

**CHILDREN AND
THE 2004 INDIAN OCEAN
TSUNAMI:**

**Evaluation of UNICEF's
Response in Thailand
(2005-2008)**

**EVALUATION
REPORT**

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Children and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Evaluation of UNICEF's Response in Thailand (2005-2008)

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The independent evaluation of UNICEF's tsunami programmes in Thailand was commissioned by the Evaluation Office at UNICEF Headquarters in New York in collaboration with the Thailand Country Office. It was conducted by engaging an evaluation team led by Alastair Ager (Team Leader), Anne Bernard, Kerry Richter and Pimonpan Isarabhakdi. Krishna Belbase, Senior Evaluation Officer in the Evaluation Office at UNICEF New York Headquarters, managed the evaluation with the involvement of the Thailand Country Office. Editing and formatting of this report was done by Suzanne Lee.

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PREFACE

UNICEF's response in Thailand to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was among one of the most ambitious responses to a natural disaster in a middle income country. There has been very little systematic evaluation of the response in Thailand, especially of the recovery and early development phases. This evaluation is intended to fill this gap by assessing UNICEF's response in Thailand during 2005-2008 using standard evaluation criteria and contributing to the building of organizational knowledge and learning linking emergency response to longer-term recovery and development. The focus of the evaluation is on building back better child protection systems, building back a better education environment, and building back better local capacity to enhance the rights of children; programme areas which were central to UNICEF's response during the recovery phase in Thailand.

To safeguard the objectivity and independence of evaluation, the evaluation was conducted by a team of independent international consultants who were recruited and managed by UNICEF's Evaluation Office. The team of international consultants was supported by national teams who, in turn, supported data collection and analysis. The evaluation benefitted from active engagement of the UNICEF Country Office in Thailand, which provided all necessary country level support required for implementing the evaluation.

The evaluation report is meant for use by the Government of Maldives, United Nations agencies, the broader development community and partners that are interested in learning from the tsunami experience and those who are engaged in supporting development policies and programmes in Thailand. Despite the investments made, considerable effort is still needed to improve the wellbeing of children and women in Thailand and the country remains vulnerable to natural disasters. It is our hope that the forward looking lessons and recommendations presented in this comprehensive evaluation will positively contribute to the strengthening of on-going efforts and to the sustainability of the achievements made. In addition, it is hoped that the evidence and learning from the evaluation will contribute to disaster preparedness planning effort and responding to future emergencies in a variety of contexts.

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The team wishes to note its appreciation of the many people who made time to meet with us during the course of the evaluation, including central and local government officials, teachers, social workers and other professionals, and the many parents, children and other community members who participated in discussions at the locations listed in Annex C.

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ACRONYMS

BBB	Build Back Better
CCC	Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies
CF	Child Friendly
CFS	Child Friendly Schools
CM	Case management
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
CP	Child protection
CPMRS	Child Protection Monitoring and Response System
CPMS	Child Protection Monitoring System
DLA	Department of Local Administration
EAPRO	East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF)
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EDC	Education Development Centre
ESAO	Education Service Area Office(s)
FDC	Family Development Center
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GHREDC	Grassroots Human Rights Education Development Committee
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
LA	Local Authority
LCB	Local Capacity Building
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoE	Ministry of Education
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MST	Multi-Sectoral Team
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NFDC	New Family Development Center
NFE	Nonformal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NT	National Test for Primary Schools
ONESQA	Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment
OSCC	One-Stop Crisis Centre
PD	Positive Discipline
PMTCT	Preventing Mother-to-Child Transmission
RALS	Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces
RTG	Royal Thai Government
SDHS	Social Department of Human Securities
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMIS	School Management Information System
SSA	School Self-Assessment
TAO	Tambon Administrative Office
TRC	Teacher Resource Centre
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UOT	UNICEF Office Thailand
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WES	Water and Environmental Sanitation
YCOWA	Yaung Chi Oo Workers' Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Country Context and Evaluation Rationale

The Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004 caused widespread devastation along much of Thailand's 400-kilometre southern coastline, directly affecting 407 villages and completely destroying 47 of them. About 1.9 million people, including 600,000 children, were affected in six southern provinces—Satun, Trang, Krabi, Phuket, Phang Nga and Ranong.

In January 2005, the UN Inter-Agency Flash Appeal for the tsunami response requested support for Thailand's disaster response and rehabilitation operations for a 6 month period. As part of this effort, UNICEF Thailand appealed for USD \$4.8 million to cover short-term priorities. However, with growing awareness of the needs in tsunami-affected provinces and the potential to 'build back better' appeals were increased and the Global Appeal for Tsunami Response eventually allocated the Thailand country office USD \$21.2 million.

There is very little systematic documentation of the Thailand post-tsunami experience. December 2008 marked the four year anniversary of the tsunami, and a natural milestone to reflect upon strategy and achievements during this period. This includes reflecting on the effectiveness of UNICEF's immediate response to the tsunami and the process of transitioning toward 'mainstreamed' programming work within three core areas: child protection, education and capacity building.

Transitioning from Relief to Recovery to Development

UNICEF's programming before the tsunami focused upon building national-level advocacy for the rights of children and women; and building replicable models at the community level within an integrated participatory framework. Its concentration on those children and communities who were not being well served by mainstream policies and programmes, and doing so aimed at making both the children more visible and solutions more accessible to mainstream policy makers and service providers. This was an appropriate emphasis for a middle-income country.

In the wake of the tsunami the Country Office mobilized a range of activities supporting response in the affected provinces including key logistical support, health and nutrition assistance, water and sanitation, educational provision and psychosocial support. Rapid response was facilitated by deployment of staff into the field and use of innovative modalities such as cash transfers. However, coordination issues proved to be a continuing challenge.

With a strong nationally-led relief effort, UNICEF's responsibility with regard to the Core Commitments to Children (CCCs) soon focused more on monitoring wider social impact issues than on facilitating direct provision. This emphasized documenting and profiling systemic inequalities with regards to the provision to migrant, *Moken* and other excluded communities; and highlighting weaknesses and delays in overall relief efforts.

This led to formulation of the 'build back better' strategy that was informed by two principal drivers: 1) use of existing program approaches that were seen to provide relevant mechanisms to address issues of longer term relevance brought to the forefront by the tsunami; and 2) the conjunction of newly identified needs and unprecedented access to resources that provided the opportunity to create new models and extend approaches adapted from existing agendas. The extension of work in the south thus represented a geographical broadening of UNICEF's scope of operations, rather than a fundamental re-shaping of its strategy.

Building Back Better Child Protection Systems

UNICEF's child protection programming in the tsunami-affected provinces has involved two major strands of work: monitoring placement conditions for separated and orphaned children; and building a child protection monitoring and response system (CPMRS).

The former strand involved a number of discrete, relatively short-term initiatives. These effectively documented needs and provided important information for advocacy purposes regarding the vulnerabilities of orphaned and migrant children. Initiatives did not produce sustained programme development, but were successful in identifying important principles and practices that were of relevance to the wider child protection systems work.

Developing and piloting the CPMRS has been the major investment in the child protection sector in the tsunami-affected provinces. UNICEF strategy has recognized a systems approach as an appropriate means of addressing identified protection risks and a means of developing a model of protection monitoring and response for potential replication on a national scale. Work supporting systems development has greatly raised awareness about child protection in the years since the tsunami. The evaluation found evidence that the chosen approach to child protection systems strengthening is appropriate and coherent, although the separation of monitoring and response elements of the model in its implementation detracts from this coherence.

In terms of the specific elements of the system, the Child Protection Monitoring System (CPMS) potentially provides a sound, rigorous, effective basis for monitoring child protection concerns. Evidence from fieldwork suggests, however, that active supervision is required to maintain the functionality of the monitoring database.

Case managers, the new cadre of staff specified by the CPMRS, represent a key resource for child protection recognized by all stakeholders. However, there were a number of issues that constrained the effectiveness of case managers during the piloting period, and resulted in a minority of tambons¹ continuing with their case manager at completion of the pilot. There are significant governance challenges in the current model of case management that need resolution, including balancing the need for case managers to be appropriately supervised but also to effectively integrate them into work at the tambon level. Recruitment, retention and competence issues are also significant and will need to be resolved to produce a sustainable cadre of case managers. Greater clarity is also required regarding best practice in the connection of other potential elements of the child protection system, including the One-Stop Crisis Centers (OSCCs).

Given national- and provincial- level interest in the system, with secured funding through provincial and international sources, prospects are excellent for short- to medium-term roll-out of the CPMRS model. The potential viability of a CPMRS has been established but the current model requires review in the light of pilot experience to ensure it provides a sustainable platform for nation-wide provision.

Building Back Better Educational Environments

Although not applied previously in the tsunami-affected provinces, a decade of shared experience in evolving the Child-Friendly School (CFS) model served UNICEF and the Ministry well as the backdrop for delivery of tsunami CCC education interventions, and as the framework for transitioning from recovery to the development of a substantively *better* education sector.

Transition from relief through to recovery was relatively seamless. Back-to-school campaigns, creation of secure temporary learning spaces and, eventually, physically stable schools using child-friendly architectural standards enabled near-full enrolment to be confirmed within the year. Transition to longer-term development extended CFS on a province-wide basis by building relevant capacity in all Education Service Area Offices and, progressively, in their schools. Applying a CFS lens in a fairly light-handed approach provided a shared vocabulary among administrators and schools, ensured reasonable ownership and gave schools access to a decade of evidence-based methods, materials and domestic expertise. Inclusion and protection provided the core themes as concepts of child rights were reinforced, teachers

¹ Tambon is a local government unit in Thailand. Below the district and province levels, they form the third administrative subdivision level. Every district contains 8-10 tambons.

were trained in positive discipline, and a series of community-based interventions began to draw in the chronically excluded.

At the same time, however, working at arms-length through the ESAO limited UNICEF's ability to directly influence school practice or manage results. Absence of an initial strategic plan targeting CFS expansion the most vulnerable children weakened its reach to them. The lack of an initial baseline with agreed indicators for tracking outcomes limited CFS's ability to measure change. Without a specific evidence-based CFS strategy developed on the basis of locally generated knowledge and agreed directions, the application of the CFS conceptual framework has been insufficient to bring about change at school level or to institutionalize a self-correcting, child-friendly education *system* at the level of the provinces.

Stronger results in the transition to longer-term development were realized through UNICEF action to bring the southern programme into closer alignment with efforts to consolidate CFS principles and practices in the national policy system in terms of both CFS-oriented policy formulation and implementation. Overall, a more enabling policy environment for Education For All and child rights-based education has been created through development of school CFS-readiness standards and tools for their application; the door of a stronger gender focus has also begun to open. However, this broadening of focus has also risked overly diffused attention to stabilizing gains in the south, and there continues to be shortfalls with respect to exclusion; positive discipline remains only partially applied; use of the cascade model to mobilize school change has not allowed completion of the learning cycle or made sufficient use of CFS as a "whole school" approach. Tools for enabling schools to consolidate and take ownership of the new ideas, especially School Self-Assessment (SSA), remain poorly understood and under-used; School Management Information Systems (SMIS), linked to SSA as a means of fostering a child-seeking school culture, was seen as "helpful" but inconsistently applied.

Relatively few indicators could be tracked from baseline levels to address issues of impact and sustainability. Without widening and targeting action to find and support excluded children on a broader scale, through both formal and nonformal education, and without consistent follow-up of the many capacity development initiatives taken, there was little to suggest significant progress so far. Continued long-term commitment to partnership with the Ministry of Education at policy level, guided by a well-articulated systems development strategy that is underpinned by sustained technical resources and direct links to Education Service Area Offices (ESAO) and schools, will be key to leaving a "CFS footprint" in the tsunami provinces.

Building Back Better Local Capacity

Strengthening local capacity to address the needs of children has been a major theme of UNICEF's work in the tsunami-affected provinces. It has been addressed by two programme strands: aiming to strengthen capacity to develop local authority plans to address issues for children and youth; the other focused on supporting behaviour change initiatives at local level.

Given the mandate of local authorities, improving local processes of children and youth planning is an appropriate focus of programming. A major marker of success is the clear engagement of key Ministry of Interior/Department of Local Administration (MoI/DLA) officials that has been secured by UNICEF for this initiative.

The content of trainings – targeted at equipping multi-disciplinary teams from all 350 tambons across the six tsunami-affected provinces to produce Children and Youth plans that inform the wider local authority plans - was broadly appropriate and appreciated. However, with the multiplicity of trainings provided, the distinctiveness of the initiative was unclear for many interviewees.

Multi-Sectoral Teams (MSTs) currently appear to be a fragile basis for planning activity, with many not yet established and those that are meeting doing so only irregularly. Availability and use of discrete Children and Youth Plans is currently severely limited, with evidence of their production in only 20 percent to 40 percent of tambons.

There is currently little evidence of engagement of children and youth in the development of plans outside of arrangements for public hearings. An audit of available Children and Youth Plans indicates significant strengthening is required to achieve local needs-based planning. Despite modest self-reported increases in allocated expenditures, there is little evidence that the quality of planning for children and youth having been significantly strengthened to date.

UNICEF needs to work to sustain government engagement – at Ministry, Provincial and Local Authority (LA) Executive levels – to secure effective progress in local planning and provision for children and youth. There is, in particular, a need to strengthen monitoring functions and technical support to ensure that MSTs meet, that quality Children and Youth Plans are produced and that these influence budgetary allocations and specified activities within the three-year local authority plans.

In the second strand of programming that focuses on Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) projects at the local level, the initial baseline survey served as a sound basis for defining priorities and target groups. 'Change agents' reportedly appreciated the approach and coverage of trainings provided. The programme provided some examples of best practice in documenting activity and achievement, and elicited a range of innovative local projects in a short timescale.

Projects served to effectively galvanize local people into action and plan for longer-term developments. However, there is a need to more coherently connect initiatives at the local level. This includes integration of BCC project work within wider support for children and youth planning, an evolution that is supported by UNICEF.

Cross-cutting Issues and Wider Lessons

The tsunami response has had a positive impact on the general quality of programming by UNICEF through two major mechanisms. Firstly, it has strengthened staff experience of implementation and coordination. Secondly, it mobilized significant resources for advancing the agenda of 'building replicable models'.

Although the 2006 country Programme of Cooperation between the Royal Thai Government and UNICEF indicates a significant historical track-record of engagement by UNICEF with relevant ministries, the 'intelligence' with which such engagement has been conducted appears to have been enhanced in recent years.

The modalities of UNICEF's programmatic initiatives are appropriately focused on government delivery systems. However, given evidence of the unresponsiveness of such systems to the concerns of children amongst migrant and other marginalized communities (a focus of UNICEF concern, but clearly a long-term agenda) it is important to maintain and extend strategic relationships with non-governmental partners that can support and highlight the needs of the most vulnerable.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) survey has proved a valuable source of reliable and relevant data for planning purposes. Commitment to regular surveys will valuably strengthen capacities for monitoring.

There are strong grounds for attributing the prominent awareness of children's rights amongst a wide range of stakeholders to activities initiated or supported by UNICEF. In contrast, there was much less evidence of awareness shown of gender issues, both in programming materials and in discussions with stakeholders.

Across each of the sectoral program areas addressed by this review – education, child protection and local capacity development – we identified weaknesses in monitoring and technical support. There was frequent ambiguity in the role of government partners in receiving, and responding to, reports on program progress.

A significant portion of the work in tsunami-affected provinces in the south has been explicitly directed to developing new systems and models of working for potential replication and

scaling-up in the rest of Thailand. Such work is generally weakly theorized in systems terms. Programmes tend to be conceptualized as a stream of activities with little in the way of rigorous monitoring to promptly identify systems challenges and solve them. In programme management terms, the management of activities is strong, but that of assumption and risk relatively weak.

Misunderstandings of UNICEF strategy and motivation were frequently encountered in the course of fieldwork, suggesting the potential of clearer 'messaging' to key stakeholders, including to UNICEF staff. Strengthening communication and engagement between sectoral teams would usefully support greater integration of programming.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions: Addressing the DAC Criteria

Relevance UNICEF actions during the post-tsunami period were generally consistent in showing commitment to determining *evidence of need* and *strategic purpose*. Most were preceded by situational assessment and defined within the Country Plan. Engagement with children in shaping strategic agendas and programmes was not prominent, suggesting greater attention could be paid to identifying the expressed priorities of children.

Effectiveness: The Core Commitments for Children were clearly met and mobilized in an effective transition to recovery response. Subsequent programmatic activity focused on infrastructure, training and systems development. *Infrastructure* investments established considerably improved school sanitation facilities but raised questions of cost-effectiveness with respect to maintenance and replicability. *Training activities* were well executed and received based on their generally strong contents, but were weakened through use of cascade methods. Models adopted within a *systems development framework* were potentially effective mechanisms to address identified needs; however, there was as yet limited evidence of their institutionalization.

Impact: There was as yet no strong evidence of impact due to the relatively recent introduction of programmes, the time required to institutionalize systemic change and the absence of routine data collection. Proxy indicators, however, indicated progress toward impacts: parents valued the CFS initiative, reporting positive change in children's capacity; tambon officials noted increased awareness of child protection issues; and case managers appreciated the effectiveness of monitoring and response systems. Taken together, such data suggest progress is being made toward targeted changes in children's well-being. Specification of indicators and systematic data collection will be needed to provide confirmation of their being achieved.

Coverage: Appropriately, UNICEF and partners focused on areas directly affected by the tsunami in the emergency phase. Equally appropriate was the policy decision to designate all communities within the six provinces as 'tsunami-affected' as a means of broadening coverage to the entire population and reinforce a 'systems development' strategy toward scaling-up interventions. In practice, however, 'pilot' and 'staged' approaches to programming have resulted in partial coverage, though province-wide adoption of the CPMS system in Ranong indicates how successful demonstration can encourage wider adoption.

Efficiency: Spending was greatest across all sectors in 2007, suggesting the length of time it took to fully establish programme strategies and modalities. The basis of inter-sectoral prioritization of expenditure was somewhat unclear. Funding to education was the largest across the sectors, with potential absorptive capacity seemingly a key consideration. Increased allocation to work in child protection and local capacity development as innovations in approach and targets, however, would have supported more robust institutionalized change at the local level and thus more efficiently established a proven systems model for national adoption.

Sustainability: There is reasonable evidence to suggest achieved gains will prove sustainable. UNICEF strategies have connected with appropriate ministries and national

institutions; explicitly engaged provincial and sub-district levels; and have been generally consistent with governmental policy priorities. Momentum has also been achieved through commitment and reliability of key individuals within partner agencies and units. Strengthening the cadre of such leaders will be key to supporting sustainable change in policy, strategy and services.

Recommendations

For Government and Partners:

a) Establish a fixed annual schedule for disaster preparedness training. This should be planned and coordinated in line with established cluster roles and Department of Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation priorities, and include codes of conduct governing treatment of and access to children in both the general and sector-based context of emergencies.

b) Select a sub-group of schools for particular and comprehensive action on issues of inclusion, focusing of children at risk from marginalization both within the school and in being excluded from it. It should build, where possible, from the base already established by the ECD programme.

c) Strengthen review processes regarding local planning for children and youth. The MoI, with support from UNICEF, should establish a formal annual review of tambon plans and approved expenditure for children's and youth activities, and provincial office audits of submitted Children and Youth Plans.

For the Thailand Country Office:

a) Conduct a review of the model of the child protection system to be promoted for national roll-out, involving both stakeholder feedback and an organizational systems perspective that incorporates an understanding of administrative and managerial processes and HR issues of recruitment and retention.

b) Establish operations research capacity in a small number of tambons. The focus should be on establishing ways for enabling greater synergy between child protection, and local capacity building and education; and identifying how existing systems and processes at sub-district level can be optimally augmented and revised to support planned activities.

c) Promote the value of, and methods for, engagement with children and youth as a more explicit element of UNICEF planning processes and the planning processes of government and other partners. This would build on some of the best practice demonstrated in the context of commissioned work on placement conditions of separated and migrant children and in BCC projects.

d) Confirm directives and develop skills for conducting RALS in emergency situations, with a particular focus on differentially affected children. This should include analyses of the overall situation for children and availability of safe and learning-oriented spaces, give attention to children who may be specifically at risk, and generate baseline measures against which progress on the relief-recovery-development transition can be assessed.

e) Consider means to strengthen influence in the south if the intention is to do more than advocate CFS. This recognizes that mentoring at school and ESAO level will be needed until coherent action is established and that closure of the Phuket office may require alternative mechanisms for active, sustained engagement.

f) For all work targeting 'systems development', more clearly identify necessary mechanisms of monitoring and technical support. Where these are not within current government capacity, set in place clear arrangements need for contracting such support.

g) Continue and extend efforts to strategically identify partners outside of government (particularly with regard to the strategic goal of securing more inclusive education) as

a means of enabling UNICEF's more active reach to excluded children and support to development of more effective approaches for eventual system uptake.

h) Adopt a more strategic approach to putting issues of gender on the programming agenda, including tracking and extending development of existing initiatives and their adaptation within the policies and programmes of other ministries.

i) Develop a more proactive communications strategy for field-partner. For example, through briefing papers shared on a regular basis updating partners on UNICEF's work and evolving commitments.

j) Establish clearer mechanisms for integration across sectoral teams within the Country Office by establishing an internal cross-sectoral working group to consider common challenges and potential strategies for establishing new or revised systems in public service provision.

For UNICEF Headquarters and Partners:

a) Share learning on systems development by commissioning distillations of best practice in systems innovation and scale-up across middle-income settings to inform country programming strategy in such work.

b) Recognize the inherent responsibility and capacity of national governments, systems and communities to manage their own relief and recovery process. This implies that UNICEF's responsibility for the CCC focus on ensuring that its own structures and systems facilitate effective and efficient local action and avoid undermining, contradicting or duplicating effective and efficient local action.

c) Plan a more complete emergency response to include tailored rapid assessments and strategic interventions, as well as a context specific development-oriented strategic analysis and action plans. Such a response should be congruent with, and make use of, the technical resources and experience of UNICEF's broader country strategy, but evolve separately from these on the basis of locally relevant and appropriate action and local participation.

d) Avoid the temptation of efficiency over effectiveness in promoting CFS, focusing on a capacity development, participatory and whole-school approach, tailored to and with the children concerned rather than the creation of a sturdy, standardized and easily delivered "package".

1. COUNTRY CONTEXT AND EVALUATION APPROACH

1.1 Thailand Country Profile and the 2004 Tsunami

Thailand is a middle income country located in Southeast Asia that has achieved a great deal of social and economic progress in recent decades. Its GNI per capita of USD \$3,400 places it in the World Bank's "lower middle" income category. Infant mortality has dropped 50 percent in the past 15 years to a rate of 7 per 1,000 births. Other major achievements have included a rise in immunization coverage to above 90 percent, access to an improved water source at 98 percent and universal primary school enrollment.

However, these achievements tend to overshadow the fact that economic development has not had a uniformly positive effect on all indicators of child welfare. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) conducted by UNICEF in 2005-06 found that Thailand had one of the lowest levels of exclusive breastfeeding in the world and that one in ten children under the age of five was underweight.²

Moreover, several groups have been left behind in Thailand's rapid economic development. These include ethnic minorities, migrants, and refugees, many of whom do not have the basic rights accorded by full Thai citizenship. An estimated one million children of primary school age either do not go to primary school or enroll years late. Nearly one million children do not have birth registration documents.

While the northeast is generally considered to be the poorest region in the country and the south to be one of the highest income regions, there has been growing recognition that children in the south face critical health and education issues as well. Pockets of poverty, affecting the general population as well as the high number of migrants and ethnic minorities in some areas, contribute to these findings. The MICS found that the south had the highest rate of malnourishment for children under age five (13 percent) and one of the highest percentages of infants with low birth weight (9 percent). It also has the lowest percentage of access to an improved water source at 82 percent and the lowest rates of improved sanitation facilities (97 percent). In terms of education, the south has the lowest attendance of all regions both for children attending early childhood education programs (54 percent) and for secondary school (72 percent).

1.2 The Impact of the Tsunami

The Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004 caused widespread devastation along much of Thailand's 400-kilometre southern coastline, directly affecting 407 villages and completely destroying 47 of them. About 1.9 million people, including 600,000 children, were affected in six southern provinces—Satun, Trang, Krabi, Phuket, Phang Nga and Ranong.

The tsunami was Thailand's worst natural disaster in recent history, causing significant loss of life, destruction of the environment (including coral reefs, marine and coastal habitats, and water sources) and loss of livelihoods. The total financial impact of the tsunami is estimated at more than USD \$2 billion, making Thailand the second-most affected country in financial terms.



² Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women: Thailand Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey December 2005-February 2006. Thailand NSO and UNICEF, 2006.

Table 1.1 Directly Affected Areas and Number of Deaths, Casualties, and Orphans by Province³

Province	Directly Affected Areas		Dead	Injured	Missing	Children Missing One or Both Parents
	District	Sub-District				
Krabi	5	19	721	1,376	544	136
Phang	6	14	4,225	5,597	1,655	587
Nga	3	14	279	1,111	608	195
Phuket	3	9	159	246	9	100
Ranong	3	9	6	15	N/A	13
Satun	3	9	5	112	1	23
Trang						
Total	23	74	5,395	8,457	2,817	1,449*

* This number includes children outside of the six affected provinces and has been subject to revision in follow-up work.

In January 2005, the UN Inter-Agency Flash Appeal for the tsunami response requested USD \$12.2 million to support Thailand's disaster response and rehabilitation operations for a 6 months period. As part of this effort, UNICEF Thailand appealed for USD \$4.8 million for the first 6 months and in March 2005 revised this upwards to over USD \$11 million for the year. These numbers were exceeded as the overwhelming success of the Global Appeal for Tsunami Response gave the Thailand country office funding of USD \$21.2 million in total.

The development of UNICEF's response in the months following the tsunami is marked by two key strategy documents. In late February 2005 the 'Tsunami Relief and Recovery and Reconstruction' strategy paper noted:

"...the relief phase is already largely over. UNICEF....must now define its longer term role in recovery and reconstruction [for children] in the tsunami affected areas.... Gaps in the rights of these children existed even before tsunami and there are many underlying causes for this that must be addressed if their situation is to improve." (p. 1)

UNICEF committed to an 'accelerated regular programme approach' to address such needs. Tsunami funding was allocated to activities in child protection, emergency education, water and environmental sanitation, multi-sectoral relief support for local authorities (including health and nutrition and cash transfers), HIV/AIDS and communications, monitoring and analysis, and operations and logistical support.

This move towards addressing prevailing social issues revealed through engagement with the tsunami-affected provinces was formally consolidated in a second strategy paper, 'Tsunami Build Back Better' in November 2005. This paper endorsed the earlier analysis, and signalled UNICEF's continued engagement across the above areas of work. However, on the basis of both identified needs and the potential to have accelerated impact on national programming and policy influence, there was a commitment to focus investment in three key programmatic areas: child protection, education and the development of local capacity to address the needs of vulnerable children. These were the three core programming areas where the balance of tsunami-related funding was focused for the following three years.

During the recovery period, emphasis was given to the most vulnerable children including those in poor and remote Thai communities, ethnic minority communities and migrant communities – all identified as both having poorer socioeconomic status before the tsunami and as missing out on assistance during the relief phase. During the recovery period UNICEF

³ United Nations Country Team (2006). Thailand One Year Later: National Responses and Contribution of International Partners. Bangkok, United Nations; National Disaster Warning Center, MOI. <http://61.19.54.131/tsunami/index.php?pack=overall>

fully mainstreamed the tsunami response into its regular programme approach using the new country programming exercise carried out in 2005 and 2006. The six tsunami-affected provinces are now among the twenty-five priority provinces for the country Programme of Cooperation agreed between Thailand and UNICEF for the period 2007 to 2011. Additional efforts have been made to:

- a) Reduce the disparities between the situation of children in those priority provinces and the rest of the country. Including the tsunami-affected provinces in the 25 priority provinces for the country programme and adopting an accelerated regular programme approach ensures continuation and completion of work to build back better for children in tsunami-affected areas.
- b) Learn from the build back better initiatives to inform decision-making in other parts of the country, through other aspects of the regular programme, especially in education, child protection and local capacity building.
- c) Work with its partners to put the needs and rights of children in tsunami-affected provinces more clearly on the local development agenda by advocating for increased investment in children and influencing local development plans.

1.3 Evaluation Rationale & Approach

The importance of documenting the tsunami experience in Thailand through a systematically planned evaluation arises from several motivations. Lessons learned exercises were carried out in early 2005 and again in late 2005, and although several component evaluations, assessments and studies have been completed, including a self-assessment of the country office's adherence to the Core Commitment to Children (the CCCs), no formal evaluation of UNICEF tsunami response in Thailand as a whole and through a more integrated analysis has yet been conducted.⁴ Thailand is a middle income country with a thriving private sector and limited dependence on external support. The country remains vulnerable to natural disasters and apart from an assessment of UNICEF's performance in responding to the tsunami, the evaluation will generate lessons and document good practices that are relevant for Thailand and similar situations. There is very little systematic documentation of the Thailand experience and demand for such an evaluation has also been highlighted by the recent tsunami audit carried out by the Office of Internal Audit in May 2008.

In 2007 the Evaluation Office conducted the first phase of this evaluation exercise comprising a pre-tsunami to post-tsunami situation assessment and literature review.⁵ The current evaluation comprises Phase 2 of the Evaluation Office-led exercise which includes the final round of evaluations in tsunami countries. The country office contributed to the first phase and is contributing to this second phase, as well as the major/final evaluation of UNICEF response in Thailand.

December 2008 marked the four year anniversary of the tsunami, and a natural milestone to reflect upon strategy and achievements during this period. Given the above history, this not only includes reflecting on the effectiveness of UNICEF's immediate response to the tsunami and the process of transitioning toward 'mainstreamed' programming work. It also involves consideration of progress in the chosen programming areas and the extent to which, with hindsight, such progress represents a valuable investment – in terms of programming outcomes and policy development - in promoting child well-being in Thailand.

Such reflection is clearly of relevance to the development of UNICEF's country strategy for Thailand (for example, in advance of the scheduled mid-term review of 2009). But it also potentially informs wider consideration of the role of UNICEF in middle-income country settings, where natural disaster may provide opportunities for differing forms of engagement than possible during a period of regular (non-emergency) cooperation.

⁴ However, an external audit looked at UNICEF-Thailand's immediate response and adherence to CCCs.

⁵ Yongpanichkul et al, 2007. Document Review on the Status of Affected and Comparable Non-affected Populations Before and After the 2004 Tsunami in Sectors of UNICEF's Work. Bangkok: UNICEF.

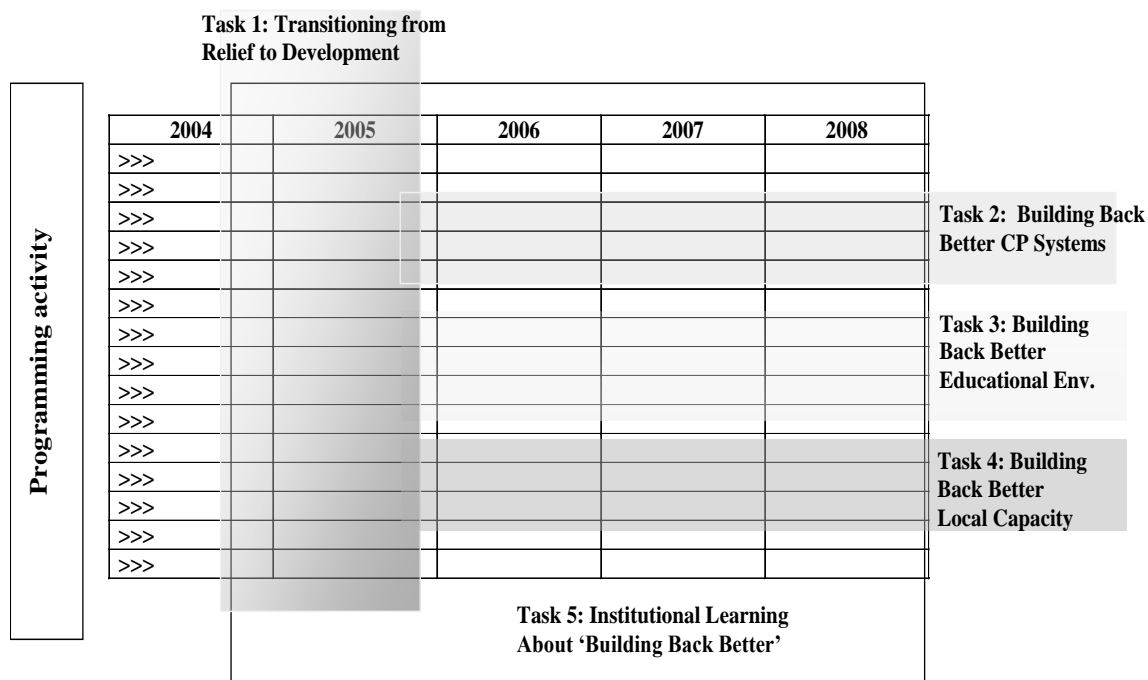
The evaluation was structured according to the following objectives:⁶

1. Determine the extent to which UNICEF’s overall response to tsunami was adequate and relevant considering UNICEF’s Core Commitments to Children and comparative advantage in Thailand.
2. Examine the overall achievement and effectiveness, efficiency, coverage/impact, sustainability, and replicability of UNICEF’s response (including advocacy, communication, and partnership/social mobilization aspects) with main focus on education, child protection and local/district capacity development components.
3. Provide recommendations for further strengthening UNICEF’s on-going Programme of Cooperation in Thailand to further achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and child rights in Thailand focusing particularly on tsunami affected and similar disadvantaged and vulnerable areas and population groups.
4. Contribute to the building of organizational knowledge and learning linking emergency response to the long-term recovery and development by identifying lessons learned and good practices during the tsunami response, especially focusing on recovery/transition programming.

