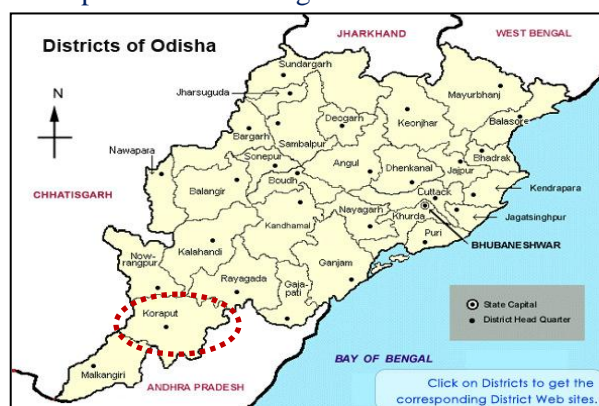
sustainable district planning units which would be involved in collection and compilation of essential data, monitoring of progress of important sectors and provision of recommendations and feedback – activities which were often neglected by DPCs due to lack of resources.

1.5 The report of the Expert Group on *Planning at the Grassroots Level*<sup>3</sup> had recommended that *every district should set up a District Planning Unit under the District Planning Officer*. It suggested that institutional support through universities and research institutions could be identified at the state and district levels to assist District Planning Committees in planning, monitoring and evaluation<sup>4</sup>. This set the stage for the *establishment of the District Planning and Monitoring Units (DPMU)*. The state Government of Odisha decided to set up DPMUs in all its 30 districts in June 2010 by strengthening the District Planning Office and the District Statistical Office that existed independently.

### *Koraput - a focus district for a variety of convergent and innovative development initiatives, including the DPMU-AC*

1.6 Koraput is part of the tribal belt of southern Odisha, with Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes making up 64 percent of the population. It is one of the poorest districts with many geographically inaccessible areas. It is also one of sixty districts that was provided a block grant of Rs. 25 million in 2010-11 under the Integrated Action Plan, for being most affected by left wing extremism and civil violence. These factors *make Koraput a challenging development environment requiring particularly targeted and focused interventions*.

1.7 Koraput has, therefore, been a focal point for various development initiatives. It has also been a focus district for UNICEF as one of the 17 districts in the country (across 14 states) under the **Integrated District Approach (IDA)**<sup>5</sup> – an important component of UNICEF's Country program Action Plan (CPAP 2008-12) in India. As part of this approach, the district administration of Koraput partnered with UNICEF to jointly initiate a programme, ANKUR, in April 2003-04 (and renewed for a period of five years in 2008), to address social, economic and human development issues in the district through interventions in people's participation and decentralized planning over a four year period.



1.8 The analytical cell was set up under ANKUR Fully supported by UNICEF, this cell was unique to Koraput. Currently, Koraput is the only district, where all the three divisions of the DPMU are functional.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Expert Group: Planning at the Grassroots level, An Action Programme for the 11<sup>th</sup> Five year plan, March 2006, Para 4.6, New Delhi

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> IDA, launched in 2004, focuses on strengthening integrated and participatory planning, increasing the demand and delivery of convergent, quality services and promoting inclusive social change.

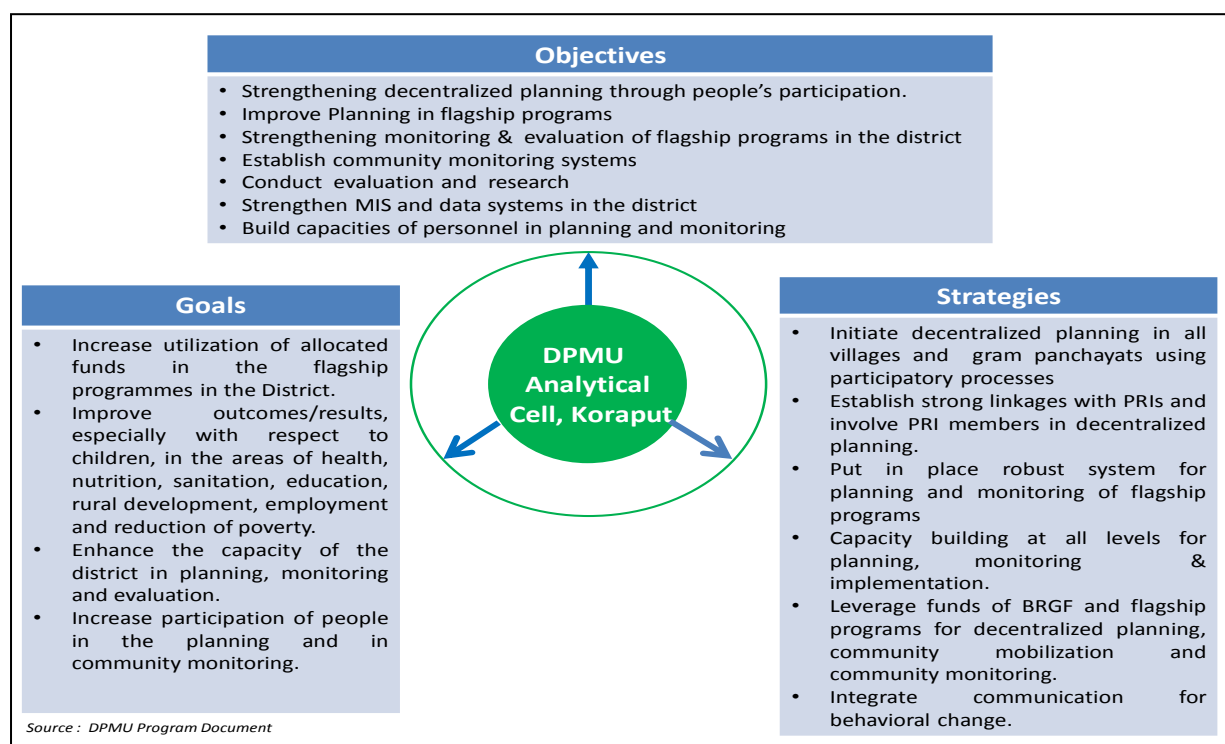
## DPMU (Analytical Cell), Koraput: Background and Overview

*The analytical cell was formed with the main objectives of improving decentralized planning and monitoring of flagship programs in the district*

1.9 Programmatic experience suggests that better planning and monitoring of flagship programmes in education, health, water supply, sanitation, nutrition, rural development, employment generation etc. can lead to improved quality in the delivery of services. Increased capacities in planning and monitoring also have the potential to lead to increased utilization of funds in the flagship programmes, resulting in improved outcomes. *The analytical cell was set up with the aim to strengthen decentralized planning and community monitoring, and to provide technical support to the DPC in effective policy formulation and resource allocation, through collection and compilation of essential data and provision of recommendations. Its core mandate was to work with the district administration and flagship programmes of different government departments to ensure sound functioning of data systems in the district<sup>6</sup>.*

1.10 The specific objectives, goals and strategies that were envisaged at the time of setting up the analytical cell are shown in Exhibit 1.1

### Exhibit 1.1 Goals, Objectives and Strategies of the Analytical Cell

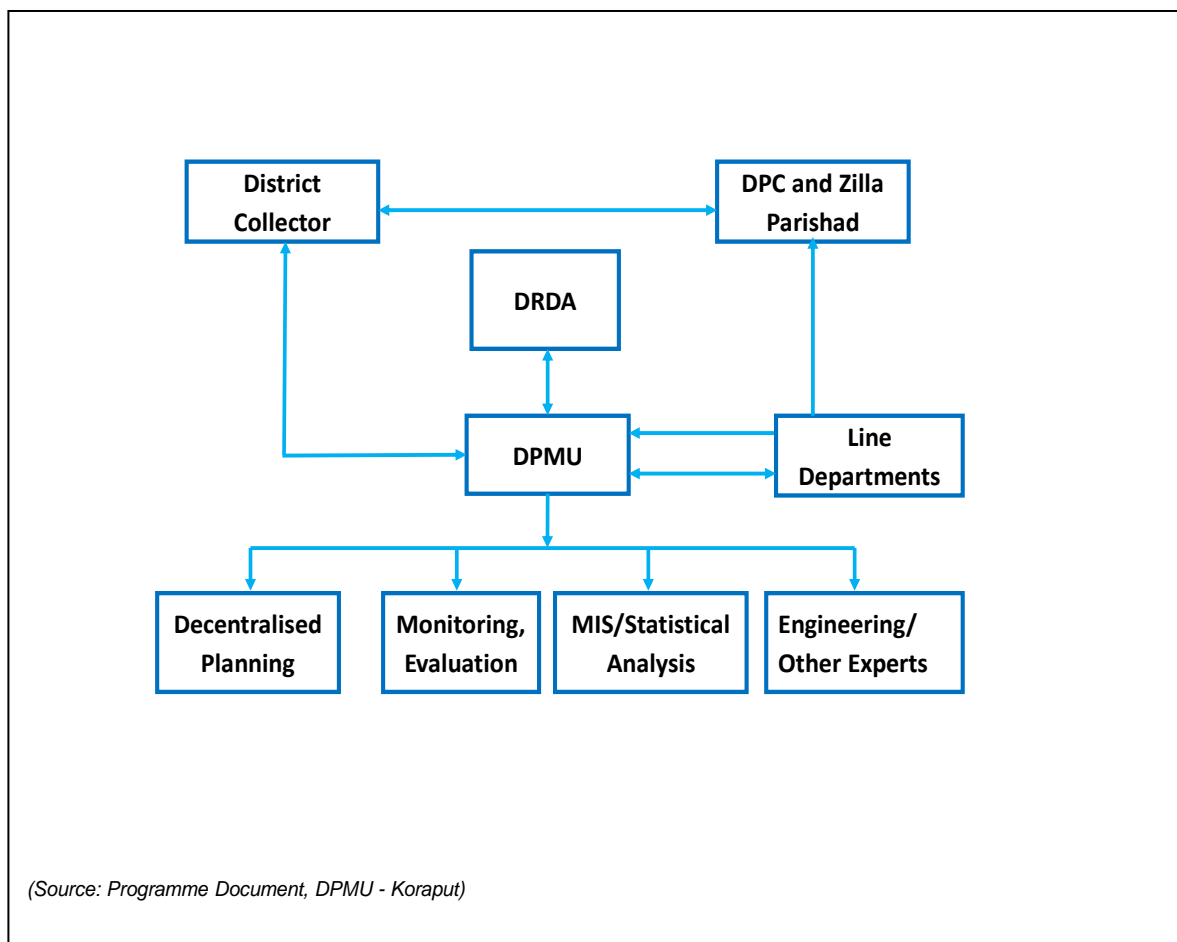


<sup>6</sup> Briefing Paper Series- Innovations, Lessons and Good Practices- DPMUs Data Knowledge Hub for Convergent Planning and Monitoring (UNICEF)

*The institutional design of the analytical cell provided for specialists with well-defined staffing and reporting relationships*

1.11 The analytical cell was initially headed by the Project Director of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) with 3 full-time specialist staff – Decentralized Planning Specialist, Planning and Monitoring Specialist, and MIS/Statistical Specialist. In 2010, the state government passed a resolution to set up DPMUs under the leadership of the Deputy Director, Planning and Coordination (DD-P&C) in all 30 districts. In order to align the analytical cell in Koraput with the structure envisaged for the DPMUs to be set up across the state, it was brought under the leadership of the DD-P&C. The DD in turn, reports directly to the District Collector (DC). At present, the Decentralized Planning Specialist position is vacant (since end of 2011) and the analytical cell is staffed with two specialists - Planning and Documentation and Monitoring and Evaluation. Besides staffing relationships, the analytical cell has line relationships with the different government departments of health, education, water and sanitation, and women and child development. The organogram is seen in Exhibit 1.2.

**Exhibit 1.2**  
**Organogram of DPMU Koraput**



### *UNICEF has provided funding and resource support for the analytical cell*

1.12 UNICEF has provided complete funding for the set up and operations of the analytical cell since its inception in 2008, and has planned support till December 2012. The DPMU was set up in its own dedicated office building (provided by the district administration) from the beginning, which was equipped with the necessary infrastructure for it to carry out its functions. UNICEF's financial support also included the following components:-

- **One-time Start-up Support:** Refurbishing the analytical cell building - civil, electrical and plumbing work, equipment, computers, furniture and fixtures.
- **Technical Support** in setting up the analytical cell
- **Operational cost** including travel and mobility cost, exposure visits.
- **External resource for coordination** through mother NGOs for coordinating the decentralized planning processes.
- **Capacity Building** of key personnel in planning and monitoring and training of Village Volunteers, PRI members, SHG members and other networks in the district.
- **Technical support** in concurrent monitoring, Joint Review Missions, conduction of situational analyses, action research, and documentation.
- **Supplies** including Village Planning Boards, IEC material.

### *The analytical cell has performed a wide variety of activities since inception*

1.13 Since its inception, the analytical cell has performed a wide variety of activities to improve planning, monitoring as well as evaluating of national flagship programs. Besides the district administration, the analytical cell has provided support to a range of stakeholders in the district including line departments and civil society. It has become a knowledge hub of essential planning and monitoring for the district, improving data and analysis, supporting systemic improvements to information flow both horizontally and vertically and working alongside departments and programs to ensure their planning and execution in line with district level needs.

1.14 The detailed analysis of the activities performed by the analytical cell is presented in Section 3 of the report and in Annexure VI. Although nascent, preliminary findings indicate that the analytical cell can be an effective vehicle to support and drive the planning process, acting as collating units and knowledge hubs for the district.

### *The Government of Odisha plans to set up analytical cells across all the districts*

1.15 In 2010, the Government of Odisha passed a resolution to establish DPMUs in each district comprising of two cells-

- **General Planning Cell**, headed by the Deputy Director, and bringing under one unit, the existing Planning and Statistical Wings comprising of District Planning Officers and District Statistical Officers and two new positions of Statistical Investigator and Senior Economic Investigator.
- **Analytical Cell**, headed by the District Collector and responsible for providing analytical support to the DPC and the General Planning Cell. The Cell is envisaged to comprise of new positions including

specialist analytical positions of an economist and experts in micro planning, geographical information system (GIS), town planning and regional planning.

1.16 The proposed DPMU structure brings together the existing Planning and Statistics divisions already functional in the districts under the existing DPMUs and mandates the establishment of a new division, called the ‘Analytical Cell’<sup>7</sup>,

1.17 The program is at a critical juncture – on the one hand UNCIEF’s support to the program comes to a close by December 2012 and on the other hand the Government of Odisha is also planning the scale up and replicates the analytical cell across the state. Hence, this was felt to be an appropriate time to carry out a detailed evaluation of the analytical cell at Koraput.

### **Rationale for the proposed study**

1.18 The rationale for the proposed study draws from two main areas – eliciting learning from the current Koraput experience for scale-up and replication in Odisha and other states, and secondly for UNICEF’s internal assessment of the outcomes and impact of its intervention.

1.19 The Government of Odisha has proposed to scale-up analytical cells in all DPMUs across the state. Other states like Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand are keen on incorporating learning from successful models in their design. Besides this, UNCIEF’s support to the program comes to a close by December 2012, and it is in the process of the next phase of strategic planning for the country. The findings and recommendations of this evaluation are aimed to address these needs.

1.20 Given this context, it was felt appropriate and timely to carry out a ***comprehensive evaluation of the design, functioning and also the results achieved by the analytical cell in Koraput***. The details of the study objectives and design are presented in the following section.

---

<sup>7</sup> The ‘Analytical Cell’ proposed by Government of Odisha will have a larger structure and wider scope than the structure supported by UNICEF in Koraput.

## SECTION 2

# STUDY DESIGN, APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

### Purpose of Evaluation

1.1 The purpose and scope of this evaluation is to study the analytical cell supported by UNICEF as a part of the DPMU in Koraput. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to derive conclusions, identify good practices and draw lessons (i.e., what worked and what can be improved) from the functioning of DPMU-AC since inception, and come out with recommendations for continuation and expansion in scope in Koraput, as well as replication in other districts of Odisha and/or other states.

### Study Objectives

- 1.2 The specific objectives of the study included a detailed assessment of the following parameters –
- **Relevance** of the DPMU-AC, i.e. whether the design and interventions of the DPMU-AC were in line with the requirements
  - **Effectiveness**, i.e. the extent to which the objectives of DPMU-AC have been achieved
  - **Impact**, i.e., the extent to which the DPMU-AC has been able to change the planning process and service delivery in the district
  - **Efficiency** of the DPMU-AC in achieving its objectives, i.e., whether resources have been used economically and within the specified timeframe
  - **Sustainability**, i.e. whether the institutional mechanisms put in place will ensure the continuation of the DPMU-AC

### Key Questions and Scope of Evaluation

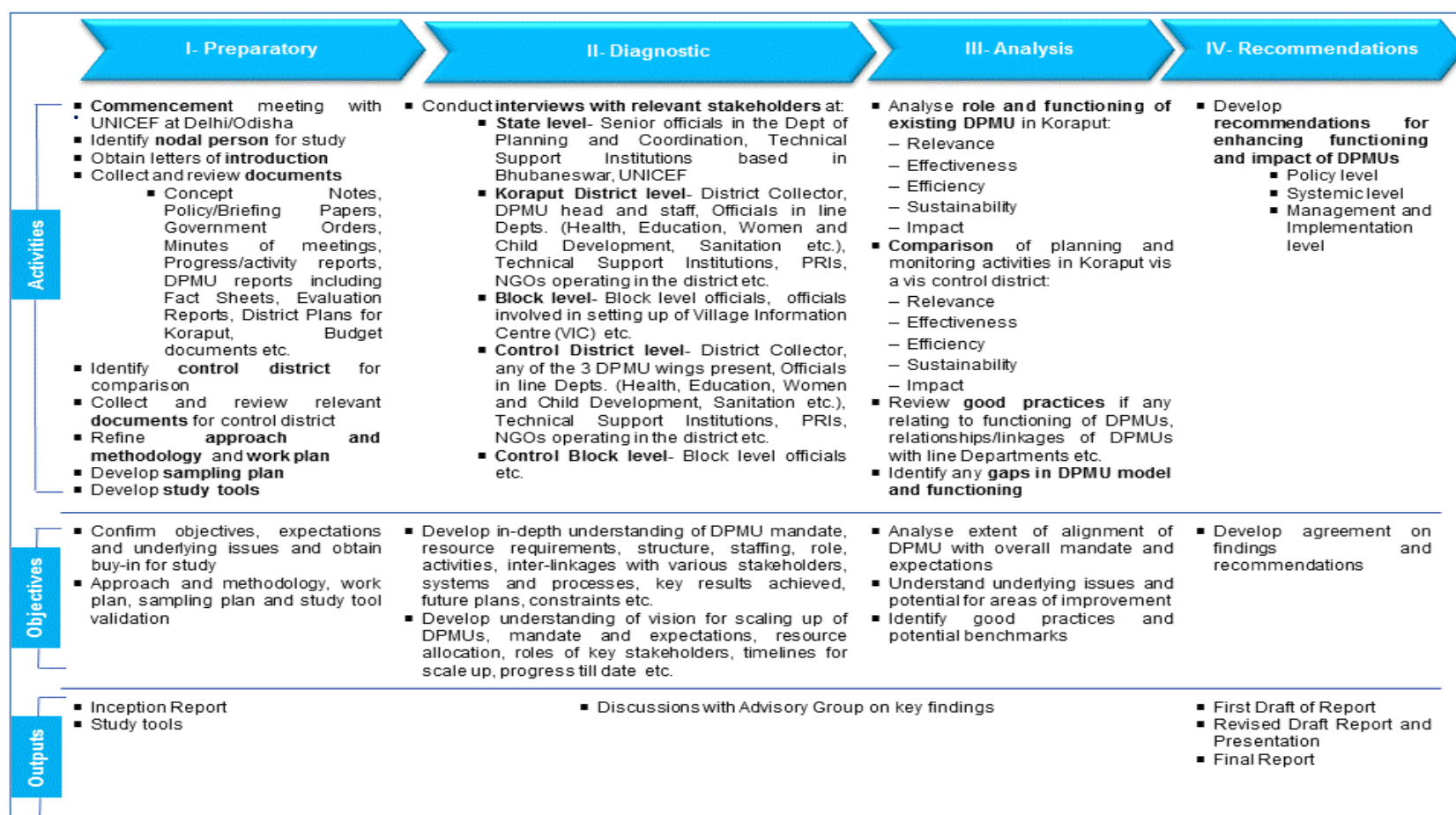
1.3 The evaluation took into account the results achieved by the interventions of the analytical cell, and their effect on the flagship programs and government departments, covering essential elements of its stated objectives. The study also evaluated the processes, actions as well as the intended and unintended outcomes of these. The evaluation solicited feedback and suggestion on the quality of implementation of DPMU-AC at various levels of stakeholders, including ideas for redefining roles and for improvement of existing operational modalities.