The scope of the evaluation was defined with respect to five discrete but related tasks, depicted in Figure 1.1. Task 1 focused on the period from the tsunami itself to the formalization of the ‘Build Back Better’ strategy in November 2005, addressing the context of existing country programme strengths and gaps for emergency response and the transitioning of response from relief to development. Tasks 2, 3 and 4 then took a detailed look at the major programming strands established in the tsunami-affected provinces that grew out of this earlier response, reviewing the progress of programming in the areas of child protection, education and local capacity development from late 2005 to December 2008.

Task 5 retained a strategy-wide focus, considering key cross-cutting issues identified in the ‘Build Back Strategy’, such as reaching the most vulnerable (e.g. migrants, and ethnic minorities), and broader strategic objectives of enhancing advocacy and policy influence through accelerated programme development. This task also considered wider institutional lessons for UNICEF Thailand and other stakeholders and settings.

Figure 1.1: Five Key Tasks Defined the Scope of Evaluation



⁶ Terms of Reference for the evaluation are given in Annex A.

The evaluation utilized both secondary analysis in the form of document review and primary data collection. A number of documentary sources existed relevant to the evaluation questions. These included field situation reports from the relief period; national and regional reports on the relief effort, a range of organizational strategy and meeting reports from the transition period, and routine annual reports. Several commissioned studies and evaluations were also available from the period. Interpretation of documentation was supplemented by interviews with UNICEF staff and external stakeholders across the sectoral areas of focus. This involved over 30 key informant interviews in Bangkok and by telephone through the period August 2008 to March 2009.

Primary data collection was used to investigate the perspective of key beneficiaries of programmes in the education, child protection and local capacity building sectors since the relief period. Fieldwork was conducted in three of the six tsunami affected provinces: Ranong, Phang Nga and Krabi. The provinces were selected to be broadly representative of the affected area, although each of the provinces faced distinct challenges. Phang Nga and Krabi were two of the provinces most directly and immediately impacted by the tsunami, and were selected for inclusion on that basis. Ranong, while not as severely affected by the physical impact of the tsunami, contains a high number of migrant children and was the major site for the pilot provincial model for child protection monitoring and response.

Focus group discussions, group interviews and one-on-one interviews were the qualitative methods used in the fieldwork in the south, as described in more detail at the beginning of the appropriate section in this report. Each sector was included in the fieldwork for each province, with stakeholders drawn from the provincial, district, sub-district and community level. In total, between August 2008 and January 2009, 19 focus group discussions, 17 group interviews and 4 individual interviews were conducted across 40 tambons, with questions structured according to an evaluation matrix developed during the inception period (see Annexes B and C).

2. TRANSITIONING FROM RELIEF TO RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Key Questions and Methods

In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami and in the transition through 2005 to the implementation of the 'Build Back Better' strategy, three themes guided development of the analysis of these actions. These focused on understanding what and how well UNICEF did in first responding to the tsunami, moving quickly to recovery and later making the shift to a development agenda. The first established the organizational and programming context of UNICEF prior to the tsunami, and served as a form of a baseline to note the particular programming strengths available for action in the relief phase and, conversely, any aspects of policy or programming that led to gaps in response, or slowed effective transition to recovery. Secondly, "telling the story" defined UNICEF's thinking and action in responding to the tsunami in terms of meeting the requirements of the Core Commitments to Children. Thirdly, an appraisal of the relevance and appropriateness of UNICEF strategic thinking as it made the relief to recovery and development transition was undertaken.

The principal sources of data for these analyses were UNICEF Thailand's policy, planning and reporting documents, triangulated where possible by reports from other agencies and interviews with those directly involved with the tsunami relief and recovery work. This included current and former UNICEF officers, key national partners and some local government implementers. The documentary base for such analysis was extensive in both number and detail. Given the time elapsed since this period, however, many that filled key roles were no longer available. Those that were available gave general accounts of actions, rather than a detailed rationale.

2.2 Programming Baseline December 2004

The 2002-2006 Country Programme of Cooperation (CPC) between the Royal Thai Government and UNICEF worked through two main approaches: national-level advocacy for the rights of children and women, and building replicable models at the community level within an integrated participatory framework. Geographically, UNICEF worked in 18 priority provinces: 7 in the north, 8 in the northeast and 3 in the south. Priority provinces in the north were selected to address the high incidence of HIV/AIDS and the presence of vulnerable groups such as the Hill Tribes; those in the northeast were selected because of its relative poverty and discriminatory attitudes towards girls. Target provinces in the south were those affected by poverty and conflict, and included only the poverty areas of urban Phuket among those areas that were later hit by the tsunami.

Although a geographically wide-spread configuration, it was a fairly tight in policy terms and focused on equity: reducing disparity for marginalized and disadvantaged groups and the urban poor; human rights: advocating for child rights and gender equality; and sustainability: increasing local capacity; and community-based solutions. Key partnerships tended to be those likely to promote sustainability: local government, largely meaning the Tambon Administrative Offices (TAOs); the Department of Local Administration (DLA) in the Ministry of Interior (MoI); the Ministries of Education (MoE) and Public Health (MoPH); the Thai Red Cross and Thai National Coalition on AIDS; and the larger universities with good outreach. In these aspects, the CPC appeared to be particularly appropriate to the context of a middle-income country in its concentration on those children and communities who were not being well served by mainstream policies and programmes. The CPC was also doing so in ways aimed at making both the children more visible and solutions more accessible to mainstream policy makers and service providers.

While the policy priorities of the CPC were reasonably well focused, it was implemented through four core areas that, in terms of activities, were more diffuse. *Child Protection and Development* provided support to strengthen local authority, family and community capacities to realize child rights through four, apparently fairly separate programming streams: *integrated family development* included local capacity building and support for Family

Development Centers at the tambon level; *HIV/AIDS* focused on prevention among youth, PMTCT⁷, support for children living with HIV/AIDS and capacity development for government and NGOs; *basic education* facilitated institutionalization of the Child Friendly School initiative at central level and supported its delivery to at risk in- and out-of-school children; *child protection* intervened on a wide range of issues including support to early warning and monitoring systems to detect child abuse, assistance to victims of abuse and exploitation, improvement of the juvenile justice system and prevention of hazardous child labor. The total 5-year budget for Child Protection and Development was USD \$10.7 million, about two-thirds of the total CPC budget.

The three remaining programmes included: *Promotion of Child Rights and Disparity Reduction*, advocating for child friendly laws, policies and programmes; *Social Policy Analysis and Monitoring Goals*, combining monitoring and evaluation with planning through ChildInfo and DevInfo software to track indicators measured by the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS); and *Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries*, supporting the sharing of Thai experience in all programming areas with developing country partners.

The CPC Mid-Term Review (MTR), conducted in mid-2004, concluded that while good progress was being made, a more strategic focus was needed. The CPC was “trying to do too many things in too many places”. It also pointed to a lack of shared vision across programme areas, a function of an overly ‘project-based’ approach. Thus, for example, the policy priorities on addressing the most vulnerable and pursuing integrated community-based approaches were not being incorporated in all areas. In particular, gender issues were seen to be included neither systematically nor consistently in all cases. The Mid-term Review (MTR) went on to urge more joint planning, and implementation to address these gaps and refocus the emphases; action to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of progress on the status of children and women at national and sub-national levels; and extraction of lessons from all programme activity. All of these were intended to apply to interventions in the south as well as in the rest of the country. By the time of the tsunami a few months later, however, evidence suggests that much of what the MTR described as challenges to “coherent, comprehensive programme intervention” still remained.

Table 2.1 indicates the budget levels by major programme area for the 2002-06 period,⁸ summarizing the baseline of investments being made by UNICEF at the time of the tsunami. 2007-11 Country Programme investments, which do not include expenditure in the tsunami-affected provinces for 2007 and 2008, are noted for comparison purposes, and are discussed further in section 2.4.

⁷ Protection of mother-to-child transmission of HIV

⁸ This does not reflect budget expansion, subsequent to the tsunami, through 2008.

Table 2.1: UNICEF Budget for the 2002-2006 and 2007-2011 Periods

	2002-2006		2007-2011	
	USD\$ 1000s	Percent	USD\$ 1000s	Percent
Child Protection & Dev: Integrated Family Development	1,838	11.1	-	-
Child Protection & Dev: HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care	3,352	20.2	5,750	20.9
Child Protection & Dev: Education	2,200	13.3	4,550	16.5
Child Protection & Dev: Child Protection Promotion of Child Rights and Disparity Reduction	3,300	19.9	5,950	21.6
Local Capacity Building	2,600	15.7	-	-
Advocacy and Social Mobilization	-	-	1,600	5.8
Social Policy Analysis and Monitoring the Goals	-	-	4,650	16.9
Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries	2,610	15.8	4,300	15.6
Future Cooperation Entity	470	2.8	-	-
Cross Sectoral Cost	-	-	450	1.6
	195	1.2	250	0.9
Total	\$16,565	100.0	\$27,500	100.0

2.3 Emergency Response: Meeting the Core Commitments to Children in the first 60 days

First response: 26 December-6 January

The tsunami struck in the morning of 26 December 2004. The following summary of UNICEF action in the first two weeks of the disaster illustrates how the CCCs were met and how early assessments led to subsequent programming.

UNDAC sent a rapid assessment team to the south including one UNICEF officer on the 30th of December with particular attention to children injured, separated from parents or orphaned. By then, UNICEF Thailand had already dispatched 30 trained child rights volunteers to address children's food, clothing, health and sanitation needs as well as 5 specialist pediatricians and 5 nurses to provide psycho-social care and support. A Communications advance team was also sent.⁹ By the 2 January 2005, five additional UNICEF teams were on the ground, including one with UNICEF Regional Office advisors, for a total of 15 UNICEF staff.¹⁰

Special attention was focused from the beginning on addressing children's trauma and re-opening schools as soon as possible. School supplies, including books and sports equipment, were procured within the first five days; psychosocial support programmes were incorporated into actions to put child-friendly learning spaces into place. More thorough assessments of children's needs were planned.

Almost immediately, there were reports of Myanmar families being denied aid in the camps¹¹ and that Thai families were resentful of the migrants receiving aid for fear that there would not be enough for Thai families. There were also rumors of Myanmar migrants stealing, leading to some being forced out of the camps.¹² In Phang Nga, where the devastation was the

⁹ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 2

¹⁰ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 3

¹¹ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 4

¹² Interview, former UNICEF staff.

heaviest, the assessment team reported that Thai authorities had sent all Myanmar migrants to Ranong where many were repatriated to Myanmar. A temporary camp was set up in Ranong for Myanmar migrant workers and families with about 500 people (40% children) by 1-January.¹³ All of this served to bring the precarious situation of these groups into the open, giving agencies like UNICEF a particular frame of reference in terms of filling gaps in government action on the CCC.

By year's end, it was recognized that children made up about one-third of the dead. Those from remote areas and islands were being targeted as at most risk of being separated from their parents or orphaned. Plans were made to field psychosocial support teams by 3 January, 2005.

There appeared to be some confusion in status reporting. UNICEF assessment teams issued daily situation analyses, in all provinces but Phang Nga reporting a major and urgent need for psychosocial counseling and support, and either no or minor problems with health, nutrition, water or sanitation. On the other hand, reports also noted that children in the camps were suffering from respiratory diseases, diarrhea and skin infection; and assessment teams recommended measles vaccinations and Vitamin A capsules for children.

“We were supposed to do an assessment, but really I didn't know how to do that; we just followed our common sense. There was a lot of confusion at the beginning.” (UNICEF Child Protection Officer)

“Mostly we worked to identify gaps in the humanitarian intervention, and to assure that all communities would receive support. There were a lot of assessments, visiting hospitals, refugee camps.” (UNICEF Child Protection Officer)

By 3 January, 2005, UNICEF had plans to deploy six teams of public health staff to identify and assist children suffering from trauma. They also carried out capacity building activities to train community social workers and teachers on dealing with traumatized children.¹⁴ UNICEF supported World Vision/Thailand to provide assistance for migrant workers and their families in Ranong.

Problems continued to be identified in the situation of migrants. The EAPRO team reported that no Burmese families were at the camps in Phang Nga, although many had been living there before the tsunami. Reports of their being bused to Ranong were explained by Thai authorities as voluntary, as was their repatriation to Myanmar. Elsewhere, teams were reporting problems with coordination of critical supplies such as infant formula in camps with migrant children. All of these cases appeared to reflect a more serious systemic condition of exclusion for these communities:

“When we arrived at beginning the migrant children were in the camps along with the rest of the population affected, but then they had to flee because humanitarian assistance was denied and they were accused of stealing by Thais. There are different categories of migrants—legal with identification vs. not; refugees vs. not. For the illegal migrants it was very difficult to find them and deliver services—and to protect them from abuse and trafficking. There was some official and some nonofficial deportation by the Thai government and police.”(UNICEF Child Protection Officer)

¹³ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 6

¹⁴ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 7

For the mainstream community and its children, however, progress on the CCCs was being made quickly. Schools re-opened on 4 January, including two damaged schools in Phang Nga that opened with temporary classrooms. While UNICEF teams reported a continuing need for proper coordination, enhanced water and sanitation, and vitamin A, they also noted enough capacity on the ground to address these issues¹⁵ and the government response was expressly shifting from recovery to rehabilitation and reconstruction.

That said, whether due to poor reporting or improved counting, the status of children left on their own or orphaned continued to be confused, a critical concern in terms of CCC action. On 5 January, the Royal Thai Government (RTG) stated the number of single-parent orphans as 276 and two-parent orphans as 19; these mostly in Phang Nga. As of 6 January, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security reported 328 registered orphans in the six provinces; 29 two-parent and 299 one-parent orphans.¹⁶

By the second week of January, the estimated number of children affected by the tsunami was some 50,000¹⁷. UNICEF had disbursed USD \$910,000 to the affected provinces and was actively pursuing a range of CCC-focused interventions. Its teams were continuing to report finding displaced families not receiving adequate support and adding them to lists of those to receive assistance. It was distributing core staples: food, measles vaccinations and vitamin A. It was beginning systematically to estimate the number of children needing psychosocial support; supporting psychologists to work with teachers and children at schools, and had produced and distributed a booklet on helping children affected by disaster. UNICEF continued to supply uniforms, materials and toys to encourage attendance, since only about half of children had returned when schools re-opened on 4 January. It also continued to assist schools in maintaining a record of those still missing. An international WES consultant was contracted to address the need in most schools for better quality and more child-friendly sanitation facilities. Particularly important for both the immediate and longer term, it had also begun working with the government to develop measures to prevent child trafficking, including setting up a registration system.

Continuing Response: Weeks 3-8

UNICEF's activities during this period continued to extend CCC implementation. It initiated the Psychosocial First Aid programme (details below); provided water purification units; assessed the situation for migrants and the *Moken* communities still not receiving government aid; and pressed the situation of children with the media. It also provided support to construction of temporary homes. "Back-to-school" support continued to be emphasized, including construction of temporary schools, scholarships for orphaned children and salary support for some teachers, learning materials/books and computers, information booklets and sport/play equipment to help children cope with grief.

UNICEF also gave cash grants to families with orphans disbursed through cash transfers directly to and through sub-district offices (TAO). As a way to avoid delay, cash transfers were increasingly being used in emergencies by donors and UN agencies, and were found to have no more problems with corruption than in-kind transfers¹⁸. In the Thai case, UNICEF cash transfers were seen as effective, and got relief to families much more quickly than did government efforts.¹⁹

¹⁵ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 8

¹⁶ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 12

¹⁷ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 9

¹⁸ "In Sri Lanka and Thailand, the method of funding post-tsunami cash transfer activities was straightforward. In both cases, UNICEF transferred money to the local government authorities who then distributed it to eligible children or households. This process was reportedly not a problem for UNICEF operations in either the Sri Lanka or Thailand Country Office. However, it was done on a small scale and was not a significant part of UNICEF's tsunami response in either country." *Gore, R, Cash Transfers in Emergencies*, p. 41.

¹⁹ Interview, UNICEF staff.

Meeting the CCC in a middle-income country

As indicated below, UNICEF's activities, mobilized within the framework of the CCCs, were quite extensive.

- Immediate contribution of 100,000 USD to Ministry of Foreign Affairs for logistics and coordination.
- Essential "Facts For Life" health and nutrition information distributed to 300,000 people, including 50,000 children.
- Psychosocial counseling by teams of experts for thousands of children.
- School attendance protected for 2,000 children through temporary classrooms, education grants, transport for children living in shelters, school repairs and school clean up campaigns.
- Water supply and sanitation upgraded for 12 temporary schools and for 2,000 families in 22 temporary shelters, including purification equipment, latrines and drainage.
- Emergency support to 15 districts for multi-sector action in shelter, food, health, nutrition, education, HIV/AIDS and child care practices/information, such as assessment and monitoring visits to vulnerable children and families.
(*Tsunami Thailand: One Year Later* p.47)

At the same time, it is important to note that most of the basic needs referenced by the CCCs were actually met by the Royal Thai Government (RTG): humanitarian relief was provided; monitoring systems for orphans were set up; and there was no immediate danger of threats to public health or malnutrition. UNICEF rapid assessments identified water and sanitation needs, but the Thai Red Cross and other organizations were also providing aid in that area. Electric power was restored quickly and the generators that UNICEF had procured and sent to the area went unused (although they were subsequently re-assigned for use over the longer term).²⁰

Where UNICEF did make important contributions to the national relief effort, again presumably drawing from its base within the CCC framework, was in two areas: in documenting and profiling the systemic inequalities in the region, both following and preceding the tsunami, in the form of migrant, *Moken* and other excluded communities; and in highlighting weaknesses and delays in overall relief efforts, identified through its several rapid assessments. Of particular concern were the following:

- *Inequality in the treatment of Burmese migrant workers and Moken*, due in part to their unregistered status, but exacerbated by their isolation and the fact that many migrants lost their identity cards and work permits²¹. There was little effort by the government to estimate the dead and missing among these groups, or the number of orphans; little concern about their access to health services; and little recognition that children from groups were not attending school (and in some cases never did).
- *Non-local Thai workers mostly from the north and northeast not registered and not adequately counted among the dead and missing*. Orphans of these migrants were thus not recognized as tsunami orphans.²²
- *A lack of control over the influx of donors, media and volunteers to the area and their access to children*. Outsiders often congregated at the schools, making it difficult for schools to return to normalcy, children repeatedly asked to tell about their experiences during the tsunami and media showing a lack of sensitivity in

²⁰ Interview, former UNICEF staff.

²¹ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 17, 18, 19, 22.

²² UNICEF. Situation Report No. 19, 22, ChildTRAC Report.

photographing and interviewing them. There was little consciousness of the threat of trafficking, abuse or exploitation of children from this unlimited access.²³

- *The Social Development and Welfare Offices not taking a leadership role in coordinating other organizations.* By February 2005 the count of (one- and two-parent) orphans was 1,080, but in fact only two of these children were not living with extended family members. Thus, by this time it was recognized that there were gaps in the registration system. The Social Department of Human Securities (SDHS) was using too many forms and was inefficient; orphans were not being adequately traced;²⁴ and the fact that most information was collected from schools meant that children below and above school age were likely being missed²⁵.
- *Fears that the boredom of conditions in the shelters and lack of supervision among young people, were leading to risky sexual behavior.* Condoms were not distributed in the shelters. Recognition that the Moken communities might have high rates of HIV previously unidentified made urgent the need for focused prevention and treatment services.²⁶
- *Loss of livelihoods among families leading to longer term vulnerabilities for children.* It was only gradually being recognized that girls were being placed in particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged positions.²⁷

Developing a Programmatic Response

In response to the gaps identified above, UNICEF began to develop more specific programmatic responses to key identified needs, and to engage a wider range of partners. Two particular strands of activity warrant note.

Psychosocial First Aid Programme (PFA)

A major need seen for children throughout the relief period concerned their levels of psychosocial distress and, to this, UNICEF responded quickly. As noted above, it immediately sent a team of physicians and nurses to handle both physical and psychological issues. It also supported the assistance of a psychiatrist from Bumrungrad Hospital in Bangkok and collaborated with Khon Kaen University on a rapid assessment of children's psychosocial status in Takua Pa district of Phang Nga as early as one week after the tsunami hit.²⁸ A trial round of psychosocial first aid sessions was held at that time, teachers asked to review materials for the workshop adapted from internationally used materials from the Red Cross and others.

The first Psychosocial First Aid Programme (PFA) sessions were held within two weeks after the tsunami in five schools in Ranong and one in Phang Nga. Over 1,000 children attended these sessions, the objectives of which were to help children express their feelings and centre their emotions, and to screen for referral any with severe problems stemming either directly from the tsunami or from its aftermath e.g. losing parents, home or family livelihood. Training materials were improved and the program refined for a second round attended by some 850 children from four provinces over February-April, 2005.²⁹

An evaluation of the programme was broadly positive, praising UNICEF for its quick response in putting it together and using domestic psychiatrists and psychologists, many of them volunteers, as well as its own community-based child protection network.

²³ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 17, 21, and interviews with current and former UNICEF staff.

²⁴ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 17 and interview with former UNICEF staff.

²⁵ Child Protection Sector Report: No title: "February 2005 Child Protection"

²⁶ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 18, 20, 22.

²⁷ UNICEF. Situation Report No. 18, 20, 21, 23.

²⁸ Lazo, L.S. & Balanon, F. n.d. *Documentation and evaluation of UNICEF Thailand's post-tsunami psychosocial initiatives report.*

²⁹ Lazo & Balanon, *ibid.*

“The psychosocial first aid (PFA) activities did help restore normalcy. The children were given the space and opportunity to share their experiences, express their feelings about what they experienced and find comfort and support in the friends who were invited to come along. Overall, the PFA restored a sense of belonging and rebuilt the children’s belief that all was not lost and that there were people who cared for them. Restoring the sense of self-worth and optimism were important for the children to be able to overcome the initial and normal effects of disasters such as fear, anxiety, and withdrawal.” (Lazo & Balanon, n.d.)

However, it also suggested a number of weaknesses in the overall strategy. In particular, that the PFA was too psychologically, rather than psychosocially, based; that setting it in schools limited its reach to those still missing children too traumatized to return; and that it failed to take sufficiently into account children’s wider “social context”, including the needs of such significant others as parents, extended family members, teachers.³⁰

While it is not clear from available data what steps were taken to redesign the PFA on the basis of these points, a development supportive of longer-term adjustment was UNICEF’s subsequent work with the Ministry of Public Health to set up a system to monitor affected children using standardized checklist forms: the Pediatric Symptom Checklist-Parent Report Form for young children and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire for those able to read and write.

Through 2005 focus on the risks and vulnerabilities of children clearly shifted (back) towards a more social understanding, culminating in the commissioning of a series of initiatives targeting orphans and separated and marginalized children from early 2006. The basis, findings and outcomes of these initiatives – as they were developed explicitly with respect to implementation of the Build Back Better strategy – are considered in the next chapter.

Education Response

Over the course of 2005, UNICEF built on its long-standing relationship with the Ministry of Education to support national and local action to move quickly to physically recover schools and bring children back. It did so *specifically through a child-friendly lens*, working with the Ministry, communities and children themselves to design child-appropriate school buildings, classrooms and sanitary facilities. It provided readily accessible learning materials to several thousands of children and began to train education managers and teachers in child rights principles, child-centred methods and inclusive thinking. It collaborated with Right to Play in the distribution of semi-structured recreational equipment aimed at enabling children’s cooperative play and trauma mitigation. In collaboration with other NGOs, university specialists and the Ministry of Health, it implemented the PFA described above and provided scholarships to orphaned children and salary support to schools needing extra teachers.

Before the end of 2005, enrolment had reached almost pre-tsunami levels with children back in schools and temporary classrooms that were reasonably safe, secure and welcoming. Significantly, however, some 15% of children were still not in school, and most of these were those who had never been enrolled: migrant and refugee children, children affected by HIV/AIDS or disability, and the very poor. For this reason, and consistent with the CCCs, UNICEF gave a “special focus” to excluded and vulnerable children in its Build Back Better transition strategy.³¹

³⁰ Such critique has been applied to the response to psychosocial needs in many other crisis settings, noting the lack of a clear policy and practice framework for much of this development of the inter-agency IASC Guidelines on Mental Health & Psychosocial Support in Emergencies (2008) – a process within which UNICEF was an active player – now provides such a framework for such work.

³¹ As suggested in Chapter 4, a commitment perhaps not met as fully as it might have been.

2.4 Planning to Build Back Better

UNICEF's relief effort in the tsunami affected area was quick to get off the ground in terms of assessing children's needs and delivering appropriate expertise in a timely way. For the most part, the national response, from the government, the private sector and efforts of affected people themselves, was strong and demands on UNICEF for direct assistance of food, medical services and water and sanitation (in the short run) were few. This enabled UNICEF to a considerable extent to bring the value-added of its expertise as an advocate for children.

As early as March 2005, UNICEF began consolidating its response in longer-term strategic plans. In mid-2005, it undertook a self-assessment of its relief responses and drawing out some of its own lessons³². For the most part, these concluded that the CCCs were well met, an assessment broadly justified on the basis of the data. While there were some reports of early relief efforts disrupting existing programming,³³ soon existing programming models and agendas were being seen as vehicles for providing assistance to tsunami-affected communities as a fully legitimate focus of an already prioritized sector agenda.

However, it was also acknowledged that "coordination with government, at national and provincial level, was not effective". Mirroring the concerns of the MTR one year earlier, internally, too, coordination of the different programme efforts was proving a challenge: "everyone tended to follow their own instincts".³⁴ Staff had been given a half-day training before going to the field and, while it was generally thought that the rapid assessments had done a good job of assessing immediate need, the training was considered by some to have been too little given the scope of analyses and work to be done. Although none said so, logic suggests this would have been especially the case if activities were expected to be integrated to some degree, a way of working for which (according to the MTR) there was not much experience in the country office (CO).

By the end of 2005, the 'Build Back Better' strategic vision for acceleration and extension of existing programmes was well established. It gained awareness of the situation of migrant and minority children in the south during the tsunami: these groups were poorer economically and had less opportunity than the majority population before the tsunami; they were treated inequitably during the relief period; and there were serious gaps in information about them. All of these concerns justified a longer-term engagement with the tsunami-affected – and previously non-prioritized – provinces.

The approach that emerged was largely one that built upon existing programming goals and strategies in the rest of the country, with the clear intention that models developed in the tsunami-affected areas might subsequently reinforce, or indeed inform, national programming. Previous work with Burmese migrants in the northern refugee camps provided an understanding of migrant networks that was helpful in the South, for example, as did its extensive collaboration with the MOE in creating strategies for fostering child-friendly schools.³⁵

However, a key challenge affecting UNICEF's response in the south was that it had not previously had a programme in the six tsunami provinces. It did not have existing relationships with local government officials in the area or with NGOs. In fact, NGO presence in general in these particular southern provinces had not been strong before the tsunami. A number of those that were working with UNICEF in Chiang Mai, therefore, came to work with

³² These are referred to as Core Commitments to Children in Emergencies

³³ *From the 2005 Annual Report*: "The main disappointment of the year was the delay in operationalizing the district capacity building project in vulnerable provinces / districts because of the need to divert almost all time and staff to the tsunami emergency response for most of the year. The importance of this programme area was reconfirmed during new country programme strategy formulation and this will be a priority for 2006." *From the Lessons Learned workshop*: "Links to regular programme: - Do we drop everything? - Do we integrate? HQ/Regional advice not clear and there is a conflict with country/programme. Technical support from HQ/RO is rather minimal. There is no special programme for vulnerable, migrants due to unsupportive government policy/local politics."

³⁴ Tsunami Lessons Learned Workshop

³⁵ Interview, former UNICEF staff.

it in the relief period. Effective to some degree, the success such partnerships were having in the north was not always realized in the quite different socio-cultural contexts of the tsunami-affected south.³⁶

Box 2.2 The Build Back Better Strategy

(from *Building Back Better: A Strategy for Thailand* p.4)

- An **accelerated regular programme approach** is adopted. Results expected by 2011 for the priority vulnerable areas in the regular programme will be achieved in the tsunami affected provinces by end 2008. The new country programme strategy to be prepared early 2006 will fully consider tsunami emergency within its strategy.
- There are unique opportunities to learn from tsunami programming experiences to better inform the regular programme work in other parts of the country.
- The six tsunami affected provinces will be added to the current 20 vulnerable provinces identified under the regular programme.
- “Emergency” issues not covered by the regular programme e.g.; psychosocial recovery, health and nutrition, will be programmed in addition.
- Issues within the “build back better” approach and not in the regular programme, e.g. water and sanitation in schools, will be programmed in addition
- Focus will be on the most vulnerable children and women
- Special emphasis on improving availability of information on the situation of children in the tsunami affected provinces
- Special emphasis on documenting lessons learned in programming in the tsunami provinces to feed into regular programme discussions.
- Advocacy on important cross cutting issues
- Identification of strategic partnerships to accelerate achievement of results
- Outposting of staff to accelerate achievement of results

Another critical challenge for UNICEF was the emergence during the relief effort of a number of other weaknesses that had been outlined in the MTR in addition to coordination. These included the need to focus its efforts for the most vulnerable children and women; to integrate gender equality issues in all programming; to strengthen monitoring systems both within its own programmes and through advocacy at the government level; and to engage in a participatory way with communities. All of these themes implied a clear shift in the transition to recovery, away from that of the (relatively) straightforward delivery of goods and services to the unquestionably more complex task of generating commitment and building capacity for institutional change within the various Ministries that had responsibility for children, but were failing to adequately recognize the particularly vulnerable ones.

To a reasonable extent, UNICEF sector programmes made that shift and, as will be apparent from later chapters, reference to these several themes recurred through the 2005-2008 period. However, the obstacles to such a shift were, and remain, significant. UNICEF faced introducing difficult policy and practice reform into well-established and often change-adverse bureaucratic systems. Thus, while an “*accelerated* regular programme approach” was adopted in the Build Back Better (BBB) strategy, actual programme application continued to happen at a much more typical speed. In consequence, as detailed elsewhere in this report, “results expected by 2011 for the priority vulnerable areas” in the country as a whole can be expected to follow the same timeline for those added in the south - if not indeed a longer one given the more recent start (and the recent crisis of governance overall in Thailand).

The challenges played out somewhat differently in different sectors, but with some common themes. In Child Protection, the transition planning was described as “seamless”; as early as July 2005, a national workshop had been convened to explore child protection issues. While this focused particularly on the issue of migrant children, the meeting played a key role in establishing momentum in working to establish an integrated child protection monitoring and

³⁶ Interview, former UNICEF staff.

response system. The details of the child protection model were new, but clearly reflected pre-tsunami goals of addressing protection issues more systemically.

UNICEF planned to work on capacity building for children and youth at the tambon level since the 2002-06 plan; work that was delayed by the tsunami.³⁷ The tsunami response, however, had brought UNICEF into closer contact with some of the key institutions at provincial and sub-district level that were required to drive this work forward. While the motivation for reviving the initiative in the south did not then come directly from the relief period, the recognition of the vulnerabilities for children in the region pointed to the logic of expanding it there and led to the developments described in Chapter Five.

In Education, too, the notions of a seamless transition and building on positive past experience were expressed and data do, in fact, suggest that UNICEF was making fair progress in establishing within communities and for children under stress a recognition of the value and viability of a rights-based, responsive and flexible approach to education. This approach also generally appeared to cast CCC interventions within a “child-friendly” framework. As the programme shifted from relief to recovery, vulnerable children were beginning to be included through efforts to seek out the chronically and temporarily out-of-school children; to be better protected by teachers exposed to non-abusive disciplining practices, and to be made healthier through better quality drinking water and sanitation facilities, to learn through play guided by better trained coaches. Community members were beginning to take a more active role in school management by participating in school committees.