1.4 The Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by UNICEF for the study provided the specific questions to be answered as part of the study. Based on this, the evaluation followed the five broad parameters –for forming its lines of inquiry and the analysis of its findings. While retaining all the questions that were raised in the RFP, a slight re-alignment of questions within each of these parameters was done to facilitate a better logical flow in this report. The detailed list of questions proposed in the RFP as well as the re-aligned questions which form the basis of the evaluation is presented in **Annexure II**.

## Study Approach

1.5 The overall approach to the study is presented in below.

**Exhibit 2.1**  
**Overall Approach to the Study**



## Study Methodology

1.6 The evaluation was qualitative in nature and the study methodology used a combination of document review and participatory qualitative research.

### *Kick-off Meeting*

1.7 As a first step, a kick-off meeting (telephonic discussion) was held with UNICEF, Bhubaneswar to mark the commencement where the following aspects were discussed -

- Develop a common understanding of the mandate and expectations from the study
- Refine and finalize the proposed approach and methodology, sampling plan, work plan, deliverables.
- Identify a nodal person at UNICEF who would support the study team in obtaining appointments, provision of letters of introduction, relevant documents.
- Collect relevant reports and documents available with UNICEF.

### *Desk Research and Document Review*

1.8 Comprehensive desk research and a detailed document review were integral parts of the study methodology. Desk research was used extensively to understand the history and evolution of the analytical cell, the various activities undertaken and the details of the same as well as the results achieved. The document review helped contextualize the need for an institutional structure like the analytical cell, and provided an understanding of its activities – lending them to chronological and thematic analyses; as well as information about its human resources, organizational structure, evolution and change over time.

1.9 The evaluation team reviewed the various relevant documents obtained from UNICEF and the analytical cell, including concept notes, policy/briefing papers, relevant government orders/memos/circulars, progress/activity reports, annual plans, job description and key result areas of the personnel, program documents, process documents, meeting minutes, various research reports, evaluation reports, presentations prepared by the analytical cell were also reviewed by the study team. The detailed list of documents reviewed for the purpose of the evaluations is enclosed as **Annexure III** to the report.

1.10 Detailed review of these documents provided a good understanding of the analytical cell and its activities and helped in providing various aspects that needed to be focused upon in the lines of inquiry in preparing the interview guides for the participatory research.

### *Designing Study Tools*

1.11 The guides for the purpose of the in-depth interviews were developed incorporating the study objectives, evaluation questions and the findings from the desk research. The *interview guides were designed to act as a check list of cues to be used for facilitating the interviews, rather than as structured questionnaires*. The draft information checklists were submitted to UNICEF and their feedback was incorporated to finalize the same for use in the field.

1.12 The final interview guides used in the qualitative research in-depth interviews as part of the evaluation are enclosed as **Annexure IV** to the report. Subsequent to this, the inception report of the study was submitted to UNICEF, containing the revised approach and methodology, sampling plan, work plan and interview guidelines.

### *Participatory Qualitative Research*

1.13 The *qualitative research was participatory and representative in nature and engaged all the relevant stakeholders* at the *state district and block levels*. The research objective and purpose was provided to all the participating stakeholders and the importance of their feedback emphasized. Understanding the purpose of the evaluation and the fact that these findings will be used to further strengthen the design of the analytical cell and/or inform the state-wide scale-up, helped the participants to come up with constructive suggestions and feedback.

### *Sampling Plan*

1.14 The qualitative research involved a combination of detailed consultation meetings through personal interviews and a few group discussions. The *sampling plan for this evaluation was developed with a view to achieve maximum representation from all stakeholders relevant* to the analytical cell.

1.15 The sampling was done in two phases. The first phase consisted of selection of the comparison district and stakeholders for in depth interviews. In order to isolate the impact of the analytical cell, the study design involved the selection of a *comparison district* – a district similar in development indicators, geographic characteristics and demographic composition but without similar institutions, processes or other interventions in the public system that could potentially affect the focus outcome and impact areas of the analytical cell i.e. decentralized planning, monitoring and research.

1.16 The *selection criteria for the comparison district were developed in consultation with UNICEF*. A-priori matching criteria such as population size, geographical location in the state, SC/ST population, literacy levels, and infant mortality rate were compared between Koraput and other comparable districts. On the basis of this matching Nabarangpur was selected as the comparison district.

1.17 Another strong reason behind the selection of Nabarangpur was the fact that it shared the same Technical Support Institution (TSI) for facilitation of planning – a civil society organization called COATS. This strengthened the assumption that all socio-demographic indicators and such other processes (like the TSI) being similar, any differential impact on the processes of interest, could be attributed to the DPMU-AC and not to any other confounding variable.

- 1.18 The stakeholders for in-depth interviews were proposed to be covered at three levels -
- **Stakeholders at the state level** (that included both government and UNICEF representatives in Bhubaneswar)
  - **Stakeholders in the focus district - Koraput** (that included government, analytical cell and civil society representatives)
  - **Stakeholders in the comparison district - Nabarangpur** (that included government representatives)

1.19 The second phase of sampling involved the selection of blocks from the two districts of Koraput and Nabarangpur. Two blocks each were covered in each of the districts –

- **Koraput** – Koraput block and Potangi block
- **Nabarangpur** - Papadahandi block and Umerkote block

1.20 The *selection of blocks was done on the basis of maximizing divergence* in order to get a good representation of the district. While one of the blocks in each district was chosen due to its close location to the district headquarter (and all the other factors of development, infrastructure and access that is associated with this), the other block was chosen for its remoteness.

1.21 The original sampling plan proposed by Deloitte was revised based on the initial discussion with UNICEF and the feedback provided by them. The revised sampling plan was provided in the inception report. This along with the actual sample covered in the field is provided in table 2.1.

**Table 2.1**  
**Sampling Plan for the Evaluation**

Stakeholders	Proposed Sample Plan	Actual Sample Covered
<b>State</b>		
Dr. R V Singh, Special Secretary, Department of Planning and Coordination	1	1
Koraput District Collector at the time of initiation of DPMU	1	-
Programme Manager, UNICEF	1	1
Relevant Program Officers, UNICEF	2-3	2
<b>Koraput District</b>		
District Collector, Koraput	1	1
District level Officials – Health, Education, Rural Development, Women and Child Development and others	4-5	11
Deputy Director DPMU	1	1
DPMU Analytical Cell Members	2	2
DPMU Planning Wing	1	-
DPMU Statistical Wing	1	-
Technical Support Institution	1	1
NGOs working in the district (Group Discussion)	2	7
Block Development Officer (1 in each block)	2	2
<b>Comparison District- Nabarangpur</b>		
Line Department Officers at Block Level	2	-
District Collector	1	1
District level Officials – Health, Education, Rural Development, Women and Child Development	4-5	5
Deputy Director, DPMU	1	1
Block Development Officer (1 in each block)	2	2
Line Department Officers at Block Level	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>31-33</b>	<b>38</b>

1.22 The actual list of interviews and persons interacted with during the field research are detailed as **Annexure V** to the report.

## **Data Analysis**

1.23 As part of the evaluation, the findings from the desk research, the document review and in-depth interviews were collated followed by an analysis of the findings. The analysis followed the overall framework suggested in the RFP and aimed to assess the extent to which the analytical cell has helped ensure need and evidence based planning, increased speed of decision making, decentralization of processes and increased convergence among departments.

1.24 Through a chronological analysis and a thematic analysis of the findings from the document review, and data from the in-depth interviews, the evaluation explored changes in the status, quality and content of decentralized planning, monitoring and data generation in Koraput *before and after the establishment of the analytical cell*. In addition, the evaluation involved a *comparative analysis of stakeholder perceptions between the focus and the comparison districts*.

1.25 A key focus area of the evaluation was to identify *good practices observed in the analytical cell* that could be possibly adapted and replicated by other districts. These included effective mechanisms for information exchange with line departments, methods for monitoring and evaluation. Alongside, the *key bottlenecks and constraints in the functioning of analytical cell* were also identified.

1.26 *Appropriate and realistic recommendations* were formulated keeping in mind the existing gaps and areas of improvement. The key findings and analysis of the evaluation are presented in the next section.

## **Study Limitations and Challenges**

1.27 It should be noted that the *evaluation design ensured that common evaluation errors have been avoided* by taking the following methodological factors into account -

- Understanding donor requirements, objectives and expectations as well as the institutional context of the engagement
- Factoring in historical/chronological data by understanding the trajectory and time series performance of the analytical cell
- Avoiding over-reliance on key informant interviews and including perceptions of all categories of stakeholders

1.28 The study evaluation and report needs to be read in the light of the following caveats –

- The evaluation was intended to be a qualitative research study. Hence the sample drawn for the assignment was not a statistically relevant one (as in quantitative research), but meant to be representative in its coverage.
- The evaluation data relied on in-depth qualitative interviews from all relevant stakeholders. Therefore, the evaluation was subject to and limited by availability of individuals/stakeholders as well as the level of articulation, co-operation and participation of the various stakeholders.
- The analytical cell has been functional for only a relatively short period of time. Since systemic changes take time to manifest in outcome/impact level indicators, it is understood that the evidence may be only indicative in nature, as it may be early to observe measurable change. Further, as the analytical cell is more in the nature of a support agency and the fact that there may

be a variety of factors influencing change, it is difficult to attribute such change to the analytical cell alone. This has also been acknowledged in the RFP.

- The evaluation based its comparative analysis on the data from only one selected district - Nabarangpur - which was found suitable to be a comparative district. The situation relating to the DPMU in this district and its functioning can be used as only an indication of the status of districts without an analytical cell. It needs to be noted here that the data/stakeholder perceptions are not representative of other districts in the state (as in all qualitative research, the inference is not of generalizability, but of divergence).
- The evaluation relied completely on the data, documents, financial statements, books and records made available to Deloitte. Deloitte would not be responsible for the accuracy of the information (including any financial information and statements) provided.
- Deloitte would not be directly or indirectly responsible for any decision or consequences of any decision, taken on the basis of the study outputs. The responsibility for the final decision would rest solely with the project implementers and sponsors.

## SECTION 3

# STUDY FINDINGS AND EVALUATION

1.1 This section presents the key study findings and analysis. The study findings have been presented along the five major assessment parameters defined in the Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by UNICEF, viz.

- A. Relevance
- B. Effectiveness
- C. Impact
- D. Efficiency
- E. Sustainability

### A. RELEVANCE

1.2 One of the focus areas of the evaluation was to assess the relevance of the analytical cell i.e. *whether the design and interventions of the analytical cell were in line with the requirements*. The key aspects that were analysed within this parameter include-

- To what extent does the design of the analytical cell address the information gaps in existing planning process and monitoring systems of different government schemes and programs?
- What were the modalities followed for the operationalization and functioning of the analytical cell? Did the modalities assist in achieving the stated objectives?
- To what extent the design of the analytical cell complement existing planning process and monitoring systems?

### *Key Findings and Analysis*

1.3 The evaluation under relevance aimed to analyse the concept and design of the analytical cell as a complement to the existing government structure of planning processes and monitoring systems of on-going programs and schemes, especially of flagship human development programs. The key evaluation findings are provided in the below.

#### *A.1 Original stated objectives and goals of the analytical cell are well aligned to the contextual needs*

1.4 Districts vary widely according to the specific needs of their population, and even more so in terms of existing interventions and available resources. Koraput, given its adverse socio-economic and human development indicators (as described in the earlier section), is one such district with a challenging

development environment requiring particularly targeted and focused interventions. Strategies, therefore, have to be specific to the district's challenges, so that they can address the unique contextual needs.

1.5 In centrally designed plans there was little scope for such adaptation and contextualization, and hence decentralized planning and monitoring became even more important for a backward district like Koraput. Further, in a resource-poor setting like Koraput there was significant lack of technical knowledge and skills and the absence of supportive structures and institutions that can facilitate decentralized planning and monitoring of social development programs.

1.6 Consequently, planning in Koraput like in many other districts remained a theoretical exercise with the various stakeholders at the state, district, block and village level often working in a vacuum and constrained to provide consideration to geographical diversity and different needs of particular ethnic, caste and socio-economic groups owing to lack of data. Further, the absence of monitoring systems and dynamic decentralized data led to significant gaps in operationalization of programmes and service delivery.

1.7 This also tended to result in the prioritization of infrastructure projects that were easier to cost and more tangible in nature than investing in projects that were more essential resulting in improvements to service delivery in social sectors such as health, nutrition and education. Ironically, while there is a great need for development interventions, the gaps in planning and the resulting disconnect lead to funds available under the various flagship programs remaining unutilized.

1.8 Effective planning, therefore, requires capacity to organize the compilation of essential data, to monitor progress by measuring outcomes on important sectors for course correction. ***The objectives with which the analytical cell in Koraput was set up were precisely to address these needs.***

1.9 The objectives of the analytical cell aimed to strengthen the decentralized planning processes and community monitoring, provide technical support to the DPC in effective policy formulation and resource allocation through collection and compilation of essential data, monitoring of progress of important sectors and provision of recommendations and feedback. Its core mandate was to work with district flagship programs to ensure sound functioning of data systems in the district<sup>8</sup> and to improve planning and monitoring functions of flagship programs and support evaluation and research.

1.10 The perceived relevance of the analytical cell as an institution created to facilitate decentralized planning and catalyse monitoring of government programs with contextualized research and data generation, is evident from the following stakeholder expressions:

*"If the district administration is a body, then DPMU is its brain. I rely heavily on the DPMU. District Collector is the convergence point for the planning and monitoring of every department and scheme in the district. For all these functions I depend completely on the DPMU... Innovative ideas for priority government schemes and livelihood programs like PMRDF, MNREGA are generated through intensive interaction with the DPMU. Demands from PRIs for programs in the villages are constant, so is the government's sanction and inauguration of new schemes. But the district administration and implementers have to know what is feasible and what should be prioritized. All this is possible because of the DPMU's inputs through their analysis. This unit is the backbone of planning! Whenever I need data I get from the DPMU. This has improved the state government's trust on the*

<sup>8</sup>Briefing Paper Series- Innovations, Lessons and Good Practices- DPMUs Data Knowledge Hub for Convergent Planning and Monitoring (UNICEF)

*district administration – because everything is backed by solid data.”*

[Sachin Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput]

*“The Analytical Cell gives direction to development. We have goals, but we can’t blindly proceed towards them. These goals need to be rational and be prioritized. The Analytical Cell was set up only for this – it helps in planning utilization of funds effectively – putting these funds in priority areas based on real needs – projects which are the most feasible, rather than the ones which come as list from the BDO.”*

[Sanjay Kumar Nanda, Deputy Director – DPMU, Koraput]

*“Benefits are coming slowly. Improved data sets at the district level leads to better district plans, and enhanced self-esteem of district and lower level officials. Planning experts are limited in the country. Mainly go to urban centres.”* [Dr. R.V. Dr. Singh, Special Secretary, Department of Planning and Coordination]

1.11 As a staff member who was part of the initial conceptualization of the analytical cell said –

*“The DPMU in Koraput is involved in critical analysis of planned programmes, to check ground realities and to give feedback for course corrections. This is their main objective and role.”*

Amarjeet, Education Specialist, Odisha State Office, UNICEF

1.12 Similarly, as the current project manager guiding the analytical cell in Koraput mentioned on the relevance of the analytical cell -

*“No other department or institution at the district level plays the role of the Analytical Cell. There is a serious dearth of capacity and time within the government to undertake planning and monitoring effectively by basing them on data. The Analytical Cell closes this gap in Koraput.”*

Rajesh Patnaik, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, UNICEF, Odisha

1.13 Comparing the situation with Nabarangpur – the comparison district for this evaluation – it is clear that there is an institutional and systemic gap that the DPMU-AC fills in Koraput. This is evident from the following stakeholder expressions of government representatives from Nabarangpur –

*“We don’t even have a database at the village level of projects that are taking place there. Because of this the same road or pond construction will be sanctioned year on year. There is no monitoring or even information of what is the status of project implementation. There is no data to guide budget outlays, and there is no capacity here in the district to take up any of these roles. We really need such guidance. Maybe an institution like your Analytical Cell will be useful for this.”*

Nanda Kishore Munda, Deputy Director, DPMU, Nabarangpur

1.14 A valuable analysis was derived from the in-depth interview with the Director of COATS, who, being the TSI for both Koraput and Nabarangpur, could compare the value addition of the analytical cell in the existing DPMU structure of the government -

*“... in Nabarangpur, the DPMU is still not well established. They don’t have the same objectives and roles as the one in Koraput. Therefore unlike in Koraput, we don’t feel we can entrust them with work as yet for district planning.”*

P.C. Mohapatra, Director, COATS, Koraput

1.15 Thus data as part of this evaluation shows that in the context of the issues and gaps that existed in Koraput and the unique needs of the district, ***the design and objectives of the analytical cell as stated in***

*the original conceptualization, were relevant* to the needs and structured to address critical gaps in the areas of planning and monitoring at the district level.

1.16 However it should be noted that the objectives and activities of the analytical cell have been evolving over the years. The details of the same and the possible causes for this have been discussed in Section B – Effectiveness.

## *A.2 The institutional design and strategic positioning of the DPMU-AC contributes to its relevance*

1.17 By design (as is also illustrated in Exhibit 1.2 in Section 1), the analytical cell is positioned not as a stand-alone entity but well within the government system. This is a primary factor which has been instrumental in establishing the analytical cell and operationalizing it and making it functional and has contributed to the continuation of its role.

1.18 This strategic positioning and leadership of the analytical cell contributes significantly to its relevance and helps in achieving and operationalizing its objectives. The analytical cell comes under the direct purview of the District Collector. Further, the head of the analytical cell – the Deputy Director – reports directly to the District Collector. This positions the institution with the advantages of being able to influence almost all the major district level policies and programs of the government. Being under the direct purview of the District Collector helps the services of analytical cell actually being availed of by the district administration. This also acts as an ‘endorsement’ for the analytical cell and enabled their entry into other government departments as well, thereby helping them become operationally more relevant.

1.19 The operational aspects of this linkage are discussed in the section on Effectiveness and Efficiency later in this report. The initial positioning of the analytical cell within the overall DRDA structure and common leadership influenced the integration of planning roles with its otherwise predominantly data analysis function. This has also contributed to the analytical cell playing a large role in supporting requests from the district administration. This was expressed by the Deputy Director in his in-depth interview -

*“UNICEF wanted good leadership for the Analytical Cell and that’s why they put it under the DRDA. Also, in districts development activities work best in integration with the DRDA. So having the DPMU under DRDA was a good decision. Earlier the District Planning Office and the Statistical Office were functioning parallel. The Analytical cell was then set up by UNICEF, and shortly after that the DPMU was set up by the government – integrating all the 3 structures of planning, statistics and analytical cell. Planning was not the main role of the analytical cell at first. It was a function on the integrated structure.”*

[Sanjay Kumar Nanda, Deputy Director – DPMU, Koraput]

1.20 However, it must be mentioned here that despite being under the common leadership, the linkage and integration of the analytical cell with other units of the DPMU – the planning and statistical units seem be routed only through the DD–DPMU with limited direct interactions, and there seems to be scope for the analytical cell to play a larger supportive role to these internal arms of the DPMU.

### *A.3 The design of the analytical cell complements the planning and monitoring processes at Koraput --*

1.21 In terms of stated design, the objectives of the analytical cell were structured to complement the existing planning process that existed in the state during the time period – with the DRDA and the PRIs being the primary government institutions responsible for decentralized planning. The objectives also provided for strengthening the existing process of planning by making it participatory with involvement of a range of stakeholders – from district administration to CBOs and communities. The stated design provided for objectives related to strengthening the monitoring systems for the various flagship programs and these were to be strengthened through evaluation and research. While the need was well taken care of in the design, the actual performance on strengthening decentralized planning and monitoring is discussed in the next section on Effectiveness.

1.22 In conclusion, the following key inferences can be made regarding the relevance and design of the analytical cell in complementing existing processes of decentralized planning and monitoring systems–

- The stated objectives in the original design of the analytical cell were relevant and strategically aimed to address the areas of weakness that were identified in program planning and monitoring.
- The modalities followed for the operationalization and functioning of the analytical cell including its structure and reporting relationships have played an important role in helping the analytical cell meet its objectives.
- The design of the analytical cell and its stated objectives complement the planning and monitoring processes.