All of this further suggested a reasonably strong base on which to move forward with a full-scale education development programme, one that is both relevant to UNICEF and Ministry Millennium Development Goal (MDG) priorities, and appropriate given proven CFS practice elsewhere in the country. It was also, however, a base somewhat weakened by the lack of an education-focused ‘vulnerability scan’. Such a scan could have provided a baseline against which to measure eventual change and perhaps, catalyzed development of a CFS strategy specifically tailored to the situation of vulnerable children in the tsunami-affected areas (as opposed more simply to moving the northern experience south).

The sense that existing UNICEF priorities and approaches were a template for response to issues and agendas raised by the tsunami was reinforced by the consistent pattern of budgeted expenditure for the 2002-2006 and 2007-2011 planning periods (Table 2.1). Although such figures do not represent total final expenditure (which was significantly greater in both periods, especially the latter, as a result of influx of tsunami-related funds) the consistency of proportional budget allocations across programme areas is marked. The 2007-11 programme has a separate category for “Local Capacity Building”, a major theme of 2002-06, but subsumed under other programme categories. Activities for the “Promotion of Child Rights and Disparity Reduction”, now labeled “Advocacy and Social Mobilization”, remain an important theme in 2007-11. “Future Cooperation Entity” signaled an initiative to individual and corporate partnerships related to fundraising. Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries is not listed as a separate programme area in the 2007-11 plan, although activity related to this continues in a work strand linked with local capacity building.

While the tsunami did not lead to a major technical broadening or re-shaping of UNICEF strategy, a clear geographical broadening was involved. Data (including the subsequent MICS survey) confirmed the tsunami-impacted areas of the south as appropriate foci of intervention because of pre-existing vulnerabilities.³⁸

³⁷ UNICEF. Annual Report 2004.

³⁸ Yongpanichkul et al, 2007. Document Review on the Status of Affected and Comparable Non-affected Populations Before and After the 2004 Tsunami in Sectors of UNICEF's Work. Bangkok: UNICEF; Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women: Thailand Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey December 2005-February 2006. Thailand NSO & UNICEF, 2006.

In summary, the post-tsunami period and the formulation of what 'build back better' meant in the context of Thailand appeared to have two broad strategic drivers:

- ***Use of existing program approaches that were seen to provide relevant mechanisms to address issues*** brought to the forefront by the tsunami and of longer term relevance (e.g. expansion of the CFS approach as a means of addressing inclusion, protection and community support for effective learning)
- A nexus of newly identified needs and unprecedented access to resources providing the ***opportunity to create new models and extend approaches adapted from existing agendas*** (e.g. development of a more coherent child protection systems approach, broader attention to vulnerable children e.g. to include orphans, strategic engagement in support to local planning processes, tailoring CFS for newly-identified fragile communities)

2.5 Lessons Learned

The CCCs are a relevant framework in middle-income settings, although governments may play a strong role in enabling their application.

UNICEF cast its tsunami interventions expressly within the framework of the Core Commitments to Children in Emergencies. Consistent with the status of Thailand as a middle-income country, however, the experience of the relief period suggest that the CCCs can be met to a large extent through government playing a considerably stronger role in enabling their application and UNICEF a more supportive one of promoting, complementing and verifying those actions than is typically the case in less developed country contexts.

There is no direct evidence of UNICEF taking a lead role in application of the CCC; not all officers, in fact, confirmed actively using them as the organizing framework for the response. As has been the case in other situations of well developed national systems and institutions (e.g. Bam), it seems rather that the CCCs directed UNICEF Thailand towards providing oversight of actions of others and an assessment of the extent to which these resulted in an appropriately comprehensive response. In this sense, the structure of the CCC provided a basic framework for UNICEF to focus key aspects of its relief response in both relevant and appropriate ways.

Efforts to implement the cluster approach in emergencies should avoid some of the coordination problems that were experienced in the context of the tsunami response.

In late 2004, discussions were in progress within the UN system aimed at improving coordination in emergency contexts, discussions that eventually led to the development of proposals for the cluster system. At the time of this evaluation, arrangements were moving to the operational stage in this process, with the designation of cluster leads and co-leads and cluster training planned by OCHA in the upcoming months. Following these steps through regular sessions aimed at further clarifying and consolidating understanding of both the principles and practices of clustering among existing and new staff, and in dialogue with key RTG partners, will be key to ensuring Thailand is in a strong position to better coordinate future relief efforts.

Disaster preparedness training is a valuable, and necessarily on-going investment.

It is widely acknowledged within the organization that the UNICEF/Thailand office was not prepared to respond to a disaster of the magnitude of the tsunami. Bangkok staff members were sent to work in the south with sometimes little or no field experience and no disaster training. UNICEF has already responded to this gap with disaster preparedness training for all staff that should greatly enhance the country office to respond to any future disasters. As with the cluster approach, here too it will be critical to undertake this training on a continued basis given the inevitable turnover in staff, changes in core partners (who should also be included to at least some degree), and the more simple fact that people forget and lose automaticity of action as time goes by.

Codes of conduct should be in place during emergencies to govern access to children in emergencies.

No code of conduct was in place for who should have access to children in emergencies, under what circumstances and in what ways. After the tsunami, Save the Children/UK developed a code of conduct for Thailand adapted from its international model, and held three workshops on its application that UNICEF staff attended. UNICEF, of course, has its own guidelines for children anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and child protection strategies. Regular updating of staff and partners on not just the codes, but how they apply in specific contexts and sectors is crucial, as is building staff skills to deal with, and promote good practice among the media - a challenge made greater with the advent of "citizen reporters" and internet photography.

The overall strength of government response may mask important weaknesses with respect to particularly vulnerable groups.

The Thai government had a strong response to the tsunami which, for the most part, was very effective. However, in some ways the strong response masked existing weaknesses in the government system that took some time for UNICEF to acknowledge. A key example was the somewhat erratic estimates of the number, types and circumstances of "orphans" and their registration. Division of responsibility between the Department of Social Welfare for children under 6 and the Ministry of Education for school age children clearly exacerbated the situation; the two efforts were not coordinated, and although UNICEF assisted both, it appeared to provide no overall oversight -- clearly a shortfall in the application of its CCC mandate. Migrant and *Moken* children and children living in remote areas were especially affected; neglected before the tsunami, they were seriously under-represented in the counting and delivery of services after it. UNICEF was already working with migrant children in other regions and was not unaware of the government stance, but the impact on the tsunami on these children was severe and required increased efforts by UNICEF to meet minimum needs. For this reason, actions were perhaps too limited while according to UNICEF determining "if there was equitable access to relief" was a focus of its early assessments, It was unclear from the perspective of inclusive education, for example, why no vulnerability scan or Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces (RALS) was done, making it more doubtful that the CCCs were met for children not, in consequence, made visible.

3. BUILDING BACK BETTER CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS

As noted earlier, work focused on strengthening child protection was an established component of the 2002-2006 UNICEF Country Programme. Planned work was targeted on a number of issues including providing support to victims of abuse and exploitation, strengthening the juvenile justice system, preventing hazardous child labor, and advocating for better international child protection laws. However, it was pre-existing work on developing early warning and monitoring systems to detect child abuse and establishing robust child protection systems at the local level that effectively served as the main foundation for child protection programming in the tsunami-affected provinces after the initial recovery period. Comprising a major element of programming in these newly prioritized provinces, this was one of three programme areas, alongside support for child friendly schooling and local capacity building (considered in subsequent sections) that served as the sectoral foci of the evaluation.

We considered two key strands of work within the 'Build Back Better' strategy as it applied to child protection. One was a series of discrete initiatives growing out of the initial assessments of protection risks in the tsunami-affected provinces related to monitoring placement conditions for separated and orphaned children. The other, informed by such developments, but with its origins significantly earlier, was work to establish a comprehensive model of a child protection system for potential replication on a national scale.

3.1 Monitoring Placement Conditions for Separated and Orphaned Children

Key Questions and Methods

As discussed earlier, during the relief and early recovery periods the particular needs and vulnerabilities of separated and orphaned children had been identified. While the call to 'Build Back Better' signaled attention to broader systems development, it also reinforced obligations to the most vulnerable. In this section the concern is on child protection work that sought to address the needs of these children. What was the focus of such programming, and was this appropriate? Were the initiatives effective, and have they contributed to longer-term gains? These were the primary evaluation questions regarding such work.

Given that these initiatives were generally short-term in nature and had all come to close by the time of the evaluation, the major source of data was through document review (including commissioned studies and project reports). Analysis was enriched through key informant interviews (with UNICEF staff, project officers etc.), including those who had been engaged in work on the projects. Some insights relevant to this analysis were also provided through the fieldwork described in the following section.

UNICEF Response

UNICEF initiated four specific efforts regarding separated and orphaned children in the tsunami-affected areas in the period 2006-2007.

Rapid Assessment of Children Without Parental Care in Migrant Communities

This assessment was conducted from March-May 2006, about 15 months after the tsunami. A total of 243 children who were not living with both parents were identified in three provinces (Ranong, Phang Nga and Krabi). Of these, 85 had migrated voluntarily without parents—the vast majority of them male. Most of these joined relatives already living in Thailand, but 35% of those who migrated without parents were living without adults. Of the 158 children who migrated with parents, 122 were orphans, 17 had parents living separately and the rest had parents with whereabouts unknown. The assessment concluded that although most of the children living without parents did live with relatives, many of the children were of need of assistance, both for basic needs and for protection from trafficking, neglect and abuse.

Pilot Case Management System for Migrant Children

This project, a follow-up to the above assessment developed by Save the Children UK and UNICEF, aimed to address identified needs with a pilot intervention in Phang Nga province. Working with the Grassroots Human Rights Education Development Committee (GHREDC), it began by developing a case management system for the 140 children identified in the assessment. Two case workers were paired with Burmese translators. For 62 cases the project found that the children had a satisfactory living situation or required minimal assistance from GHREDC. For the remaining 34, 11 could not be located and 23 were referred to GHREDC. The project team worked to find resources within the family and community solutions to aid the children. They also identified other issues of concern; many of the children were working at very labor intensive jobs to send money home to their families in Myanmar, and some of those living with relatives considered it only a temporary living situation.

Situation Analysis of Thai Orphaned Children

UNICEF conducted a situation analysis in 2007 of Thai children who lost one or both parents in the tsunami. It found that most of the children were living with relatives and that most of them were in a satisfactory living situation. Many were receiving psychological services from NGOs and most received the government scholarship money. But the study found that few received support from the Provincial Department of Social Development and Human Security (SDHS) or other government agencies. The study found that “there is no evidence of a significant increase in the population of children cared for within Government shelters or welfare homes as a direct result of losing parents or other care-takers in the tsunami.”³⁹ However it found that “many” tsunami-affected children had been admitted to the government boarding schools and some private ones, and children were admitted with no systematic assessment of their family circumstances or attempt to explore alternatives.

Monitoring Placement Conditions for Orphan Children

UNICEF contracted with ChildTRAC to develop a system to track tsunami orphans and assess their situation. Beginning in January 2007, ChildTRAC developed a ‘master list’ of orphans through collaboration with SDHS and NGOs that were also working in this area. This list was crosschecked with more than 30 different sources and used as a starting point to begin tracking children. ChildTRAC developed a database with information about where orphans were living and with whom, whether they were receiving any assistance, their schooling status and an assessment of their well-being. The Royal Thai Government figure of the number of single- and double-parent orphans from the tsunami was 1,480 in February 2005.⁴⁰ By the end of their project ChildTRAC had identified 1,729 orphans living in the six affected provinces and 580 living in other provinces, suggesting that approximately 1 in 3 orphans were missed by the government listing.

Findings

Initiatives effectively documented needs and provided important information for advocacy purposes.

These discrete initiatives addressed a number of significant concerns that emerged in the post-tsunami period. Though the government had a count of the tsunami orphans, there was no official recording method of where they were living or with whom. There were fears of the ‘commoditization’ of orphans given their entitlement to government scholarships to pay their way through school.⁴¹ There were reports that parents and other family members were using

³⁹ Situation Analysis Report: Strengthening Alternative Care Options, p. 5.

⁴⁰ ChildTRAC. Children of the Tsunami: Where Are They Now? 2008.

⁴¹ “The 1,500 children orphaned by the tsunami have been compensated with 25,000 baht (USD 714) during 2005, and an additional 10,000 baht (USD 285) in 2006. In addition, these children are eligible to receive scholarships from a special project called “Palang Jai Pue Anakot Andaman” (Moral Support for the Future of Andaman). These scholarships provide 283,000 baht (USD 8,086) for kindergarteners, 250,000 baht (USD 7,143) for primary school children, 184,000 baht (USD 5,257) for secondary school

the scholarship money for other purposes, and that relatives were adopting orphans to get the scholarship money.⁴² There were also reports of boarding schools and orphanages recruiting orphans from families, with reports of orphans as young as age three being sent to another region to attend boarding school. Additionally, as noted in Chapter 2, there were persistent concerns that the needs of migrant children had neither been appropriately documented nor addressed by government authorities.

In this context, each of these initiatives was appropriately focused on securing clear evidence regarding the needs of specific groups, and indicating appropriate programming and support to address these. The Rapid Assessment and subsequent Case Management Pilot with migrant children highlighted significant protection risks within these communities. As well as highlighting the needs of orphaned children, the Situation Analysis documented a number of concerns regarding the care of those who had been victims of abuse, including such children being placed in shelters without any referral to the judicial system or SDHS. The ChildTRAC work served to indicate government under-estimates of orphaned children and, for a significant minority, the potential risks associated with their placement conditions.

There is also evidence that such information was appropriately used for advocacy purposes with governmental and non-governmental agencies. Numbers of separated and orphaned children were used in UNICEF briefings, and used by other agencies for planning and advocacy. The Situation Analysis report featured a useful 'article by article' analysis of practices at variance with the Child Protection Act. It also provided a clear evidential base for UNICEF's advocacy regarding the dangers of residential care facilities and boarding schools in the tsunami-affected areas being "resource-led not demand-fed".

There was little evidence of sustainability of direct programming influence.

These initiatives were all designed as short-term and the Rapid Assessment and Situation Analysis were clearly both informative, rather than targeting service development. Consequently, expectation of impact on on-going services would be appropriately low. However, both the Pilot Case Management work and the ChildTRAC project involved innovations in support to children and there were appropriate attempts made to sustain these past project completion. In the case of the former, it appears that no follow-up was conducted, and so it is not possible to conclude if support identified by case managers for families continued through the SDHS or by other means. However, there are fuller accounts of ChildTRAC's attempts to pass on use of their functioning database to the SDHS. Here, specific training for staff of SDHS was arranged, though no resources were identified for further support following the end of funding to ChildTRAC. Follow-up visits by both ChildTRAC and UNICEF to local SDHS offices suggested that less than half were using the database and those who were uncertain about its use.

Important principles and practices were identified for use in wider child protection systems work.

Although there is little evidence that these initiatives had sustained on direct programming, a number did demonstrate 'proof of concept' of some important ideas. The Case Management Pilot clearly provided experience in a model that, with variation, formed the basis for specifying the case manager role at New Family Development Centers described in the next section. The ChildTRAC database also reinforced the potential value of child protection monitoring systems at the time the Child Protection Monitoring System (CPMS) was being established as another foundation of the proposed child protection system for roll-out across tsunami-affected provinces. Finally, the situation analysis confirmed that - with the educational system, justice system, social work system and NGO provision not well coordinated to respond to child protection needs - many children 'fall through the cracks' of

children, 136,000 baht (USD 3,886) for high school children and 85,000 baht (USD 2,429) for undergraduate students. Approximately 27,000 tsunami affected school children received scholarships from the MOE worth 15,000 baht (USD 429) to ensure that they were able to continue their schooling." *Document Review on the Status of Affected and Comparable Non-affected Populations Before and After the 2004 Tsunami in Sectors of UNICEF's Work*, p. 39

⁴² Focus group discussions with teachers.

provision. This finding further reinforced the value of the initiative examined in the following section.

3.2 Building a Child Protection Monitoring and Response System (CPMRS)

Key Questions and Methods

The key questions regarding the CPMRS addressed the basis for seeking to build a child protection systems approach, the methods and models used for this work and how effective they had been. To the extent that this work was seeking to establish a model for child protection that could be 'rolled-out' on a national basis, we also considered evidence of this work leading to the strengthening child protection and influencing national systems.

Methods to address these questions included group structured interviews with tambon administrators, staff at tambon-based New Family Development Centers (NFDCs), the child protection multi-sectoral committee attached to these Centers, staff at District 'One Stop Crisis Centers (OSCCs) and members of Provincial Child Protection Committees in each of the three provinces visited. Individual structured interviews were held with case managers, UNICEF staff and other key informants.

Tambons were purposively sampled for interviews based on whether they were part of the Child Protection Monitoring and Response System (CPMRS) programme. Staff of six Tambon Administrative Offices (TAOs) was interviewed on this basis (two in each of Ranong, Phang Nga and Krabi). All except one of TAOs in Krabi had been engaged in piloting deployment of a case manager as well as using the monitoring system. One OSCC per province was selected based on logistical constraints; these were all based at district hospitals. Four case managers were interviewed (2 in Ranong, 1 in Phang Nga and 1 in Krabi), although only one of these was still working for the tambon at the time of the interview.

We additionally held interviews with current and former UNICEF staff and other key informants Bangkok and by telephone. Analysis was supplemented by extensive document review, which included a recent internal evaluation of the NFDCs.

UNICEF Response

Well before the tsunami, UNICEF Thailand had recognized the need to shift to support the development of child protection systems rather than addressing protection needs in terms of specific risks or 'vulnerable groups'. This reflected broader policy moves within UNICEF as a whole in recent years, but also – as evidenced by the 2002-2006 Country Programme – recognition that supporting such development was an appropriate focus for UNICEF's technical expertise given the capacities and mandate (consolidated in due course by the 2003 Child Protection Act) of the Royal Thai Government. This commitment was strengthened with gathering evidence – through and beyond the tsunami - of weaknesses in child protection of the sort noted in previous sections.

Developing the Model

Formation of national Child Protection Working Group – co-chaired by UNICEF and the MSWHS – signaled greater opportunity to advocate for a more child-centered and systematic approach for child protection. UNICEF convened a national workshop in July 2005 that brought together child protection professionals from all over Thailand. Titled "Child Protection in Tsunami Affected Communities: Guiding Principles and Best Practices", the workshop provided a platform to develop a new agenda for community-based child protection systems. The entry point for the workshop was concern over the institutionalization of children in public and private orphanages and boarding schools, but the scope was expanded to include the

child protection system in general.⁴³ Subsequently UNICEF led a study tour to Australia for members of the Child Protection Working Group to see the full child protection system there, including the foster care system. This visit was seen to be extremely helpful in raising awareness of how a child protection system could be developed; as one interviewee noted: 'challenging lack of interest [in some stakeholders] and giving a sense of what *could* be done'. UNICEF identified the Office of Women's Affairs, with responsibility for Family Development Centers at tambon level, and the MoH, responsible for OSCCs, as key partners in government in this period.

Through these engagements UNICEF collaborated with government and other partners to develop a model for a comprehensive child protection monitoring and response system (CPMRS).⁴⁴ The model included a database that collated information about all children in a tambon aged up to 18, which was designed to be an 'early warning' system to identify children at risk. A participatory process was used to determine which indicators appeared most useful for identifying such risk. In addition to such monitoring capacity, the other major component of the CPMRS model was a 'response' element, focused upon a case manager, either a social work professional or a paraprofessional, working at the tambon level. The principal duties of the case manager were to monitor the circumstances of children listed as 'at risk' and to connect them to appropriate services.

With supervision arranged from the Office of Women's Affairs⁴⁵, this configuration was labeled a "New Family Development Center" (NFDC), to link to – and distinguish it from - the existing "Family Development Centers" (established by the Royal Thai Government in 2004 to meet family needs in the community, including establishing networks of community volunteers). A Management Working Group consisting of TAO officials and the case manager was to run the center, and a community network of concerned individuals was created to contribute to the development of preventive strategies and collect data for the database or CPMS (Child Protection Monitoring System).

Pilot Implementation

The monitoring component of the system was implemented by the Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, who conducted child rights sensitization and advocacy at the national, provincial at sub-district levels and established the CPMS itself at the tambon level. UNICEF, through its field office in Phuket, managed the case manager program.

UNICEF selected tambons to pilot the CPMRS based on demographic characteristics (for example, the number of schools and the population of children in the tambon) and the tambon's willingness to participate. In Phase 1 in 2006 the CPMS was piloted in three TAOs across three provinces (Phuket, Krabi and Phang Nga). This pilot included developing indicators for the CPMS with key stakeholders in the community, including those who worked in child protection, community volunteers and schoolchildren. This led to the development of 22 child- and household-specific indicators to identify children at risk. A questionnaire, designed for completion by community volunteers and children themselves, was also developed to collect data with respect to these indicators.

A first round of training for case managers was held in Bangkok for tambon employees and others who worked in child protection, with the goal adding the case management (CM) role to their job descriptions and working as paraprofessionals. This group did not ultimately serve as case managers because they were unable to combine the CM role with their other duties. A second round of training included mainly, but not exclusively, those with professional social work training. These case managers were generally hired from the south. This second group of case managers was in post from October 2007 for a maximum of thirteen months.

⁴³ The workshop led to participatory work by Judith Ennew using children and youth as researchers to collect over 5,000 pieces of documentation.

⁴⁴ Krueger, A. 2008. *The model of a comprehensive child protection system for Thailand*. Unpublished.

⁴⁵ The intention was to have the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, eventually collaborate with this effort. UNICEF, *Piloting New Family Development Centers (NFDCs) as a Cornerstone for Community Services in Thailand*.

Earlier in 2007, Phase 2 of the CPMS roll-out involved coverage across 27 TAOs in the six provinces (24 new tambons plus the original 3). While it was intended that all 27 of these tambons would have a case manager, in practice the lack of willingness for some of the tambons to host the position, combined with difficulties in recruiting enough professionals for the jobs, meant that ultimately only 16 of the tambons became New Family Development Centers (NFDCs) as planned.

In 2008, budget constraints led to the decision to focus Phase 3 CPMS development in Ranong province, with the aim to cover at least half of the TAOs (ultimately, 15) so that the basis of a model provincial system for child protection monitoring would effectively be established. The support of the Provincial Child Protection Committee and the governor in Ranong was a crucial factor in choosing Ranong as the pilot for the model. This decision separated the monitoring (CPMS) and response (case manager/NFDC) components of the planned model child protection system in a much larger number of tambons. However, UNICEF sought to ensure that some response capacity was available to all tambons using the CPMS by providing training and support to all District OSCCs serving tambons without case management coverage.

A final component of pilot implementation was the development of a child protection manual for each province. This was done through a participative process involving provincial health workers, social workers, the police, the attorney general, and those in the education sector. The manual lays out what each should do in a child protection case and includes such tools as an assessment form for teachers to keep a record of child protection situations. The manual and the process of creating it were designed to get these various sectors to work together on protection cases and to understand the full picture of who should be involved. The manual was developed in a series of three workshops for each province to build a sense of ownership for the effort. A manual has been developed for four provinces, with such implementation supported by the National Child Protection Committee.

Findings

UNICEF's approach to child protection systems strengthening is appropriate and coherent.

All evidence suggests that UNICEF was right to prioritize child protection systems strengthening both as a specific response to address protection risks made evident subsequent to the tsunami and as a more general strategy of relevance for national implementation. The case made to stakeholders – that a systems response was the most appropriate way to address concerns of children ‘falling between the cracks’ of existing provision – was a sound one, and is now widely accepted in discussions at local and national level.

Further, in developing the model, UNICEF drew well upon international and national thinking regarding child protection. The CPMRS model has conceptual clarity, and is one of a number of models of child protection systems development that has attracted global interest within the Child Protection Working Group of the inter-agency Protection Cluster Working Group (convened jointly by UNHCR and UNICEF).⁴⁶

Separation of monitoring and response elements of the model detracts from this coherence.

One concern about the approach – given the goal of developing an integrated system of child protection – is the somewhat artificial division that has occurred between the monitoring (CPMS) and response (Case Manager within NFDCs) elements of the system. This division has largely come about because of pragmatic issues around implementation. The CPMS has been implemented with a clear, respected technical lead from Mahidol and with a clear route of access into appropriate governance structures at the tambon level. Implementation of the case manager model has required more complex governance structures involving the

⁴⁶ CPWG/PCWG (2009). CPWG Annual Meeting. Geneva.

provincial SDHS and was more commonly declined by tambons. Of 38 tambons that engaged in CPMS work in one or more of the three phases of implementation, only 16 had engaged in the case manager/NFDS element of the model. Although, as noted, UNICEF has provided technical support to OSCCs to ensure that some response capability is available to any tambon implementing CPMS, this separation clearly fails to reinforce the ultimate goal of a unified, systemic approach to child protection.

Work supporting systems development has greatly raised awareness about child protection in the years since the tsunami.

In the course of this work to promote child protection systems, it is clear that there has been significant achievement regarding general awareness of protection issues. All of the provincial and tambon administrative offices visited felt that awareness had been raised in communities, schools, child care centers and among child protection officials, both about child protection and about child rights. The trainings that UNICEF held were positively regarded.

“Before the tsunami, the TAO had no data on children and their families, but now awareness is dominantly seen. People learn about child rights and how and where to ask for assistance” (TAO, Phang Nga)

“Before the tsunami, child protection and data were not clear. The health workers did some and the teachers and the TAO as well. When UNICEF came and asked to establish the NFDC by using the multi-sectoral team, the children’s data were collected systematically. The TAO now has maintained the child protection network” (TAO, Krabi)

“Before this, each organization did its job separately. Now there is more coordination and cooperation, and more child sensitization. Children are rescued faster than before” (Provincial Child Protection Committee, Krabi)

Several of the TAOs visited had developed their own initiatives on child protection. For example, one TAO had produced posters and stickers to promote child rights and child protection, with a phone number to call to report on suspected child abuse or neglect. Another TAO hosted a project by Thammasat students to make a booklet on child protection for the community.

In terms of specific evidence regarding implementation and effectiveness of the CPMRS, given the rather different coverage of the CMPS and case manager elements of the system that arose through implementation, these are appropriately considered separately.

The CPMS potentially provides a sound, rigorous, effective basis for monitoring child protection concerns.

The documentation produced regarding all phases of the CMPS roll-out provides evidence that this is a well-conceived approach that has been carefully and thoroughly implemented. The approach is marked by both solid technical capability (in terms of the software for the database) and appropriate consideration of principles of community engagement (in terms of processes of defining ‘at risk’ indicators and gathering information).

In visits to tambons where it had been implemented, the database was universally praised as a useful tool for identifying children at risk. There were a number of examples of effective use being made of the data collected. One tambon reported using the data to identify disabled children, and arranging for service provision for them. Another reported using data indicating children at risk for drug use to provide a special recreational and preventive programme for this group. Throughout discussions there was clear evidence of the recognition of the importance of confidentiality of the data held on the system, and care in its use.

There were varied reports on the accuracy of data held on the database. One tambon estimated that they had found it to be 90 percent accurate; others reported that they had found significant numbers of errors in what was held. Such variation denotes the importance

of the quality assurance of initial, community-based data collection and of regular updating of data to ensure relevance of information.

Active supervision is required to maintain the functionality of the CPMS.

It was common in discussions at tambon level for the active engagement of the Mahidol supervising team to be noted.

“The CPMS team visited very often, if they didn’t come they phoned in. The monitoring system is very good; the questionnaire is useful for the TAO”, TAO -Ranong

Where such supervision had been withdrawn or reduced (with the team focusing on Ranong in Phase 3 of the roll-out) there was evidence that utilization was often significantly reduced. In the course of visits to tambons, the evaluation team checked whether the database was being maintained and updated. Only in the two tambons visited in Ranong province had the database been updated since initial data collection. In Phang Nga, one tambon reported difficulties in identifying the password required to access the database from the previous ‘focal point’. In another, the TAO focal point knew how to print out a report but had not been updating the data. In Krabi, in one tambon there was no one left who knew how to use the database. In another the database had not been updated since the person initially responsible had left.

This suggests that despite the sound design of the system and the positive manner in which training has been received, supervisory support over a period of months does not currently establish functional capacity for use of the CPMS within tambons in the absence of on-going supervision. Given the aspirations for province-wide, and indeed nation-wide, roll-out this raises important questions about the model required to provide such support (or develop stronger capacity at the tambon level).

Case managers represent a key resource for child protection recognized by all stakeholders.

All visited Provincial Child Protection Committees considered that the introduction of case managers had helped considerably with screening cases and coordinating child protection efforts. Case managers were seen as a critical link to the household.

Many TAOs that did not have a case manager reported that they would wish to have such a post. Even where a TAO’s experience of the pilot had been problematic – for example, with the early resignation of the appointed case manager - the value of having someone working on child protection at the community level was generally recognized. Our findings reinforce those of UNICEF’s internal evaluation of the New Family Development Centers that concluded that the case managers were seen to be a key resource in bridging the gap between service providers at provincial and local levels such as the OSCC, emergency shelters and community.

The value of this role was also recognized by OSCCs, seeing that the post provides a valuable connection to referral services at the District level. For example:

“Before having a case manager, the cases were sent by the police. The case manager took good care of the children. And children love him and even the needy. Having and not having a case manager is different; they can do follow-up and go house to house. Now we use our trained teachers and village health volunteer to do a campaign about child protection”
(OSCC -Krabi)

“If it were not for the case manager we would not know about the tambon CPMS...This would be useful for the OSCC to investigate repeated cases. The OSCC can only cure but not protect. It would be useful to have a case manager in every TAO”, OSCC -Phang Nga

Interviews with case managers confirmed their substantive engagement in key child protection issues. Three had had to handle cases of child rape, for instance. Others described work with physically abused and neglected children, children with disabilities and migrant children.

Box 3.1 Case Example

One case manager reported that his first case was a student who was raped by her father’s friend. The child dared not to talk, and the case manager had no guidelines to investigate so he let the teacher and policemen talk to the child. He himself talked to her father. The case manager visited her house to do the follow-up for the OSCC, and was the coordinator between the police and OSCC. OSCC helped to rehabilitate the child.

However, other than case notes – which were clearly inaccessible to the evaluation team on the basis of confidentiality – there appeared to be no formal recording of case load, case composition and referrals that could be used for monitoring purposes.

There are significant governance challenges in the current model of case management that need resolution.

Despite this general welcome for the role of the case manager, there were a number of major issues experienced during the course of the pilots that had resulted in only one of the eight visited⁴⁷ tambons continuing with their case manager beyond the pilot (see Table 3.2). Data from UNICEF’s internal NFDC review – completed some months earlier with all sixteen participating tambons- had suggested the potential for rather higher rates of continuation, but highlighted similar issues which are here grouped as governance challenges and human resource questions.

In terms of governance, the complexity is illustrated by noting that case managers had potentially five discrete accountability lines. First, each case manager had a local mentor, whose role was to provide guidance and support in the context of cases of particularly complex abuse and violence. Mentors were appointed depending on the availability of a suitable person in the local area. Amongst those interviewed, case managers had been mentored by staff from the Sahathai Foundation (a Thai NGO that works in child protection), members of the Krabi-based “Love and Peace team”, a staff member at a children’s shelter and an OSCC-based nurse. Second, members of the Faculty of Social Work at Thammasat University, who had run the training for the case managers, provided assistance by telephone and conducted monitoring visits. Initial engagement was on a one-to-one basis, but shifted to group meetings over time. Third, the UNICEF child protection officer based in Phuket also provided technical support to the case managers. Fourth, as case managers worked under the NFDC structure, they were formally supervised by officers at the provincial SDHC level

⁴⁷ Three case managers continued across the eight unvisited tambons.

(though, as noted in the NFDC evaluation, not by SDHC staff actually responsible for child protection). Fifth, as they were physically based within the TAO, tambon officials frequently assumed some accountability from case managers to support other work of the tambon.

This arrangement brought multiple sources of support, which could be appreciated. Case managers valued being paid visits in the field, receiving comments on their handling of cases and on their reporting. In terms of support from UNICEF, the child protection officer was seen as holding case managers to a high standard, but providing very good support. However, these multiple lines of accountability, reporting and supervision were reported to frequently result in ambiguity and conflicting expectations.

Case managers reported receiving conflicting advice from the different levels of technical assistance and supervision. Some reported that they were asked to do administrative work for the TAO which was not part of their role. Some of the tambons also expressed frustration that the case managers did not work for them, and that the case managers were secretive about their work. They reported that the case managers refused to discuss any of the child protection cases they were working on due to confidentiality concerns. Also, the case managers were the only ones with the password to the CPMS, and no one else at the tambon was trained to use it. In some cases the case manager left without giving the password to anyone at the TAO. The issue of salary was also mentioned by several of the TAOs visited; they felt that UNICEF should not be paying so much more than the government officials themselves made, especially to a young inexperienced person. UNICEF paid the case managers approximately 9,500 baht⁴⁸ per month whereas the comparable position in the TAO, of a junior development officer, is approximately 7,500 baht. Some of the CMs were considered to have not paid proper respect to the TAO.

This lack of effective engagement with the TAO had major impact on the work of many case managers, and was seen as the number one issue affecting their effectiveness by a university social worker engaged in their supervision:

“The TAO looked at me as a UNICEF person, not as part of the TAO (Case Manager)

“Every day I had to sign in at the TAO, and I would inform them what village I was going to that day, but no one was interested” (Case Manager)

“The TAO didn’t fully support me; they didn’t help with transportation or travel costs, and I didn’t have a seat at the TAO office” (Case Manager)

The complex accountability lines clearly have their origin in seeking to provide suitable professional supervision for child protection work and appropriate line management relationships given the NFDC being the formal structure with which case managers engaged. Nonetheless, it is clear that case managers need to be more effectively and coherently engaged with tambons themselves than was often achieved during the pilots if they are to prove the sustainable foundation of such positions. How this is resolved is influenced by the other cluster of issues raised in the course of pilot implementation: those related to human resources.

Recruitment, retention and competence issues are significant and will need to be resolved to produce a sustainable cadre of case managers.

When the case manager program finished at the end of October 2008, most of the tambons visited by the evaluation team did not continue the case manager position (see Table 3.2). Some expressed the desire to do so but did not have the funding in their current three-year plan. Across all 16 TAOs, it was reported that seven did offer a job to the case manager but at a lower rate than is in accordance with other positions in the tambon government. Of the

⁴⁸ 9,500 baht is approximately equivalent to USD \$135.00.

seven case managers offered a permanent job, four accepted the job and three found higher paying jobs elsewhere.

Table 3.2: Status of Case Manager Positions Across Eight Tambons Visited At Time of Fieldwork	
1.	CM would like to be hired, but tambon says they cannot afford it
2.	Had CM who did not work out and quit; tambon would like to have one but cannot afford it
3.	CM was hired as development officer
4.	CM was not hired; tambon says they cannot afford a CM
5.	CM worked out well but left early due to family issues; tambon plans to hire a CM locally
6.	CM got a new job as a government official; tambon wanted to hire her but at lower salary
7.	CM did not work well with the TAO and they didn't hire her; plan to use VHV as CP network.
8.	CM got a new job at an international NGO; tambon wanted to hire him but at lower salary
Overall: 1/8 hired, 1 tambon has plans to hire	

Salaries had been identified on the basis of recruiting qualified social workers, and providing them with sufficient incentive to locate in rural areas in the south. This programmatic decision was based upon earlier experience in seeking to train paraprofessionals for the role of case manager, and an increasing awareness of the technical demands of managing the CPMS. However, the requisite balance between professional skills, experience and capacity for local engagement remains difficult to both specify and secure.

Interviewed case managers noted that for those moving from elsewhere, it can be difficult to adjust to a new region as well as a new job. Communities could also be seen as reluctant to accept an outsider in such a sensitive position. Case managers drawn from the local area can be more familiar with both formal and informal resources for referral and support.⁴⁹

With likely shortages of suitably qualified staff originating from southern provinces for the foreseeable future, a choice needs to be made between hiring based on professional expertise, or having local knowledge. There is no clear consensus on this issue amongst stakeholders. An internal UNICEF evaluation of the case management program conducted interviews with 22 child protection workers (mostly social workers), two teachers and one principal across the six provinces. Asked about the qualifications and desired background of a case manager, responses are summarized in Table 3.3.⁵⁰ The basis of these judgments included reference to the fact that social workers are trained to handle sensitive situations, to maintain confidentiality, and to understand the legal aspects of child protection cases.

Table 3.3 Suggested Qualifications and Background of Case Managers	
Local person	2
Personality, commitment, service mind	3
Social work professional	13
Can be paraprofessional with training	2
Can be lawyer with social work background	1

However, two out of three of the provincial child protection committees that were interviewed identified that the greatest weight should be attributed to case managers drawn from the local

⁴⁹ UNICEF, 2008, *NFDC Evaluation*.

⁵⁰ Some respondents mentioned more than one characteristic.

area. All TAOs that had case managers believed a local case manager should be employed in order to be fully effective in their work. In some cases this was due to negative experiences with case managers from outside the local vicinity, or positive experiences with a local case manager.

In the medium-term, it appears that this dilemma will be most appropriately settled by labor market conditions and the requirements for a sustainable cadre of case managers for a model being implemented on a potentially national scale. Noting that the salaries offered during the pilot scheme were still not able to match conditions available in Bangkok and elsewhere and thus, were insufficient to attract the best social work graduates, it appears that the 'tide' is moving in favor of a revised paraprofessional model. Given this, lessons learned from the initial experience of training paraprofessionals (documentary reports of which could not be traced by the evaluation team) would likely be useful in informing this approach.

Greater clarity is required for best practice in the connection of other potential elements of the child protection system, including the OSCCs.

While the core focus of the evaluation team was on the work of the CPMS and case manager system, there are clearly other important elements of the child protection system. The OSCCs, for instance, are a major focus of referral in CPMRS model. However, while the focal point for the OSCC should attend the multi-sectoral team meetings of the NFDCs they serve. In practice this is often not possible. The OSCC may meet with the provincial child protection committee as rarely as once a year. For the most part, the OSCC was considered for the most severe child protection cases, when medical attention is required. In theory, the hospital should treat the child and then refer the case for long-term follow up to the provincial child protection authorities. In practice, however, there are very few child protection professionals employed by the Department of Social Welfare and are they unable to take on a significant case load. In the course of our visits, therefore, we found very inconsistent linkages between the OSCC and other parts of the child protection system.

"We try to settle cases within the hospital without having to call others in. If we have a case with a problem we can call the police. We also reach out to the community via the schools." (OSCC-Krabi)

"The NFDC is not really a 'center', we don't really work with them." (OSCC Ranong)

"For a difficult case, we contact SDHS, the provincial CP committee and the provincial public health office." (OSCC Phang Nga)

Prospects are excellent for short- to medium-term roll-out of the CPMRS model.

Support has been growing at the provincial and national level for the child protection model that UNICEF had put in place. The national Social Welfare Department has been working with the Mahidol team to establish the CPMS at the national level. At the request of the Secretary of the National Child Protection Committee, INMU and the CPMS project team prepared a proposal to expand the CPMS to 24 provinces and 24 tambons in all regions of Thailand (north, northeast, central, south) in 2009, and an additional 20 provinces the following year. Funds for this expansion will come directly from the National Child Protection Committee Office's regular budget; this proposal will be reviewed by the National Child Protection Committee in March 2009.

UNICEF has also received funding to expand the CPMRS work in all six provinces in the south as of January 2009, covering 130 TAOs for the CPMS and 65 TAOs for the case managers. While the project does not fund salary costs of case managers, it is hoped that it can support training for existing positions at the TAO level. These positions would be professional social workers where possible, but if not, would be para-professionals—presumably TAO staff who formally have the case manager job description added to their TORs and are provided with training and monitoring.

In Ranong province, the CPMS will cover all TAOs in 2009. This will initially be covered by funds from UNICEF. However, the CPMS project has been placed within the five-year Ranong Provincial Development Plan, which is now being reviewed by the Ministry of Interior. In February 2009, at a meeting of the Ranong Provincial Child Protection Committee, the governor stated that, provided there is no drastic budget cut, the Provincial Government will sustain the CPMS over the next five years. Funding is confirmed for 2010, and will be reviewed every year thereafter, in line with all projects.

There are opportunities to link the three child databases (school, TAO (CPMS) and OSCC case records).

In the course of fieldwork it became apparent on a number of occasions that the separate development of school, CPMS and OSCC case record systems may not be an efficient use of resources and, indeed, may represent a missed opportunity for more integrated planning of child services. For example, case managers could meet with teachers regularly about at-risk cases in the database which would also allow teachers to refer children at risk that they see. In this way a closer relationship could also be built between TAOs and schools.

Lessons Learned

The potential viability of a CPMRS has been established but the current model requires review.

The model of the child protection monitoring and response system has been shown to be viable in some locations. There are strong indications of many aspects of it being well received and some evidence – though lack of routine data collection constrains the ability to conclude the scale of such impacts – on it supporting relevant protective interventions in the lives of children and youth.

There are, nonetheless, major and recurrent challenges in maintaining and embedding the system within the work of tambons and other key institutions. The lessons learned from implementation over the last two to three years need to be incorporated into a review which results in specification of a refined model of CPMRS. Given the challenges that have resulted from the artificial separation of monitoring and response elements, there will be significant potential benefit in engineering the re-integration of these components in documentation, programming and policy discussion. This is particularly pertinent given the development noted above of a rapid scale up of CPMS in the absence of resources to fund dedicated case manager positions.

There is wide international interest within UNICEF and the Protection Cluster Working Group, particularly amongst international non-governmental organization partners in the Child Protection Working Group, in the agenda of child protection systems development. In these circumstances, experiences in Thailand include challenges faced and consequential revisions that should be appropriately disseminated.

4. BUILDING BACK BETTER EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Starting in north/northeast Thailand in 1996, the Child-friendly School (CFS) concept has passed through many iterations and extensive collaborations between UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and a range of other partners. It has now come to be understood as the way to advocate and provide for the right of all children to a good quality basic education through action in six core dimensions: *inclusion, effective learning, health and protection, gender responsiveness, participation* and, underpinning all of these, *child rights*. In this respect, CFS has also come to be understood as a *whole school and school-based approach* to mobilizing change in the quality and effectiveness of Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)-based thinking and behaviour where children are most directly affected.

While monitoring and evaluation of CFS activities in Thailand have been fairly limited, leaving its long-term effectiveness with respect to children's learning outcomes more notional than confirmed⁵¹, its value in terms of children's inclusion, health and protection at school children continues to be considered sound. As the framework that the MoE and UNICEF had been working to consolidate and institutionalize within the national system, CFS was most explicitly introduced to schools in the six tsunami provinces through the recovery to development transition, and continues to frame the Country programme.

4.1 Introducing CFS in Schools and Systems as a Strategy for Building Back Better

Key Questions and Methods

CFS has never been a simple project intervention in Thailand. Rather, it is more accurately understood as a complex "school change through organizational learning" innovation that involves all aspects of children's relationship with the school in seeking to ensure their right to be included and to realize relevant, good quality learning outcomes. CFS works within a *logic model* that assumes mobilizing sustainable and lasting change in the way schools engage with children. It requires simultaneous and coordinated action in three locations: inside the school itself, in the immediate context of families and communities, and in the wider policy and resource environment. It is a model, therefore, in which a child-friendly school cannot simply be "delivered", either into the education system by an agency like UNICEF or into schools by a Ministry of Education. Rather, it must be *facilitated*, through responsive incremental interaction with all stakeholders and usually with support from a variety of partners. It is a model that makes CFS implementation fairly unpredictable and difficult for interveners both to manage and track.

UNICEF and the MoE⁵² applied child-rights thinking in relief interventions in early 2005 and the CFS model *per se* through the later recovery and development stages (mid-2005 to 2008). On the whole, these activities were framed within established and reasonably successful past CFS practices elsewhere in the country. Unlike these other practices, however, interventions in the south have not been particularly targeted. All schools in the six affected provinces have been eligible for support and that support has been relatively diffused, and has to some degree addressed all six CFS dimensions. Nor has UNICEF been as proactively interventionist as it was in the north and northeast. Its support to CFS training, advocacy and materials provision in the south has been managed principally through the regular programme of the MoE at the national and local levels.

For these reasons, it was not surprising to find no statistical evidence of change produced through the CFS project in terms of persistently higher enrolment, progression or national test score rates in the South. Nor did the limited time available for the evaluation fieldwork allow

⁵¹ Two reviews of the CFS were in the process of being completed at the time of this tsunami study: a Global CFS review and a national assessment of learning outcomes. Both include specific reference to learning quality in CFS in the South, among other data. The latter became available just as this study was being finalized and its main findings for the South are noted later; the former is not yet published.

⁵² In collaboration with NGOs (e.g. SCF, Right to Play), universities (e.g. Chulalongkorn, Mahidol, Khon Kaen) and private agencies (e.g. Education Development Centre, KIAAsia)

for the collection of primary classroom-based data on learning outcomes e.g. tests or projects that might have indicated improvement in critical thinking, question asking or analytical skills among CFS students at a more individual level.

The evaluation, instead, looked for answers to the question of whether the use of CFS was enabling “building back better schools” in the tsunami provinces based on two sources: *the logic of good practice* -- whether the nature and methods of the CFS inputs provided were appropriate to produce positive change at some point; and *results as perceived by those involved* -- of CFS providers (MoE/ESAO, UNICEF) about the kinds of change produced by their actions to support awareness of, and action on, the CFS concept; and of CFS-application schools (directors, teachers, students and parents) and how what they have received and done in support of CFS has changed the school and quality of life and learning for children in it.

Both sources involved collection and analysis of qualitative data. In total, 23 focus group discussions were conducted in three provinces and 28 tambons with stakeholder groups considered integral to effective CFS practice i.e. school directors, teachers, students, parents and school committee members. Selection of actual focus groups was based on sufficiency of numbers and accessibility in a relatively short time frame, as well as recommendations from the ESAO; they were not selected on a random basis. The focus group discussions were complemented through individual structured interviews with current and former UNICEF education staff and key MoE officials⁵³. Project documents and primary source material, e.g. progress and trip reports, were reviewed.

UNICEF Response

As detailed in Chapter 2, UNICEF’s immediate response to the tsunami within the first 1-8 weeks was guided by the CCCs: mounting a back-to-school campaign aimed at recovering all children, especially girls and the most vulnerable; creating safe and secure temporary learning spaces for them with teachers, learning materials, psychosocial support and recreational activities; and reopening physically stable schools. With the relatively rapid move to longer-term recovery by mid-2005, UNICEF and the Ministry began more expressly to reflect the concepts and methods of the CFS. Appropriately building on past good practice, among the first recovery activities was a training-of-trainers workshop for Education Service Area Officers/ESAO⁵⁴ in the provinces, drawing on “the best teacher supervisors from the north” and using resource materials developed in Thailand over the previous decade.

Being in a tsunami-affected tambon was initially the priority criterion agreed by UNICEF and ESAO for selection of schools eligible for CFS support. Programming reach was quite quickly extended, however, on a province-wide basis following the logic that all children were likely to have been affected in some way by the tsunami, both by its immediate trauma and by its aftermath of lost family members, disrupted family living patterns, shifts in population, stress on community services and loss of livelihoods. Interventions also took into account long-term needs to improve education quality and access to vulnerable children and the relevance of the Country programme in supporting both the building of CFS capacity within the system as a whole and the targeting of excluded groups.

In this respect, UNICEF was able to draw on its strong relationship with the MoE and on the comparative advantage of its in-depth knowledge of CFS as an innovation to quickly provide selection guidelines that generally could be grouped generally into two broad categories likely to foster successful uptake of the new ideas. Schools would be chosen that were “ready”, either because they were under stress from the physical or psycho-social effects of the tsunami, or from situations of general disadvantage (remoteness, poverty, large minority

⁵³ See a full list of persons contacted in Annex B.

⁵⁴ The ESAO was a relatively new administrative unit, 172 (now 185) created in 2003 as a result of a major restructuring of the Ministry of Education bureaucracy, responsible for 200-300 schools and 300,000 -500,000 students with respect to policy and planning, promotion, supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

groups); or because they proved to be open to change through strong leadership, active school staff, good relations with the community and/or a willingness to volunteer.

Based on data from the three sampled provinces, while some ESAO were not immediately enthusiastic about beginning a CFS programme “because they had so many other projects going on”, the general response was positive. As had been occurring with its recent CFSI project in Thailand, UNICEF initiated regular, fairly non-intrusive support to Ministry activities at central and local levels through contributions of logistic, material and technical resources. Each ESAO was able to set its own priorities for school selection and support; overall the MoE directed all CFS action. It was an important light-handed approach that ensured local ownership over the building back exercise - not only responsibility for its application - but also one that considerably limited UNICEF’s ability to directly influence both practice and results.

By mid-2006, 160 schools had initiated the CFS programme and 1,631 teachers were trained in CFS concepts and child-centred methods. Over 2007-8, another 186 schools (some 45% of the provinces) were exposed to key CFS components, over 3,000 teachers reached through some form of awareness raising or training, and some 90,000 students able to benefit from increased attention of teachers to their rights – especially with respect to participation, protection from harm, basic health and hygiene.

On the whole, the efforts taken by UNICEF in partnership with the MoE and others proved successful. After 18 months, “all children *who attended school before the tsunami* [were] back at school”⁵⁵. The highlighted caveat – using pre-tsunami enrollment as a base - was critical, however. Reinforced by the 2002-2006 CPC commitment to “ensure that quality basic services are accessible, available and affordable to all, including the most vulnerable children and those in need of special protection”, UNICEF’s mandate to support the most vulnerable children came more sharply to the forefront as its local assessments began to show that “significant numbers of children never attended school even in pre-tsunami times” - children from the most marginalized groups, living in poverty, in island communities, unregistered migrants and minorities⁵⁶. These children became, certainly in policy, a core focus of the November 2005 Building Back Better Strategy.

A number of specific activities to rebuild schools capable of providing better education were initiated in the early part of the relief to recovery transition and continued to occur throughout the development phase. In some cases these actions have been strengthened by being more fully integrated into regular systems action, helped typically through the complementary auspices of external agencies besides UNICEF.

Improved Sanitation

Water and sanitation has traditionally been core to CFS, a matter of ensuring a “safe, secure and healthy” environment for children; it has been among the most visible post-tsunami interventions in the support provided for improvements to school toilet facilities. Installed under the WES programme on the basis of applications made by schools, a UNICEF-contracted architect worked with the MoE, ESAO, communities and children to develop specifications for the bathrooms and encourage local capacity for their management. Described by many in Thailand and the region as the ‘gold standard’ in child- and girl-friendliness, the design has now been adopted as the target specification for all Thai schools⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ UNICEF. “Thailand MTR 2004”: 4 (emphasis added)

⁵⁶ UNICEF 2006. “Tsunami Response and Recovery: Education Programmes”. Additional information provided at the request of the US Fund for UNICEF: 24

⁵⁷ As happened also in other tsunami contexts, some also express concern that “over standard” specifications and cost prohibit wider use, especially in rural settings, and that money saved by buying locally could be better spent “for teaching materials or student activities”

Importantly, the focus of programming in this area has gradually expanded since 2007 to include increased attention on training teachers, school health personnel and children on healthy hygiene practices, chiefly through the child-to-child FRESH and WASH programmes. By 2008, the water and sanitation facilities of over 200 schools had been upgraded through UNICEF support.

Positive Discipline

In collaboration with Save the Children Sweden and expertise from around Thailand, training began in 2005 and has continued to be provided for school directors and teachers on the rationale and methods of positive discipline. Principally aimed at enabling implementation of the 2003 Child Protection Act prohibiting corporal punishment, positive discipline training is intended to serve as a way to pilot greater attention to the issue of child abuse in schools. According to messages drawn from positive discipline workshops, “punitive consequences of students’ behavioural problems (through) force, fear and pain” continue to be part of the school culture.⁵⁸ It is also a strategy for implementing UNICEF commitments to child protection in situations of conflict and community breakdown.

Healing Through Play

Right to Play International was contracted early on to provide a sports and games programme for schools. SportsWorks has addressed the immediate post-tsunami trauma of children by providing a physical outlet for their anxiety and normalizing interactions with peers through play. In line with the new curriculum, it has also focused on psycho-social learning through play, the integration of this learning into the classroom, and the training of coaches in child-centred approaches to leadership.

Inclusive Education

In 2007, UNICEF emphasized as a “major focus of the CFS approach.... ensuring access for [and] retaining” out-of-school children⁵⁹ and especially in the past 1-2 years has supported through OBEC, a large number of guideline development and training workshops and field-based applications for ESAO officers, school directors and teachers in ways to identify, seek out and support at risk and out-of-school children, through both formal and nonformal programmes.

A potentially seminal initiative in this respect, and key to Building Back Better for those chronically excluded children discovered through the tsunami, has been funding of the Education Development Centre (EDC) to design and implement a community-based series of interventions in Phang Nga and Ranong⁶⁰. Project aims have been complex and, based on quarterly reports, increasingly effective in engaging with children, communities, schools and government agencies towards enhancing education quality and relevance; advocating more progressive inclusion policies; and building capacities of communities and local NGOs to seek out and facilitate attendance. It has also innovated with teaching/learning materials and self-learning kits.

Inclusion also concerns children marginalized by learning and physical disability and UNICEF has worked with the MoE Bureau of Special Education to train teachers from 350 schools in the south (60% from tsunami-affected provinces; 40% from conflict areas) to better support these children in the classroom. The MoE has further extended this training to almost 3000 schools nationally, and a guideline manual will be published later this year.

⁵⁸ UNICEF Officer Trip Report, October 2007

⁵⁹ Country Office Annual Report 2006: 15

⁶⁰ “Education Access for Underprivileged Children in Southern Thailand: 2007-2009”, EDC

Findings

Within the CFS framework, and actions to ensure the broader fundamentals of inclusion, quality and school-community collaboration, the MoE and UNICEF appear to have made a fairly seamless transition from relief through recovery to development.

Building from Success

In principle and in practice, using CFS as the basis on which to move through relief to recovery and now development has clearly been appropriate. CFS has been the main, successful, organizing framework for UNICEF in Thai education for the past decade and more. Its partnership with the MoE through the years of CFS evolution has created a basis of trust, shared understanding of the dimensions, materials and networks of expertise on which both can rely. According to Ministry officers long involved in this experience, the MoE remains committed to the CFS approach and continues to work well with UNICEF in establishing it in all regions because it is “a partner [working] toward sustainable long-term approaches” to educational change, “not short-term projects”.

Application of CFS as an operational definition of a child’s right to be included in protective schools of good quality is appropriate and relevant at anytime. It has been particularly so in the context of the tsunami emergency where these rights have been put at serious risk and where UNICEF has been able to articulate its child protection mandate explicitly through provision of the technical capacity, not just the money, to help make it happen⁶¹. Using the CFS framework has reinforced the legitimacy and capacity of UNICEF:

- to advocate a holistic and coordinated perspective to building back the education system and schools in ways that put children, especially the most vulnerable, at the centre; and
- to involve parents and teachers, as well as the MoE, as joint duty bearers toward this end. In the process, quickening their ability to deal with their own trauma, as well as giving them an active role in restoring a sense of normalcy to children;
- to link with other actors and actions working with children and families in, for example, health, child protection, HIV/AIDS and post-traumatic stress; and
- to move in a consistent and coherent way from the immediate relief period (formally in schools, informally in child-friendly spaces, NFE outreach, ECCD) to long-term school change, in contexts able to advance the same principles and catalyze the same practices of child rights-based education for children already in school and for those not yet in school.

The *gradual expansion of CFS coverage* has also, therefore, made sense. Enabled by additional funds and, more importantly, the additional personnel to implement CFS activities in situ, such expansion has allowed a more systematic transition back to regular programming. Greater focus in the south and, especially, relating to access for the most vulnerable/excluded children fulfilled policy commitments. Made in the 2004 Mid-Term Review (MTR).

Apparently appropriate, too, has been the *use of well-established CFS approaches, materials and expertise* in introducing the concept and its application in the ESAO and schools in the South. According to one former UNICEF Education officer, by 2005 CFS had become a well-understood “package” that could be delivered reasonably efficiently, building directly on UNICEF’s comparative advantage and taking advantage of Thailand’s rising CFS reputation.

⁶¹ The Bam Impact Evaluation suggested that technical capacity is the particular comparative advantage of UNICEF in middle-income countries.

“CFS is what we do; we had already implemented it in our priority areas in the north and northeast, but just hadn’t done it in the south because it’s a relatively better off region and we didn’t have that much funding. CFS is the UNICEF education programme, [the one] it implements worldwide and Thailand has become a leader in CFS. It’s sort of a package that we have.”

The MoE agreed; based on the experience and expertise it had evolved elsewhere in the country, supporting the use of CFS in the south had enabled the Ministry to make a reasonably quick start: “we were doing it for the third time, so we knew what to do”. As discussed later, however, where CFS has been delivered as a relatively set piece to a broad swath of schools and in “cascaded” fashion, the success of its “taking root” in those schools has been limited.

Nevertheless, as a comprehensive approach to inclusive good quality education, introduction of the CFS model has opened up the *potential of meaningful change* in schools in the south by giving them a reasonably rapid access to years of evidence-based experience as to what the process of “becoming child-friendly” looks like, how to mitigate its challenges and how to make full use of the benefits of its new ideas. It has also opened up the *potential for both ESAO and schools to test new ideas and reach new children* through on-going exchange of technical and moral support from a range of Thai and international experts, those who in 2005 “were available to help expand the programme to the south”.

So far, neither of these potentials appears to have been realized. However, based on its own reporting, the EDC has particularly strong potential as an agent in both respects, helping move forward CFS theory and practice to a wider base of ESAO and schools in the south. It has extended the scope for flexible and sustained reach to children most at risk; complemented UNICEF’s own expertise and strengthened its links to schools, communities and local education staff; and generated a key knowledge base on which to further evolve CFS as an effective approach for inclusion and building schools as learning communities. The project appears also to be serving as mentor to ESAO, local government authorities, principals and teachers on ways to seek out and retain vulnerable children in formal and nonformal CFS environments.

The bureaucracy of the MoE is a highly decentralized one, and UNICEF had not worked previously in the south. While the CFS concept, principles and activities had been well developed at central level and in the north, it was not necessarily the case that ESAO directors and supervisors in the six tsunami provinces were familiar with these, or with UNICEF itself. In this respect, the combination of a new geographic location, new ESAO and school collaborators, an unfamiliar socio-cultural mix of communities, and children experiencing different types of exclusion from school could have created a major hurdle for UNICEF in introducing CFS efficiently and effectively.

The fact that any such hurdles have been reasonably low appears in large measure to have been due to the decision taken by UNICEF early on to establish local offices in the tsunami-affected areas. Contracting for school construction and delivering school materials could have been done from Bangkok. Effectively engaging ESAO, schools and communities in a new way of thinking about what a child rights-based school should be like could not have been because creating a child-friendly school is a process, not a deliverable. This has made it critical for UNICEF to take both a gradual and interactive approach to its support to learning among all stakeholders - government officers, school staff and parents; to helping them clarify and agree on the goals, priorities and respective responsibilities of CFS implementation and being to test them out in practice.

While there were no “counterfactual” data to prove that progress might have been made without having had technically capable officers interacting on-site to negotiate, facilitate and

adapt these processes, logic and previous CFS experience⁶² indicate it was a key condition to schools even beginning to integrate CFS as a principle of action rather than simply a series of activities. Data from trip reports and interviews to some extent confirm this. Being on-site has enabled UNICEF to develop a very good sense of the realities on the ground, both challenges to and opportunities for effective action -- a sense no doubt more immediate than would have been possible through frequent trips from Bangkok. It has allowed fairly regular involvement in on-going discussions within and among ESAO; meetings to follow up on progress reports and undertake annual reviews; and interactions with schools and community committees to advocate, mentor and confirm core understandings of CFS principles and practices “in progress”.

Based on the nature of the interchanges, UNICEF officers described having experienced local ease of interaction that has enabled an informal sharing of experience, as well as having studies and approaches developed elsewhere in the country with relevance to the south e.g. on CFS quality indicators for monitoring child-friendly learning environments, strengthening multi-grade schools in isolated communities, testing bilingual materials and teaching strategies, and creating day-time learning centers for migrant children⁶³.

Limited Vulnerability Targeting

Somewhat more questionable has been the apparently limited strategic planning and targeting of the CFS expansion to reach the most vulnerable children and communities in the tsunami-affected south. While officially part of the five other provinces and ten districts already specifically identified having high levels of disparity and vulnerability with respect to children’s education, the absence of a CFS-specific implementation plan for these provinces has likely meant missing at least some important differences. It is unclear why there was no vulnerability scan or institutional capacity assessment conducted, by either UNICEF or the ESAO, as a basis for guiding the substantive or geographic focus of CFS interventions. Nor was there a strategic plan developed with the Ministry around which specific objectives for the 2005-2008 accelerated programme period may have been negotiated.

To some extent, the point made by one UNICEF officer in this regard makes sense: given the frequency of consultations between its education staff and the MoE, a formal preliminary analysis of the situation for children was not warranted; they could assess as they moved forward. On the other hand, without a clear point-of-entry assessment of the nature, scope and options for addressing the situation of these children, UNICEF and the ESAO have been left without a well defined baseline against which to track outcomes and with few agreed indicators or methods for measuring change.⁶⁴

Lessons Learned

Applying a CFS lens was clearly the “right thing to do” in terms of designing actions to bring children back to welcoming schools quickly and effectively within the context of a recovery effort.

⁶² Much of the core of CFS in Thailand has been built through continuous involvement of UNICEF, NGOs, academic institutions and national consultants working directly with the MOE, local authorities and schools to try test and assess ways of applying the principles of a child rights based approach in children’s teaching and learning, protection and participation.

⁶³ It was not clear from the data how many of these studies involved schools or people in the tsunami affected areas; certainly some have and the more this happens, the more likely it will be that the intention of the BBB Strategy to generate and disseminate lessons from the 2005-8 experience will be realized.

⁶⁴ While UOT and EAPRO officers conducted rapid assessments for health, nutrition and WATSAN, and out of school children were tracked using the population census, there were no references to a Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces (RALS) exercise being done. In 2008, however, an “in-depth needs assessment of at risk out of school seafarer and Burmese children” was conducted in Phang-Nga and Ranong with 226 children subsequently enrolled “under the jurisdiction of the ESAO” (Country Office Annual Report 2008:16)

Pursuant to the CCCs, UNICEF's education contributions to tsunami relief were for the most part in the form of the infrastructure, learning materials and supplies needed to build schools back as quickly as possible as child-welcoming learning spaces. Based on the fact of a rapid reopening of schools, this was clearly an appropriate approach to take.

Once in the recovery mode, moving reasonably quickly to establish the CFS framework was equally appropriate. The conception of the child-friendly school has evolved and proven effective through over a decade of UNICEF and MoE partnership. It operationalizes the whole of a child's right to be included, protected and healthy in a good quality learning environment. It has therefore allowed UNICEF to advocate a holistic, coordinated perspective in making the case with parents, teachers and managers for children being in effective and inclusive schools on the basis of good practice, shared understanding of goals and a network of expertise.

Without pausing to take stock and reformulate a CFS strategy based on conditions and perspectives in the south, longer-term development of a child-friendly education system targeting vulnerable children in the region may be compromised.

The potential for establishing long-term CFS-oriented reform of the education system in the south may be impeded by UNICEF's expectations that the injection of additional resources can produce rapid mainstreaming of the concept. Lessons from the north would suggest that CFS action planning needs to be context-specific, framed explicitly and coherently within a capacity development whole-school approach that is tailored expressly for locally vulnerable children and in ways consistent with the local realities of those children and their communities. This calls for a consideration or 'recasting' of northern experience rather than a 'roll out' of an established program.

One education officer, for example, noted discovering significant effort being made by an ESAO in one southern province to bring in communities, foster commitment and find ways of bringing in and supporting marginalized children – eventually developing a local foundation to continue the work. Rather than necessarily looking to outside agencies in support of things like inclusion, “we need to look for more of this kind of local commitment” and build with more of these indigenous initiatives because in the end “they are more sustainable”.

The situation of large numbers of recurrent marginalization and migration in the north is different from that of the south where the phenomenon is still being explored. So, too, the depth of mutual understanding and level of coordination between UNICEF and the MoE in the north is different and greater than in the south, given the significant difference in the ages of the respective relationships. According to UNICEF, for both reasons it has been more difficult to develop child-seeking and well-targeted programmes in the south where a more labour-intensive UNICEF effort still needs to be made to track children. In the north, ESAO supervisors and communities are more willing and able to “move themselves” with these kinds of ideas.

Without a strategy developed on the basis of locally generated knowledge and agreed directions, UNICEF and the MoE may find it continuingly more difficult to gauge their progress and to show well-defined change in the status of children since the tsunami.

At the end of 2005 the BBB Strategy reported “significant numbers not attending school”, but few very specific answers as to why, or what might be available locally on which to build remedial action. Answers to both of these questions still await more community-based investigation.