## **B. EFFECTIVENESS**

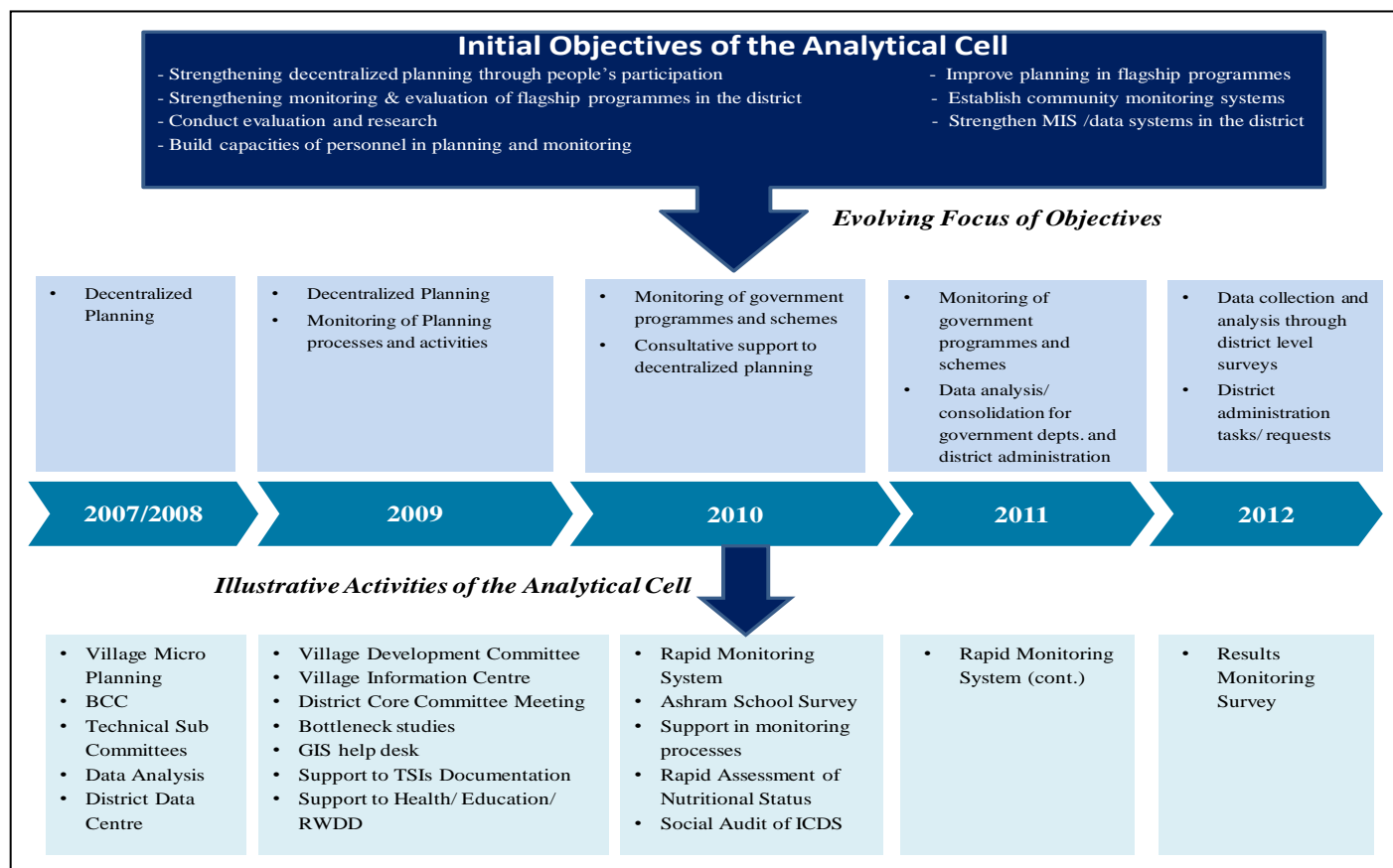
1.23 An important focus area of the evaluation was to assess the *effectiveness* of the analytical cell *i.e. the extent to which the objectives of the analytical cell have been achieved*. The key aspects that were analysed within this parameter include -

- To what extent DPMU achieved its stated objectives?
  - To what extent are the objectives of the analytical cell specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound?
- What was the nature of partnership with the government departments at the district level? What has been the contribution of the departments to DPMU? To what extent the roles of District Administration, frontline functionaries, PRIs, civil society, community members and other stakeholders have contributed to overall outcomes of DPMU?
- What are the difficulties/constraints that DPMU has encountered over time? Are there any gaps in implementation?

### ***Key Findings and Analysis***

1.24 To understand the effectiveness of the analytical cell, it becomes important to understand the various activities carried out by them since inception. While the detailed list of activities undertaken by the analytical cell over the years, the source of funding for each activity and the actual role of the analytical cell in the activity has been profiled and is available as **Annexure VI**. An illustration of the same is provided in the exhibit below -

**Exhibit 3.1**  
**Activities of the Analytical Cell**










1.25 The nature of activities carried out by the analytical cell since the time of inception reveals that they have been varied, cutting across multiple functional areas and sectors ranging from village micro planning, participating in technical sub-committee meetings, designing and executing the Rapid and Result Monitoring surveys, undertaking bottleneck assessments to collation and triangulation of data, functioning as the secretariat to the Collector, program / event management, and assisting in the Parab Festival. While some of these activities are conducted on a regular basis, others are on an ad hoc basis; also, while some activities are planned, some are taken up based on requests from the district administration and line departments.

***B.1 The various activities undertaken by the analytical cell have helped achieve its stated objectives to a reasonable extent***

1.26 The core mandate of the analytical cell has been to support the district administration and the flagship programmes to ensure that sound data systems are functional for the district which in turn strengthens decentralized planning and improves the monitoring of the programmes. In doing so, the analytical cell has been fairly successful in achieving its stated objectives. The overall summary of the performance of the analytical cell in meeting the various stated objectives is presented in the table below and the details of the performance provided subsequently -

**Table 3.1**  
**Performance Summary of the Analytical Cell in meeting the stated objectives**

Objective	Performance Summary
i. Strengthen decentralized planning through people's participation	
<i>Initial focus of the DPMU-AC was on strengthening people's participation in decentralized planning. However, over the years this focus has been diluted and activities are no longer directed towards this objective.</i>	
ii. Improve planning in flagship programs	
<i>Planning in flagship programmes has been an important objective. Analytical cell has been involved indirectly in strengthening planning processes for flagship programmes by working along with department officials and providing support through technical guidance and data analysis.</i>	
iii. Strengthen Monitoring & Evaluation of flagship programs	
<i>Increasingly involved in strengthening monitoring and evaluation of flagship programmes. Analytical cell has been implementing innovative monitoring systems in the district.</i>	
iv. Establish community monitoring systems	
<i>DPMU-AC tries to involve the community in conducting monitoring exercises. Community monitoring systems have not been institutionalized in the district.</i>	
v. Conduct evaluation and research	
<i>This is a core activity of the analytical cell which conducts evaluation and research in the district based on its staff KRAs and requests from the district administration.</i>	
vi. Strengthen MIS and data systems in the district	
<i>Data systems have been strengthened in the district. MIS and a desktop GIS application have been developed and government officials have been trained on using the GIS.</i>	

Objective	Performance Summary
vii. Build capacities of personnel in planning and monitoring	
<i>Limited involvement of the DPMU-AC in building capacities of government personnel in planning and monitoring.</i>	



***B-1(i) While in the initial years there was focus on decentralized planning through people's participation this has diluted over the years -***

1.27 In the initial phase, the analytical cell through its various activities including Village Micro-planning, Village Development Committees (VDC/Gaon Kutmb) and Village Information Centres (VIC) played a very active role in strengthening decentralized planning through people's participation (Annexure VI). In all these activities the cell directly planned, facilitated and monitored the implementation, in close coordination and involvement of the DRDA, the PRIs, CBOs and local communities.

*Village Planning processes were initiated in 6 blocks in Koraput through NGO partners. The DPMU-AC was involved in facilitation, coordination and monitoring of the NGOs. They also provided a 21 day training to the NGO staff and village volunteers for conducting the micro planning process and developing plans for the villages.*

1.28 The analytical cell was involved in activities for sensitizing people to grass root level planning, motivating and capacity building of village volunteers, sensitizing the PRI members to the decentralized planning. Participation and support of the local community and PRI members for decentralized planning is a major challenge and bottleneck in various districts. The role of the analytical cell in such activities in the initial phase provided a strong foundation for effective decentralized planning in Koraput.

*"The analytical cell provided support to the decentralized planning in six blocks. Through systematic analysis, they identified and prioritized issues. We had not seen such a focused approach earlier."*  
**[Representative from Ekta, Koraput]**

1.29 However, over the years the involvement of the analytical cell in such activities has decreased. It should also be noted that, some of these activities themselves, like for instance the Village Micro Planning and VICs have either completely stopped or slowed down.

1.30 The positioning of the analytical cell vis-a-vis decentralized planning saw a significant shift after the policy decision to appoint an exclusive technical support institution for preparing the district plans after which the direct role of the analytical cell in planning came down significantly. While the analytical cell was no longer expected or mandated to play a direct role in decentralized planning, they continue to provide support to the Technical Support Institution (COATS is the TSI in Koraput).

*“While the structure of the planning process remained the same, the analytical cell through its various activities helps in streamlining the planning process. District planning is an onerous task and requires a high degree of technical and data support. We (COATS) took up the role of TSI in Koraput. While not officially required, they continue to provide support to various aspects of the decentralized planning.”*

[Dr. PC Mohapatra – Director – COATS, Koraput]

1.31 Preparation of district plans require a high degree of data support and the analytical cell plays a key role in addressing the gaps. Besides providing the TSI with data, the analytical cell also provides support in analysing the data and preparing analysis tables. In few instances, the analytical cell members participated in the district planning meetings held at the village / block level and provided technical support during the meetings.

*“This year’s district plan for Koraput, included data that came from the Nutrition Evaluation done by the analytical cell. This was a value addition and actually captured grass root level data.”*

[Mr. Sachin R. Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput]

1.32 The support provided by the analytical cell to the planning process has also been acknowledged by the TSI. By virtue of the fact that the TSI also handles district planning for Nabarangpur, the differences that were observed in Koraput in terms of grass root level strengthening of people participation, data availability, technical support, analytical support and streamlining of the planning process were mentioned.

*“We don’t feel the presence of the DPMU in Nabarangpur. The DPMU there is in the process of establishing themselves. . Therefore we also don’t get any data support or help from them. The analytical cell in Koraput is well established – so we are able to entrust them with our critical requests”*

[Dr. PC Mohapatra – Director – COATS]

1.33 In conclusion, *the focus of the analytical cell has shifted away from developing community participation* in the planning process. However, *the support made available to decentralized planning through availability of data and analysis has continued and remains significant.*

#### ***B-1 (ii) The analytical cell provides significant support to the planning of flagship programmes -***

1.34 The analytical cell was intended to serve as a fully dedicated secretariat and provide technical support to the District Planning Committee. Alone, the analytical cell cannot address many of the underlying governance issues outlined but it can be an essential component of a larger reform process. Flagship programmes have their own planning team, monitoring systems and formats etc. and the analytical cell thus does not have a direct role in the planning of these programs. Instead it provides strategic support in terms of closing data and analysis gaps for planning and monitoring.

1.35 The analytical cell functions as a **mini secretariat to the District Collector** and is the repository of all information related to the flagship programmes in the district viz. objectives of the programme, budgetary allocations, fund utilization etc. while at the same time also ensuring timely availability of data. This helps in making available a comprehensive view of the district at one place for the purposes of

effective planning and resource allocation. The analytical cell serves as a “one-stop” for all information requirements relating to the flagship programmes.

*“Earlier when the Collector wanted some data related to the flagship programmes or for planning he would approach the PD (DRDA). But now such requests directly go to the analytical cell who also ensure a quicker data turnaround”*

*[Sanjay Kumar Nanda, Deputy Director – Planning & Co-ordination, Koraput]*

*“Koraput is an IAP district by virtue of which its implementation is closely monitored by the Planning Commission. Hence there is a high level of data and analysis requirement. The analytical cell provides tremendous support for making data available as well as analysis.”*

*- Mr. Sachin Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput*

1.36 Besides providing data that is required for planning, the analytical cell acts as a **technical unit** by participating in the various planning meetings held by the flagship programmes. The analytical cell uses these meetings as a forum to highlight the various gaps / issues in the planning and implementation of plans. Through scientific analysis, the analytical cell facilitates an understanding of the critical issues and prioritization of resource allocation. The analysis carried out by the cell becomes an important input for deciding what activities to take up, and the projects to focus on.

*“During a closed loop meeting with the Collector, and the various departments, there was a suggestion for establishing a Regional Resource Centre for children. The analytical cell prepared the concept note and road map for implementation.*

*“Demands from PRIs for programmes in the villages are constant, so is the government’s sanction and inauguration of new schemes. But the district administration and implementers have to know what is feasible and what should be prioritized. All this is possible because of the DPMU’s inputs through their analysis. For instance, there was a demand for a bridge costing INR 5million. Analytical cell carried out the cost benefit analysis and found that this served only two villages with less population, other projects having a larger reach and need were prioritized upon.”*

*- Mr. Sachin Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput*

1.37 Efforts are also directed towards strengthening the capacities of government personnel in planning and utilizing data albeit in an informal manner. They also actively participate in the brainstorming and help in analysing and developing new and innovative ideas.

*“In the course of IAP implementation, Koraput district is pursuing more than 48 livelihood projects becoming one of the most active districts. The analytical cell played a major role in conceptualizing these ideas as well as working out their feasibility and cost benefit analysis.”*

*- Mr. Sachin Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput*

1.38 The analytical cell also participates in the **District Core Committee Meetings** which are held under the leadership of the District Collector to review the progress on the various programmes by the departments, identifying the challenges and bottlenecks in implementation and in re-strategizing the same. The District Core Committee Meetings are attended by the chairpersons of flagship programmes and departmental heads of the district. The meetings which are held once a quarter also have UNICEF officials participating in them. The analytical cell provides technical and content support to the district core committee meetings. Besides attending the meeting and preparing the minutes, the analytical cell

undertakes research, analysis and evaluation of critical issues at the behest of the Collector or District Administration and presents the findings.

1.39 The analytical cells participation in the planning meetings was described under the Key Result Area (KRA) of the Planning and Monitoring Specialist. However, the post has been lying vacant since October 2011 and this activity is not a part of the job description of the existing personnel. While the existing personnel participate in the meetings with fair regularity, over a period of time, it has the risk of getting diluted.

1.40 The analytical cell has been *effective in supporting and driving the planning process of various flagship programmes* by providing *data and evaluation support and by acting as a collating unit and knowledge hub of information* for the district. It is now considered an *integral part of the departments and the back bone for planning*.

***B-1 (iii) The most critical role played by the analytical cell is in strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of flagship programmes***

1.41 Monitoring and evaluation is one of the key activities of the analytical cell and is seen as a vital tool for improving the district planning and outcomes.

1.42 The analytical cell has been providing technical support to the district administration and various departments to *strengthen the regular monitoring activities* leading to more robust methodologies being followed by government functionaries. In addition, the analytical cell has been a part of a variety of new and innovative M&E systems in the district like the Technical Sub Committees, Rapid Monitoring System and Results Monitoring Survey as well as other ad hoc M&E studies like the Ashram School Survey and the Social Audits etc.

*The DPMU-AC has been involved in designing the methodology, questionnaires and checklists of the Ashram School Survey, the Rapid Assessment of Nutrition Status, and the Social Audit for ICDS.*

1.43 The analytical cell has ensured improvements in the existing monitoring systems by providing inputs for conceptualization and designing the research/ evaluation, technical support for quality improvement and data analysis. Data from the ground has been used by the analytical cell for

*The Integrated BCC Cell, a pilot program in Koraput wanted to develop a program on Social Mobilization. The analytical cell helped in developing the study design, information checklists, analysis formats etc.*

understanding the critical issues and incorporating them into the *study design*. Various suggestions have been provided by the analytical cell in developing the *study objectives, improving monitoring checklists, developing a scientific sampling plan and in the analysis of monitoring data*. The

analytical cell has demonstrated rigorous quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and helped flagship programs to develop these systematically. The availability of a qualified MIS/ statistics specialist in the analytical cell also proved important for providing the technical guidance.

*"A gradation of the various Anganwadi Centres in the district was proposed. Analytical cell assisted in the process of developing the checklist for gradation covering 15 diverse parameters. This was done in 2010-11 and helped in drawing up an action plan specific to the needs of the various AWCs."*  
[Ms. G. Seeta Kumari, District Coordinator]

1.44 A key focus area of the analytical cell has been **action research** in the form of Rapid Monitoring System and the recently initiated Results Monitoring Survey. The analytical cell has been involved in the design, implementation and analysis of these activities.

1.45 The objective of the **Rapid Monitoring System** was to strengthen the implementation and service delivery of various government programmes through effective monitoring. This was the first time that there was a convergent tool for monitoring<sup>9</sup>. Initiated by the erstwhile Collector, the analytical cell's role included –

- Programme management and monitoring the survey
- Being a part of the monitoring team when there was absenteeism from the government officials
- Comprehensive analysis of the data for the 15 months and presenting the findings and key issues that emerged
- Training field investigators

Though initiated by the District Collector, the analytical cell was the nerve centre for the rapid monitoring system, which was unique to Koraput and brought to light a variety of issues cutting across multiple sectors and flagship programmes which gave place for initiating effective action. The findings of the Rapid Monitoring System were analysed by the DPMU and orders for corrective action were issued by the District Collector on a daily basis.

*"Analytical cell analysed the RMS to highlight that average school attendance was only around 50%. Deeper analysis identified teacher absenteeism as a major issue. Major thrust was given by the collector to improve attendance and a variety of corrective action initiated. Action was taken against 700+ teachers. Teacher attendance improved from 67% to 92%"*

1.46 The current focus of the analytical cell is the **Result Monitoring Survey** which aims to ascertain quality of service delivery, identify bottlenecks in implementation of flagship programme and to carry out further in-depth studies based on needs from the issues flagged through the monitoring. This study has been entirely conceptualized and designed by the analytical cell. Around 1600 households are to be covered through a panel survey which is expected to yield real data from the ground on a variety of relevant aspects for the flagship programmes. The programme management of the survey, training and monitoring the field investigators, quality assurance, and data analysis and report preparation are handled by the analytical cell. Both the Rapid Monitoring system and the Results Monitoring Survey are unique in that they **ensure convergent monitoring and that monitoring reports** reach those who can take effective action.

1.47 The analytical cell also plays an important role in **concurrent monitoring**. The analytical cell is a part of the **Technical Sub-Committees (TSC)** which acts as important forums for concurrent monitoring. The TSCs are an initiative unique to Koraput. TSCs - formal bodies with multi department representation

---

<sup>9</sup> Briefing paper Series : Innovations, Lessons and Good Practices - District Planning and Monitoring Unit - **Data Knowledge Hubs for Convergent Planning and Monitoring**

were established in the district to bring about convergent planning and action specially focused on children. The analytical cell members are an integral part of the TSCs and they play an active role by participating in meetings, identifying and highlighting key issues, making presentations on independent and focused research undertaken, facilitate action on the issues and follow up on the same.

*The analytical cell highlighted the correlation between quality of water in tube wells, individual household latrines and diarrhoea epidemic. The analysis helped the Dept. of Rural Water Systems and Sanitation and the Dept. of Health to take concerted corrective action.*

1.48 The TSCs work as an important forum for the district officials as well as the analytical cell in this respect. In fact, while originally the TSCs aimed to meet once a quarter, the TSC for health and education with ICDS and SSA officials recognize the great value of the TSC and meet once a month. The analytical cell provides inputs, presents findings from the district, and suggests action areas to the TSC. The aim is to provide the district officials with easily-attainable solutions to the challenges in the district

1.49 Another instance of concurrent monitoring undertaken by the analytical cell is the **Daily Telemonitoring** undertaken under the Sarva Shiksha Abhyan. The analytical cell has been involved in the research and formulation of a variety of parameters for the daily tele-monitoring of 100 schools selected at random.

1.50 It was unanimously acknowledged that the analytical cell has been *instrumental in bringing about a better monitoring system* in the district as well as a *robust and innovative approach to M&E* in the district.

1.51 However, while monitoring activities have been strengthened in the district, they have not as yet become institutionalized or regularized by the respective programs or departments. There is also no defined frequency or regularity for the monitoring systems.

*B-1 (iv) While there are interesting instances of involving the community in monitoring these are yet to be institutionalized*

1.52 Community involvement in monitoring has been an important feature in the analytical cell's activities. The Social Audit conducted for ICDS had strong community involvement and worked to raise awareness about government services as well as to evaluate the service delivery mechanism. It also involved the Self Help Group network – Mission Shakti for the purpose of carrying out the Social Audit, The DPMU has also utilized community members, PRI members, retired school teachers, NGO workers, youth volunteers and government functionaries in activities like the Rapid Monitoring System and Results Monitoring Survey.

*The DPMU has worked with Mission Shakti to implement the Social Audit for ICDS with the dual purpose of sensitizing the community as well as to evaluate the services delivery mechanism. The DPMU was involved in the conceptualization and design, coordination, training of data collectors and in the analysis of findings. The activity led to the implementation of Supreme Court guidelines and increased supportive supervision to identified AWCs.*

1.53 The community monitoring activities conducted/initiated by the analytical cell are usually one-time activities and have not been taken over by the district on a sustainable basis. But where community monitoring has been undertaken, it has been successful. The evaluation also found that once the activities

of the analytical cell comes to an end, there is no follow up on the action taken to improve services which was initiated due to the monitoring.