4.2 Consolidating CFS as a Rights-Based Approach to Education for Vulnerable Children

Key Questions and Methods

By the end of 2008 UNICEF was reporting that some “45% of all schools in the tsunami-affected provinces now apply the child-friendly approach”⁶⁵, based on training of principals and teachers in its “key components”, especially the concept of child rights and child-centred learning approaches. The statement raises two questions:

- What does it look like to “apply the child-friendly approach”; and
- Has applying it made children’s lives better, and in a way likely to be sustained?

For the first question, data were generated through UNICEF reports, key informant interviews and focus group discussions aimed at understanding what the CFS approach might mean as a *whole* for a school, ESAO or student. The answer remained somewhat inconclusive, however, since CFS appears to mean less an “approach” as such, than more simply one or more of several areas of support where UNICEF is giving training, advocacy, infrastructure development and materials. Because these are not being provided in an especially integrated way, but rather on a discrete and apparently somewhat random basis, it is difficult to know precisely what the various parts of the CFS model are actually “adding up” to be.

To answer the second question, data on learning outcomes were sought through two sources: primary fieldwork and other studies. On the first, several requests were made to the ESAO for school-based data, but for reasons that remained unclear these could not be provided. On the second, as noted in an earlier reference, two UNICEF-commissioned assessments⁶⁶ of the effects of CFS interventions on children’s learning, participation and wellbeing in schools had recently been conducted, both including a partial focus on tsunami-affected provinces in the south. The Global AIR evaluation had not yet been officially released and its findings were therefore unavailable. The review did have access to the Khon Kaen study, but only as it was being finalized and past the time when it would have been possible to elaborate the implications of findings with researchers -- all of which suggested fairly weak academic progress⁶⁷ -- for discussion here.

Data on children’s more general response to the CFS interventions were chiefly sought with respect to the *perceptions of change* in themselves and in their school. Perceptions were also sought from school staff and community members, Ministry officials and UNICEF. Given the small sample size, relatively short data collection sessions and complications of interpreting from Thai to English, interview and focus group data must be considered indicative rather than definitive. Documents provided only limited insights, chiefly because neither UNICEF nor the MoE have been systematically collecting the type of outcome data that might show progressive change in children’s knowledge, attitudes or behaviour related to CFS inputs.

UNICEF Response

In terms of sustainability, undertakings by UNICEF to consolidate CFS principles and practices *within the system* itself have been critical. Applied nationwide, but with presumable influence in the south, these have involved a continued emphasis on ensuring CFS actions are not seen as parts of a UNICEF “project”, but as progressively more integrated elements of MoE policy. This has been largely achieved by working in close collaboration with the Ministry *from the inside*, both at the centre, through contributions to policy formulation; and in local education offices/ESAO and schools, through the kinds of advocacy, mentoring and

⁶⁵ UNICEF. 2008. “Consolidated Emergency Thematic Report (Tsunami)”: 1

⁶⁶ Global Evaluation of CFS, by the AIR group; and UNICEF/Thailand & Faculty of Education, Khon Kaen University. 2009. “Study and Follow up of Academic Achievement for the Students of Child Friendly School Project”.

⁶⁷ Some examples: Primary 3 results were below national average in key areas of Thai and Math; only English was higher in Primary 6. In lower secondary, while Thai scores improved between 2006-7, in all other core subjects they declined.

support to training and tools development that are necessary for these policies to be implemented⁶⁸. To some extent, UNICEF has also helped to generate the knowledge critical for both ends of this policy-to-practice continuum, although not always very systematically.

As a consequence of all of this, important progress has been made toward creating with and within the Ministry an *overall enabling environment for EFA and child rights-based education*. Because of the holistic nature of CFS as a framework, this environment has had, in turn, direct implications for efforts by both the system and UNICEF to create more child-friendly schools. Not all of these have focused specifically or uniquely on the six tsunami-affected provinces; nevertheless, most if not all are relevant. As of 2008⁶⁹,

- School readiness and development policy and standards have been finalized, with tools for their application partially developed. Quality standards based on CFS have been adopted. Standardized tests for measuring learning achievement are in place. Financial support programmes, bilingual education and multi-grade teaching approaches are being developed for children of families living in poverty or affected by ethnic marginalization and physical isolation. Life skills are being incorporated more explicitly across subject areas. Safe water and hygiene coverage are being officially extended to all primary schools.
- Although a gender audit of the sector plan has not yet been done and steps to address gender disparity are still considered only “partial” (MTSP/08), the door of a stronger gender focus is being opened. UNICEF and the Bureau of Policy and Planning/MoE have taken actions both to assess 50 schools (most from tsunami provinces) through a gender lens focused on teaching, classroom management and use of corporal punishment; and to train/support MoE officers in the application of a gender assessment tool for reviewing textbooks. According to UNICEF, the Ministry has used the information both for its own classroom observation and text books analysis, and for putting together a master plan for promoting gender equality.

Less positively, there continue to be serious “shortfalls” with respect to exclusion, a gap with specific relevance to CFS policy and programmes in tsunami-affected areas. For example, despite policy provision for children’s enrolment “irrespective of their nationality and registration, supportive policies on the legal status of migrants and refugees [were still] missing”⁷⁰. Also, as will be noted later, assumptions of gender equality at school level continue to go largely unchallenged.

While there appear to be few specific actions aimed at CFS consolidation in the south, one potentially promising example has been the support given to opening Teacher Resource Centers. As a strategy that has proven key as a change-sustaining tool for UNICEF’s CFS work globally, the TRC are a vehicle for the continuing professional development of principals and teachers that, unlike the cascade model, are well-placed to realize value. They are being managed by users through peer mentoring, and enabling improvement in pedagogical practice through application of new learning in the classroom. As of 2007, 12 TRC had been created in the south, with UNICEF further supporting construction and the provision of computers, books and tools for enabling teachers to create their own learning materials. Most importantly, UNICEF officers are continuing to work with ESAO to develop the centers, improve implementation plans promoting their use and monitor application of materials and activities.

⁶⁸ To use the language of the 2008 County Office Annual Report, “[finding] the right balance and complementarities between field-based support to develop operational models (and influencing) wider systems through work on policies, legal reform, budget for children and more focused advocacy” (2).

⁶⁹ Country Office Annual Report 2008 Annex: MTSP Specific Monitoring Questions

⁷⁰ Ibid: 17

Findings

Working through a CFS framework to re-establish schools in the tsunami-affected provinces was the right thing to do. Progress on building a more permanent child-friendly education “system” in the south, however, is proving a rather more tenuous task to get right and it is unclear if schools and communities are fully aware of what CFS means or what actions they can take to make it happen.

The CFS “approach” combines new ways of thinking about child rights and new ways of supporting children’s inclusion and learning in school. The task of engaging schools in serious change is invariably a complicated one; it can be threatening for some and is always labour intensive. This has proven a core challenge to the success of CFS reform in Thailand in general, and it is not surprising to find it so also in the south. There are often good reasons why schools are reluctant to join; typically it is those with more resources and confidence in the value of education that have the greater margin for participation. In many cases, it was reported, the ESAO officials “had to convince some of the neediest schools to join the programme, as they were concerned that raising awareness of child rights would cause disciplinary problems.... Krabi officials found that the less needy schools were more likely to volunteer...”.

Some small schools have felt unable to spare their few teachers for training. At the same time, there is evidence that some disadvantaged schools have wanted to participate, but “felt excluded from the training and the CFS programme”. Both suggest there may be problems with ESAO assessments failing to adequately understand the nature of constraints facing different schools and to appropriately accommodate CFS action appropriately to address these.

Enabling schools to engage with the full mix of CFS elements that ESAO and UNICEF have been providing, and to apply them holistically in ways appropriate to their individual situations, have also been challenges. Two superficially contradictory processes come into play in this respect. On the one hand, each school needs to understand CFS as a way of acting *as a whole* to support child rights *as a whole*. At the same time, the concept needs to be *unpacked* at school level by all stakeholders in order for each to assess how the different dimensions apply and can best be addressed in that specific context. Based on the data, both of these actions are happening to some degree in the south, but probably not sufficiently to ensure sustainability of the CFS changes being promoted.

On the positive side, although still inclined to talk about the post-tsunami CFS in terms of discrete activities, focus group discussions indicated that teachers, administrators and children are coming to understand CFS to some degree holistically, as an expression of children’s rights to develop their full potential and to have a voice in their learning. It is also positive that schools, communities and policy-makers appear to see CFS interventions as having a clear link to other activities being undertaken in the school and that ESAO are attempting to “make sure that the CFS framework fits and supports (other) education developments in the country” (UNICEF Education Officer). Most, if not all, of the separate CFS elements -- access for all children, child-centred teaching, positive discipline, life skills and livelihood lessons -- are considered to have already been introduced in policy, and were now simply being facilitated through MoE collaboration with UNICEF.

Less positively, communicating CFS as a holistic rights-based school concept, something more than the sum of its parts, is not quite there yet. In the focus discussions there appeared to be a limited sense of synergy among the activities, of people not seeing them as part of an on-going process of working toward making the school *progressively and comprehensively “more friendly”* overall, but rather as one-off actions, each for its own sake.

The problem lies not just with the school. As one UNICEF Education Officer stressed, it is important to tailor CFS language to listeners at school level in ways that allow them to see the whole, but CFS promoters themselves have tended to “break up the idea to fit their own work” e.g. CFS as better toilets, more recreation facilities or nutritious meals, special education interventions. *“It is important that we put it back together”* and *“make CFS as straightforward as possible. In different platforms, the language may be more or less sophisticated, but eventually CFS needs to be understood by children and parents as a happy school”*, one that welcomes children and enables them to learn.

Addressing CFS sustainability from this perspective also concerns enabling schools to *consolidate* and take *ownership* of the new ideas underlying the concept. In this respect, the apparently still limited use of *School Self-Assessments* (SSA) is important. Traditionally, the SSA process has not simply been a CFS planning tool, but the means by which staff, parents and students collectively assess the quality and effectiveness of the school with respect to the CFS dimensions (which, in turn, reflect the core Convention on the Rights of the Child pillars of survival, protection, development and participation); and from there identify actions to strengthen each of these through the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

In this way, the SSA-SIP process also links to UNICEF’s commitment to promoting a Human Rights-Based Approach to education programming insofar as it is the “component whereby schools, parents, communities and children themselves are involved, starting with child rights sensitization and followed by review of school achievement and gaps and planning for improving school performance and making the school conducive, healthy and effective for children”⁷¹. The Ministry itself has apparently made a commitment to this in its intention to more forcefully encourage schools to conduct SSA prior to proceeding toward their improvement planning.

Focus group discussions indicate, however, that while many consider SSA “useful”, its application in terms of pursuing the full cycle of assessment, planning, action and monitored progress remains minimal. UNICEF itself has recognized this in their own follow up of SSA and SIP activities, various trip reports noting the challenge of building awareness and capacity for a process that is both time-consuming and labour intensive for both schools and ESAO. Unfortunately, until it is actually done and proves useful, there is little to mobilize the effort.

The School Management Information System (SMIS) initiative is often linked to the SSA process in CFS programmes as another means of fostering a pro-data “culture” with respect to tracking students’ access and progress. Although it is not clear from the focus groups how the SMIS are being managed in schools, it was promising that ESAO and teachers appeared to find the information they provide “helpful” as a way to “search for the disadvantaged children” (Director, Krabi). A cautionary note is warranted, however. Like SSA/SIP, SMIS are useful only to the extent they are consciously managed and regularly used, something not always the case according to Education Service Area Offices (ESAO). As one officer in Krabi noted, “each school has different capacity [for this]. Teachers have not enough technological skill in the smaller schools”. Further, some teachers apparently feel that SMIS is “not necessary” in their school “because [we] know every single student well [and] SMIS is too detailed; why [do we] have to ask about things like income on SES?”.

⁷¹ Country Office Annual Report 2005: 43

According to UNICEF, while this attitude on the part of teachers is probably widely held, actual evidence suggests it is inaccurate:

“There are teachers who [would be] willing to demonstrate that they could do better without SMIS, but those schools that implement SMIS systematically see that they [can] serve their children better and [in a] more systematic manner. As well [they are able to use] the information for their professional growth.”

Actions taken in the schools appear to be making a difference at the effective level, an important “necessary condition” to sustaining CFS action.

Focus group discussions indicated that changes are being realized in the perceptions of children; children now perceive they have the right to develop as individuals and the capacity to increasingly manage that development. Children, the core beneficiaries of CFS, are described by teachers, parents and themselves as having greater self-confidence to “ask for reasons from the parents”; as “knowing how teachers or parents should treat them”; and as “daring to ask [and] debate with the teachers”. Increasingly, it appears, they are also enjoying going to school; are being “taught to think and practice by themselves”; are learning the skills of making a living and managing effectively in their social and physical environments.

There are indications of teachers also changing, but these are fewer. On the one side, focus group data suggest they are becoming more child-centered and interactive in their methods, moving towards more constructive ways to promote acceptable behaviour. According to some students and parents, teachers “now use asking-and-responding style;...listen to students’ viewpoint and find interesting topics to teach...[use] fewer lectures”. On the other side, these and other references to specific changes in pedagogy were fairly abstract, perhaps not surprisingly since CFS inputs in this area have been relatively few.

CFS appears to be making some difference in the attitudes and behaviours of parents as they become more involved with the schools, are asked to come to “share local wisdom”, and use school facilities and sports fields. In some cases, parents are described as being “more open” to talking with teachers, although it was not clear whether these conversations concerned their children’s learning and behaviour or other more general school-community relations.

Finally, the lack of awareness about CFS as a term among school committee members in the first focus group discussion and the very little they had to say about its components, suggest that the reach of capacity building for this group may be too minimal⁷². To the extent that this finding can be generalized, it is important as a core aim of CFS continues to be community engagement in the school, particularly with respect to child protection issues and seeking out missing children.

An important gap: While comments from ESAO, teachers and parents were consistent in equating CFS with children’s development in terms of their ability to think and act with confidence and responsibility, references to the substance or quality of their learning outcomes were few. It was not clear from the data how much attention is being given to pedagogy as such in the CFS training on child-centred methods, but the definition of a CFS as “*academically effective for children*” is a key one. In this respect, the comments by ESAOs in Krabi and Phang-Nga warrant note:

“CFS will not improve National Test scores; it’s not related to learning”

“We should see whether the students are happy or sharing, and whether the teachers are more responsible. National Test scores are not important”.

⁷² Some caution is warranted here with respect to the scope of this analysis: comments from the first SC focus group were minimal and subsequent groups combined parents and committee members.

Strategies for engaging teachers in the CFS process are limited by a cascade model that typically fails both to complete the learning cycle and to make sufficient use of CFS as a “whole school” approach to change.

CFS implementation in the south, as has been the case nationally, has happened largely through short training events and workshops. The effectiveness of these activities has not yet been formally assessed, nor has the way of selecting CFS focal point teachers for the training. Unfortunately, the design/timing limitations of the evaluation did not allow for detailed analysis of either the training activities or teachers' application of their learning.

However, there was nothing in the data to indicate that the approaches used by the ESAO have been atypical of much in-service programming in the Thai system. In this respect, two weaknesses common to the cascade model are most likely affecting CFS training: the degree to which trainees have understood the messages being conveyed and have the skills to introduce these new ideas and to mentor peers are not expressly or adequately confirmed; and, that the time and channels needed to support this kind of interactive teacher-teacher dissemination are not being created in the trainees' home schools. To the extent that these characteristics are true of the training in the South, logic suggests that realization of CFS lessons, with respect to changing the pedagogy of the classroom and management of the school environment, may still be limited.

Focus group data tend to confirm this. Further, the selection for and conduct of training sessions appear to be somewhat ad hoc processes. “Teachers in CFS schools rotated to attend workshops” as these were offered, rather than as part of a strategy discussed and decided upon *at the level of the school and ESAO* for the wider and systematic professional development of staff - either in CFS or, more generally, in effective teaching.

To some extent, the approaches being used appear to be working. Focal point teachers were well able to articulate the broad sense of CFS in focus group discussions. At the same time, however, teachers not directly involved appeared “sometimes [to feel] they didn't know it as well and were shy to speak out about it”, either to complain about or to praise its application. Selection/cascade processes leave some teachers resentful at not being included, and others who are chosen for training are resentful at the time required. More importantly, cascade procedures appear to be inconsistent and inefficient as a means of disseminating the new learning: “some [teachers] transfer their knowledge to their colleagues, but some do not”; “some still do not accept the CFS ideas [like] positive discipline and child rights” and so don't promote them; “sometimes the person selected [is] not skilled at transferring CFS to other teachers, and some teachers “do not accept training from their peers”.

Support to excluded children through the EDC project is a significant step to moving forward UNICEF commitment to reaching the most excluded; so, too, are the workshops to train ESAO and schools to account for missing children. However, without a widening and targeting of action to find and support these children on a broader scale and without consistent follow-up of the training, there is little to suggest significant progress on the BBB focus on “vulnerable children and women” in the south.

Inclusion, along with effective learning, is fundamental to CFS. However, it still appears to be less than fully addressed by the ESAO or accepted by participating schools in the south. Inclusion encompasses both the right of children to have ready access to a good quality school, and the right of those who are inside a school to be allowed, encouraged and enabled to participate fully as active agents of their own learning - and to learn. Issues of disability, learning modalities, language, gender, culture and ethnicity all feature here in terms of some children being engaged and others being marginalized in the life of the classroom. Little of this scope of the concept appeared in the focus group data.

In part through long-time advocacy of UNICEF, Thailand has created a reasonably enabling policy environment with respect to all children having the legal right to be in school and to receive the necessary financial support where needed. Such policies were not fully implemented by communities and schools in the south before the tsunami. Since then,

specific interventions of UNICEF to promote them to ESAO, teachers and parents appear to be making progress, but on a less urgent basis than implied by the BBB. According to one former UNICEF Education Officer with reference to the post-tsunami input, “raising awareness of inclusiveness was successful, but the implementation was not”. For another, inclusion was considered by school directors as well as some teachers “to be a burden” in cost and effort. “Sometimes schools don’t really understand inclusiveness and it doesn’t ‘take”.

To some extent, the issue is one of awareness, schools assuming for example that they have to pay for local Burmese volunteers to work with migrant students not realizing these students are entitled to an allowance. In a deeper way, however, it is perceptual, directors and teachers are not sufficiently “sensitized to the fact that [migrant] children have the same rights as Thai children” (UNICEF Education Officer). In this respect, UNICEF both gains and struggles with the fact that it works largely through others. On the plus side, the collaboration with EDC appears to be effective: “it trained teachers from participating schools about the multicultural classroom setting [and] it’s getting better for some”. Other situations, however, are not as positive: “[we] have to rely on how schools communicate to parents [for example] and some schools fail to do that well. It takes time to build trust, quite slowly, and depends on the school”.

UNICEF Education staff correctly make the point that the nature, scope and persistence of exclusion in the south is different from that of the north and that it has been important, therefore, to tailor. The evaluation fully concurs with this perspective. However, data suggest that the considerable efforts being made in the north to promote tailoring there – to analyze and act on exclusionary processes and marginalized children -- are not being matched in the south. The specific exception is the EDC programme, but here the evaluation would also agree with UNICEF’s caution that any such programme which begins to enable children to return to school risks not being able to sustain them there “beyond 2009” and the end of UNICEF funding. According to UNICEF staff, both it and the NGOs will need to “work closely with the ESAO ...to be sure (they keep) their eyes on these cases”; that besides getting these relatively few migrant children into school, they will need to support the ESAO in stay “constantly on top of the issue” at the system level.

More attention is required to effectively communicate key principles of positive discipline.

Focus group responses indicate that the idea of disciplining children through positive guidance rather than physical or psychological punishment continues to be a somewhat unstable one among parents and teachers, those adults central to children’s quality of life in school. They suggest that general awareness raising and positive discipline training need to go further in helping parents and teachers -- together with children -- explore and challenge deep-seated socio-cultural and religious norms that prevent them from seeing children as having rights of protection and agency, and challenge fears that changes to established child-rearing practices could undermine the fundamentals of being Thai - that children will “lose their Thai identity, respect of seniority, politeness...”.

“The CFS workshop concentrated on psychology rather than changing the values of the community. This is a conservative Muslim community; many do not accept positive discipline. Some see this as related to the failures of Western society e.g. students shooting teachers; it is seen as an attempt to transfer Western values here. Students are thought to pick up bad ideas from western tourists in the area.” (Teachers, Krabi)

“Parents hit children because they are stubborn. Teachers also hit students but not strongly [and] parents don’t mind because their children do wrong.....parents hit children and tell the teachers to punish by hitting, but the school punishes students by ordering them to collect garbage, or to clean toilets.” (Parents, Phang Nga & Krabi)

“Physical punishment is found in some schools with permission from parents... Some want the teacher to hit the students as in the past [but] now the teachers cannot hit the students.” (Directors, Phang Nga & Ranong)

When students do not do their homework “they are punished” or “when they quarrel teachers will investigate all and punish by beating with stick....”; “Teachers still use beating as one type of punishment [but] it is less frequent”(students, Phang-Nga)

To the extent parents equate application of child rights with condoning irresponsible behaviour, or an absence of corporal punishment with poor discipline, there continues to be a tension for teachers as they try to accommodate pressures from the Ministry of Education to apply the new rules. It is a tension that has not gone unrecognized by UNICEF through its monitoring of reactions in schools and training sessions. Recommendations have been made to the ESAO to consider expanding training to parents so they also “learn alternative responses ...to problem behaviour”. Effective discipline at home, UNICEF believes, “would help boost discipline at school...training could be done by teachers from their children’s school [to] change the mindset of parents ...”⁷³.

It was not clear from the data the extent to which such ideas were being taken up. Nor did interviews with Ministry officials reveal opinions at policy level as to the need for, or value of, this kind of training. UNICEF staff, however, note that ESAO should be encouraged to more actually support and facilitate application of the new approach, rather than simply monitoring the training.

Equating CFS with gender equality in a way that assumes action on the former will automatically lead to changes to the latter remains a threat to ensuring that schools are not only child-friendly in a general sense, but friendly for girls and other especially vulnerable children.

In principle, CFS confirms both inclusion and gender equality as distinct dimensions; in practice, gender tends to be left out, assumed to be automatic as part of all CFS activities in general. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Without specific planning, action and monitoring efforts to bring girls into school -- especially those from culturally traditional communities-- to enable their active participation in learning, to ensure gender sensitive texts and gender responsive teaching, and to deal with sexual harassment, little change in the situation for girls actually happens.

Overall, this is the case of CFS in Thailand including in the south where few ESAO, school administrators, teachers or parents claim to recognize gender as an “issue” in terms of either access or quality:

⁷³ UNICEF Trip Report: Oct 2007

“Educational opportunity between boys and girls is not different”; “boys and girls are treated equally. They can join any activity they prefer.” (Parents, Phang Nga & Ranong)

“They study and play together, [there is] no sex discrimination.” (Director, Phang Nga)

“Teachers allow boys and girls work together;...boys and girls are treated equally.” (Students, Ranong; Phang Nga)

“[Girls] are treated equally. [There are] more girls in student council and all 3 student inspectors are female.” (Teachers, Phang Nga)

The message in all of this is not that boys and girls are necessarily seen or feel “unequal”, but rather that the current “all is well” thinking is not effectively being challenged through the CFS intervention. Girls and boys may be treated and be developing equally, but the case is not yet proven and studies have suggested that sexual harassment in Thai schools continues to be a serious problem.

Answering the key questions of “what difference” UNICEF is making to schools becoming more child-friendly and whether progress is sustainable remains a challenge. Relatively few evidenced-based indicators of change from a baseline are being identified or tracked.

Overall, logic and the data suggest that children as a whole and in the mainstream are doing better since the tsunami. Schools have been recovered and, in many cases, to a higher construction and “child-friendliness” standard with the application of improved building criteria and water and sanitation facilities. Support from UNICEF, in collaboration with domestic and international NGOs, is enabling the MoE to put into fuller practice policies already on the book with respect to corporal punishment and child-centred learning.

Other than in specific project areas like that of the EDC, however, there is less of an indication that significant change for the better is being realized for children who are consistently and/or systemically excluded.

It is important to note that data are not available to confirm either of these above assessments. The MoE and UNICEF have not, as yet, explicitly put into place a performance framework that lays out what are to be considered the appropriate “expected results” of their relief to recovery and development action for CFS. The majority of statements of intent focus on inputs and outputs (e.g. numbers trained and actions completed), not outcomes (e.g. changes produced). Broad objectives, such as 40% primary schools in priority districts “practise child-friendly quality standards”, give a sense of the scope but not the depth of change expected. Without defined indicators of what progressively better “practising” schools might look like, monitoring of inputs and tailoring their adaptation have been difficult.

From this same perspective, the fact that so far steps taken so far to strengthen the capacity of especially ESAO partners in monitoring, evaluation and reporting are still largely informal is probably inhibiting CFS consolidation. As one Education Officer noted, the point is not to ask ESAO for an accounting to UNICEF since this would be inappropriate and “too much. UNICEF tries not to promote CFS as UNICEF; we are facilitators. If the ESAO commit to it, they will implement more (of it). From their perspective, CFS is already an add-on activity; if they don’t buy in, there’s no point...”.

While a fair comment, the aim of building strong monitoring and evaluation capacity is precisely to *enable* schools and ESAO to buy-in more fully. As discussed with respect to SSA, the assumption is that they will not see CFS as an add-on simply because they have better analyzed their own CFS action, tracked its benefits and made their own adaptations in realizing their inclusion and quality goals.

This is not to imply there is an absence of UNICEF accountability for what is being done and the quality or reach of the interventions. In fact, references in both interviews and documents to the regularity of staff oversight and follow up of the CFS activities provided by the Ministry and other partners were numerous. Until the closure of the southern offices, they have also been important with respect to promoting consolidation of CFS action through the immediacy of their delivery to stakeholders. Trip report notes describe quite detailed guidance to ESAO on ways to strengthen Teacher Resource Centers in their support to “effective learning”; to widen and improve participation of at-risk and small schools; to complete the analysis-action-assessment process of SSA; and to foster school-school CFS networks.

The principal weakness in all of this, however, appears to be the *limited systematization* of this review and feedback process. Externally, information on various aspects of the UNICEF/CFS programme and the general situation of education in Thailand is being generated through collaboration with various universities – chiefly Chulalongkorn, Mahidol, Khon Kaen. Internally, however, the experiences being gained and lessons being learned appear to not be moving much beyond the officers and partners involved. To the extent the institutional memory and accumulated programming wisdom of CFS interventions rest mainly in the individual officers, a necessary condition for organizational learning and sustained change is not being met.

One important difference made by UNICEF since the tsunami, though not specifically in the south, has been to catalyze more explicit use of CFS thinking into national MoE monitoring. Suggestions that CFS indicators be included in evaluations of schools have resulted in the preparation of an operational “Checklist for Child-Friendly Schools”, and the ONESQA⁷⁴ introducing more CFS terminology in its indicators for school effectiveness⁷⁵. Thus, while there may not yet be a specific monitoring system to report on CFS dimensions, there is more consistent and, hopefully, cumulative language through which to explain and assess what CFS schools are trying to do.

Lessons Learned

The goals of CFS-based education will be at risk without stronger monitoring and evaluation at an organizational level in UNICEF.

UNICEF applies a fairly ‘light hand’ to its CFS education interventions, working chiefly with Ministry of Education partners in ways that leave them free to interpret tasks and apply priorities according to their own understanding of CFS purposes, their own resources and school contexts. This is both reasonable in a setting with such strong local partners and appropriate in principle as a means of fostering ownership and sustainability; it is also, however, an approach that makes it difficult for UNICEF to know precisely what is being done, why, how well and to what effect. Further, it is an approach inclined to produce a limited focus on coherent and comprehensive capacity development where, as in the case of Thailand, it relies on a cascade model. Sustaining and building CFS change will require more consistent planning, implementation and tracking of all aspects of the intervention, and from the perspective of a full “learning cycle” that enables learners in the different sensitization, mentoring and training exercises to move from awareness of a new idea or skill, through consolidation to application in the classroom or workplace.

⁷⁴ Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment. Also included in the wider circle of agencies and offices active in setting and reinforcing standards: Bureaus of Policy and Planning; Academic Affairs and Educational Standards; Special Education; Innovative Development in Education; Nonformal and Information Education.

⁷⁵ The 2007 UNICEF/ONESQA co-sponsored “Workshop to Review Indicators for Quality Development of Basic Education Institutions” to harmonize quality indicators recommended that the MoE “consider integrating selected elements of CFS indicators, in particular process indicators, into standards and indicators for internal quality assurance ...”; and that “cooperative efforts of UNICEF, MoE, agencies concerned and the ONESQA for education quality should be strengthened so as to attain unity and harmony and to reach internationally recognized standards” (pg. x).

Systematic generation and dissemination of cumulative “lessons learned” to policy and programme users are key to achieving Building Back Better strategic commitments.

The BBB strategy committed UNICEF to improving availability of information on the situation of children in tsunami-affected provinces through documenting lessons learned in programming in the tsunami provinces, feeding these into regular programme discussions and using them to advocate on important cross cutting issues. Lessons are not being learned, however, because of a less than forthright approach to fostering analytical capacities and practices among ESAO partners. One aimed at catalyzing them to pursue explicit CFS-oriented baseline analyses of tsunami-affected schools and communities, fully apply such core “learning for change” school-based mechanisms as SSA and SMIS, and seek evidenced-based indicators of change at their own programme level. To the extent this is not happening, CFS interventions are effectively “driving blind”, and MOE / UNICEF are not generating the kind of knowledge that can be given as lessons to the national level to apply in other times and regions of the country where children become / are vulnerable to exclusion from good quality, effective public education.

While the concept of a child-friendly school can persist for a long time, its actual effect on teaching practice and learning outcomes fades without consistent, progressive and visible support from a child-friendly “system”, including civil society.

As noted by one UNICEF officer, grade score gains made in northern CFS schools - even strong ones - have tended to be “most pronounced in years 1-2” and lost in later years as Ministry of Education and donor resources for workshops and other means of engaging stakeholders stop. To sustain levels of involvement, one compensatory strategy applied in the north has been to develop partnerships able to sustain CFS momentum. This has begun on a limited basis in the south with the EDC and, more importantly, in some school-school arrangements e.g. in Krabi where the ESAO is reported to have done “remarkable work” in connecting CFS schools, directors and teachers and having these, in turn, act “as facilitators and mentors” to newly initiated schools. Pursuing these types of links in a consistent and planned way will be key to CFS expansion and consolidation.

Continued long-term commitment to partnership with the Ministry of Education at policy level, guided by a well-articulated systems development strategy underpinned by sustained technical resources and direct links to ESAO and schools, will be key to leaving a “CFS footprint” in the tsunami provinces.

Establishing the CFS programme in the south was based upon the strong foundation of a well-developed conceptual framework, established training materials, experienced mentor/trainers and built on UNICEF’s longstanding partnership with the Thai government. It is less clear that these strengths will continue to be sufficient to consolidate and, especially, to institutionalize change without the same attention to multiple, locally-designed and iterative interventions backed by continuing assessment and tailored human rights development input, as was applied in the north/northeast. In this context, the closing of the Phuket office, and losing the type of spontaneous, responsive interaction that had allowed hands-on mobilizing and monitoring of CFS actions like SSA and TRC development, represents a further challenge.

One clearly positive and potentially significant finding of the evaluation relevant in this regard was the *culture of informal partner mentoring* evolving between UNICEF Education officers and partners. Through “regular visits” with ESAO, officers checked whether they were “implementing according to the [CFS] plan”, discussing “not only statistics such as the number of schools, but making sure that educational supervisors understood the approach ... talked with the language of CFS... [supported a] school management approach [that had] children as center and core of activities”. Meetings were opportunities to review together “their understanding of the issues”, to ensure they were able to “take the principles and apply them further on; ...to see that each school aligns with CFS...”. These are the kinds of exchange and learning that will need to continue to be encouraged from Bangkok.

5. BUILDING BACK BETTER LOCAL CAPACITY

In order to ensure the rights and well-being of all children in Thailand, there is an acknowledged need for greater capacity among local service providers, including government authorities. At the same time, the most vulnerable children and families have to be empowered by giving them the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to help themselves and to insist on the fulfillment of their rights to basic services, such as health care and education. Accordingly, a major strand of UNICEF's work over the last three years that has not grown out of experience from the tsunami response but, as indicated in Chapter 2, has had earlier origins has been to strengthen local capacity to address the needs of children.

In the period under review, such work has been structured with respect to two programme strands: one addressing capacity to develop local authority plans to address issues for children and youth, and the other focused on supporting behaviour change initiatives at local level. The 2007-2011 Country Plan states the aims of these programmes are 'to strengthen capacities at the sub-national level for planning and action on children's rights' and 'to promote positive child care behavior/practices in the family and community' respectively⁷⁶. From 2009, these two programme strands are to be more explicitly integrated, a move that the evaluation team supports. However, for the purposes of this evaluation, they have been reviewed separately in the following sections.

5.1 Local Capacity Building for Children and Youth Planning

Key Questions and Methods

Given that this was effectively a new area of, and approach to, programming for UNICEF, the evaluation initially considered the rationale for the focus and approach adopted. With a major focus of the capacity strengthening approach adopted involving training, we also addressed how training events and other inputs had been received. Although, given the short timescale since implementation, impacts on children's well-being were unlikely to be noted. We did, however, investigate evidence that strengthened processes for children and youth planning were being established and were producing improved local plans. We also addressed what barriers to progress have been experienced, and how might these be overcome.

The primary data analyzed in this section derive from qualitative group interviews with concerned stakeholders at the local level. The group interviews were intended to capture perceptions and opinions of the key stakeholders of the local capacity program at the level of tambons and municipalities. The participants in these interviews included TAO permanent secretaries, executive officials, planning officials and other members of planning committee. All 350 local authorities in the six tsunami affected provinces were covered by this program, and with the resources available it was clearly impossible to visit more than a small fraction of these. For efficiency, we selected tambons and municipalities to visit based upon their engagement with the child protection system pilots, but also supplemented this with visits to adjacent tambons that were not engaged in that program. In total, we visited eight local authorities.

This fieldwork data was supplemented with key informant interviews with UNICEF staff and Mol/DLA officials. Following the provincial fieldwork, individual structured interviews were conducted with key Ministry of Interior officials in Bangkok. Phone interviews were conducted with UNICEF and Mol staff members. Individual face-to-face structured interviews were also conducted with current local capacity building staff in Bangkok. A full list of persons contacted is found in Annex B.

Finally, document review was conducted both of descriptive project documents and of primary source material such as annual review meeting minutes, project achievement reports, UNICEF annual reports and, especially, available Tambon Children and Youth Plans. A

⁷⁶ A third programming element grouped within the Country Plan aimed 'to document and share experiences along with best practices in furthering children's rights with other countries through South-South cooperation' is not addressed.

sample of twenty Children & Youth Plans – drawn from the 74 that were made available to the evaluation team by the Ministry of Interior in the latter stages of the evaluation - were systematically reviewed with respect to pre-determined quality criteria. These quality criteria were selected on the basis of issues emphasized in training on the preparation of the reports: promoting awareness of human rights, identification of age-appropriate activities, and evidence of analysis of needs shaping proposed activities.

UNICEF Response

Recognizing the increasing roles and duties of local authorities in social development in recent years, the Department of Local Administration (DLA) of the Ministry of Interior agreed in 2006 to work in partnership with UNICEF to strengthen capacities of both government and non-government sectors at the sub-national/local levels, in order to be able to better respond to children's rights, especially those in vulnerable situations.

The core programme activities through 2007 and 2008 in the tsunami-affected provinces comprised:

Local Capacity Assessment: This assessment, conducted in 2007, included a review of official documents, administration of questionnaires to local authorities, and field visits. It provided baseline information on the current capacities of all services providers and stakeholders including local authorities in planning and action for children. The assessment resulted in important findings that provided a potentially sound basis for subsequent capacity strengthening efforts. For example, the assessment confirmed that one of the consistent priorities for Tambon Administrative Organizations (TAOs) was to set up child care centers and to fund sports activities, without a clear rationale for such priorities. There was little evidence of commitment to encouraging participation of children or in broader youth development activities. Local authorities also tended to implement children and youth development projects/activities in accordance with their pre-existing budget framework and not engage in discussion of the appropriateness of such historical allocations. Projects and activities were found to be fragmented, not supporting the holistic development of children and frequently lacked continuity in their implementation in relation to children's development needs.

Assessment of Health and Nutritional Status of Underprivileged Women and Children in Six Tsunami Affected Provinces: This rapid health assessment conducted in 2007 provided information on numbers and locations of vulnerable children and current disparities. It showed many gaps which need to be addressed, especially among the vulnerable groups who have difficulties in getting access to health services such as the Moken (sea gypsies) and migrant people.

Children's Rights and Local Planning for Children Advocacy Workshop. This 2007 meeting was targeted at executive officers of Local Authorities (LAs) to promote awareness and commitment to improved children and youth planning at tambon and municipality level.

Provincial Training Workshops. These workshops were held in each of the six tsunami-affected provinces, targeting staff from all 350 tambons and municipalities. The primary objectives of these workshops were to provide knowledge and understanding of children's rights, awareness of current circumstances of children and women, and approaches to local planning for children. Participants attending the training workshops included representatives from across a number of sectors such as community leaders, health officers, teachers, and local authority staffs. LAs were asked to form a multi-sectoral team (MST) on children's rights and local planning for children following the first workshop, including (but not restricted to) participants at the workshop. After the second workshop, LAs were expected to use the MST to formulate a children and youth plan and submit it to the Provincial Office for Local Administration who would, in turn, send it to the DLA office in Bangkok. A DLA official responsible for UNICEF and DLA cooperation summarized two anticipated outputs from these trainings: 1) local authorities were able to conceptualize the idea of a children's plan, and 2) increased capacity in "transferring concepts into plans and activities". To ensure this latter

output, the children and youth plans were to be used to inform the overall local authority (three-year) plan⁷⁷, which forms the basis for all tambon and municipality funded activities.

Materials on Child Rights & Development. At or after these training workshops a significant amount of materials (relevant publications or materials developed specifically for the initiative) were distributed. These included books on child development, a manual on children's rights, and documentation to support local authorities in their work on children and youth development.

Box 5.2 Documents Developed and Distributed

- Manual for Children and Youth Development Implementation
- Child Rights and Local Planning for Children and Youth, 2008
- Child Development Booklet
- Child Rights Booklet

Overall, this response reflects a sound analysis of the potential contribution of local authorities to more effective promotion of child rights and well-being, commitment to thorough assessment of constraints in local capacity, and the utilization of such information in developing good technical and action-oriented materials. In retrospect, as is reinforced in the next section, the major weakness of the response appears to have been in technical support to, and monitoring of, the development of the targeted children and youth plans, and the utilization of such planning in the development of the three-year LA plans.

Findings

Given the mandate of local authorities and the findings of the local capacity assessment, improving local processes of children and youth planning is an appropriate focus.

UNICEF had worked with the Urban Development Group of the Mol in municipalities in the early 1990s, but had not been specifically engaged in work with this Ministry until the tsunami prompted engagement with tambons in the tsunami-affected areas. As previously noted, engagement with the tsunami response and recovery phase signaled many needs in the tsunami-affected provinces regarding the situation of children. Local authorities are seen as playing an increasingly important role in development, with 35 per cent of government budgets now spent at the local level. Local authorities, though they are the smallest governing organizations, have become increasingly strong with the process of decentralization. They now have authority to manage their own budget and develop policy and work plans. In consequence, local authorities are well placed for a key role in addressing the problems of children and, more generally, supporting more child-friendly environments in their communities.

Despite their mandate and strategic role for such work the Mol has, however, come to recognize the significant weaknesses of local authority capacities to deal with quality of life improvement, especially in relation to children and youth development. Scrutiny of pre-existing tambon plans confirms a lack of awareness of key issues on children's rights and participation, and a formulaic dependence on particular forms of activity, such as youth camps, without a clear basis for their prioritization.

Clear engagement of key Mol/DLA officials has been secured for this initiative.

The Mol's current commitment in addressing this appears to have been very much related to advocacy for such work from UNICEF in the post-tsunami period, culminating in the

⁷⁷ Prepared by mid-year for a three-year planning cycle beginning the next year. Different LAs are on differing planning cycles, i.e. some prepared in 2007 for a 2008-2010 plan, others in 2008 for a 2009-11 plan. Budgets, potentially adjusted from three-year plan proposals, are approved on an annual basis.

establishment of UNICEF's Local Capacity Building Programme in 2006. The director of this programme brought with her considerable knowledge of work within Thai government systems and has established good working relations with senior officers in the Mol. Such relations have been translated to clear policy commitments and profiling of children's issues in ministry publications. Given the 'command structure' of local government in Thailand such commitment is a vital prerequisite to secure engagement of local authorities. Although political commitment is crucial, clearly local capacities also need to be strengthened if tambon and municipality plans are to reflect greater awareness of the needs and circumstances of children. It was thus an important success to additionally secure recognition for the need for sustained investment in capacities at local level to meet the objective of more effective planning.

The content of trainings was broadly appropriate and appreciated.

Review of the curriculum and materials used for training suggests that they were generally of high quality and addressed an appropriate range of topics at an appropriate level. The one major lapse in content was the scant attention given to issues of gender. Broader child rights issues were, however, well covered, and the 'assessment-analysis-action' structure suggested for planning was sound and accessible.

The trainings were commented upon positively in evaluations collected at the time of delivery, and those interviewed at tambon and municipality level recalling the training generally reinforced the positive appreciation of coverage. Informants appreciated the effort of UNICEF in targeting improved capacities of local authorities so that they could implement children related activities. Specific benefits included the opportunity to learn more about child rights and learn how to plan activities related to children's discrete developmental needs at different ages. The workshop gave them more examples of activities, as well as opportunities for sharing and learning experiences with other TAOs.

The distinctiveness of the Children & Youth Planning initiative was often unclear.

Notwithstanding appreciation for the trainings, many informants the distinctiveness of the training received was unclear. With decentralization, local authorities and local people are targets for numerous development initiatives and receive much training. Only half of the groups interviewed could recall the training workshop referred to and describe any of the training curriculum and activities (see table 5.1). This is not a major concern in its own right but, taken together with the evidence elaborated in the remainder of this section, hints at the current lack of traction of the initiative on local planning processes.

Table 5.1 Reports from Group Interviews at Tambons

Tambon	Recall training on children & youth plan?	MST has met? ⁷⁸	Youth council involved in planning?	C&Y Plan available at time of visit?
Ranong	1/3	0/3	0/3	1/3
Phang Nga	1/3	1/4	1/3	0/3
Krabi	2/2	1/2	0/2	2/2
Total	4/8	2/9	1/8	3/8

MSTs currently appear to be a fragile basis for planning activity.

Feedback collected by participants at the second local planning workshop had indicated that 91 percent of LAs had established MSTs, and 55 percent of LAs were engaged in planning. However, such data is unlikely to be a reliable source of gauging activity at tambon and municipality level, as it is self-reported in the context of clear expectations of adherence to recommended actions. Although based upon a small sample, with only two of nine LAs able

⁷⁸ Data available re: establishment of MST available by telephone for additional tambon in Phang Nga.

to confirm that a MST had been established and met, our estimate that around one in four LAs had convened as MST is likely to be a safer judgment.

Discussions at tambons and municipalities indicated significant uncertainty over the role and function of the MST. Some people were named as members of a MST but were not aware that they had been nominated. There was confusion over the term “multi-sectoral team” in local authorities that have the New Family Development Centers associated with UNICEF’s Child Protection programme. The structure of the NFDC also includes a MST for child protection. When the evaluation team asked for interviews with the MST, we were introduced to several of these. Additionally, a number of planning officials noted that a major problem with utilizing multi-sectoral teams for planning was conflicting schedules amongst members.

Several TAOs noted that they already had three teams linked to the preparation of the 3 year plan, and were unsure of the role of another entity in this process. Each TAO has a local planning committee, a working group for planning, and monitoring committee. All local authorities that were interviewed used the same strategy for planning, with local officials largely responsible for drafting the plan and related activities and then seeking agreement on this through utilization of public hearings. It is unclear how the establishment of a MST and preparation of a discrete Children and Youth Plan fitted into this process or, indeed, into the process of obtaining formal approval of budgets for youth and children’s activities by the required local authority council (as with all areas of the budget) on an annual basis.

There is currently little evidence of engagement of children and youth in the development of plans outside of arrangements for public hearings.

These pre-existing processes for planning somewhat explain the disappointing levels of consultation with youth councils during the course of planning indicated in Table 2.1. Although not formally an explicit expectation of the children and youth plans that were to be prepared following the training workshops, the failure to engage youth through the major structure of youth organization at the local level is an indication of a lack of awareness of the need for explicit attempts to engage children and youth required for effective participation. A number of tambons reported that young people could make their views known in the context of the general public hearings on the Tambon Plan, but there were clearly not high expectations of involvement by this means.⁷⁹

Availability and use of Children and Youth Plans is currently limited.

Given all of the above it is not surprising to note that we found evidence of production and availability of a Children and Youth Plan at only three tambons visited. Initial reports from the Mol/DLA estimated that approximately 80 percent of LAs had produced a discrete Children and Youth Plan following the training workshops. Subsequently, however, it was confirmed that only 74 reports had been received by the Mol. Although there was some confusion as to whether there was a clear expectation that tambons producing reports would forward them to the Mol – through provinces, as appropriate – this suggests a far lower estimate of completion. Based upon our findings at tambon level, it would seem appropriate to judge that only between 20 percent and 40 percent of tambons actually produced plans as specified.

This is clearly a disappointing finding given the envisioned role of the Children and Youth Plan as a mechanism of focusing the attention of a suitable range of stakeholders on the needs of children and thereby ensuring appropriate activities for children and youth. Discussion revealed uncertainty on the role of the Children and Youth Plan, similar to that noted above regarding the MST. Among local authorities interviewed, some reported that they had produced the Children and Youth Plan but were uncertain if this had been a requirement. Others could not recall whether they had submitted the plan as required by the DLA. Some local authorities reported that they did not know whether there was a separate plan for children and youth required because the responsible person who attended the workshop had been transferred to other offices.

⁷⁹ This general lack of engagement with children and youth is reinforced by the audit of available plans (see below) that infrequently referenced direct consultation with children in their development.

Available Children and Youth Plans indicate significant strengthening is required to achieve local needs-based planning.

Of the 74 Children and Youth Plans that were made available to the evaluation team in the latter stages of the evaluation, we selected a sample of twenty for systematic audit. As noted earlier, the plans were assessed against three quality criteria related to the training received for their preparation (see Box 5.4).

Box 5.4 Criteria for Assessing Quality of Children & Youth Plans

- Promoting Awareness of Child Rights
- Specifying Age Appropriate Activities
- Evidence of Analysis of Needs Shaping Proposed Activities

Plans were graded on a three-point scale with respect to each criteria: 0 representing weak evidence, 1 some evidence and 2 strong evidence of that criteria being fulfilled. Average scores for each criteria are noted below in Table 5.2. Summing scores across criteria for a total plan score, three scoring bands were defined: 0-2: weak; 3-4: moderate; and 5-6: strong. The number of plans rated as scoring within each band is shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.2 Average Scores for Children & Youth Plans On Specific Quality Criteria

Promoting Child Rights	Age Appropriate Activities	Needs Analysis	Shapes Activities
1.05	1.55	0.95	

Table 5.3 Children & Youth Plans Falling Within Each Scoring Band

Weak	Moderate	Strong
4	15	1

Plans were generally strongest in specifying a range of age appropriate activities. In some instances, this was demonstrated with specification of detailed responses to the circumstances of children of certain ages. The Klong Phon plan, for instance, targeted improvements at the child care center, nutrition, and appropriate toys for children under the age of five years; aspects of religious and moral practice for those between the ages of 6 and 14 years, and income generating activities for youth aged 15 to 25 years. Awareness of child rights was consistently evidenced in terms of noting the four aspects of child rights covered in the trainings, but the plan from Muang Kluang was unusual in building upon this to plan specific activities: in this case a survey of children without citizenship. More generally, plans were most disappointing with respect to the weak evidence that proposed activities related to an engagement with analysis of local needs. There was a tendency for proposed activities to be ‘formulaic’, following the examples provided on the *pro forma* provided in the course of training rather than reflecting specific local circumstances.

As Table 5.3 suggests, putting these findings together – that from Muang Kluang – could be considered as strong, and thus a solid basis for advocacy for children’s needs within the local authority planning process. Only four of the plans were judged as weak, failing to provide any substantive advocacy for the needs of children. But the remaining fifteen, while addressing appropriate elements, did so in a manner unlikely to significantly shift the agenda of local authorities in terms of the evidence they provided of children’s needs and appropriate activities to respond to them. Preparation of such plans may, in and of itself, raise the profile of issues for children at the tambon level. But such plans require significant strengthening if they are to provide the basis for supporting development of three-year local plans in a more informed manner.

Box 5.3 Good Practice of Local Planning for Children and Youth Muang Kluang TAO, Ranong

While the general picture from discussions was of a lack of innovation in planning processes regarding the circumstances of children, there were some examples of emerging good practice. In Muang Khuang:

- A multi-sectoral team consisting of representatives from sectors including health, civil society, social security and human development, education, etc. was used to develop the TAO plan for children and youth.
- The CPMS database was utilized for the situation analysis of children's needs.
- Problems of children were identified across four discrete groups:
 - 0-5 years: malnutrition, lack of qualified personnel in education and appropriate educational material for child development, broken families, unregistered children
 - 6-14 years: under weight, developmental delays, vulnerability to drug addiction and premature sexuality, broken families, unregistered children
 - 15-25 years: not continuing higher education, unemployment, early marriage
 - Children with disabilities: learning disorder, physical disability, autism
- Appropriate activities were then proposed for each of these groups:
 - 0-5 years: search for under-weight children, training on nutrition for parents, food supplementation, support for educational material, child caretaker development, life skill training for families, search for unregistered children
 - 6-14 years: awareness raising for higher education among parents, awareness raising on anti-drug addiction, sex education
 - 15-25 years: promotion of higher education, occupational training, anti-drug training, sex education
 - Children with disabilities: support of appropriate material for child development, arrangement for individual lessons

Use of the simple audit framework described above may – with adjustment, as required - have a role in providing formative feedback to MSTs preparing Children & Youth Plans from supervisory officers. Noting the constraints on such capacity, it may also be appropriate to consider its use as a mechanism of mutual peer-review of plans by MSTs from neighboring tambons. Formal audit of a sample of plans should also feature within the routine annual monitoring of the programme.

There is little evidence that the quality of planning for children and youth has been significantly strengthened to-date.

Ultimately, impacts on the lives of children and youth will be through the quality of local plans put in place and funded, rather than through adherence to particular procedures aimed to strengthen such planning. There is presently little evidence of a significant increase in such quality, however.

Some TAO planning officers suggested that after attending the workshop they have, more carefully learned about analyzing more carefully the situation of children and youth, searching for the real problems of children in each age group. They felt as if could now more effectively pinpoint problems and plan appropriate activities to solve these problems. They cited examples of activities initiated through this process. For instance, working on development issues for children with disabilities and encouraging appropriate child care practices.

On the other hand, other TAOs admitted that even though they had formulated a separate Children and Youth Plan, there was nothing really new in their proposals. Moreover, given that the budget for work with children and youth had not increased, they could not propose many activities. Even where local authorities had formed a multi-sectoral team for children

and youth planning, it was generally viewed as impossible for them to make any significant changes if the top executive officials were not interested in children and youth development.

Inspection of available three-year plans suggests that, in content and process, these generally appear to be being shaped by existing procedures and assumptions. Across all six provinces a modest increase of proportional spend by LAs on children and youth activities was indicated between 2008 and 2009 (4.0 percent to 4.8 percent). However, this calculation is based upon self-report estimates by tambon officials at the end of one of the planning workshops, and it is difficult to judge the reliability of these figures.

Lessons Learned

There appear to be two major lessons to be drawn from the last two years' experience of working on the local capacity building programme. These are of relevance to national, rather than wider international, processes at present.

UNICEF needs to work to sustain government engagement – at Ministry, Provincial and LA Executive levels – to secure effective progress in local planning and provision for children and youth.

It was noted earlier that the high-level of support for this initiative in the MoI was key to its implementation, and that UNICEF played a key role in advocating for the Ministry to give an enhanced profile to children and youth activities. Such commitment at ministry level is a key factor in encouraging local authorities to pay more attention to children and youth. However, the programme Steering Committee (involving senior officials) meets only once a year, so there is not a high degree of awareness of programme details, particularly with regular changes in personnel. The administrative structure of the Department of Local Administration also creates difficulties for the Ministry to give a strong lead to the project. The local capacity programme involves different divisions in the department, so to reach mutual agreement line of command is complicated. The division that has direct responsibility on children and youth development was not involved in this project. More generally, MoI/DLA officers admitted that they have little background or training on children and youth development, and that they were somewhat dependent on assistance from colleagues with the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

Commitment of TAO executive chiefs has also been signaled as major factor in securing real progress on the place of services for children and youth at the local level. Actively involving TAO executive administrators in the programme process would be one means of achieving this. However, as a DLA official observed, the TAO chief executives did not attend the trainings and were often unaware of the expectations of its impact on planning and activities. As the Programme Annual Review noted in 2007, in such circumstances it is difficult for the multi-sectoral teams to make any significant impacts. However, Klongpon TAO planning officials reported that that the involvement of their vice TAO president in the training workshop and planning process made it easier to have Children and Youth Plan approved for budget. Moreover, the budget for child development in this TAO has gradually increased.

In the situation of both central ministry and local authority executive engagement being crucial to programme progress, the role of the intermediary layer of government – the Province – clearly comes into play as a crucial linkage between central and local authority. The current programme engagement with provincial officers, by UNICEF staff and others, appears inappropriately weak. With confusion about the role of MSTs and the requirements for Children and Youth Plans, and who they should be sent to when they are prepared etc., provincial DLA officers have a key role to play both to follow-up on the progress of planning at the local level, and to pass such information to central ministry in Bangkok. This weakness raises the other major lesson from the evaluation of this area of programming.

There is a need to strengthen monitoring functions and technical support for children and youth planning.

Although the local capacity building project has effectively monitored inputs over the last two years, it has done less well with monitoring the outputs anticipated to flow from them. It was documented in the minutes of the 2007 Annual Review that a UNICEF official drew attention to apparent weaknesses in monitoring. The findings of the current evaluation suggest weak programme influence on outputs believed to support stronger local planning for children and youth activities: the establishment of MSTs and preparation of a discrete Children and Youth Plan to focus planning activities in this area. Until the model is formally changed, and training explicitly targets other mechanisms for improving planning processes, it is vital that the establishment of MSTs and the production of strong children and youth plans be outputs readily identifiable within any tambon. This is not the responsibility of a periodic evaluation, but of routine monitoring.

The current monitoring strategy appears to be focused on organizing an annual meeting to review progress and share experience. This seems to be insufficient to gather data of a form that could be used to identify problems that LAs are experiencing in developing effective plans, and provide appropriate support to them. Though the programme has requested the Provincial Office for Local Administration chase up the submission of children plans, this appears to have been ineffective. This office at the provincial level is currently cast in the role of administrator or workshop coordinator, and little else. However, there is a clear need for a variety of other roles to be fulfilled: not just monitoring, but training, technical support and supervision. Locating such functions at the provincial level makes clear sense. As one DLA officer noted, such a decentralization strategy would create a sense of belonging and would encourage serious participation in the initiative.

It is suggested here that UNICEF reviews its monitoring and evaluation requirements for the local capacity building (LCB) work and, unless the adopted programme model adopted significantly changes, that UNICEF sets clear expectations of receiving information on the number of MSTs in operation and the number of children and youth plans prepared (signaled by submission to Provincial and central Mol). Provincial government is clearly the best placed to provide such data on a regular basis, with the establishment of appropriate systems. Such systems should support drawing provincial staff into related technical support functions to TAOs, providing guidance on the production of plan as required.

With these systems in place, UNICEF will then be well positioned to annually evaluate the quality of children and youth plans (against the criteria suggested here) and, more crucially, the quality of three-year plans informed by the preparation of these discrete children and youth plans. This evaluation mechanism would also appropriately consider trends in the budget allocated in these plans to children's activities, and the annual budgets subsequently confirmed by LAs in the annual budgeting round.

5.2 Behaviour Change Communication

Key Questions and Methods

The focus of this section is the extent to which there was a sound rationale for the approach adopted for behaviour change communication work in tsunami-affected provinces within the 'Build Back Better' strategy, and how effective the programme has been in achieving targeted goals. Supplementary questions concerned how well communication workshops and other inputs were received, barriers to progress that have been experienced, and how these might be overcome.

Groups of change agents in 3 sub-districts were interviewed. Each group comprised of the activity focal point, change agents who received training and those who did not receive training. Following the provincial fieldwork, individual structured interviews were conducted with key Ministry of Interior officials in Bangkok. Phone interviews were conducted with UNICEF and Mol staff members. Individual face-to-face structured interviews were also conducted with current local capacity building staff in Bangkok. Document review included

examination of project reports detailing the 12 Behavior Change Communication (BCC) projects.

UNICEF Response

UNICEF's BCC programme in tsunami-affected provinces has aimed to promote positive child care behaviors in families and communities, using participatory learning and action (PLA) approaches. It has involved two major activities in the 2007-2008 period: a baseline review of child care practice in families and communities across the six provinces; and, subsequently, a targeted programme of participatory learning and communication training in 12 LAs.

The programme started in 2007 with a desk review of child rearing behaviors in six tsunami-affected provinces. After the desk review, a baseline survey on child care practices was implemented in these provinces. The target population for this survey explicitly included Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims, migrant people, Thai Mai (*Moken* or sea gypsies) and poor people living in urban areas in the six tsunami affected provinces. The assessment had a major child rearing and breast-feeding focus, and utilized both a survey approach and focus groups. This baseline assessment was potentially a sound basis for planning interventions, but was unduly delayed in its implementation and dissemination, restricting the time available for interventions based upon its findings.

A roundtable meeting with stakeholders was held in November 2007 to solicit inputs to develop key messages that were based on baseline assessment results for strategic communication interventions aimed at promoting positive parenting and child care practice among the target vulnerable populations. Building on this discussion, activities for behavior change communication were planned by commissioning Prince of Songkhla University to develop a programme of trainings that would lead to local teams of 'change agents' to implement behaviour change communication projects in their locality. This work appears to have been well planned and implemented, but did not begin until late in the year, with an apparent deadline for completion related to the closure of the Phuket office and the retirement of the responsible BCC officer.

The phases of this programme included:

- Communication skill training for groups of "change agents" from 12 pilot communities across the six tsunami affected provinces in August. These change agents were representatives from communities who would initiate the behavioral change communication project in local communities. The training workshop on "Dialogue with Family and Community" used "new consciousness approach" aimed to enhance the interpersonal communication skill of change agents. At the end of the workshop the change agents were asked to submit project proposals on BCC strategic intervention for positive child care and practices, for seed funding support from UNICEF. Twelve project proposals were submitted and seed funding (of 20,000Bht) was provided for implementation.
- Change agents then implemented project activities in the community during August to September 2008. These addressed a range of issues including exclusive breastfeeding, nutrition for growing children, personal hygiene, positive parenting, and 'safe sex'. The full listing of projects is given in Box 5.5.
- The programme ended with opportunities to share best practices and models at the provincial and national level for potential replication in other regions in Thailand in October 2008.

Findings

The baseline survey served as a sound basis for defining priorities and target groups.

The principle of commissioning an in-depth study of local practices was a sound one, and the report identified a number of issues relevant to potential behaviour change programming. However, the delay in its implementation and dissemination led to inappropriate compression of the apparent 'window' for the subsequent training and implementation.

Change Agents appreciated the approach and coverage of trainings.

According to interviews with change agents, the training workshops were very interesting and much appreciated by those who attended. It was not seen as a workshop that provided knowledge and instructed how to implement a project; it was considered a "new approach". The participants explained that the training was about how to live with others, especially how to listen more effectively to diverse opinions. Change agents not only reported that they felt that this had equipped them for community consultations, but such equipping appeared to be evidenced in the scope and range of many of the projects.

The programme provided some examples of best practice in documenting activity and achievement.

Throughout the intervention process, the assigned research team from Prince of Songkhla University documented engagement with communities and their emerging plans in both written and video formats. The team also developed "BCC intervention models" based upon the change agents' experience, which were to be submitted to MoI/DLA for sharing lessons learned with other target provinces.

The programme elicited a range of innovative local projects in a short timescale.

While in the course of reviewing local Children and Youth Plans, little evidence of innovation was found. However the BCC projects provided vivid evidence of the potential for local people to come up with fresh ideas given appropriate support.

Box 5.5 BCC Projects Across the Twelve Pilot Sites

- "Parents Know What, Youth Knows How" (anti drug abuse) by Muang Kluang TAO, Ranong
- "Breastfeeding Promotion among Newly Delivered Mothers" by Bangrin TAO, Ranong
- "Young Child Development" (breastfeeding and mobile toys) by Kuraburi TAO, Phangnga
- "Breastfeeding Promotion" by Kukkak TAO, Phang Nga
- "Kamala New Generation loves Sports" (anti drug abuse) by Kamala TAO, Phuket
- "Teen Corner in Baan Koh Sirae School" by Rasada TAO, Phuket
- "Promoting Positive Child Care Practice Through Traditional Media and Performance" by Koh Lanta Yai TAO, Krabi
- "Heaven in Family" by Saladan TAO, Krabi
- "Brave Young People Against Drug through traditional performance" by Kuan Thani TAO, Trang
- "New Green Generation in Bangmark", by Bangmark TAO, Trang
- "Young Women of Pakbara and Traditional Arts Activities" by Paknam TAO, Satun
- "My children come and enjoy your recreation here" (mobile toys) by Kampeng TAO, Satun

One group of change agents that worked on the provision of toys to disadvantaged children aged 0-6 years assessed their achievement as 80 percent effective. Evidence was drawn from observations: previously children of this particular disadvantage group did not know how to play and to share toys among friends.

Other groups who worked on breastfeeding stated that they had been successful in engaging 'hard to reach' target groups such as migrants and Moken mothers. These target groups had participated in the training sessions and practice breastfeeding. One group working on such trainings estimated that they were 80 percent to 90 percent successful, which was "higher than our expectation" (*Khuk Khak TAO*).

Projects served to effectively galvanize local people into action and plan for longer-term developments.

All groups of change agents saw the importance of their work and reported their wish to continue. They commonly acknowledged that a project can be sustainable only if the TAO – or some other authority - is convinced and accepts the idea. Incorporation into the local plan – and the subsequent allocation of budget to activities by this process – was accepted as the key goal. This reinforces the potential value of the MST and Children and Youth Plan in establishing a route to this goal – though connections to such processes in the communities visited were weak.

Rather, change agents had had to display innovation and persistence in seeking a longer-term future for their projects. One TAO official who was a member of the *Bang Rin* change agent group had used his role and connections to propose the incorporation of his group's project into the three-year plan of that Municipality. A process of negotiation between group members and the local authority was anticipated. If successful, it was acknowledged that more volunteers would be needed, and the first core group was planning to transition to the role of mentors.

The change agent for the breastfeeding project implemented in Khuk Khak sub-district was seeking support for continuation of this work through the local health center, judging that receipt of funds from the Office of National Health Assurance would be an easier path than funding from the TAO. She thought that it would be much more difficult to receive funding from TAO. Many groups, such as that in Kraburi, pointed to the potential importance of support from the Mayor in seeking funding, though decisions had to await formalization through the annual budgeting cycle.

There is a need to more coherently connect initiatives at the local level.

Although the Local Capacity Development of children and youth planning and Behavioral Change Communication projects are administratively under the same UNICEF programme area, the implementation of these projects was not in any way connected. The Multi-Sectoral Team for planning, for instance, did not have any role in behavioral change projects. At the very least there would seem to be value in attaching change agents to support the work of MSTs. There are, however, wider opportunities for conceptually and strategically connecting these - and other – initiatives at the local level.

Lessons Learned

Effective monitoring and technical supervision brings great programmatic benefits, and can be achieved in resource- and time-constrained circumstances.

High levels of monitoring by Prince of Songkhla University during the project development stage appear to have been effective in developing sound proposals. This input was complemented by technical input to teams on project approach and report-writing, a level of close technical support that appears to be a model for other areas of programming.

It was a remarkable achievement to facilitate a locally-owned process of project specification and completion in such a tight time-scale. However, it demonstrates the capacities and enthusiasms of local people provided with strong, coherent technical support focused on targeted task completion.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND WIDER INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING

6.1 Impact of Tsunami Response on General Quality of Programming

As noted, a key focus of the evaluation was reflection on the strategy of 'mainstreaming' tsunami-response efforts and building on existing UNICEF Country Office (CO) programming strengths. Attention has principally been upon the benefits to programming in tsunami-affected provinces of this strategy. It is strategically appropriate, however, to also consider influence in the other direction. That is, how did work in tsunami-affected provinces influence the wider work of UNICEF in Thailand?