***B-1 (v) Efforts of the analytical cell have led to strengthened MIS and data systems in the district and enhanced information flows between levels and departments***

1.54 Data systems in the district have been strengthened through the efforts of the analytical cell which has emerged as the **data hub for the district** where information is readily available. In addition, potential user departments including various line departments, district administration, NGOs, civil society members etc. are also aware about the analytical cell being the **knowledge storehouse for the district**.

*“Whenever I need data I get from the DPMU. This has improved the state government’s trust on the district administration – because everything is backed by solid data. For instance, when I make state/ national level presentations, it is backed by excellent data/ analysis such that there is very little questioning. Audit queries are addressed effectively because of sound data and proper analysis. ”*

*[Sachin Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput]*

1.55 While data has been made available in plenty, it would not be of any use unless it is meaningfully analysed. The analytical cell plays an important role in the collation and triangulation of data. All available data relevant to a particular area – internally generated, external research based or derived through sample surveys etc. – are collated at a single point. The analytical cell also triangulates this, to identify any significant variances in the data. If required, the analytical cell has also undertaken sample surveys to validate the data.

*The malnutrition data in the district was not reliable with CDPOs reporting 2-5% malnutrition. The District Administration approached the DPMU-AC to validate ICDS data. Through a Rapid Assessment of Nutrition Status it was found that many AWCs didn’t have weighing scales and AWCs were not weighing children. The assessment led to issues being identified, logistical gaps addressed and the introduction of a fixed weighing day at all AWCs.*

1.56 Further, a **web based GIS, GIS Help Desk and desktop application** has been developed for the district. The analytical cell was involved in the collation and coding of data for NIC, conducting and facilitating training for the district officials and providing handholding support to MIS personnel for using GIS maps in planning. The analytical cell also supports harnessing the GIS for various practical applications that can be used in planning and monitoring.

1.57 With the analytical cell’s support to the system, there has been enhanced information flow between departments and programs both vertically and horizontally. The MIS is being used by different departments and the TSCs for better planning and monitoring of programmes.

1.58 ***Making available sound data and MIS is integral to effective planning and monitoring. The analytical cell has created a sound base for data availability and MIS support in Koraput.***

***B-1 (vi) Conducting research and evaluation is another core focus area for the analytical cell***

1.59 An important value addition brought in by the analytical cell has been in undertaking and conducting a wide variety of research and evaluation studies that have supported the planning and monitoring of various flagship programmes.

1.60 The analytical cell undertakes research and evaluation studies based on their own interest or as defined in their KRAs, based on specific requests from district administration and line departments or based on issues that arise out of District Core Committee / TSCs, based on requests from UNCIEF etc. The evaluation and research undertaken by the analytical cell have also cut across multiple sectors and have been a combination of small budget sample surveys, thematic intervention studies and large scale evaluation studies.

1.61 The analytical cell has been conducting independent research, assessments and bottleneck studies and analysis of data to identify challenges and best practices in the district. The bottleneck studies and analyses have been conducted based on the defined KRAs of the analytical cell and on request from the district administration/department heads and help the administration in taking corrective action. The focus of the analytical cell has shifted towards conducting such research which also helps in strengthening the planning in the district. Some of the activities undertaken included bottleneck studies for schemes under flagship programs like JSY (under NRHM), a rapid assessment of nutritional status to cross check and validate underweight data of the ICDS, an Ashram School Survey to assess the quality of services, the status of schools and educational attainment among the children etc. An illustrative list of such research studies carried out by the analytical cell include

- Analysis of Infant Death, IMNCI & Routine Immunization
- Analysis of Monitoring Formats used in SSA
- Analysis of IEC/BCC fund utilization under National Rural Health Mission

*A bottleneck analysis of the Dhanalakshmi scheme was undertaken on request from the district administration. The study identified issues like the absence of standard operational procedures and inadequate IEC activities. It also provided recommendations for simplifying operational procedures and increasing awareness among the community.*

1.62 A case study of one such research initiative of the analytical cell is presented below.

*A survey was undertaken to evaluate Ashram Schools (residential schools established for SC/ST children) in terms of quality of services. The DPMU-AC was involved in the methodology design, training to and monitoring of investigators as well as data quality assurance and analysis. The evaluation led to action being taken on the issues identified including water supply and food menus. Instructions were given by the government to use the School Improvement Grant (under SSA) to build/fix toilets in the schools.*

1.63 The **research and evaluation** undertaken by the analytical cell, **besides making available relevant data from the ground also facilitates a deeper understanding of the critical issues on the ground.**

***B-1 (vii) Limited effort by the analytical cell for building capacity of personnel on planning and monitoring***

1.64 The analytical cell's efforts in building capacities of personnel involved in planning and monitoring have been extremely low. Instead, their efforts have been directed more towards implementing new activities in the district.

1.65 Some efforts towards strengthening capacities in the district for planning and monitoring have been through the TSCs, activities like the Rapid Monitoring System which utilized government functionaries in collecting data and in helping department heads utilize up-to-date data while planning. The capacity building has focused on field surveys, and on conducting evaluations and research. However, efforts towards this objective need to be strengthened in order to institutionalize better planning and monitoring in the district.

## ***B.2 The objectives and roles of the analytical cell have been evolving over the years***

1.66 The objectives and roles of the analytical cell have been evolving since its inception. The analysis indicates that the activities of the cell have shifted in line with it focusing on some of the original stated objectives over others, as illustrated in Exhibit 3.1.

1.67 The evolution and change in the focus of objectives is evident through the analytical cell's activities as well as from the annual goals and key result areas of staff members, though it has not been formally documented after the initial statement in the original program document. For example, the KRAs in 2007-08 for the staff mainly prioritized the facilitation of decentralized planning through the project management of activities like the Village Development Committees and Village Information Centres, as against the KRAs for 2012 where only the Results Monitoring Survey is indicated as a priority area.

1.68 A major *shift in the focus has been from that of being a catalyst of decentralized planning to become more of a data hub with more emphasis on monitoring government programs*. The shift does not however mean that the analytical cell has deviated from its main objectives but rather just brought about a prioritization within the larger canvas.

1.69 A variety of factors could have influenced this prioritization / evolving focus of the analytical cell

- **Emergence of Technical Support Institution mandated for decentralized planning** - The Government of Odisha in 2008-09 made the policy decision of mandating Technical Support Institutions (TSIs) – civil society organizations from the state – to undertake decentralized planning. TSIs were allocated one or more districts (based on their presence and experience), and they were responsible for the entire process and the final district plan. Bestowing TSI's with the complete responsibility of decentralized planning could have led to the decrease in the analytical cell's focus in this area, especially since 2009-10, contributing to a gradual shift in objectives and roles. This is captured in the following stakeholder expression:

*"UNICEF decided on the basis of the XI Plan Document to pilot the DPMU. Initially the analytical cell was supposed to be involved in decentralized planning- support was provided for village planning exercises etc. However, once it was decided to hire an external agency for planning- the TSI, the role of the DPMU changed. Now the TSI takes support from the DPMU."*

[Amarjeet, Education Specialist, Odisha State Office, UNICEF]

- **Priorities of the district administration, the District Collector** - The close proximity with which the analytical cell works with the district administration and the fact that the analytical cell works directly under their purview could have had a bearing on the evolution and prioritization based on the focus / priority areas of the district collectorate and how the leadership wants to use the analytical cell
- **Focus areas and priorities of UNICEF** –Typically, outcome and output level indicators are set by the country office of UNICEF based on national five year plans. States define the interventions and special programmes linked to these indicators. This is also the case with IDA and ANKUR where UNICEF has been working very closely in Koraput. The overall direction from UNICEF also has a bearing on the changing priorities of the analytical cell. For example, the idea that the Results Based Monitoring Survey should be the prime focus of the DPMU going forward from this year, came from the UNICEF country office.

*“2011 onwards the focus of the DPMUs activities have shifted to conducting action research. The value-add to planning is through providing reliable data sets and analysis.”*  
[Analytical Cell Staff]

1.70 It should also be noted that the position of the Decentralized Planning Specialist in the analytical cell has been vacant since October 2011 and for the present this role is clubbed with the existing specialist’s role to read as a Planning and Documentation Specialist. However the gap in this role and the need for this specialist has been expressed by various stakeholders.

1.71 Given how complex institutions are, especially when they are located in state systems, and drawing from organizational theory, the reasons for these changes in priorities of the AC over time seem to be iterative and multidimensional, where different factors, individually and in interaction with each other, have led to them.

1.72 The evolution of objectives and activities does not however indicate a deviation from the overall objectives but rather only a change in prioritization of these objectives. Therefore, rather than a comparison with the original objectives, the relevance of the institution is analysed as a dynamic process in this evaluation.

1.73 While the focus or priorities of the analytical cell have been evolving, the same has not been explicitly documented and there has also not been an updation to the original objectives. However, despite this, given the close working relationship of the analytical cell with key stakeholders – UNICEF and the district administration – they have been either instrumental for the change or cognizant of the same.

1.74 Further, the analytical cell is largely an institution that supports other government departments in their planning and monitoring needs. To that extent, if these changes have been driven by the changing needs of the user departments/ stakeholders, it makes the analytical cell’s role all the more relevant to the contemporary needs; rather than diluting it, it adds to its relevance. Given the changing policy context of the government / stakeholders, the design of the analytical cell was and continues to be relevant to address the needs of decentralized planning and monitoring by being a dynamic institution that is able to respond to shifting public policy demands































### ***B.3 While objectives are relevant to the district and to the role of the analytical cell, indicators and performance measures haven't been set***

1.75 While developing objectives, organizations often use the S.M.A.R.T philosophy to ensure measurable goals are set. S.M.A.R.T refers to Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound. Designing objectives in this manner also help in identifying performance measures and indicators.

1.76 This assessment against S.M.A.R.T evaluates how the objectives have been stated in the DPMU-AC program document, and if there have been indicators of measurement, timelines for achievements and milestones set during the course of functioning. This, however, is not an assessment of the achievements of the objectives of the DPMU-AC. This evaluation found that while the objectives of the DPMU-AC are specific and relevant to the district and to the envisaged role of the analytical cell, specific indicators and performance measures have not been set out. While developing the objectives, there was a recognition that public systems and institutions are dependent on external supporting factors like integration and convergence of the new structure with the existing system, the government leadership and relationships built between the staff of the new structure and existing personnel in the system.

1.77 The table below shows the extent of the objectives of the DPMU-AC in being S.M.A.R.T

**Table 3.2**  
**Extent of Analytical Cell's objectives in being S.M.A.R.T**

Objective	Specific	Measurable	Attainable	Relevant	Time-Bound
Strengthening Decentralized planning through people's Participation					
Improve Planning in flagship programmes					
Strengthening Monitoring & Evaluation of flagship Programmes in the district					
Establish Community monitoring systems					
Conduct Evaluation and Research					
Strengthen MIS and Data systems in the District					



***B.4 The strategic positioning of the analytical cell and its performance has helped in bringing about convergence and integration among different sectors***

1.78 The analytical cell has worked towards fostering an environment of convergence through its strategic positioning and activities. As has been discussed in the section on Relevance, the organizational design of the analytical cell, its linkages with different departments across sectors, and with the district administration, has strategically positioned it to bring about inter-sectoral convergence. It has managed to entrench itself reasonably well with a range of stakeholders in the district.

***B.5 Through its performance the analytical cell has made itself indispensable to the planning and monitoring needs of the district administration and line departments***

***B-5 (i) The analytical cell has made itself indispensable to the district administration by becoming a mini secretariat for all their data and analytical support -***

1.79 The close involvement of the District Collector in the setting up and operationalizing the analytical cell has been acknowledged as a key factor for the recognition and acceptance of the DPMU-AC in the district. The Collector and the district administration have continued to work closely with the analytical cell and for all practical purposes the cell serves as the “go-to” department for the various initiatives of the Collector.

1.80 The District Collector is increasingly dependent on the analytical cell for collation and analysis of data and preparation of reports and presentations, especially for the Integrated Action Plan which is monitored by the Planning Commission directly. The analytical cell staff is perceived by the District Collector as trained manpower available to him for critical activities. The cell has become an indispensable part of the district for the District Administration and functions as a secretariat for the District Administration. The analytical cell is approached for any information that the District Collector might need, to help in preparing presentations and for any new initiatives being launched in the district, as well as for monitoring existing programmes. The analytical cell acts as a resource centre providing technical support in conceptualizing and analysing various new ideas e.g. preparing concept notes for tracking pregnant women, alternate vaccine delivery system, on Pravesh Utsav (enrolment drive) in schools, block /district level task force for education etc.

1.81 While officially, the analytical cell is involved in providing analysis of data to the District Collector, working to strengthen the planning process with different departments, and planning and implementing M&E frameworks, they are also involved in activities like organizing the Parab tribal festival in the district and other such requests that come from the district administration. They also function as event / programme managers for such festivals, job fairs, VIP visits etc. This evaluation found

that the DPMU has been successful in working along with different departments and the District Collector to link different BCC activities to the Parab festival in a bid to increase coverage and efficient utilization of department's budgets. This convergence of activities for BCC in the Parab festival has now become regularized in the district.

*"Even if something doesn't directly come under the DPMU, they help in planning. Take the Parab festival for example. The budget for Parab is around Rs. 20-25 lakhs, but we don't spend the entire amount. Instead due to convergence of activities and integrating BCC activities of different departments with the food festival we used about Rs. 15lakhs only. This practice has now become integrated into the system."*

[Sachin R. Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput]

1.82 The analytical cell also takes part in various promotional activities at the district level meant for creating awareness including Swachattha Utsav, Health Melas, Cycle Rally etc. They are also involved in preparing reports, presentations, success story documentation etc. for external delegation visits etc.

1.83 The District Collector and Administration openly acknowledge the difference made by the analytical cell to their data and research needs. The administration has developed a level of comfort and trust on the data and analysis support provided by the analytical cell and their role has made significant contributions in enhancing Koraput's planning and monitoring processes for these programmes.

*"... the analytical cell is the backbone of planning and monitoring in Koraput. If they are not there, my performance will decrease significantly. District Collector is the convergence point for the planning and monitoring of every department and scheme in the district. When I need to consult with district officers for any decisions, I find that most useful inputs come from the analytical cell as they have a holistic view of all the programmes in the district and through the various evaluation and research they carry out. "*

[Sachin Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput]

1.84 The relationship with the district leadership and administration is pivotal for the existence, functioning and scale up of the analytical cell. The analytical cell's role and functioning will become insignificant and redundant if they don't have the support and buy-in of the district leadership. To that extent, the analytical cell till date has managed to strike an excellent working relationship with the district administration which has also been reciprocated. They have also proven by example and their capability and performance on the job have led the district administration to further utilize them.

***B-5 (ii) The fact that the various government departments increasingly use the services and support of the analytical cell illustrates the mutually beneficial relationship that has evolved in the district***

1.85 Most of the government departments and flagship programmes have their internal systems and processes in place for planning and monitoring. Therefore, at the time of inception they were of the opinion that the analytical cell may not be useful to them. . However, after working with the DPMU there has been an acceptance and appreciation of their contribution to better planning and monitoring in the district. An acceptance of the DPMU by the District Administration – department officials as well as the District Collector, civil society and the community has been of utmost importance right from the time of inception. Today, most departments consider the analytical cell as a "think tank" and an integral part of their planning and monitoring initiatives.

1.86 A strong relationship has been built over the years between the analytical cell and the line department heads based on an environment of mutual trust and confidence which is imperative for the smooth functioning. The quality of work from the analytical cell has been an important factor for the trust. If the analytical cell had not been delivering work of good quality they may not have had repeat demand for their services from the user departments. Often the district officials contact the analytical cell directly with their requests without routing it through the official hierarchy. The analytical DPMU takes on many tasks such as bottleneck studies, analysis of data, and documentation based on requests of department heads. In fact, they have built up a reputation of never refusing to take on any activity requested by the district administration. This is partly because of the job description laid down by UNICEF which suggests that the DPMU staff keep up to 50 percent of their time dedicated to working on tasks requested by the administration and partly due to the staff members themselves who push themselves to take on any task and complete it within the stipulated time.

1.87 The analytical cell's role as a facilitator for convergence between departments has been highly appreciated. The Technical Sub Committees are a case in point. They have in particular led to issue based reviews and inter departmental convergence on planning and monitoring in the district. Recommendations and action areas presented by the analytical cell at TSC meetings, through evaluations and analysis reports are often taken up by the district officials and orders are issued by department heads or even by the District Collector. The underlying cause for the success of the TSC lies in the availability of up-to-date information, but also in ensuring the data is accessed by those who are in a position to take corrective action.

1.88 The nature of relationship that the analytical cell enjoys with the various line departments and the activities undertaken are detailed in the table below –

**Table 3.3**  
**Relationship of analytical cell with line departments**

Department	Strength of Relationship	Details
Education	Very Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked closely with SSA. Has been instrumental in addressing issues of data deficiency</li> <li>Involved in activities like data analysis, capacity building, awareness generation, and building an innovative monitoring mechanism. Helped in preparing annual work plan for out of school children and for improving classroom quality.</li> <li>As a result of the monitoring visits through Rapid Monitoring System, teacher attendance increased from 67% to 95%</li> </ul>
Health	Low – Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involved in activities like developing monitoring checklists, bottleneck analyses of JSY and GKS, impact study of IEC/BCC activities and developing strategies to address gaps through the TSC.</li> <li>Functions as data coordinator, provides quick comparison and analysis of data.</li> </ul>

Department	Strength of Relationship	Details
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in leadership in the health department has led to a decrease in interaction between the DPMU and the department. The TSC and other convergence activities led by the CDMO have decreased and become irregular</li> </ul>
<b>Rural Water Supply and Sanitation</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involved in providing data for the Action Plan, providing technical support for planning and monitoring and by providing inputs through the TSC</li> <li>Conducted impact assessment of trainings provided to Self Employed Mechanics (SEM), and in drawing a correlation between quality of water in tube wells, individual household latrines and diarrhoea epidemic.</li> <li>Rapid Monitoring System helped throw up issues like the lack of awareness amongst the community of the SEMs in the area. This was addressed in the next water sector plan.</li> <li>Evaluations and surveys conducted by the DPMU like the Ashram School Survey also drew light to the status of toilets in schools and helped in convergent planning between the DWSS and SSA and increased fund utilization.</li> </ul>
<b>Mission Shakti and ICDS</b>	<b>Very Strong</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked very closely with the Department of Women and Child Development.</li> <li>Initiated Social Audit for ICDS in two phases which led to identification of major challenges and implementation of Supreme Court guidelines for Anganwadi Centres. The Social Audits led to infrastructural concerns being addressed, grading of AWCs and increased supportive supervision being provided to identified AWCs. The DPMU was also involved in providing training to AWC staff.</li> <li>Based on the success of the Social Audits, the District Administration is in the process of planning a third phase, with technical support of the DPMU.</li> </ul>

***B-5 (iii) The analytical cell has also established smooth working relationship with the civil society***

1.89 The analytical cell has worked closely with NGOs and civil society in the district as well as with frontline functionaries, PRI members and community members. Activities like Village Micro Planning, Village Development Committees, information collection for bottleneck studies and surveys as well as for the Rapid Monitoring System actively involved local NGOs and village youth volunteers and sensitized PRI members and frontline functionaries. The cell has been involved since the time of its inception in facilitation and coordination of activities involving community members through field level NGOs. The NGOs EKTA and SOVA in particular have been actively involved in orienting PRI members and the

community towards village level planning, utilizing the Village Information Centres, taking part in and contributing to the Village Development Committees and towards Behaviour Change Communication and in demanding better services.

*The analytical cell has brought about convergence between line departments on BCC. A common action plan was developed for IEC/BCC activities including focus on strategies to expand reach. Since updated reliable information is now available, planning is easier and activities are focused. The participation of departments has increased, interaction between departments has increased and mutual trust has been built up."*

*[Mr. Umesh Patra, Joint Secretary, EKTA]*

*We were selected to implement the Child Reporters programme which required the participation and support of various departments including the DPC-SSA, District Inspector of Schools, Circle Inspector of Schools etc. Normally this would have been a time consuming process and a major bottleneck for even the programme to start. However the analytical cell through its well established network could easily mobilize the various departments together. After the analytical cell, coordination between the various departments has vastly improved.*

*[SK Patnaik, Koraput Farmers Association]*

1.90 One of the most significant contributions of the analytical cell has been the creation of an environment for civil society organizations in the district to interact and link with the government system. By involving local NGOs in data collection, implementation and monitoring of government schemes, they facilitated their linkage with the district administration, and established the capacities and experiences of civil society as a useful resource base for the government. The following expression by the founder of a leading local NGO captures this succinctly:

*"Before the analytical cell, NGOs used to do some surveys on their own in their limited areas. The government never came to us. They hired consultants for advice and research. The government would also not share data or information with NGOs. There was a lack of trust in our intentions and capabilities. The analytical cell changed all this. Since now we are involved as equals in planning and monitoring processes for government programmes, they have become more accepting of us."*

*[Sanjit Patnayak, Founder, SOVA]*

#### ***B-5 (iv) There is scope for strengthening relationships with the DPC, other units of the DPMU and block levels***

1.91 The analytical cell's interactions are largely with the TSI and their interactions with the DPC directly seem limited. Despite being under the common leadership of the DD-DPMU, the linkage and integration of the analytical cell with other units of the DPMU – the planning and statistical units seem to be routed only through the DD-DPMU with limited direct interactions. The analytical cell fine tunes the statistical reports prepared by the Statistical Wing and provide them with updated data. Project proposals under the Innovation Fund<sup>10</sup> are either prepared / fine-tuned by the analytical cell. During interactions, it was mentioned by the leadership that formal agreements were felt unnecessary owing to common leadership by the DD. However there seems to be scope for the analytical cell to play a larger supportive role to these internal arms of the DPMU.

<sup>10</sup> Koraput is eligible for INR 30 million (under two heads) under the District Innovation Fund

1.92 The presence of the analytical cell also seems limited to the district level only with not much presence being felt at lower levels in the decentralized planning process. During interactions with Block Development Officers in Koraput and in the control district of Nabarangpur, no difference was found in this aspect or in the processes followed at the block level between the two districts.

*“We are not aware of the analytical cell and have not had interaction with them. Our interactions are only with the DPMU and TSI to whom we submit the integrated plans from all the villages and PRIs.”*

[Ramesh Chandra Sahu, Block Development Officer, Pottangi Block, Koraput]

1.93 In conclusion, the following can be said about the effectiveness of the analytical cell at Koraput –

- The analytical cell has been involved in a wide range of activities over the years that have cut across multiple functional and sectoral areas with a view to effectively meet the stated objectives
- These activities of the analytical cell have helped it to achieve its stated objectives to a reasonable extent. However it is still early days - having made a good beginning, there is scope for the analytical cell to sustain the momentum going forward.
- The objectives and activities have been evolving through the years and the focus has changed from strengthening decentralized planning to an increased focus on monitoring government programs and schemes.
- Despite an evident evolution of the objectives of the analytical cell, as reflected in its prioritization of activities and profile of human resources, the same has not been officially documented and neither has the original program document been revisited during the existence of the institution for any strategic review
- The analytical cell has been working closely with government officials in a collaborative manner. It is uniquely positioned with linkages with the District Collector, District Planning Office, DRDA, DPC, Zilla Parishad and with Line Departments. This strategic positioning has brought about convergence of activities and efforts towards better decentralized planning and monitoring in the district.
- While it has maintained strong relationships with most departments in the district and considered important by them, these relationships are not formally documented through legal memoranda. A change in leadership could impact the working relationship.

## C. IMPACT

1.94 An important focus area of the evaluation was to assess the *impact* created by the analytical cell *i.e. the extent to which the analytical cell has been able to change the planning process and service delivery in the district.*

1.95 The finding and analysis under the impact section addresses the following issues -

- To what extent has the decentralized planning process been strengthened and the monitoring systems of flagship programmes been improved?
  - *Increased utilization of allocated funds in the flagship programmes in the district*
  - *Improved outcomes/results in the areas of health, nutrition, sanitation, education, rural development, employment and reduction of poverty*
  - *Enhanced capacity of the district in planning, monitoring and evaluation*
  - *Increased participation of people in planning and community monitoring*
- To what extent is the data generated by the DPMU-AC being utilized by various government departments and how?

### ***Key Findings and Analysis***

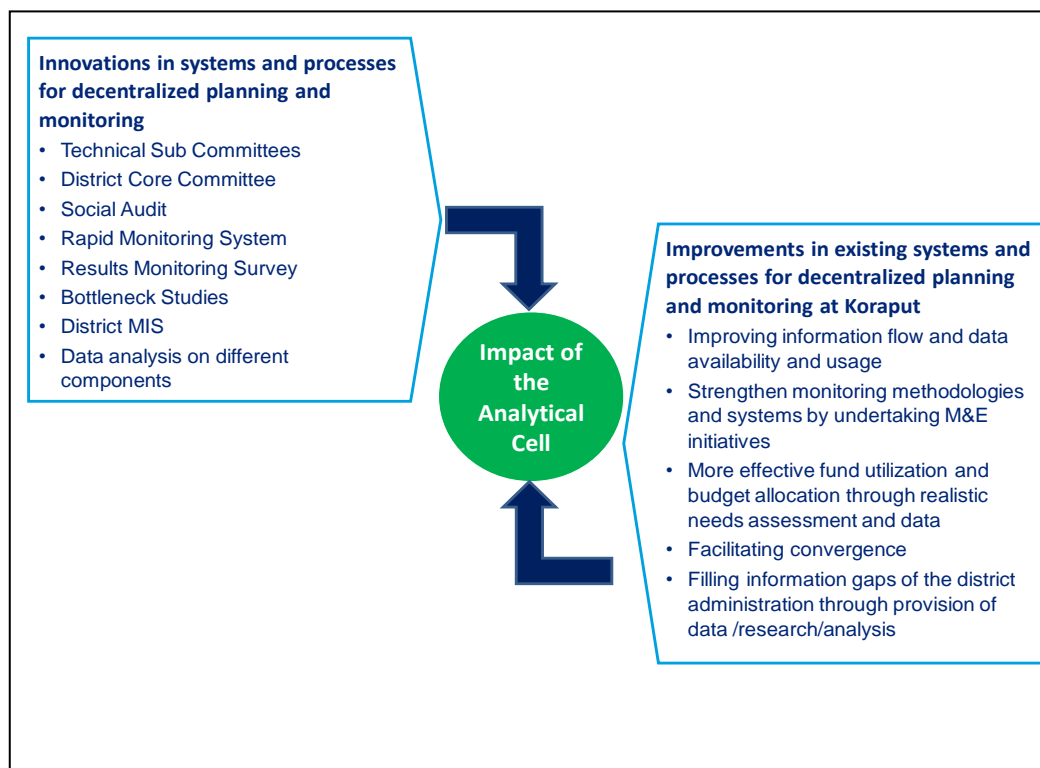
1.96 The analytical cell has been working to strengthen planning and monitoring, data systems and service delivery in Koraput. While there have been early results, the programme is still at a nascent stage and improvements in output indicators or quantifiable results are still to emerge. As has also been mentioned in section 2 of this report, evidence in the form of quantifiable data or causality for improvements in education, health, nutrition, rural development indicators is beyond the scope of this study. Further systemic changes take time to result in impact. Instead, change is manifested in the processes and systems being followed in the district as well as stakeholder perceptions.

1.97 The study methodology for the evaluation was primarily qualitative in nature focusing on document reviews and participatory research. This has also been acknowledged in the study RFP where it is mentioned in the context of analysing the impact of analytical cell that “it was understood that the evidence may be only anecdotal, as it may be early to be able to measure change and in any case it would have been difficult to attribute such change to the DPMU (analytical cell).” The evaluation of impact needs to read in this context.

1.98 The analytical cell’s impact is indicative in both conceptualization and implementation of innovations for strengthening decentralized planning and monitoring which are unique to the district as well as strengthening and improving existing systems and processes in place. This is illustrated in the exhibit below –

## Exhibit 3.2

### Impact of the Analytical Cell – An Illustration



#### *C.1 The analytical cell is a catalyst of various innovations for strengthening planning and monitoring*

1.99 Since 2008, the analytical cell has been instrumental in conceptualizing, operationalizing, coordinating and implementing a variety of innovations which are unique only to Koraput. These activities were aimed towards piloting innovations in the district which can then be institutionalized by the government and replicated across the state/country.

1.100 The analytical cell has been a part of various innovations in the district in terms of new monitoring mechanisms / evaluation / research studies etc. An illustrative list of such innovations, which the analytical cell has been part of include –

- **Rapid Monitoring System** which used surprise checks at the grass root level to ascertain the success of implementing government programs and used retired head masters, PRI members etc. for data collection which led to an ownership by the community of the process.
- **Technical Sub Committees**, where three such committees were set up to bring together stakeholders from across sectors to discuss critical challenges and take convergent action
- **District Core Committee Meetings** where the progress on the various programmes were reviewed and convergent action initiated
- **Social Audit** implemented in partnership with Mission Shakti (the SHG network in the district)
- **Results Monitoring Survey**, a panel survey covering households to generate authentic data from the ground on whether government programs and schemes reach people with required quality as envisaged in the programs and to make a thorough probe about the service quality and client satisfaction
- **Bottleneck Research** studies to identify the root cause and challenges constraining progress

- **Data triangulation** and cross cutting analysis on **different components**

1.101 Koraput has been the centre for a variety of innovations and interesting pilot programs in the last 4-5 years. The conducive environment for innovations has been facilitated by a variety of factors including proactive district administration, initiative of the district leadership, high focus by UNICEF through their development interventions etc. The innovations, therefore, cannot be attributed solely to the analytical cell; however the cell has been an *integral part of the initiatives* and been a *catalyst and driving force behind the implementation and analysis of these innovations*. Stakeholders interviewed strongly believed that most of these *innovations were taken up on the strength of the analytical cell's existence* as there was a capable entity available for conceptualizing and implementing the innovation.

1.102 The various *innovations have, in their own small ways, led to positive changes and improvements in the decentralized planning and monitoring systems* in the district and therefore, have been impactful.

## ***C.2 The impact of the analytical cell is evident through the enhanced capacity of Koraput district in decentralized planning, monitoring and evaluation***

1.103 Besides innovations, the analytical cell's impact is evident in strengthening existing systems and processes related to decentralized planning and monitoring viz. improving district information flow within and between departments and with the District Administration, availability of quality data leading to better usage of data to increase fund utilization, strengthening monitoring methodologies and systems and filling any gaps felt by the district administration. These have resulted in improved service delivery which is contributing to improved outcomes/results. Details of a few key areas of impact are provided in the following paragraphs.

### ***C-2 (i) Efforts of the analytical cell have resulted in better data availability, data utilization and improved information flow which have been used effectively for planning purposes***

1.104 At the core of effective decentralized planning and monitoring is the availability of sound and reliable data. The analytical cell's efforts over the four years has resulted in their becoming a *"data hub"* for the district and *serving as the knowledge repository for the various information requirements* of the district. This is evident through the creation of a District Management Information System covering –

- **Factsheets relating to different departments / flagship programs** - Education, Health, ICDS, MGNREGS, Agriculture, Forest, and Roads - were collated and hosted on the district website for public information. Besides providing data for Koraput there is also comparison of data with state level and country level indicators.

**Exhibit 3.3**  
**Illustration of Impact: Fact Sheet for Data on TSC & Rural Water Supply**

Fact sheet- TSC & Rural Water Supply						
Item	Koraput		Oriss		India	
	Tar	Achiev	Tar	Achiev	Tar	Achiev
IHHLS BPL	221421	66383 (29 % )	4485050	1848710 (41.2 % )	59101014	31038926 (52.5 % )
IHHL APLS	42780	1322 ( 3 % )	2571598	322893 (12.5 % )	60721072	25807641 ( 42.5 % )
IHHLS Total	264201	67705 ( 25 % )	7056648	2171603 ( 30.7 % )	119822086	56846567 (47.4 % )
Sanitary Complex	50	0	818	22	32887	16410
Schools Toilets	2659	2455 ( 92.3 % )	70663	55490 (78.5 % )	1196649	889082 (74.2 % )
Balwadi Toilets	1130	838 ( 74 % )	25160	15443 ( 61.3 % )	438001	277308 (63.3 % )
RSM	10	0	289	283	4191	5198
PC	10	10	0	718	139	2992
Project outlay( In Lakh)	6450.55		131320.04		1788554.73	
Release	1705.03		40753.61		822068.43	
Expenditure	1316.06 (77 % )		29081.53( 71 % )		584316.56( 71 % )	
Access to drinking water	99 %		96 %		NA	
No of Spot source as on 31.3.2009						
Tube Well	8171( 82 % )		270418 (96.5 % )		NA	
Sanitary wells	1573 (15.8 % )		9287 ( 3.3 % )		NA	
Spring base	203 (2.0 % )		259 ( 0.09 % )		NA	
Total	9947		279964		NA	
No of piped water supply Schemes	193 ( 74 village )		5158		NA	
House hold with sanitation coverage	25 %		27 %		34 %	
No of habitation fully covered	4512( 98.9 % )		1367216 ( 96.1 % )		NA	
No of Habitation partially covered	13 ( 0.2 % )		50479 ( 3.5 % )		NA	
No of Habitation Not covered	33( 0.72 % )		4588 ( 0.3 % )		NA	

Source :DWSM/ARWSC report [www.ddws.nic.in](http://www.ddws.nic.in) upto july 2009.

Source: <http://koraput.nic.in/New/DPMU/TSCI.pdf>

- **Factsheets relating to all the 14 blocks of Koraput** have been prepared covering parameters of socio-economic status, demography, health, education, literacy, work participation, agriculture, soil, vulnerability and nutrition.
- **Web GIS and desktop application** provides complete data on all aspects of the district including number of roads, number of functional AWCs, number of schools, location of tube wells etc. These are used for both

planning and monitoring purposes. For instance, the labour budget is prepared based on GIS data and analysis is conducted by the DPMU-AC.

- **Documentation / success stories** which act as a knowledge bank of good practices

1.105 The **reliability of data** has also been ensured to a reasonable extent by the analytical cell. Data triangulation from multiple sources has helped in highlighting the deviations and variances in data. This has triggered action to probe the differences and undertake sample research studies to validate data.

*“The AC consolidates and corroborates data from different sources- department data and from external sources like SRS and presents it to the departments. If there is a felt need for more data, the AC often undertakes independent research and small studies.”*

[Akshaya Limal, M&E Specialist, DPMUI-AC, Koraput]

1.106 The analytical cell has also been successful in creating a **high degree of awareness** about the availability of such data. Stakeholders from most government departments, the TSI and NGOs have provided **numerous instances of using this data** for their planning and monitoring purposes.

1.107 The impact in Koraput is also evident through a comparison with the control district- Nabarangpur – which suffered from lack of complete and up-to-date data as well as lack of analysis which is impacting the development and implementation of plans.

*“Prioritization is a major issue in planning. Without data bases to see how many/what kinds of project and under which scheme projects have been allotted to villages, it is not possible to manage outlays effectively. We need an agency like the analytical cell to play a bigger role in this respect”*

[Yamini Sarangi, District Collector, Nabarangpur]

*We don't even have a database at the village level of projects that are taking place there. Because of this the same road or pond construction will be sanctioned year on year. There is no monitoring or even information of what is the status of project implementation. There is no data to guide budget outlays, and there is no capacity here in the district to take up any of these roles. We really need such guidance. Maybe an institution like your Analytical Cell will be useful for this.”*

[Nanda Kishore Munda, Deputy Director, DPMU, Nabarangpur]

1.108 Through data generation, collation, analysis (needs assessments, feasibility studies and resource utilization analyses), the analytical cell has been supporting the TSI extensively in preparation of effective District Plans. Data collection, collation and analysis by the analytical cell helped the TSI in preparing a more comprehensive plan in 2011-12 backed by reliable information.

*“The district plan prepared for Koraput is more comprehensive than Nabarangpur. In Nabarangpur, we have access only to 60% of the data compared to Koraput. The analytical cell has taken care of all the data needs at Koraput”*

[P.C. Mohapatra, Director, COATS, Koraput]

1.109 Besides making available data, the analytical cell has also been **effective in improving the information flow in the district** and in ensuring that the data reaches the various departments for their planning and monitoring purposes.

1.110 The various analyses carried out by the analytical cell on the data (including budget and fund utilization, monitoring formats, status reports, bottleneck analysis of specific schemes and programmes

like the JSY, Dhanlakshmi, Gaon Kalyan Samiti etc.) is shared with the departments and district administration through various forums like the monthly meetings of the Village / Gram Panchayat, block level meetings, Technical Sub Committee meetings and District Core Committee meetings etc. ***These forums have also played a key role in improving the information flow horizontally and vertically in the district.***

1.111 Besides improving the information flow, the insightful analyses of the analytical cell has also ensured that the information is targeted at those issues/ areas thereby facilitating corrective action. This is also endorsed by the district officials. Seemingly disparate information is correlated and the inferences drawn have helped the departments to identify issues and planning interventions accordingly. For instance, while analysing the high prevalence of diarrhoea epidemic in a block, the analytical cell was able to draw correlation between quality of water in tube wells, individual household latrines and diarrhoea epidemic.

*“In 2007 a major diarrhoea epidemic broke out with high casualties. and many people died. Based on the analysis of the analytical cell, the operational levels of tube wells in the district and the quality of water was identified as the major issue and addressed through the next water sector plan. As quality of water supply has been improving, there have been no diarrhoea cases in the last two years.*

[Manoranjan Mali, Chief Engineer, Department of Water Supply and Sanitation, Koraput]

1.112 In addition to the lack of sound data, the lack of analytical support is seen as a constraint in Nabarangpur for effective planning and monitoring.

*“Data analysis is not really happening in this district. We are not evaluating the programmes, there is no cost-benefit analysis, and there is no analysis of feasibility or sustainability. We concentrate blindly on implementation only. There should be a separate entity for this work. An Analytical Cell-type structure will be useful. We can't spend project money because we can't plan on time. Basic fund utilization depends on statistical data and analysis. The Analytical Cell, if formed, can take on this role.”*

[James Ekka, Project Director, DRDA, Nabarangpur]

1.113 The availability of data and improved information flow has also facilitated a more rigorous monitoring of the progress of flagship programmes. The data analysis has helped in establishing baselines for flagship programmes to compare their results with. For instance, the NOP has targeted a reduction of 3.5 percent in malnutrition every year in the district. The analytical cell has helped in establishing a baseline and in regular monitoring.

*“One can see the difference between Koraput and Nabarangpur- In Nabarangpur, departments have to work by themselves, and data is not readily available or reliable. The analytical cell leads to better analysis and comparison of data.”*

[Santosh Kumar Padhi, NOP, Koraput]

1.114 However, while the data generated by the analytical cell is used extensively by the district administration and government departments currently, the generation of data by the analytical cell is determined to a large extent by requests from the respective departments, rather than as a selected list of indicators that are published with pre-determined regularity and on the basis of standardized data sources.

1.115 Since this activity forms the backbone for effective planning and monitoring, these gaps need to be addressed if the analytical cell has to regularize credible data generation and integration into the systems of planning and monitoring in the district.

***C-2 (ii) The analytical cell has helped in strengthening monitoring methodologies and systems in Koraput***

1.116 The technical supported provided by the analytical cell to ***strengthen the regular monitoring activities*** has led to more robust methodologies being followed by government functionaries. In addition, the analytical cell has been a part of a variety of new and innovative monitoring and evaluation systems in the district like the Technical Sub Committees, Rapid Monitoring System and Results Monitoring Survey as well as other ad hoc studies like the Ashram School Survey, Nutrition Survey and the Social Audits etc. which has been covered earlier in the section.

*“The Social Audit findings have been very helpful in bringing effective interventions to address the issues. Recognizing the utility, the District Administration is planning to take over Phase III of the social audit. However, we still cannot do so without the technical assistance of the analytical cell.”*  
[G. Seeta Kumari, District Coordinator, Mission Shakti]

1.117 The technical inputs provided by the analytical cell on the design, analysis and methodologies have resulted in a sounder monitoring mechanism being in place.

*The DPMU-AC has been involved in designing methodology as well as the questionnaires and checklists of the Ashram School Survey, the Rapid Assessment of Nutrition Status, and the Social Audit for ICDS etc.*

1.118 The analytical cell’s role in planning monitoring visits of government functionaries, in order that they cover different blocks in the district in each visit, has helped in maintaining an equitable geographical representation in their monitoring systems.

*“Everything is planned and analysed by the analytical cell. Even my visits and tours are analysed by them to see which areas I have covered and which ones I have left out, so that I can plan my next tour to those areas. This has become a system now.”*  
[Sachin R. Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput]

1.119 Through ***concurrent monitoring systems*** like the review meetings and technical sub committees, and the status report prepared on different issues based on sample surveys like School Sanitation Report, Teacher Absenteeism Report, the analytical cell has ensured a forum for discussing critical issues, developing action points and ensuring effective follow-up by helping the government departments to discover ground realities, identify gaps in implementation and to take corrective action.

1.120 An interesting case study of the impact through effective monitoring systems brought about by the analytical cell is provided below –

*The AC was involved in conducting a Rapid Assessment of Nutrition Status in Koraput and Social Audit for ICDS in two phases.*

- *The Nutrition survey carried out with the aim of establishing baseline data on child health found major gaps*

*in AWCs across the district.*

- *The AC designed a Social Audit in order to sensitize the community sensitization to draw attention of the authorities to fundamental issues in service delivery.*
- *The analytical cell was also involved in training data collectors and analysis of data.*
- *The Social Audit led to the identification of major service gaps including lack of weighing scales in the AWCs which led to difficulties in accurately growth monitoring of children, all components ANC/PNC not being covered, hand washing awareness high but practice low.*
- *The Social Audit led to the implementation of Supreme Court guidelines for AWCs and the grading of AWCs based on geography and service delivery and action plans were developed to increase supportive supervision at low performing AWCs. The AC also helped develop checklists for AWC supervisors to be filled out every month.*

1.121 Comparison with Nabarangpur and discussions with stakeholders revealed that the existing human resource within the government are burdened by a heavy workload and capacities are also limited. In the absence of an entity like the analytical cell, there is a visible gap in the rigour of monitoring.