As previously noted, there was some concern in the early months of the tsunami response about the delays in 'regular programming' created by having to attend to meeting the needs of the emergency. During the course of the evaluation, however, UNICEF staff more generally commented on the positive impact of engagement with the tsunami response on the quality of UNICEF's country programming. Other evaluation findings broadly support this linkage. The influence of this engagement appears to have brought rather positive benefits in two main areas: staff experience and the availability of significant resources for the CO agenda of 'building replicable models'.

Staff experience

The demographic profile of national staff within the UNICEF Thailand office tends towards young, college-educated individuals with relevant disciplinary qualifications and agency expertise, but with relatively limited fieldwork experience. In the immediate wake of the tsunami such individuals found their short-term deployments into tsunami-affected areas very demanding. However, the experience of working through the complex web of relationships involved in tsunami-response bolstered important capacity across all programs of the country office. The Phuket Office established an operational base for UNICEF which, while not in the long-term strategic vision of UNICEF in Thailand, provided an important foundation for field learning. It is clear that such engagement usefully informed a broad range of activities and strategic decisions over the last four years.

This said, it is equally clear that the closure of the Phuket office marks, both symbolically and practically, the end to this phase of engagement with implementation. Further, with natural turnover, the benefits of such engagement are now gradually being lost. Given the positive impact of such engagement on general programming, it is appropriate for UNICEF Thailand to consider alternative strategies to ensure that staff continues to be exposed to issues of program implementation beyond what they will experience through supervisory visits and field visits with partners. The office might usefully consider, for example, encouraging short-term (one or two week) attachments for staff with partner organizations. The costs and disruption to programming associated with such measures would be limited, but the potential benefits significant.

Resources for advancing the agenda of 'building replicable models'.

The 2002-2006 County Plan signaled UNICEF Thailand's commitment to 'building replicable models' of services for children but opportunities and resources for such innovation were limited. A significant portion of the UNICEF Thailand \$22 million allocation from tsunami appeal funds has ultimately gone to such activity, whether this was promoting a model child protection system or developing a means of shaping local authority planning regarding activities for children and youth. Tsunami monies provided an unprecedented opportunity to 'build (back) better' and demonstrate potential service models that the Thai government and other partners could, in due course, take to scale. This report later examines some of the challenges of managing such a series of innovation initiatives and how such innovation might have been more effectively managed. Here, it is simply noted that the commitment of UNICEF Thailand to relate its work in the tsunami-affected provinces so directly to establishing program models –CPMRS, Children and Youth Plans etc. – of explicit relevance to national

programme agendas brought very clear benefit to such programming. Local capacity building initiatives targeted to northern provinces are being shaped by experience in the tsunami-affected south, as are initiatives in child protection. In some cases learning has not yet established a 'replicable model', but the documented challenges in seeking to establish one (e.g. regarding the professional or paraprofessional basis of CP case managers at local authority level) are usefully informing such developments.

6.2 Policy-level Engagement

Another trend over the past four years that may be attributed in part to relationships forged by the tsunami emergency response and the subsequent work to 'Build Back Better' is enhanced policy-level engagement with relevant ministries in a few key areas. Although the 2006 country programme of cooperation between the Royal Thai Government and UNICEF indicates a significant historical track-record of engagement by UNICEF with relevant ministries, the 'intelligence' with which such engagement has been conducted appears to have been enhanced in recent years.

In advancing its agenda for strengthening child protection systems, for instance, UNICEF has navigated a complex network of relationships between the Ministry of Social Welfare and Human Security, the Secretariat of the National Child Protection Committee based within that ministry, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior (responsible for local government structures) and a range of other relevant government bodies (e.g. regarding juvenile justice). Building upon relationships established in the Child Protection Working Group established at the time of the tsunami, such engagement has – through conferences, workshops and regular meetings – identified clear 'champions' for issues (such as the MSWHC/Office of Women's Affairs) and seen frameworks such as the CPMS adopted as policy by a number of provinces.

As noted in Chapter 5, UNICEF has secured strong working relationships with the MoI/DLA in promoting the agenda of strengthened local planning for children, with indications in reports and ministry publications of a significant increased policy awareness of children issues in the last two years. In the education sector there has been less clear evidence of new areas of policy engagement beyond those long-standing with the MoE, although, as noted below, there has been recent valuable dialogue on the issue of gender.

6.3 Reaching the Most Vulnerable

From the early weeks of 2005, assessments identified significant vulnerabilities for children in tsunami-affected areas thereby justifying the addition of six provinces to the 19 previously flagged for priority action by UNICEF. Subsequent assessments, such as the rapid assessment of children without parental care in migrant communities and the 2007 situation analysis to assess the situation of Thai children who lost parents in the tsunami, confirmed extreme vulnerabilities in these previously unprioritized provinces. The MICS survey of 2007 further validated the reclassification of the six-tsunami-affected provinces as foci of priority action.

In the formulation of the 'Build Back Better' strategy, UNICEF Thailand chose an approach of accelerated development of existing program priorities as a response to these identified needs. This identified existing programming approaches – such as the CFS programme – or new approaches suitable for subsequent national scale-up – such as the CPMRS and LCB initiative – as the main vehicles for addressing vulnerabilities. A common feature of these approaches is their utilization of government systems for delivery. Indeed, they are all essentially government systems strengthening or reform processes. This has the huge advantages of potential for scale and sustainability, and makes sound strategic sense.

However, there are constraints as well as opportunities of working through government services, particularly in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable that are generally most likely to have poor access to such services. Such poor access can be linked to the general inflexibility associated with large-scale, centralized government provision; but it can also be more directly linked to the political agenda of government. For instance, it has been clear that provision of services to migrant communities has not been a priority of the Thai government.

To the extent that child vulnerability has consistently been found in migrant communities, what evidence is there that the modalities of programme response – focused on government delivery systems – have effectively addressed such vulnerability?

From material available to the evaluation team there was some evidence of behaviour change projects including migrant and other vulnerable children, with one specifically targeting *Moken* children. Reviewed local Children and Youth Plans did not give a high profile to such issues. Risks associated with migrant status are noted on the CPMS and this provides a mechanism for monitoring vulnerability although, as suggested earlier, the follow-up on identified concerns was weak in many tambons. Similarly on the education side, while CFS emphasizes inclusion across all six dimensions and is the first in insisting that schools be “child-seeking”, the potential of the ‘build back better’ focus on vulnerable children is not yet being realized in the sector. Somewhat ironically, perhaps, the progress made by the ESAO on “scaling up” CFS in the schools seems to be “washing out” the ability of the system to target the children that are not presently in school.

In this respect, it will be important for UNICEF to make the most of its comparative advantage in being able to operate both within and outside of formal bureaucratic channels. Targeting activities that serve as “outreach incubators for innovation”, UNICEF can support the development of new and effective approaches for eventual system uptake, while at the same time actively reaching excluded children. This implies extending its efforts strategically to identify partners outside of government. There are positive exemplars of such development in UNICEF’s contracting with NGOs like the EDC for education, or agencies that are ‘non-traditional’ for the sector, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for its work with migrant children and, in the context of HIV programmes in the far South, the Muslim Youth Council. Such developments are to be warmly encouraged to maintain an appropriate balance in the portfolio of the Country Office.

6.4 Strengthening Data and Monitoring Systems through the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey

As noted above, UNICEF’s commitment to supporting the implementation of a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2006 – in part utilizing tsunami-related funds – provided rigorous evidence of the vulnerabilities of populations in the tsunami-affected provinces. Implemented by the National Statistical Office with technical support from UNICEF, this not only provided evidence to support UNICEF’s engagement in provinces in which it had not previously engaged, but also established a high standard of data collection on which to base strategic investment and programming decisions.

This potential for directing programme investments more appropriately is illustrated by Table 6.1, drawn from the preliminary documentary review of pre- and post-tsunami conditions commissioned by UNICEF in 2007. The table shows the very significant differences between the proportions with low birth-weight indicated by Provincial Health Office/Ministry of Public Health data and the more reliable and rigorous MICS survey. The latter suggest priority concern for the situation in Satun and Trang, while other sources of data would prioritize an apparent upward trend in low birth weight in Krabi.

Table 6.1: Low Birth Weight Rate by Province (per 100 Live Births)

Level of Tsunami Impact	Province	2004	2005	2006
High	Krabi	6.17	8.02	11.1 (4.8)
	Phang Nga	7.5	6.7	5.8 (5.9)
	Phuket	n/a	n/a	n/a (4.6)
Low	Ranong	6.2	6.1	3.2 (8.8)
	Satun	8.0	7.8	7.9 (13.1)
	Trang	8.6	8.5	10.4 (13.0)
	National	8.5 ¹	8.7 ¹	n/a (9.3)

Remarks: Number in bracket refers to results from MICS survey; other figures from Provincial Health Office/DOH/MoPH sources.

A recent evaluation of the 2006 MICS survey rated it highly in terms of both rigor of implementation and potential to inform decision-making⁸⁰. There is clear evidence within the UNICEF Thailand office of these data being regularly utilized to inform program staff. Plans to mount another MICS survey in 2010 are thus to be welcomed, particularly as this will provide a basis for tracking trends over time (at national and provincial levels). The current evaluation was significantly constrained by the limited availability of data with respect to which program impact might be deduced. MICS data will provide a useful source for future evaluations for such purposes. To establish a more accurately detailed baseline for children in and out of school in the tsunami-affected provinces, UNICEF should also consider supporting the MoE to redo aspects of the education survey developed together in 2004 and based on the MICS education module.

6.5 Rights-based Approaches to Programming and Gender Equality

Internationally, UNICEF is committed to human rights-based approach to programming (HRBAP) and gender equality. Such themes figure strongly within the UNICEF Thailand country plans for both 2002-06 and 2007-11 and within annual reports throughout the period covered by this review.

During the course of the evaluation consistent evidence of the effectiveness of UNICEF's work in promoting awareness of child rights was found. From ministerial discussions, through consultations with provincial and tambon officials, to meetings with service providers and communities there were clear indications that the discourse on children reflected an understanding of child rights as a critical determinant in understanding, and responding to, the needs of children.

"Children know their rights. They know how teachers or parents should treat them."
(Parents, Phang Nga)

"When CFS has implemented in school, teachers are aware of child rights. They change the way they talk to, discipline students. Students are more active. They dare to discuss with teachers about their needs. Students are more responsible for their duty too."
(Teachers, Krabi).

"Awareness about child protection has been increased after UNICEF came to ignite [the issue]. We made posters and stickers to promote child rights and protection (with the phone number to call). So people are concerned if a teacher hits students."
(New Family Development Centre, Phang Nga).

There are strong grounds for attributing this prominent awareness to activities initiated or supported by UNICEF. Training in support of the CFS initiative featured child rights issues prominently. So did training and documentary materials supporting the development of children and youth planning at the local level. Materials related to the implementation of CPMRS work generally reflected a clear child-rights perspective, with the principles underlying the implementation of the CPMS and mechanisms of improved response also clearly congruent with a rights-based approach. Clearly, there are areas where further progress is required (e.g. with regard to some attitudes towards corporal punishment), but this is an area of clear success.

In contrast, there was much less evidence of awareness of gender issues, both in programming materials and in discussions with stakeholders. Children and Youth Plans were largely 'silent' on gender, reflecting the scant attention paid to such issues in the training programme and supporting materials. There was little evidence of gender being used as a key variable for disaggregation of trends in vulnerability mapped by the CPMS⁸¹. Government

⁸⁰ John Snow, Inc. 2008. Evaluation of UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys Round 3 (MICS3) Final Report. UNICEF Contract No. EO/ICC/2007/04.

⁸¹ Status Document prepared for the Annual CPMRS Project Review 7 December 2008, Rasada TAO, Phuket

commitment to CFS, both implicitly (under inclusion) and explicitly makes gender equality a core criterion. In practice, however, little has been done in schools or the bureaucracy to challenge received wisdom that unequal and abusive treatment on the basis of sex is “not a problem” in Thai education. Throughout the evaluation, the research team probed interviewees on issues of gender faced and/or responded to. The typical response was that ‘gender is not an issue here’.

“Boys and girls are equally treated. [There’s] no difference in educational opportunity. School zoning is done between primary and secondary classrooms, not by gender.”
(School Directors, Ranong)

“The number of boys and girls in schools is not different. They study and play together, no sex discrimination.” (School Directors, Phang Nga)

“The schools give equal opportunity to every student either boy or girl. It depends on the student’s ability”. (Teachers, Ranong)

“There are more girls in student council and all three student inspectors are female.”
(Teachers, Phang Nga)

It is appropriate that UNICEF is beginning to adopt a more strategic approach to putting issues of gender on the programming agenda as a way to ensure the progress made on broad issues of child rights is matched by attainment regarding gender equality. There are indications of this recognition in plans to revise training materials used in local capacity building work to reflect greater gender awareness; its support for the development by the MoE of a ‘Masterplan on Gender’ are to be welcomed. It will be relevant to its own mandate and appropriate given overall child rights-based strategies to track the development of these initiatives and consider support for their adaptation within the policies and programmes of other ministries.

6.6 Approach to Monitoring and Technical Support

Across each of the sectoral program areas addressed by this review – education, child protection and local capacity development – we identified weaknesses in monitoring and technical support. Frequently, there was ambiguity in the role of government partners in receiving, and responding to, reports on program progress. There was considerable confusion, for example, regarding the expectation of tambons to submit children and youth plans to ministry, either centrally to the MoI/LGA or to/through provincial offices of the MoI. Where lines of reporting to government were clear, monitoring functions often remained weak. ESAO, for example, were not consistently supporting completion of the CFS school self-assessment cycle by helping schools move them to the “next step” of generating, monitoring and adapting school improvement plans on the basis of the assessment. Nor have their own progress reports typically gone beyond reporting on activities undertaken to analyze the quality and results of those activities. More generally, there was a pervasive lack of clarity regarding the current ‘state of play’ of initiatives e.g. regarding tambons who had engaged in earlier phases of the CPMS pilot program who were still maintaining the currency of the protection database, or the establishment of MSTs to coordinate children and youth planning.

Such lapses are of particular concern given that the predominant nature of programming is to support systems innovation and/or development. Monitoring, in these circumstances, is not just an audit tool to confirm that activities have been implemented as planned, but also a diagnostic procedure to guide required technical support to address experienced problems and bottlenecks. The efficacy of any systems development initiative will be significantly reduced if there are ineffective mechanisms in place for prompt recognition and resolution of challenges faced. Across the CFS initiative, the development of the CPMRS system and the LCB programme there has been a tendency for implementation challenges to be identified through periodic evaluations and consultations rather than through routine reporting and supervision.

UNICEF has appropriately recognized that in the majority of these initiatives it is key to sustainability that reporting and support be coordinated through government systems, rather than establishing separate reporting procedures to UNICEF or for UNICEF to provide direct technical support to implementers. However, in practice, UNICEF has been drawn into both of these roles (albeit informally and/or inefficiently) to seek to support initiatives. Thus UNICEF education staff has been engaged in – largely undocumented - monitoring functions with ESAO in support of CFS work in schools. Phuket-based child protection staff was reported by case managers to be both an important reporting line and significant source of supervision. With the closure of the Phuket office this ‘informal’ channel of reporting and support has been lost, with little indication of how it will be substituted or confirmation that governmental (or other) reporting and support structures have become sufficiently robust to no longer require supplementation.

The evaluation team considers that, particularly acknowledging the systems development focus of most interventions, mechanisms of monitoring and technical support need to be far more clearly conceptualized. This will mean coming to more explicit understanding with government partners about standards and responsibilities in reporting, and greater recognition of the ongoing technical support that may be required to drive this type of implementation. Where this technical support is not within current government capacity (e.g. through ESAO for CFS work, or through Provincial officers for CPMRS or LCB development) then clear arrangements need to be set in place for contracting such support.

6.7 Challenges of Systems Innovation (‘Building Replicable Models’)

A significant proportion of the work in tsunami-affected provinces in the south has been explicitly directed to developing new systems and models of working for potential replication and scaling-up in the rest of Thailand. This is clearly the case with the local capacity building work and the child protection systems work. Even though the CFS work is based upon an existing approach, that approach itself calls for seeing the school (and the community it serves) as a system that can be supported in shaping itself to more effectively promote the needs and rights of the child. So ‘systems’ challenges of innovation, change, interdependence and sustainability are central to much of programming.

Given this, it is notable how much of the current portfolio of activity is weakly theorized systems work. Programmes tend to be conceptualized as a stream of activities with, as noted above, little in the way of rigorous monitoring to promptly identify systems challenges and solve them. In programme management terms, the management of activities is strong, but that of assumption and risk weak. This is of lesser concern when the focus of delivery is well validated, discrete interventions of proven efficacy. When the interventions are exploratory, however, this is more of a cause for concern. For example, the multiple factors determining the efficacy of the case manager role (e.g. professional background, local knowledge, lines of accountability, tambon executive commitment to role and issue of child protection, facility with database, availability of volunteers to collect data for database, prevalence of protection concerns, capacities of referral services in locality etc. etc.) warrant careful examination, building on the recent evaluation of the NFDCs, in the context of the initial ‘systems’ conceptualization of the CPMS.

There are significant dangers in inappropriately seeing interventions as a ‘package’ to be delivered, when – in addition to materials to be used and trainings to be followed - there are important processes of reflection and problem-solving required to further impact. There are some indications that the efficacy of the CFS approach in the south may have been constrained in this manner. There is an additional danger, however, in seeking to define a ‘package’ when the grasp of key determinants of success and failure remains weak. In both the local capacity building and child protection areas there are real signs of progress, but UNICEF seems some way off from confidently specifying the key features of a system that will result in greater prominence of child focused activities at the local level, or of a system that will reduce cases of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Rather than pursuing such a high volume of weakly implemented ‘pilots’ of services, there would be value in a more considered, structured ‘operations research’ approach to systems development trials, at least in some settings. This would mean placing resources at tambon level to not only note challenges in implementation of, say, the CPMRS, but to support a process of problem-solving and reflection that leads to a stronger understanding of the determinants of an effective system. This approach has wide currency in the field of health, and UNICEF is utilizing it to support refinement and roll-out of proven child survival strategies.⁸² It is also now being utilized by UNICEF in conceptualizing child protection systems in settings such as West Africa⁸³. There are also some commonalities between this approach and that adopted by UNICEF, with Ministries of Education and other partners, in initially establishing the CFS as an approach to child-rights based education in Thailand and elsewhere in the region.

In seeking to develop a better and more robust understanding of what constitutes effective systems, we recognize the useful work that the Country Office has been taking forward on the issue of ‘leadership’, as evidence from all strands of work has suggested the importance of this to innovation. However, we would encourage UNICEF to consider that promoting effective leadership may usefully involve more systemic interventions than training programmes. Use of in-country exchanges (where staff from one tambon share experience of successful innovation with staff at another that are just beginning such work) may be a valuable approach, as would mentoring (providing in-person or telephone follow-up of individuals taking forward a plan of action, and providing them with an opportunity guided reflection).

6.8 Communication

External

While undertaking fieldwork in the south, we consistently came across the perception that UNICEF was withdrawing from its work with partners. The bases for its decision-making was often unclear, and – for some partners - its apparent lack of long-term commitment perplexing. This was most vehemently expressed by respondent as follows:

“UNICEF came during the critical period. Everything was confusing during that time so UNICEF started late. But when everything was settled down, UNICEF is departing”,
Provincial Child Protection Committee, Ranong

Such reports caused some distress to officers in the UNICEF Country Office, who considered the reality as quite different. In this context we consistently heard that work was, in fact, continuing, if not expanding. This, however, was often not the message that was being received on the ground. Given the aim of the country program to build capacity and policy influence, it is clear that this issue needs to be addressed, with the communications capacities of UNICEF quite explicitly and professional deployed to identify the key ‘messages’ that the CO wishes to send, and find effective means of communicating these.

Internal

Ambiguity regarding UNICEF’s strategy was not only reflected in the comments of external stakeholders. UNICEF staff, particularly those whose contracts were not renewed on the closure of the Phuket Office, but Country Office staff too, frequently indicated a lack of clarity on issues of policy, implementation, decision-making and resourcing. Within a relatively small

⁸² For example, the Community Case Management of Childhood Illness work currently being led by Alexandra de Sousa, the Director of Operations Research at UNICEF NY.

⁸³ Promoting national child protection systems in West and Central Africa Region via study, mapping and assessment tool development, and in-country technical support. UNICEF WACA.

Country Office more effective, transparent communication should be attainable, and is likely to be of real programmatic value.

Although this most directly relates to management communication, the evaluation team considers that there would be much to be gained with stronger mechanisms of inter-sectoral, inter-programme collaborative working within the office. The Country Office has recognized that, at local level, there is likely to be significant value to bringing together work on communication and behaviour change, children and youth planning, and child protection. Given the notion that CFS is, by definition, child-centred rather than school-based, there are also opportunities for integration – or, at least, more purposeful collaboration – with work in the education sector, for example, that focused on exclusion and protection.

It would be valuable for the Country Office to consider processes or frameworks that would foster greater coherence within such work within the 'Child Protection and Development' programme area. Using the Protective Environment as a framework for reviewing the wider context of childhood vulnerability in Thailand and the strategic responses that different groups within UNICEF might collaborate upon to strengthen protective mechanisms might assist in this manner. Evaluation findings suggest that peer-review of draft proposals and documents across sections may be a helpful mechanism for enhancing mutual understanding, and identifying potential areas of synergy.

7. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary and Conclusions by DAC Criteria

The DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact, coverage, efficiency and sustainability provide a useful template to summarize the overall evaluation of UNICEF's response to the challenges and opportunities presented by the tsunami from late 2004 to December 2008. Commentary with respect to such criteria does not seek to reprise the detailed analyses of sectoral and broader programming response of previous sections, but rather to identify key strengths and weaknesses in the overall response when viewed from a strategic perspective.

RELEVANCE

The evaluation team identified strong evidence of the relevance of UNICEF's response throughout the four year period following the tsunami. Notably, in terms of ensuring the relevance of response, the activities of UNICEF during this period have generally been consistent in showing commitment to *evidence of need* and *strategic purpose*.

In terms of *evidence of need*, most activities have been preceded by serious attempts at situational assessment. This included prompt deployment of staff in tsunami-affected provinces for rapid assessment of local circumstances, which explicitly drove both development of local response mechanisms and advocacy for support to national authorities and UNICEF Headquarters. This played an important role in directing UNICEF's activities to be complementary to government capacities and focusing technical input into sharpening government awareness of unmet needs in terms of vulnerable populations.

Commitment to determining evidence of need as a means of ensuring programming relevance was also consistently demonstrated in subsequent sectorally-focused development. Work in schools built upon an approach that included school self-assessment as a foundation for subsequent behaviour change. Communication activity was based upon an extensive baseline analysis of cultural issues shaping attitudes to, and the upbringing of, children. Assessments of the circumstances of separated children and of migrant youth, and community-based work on the development of indicators of children at risk, provided a strong evidential base to develop relevant programming response in the field of child protection.

As noted earlier, the development of the 'Build Back Better' strategy also reflected *strategic purposes* that had been defined within the Country Plan before the time of the tsunami. This continuity of strategy provided another strong influence ensuring relevance, insuring against 'drift' in mission or inappropriately short-term thinking. Programmes in education, child protection and local capacity building generally proceeded with a sound analysis of governmental commitments and capacities. Work facilitated by these programmes was thus commonly appropriate to the government's increasingly developed understanding of its role in promoting children's well-being, whether through the mechanism of ESAOs, tambons or other structures.

The evidence regarding engagement with children in shaping strategic agendas and programmes – another mechanism for ensuring relevance of programming – was less strong. There is clearly NGO activity in the country relevant to this, and the institution of Youth Council provides another mechanism for such engagement. It may be useful for UNICEF to make such engagement a more explicit element both of its own planning processes and of the processes of government partners (and others) with whom they are working.

EFFECTIVENESS

In terms of the expectations of the Core Commitments to Children in Emergencies, UNICEF appears to have clearly met these in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, and thus may be considered to have mobilized an effective response. Subsequent programmatic activity – across education, child protection and local capacity building (and, indeed, other areas) – has been generally focused on one or more of *infrastructure* (the latter mostly on water and sanitation in schools), *training* and *systems development*. Judging the effectiveness of such activity (impact and sustainability being considered below) principally means considering the extent to which the inputs made in these areas achieved targeted outcomes.

Infrastructure investments were largely effective in that they established considerably improved, and used, sanitation facilities in schools damaged by the tsunami and/or lacking them prior to it. At the same time, the superior technical quality of the installations raised questions of cost-effectiveness in terms of replicability across the system and maintenance over the long-term.

Training activities were reported to be generally well executed and received. The content of training (regarding CFS, child protection, local planning, child rights, communication etc.) was generally strong, and facilitation and pedagogy was generally judged to have been effective.

The models adopted from *systems development* (ranging from the innovative CPMRS, through proposals to establish multi-disciplinary teams shaping a Children and Youth Plan at tambon level, to the ‘scaling-up’ of the CFS approach in schools in the tsunami-affected provinces) were generally sound and appropriate, providing potentially effective mechanisms to address identified needs. The evidence of their robust establishment and institutionalization following programme support is less strong, however. The effectiveness of the CFS interventions with schools and local authorities is uncertain, notably with respect to the goals to consolidate child-centred and academically rigorous teaching, undertake continuous self-correction and seek out chronically excluded children. Equally, while many tambons reported positively on documenting children’s needs through the database and providing better access of services through deployment of a case manager, only a minority of targeted tambons had a fully functioning CPMRS of the form with respect to which training was based in place at the end of 2008. While training inputs had been appreciated, few tambons had produced a discrete Children and Youth Plan of the form specified in the objectives of the local capacity building programme.

The failure to consistently achieve such targeted outcomes has informed programming and is leading to revision of the systems models being promoted (e.g. the greater use of paraprofessionals in the role of CM; de-emphasis on the expectations of production of a discrete Children and Youth Report by tambons etc.). Consideration of such revisions is clearly appropriate. The key question, clearly, is not so much whether specific systems have been fully established, but whether the systems have been sufficiently strengthened to begin to have the targeted impacts on the well-being and circumstances of children.

IMPACT

The evaluation was unable to secure strong evidence regarding the impact of the response over the last four years at the level of children and their communities. There are three major reasons contributing to this. Firstly, the focus of the intervention has been (appropriately) systemic, and it is usually a number of years before such systemic changes and work through fully into the lives of children, their caregivers and their communities. Secondly, most systems interventions have – in practice – been implemented quite recently (with some elements being in place only in late 2007 and mid- 2008). It is unrealistic to see substantive impacts over such timescales. Thirdly, routine data collection that may assist in detecting impact (and attributing it to programme activity) was generally not in place. Routine collection of educational statistics, numbers of child protection referrals, expenditure on children and youth activities at tambon level etc. is an important pre-requisite for efficiently documenting impact over time.

In the absence of such impact data, the evaluation team has had to rely on 'proxies' of such data. These are from two principal sources. One, especially in the area of education where the team interviewed many parents, reports on perceptions of change by relevant stakeholders. Such data, as we have noted in the relevant sections, broadly supports the positive impact of programming. Parents valued the activities related to the CFS initiative and reported positive change in their children. Tambon officials welcomed increased awareness of child protection issues, and case managers reported on the value of their training and monitoring and response systems in addressing issues of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The other source of 'proxy' data relates to the use of competences and systems that we could anticipate would, in due course, have positive impacts on children and their communities. In this category are: the greater reported knowledge on issues of child rights, the development of innovative community-based education projects on local themes of concern regarding children, and the preparation of some Children and Youth Plans.

Taken together, such proxy data suggests that some progress is likely being made towards targeted impacts on children's well-being, though explicit consideration needs to be given to the specification of indicators that would provide a robust documentation of such impact through routine data collection mechanisms.

COVERAGE

In the emergency phase of their response, UNICEF and its partners clearly sought to identify areas directly impacted by the tsunami and to assess damage, loss of life and disruption across the six tsunami-affected provinces. The tsunami, as noted earlier, had – through population displacement and disruption of infrastructure - social and economic impacts beyond areas of direct physical impact. The policy decision to designate all communities within the six provinces as 'tsunami-affected', and thus broaden potential coverage of interventions to the entire population of these provinces was, in these circumstances, clearly appropriate. This is reinforced by the choice of 'systems development' interventions as the principal vehicle for response which, by definition, would potentially be scaled-up to serve all communities in the provinces in due course.

In practice, however, the youth planning component of the Local Capacity Building programme was the only element of intervention that was formally taken to scale throughout the tsunami-affected provinces by December 2008 (with training provided for staff of 350 tambons and municipalities). The roll-out of the implementation of CMRS, the introduction of case managers, and training for behaviour change communication projects were all managed as focused 'pilot' interventions in selected sites with, as a consequence, partial population coverage. CFS was more managed as a 'staged' program, rolling out in 'batches' to selected schools through extending regular staff training and supervision with more workshops, outreach visits, and materials. The absence of a specific institutional and professional development plan for this process has meant that coverage, while reaching several thousands of children through the training of several hundred teachers, has been limited in depth.

A systems development intervention strategy makes sense when (1) systems models are still being developed and (2) there is assumed institutional capacity to adopt successful innovation and for amended practice to diffuse it. There are two risks in going forward on the basis of these assumptions. Without a clear strategy and agreed commitment of resources from senior officials, coverage can stall at an inappropriately low level. Further, the most vulnerable and needy of communities may not be selected for intervention in the first place, particularly as they may not, for institutional reasons, be suitable sites for demonstrating success. Almost by definition, these will be the communities who are culturally, geographically and economically the most "hard-to-reach" with such innovations.

There is some evidence of both of these risks in the current context. The model of innovation adopted - essentially one of multiple demonstrations – depends on interest and capacity (in this case, largely of government) to 'take to scale' interventions that are promising. Ranong-

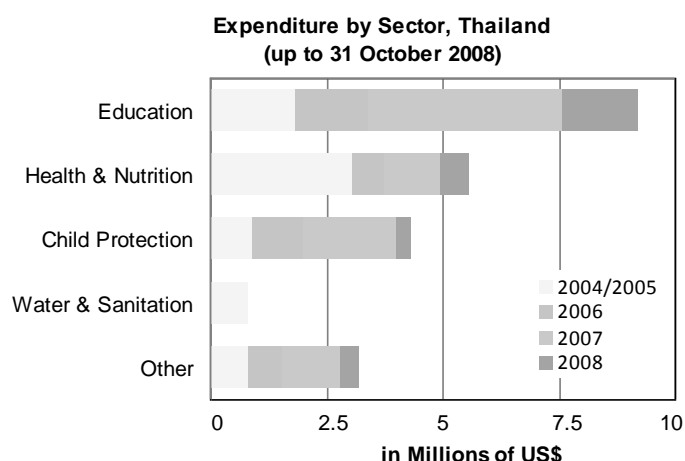
wide adoption of the CPMS provides an example of this process effectively at work. More generally, the Thai political system gives central government strong influence over policy and resource allocation at the provincial and sub-district levels, reinforcing the apparent potential for ‘cascading’ change once supported by a key ministry. Nevertheless, the lack of full or continuing implementation of planned innovation at many sites highlights the reality of incomplete coverage, notwithstanding governmental support. In the case of local capacity development, neither the number nor quality of Children and Youth Plans currently suggests the likelihood of ‘systems change’. In the case of CFS, adoption of the vocabulary of rights-based education seems, as yet, too superficial to have translated into widespread or consistent acceptance of positive discipline over corporal punishment.

Also, although systems are potentially equipped to address them, there was, as yet, little strong evidence of the structures being put in place to address, in a coherent and sustained way, the pre-existing causes of vulnerability or marginalization of specific communities across the affected provinces. For example, schools working with NGOs on programmes that better recognize socio-cultural or linguistic constraints to participation of indigenous and refugee children represents a necessary and valued step to enabling inclusion in the short term. However, there was little evidence of a fundamental rethinking of how teacher training and curriculum development, school boards’ terms of reference, or schools’ relations with other child-focused agencies might need to change to establish an education system that ceases to exclude children.

EFFICIENCY

It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to formally address the allocative efficiency of the UNICEF response to the tsunami, that is, to answer the question of whether funds would have brought greater (or lesser) benefit if spent on other activities. However, it is clearly appropriate to consider the broad efficiency of programming, noting gross expenditures and identified benefits.

Mapping expenditure is made complex by the (appropriate) inter-mingling of general country office programme expenditure and tsunami-fund resources. The figure below tracks the latter, and provides a clear picture of overall programming emphasis with such funds. As of October 2008, total spending was \$ 21,900,000, of which over 40 percent was spent in the education sector.



Other than major health and nutrition expenditure in 2004/05, it is clear that the ‘burn rate’ for spending was greatest across all sectors in 2007, signaling the length of time it had taken to establish programme strategies and modalities to respond to needs in an area of the Thailand with which UNICEF had previously had little engagement.