1.122 Effective monitoring systems have thus led to effective action and undertaking interventions targeted at specific needs. However, these need to be undertaken on a sustained and on-going basis, rather than as one-time attempts, to yield meaningful results in the long term.

### ***C-2 (iii) Increased level of convergence in the district***

1.123 The analytical cell has been functioning since 2008 as an integral part of the public system in the district and is involved in activities across departments/ schemes. Earlier sections detailed the progress made in achieving convergence among various stakeholders through the creation of forums like the Technical Sub-Committee Meetings and District Core Committee Meetings, as well as through initiating joint action on monitoring systems.

*“Interdepartmental convergence is high in the district.”*

*[Dr. Pramod Kumar Mohanty, CDMO, Koraput]*

1.124 These committees are unique initiatives of the analytical cell and have been instrumental in bringing about strengthened planning and monitoring in the district. The convergence of various departments and the district administration is a ***critical factor for effectively addressing issues identified through the data analysis and research undertaken by the analytical cell.***

*“The analytical cell works along with the departments to provide data and analysis. Plans are designed with their inputs. The analytical cell never gives us an impression of being a different unit. They have integrated so well within our activities.”*

*[Balamukunda Bhuyan, District Project Coordinator, SSA, Koraput]*

1.125 In contrast, stakeholders in Nabarangpur expressed concern about the lack of convergence and information sharing between departments. While the health department has taken the initiative to work along with ICDS in the district, in comparison to Koraput the convergence is low.

*“There is no interconnectedness and information sharing is very important”.*

*[Sitaram Patil, BDO, Umerkote Block, Nabarangpur]*

1.126 The existing personnel and their capacities have been a key factor in achieving this convergence. Efforts need to be made to ensure that the convergence that the analytical cell has achieved moves beyond individuals to get more institutionalized. Further, while there is convergence at the district level, the same does not percolate below to the block levels.

#### *C-2 (iv) Filling in gaps within the district administration*

1.127 The collectorate is the focal point of all development interventions at the district level as well as for effective decentralized planning and monitoring at the district level. To ensure this, the District Collector requires the support of data, analysis and evaluation. The designated staff of the district are over-burdened with their routine tasks, and are often unable to provide an independent perspective of the progress. This establishes the strong need for a unit to support the needs of the district administration. The analytical cell has been impactful in addressing this need.

1.128 Around 50 percent of the analytical cell personnel's time is earmarked for working on requests from the district administration. Besides support to planning and monitoring, it also encompasses miscellaneous services including providing data support, prepare presentations to external visitors, programme management support for district programmes and initiatives.

1.129 While the activities catalysed by the analytical cell are innovations unique to Koraput, a comparative analysis based on in depth interview data from stakeholders in Nabarangpur, clearly shows that these areas of intervention are gaps and felt needs in the regular government system which are currently addressed to a large extent by the analytical cell in Koraput. Government stakeholders in Nabarangpur expressed a strong desire for monitoring and evaluations as well as data analyses to help in planning of flagship programmes and government schemes. The following stakeholder expressions show the gaps and the needs of the district administration in Nabarangpur which aren't being met especially with respect to planning, monitoring and data analysis:

*"We need a strong analytical cell to take a stronger role in planning."*  
[Yamini Sarangi, District Collector, Nabarangpur]

*"An Analytical Cell in the district would be very useful for data analysis and for stronger monitoring"* [Ananda Jena, DPC-SSA, Nabarangpur]

#### *C-2 (v) Relatively low focus on improving fund utilization of flagship programmes*

1.130 A critical focus area of decentralized planning and monitoring was to improve the fund utilization of flagship programs. The analytical cell carried out budget analysis of various departments - NRHM, SSA, ICDS, Rural Water Supply and TSC and presented to the relevant stakeholders in 2008.

1.131 However, while conducting the evaluation, it was found that budget allocation and utilization data for flagship programs was not readily available with the analytical cell post 2008. This raises concerns about the analytical cells' regular and continued monitoring of this aspect of their envisaged role.

1.132 An analysis of the data made available showed that the SSA demonstrates a consistent increase in fund utilization (increasing from 61 percent utilization in 2007-08 to 80 percent in 2010-11). This increase can be attributed to the strong relationship between the District Project Coordinator, SSA and the analytical cell among other factors like the stable tenure of the District Project Coordinator and other department officials. On the other hand, the NRHM shows a fluctuation in the fund utilization (increasing from 23 percent in 2007-08 to 80 percent in 2009-10 and then decreasing to 57 percent in 2010-11). At this point, it is not possible to conclusively establish the impact of the DPMU-AC on the fund utilization pattern of flagship programs.

1.133 In some instances where there was a constraint of funds, the analytical cell through their analysis helped in identifying sources of unutilized funds under other budget / program heads which could be utilized for this purpose.

*“The Ashram school survey highlighted the lack of functional toilets. It was proposed to address this. However, there were no funds available with the Department or District Programme Coordinator. The analytical cell had carried out the budget analysis. Therefore they were able to suggest the existence of unutilized funds under the School Improvement Grant which could be used for this improvement. In addition, the report helped the DPC request the state for more funds and obtained the sanction. This ensured timely action. “*

*[Mr. Manoranjan Mali, Chief Engineer, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation]*

#### ***C-2 (vi) Relatively low focus and impact on increasing people's participation in planning and capacity building of government personnel***

1.134 The analytical cell during the process of village micro plan, established village information centres and worked actively to develop capacities of volunteers from the community. There was also involvement of government officials in the Rapid Monitoring System, Mission Shakti personnel in Social Audit, NGOs in VIC/ BCC, village youth as volunteers in BCC, community volunteers as investigators in Result Monitoring Survey etc. In all these initiatives, training and capacity building measures were undertaken. However, with the reduced focus on such activities, people's participation has not been an area of focus, and therefore, impact.

1.135 While there was some focus initially on enhancing capacities of government personnel and increasing participation of people in planning and monitoring, this has not remained a conscious focus area. However, the close working relationship that the analytical cell enjoys with the various government officials through involvement in forums such as the TSC and the District Core Committee meetings have led to learning from the good practices, systems and methodologies of the analytical cell and strengthening of department capacities in planning, mid-term corrections and utilizing up-to-date and reliable data. However since this is not a conscious focus area, the impact of this also has been minimal.

1.136 Based on above findings and analysis, the following observations can be made about the impact of the analytical cell –

- While the analytical cell has been impactful in many of its activities related to its objectives, there is lack of conclusive evidence yet about the impact of the institution as a whole within the public system. The evidence of such impact is complex to establish, and often requires long term

sustainability of interventions.

- The last four years have seen a lot of innovations in the planning and monitoring systems at Koraput. While these innovations and changes cannot be attributed only to the analytical cell (there being other contributing factors as well), the analytical cell has been a key catalyst for these changes.
- Besides innovations, the analytical cell's impact is evident in strengthening existing systems and processes related to decentralized planning and monitoring viz. improving district information flow within and between departments and with the District Administration., availability of quality data leading to better usage of data to increase fund utilization, strengthening monitoring methodologies and systems, filling any gaps felt by the district administration. These have resulted in improved service delivery which is contributing to improved outcomes/results
- In the area of decentralized planning, the impact of the analytical cell has been more indirect and facilitative through the provision of pertinent data that aids planning decisions at different stages – needs assessments, feasibility analyses, and resource allocation and analysis support.
- In the area of monitoring, the impact of the analytical cell has been through the conceptualization and implementation of innovative monitoring mechanisms and initiatives across different flagship programmes. These activities, in turn, have had impact in terms of corrective action. However, these activities/monitoring initiatives have not been followed up or regularized into systems – which are needed for sustained impact.
- Data generation and analysis emerges as the most significant role and area of impact of the analytical cell. However, the generation of data is determined to a large extent by requests from the respective departments, rather than a selected list of indicators that are published with pre-determined regularity and on the basis of standardized data sources.
- A significant area of impact of the analytical cell has been the process of bringing about convergence amongst different departments through the creation of forums like the Technical Sub-Committee Meetings and District Core Committee Meetings, as well as through initiating joint action on monitoring systems.
- While there was some focus initially on enhancing capacities of government personnel and increasing participation of people in planning and monitoring, these have not continued as focus areas. Therefore, the impact on these has been minimal.

## D. EFFICIENCY

1.137 The evaluation covered an assessment of the *efficiency* of the analytical cell i.e. *in achieving its objectives whether resources have been used economically and within the specified timeframe*.

1.138 The key aspects that were analysed include –

- Extent of efficiency of management of resources (human, financial and supply) keeping in mind results to be achieved
- Extent to which the analytical cell has been efficient in adhering to UNICEF financial guidelines and Government of Odisha financial systems
- Reporting, monitoring and review mechanisms in place for the analytical cell and extent of contribution to the performance of the analytical cell

### *Key Findings and Analysis*

1.139 This section aims to evaluate the efficiency in resource management, financial reporting, monitoring and review mechanisms of the analytical cell.

#### *D.1 The analytical cell has established a fair degree of efficiency in financial and human resource management*

##### *D-1 (i) UNICEF fully supports the costs of the analytical cell till December 2012*

1.140 The analytical cell was established in partnership between the District Administration of Koraput and the UNICEF State Office. The complete funding support to the analytical cell has been provided by UNICEF till December 2012. Besides the one-time start up support for refurbishment and operational costs of the DPMU building and equipment, UNICEF's support includes the remuneration of DPMU professionals (currently staffed by two specialists, though till December 2011 there were three) as well as training and capacity building programs.

1.141 The total cost of functioning of the analytical cell has been Rs. 7.38 million (USD 134,242) including the one-time establishment cost as well as the cumulative annual budget from 2008 to 2012.

1.142 The initial establishment cost of setting up the DPMU was approximately Rs. 1.56 million (USD 28,500 approximately). The physical infrastructure (building) was provided by the government and UNICEF funded all necessary civil, electrical and wood work.

1.143 The recurring annual cost of the DPMU in 2012 was budgeted to be approximately Rs. 1.60 million (USD 29,000 approximately). The break-up of the same is provided in the table below –

**Table 3.5**  
**Annual Budget of the Analytical Cell: January – December 2012**

Head of Expense	Amount in INR (USD figures in bracket*)	% of total annual expenditure
Honorarium for two specialists	1,008,000 (18,327)	63%
Vehicle hire and fuel charges	240,000 ( 4,364)	15%
Communication Charges	36,000 (655)	2%
TA/DA (govt. norms)	48,000 (873)	3%
Management Costs	150,000 (2,727)	9%
Mobility / contingency support to DD, DPMU	120,000 (2,)182	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,602,000 (27,127)</b>	

\* - 1USD = INR 55

Source: UNICEF State Office, Bhubaneswar

***D-1 (ii) The analytical cell's budget reflects only the salary and operational cost and not the programme / activity related costs***

1.144 The organization of budgets is according to the internal administrative and financial protocols of UNICEF. While the budget allocation provides for human resources and operational expenditures, such as communication and travel costs, it does not include budgets for the various activities and programmes undertaken by the analytical cell. These are allocated by UNICEF under separate budgets for the respective sectors or programmes that they intervene in, as per their strategy. For example, the Social Audit was supposed to be conducted by Mission Shakti with technical support from the analytical cell and was funded by UNICEF. UNICEF also funds many of the special research/evaluation activities undertaken by the analytical cell like the Rapid Monitoring System and the bottleneck studies for different flagship programmes. However these are not part of the annual budget of the analytical cell but allocated separately by UNICEF from its Integrated District Approach budgets. The current focus activity of the analytical cell, the Results Monitoring Survey is completely funded by UNICEF for the first two rounds of the survey and the District Administration will take a decision on continuing the activity and the financial support.

1.145 Thus the annual budgets for the analytical cell would only be reflective of the salary and operational costs. While some of the routine activities of the analytical cell which are non-programmatic in nature like for instance attending technical sub -committee meetings, data triangulation etc. get covered under this expense head, other activities like the evaluation, research studies etc. may not be included.

1.146 This differentiation and exclusion of programme costs has both positive and negative implications. The analytical cell was established to facilitate a stronger planning and monitoring system

for flagship programmes in the district and to that extent all the activities that are carried out by the analytical cell support the district administration and other flagship programmes in more effective planning and monitoring. In principle, therefore allocating the major activity costs to the respective sectors or programmes can inculcate a sense of ownership by the respective departments/programmes for the activity under consideration and eventually facilitate a smooth transition to the government budgets thereby auguring well for sustainability as well. This is evident from the following stakeholder expression:

*“Budget for programmes comes from different UNICEF budgets. This is also because UNICEF wants to define its role as catalytic support for the analytical cell and not implementation. The programme costs ideally, will be picked up by the government departments as their own activities.”*

*[Mr. Rajesh Patnaik, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, UNICEF]*

1.147 As the DPMUs role evolves to providing technical support to government departments there should be sustained effort to add value to government units/programs for planning, M&E etc. and budgets should be provided for these activities.

***D-1 (iii) The analytical cell has been financially efficient and functioning at a reasonable cost***

1.148 The annual budget of the analytical cell<sup>11</sup> is relatively very small in comparison to the District Administration budget as well as the Integrated District Approach budget of UNICEF (through which the analytical cell has been funded). An analysis of total figures show that the costs of the analytical cell based on its 2012 annual budget is a mere 0.04 percent of the District Administration’s budget (based on Koraput District Administration’s budget for 2011-12), and only 4.31 percent of the UNICEF IDA budget (based on UNICEF’s IDA budget for 2012).

1.149 An analysis based on the comparison of the annual costs of maintaining the analytical cell structure, with its human resources and operational expenses, vis-à-vis the activities that the institution has undertaken, its effectiveness and impact (discussed in other sections of this report) indicates that it has actually managed to achieve its results at a very reasonable investment and therefore, has been cost-effective. Given that the unit serves the need of multiple stakeholders – the district administration, UNICEF, various flagship programmes and government departments, the costs have actually been optimized by having a single unit which is able to handle the needs across rather than duplicating the cost.

1.150 The analytical cell is a relevant and effective institution playing a crucial role in bringing about improvements and innovations in planning and monitoring in the district. It has been able to close the significant gap in data generation, collation and analysis that public systems often lack. Given these impact areas, supporting the current model of the analytical cell in Koraput (by UNICEF currently and then by the government) would be a feasible and cost effective decision. However the scale up model proposed by the government includes significant changes in the design and human resource composition and hence the cost effectiveness of that model needs to be evaluated independently.

<sup>11</sup> The comparison uses the budget provision made by UNICEF i.e. only with salary and operations cost and without program cost. The broad cost benefit analysis use this and therefore needs to be viewed keeping this in mind. For a more meaningful and comprehensive cost-effectiveness analysis of this institution, a notional program related cost also needs to be assumed.

*D-1 (iv) The lean staffing of the analytical cell ensures efficiency of human resources, but may become a bottleneck for meeting objectives*

1.151 The human resource structure has gone through changes since inception. The role rationalizations and changes in staff profiles and job descriptions have been discussed in detail in the section on Relevance earlier in this report. At the time of inception there were three specialists for ‘Community mobilization and planning’, ‘Monitoring and Evaluation’ and ‘MIS and Statistics’. But after the exit of the Decentralized Planning Specialist, the staff profile has been changed to a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist; the establishment of the Integrated Behaviour Change Communication Cell at the district level led to the discontinuation of the Community Mobilization Expert position.

1.152 The lean human resource structure and rationalizations have contributed to the efficiency of the analytical cell and indicates that the institution has been able to respond to changing needs and maintain a high level of efficiency by retaining or developing what is needed and avoiding potential duplication of efforts and resources. The two members have also been involved in numerous activities and it would be safe to say that there is efficient utilization of resources. The staff is capable of ensuring all tasks assigned to them are completed. The staff members have earned a reputation of never refusing any requests from the district administration and providing quality outputs.

1.153 However, it is also imperative to point out that a lean staff unit as the analytical cell might not be optimal to achieving the aims and objectives set out at the time of inception. As has been discussed in the previous sections, the change in the staffing structure and in nomenclature as well as positions being merged is an area of concern. As the DPMU gets more firmly entrenched within the District Administration and the dependence of line departments on the DPMU increases, the staff is being challenged to meet demands and maintain quality of output<sup>12</sup>.

*“We are flooded with requests from the District Administration for different things all the time. From data analysis, preparing presentation for the DC, analysing his visits, even organizing local festivals like the Parab...it becomes difficult in terms of time. But the analytical cell never refuses any of these requests. It’ll help if we have more people. I think we need two specialists – one for planning and one for GIS.”*

*[Sanjay Kumar Nanda Deputy Director, DPMU, Koraput]*

1.154 It should therefore be ensured that the basic threshold levels are clearly set and these need to be non-negotiable. The rationalization should not be at the cost of diluting the core objectives.

1.155 Another important point to note is the relatively flat hierarchical structure of the analytical cell, DPMU and District Administration. Originally, the thought within the Government of Odisha was that the DD-DPMU would report to the Additional District Collector who in turn would report to the District Collector. However, at a meeting in Bhubaneswar, the then District Collector pointed out that having an intermediary would only create delays in action. The direct relationship between the analytical cell staff, DD-DPMU and District Collector has been important factors in ensuring activities take place in an efficient manner.

<sup>12</sup> Similar findings have been referred to in the Briefing Paper Series: Innovations, Lessons and Good Practices- District Planning and Monitoring Units: Data Knowledge Hubs for Convergent Planning and Monitoring

## ***D.2 The fund disbursement method followed ensures involvement of the district administration and hence ownership for the analytical cell***

1.156 The fund disbursement for the analytical cell takes place directly from UNICEF to the District Administration/DD-DPMU on a quarterly basis based on the budgets agreed upon at the beginning of the year with UNICEF. During the last quarter of each year, the plans for the next year are discussed with various line departments. During these discussions, broad interventions are agreed on and then presented to the District Collector for finalization. This provides the broad framework within which financial and technical support is provided to the District Administration.

1.157 The analytical cell's expenses including salaries of staff are then disbursed by the District Administration directly. UNICEF approves of a detailed budget submitted by the DD-DPMU before releasing funds. In the past, 80 percent of the funds were released per quarter and the balance 20% reimbursed based on bills, project reports etc. submitted. However, this is no longer the case. Currently, the funds are released on a quarterly basis and can only be used for the activities specified. The DPMU maintains budget and expenditure details which are shared with the District Administration and UNICEF on a quarterly basis.

1.158 The analysis indicates that this method of fund disbursement and disbursing of expenses by the District Administration also builds a level of ownership within the administration over the analytical cell. It also strengthens the reporting relationship between the analytical cell staff and the DD-DPMU.

1.159 In all these financial processes, the analytical cell has been largely efficient in adhering to the UNICEF financial guidelines and Government of Odisha financial systems. This has also been facilitated by the fund disbursement mechanism which has both UNICEF and the district administration closely involved and overseeing the financial aspects ensuring compliance.

1.160 An analysis of the activities in the previous sections shows that as the DPMU has evolved, certain objectives are given higher priority than others and the activities reflect the prioritization. While this hasn't been reflected on paper, it is evident in the activities undertaken through the years. An alignment of activities to the objectives in a more structured manner would lead to a more efficient utilization of resources. The analytical cell could also explore the possibility of using department budgets especially the unutilized budget for funding certain activities. This will help in building further ownership of the district administration and the user departments over the analytical cell. The following section on sustainability covers in detail suggestions for a formal funding/ cost sharing relationship between the analytical cell and the district administration and different line departments will help in increasing the ownership of the administration and reducing the reliance on personal relationships in case of leadership change.

## ***D.3 While reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place, there is scope for strengthening***

1.161 UNICEF played a key role in the conceptualizing and design of the analytical cell including deciding its objectives, goals and annual Key Result Areas (KRAs). Over the period, UNICEF's role has become one of providing technical guidance and mentoring to the program.

1.162 Project reports are filed and sent to UNICEF as part of the monitoring and officials from the State Office make regular visits to Koraput to monitor progress of different projects and activities. Further, UNICEF is also part of the District Core Committee meetings and this also serves as a forum for reviewing the various analysis carried out by the analytical cell.

1.163 Along with the annual budget a broad plan for the year ahead in terms of the key focus areas are identified which translates in to the KRAs for the staff. Annual performance reports are prepared by the staff which compared the activities carried out through the year against the KRAs laid out at the beginning of the year. While the annual performance reports were submitted to UNICEF and the DD-DPMU initially, these have not continued after 2009. The analytical cell staff report directly to the DD-DPMU. UNICEF and the DD-DPMU conduct performance reviews of the DPMU members together but these are informal and are not organized on a regular basis.

1.164 However, the fact that the analytical cell works under the direct purview of the District Collector and DD-DPMU ensures a constant and on-going monitoring of their performance. Further, since the analytical works closely with line departments and also handles their data and research requests, the feedback given by these departments also acts as a concurrent monitoring mechanism.

1.165 The lean structure of the analytical cell and its close proximity to UNICEF, DD DPMU and the District Administration ensures that the informal monitoring is also effective in meeting the requirement. However as the analytical cell scales up and diversifies, there is need for a more formal and structured monitoring process. The internal reporting and monitoring mechanism needs to be strengthened and institutionalized to enable the analytical cell staff and the District Administration to measure results more clearly and to build a system of accountability for work in the future. This assumes importance especially for the scale up of the analytical cell across the state.

1.166 Based on the above findings and analysis, the following observations can be made about the efficiency of the analytical cell –

- The analytical cell is fully funded by UNICEF till December 2012. The current budget allocation is reasonable for the span of activities carried out by the analytical cell indicating good financial efficiency
- The lean organization structure and flat hierarchy facilitate efficiency of human resources
- However, its funding has been decreasing over the years keeping in line with its redefined role as a catalytic supporter.
- Routing the budget disbursement through the district administration is aimed towards increasing ownership and control of the analytical cell as a part of the government system.
- For financial reporting, the analytical cell maintains budget and expenditure details and these are shared with UNICEF on a quarterly basis. This is a strong and efficient system.
- While reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place and working efficiently, they have tended to become more informal over the years. There is scope for tightening the same. Although there is a differentiation of programme budgets of the analytical cell from its organizational budgets, efficiency of such a mechanism is still inconclusive. Also, a visibility of the overall cost including the spending on programs activities will be important to know at the time of takeover by the government and during scale up and replication.
- With its lean staffing, there is efficient utilization of resources at the analytical cell. However, whether this is optimal to attain the objectives is doubtful. With the increasing dependence of the district administration on the analytical cell and consequently the ever increasing workload on the staff members more staff members may be required to achieve the objectives of the analytical cell while at the same time maintaining quality.

## **E. SUSTAINABILITY**

1.167 An important focus area of the evaluation was to assess the *sustainability* of the analytical cell *i.e. whether the institutional mechanisms put in place will ensure the continuation of the analytical cell*. The finding and analysis under this section addresses the following issues -

- Extent to which institutional mechanisms for the DPMU, its modalities followed and their effectiveness for operationalization and functioning of DPMU are sustainable
- Nature of partnership of the DPMU with government departments at the district level, and contribution of these departments to the DPMU
- Is there a felt need for the analytical cell to continue in the future? What are the challenges in the continuity of the analytical cell

### ***Key Findings and Analysis***

1.168 This section provides the details of the finding and analyses relating to the sustainability of the analytical cell.

#### ***E.1 The institutional mechanisms and operating modalities of the DPMU-AC are sustainable but provides scope for being more formalized***

1.169 The institutional mechanisms of the analytical cell in terms of its design, organogram and formal positioning within the government system are sustainable to continue playing the envisaged role. As discussed earlier, the cell has been strategically positioned within the government system with direct linkages to the District Administration which gives it the added advantage of being involved in all public programmes. The leadership of the analytical cell with the DD-DPMU (with direct reporting mechanism with the District Collector) ensures that the cell is led and guided by public administrators and therefore, by priorities and needs of the public system.

1.170 In public systems, innovative institutions and their sustainability depend to a large extent on integration and convergence of the new structure with the existing system. Despite being fully funded by UNICEF, the analytical cell was created within the government system and reports for all day-to-day activities to the DD DPMU with UNICEF playing a mentoring role. This has led to the District Administration and the District Collector perceiving the analytical cell as an integral part of their system.

1.171 This design of the institution and its leadership contributes to its sustainability. The analytical cell is completely integrated into the government system, rather than creating a parallel structure with civil society or UNICEF leadership.

1.172 Another factor that contributes to the sustainability of the analytical cell as an institution within the government system is the formal agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding about its role, leadership and positioning between UNICEF and the District Administration in Koraput. The legal agreement protects the cell from changes in bureaucratic leadership and consequent priorities. Although

such changes may significantly impact the role and functions of the analytical cell (as seen in the form of requests from the District Administration discussed in the section on Effectiveness in this report), the institutional structure and mechanisms have remained largely unaffected, thus sustaining the existence of the institution.

1.173 The evaluation found that the modalities followed for operationalization and functioning of the analytical cell, changes in these modalities over time, or shifts between originally stated vision and practice have been largely informal in nature and mostly undocumented. The focus on goals and activities of the analytical cell have changed significantly since its inception from largely a decentralized planning role to a more data generation and analysis role in 2012, with about 50 percent of the time and efforts of the staff invested in responding to requests from the District Administration and other Line Departments. However, these shifts in focus have not been formally documented. This is evident from the following stakeholder expression:

*“Originally the Analytical Cell was set up to provide planning and monitoring support to the district administration. They took up planning activities at decentralized levels. This was also an extension of the ANKUR project of UNICEF that facilitated village micro-planning. But slowly this changed into a supervisory role at best. The Village Information Centres that were earlier managed by the DPMU were converted to Gram Panchayat resource Centres because it was difficult to have a village level presence for the Analytical Cell. Then the Integrated BCC cell came up as a part of another UNICEF project, and was entrusted with the community participation role. So again the DPMU discontinued this role and now it provides only technical support and data to the IBCC. Then the TSI came up and the DPMU’s role in decentralized planning was further reduced. DPMU’s role changed to designing M&E frameworks and technical aspects of monitoring and data collection.”*

[Rajesh Patnaik, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. UNICEF, Odisha]

1.174 Given the familiarity and close working relationship that the analytical cell enjoys with the current stakeholders this has not been an issue till date. However such informal shifts in roles and functioning of an institution may affect its sustainability, especially in the context of public systems where bureaucratic leadership may change frequently with consequent changes in operational modalities or even the core rationale and objectives Unless documented, there could be a huge deviation between originally stated vision and actual practice with no documented rationale or logic behind the evolution. Formal documentation of critical changes in the trajectory will become important for the future.

## ***E.2 The analytical cell’s partnerships with the government departments is currently strong, but their sustainability needs to be strengthened***

1.175 The analytical cell enjoys a smooth and mutually beneficial working relationship with the district administration, many government departments like health, education, water and sanitation, and ICDS. But these have been largely determined by current incumbents and leadership in these administrative positions, especially in the absence of any formal relationship or legal memorandum of understanding with these individual departments.

1.176 The absence of formalization and institutionalization could have a bearing on the sustainability as is already evident in the case of the Health Department - while the analytical cell is perceived as a significant value addition in planning and monitoring of existing flagship programmes by the Departments of Education, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, and by Women and Child Development,

there is a lower utilization of their services by the Department of Health and Family Welfare currently. This seems to be driven by the perception of the new leadership of the department. This has had implications for a variety of initiatives where the analytical cell has been involved including the Technical Sub Committee meeting chaired by the CDMO which have not taken place in the last quarter. In the absence of formal documentation, there is a risk of this relationship diluting further overtime and the new incumbent may not have any basis for pursuing the relationship with the analytical cell. This is evident from the following stakeholder expression.

*"We have all the skills required for planning and monitoring. The DPMU does not give us anything additional. The department and the NRHM have very good tools for monitoring progress, ANMs fill up forms regularly, the district health plans are formed each year."*

[Dr. Pramod Kumar Mohanty, CDMO, Koraput]

1.177 The nature of partnerships between the analytical cell and the government departments appeared to be more organic, where the duration of incumbency and consequently, the strength of the relationship built, were determinants of the role that the analytical cell played in a particular department. A case in point is the relationship which the analytical cell enjoys with the SSA – the role of analytical cell in Rapid Monitoring Survey of schools was used by the SSA and the Department of Education to take punitive action against teacher absenteeism. The positive results seen led them to constantly avail the services of the analytical cell. The TSC headed by the SSA has increased the frequency of meetings. The DPC-SSA in Koraput acknowledged the contribution of the DPMU-AC in their improved performance and considers them an integral part of his team including for crisis management.

1.178 In the absence of any formal relationship or legal document of understanding with these individual departments, it is important to institutionalize and formalize at least the key tenets of the relationship for sustainability.

### *E.3 Need for knowledge management to sustain the high performance standards*

1.179 The analytical cell is an extremely compact unit with only two specialists (currently). Since inception the analytical cell has been staffed by specialists who have been extremely capable, competent, committed, self-motivated and passionate about reaching the objectives and goals. The success of the analytical cell and the high quality standards set has been fuelled to a large extent by the individual initiative and drive of the staff.

1.180 Given the small size of the unit, it also becomes difficult to isolate the performance of individuals from the institution. Going forward, the momentum gained should not be at a risk due to change of personnel. While this aspect is not wholly avoidable, its impact can be minimized by ensuring that there is knowledge management, knowledge transfer and institutionalizing the learning.

### *E.4 Current budget allocations indicate financial sustainability although sustainable funding mechanisms for the future have not been determined*

1.181 As discussed earlier, the current annual budgets of the analytical cell providing for their salaries and routine operational cost is reasonable and insignificant in comparison to the overall district administration budget. Given their immense value addition and the reasonableness of their budget, it

should not pose an issue for sustainability – whether the district administration absorbs the cost or whether it is funded by the state government under a separate budget head.

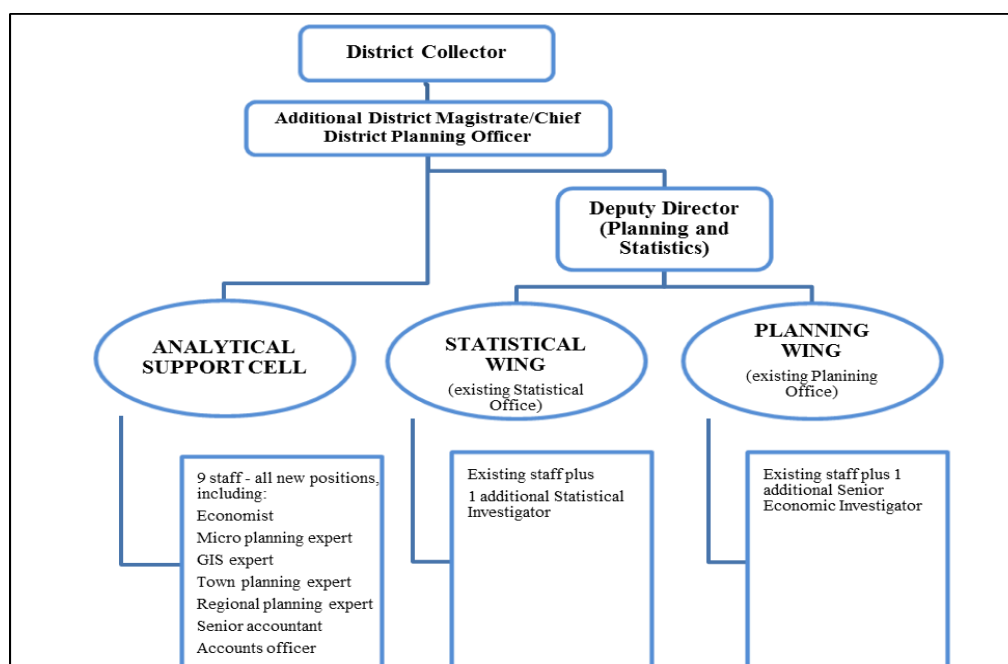
1.182 An important aspect to factor in is the budget for various programs / activities that are currently funded by UNCIEF. As the role of the DPMU-AC evolves from implementation to technical assistance and support to different departments and flagship programmes, modalities for supporting the costs of innovative initiatives for monitoring-evaluation/research within these programmes. The role of the analytical cell will become redundant in the absence of these activities.

#### ***E.5 Unanimous felt need for the analytical cell and the scale up plan of the Government key drivers for sustainability***

1.183 The felt need for an institution like the analytical cell within the government system is a determinant of its sustainability. Unanimously, the various stakeholders, be it the district administration, line departments or the civil society, acknowledged the contributions made and endorsed their continuity. It was felt that the good beginning made had to be sustained and the role of the analytical cell indispensable in this journey. Since the need for the analytical cell is strong and growing, its existence is rationalized.

1.184 Another important indicator for sustainability is the resolution passed by the Government of Odisha (GoO) in June 2010 to establish DPMUs in all the thirty districts of Odisha. The Analytical cell reporting directly to the Collector is proposed to be an integral part of this structure for providing high end analytical support to the DPC and the other two cells. The revamped structure with nine personnel proposes to have five new specialist positions with adjoining support staff, as shown in the exhibit 3.4.

**Exhibit 3.4**  
**Structure of DPMUs proposed to be rolled out by the Government of Odisha**



1.185 The fact that the analytical cell is perceived as important and adding value to the government system is evident from the prominence accorded to it in the scale-up and the government's decision to invest in appropriate and higher number of human resources. However, it is interesting to note that the current model of the analytical cell is not being replicated in the planned state-wide program..

1.186 The current structure of the cell being lean also resulted in availability of skilled personnel, efficiency as well as quality of service. Further, the salary scale offered by UNICEF has been an important factor in attracting and retaining skilled personnel. The salary scale being proposed by the Government of Odisha may not be adequate for attracting and retaining quality personnel at the district level. With the scale up involving multiple and diverse skill sets, across 30 districts, there could be challenges around the availability of skilled human resource, close working relationship with the District Administration and quality of service. Robustness and quality, which are currently the defining factors of the analytical cell should not get lost in the largeness and bureaucracy of the institution making it "yet another government department."

#### *E.6 Seamless and smooth transition in functioning is critical to sustainability of the DPMU-AC*

1.187 Another important factor is the role of UNICEF in planning for sustainability of the analytical cell especially in the context of changed strategic plans for its Integrated District Approach and consequent changes in its funding priorities. While the support of UNICEF to the functioning of the analytical cell has been significant, it has decreased gradually over the years in order for the government system and district leadership to play a more active role, thus leading to its sustainability. This shift is also seen in reporting mechanisms of the analytical cell's goals and key results areas and activities of the staff members, discussed in the section on Efficiency earlier in this report. However, this has happened organically, without any documentation to indicate such a shift by design.

1.188 UNICEF's funding support comes to an end by December 2012. It has been constantly appraising the district administration about the need for transition, including in the DPMU Approval Letter of 2012. However, due to the proposed state-wide government initiative for the DPMU cell and the delay in its operationalization, concrete steps are yet to be initiated for the transition.

1.189 The discontinuation of UNICEF funding at this stage would have serious implications for the continuity of the analytical cell. There has been a good beginning made and early results have become visible. Though nascent in achievements, there is a strong potential for the analytical cell to contribute further. Many stakeholders feel that the analytical cell has just reached a stage of stability in roles and positioning within the public system, and UNICEF's withdrawal at this stage will have a negative effect on the initiatives of monitoring and data analysis that has been started by the unit in the last 4-5 years. The discontinuity will lead to a break and loss of momentum which needs to be avoided.

*"...the analytical cell should be there for impact evaluation, documentation, monitoring...whatever the cell developed is difficult to be picked up by the department so soon and easily. Sustainability is a major concern if UNICEF funding is discontinued."*

[Balamukunda Bhuyan, District Project Coordination, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Koraput]

*"ICDS will continue with the monitoring, but we will miss the added inputs and value of the DPMU in this monitoring, if it discontinues."*

[G. Seeta Kumari, District Coordinator, Mission Shakti and DWCD]

*"I interact with UNICEF once in every 2 months, and I always request them to continue support to the analytical cell..."*

[Sachin R. Jadhav, District Collector, Koraput]

1.190 In conclusion, the following propositions can be made regarding the sustainability of the AC-DPMU as an institutional structure within the public system, with a set of goals and modalities of functioning –

- The concept of the analytical cell as an institution is sustainable in the current context where the public system acutely lacks the ability to generate robust data and analyse it for corrective action, monitoring, planning and reforms.
- The institutional mechanisms of the analytical cell in terms of its design, organogram and formal positioning within the government system are efficient and sustainable to continue. However the modalities followed for operationalization and functioning, changes in these modalities over time, or shifts between originally stated vision and practice has been largely informal in nature and mostly undocumented.
- The analytical cell's relationship with the district administration and various government departments has been largely individual driven, determined by current incumbents and leadership in these administrative positions. The lack of documentation or legal memoranda of understanding with government departments raises concerns about the sustainability of its roles and contributions in their respective flagship programs.
- To a large extent the performance of the analytical cell has been driven by its personnel. Given the small size of the unit, it also becomes difficult to isolate the performance of individuals from the institution. This calls for knowledge management and institutionalizing the learning
- The financial support required to meet the salary and routine operational cost of the analytical cell is not high and should not be an issue for sustainability. However modalities for supporting the program costs need to be ironed out
- The unanimous felt need amongst the various stakeholders for the analytical cell and the government of Odisha's proposal for setting up the institutional cell across the state are key drivers for sustainability. However strategies need to work towards ensuring a smooth transition without breaking the current momentum.
- The institutional positioning of the analytical cell is crucial in determining its sustainability – it has to be integrated within the existing government system and have strong convergences with government departments and programs.
- While UNICEF has worked towards the sustainability of the analytical cell through gradually withdrawing from functional modalities, withdrawal of its funding at this stage would have serious negative implications for the sustainability and continuity of many of its initiatives. An interim strategy therefore needs to be worked out.

## In Conclusion

1.191 At the core of the evaluation was a small analytical unit that was set up to strengthen decentralized planning and monitoring by providing data and analysis support. This has been achieved very well especially taking into account the fact that the unit comprised of only two personnel. The cell has managed to meet diverse objectives and provided assistance to a wide range of stakeholders. The initial success and early results hold promise. The utility and need is very strong and hence the future focus needs to be on consolidating the gains, addressing the issues and scale up performance to a higher plane. The way forward and recommendations are presented in the next section.

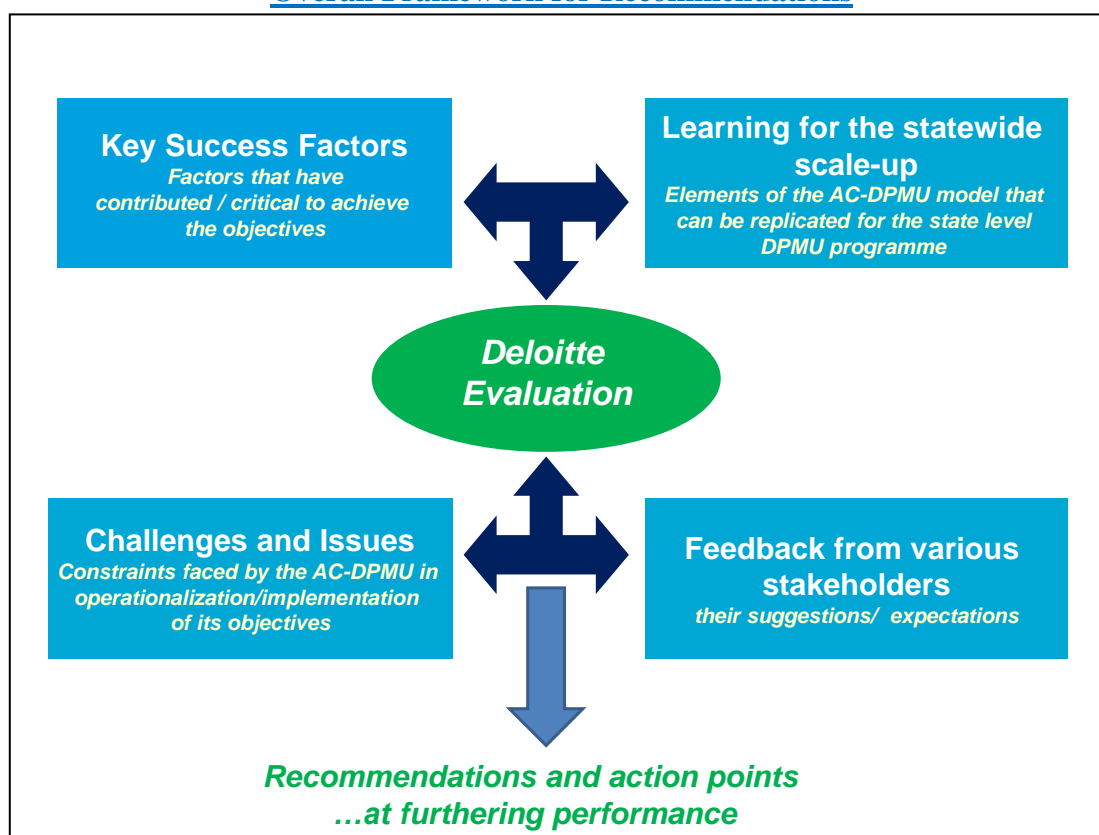
1.192 The findings indicate the relevance of an institution like the analytical cell, with originally envisaged objectives and structure, in strengthening decentralized planning and monitoring in the district. Despite an evolving role, the DPMU-AC has been effective in planning and monitoring activities for flagship programmes of different departments, and the impact of the cell is manifested in process outcomes of these programmes. Along with the perceived value expressed by stakeholders, this establishes a sound case for the analytical cell to continue in Koraput, or for elements of the model to be replicated across the state. The fact that it is a small unit with relatively low operating cost supports this case. Having seen the positive experience in Koraput, the district administration needs to prepare a time bound action plan for taking the ownership of the analytical cell. During the interim period, UNICEF may consider an extension of support to avoid discontinuation of activities.