In terms of broad efficiency, there are two issues raised by this data. Lack of funding was cited as a major reason for the pattern of roll-out of the child protection system, with

retrenchment into Ranong for the CMRS for 2008 and the brief pilots of the case management model in just sixteen tambons. The timescale and funding envelope available for behaviour change communication programming was similarly constrained through 2008. Funding restrictions are realities, but it seems that the disruption to full, ongoing piloting of 'candidate' systems resulted in tangible inefficiencies in this area of programming, with some confusion at the local level about commitment and continuity.

On the other hand, major funding for the education sector was allocated when the strategy for intervention – support to the elements of a child-friendly school – was well in line with already established, and to some extent implemented, governmental policy. The additional tsunami investment did bring tangible benefits to schools: chiefly, improved infrastructure and a greater intensity of training in aspects of school management, teaching and children's participation relevant to existing MOE directives broadly relevant to the CFS model. Importantly for UNICEF priorities, it also brought fresh impetus to the profile of that model as an expression of a child rights-based school.

If, in the longer term, this is found to have "kick-started" a significant restructuring of more inclusive and academically effective policy and programming in the region, the investment would have been well made. However, because of the fairly diffused way in which the intervention was managed, more one of extending existing activity rather than starting something significantly new, it is perhaps not unreasonable to judge that funding generally accelerated benefits that may have been anticipated in due course as part of regular national action. In other words, a less extensive intervention may have reduced, but probably would not have threatened, the eventual application of a CFS-informed education change agenda already in place.

Inter-sectoral prioritization is challenging. However, the data above suggest that greater allocations to work in child protection and local capacity development are likely to have resulted in more secure gains in terms of both institutionalized change at the local level and an established systems model for adoption at the national level. Decreased allocation to education would have reduced coverage, but not threatened the development of an intervention model (already established) or governmental policy (already in place).

SUSTAINABILITY

There is reasonable evidence that the gains achieved over the last four years in the south will prove sustainable. Notwithstanding recent political events, public institutions remain fairly stable and critical for building enduring structures to influence the education, care and protection of children. UNICEF strategies have connected with appropriate ministries and national institutions, as well as explicitly engaging at provincial and sub-district levels. Through effective advocacy, much of the agenda of UNICEF appears consistent with governmental policy, though political commitment to change inevitably varies across ministries.⁸⁴

Despite the economic downturn, the medium-term prospects for the Thai economy are sound, with revenues likely to be increasingly directed to social sector programmes. Communities – with some exceptions and sensitivities – appear to broadly welcome means of more effectively identifying and addressing the needs of children. Human resource constraints exist – notably in securing qualified social workers for rural areas – but are, by global standards, modest, and appear addressable.

In short, a number of the challenges to the sustainability of change facilitated by UNICEF investment in other settings are not evidenced in Thailand, and the long-term prospects for sustainability (and, indeed, strengthening) of change are thus favourable.

⁸⁴ It is currently unclear whether the recent trend of public servants to become visibly aligned with political factions, as opposed to maintaining the separation of the uniquely Thai approach to a "bureaucratic polity", will compromise this situation.

This is not to ignore specific threats to sustainability in the shorter-term, however, which may translate into longer-term fallback. One, the failure to firmly institutionalize or imbed change of approach before moving on to another setting, has already been highlighted. Another threat to sustainability, signaled in a number of interviews and recognized by UNICEF, is the issue of leadership. Sustaining momentum within initiatives, at tambon, provincial or national levels was often attributed to the commitment and reliability of key individuals. Strengthening the cadre of leaders (political and technical) with a vision for improving circumstances for children will likely be a key contribution to supporting sustainable change in policy, strategy and services for children.

7.2 Recommendations

Recommendations to Government and Partners:

Establish a fixed annual schedule for disaster preparedness training.

This should be planned and coordinated in the context of established cluster roles along with the Department of Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation. Such training should function on a continuing basis, with all staff required to attend on a pre-assigned schedule. Training should include review of codes of conduct governing treatment of and access to children in emergencies, both in general and in specific contexts and sectors.

Select a sub-group of schools for particular and comprehensive action on issues of inclusion.

These should necessarily be ones with children at risk, either marginalized children within the schools or exclusion from them. Because they will likely be those with which the EDC has been working, the aim should be to build from that programme to assess and consolidate gains made and institutionalize these in terms of good practice policies and actions at district and provincial levels. MOE partners and officers in the Education section already have experience and strategies for doing this in the north, but would need to tailor these specifically with and for stakeholders in the south.

Strengthen review processes regarding local planning for children and youth.

The Ministry of Interior should institute – in collaboration with UNICEF - a formal process of annual review of tambon plans, including a requirement to report approved expenditure for children's and youth activities. This is a key indicator for the success of attempts to develop plans that reflect the needs of children and youth. Processes of review should also involve an audit (administered through provincial offices) of submitted Children and Youth Plans and, preferably, meeting minutes of tambon MSTs.

Recommendations to Country Office:

Conduct a review of the child protection system model to be promoted for national roll-out.

The last two years have provided valuable learning regarding both monitoring and response elements of the proposed CPRS. In the context of the wider roll-out of the monitoring elements of this system and the need for re-specification of the case manager role as a key facilitator of response, it is timely to conduct a review of the core model and specify revisions and developments that are required. While this should involve stakeholder feedback, the critical contribution will be an organizational systems perspective, incorporating understanding of administrative and managerial processes and HR issues of recruitment and retention (including labor market analysis).

Establish operations research capacity in a small number of tambons.

Incorporating an on-going operations research capacity (or capacity for participative action learning) in a small number of tambons would usefully serve the function of refining, validating and confirming the model for wider CPMRS roll-out over the next two to three year period. While particularly suited to support development of the CPMRS model, such capacity would also be relevant to the agenda of exploring greater synergy between child protection work and that regarding local capacity building and education. The focus would be on existing systems and processes at sub-district level and how these can be optimally augmented and revised to support planned activities (rather than specifying discrete sectoral mechanisms).

Confirm directives and develop skills for conducting RALS in emergency situations, with a particular focus on differentially affected children.

This would require, at minimum, analysis of the overall situation for children and need for safe and learning-oriented spaces. Given the likelihood of sub-groups of children being especially at risk as a consequence of other factors (e.g. gender, disability, conflict, ethnicity etc.), assessments should anticipate means of addressing such differential vulnerabilities. The focus of RALS should be both on identifying immediate needs and opportunities for support and establishing a baseline for measuring progress in the relief-recovery-development transition.

Consider means to strengthen influence in the south if the intention is to do more than advocate CFS.

Integrating child-friendly principles and practices into schools and local ESAO in a way that creates the vision and reality of whole school reform can not easily be done from afar, even with frequent visits. Mentoring at school and ESAO level will be needed at least until the idea of CFS as being something unique, valuable and warranting consistent and coherent action is established. With closure of the Phuket office, alternative mechanisms for active, sustained engagement need to be planned.

Promote the value of, and methods for, engagement with children and youth as a more explicit element of UNICEF planning processes and the planning processes of government and other partners.

In the context of the strengthening of local planning processes for children and youth, the lack of sustained engagement with children was striking. Where youth councils are established, these seem to provide a potential avenue to strengthen such engagement. For younger children however, other methods need to be promoted. There were, in the context of commissioned work on placement conditions of separated and migrant children and in BCC projects, some examples of good practice in facilitating participation with children that could be used in such circumstances.

For all work targeting 'systems development', more clearly identify necessary mechanisms of monitoring and technical support.

A more explicit understanding is required with government partners about standards and responsibilities in reporting, and the ongoing technical support that may be required to drive implementation of interventions targeting systems change. Where this technical support is not within current government capacity (e.g. through ESAO for CFS work, or through Provincial officers for CPMRS or LCB development) then clear arrangements need to be set in place for contracting such support.

Continue and extend efforts to strategically identify partners outside of government, particularly with regard to the strategic goal of securing more inclusive education.

The scale and impact of UNICEF's work in Thailand is supported by its strong policy linkages with government and commitment to implementation through governmental systems. However, such an approach will not necessarily support UNICEF's mandate to reach the

most vulnerable. UNICEF will often be more able to actively reach excluded children, and support the development of new and effective approaches for eventual system uptake, by strategic engagement with partners outside of government. There is some evidence of this approach, which would usefully be strengthened. The present Mid-term Review provides an excellent opportunity to review strategies, particularly with regard to achieving a more inclusive education system.

Adopt a more strategic approach to putting issues of gender on the programming agenda.

Progress made on broad issues of child rights is not matched by attainment regarding gender equality. This has been recognized in plans to revise training materials used in local capacity building work to reflect greater gender awareness and in support for the development of the Ministry of Education 'Master Plan on Gender'. UNICEF needs to track and extend the development of these initiatives and consider support for their adaptation within the policies and programmes of other ministries.

Develop a more proactive communications strategy for field-partners.

Misunderstandings of UNICEF's strategy in the tsunami-affected provinces was frequently encountered and 'messaging' amongst staff too was often inconsistent. There would be value in production of concise briefing papers on a regular basis that could be used by staff to update partners on UNICEF's current work and evolving commitments.

Establish clearer mechanisms for integration across sectoral teams within the Country Office.

The CO should establish an internal cross-sectoral working group to reflect on common challenges – and potential strategies – for establishing new or revised systems in public service provision (i.e. within schools, child protection systems, local planning authorities etc.). This group should consider peer review of early draft proposals across sections, joint missions to the field, and debriefing seminars following such visits, etc., as mechanisms to support greater integration of analysis and approach.

Recommendations to UNICEF HQ and Partners

Share learning on systems innovation for middle-income settings to inform country programme strategies.

UNICEF, through its Evaluation Office and relevant sections of the Programme Division, should commission a distillation of best practice in systems innovation and scale-up across middle-income settings to inform country programming strategy in such work. Such work is a core concern of the UNICEF Thailand Office, but of many other middle-income offices also.

Recognize the inherent responsibility and capacity of national governments, systems and communities to manage their own relief and recovery process.

UNICEF response to emergencies in the context of middle-income countries should take as its point of departure the fact that the intended beneficiaries of the CCCs are children of national and local governments and systems that have, by definition, the capacity and responsibility to assess and set agendas, deploy resources and monitor results. While they may lack the immediate wherewithal to use this capacity fully, they retain the responsibility to act. In these circumstances, UNICEF's responsibility for the CCCs should be to enable their fulfillment. It will generally accomplish this by ensuring its own structures and systems facilitate effective and efficient local action, through appropriate and responsive technical, financial and substantive resources; and avoiding structures and systems that undermine, contradict or duplicate effective and efficient local action.

Plan a more complete emergency response to include tailored rapid assessments and strategic interventions, as well as a context specific, development-oriented strategic analysis and action plan.

While the latter should draw on, be congruent with and make use of the technical resources and experience of UNICEF's broader country strategy, it should be evolved separately from these. The aim is to not simply ensure locally relevant and appropriate action, but also to enable local participation, ownership and commitment, and to energize UNICEF's own officers toward new thinking and action. Otherwise, the risks are that untested assumptions will be made and inappropriate patterns repeated.

Avoid the temptation of efficiency over effectiveness in promoting CFS.

The strength of the CFS concept is its internal flexibility, allowing it to be responsive to local contexts and user application. The tendency to recreate it as a sturdy standardized package for easy delivery is a reasonable one, especially in a post-emergency sector rebuilding process, but it will ultimately fail by abandoning the principles and good practices of child-friendly interventions that require an expressly capacity developing, participatory and whole-child approach, tailored to and with the children concerned and the learning needs and resources that are available.

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9. ANNEXES

Annex A: Terms of Reference

Children and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami Evaluation of UNICEF's Response in Thailand - Terms of Reference

Background

The Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004 caused widespread devastation along much of Thailand's 400-kilometre southern coastline, impacting on 407 villages and completely destroyed 47 of them. It affected some 1.9 million people including 600,000 children in six southern provinces - Satun, Trang, Krabi, Phuket, Phang, Nga and Ranong. It turned out to be Thailand's worst natural disaster in recent history causing significant loss of life, destruction of shelters, water sources and damage to coral reefs and marine and coastal habitats and loss of livelihoods. The total financial impact of Tsunami is estimated at more than \$2 billion. This makes Thailand the second most-affected country in financial terms.

In January 2005, the UN Inter-Agency Flash Appeal for the tsunami response appealed for US\$ 12,210,000 to support Thailand's disaster response and rehabilitation operations for the 6 months period to June. As part of this appeal, UNICEF Thailand appealed for US\$4,760,000 for the first 6-months response. In March 2005, UNICEF's appeal was revised upwards to over US\$ 11 million for the year. Funding for relief activities was allocated to child protection, emergency education, water and environmental sanitation, multi-sectoral relief support for local authorities (including health and nutrition and cash transfers), HIV/AIDS and Communications, monitoring and social policy analysis, and operations and logistical support.

UNICEF's immediate priority action, consistent with UNICEF's Core Commitments to Children in emergencies was to:

- Ensure critical psychosocial care and support for children who have been affected by the emergency mainly through family and community support and in-school activities
- Investigate cases of separated children and ensure the systems are in place to reunite them with their families.
- Get children back to school for the January 4th opening as a contribution to a return to normalcy
- Better assess the situation of children in the affected areas with a focus on the poorest areas and those that are the remotest.

In total Thailand country office received funding of US\$ 21.2 million from the Global Appeal for Tsunami Response and actual expenditure from December 2004 to end of December 2007 was US\$ 18.2 million (86 percent) leaving a balance of US\$ 3.0 million for expenditure in 2008.

After the immediate humanitarian needs were addressed in the initial six months following the disaster, UNICEF implemented programmes for longer-term recovery and development efforts with main investments in education, child protection, health and nutrition. UNICEF's approach was guided by its Relief to Recovery Strategy for the period 2005 to 2006 and by its regular country programming exercise for the period 2007 to 2011. The approach was one of an accelerated regular programming within an overall 'Build-Back Better strategy' with key results set for the country programme by 2011 to be achieved the tsunami-affected provinces by end 2009. (See Relief to Recovery Strategy, UNICEF Thailand February 2005 and Build-Back Better Strategy, UNICEF Thailand November 2005.

Under the Build-Back Better strategy the Tsunami response presented an opportunity to provide the affected areas with better services and facilities, mobilize communities and the local government so as to improve the situation beyond the pre-tsunami period. The spirit of "build back better" has been an important force behind UNICEF's involvement in the post-

relief phase. The recovery programme focused mainly on the following programme components:

Child protection: providing psycho-social recovery and training; piloting a child protection monitoring and response system for improved response at the community level; tracking the number and placement conditions of orphaned children through the use of a database and assessing their care and support through follow-up.

Education: rapid scaling-up the Child-Friendly School (CFS) initiative; providing safe drinking water and good sanitation through rehabilitation of facilities in selected schools.

Local Capacity Building: building the capacities of families, communities, local authorities and service providers in children's rights and strengthened local planning for children

Monitoring situation of children, assessments and data: MICS 2006 national and disaggregated by tsunami-affected province, several other studies and assessments.

Other programme components, with less emphasis, included:

HIV/AIDS: strengthening teaching of life skills-based education for HIV/AIDS and sexuality education; promotion of youth-friendly counseling services; and expansion of access to community-based care and support for children living with HIV.

Health and nutrition: focused support to local health authorities to ensure regular outreach services (essential health, nutrition, including growth monitoring and information) to underserved communities.

During the recovery period, a focus was given to the most vulnerable children including poor and remote Thai communities, ethnic minority communities and migrant communities – all identified as missing out on assistance during the relief phase and therefore with additional vulnerabilities compared to others.

During the recovery period UNICEF fully mainstreamed the tsunami response into its regular programme approach using the new country programming exercise carried out in 2005 and 2006. The six tsunami-affected provinces are now among the twenty-five priority provinces for the country programme of cooperation agreed between Thailand and UNICEF for the period 2007 to 2011.

Additional efforts have been made to:

- a) reduce the disparities between the situation of children in those priority provinces and the rest of the country. By including the tsunami-affected provinces in the 25 priority provinces for the country programme and adopting an accelerated regular programme approach will ensure continuation and completion of work to Build-Back Better for children in tsunami-affected areas.
- b) learn from the Build-Back Better initiatives to inform decision-making in other parts of the country, through other aspects of the regular programme, especially in education, child protection and local capacity building
- c) work with its partners to put the needs and rights of children in tsunami-affected provinces more clearly on the local development agenda by advocating for increased investment in children and influencing local development plans.

The importance of documenting tsunami experience in Thailand through a systematically planned evaluation arises from several reasons. Although lessons learned exercises were carried out in early 2005 and again in late 2005, and although several component evaluations, assessments and studies have been completed, including a self-assessment of the country office's adherence to the CCCs, no formal evaluation of UNICEF tsunami response in Thailand as a whole, through a more integrated analysis, has yet been conducted. Thailand is a middle income country with a thriving private sector and limited dependence on external support. The country remains vulnerable to natural disasters and apart from an assessment of UNICEF's performance in responding to the tsunami, the evaluation will generate lessons and

document good practices that are relevant for Thailand and similar other situations. There is very little systematic documentation of the Thailand experience and demand for such an evaluation has also been highlighted by the recent tsunami audit carried out by the Office of Internal Audit in May 2008.

In 2007 the Evaluation Office conducted the first phase of this evaluation exercise comprising pre-tsunami, post tsunami situation assessment and literature review. The current evaluation comprises phase 2 of the Evaluation Office led exercise which includes the final round of evaluations in tsunami countries. The country office contributed to the first phase and is contributing to this second phase as well as the major/final evaluation of UNICEF response in Thailand.

Evaluation Objectives:

The proposed evaluation has the following objectives:

1. Determine the extent to which UNICEF's overall response to tsunami was adequate and relevant considering UNICEF's Core Commitments to Children and comparative advantage in Thailand.
2. Examine the overall achievement and effectiveness, efficiency, coverage/impact, sustainability, and replicability of UNICEF's response (including advocacy, communication, and partnership/social mobilization aspects) with main focus on education, child protection and local/district capacity development components.
3. Provide recommendations for further strengthening UNICEF's on-going programme of cooperation in Thailand to further achieve the MDGs and child rights in Thailand focusing particularly on tsunami affected and similar disadvantaged and vulnerable areas and population groups.
4. Contribute to the building of organizational knowledge and learning on linking emergency response to the long-term recovery and development by identifying lessons learned and good practices during the tsunami response focusing especially on recovery/transition programming.

Evaluation Scope

In general, the evaluation covers the emergency response to early development phases of tsunami response but given the fact that some documentation of the early phase already exists, the major focus of the analysis will be on the recovery and early development phases. While the evaluation will analyze performance from the broad perspective in all programme areas covered by UNICEF, the emphasis will be on child protection, education and local capacity development components. The evaluation will provide answer to the following issues/questions:

Relevance / Appropriateness of UNICEF response in various phases: In the context of a middle income country, how did UNICEF identify its particular niche and comparative advantage in responding to tsunami? Given UNICEF's comparative advantage in Thailand, how responsive was the programme with respect to the needs of children and women in various phases of tsunami operation? To what extent were the overall programme strategies and sector specific programme strategies/ activities consistent with the intended results/ impacts? How adequate was the focus of UNICEF's post-crisis programmes on the special needs for protection of vulnerable children and women?

Effectiveness: To what extent were the defined objectives achieved during the emergency and recovery response phases? Did UNICEF's response strike a balance between direct implementation and national/local ownership?

Efficiency: To what extent can UNICEF's overall response and strategic shifts be considered timely? What were the key success factors in responses that were timely and

hindrances/constraints that caused untimely response? How adequate was the quality of services provided through various sectors especially education and child protection? Can any concrete conclusions be drawn regarding cost efficiency of UNICEF response with respect to the use of low cost/efficient approaches?

Coverage/Impact: What conclusions can be drawn with respect to measurable coverage and impacts on children and women (positive and negative consequences) of UNICEF response, particularly in programme areas that received priority attention during the recovery and early development phases?

Recovery/transition programming: How well conceived and efficient has been the programme's transition from humanitarian relief to recovery and early development phases? What lessons can be drawn for the future both in terms of cross-sectoral as well as sector specific issues in relation to recovery/transition programming?

Rights-based approaches to programming and gender equality: How adequately were various elements of the human-rights-based approach to programming applied including gender equality, especially as the shift occurred from humanitarian relief to the recovery phases? What lessons and recommendations can be drawn for the future for systematic use of human rights-based programming in humanitarian response and recovery phases?

National/district/local capacity development: As the programme shifted from humanitarian relief to recovery and early development phases, how well was national/district/local institutional capacity development strategy conceived and implemented? As part of its focus on district/local capacity development, did UNICEF influence local development plans to include more resources and greater action for children in the tsunami provinces? *To what extent and how?* What key lessons and good practices in institutional capacity development can be identified for the future?

Disparity reduction: Is there any concrete evidence regarding the effectiveness of the tsunami response in terms of reducing disparities in terms of access to and quality of services in the programme areas? What strategies can be proposed for improved access and quality of services by less advantaged/reached areas and population groups?

Use of cash transfers and role of private sector: These two aspects of the tsunami response in Thailand are useful to document. The use of cash transfers for relief which was reviewed in 2005/6 and a more detailed documentation is needed. What were the key lessons from the use of cash transfers that can be used in Thailand and elsewhere? What has been the experience in working with the private sector and what lessons and recommendations can be drawn for the future?

Partnerships: During the tsunami response, UNICEF worked with a variety of traditional and non-traditional partners. What has been the overall experience in working with a variety of partners including private sector organizations? What lessons and recommendations can be drawn for further strengthening of UNICEF partnerships during humanitarian response and recovery in the context of a middle income country?

Learning and information use: How timely and adequate was the data/information generated for need/situation assessment and programme planning/performance monitoring? What has been the experience in generating and using information and conducting/using studies and evaluations and what lessons can be drawn for the future?

Sustainability, replication and upstream focus: Were there plans and efforts to ensure that the services and facilities created in response to Tsunami remain operational after UNICEF withdraws its funding support? Are there any particular examples of spin-offs (positive or negative) from the tsunami response? Which programme areas? How did these originate? Are there any programme areas where UNICEF's tsunami response has had wider influence on national policies and plans? What are the lessons that can be distilled from the Thailand experience in general and with particular respect to education, child protection and district/local capacity development?

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation will be based mainly on secondary data sources but there will be need for some primary data collection which will be determined and planned as part of the scoping/evaluability mission. The evaluation will be based on the following methods:

Document review (both in-country, on web, and on UNICEF intranet): There is considerable literature on tsunami in Thailand and this includes UNICEF's periodic review reports and many studies. In addition, the latest MICS survey provides province-level data which can be an important source for the evaluation.

Scoping/evaluability mission: The evaluation is planned in two phases. The first phase will include a scoping mission and evaluability assessment which will include detailed planning for the evaluation and field data collection methodology, instrument development.

Primary data collection: Primary data collection will be organised with the help of a national team who will gather information (qualitative and quantitative) through key informant interviews, focus group discussions and through field observation and rapid surveys (if necessary). There might be a need to engage a national institution for conducting survey but this will be known only after the scoping mission. Field-level data collection and any surveys will also entail proper use of sampling and statistical methods.

Data analysis using qualitative and quantitative methods: Given the qualitative nature of much of the investigation, findings should be triangulated from a wide range of sources. Validation of findings will take place during the field presentation, followed by comment and feedback on the draft reports.

Organisation and Management

The evaluation will be managed by Senior Evaluation Specialist (tsunami portfolio manager) based in UNICEF's Evaluation Office in New York who will collaborate closely with the CO (Lead Person Monitoring and Evaluation Officer) in managing the evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted primarily by a team of 2 evaluation experts (international) who will have prior evaluation expertise in at least 3 programme areas covered by the UNICEF response, exposure to developing countries and emergency contexts.

The international evaluators will be working closely in each country with a team of national institutions/ consultants who will support information/data gathering and processing. The national teams will be identified prior to the visit of the evaluators by UNICEF Evaluation Office with support from UNICEF CO in consultation with the international consultants. UNICEF CO will issue separate job contracts for the national institutions/consultants identified and the later will report to the CO for all matters related to the administration of their contracts. Technical guidance and oversight will be with the international consultants based on their respective areas of expertise.

During the course of the evaluation, the evaluation team will have significant interaction with selected government officials, UN agency staff and the members of the IASC-CT, international financial institutions (particularly the Asian development Bank and the World Bank), international and national NGOs, civil society actors and other allies who have played key roles during the tsunami response. In the course of the evaluation, the CO will form a reference group for the evaluation which will have representation of various stakeholders. The reference group will support the evaluation by reviewing inception and draft reports and it will also play an important role in promoting the use of evaluation recommendations. An inter-divisional reference group, that is established at the headquarters level for the tsunami impact evaluations in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand will serve the present evaluation by providing feedback on the inception report and draft reports.

Evaluation Team:

The Evaluation Team will comprise 4 members, 2 international experts and two Thai nationals (could be an institution). One of the international experts shall be selected to work as the Team Leader. The Team Leader shall, in addition to the sectoral tasks, be responsible for operational management and smooth and efficient conduct of work by the members of his/her team.

The ideal candidates would have:

- extensive experience in evaluation of humanitarian and/or recovery response particularly in Southeast Asia.
- expertise in at least one key area of UNICEF's work in Thailand, namely health and nutrition, education, and protection.
- expertise in qualitative and quantitative methods of evaluation, including rapid appraisal methods
- expertise and experience in data collection, management and analysis
- knowledge of evaluation norms, standards and approaches (especially UNEG norms and standards).
- proven communication, facilitation and writing skills
- excellent knowledge of English (oral and in writing)
- ability to work independently, as well as member of a team

Deliverables:

Inception Report – At the end of the first visit, the evaluation team (international consultants) shall prepare an inception report containing results of literature review, interpretation of evaluation questions and observations on their evaluability, detailed methods, draft instruments, work plan and organization of the evaluation report.

Presentation of preliminary findings: At the end of second field visit, the evaluation team will present their draft findings. The evaluation team will also make a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

Draft/Final evaluation report: The Evaluation Team will prepare a draft report for comments by selected stakeholders. The final report which will address the comments provided should be organized on the lines suggested in UNICEF Evaluation Report Standards. The quality of the report should achieve at least a 'good' ranking according to internal UNICEF criteria. It should clearly state the limitations of the methodology followed. The report will include an Executive Summary of 2-3 pages for which UNICEF's guidance note can be referred to. The Executive Summary will be translated into Thai language.

Annex B: Evaluation Matrix Guiding the Evaluation

Task	Core Focus	Methods	Indicators
1. Relief to Development	UNICEF's response in terms of the CCC	Document review; interviews with local and national stakeholders in emergency response; UNICEF CO interviews	Fulfillment of CCCs
	Relevance to and consistency with existing programming strengths and gaps	Review of 2004 country plan and annual report; UNICEF CO interviews	Match/mismatch of capacity and demands
	Effectiveness and appropriateness of 'transition planning'.	Document review; interviews with local and national stakeholders in emergency response; UNICEF CO interviews	UNICEF/DAC criteria comparing late 2004 and late 2005 programming emphases
	What has been learned of wider relevance?	Thematic analysis, identifying principles and exemplar of good practice.	
2. Child Protection	Relevance and appropriateness in "doing the right things"	Document review; UNICEF CP staff interviews; external stakeholders (e.g. social workers, M of SDHD staff etc.)	Response c.f. elements of Protective Environment Framework
	Efficiency and effectiveness in "doing things in the right way"	Document review; UNICEF CP staff interviews; external stakeholders (e.g. social workers, M of SDHD staff etc.)	'Satisfaction' of those trained; perceived value of developments by professionals, local officials and government officers
	Significance and sustainability of impacts	External stakeholder interviews; follow-up interviews with children and carers; audit of monitoring database & referral records	% CPMS databases that have been updated within last 12 months; % of children indicated as extremely high risk/high risk who have been visited in last 12 months; number of CP cases referred - by category of protection risk - c.f. Tambons receiving no programme support; % of referrals receiving active case management (i.e. documented actions such as home visit or other intervention)
	Lessons learned and recommendations	Thematic analysis, identifying principles and exemplar of good practice.	
3. Child Friendly Schools	Relevance and appropriateness in "doing the right things"	Document review, stakeholder interviews and observation at national, local and school levels	Coherence with policy and documented needs
	Efficiency and effectiveness in "doing things in the right way"	Document review, stakeholder interviews and observation at national, local and school levels	Evidence of relevant attention to 6 CFS criteria

Task	Core Focus	Methods	Indicators
	Significance and sustainability of impacts	Review of school and ESAO records; observations (teacher-student interactions, school application of discipline) in schools	Changes in capacities and commitments of institutions with respect to 6 CFS criteria; attainment of CFS criteria (c.f. schools not receiving programmatic assistance)
	Lessons learned and recommendations	Thematic analysis, identifying principles and exemplar of good practice.	
4. Local Capacity Development	Relevance and appropriateness in “doing the right things”	Document review; interviews with UNICEF local capacity development staff, Mol staff, MST members	
	Efficiency and effectiveness in “doing things in the right way”	Document review; interviews with UNICEF local capacity development staff, Mol staff, MST members	‘Satisfaction’ of those trained; perceived value of developments by local officials and government officers
	Significance and sustainability of impacts	Review of Children & Youth plans, BCC community project proposals; interviews with children & youth	% MSTs producing plan by deadline; % plans detailing clear activities for children; % plans formally adopted by TAOs (with clear budget allocation)
	Lessons learned and recommendations	Thematic analysis, identifying principles and exemplar of good practice.	
5. Institutional Learning	What aspects of ‘Build Back Better’ were (and were not) achieved?	Document review (including draft reports on Tasks 1 to 4); interviews with UNICEF senior staff (inc. Section Heads); interviews with senior government officials	Fulfillment of strategic priorities identified in BBB (e.g. reaching most vulnerable; strengthening capacity for disaster preparedness; policy influence)
	What are the lessons from this for the UNICEF Thailand Country Programme?	Thematic analysis, identifying principles and exemplar of good practice.	
	What are the wider lessons for UNICEF and other agencies?	Thematic analysis, identifying principles and exemplar of good practice.	

Annex C: Record of Consultation and Fieldwork Locations

List of persons interviewed:

UNICEF Country Office

Tomoo Hozumi	UNICEF Representative
Andrew Morris	Deputy Representative
Andrew Claypole	Chief of Social Policy Section
Scott Bamber	Project Officer, HIV/AIDS Section
Amanda Bissex	Child Protection Officer
Rangsun Wiboonuppatum	Education Officer
Kanda Sutthanunt	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Suganya Boonprasirt	Project Specialist, Local Capacity Building
Sirirath Chunnasart	Child Protection Officer
Settisak Akanimart	Child Protection Officer
Napat Phisanbut	Programme Communication Officer
Chayanit Wangdee	Project Assistant, Social Policy Section

UNICEF Phuket Field Office

Urai Singhpaiboonporn	Programme Communication Officer
Nantaporn Ieumwananonthachai	Child Protection Officer
Nantawan Hinds	Education Officer

Former UNICEF Staff

Alexander Krueger	Child Protection
Brigette DeLay	Child Protection
Elsa Laurin	Child Protection
Naiyana Thanawattho	Child Protection
Kitiya Phornsadja	Education
Katrin Imhof	Education
Somsak Boonyawiroj	Education

Ministry of Education

Benjalug Namfa	Director, Bureau of Academic Affairs and Educational Standards, Office of the Basic Education Commission
Wongduen Suwansiri	Office of the Basic Education Commission
Sirima Monmai	Office of the Basic Education Commission

Ministry of Interior

Wattana Phaisurat	Director, Technical Services and Foreign Affairs Division, Department of Local Administration
Dhana Yantrakovit	Department of Local Administration

Others

George Attig	Institute for Nutrition, Mahidol University
Anyamanie Buranakanon	Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University
Sirivieng Pairojkul	Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University
Chantalle Lacroix	Director, ChildTRAC

Tambons represented in fieldwork:

Ranong

Ban Na
Bang Hin
Bang Phra Nuea
Bang Rin
Haad Sompon
Khao Niwet
Kraburi
La Un Tai
Muang Kluang
Ngao
Ratchakrut
Sai Daeng

Phang Nga

Bang Toei
Bang Wan
Khlung Khian
Khuk Khak
Kuraburi
Lam Kaen
Lam Phi
Le
Marui
Na Toei
Takua Pa
Thai Mueang
Tung Ma Prao

Krabi

Ao Luek Nuea
Ao Luek Tai
Din Udom
Huai Nam Khao
Khao Kram
Khao Thong
Khok Yang
Klong Pon
Klong Tom
Klong Yang
Koh Klang
Phru Tiao
Plai Phraya
Sai Thai
Saladan