## SECTION 4

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

1.1 The detailed evaluation, analyses and conclusions presented in the earlier section formed the basis for assessing the key achievements and factors that are critical to the success of the analytical cell as well as the various challenges/limitations and possible areas of improvement. This section will draw upon these learnings as the basis to arrive at possible recommendations/ action points for future programming and strengthening of the analytical cell in Koraput and in the planned scale up in Odisha. The overall framework for the recommendations is presented in Exhibit 4.1 below

**Exhibit 4.1**  
**Overall Framework for Recommendations**



## **Basis for Recommendations: Success Factors, Challenges and Learning for scale up**

### ***Learning from the Koraput model***

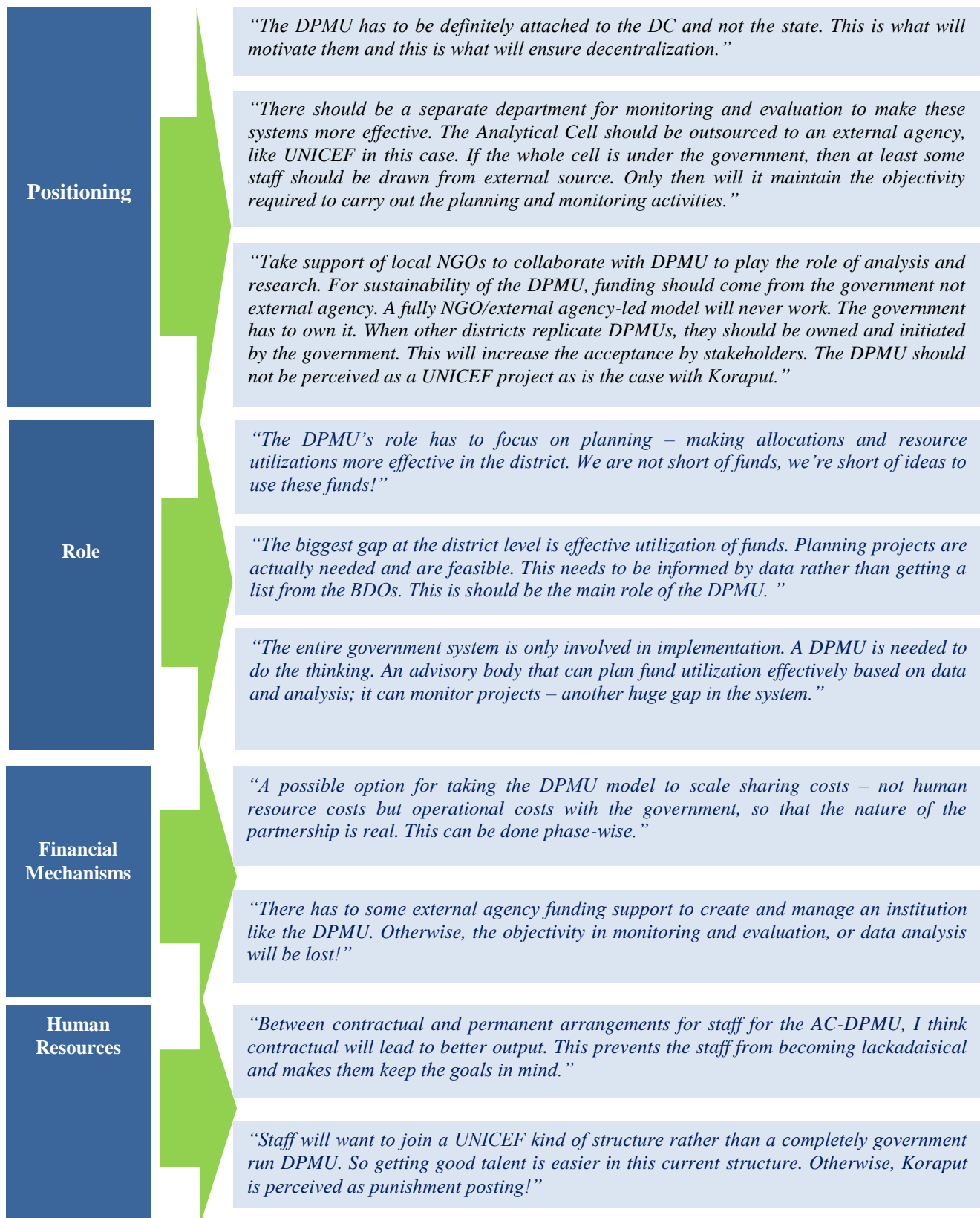
1.2 The evaluation also helped in identifying important lessons from the Koraput model that can be incorporated while replicating the model (in Odisha) or when designing any future model elsewhere –

<b>Learning from the Koraput Model</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>strategic institutional positioning</b> of the institution along with <b>effective leadership</b> is crucial in determining its impactful functioning and sustainability. The current model of housing the analytical cell within the DPMU with reporting relationship to the DD-DPMU seems effective.</li><li>• The structure also has to provide for <b>effective linkages</b> with the District Collector, District Planning Office, DRDA, DPC, Zilla Parishad and with Line Departments which also need to be <b>institutionalized</b>. Besides this, the analytical cell needs to maintain links with civil society. This can help in bringing about convergence of activities and efforts towards better decentralized planning and monitoring.</li><li>• Many factors may independently, or in interaction with each other, contribute to a need for shifting the focus areas of an institution like the analytical cell such as, national policies, policy context in the state, development priorities, donor priorities, change in leadership etc. However the institution has to be <b>flexible and dynamic</b> to respond to such changes. In doing so, the institution needs to ensure that it <b>remains relevant</b> – this is possible by being cognizant of the objectives and goals and ensuring that it serves the need of the end users.</li><li>• <b>Clear statement of goals and objectives</b> of the analytical cell is important, with institutional mechanisms to review these regularly against activities and changing policy needs.</li><li>• <b>Lean but optimal staffing</b> with right expertise is important to ensure quality of services which in turn is imperative for driving demand for services. While the desire may be to staff the cell with many specialists, availability of quality human resources needs to be borne in mind.</li><li>• <b>Balancing increasing demand while maintain quality</b> is essential to ensure value creation and sustainability.</li><li>• <b>Knowledge management</b> is critical along the life cycle of the institution - In order to protect the functioning and role of the analytical cell through change in leadership, human resources etc., it is important to have official documentation of the evolution and rationale of change along the project life cycle.</li></ul>

### ***Feedback from Stakeholders***

1.3 Stakeholder expressions from the in depth interviews reiterate these conclusions. Stakeholder feedback for strengthening the analytical cell can be organized under the following heads presented below -

### Exhibit 4.3 Stakeholder Feedback



## Recommendations and Action Points

1.4 Based on the findings and learnings from the analytical cell in Koraput, recommendations for replication and scale up of the Analytical Cell are provided below:

**Table 4.1**  
**Broad Recommendations for Replication and Scale Up**

1.	<b>Strategic institutional positioning of the DPMU is crucial in determining its impactful functioning and sustainability</b> - The DPMU has to be positioned with linkages with the District Collector, District Planning Office, DRDA, DPC, Zilla Parishad and with Line Departments. Besides this, the DPMU needs to maintain links with civil society. This can help in bringing about convergence of activities and efforts towards better decentralized planning and monitoring.
2.	<b>Analytical Cell must be a flexible and dynamic institution</b> - Many factors may independently, or in interaction with each other, contribute to a shift in focus areas of an institution like the DPMU, such as, human resources, change in leadership, and policy context in the state. The DPMU has to be flexible and dynamic as an institution to respond to such changes.
3.	<b>Objectives and role of DPMU must factor in specific needs and context of the district</b> - The rationale of the analytical cell is embedded in the need for decentralization of planning, monitoring and data generation in public programming. While this is the core goal of the institution, it is important that its objectives are informed and activities are determined by unique needs of the district. In keeping with the true spirit of ‘decentralization’, the analytical cell should take into account contextual socio-economic, geographical and demographic realities into consideration for planning its roles and activities.
4.	<b>DPMU must have formal linkages with line departments and with block level administration</b> - to ensure sustainability of the relationship, and consequently the analytical cell’s role in flagship programmes. Similarly, linkages must be established with block level administration to facilitate effective decentralized planning.
5.	<b>DPMU’s should be staffed with lean but optimal manpower, with expertise in alignment with core objectives</b> – The alignment of human resource organization to the core objectives of the analytical cell is crucial. The number of staff members should be in line with the workload of the analytical cell – while a lean manpower augurs well for efficiency, the staffing should be optimal enough to handle the work load without compromising on the quality of work.
6.	<b>Analytical Cell must have strong linkages with other units of the DPMU</b> – to ensure comprehensive interventions in planning and data generation for decentralization, as well as role rationalization among the three units.
7.	<b>Regular capacity building of staff</b> – to ensure knowledge updation especially for rigour in data collection and analysis methodologies. This could be through bringing in new innovations, models as well as using contemporary data collection and analysis methodologies.

1.5 The findings of the evaluation will help the district administration in appropriately positioning the analytical cell and deciding its scope beyond UNICEF commitment i.e. beyond 2012. The broad recommendations for DPMU- AC, Koraput based on the evaluation are put forth in three broad areas–

- Institutional and Policy Level
- Structural Level and
- Operational Level

**Table 4.2**  
**Broad Recommendations and Action Points for DPMU-AC, Koraput**

### **A. Institutional and Policy Level**

<b>A. Institutional and Policy Level</b>	
The recommendations in this section relate to institutional and policy level interventions. These recommendations are focused towards strengthening the fundamental design, rationale, role definition, activities, positioning and funding of the DPMU as an institution in Koraput, and going forward in other districts across Odisha.	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Continue and replicate the analytical cell</b> – Given the unanimous felt need and relevance of the institution, it is strongly recommended that the analytical cell continues to exist at the district level in Koraput to support and facilitate effective decentralized planning and monitoring. The role definition of the institution, should be contextualized to district level realities, so that it is effective and impactful in strategically responding to local needs.
<b>2.</b>	<b>UNICEF should extend interim support while District Administration takes up ownership of the analytical cell to ensure continuity of service</b> - As UNICEF support to the analytical cell comes to an end in December 2012 and as the GoO plans a state-wide scale up of DPMUs, it is imperative that the analytical cell in Koraput continues functioning. In order to avoid a gap in functioning of the DPMU, it is recommended that UNICEF extends interim support for the program for a mutually agreeable time frame with the District Administration. As an option, a fund sharing arrangement where UNICEF supports the human resource costs for the interim period while the District Administration supports the operational expenses can be worked out. This is envisaged as a rational cost sharing plan, as the District Administration is currently supporting the infrastructure costs for housing the analytical cell and is therefore, more geared towards operational support, while the salaries are supported by UNICEF and the scales are as per UNICEF guidelines
<b>3.</b>	<b>The objectives of the analytical cell should be fine-tuned based on contextual needs and should reflect specific needs of the district</b> – Given that the institution has been in existence for more than 4 years, it would be appropriate to revisit the objectives and fine tune them based on the current district level priorities and need and actual performance on the ground. The objectives and activities of the DPMU should be determined by unique needs of the district. In keeping with the true spirit of ‘decentralization’, the analytical cell should take contextual socio-economic, geographical and demographic realities into consideration for planning its roles and activities. This will also contribute to its relevance in the district and in impacting indicators of focus.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Maintain a balance between flexibility and focus on goals</b> – It is important for the institution to maintain flexibility to respond to contextual needs but at the same time ensure that there is no

A. Institutional and Policy Level	
	deviation from the larger objectives and goals. There is, otherwise, a danger of becoming an institution that is overtaken by political or individual priorities. A concurrent annual review of the past year's performance and how it fared against the objectives while at the same taking cognizance of the changing priorities for the year ahead is important. Any shift in focus of the objectives / activities need to be documented with the reason for the shift.

## B. Structural Level

B. Structural Level	
The recommendations in this section relate to action points at the structural level of the analytical cell – towards its human resource organization, deciding objectives and activities and strengthening linkages with stakeholders.	
1.	<b>Staffing of DPMU should remain lean but optimal to work load and human resources should be organized in alignment with core objectives</b> – The number of staff members should be in line with the workload of the analytical cell – while a lean manpower augurs well for efficiency, the staffing should be optimal enough to handle the work load without compromising on the quality of work. The alignment of human resource organization to the core objectives of the analytical cell is crucial. This needs to be done periodically and also in the context of any reprioritization / re-focus in the stated objectives. The position of decentralized planning specialist which has been lying vacant should be filled at the earliest. Further, additional skill sets that may be required should be identified in consultation with district administration and line departments.
2.	<b>Need to formalize linkages with line departments</b> – The analytical cell's partnerships with various government departments are currently based on current incumbency and organic relationships. This needs to be consolidated upon and formalized to ensure sustainability of the relationship, and consequently the analytical cell's role in flagship programmes. The formalization of these linkages can be achieved through memoranda of understanding (MoU) with each of the line departments, or through relevant clauses in the MoU with the district administration that can be ratified by the departments as per standard government protocol.
3.	<b>Need to strengthen linkage with other units of the DPMU</b> – The analytical cell's strong linkages with the Planning and Statistical wings of the DPMU will help facilitate more comprehensive interventions in planning and data generation for decentralization, as well as role rationalization among the three units. This can be initiated through periodic meetings between the cells and also through drawing up a routine set of activities where the analytical cell can support the other cells.
4.	<b>Imperative to create linkages with block level administration</b> – The evaluation observed that the linkage of the analytical cell with administrative levels below the district was very limited / non-existent. While at the initial stages, the role of the analytical cell was conceptualized only as a district level unit, establishing linkage with block level administration will help in better data availability from the ground that will facilitate a more effective decentralized planning.

## C. Operational Level

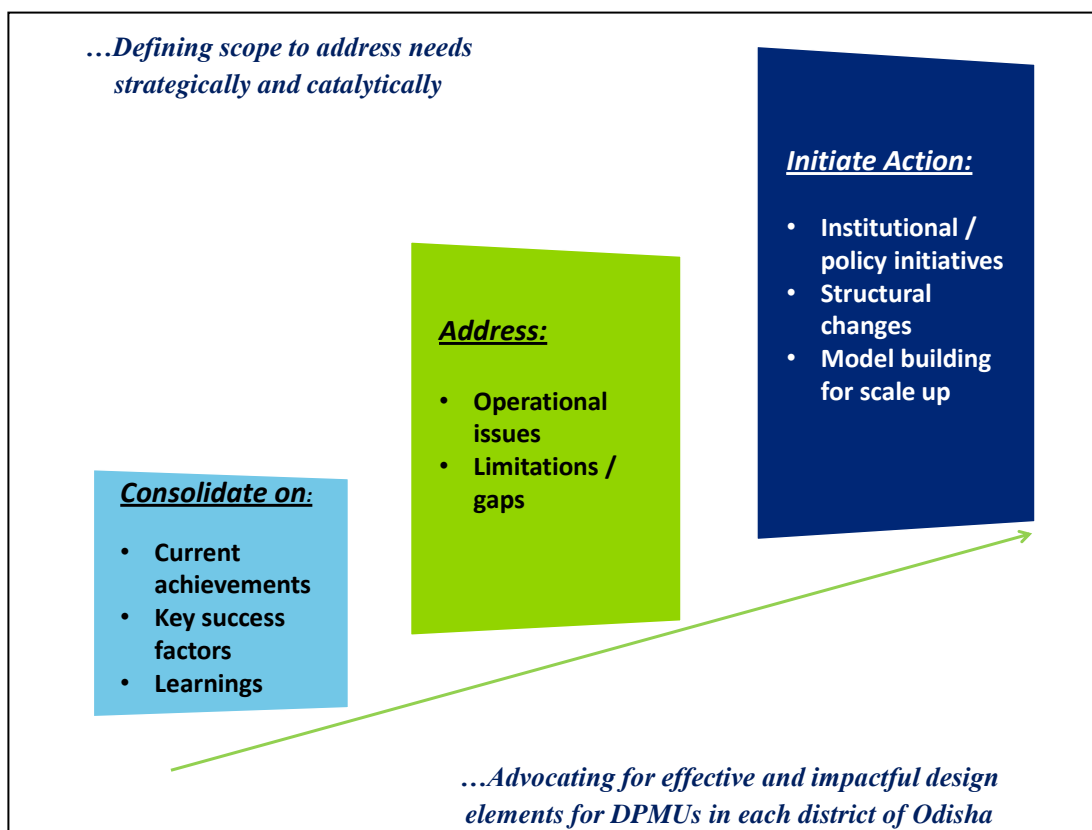
C. Operational Level	
The recommendations in this section pertain to the operational modalities and functioning of the analytical cell to make these more effective and efficient. The areas for action include undertaking strategic reviews to ensure alignment of objectives and activities, and strengthening internal documentation and process reviews.	
1.	<b>Need to make objectives and KRAs specific and undertake strategic reviews to ensure alignment of activities to objectives and goals</b> – There is a need to make objectives and KRAs of the DPMU and its staff more specific and measurable. Defining measurable processes and output indicators will help in providing clarity of expectations and targets to be achieved. Regular strategic reviews will help check fidelity and alignment of activities with core goals and objectives of the analytical cell. This can be done annually to ensure that the activities planned for the year ahead factor in the changing demands and needs as well as any re organization or re prioritization of objectives thereby ensuring that the role of the analytical cell remains relevant.
2.	<b>Need to Strengthen reporting and monitoring mechanisms and strengthen performance reviews</b> – While monitoring and reporting mechanisms have been defined for the analytical cell, they have become informal. As a good practice, it is important to have a formal and rigorous monitoring and reporting system. A robust internal monitoring and evaluation system which provides for various process and output level indicators will help make monitoring more meaningful. This will help in tracking performance and measuring results more clearly and thereby build a stronger system of accountability for performance. In addition, in order to have an internal mechanism of checking the relevance of staff profiles and roles to the overall objectives of the institution, it is important that performance reviews are regularized and formalized as a system.
3.	<b>Undertake formal financial reviews for priority setting</b> – The analytical cell’s processes of budgeting and reporting to UNICEF and the district administration have been strong. In addition a comprehensive financial review can be undertaken factoring in the various program related expenditure for activities undertaken by the analytical cell. Given that most of these activities are currently funded by UNICEF, it will provide the district administration scope for budgeting such activities, evaluation and research studies in the future. This will also help in prioritization (through fund allocation) of activities and utilization under different core areas.
4.	<b>Ensuring an appropriate mix of activities</b> - The activities of the analytical cell should be an ideal mix of routine versus ad hoc activities based on requests from various stakeholders. A list of ‘essential’ activities that should be worked out in consultation with the district administration and line departments and should be updated regularly. The activities should include a list of routine data collation (e.g. fact sheets, district and block level statistical profiles etc.), data updation and monitoring and research initiatives. The periodicity and frequency of these activities also need to be specified. Tracking output level indicators also need to be initialized and streamlined.
5.	<b>Strengthen knowledge management</b> - Besides data, the analytical cell is a knowledge repository of a wealth of systems and methodologies. This knowledge to a large extent rests with individuals. Along with success stories, documenting the methodologies and processes adopted in carrying out various research studies, the sampling rationale used, survey instruments, learning from these studies, challenges etc. will be extremely useful for the analytical cell in the

C. Operational Level	
	future as well as stakeholders in other districts / state keen on replicating the same.
6.	<b>Ensure regular capacity building of staff for knowledge updation</b> – Through bringing in new innovations, models as well as using contemporary data collection and analysis methodologies, staff capacities for data collection and analysis can be updated and strengthened. Periodic investment need to be made on technology / analysis software packages and training on using the software will also help.
7.	<b>Ownership and absorption of activities into the government system</b> – Activities of the analytical cell need to be integrated within the departments and become regular systems. Formal relationships with line departments (recommended above) will contribute to this systematization. A system of formally planning and budgeting by the various flagship programs and line departments for research and support activities to be undertaken by the analytical cell can be initiated.

## The Way Forward

1.6 The analytical cell has made a positive beginning resulting in positive early results. The program offers a sound case for continuation and replication/scale-up. In doing so, it is important to consolidate the current gains and inherent strengths of the programme and act upon the limitations identified in order to ensure that the analytical cell continues to remain relevant, effective, efficient and impactful. The way forward in this context is illustrated in Exhibit 4.4.

**Exhibit 4.4**  
**Way forward for the Analytical Cell**



1.7 The various recommendations and action points can be discussed and finalized by UNICEF, state government and the district administration of Koraput.