Guidance on Conducting a Situation Analysis of Children's and Women's Rights

Taking a rights-based, equity-focused approach to Situation Analysis

unicef

Division of Policy and Strategy
March 2012

Table of Contents

Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CA	Country Analysis
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CP	Country Programme
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMIS	Education Management Information System
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HMIS	Health Management Information System
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFIs	International Finance Institutions
IMEP	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
KAP	Knowledge Attitude Practice
MBB	Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks
MD	Millennium Declaration
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MTSP	Medium Term Strategic Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSE	Non-State Entity
PCNA	Post Conflict Needs Assessment
PPPM	Programme Policies and Procedure Manual
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
RR	Regular Resources
SD	Supply Division
SitAn	Situation Analysis of Children and Women
SP	Social Protection
SRA	Strategic Result Area
SWAps	Sector Wide Approaches
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group

These guidelines will be updated frequently. Comments and queries should be referred to Etona Ekole (eekole@unicef.org) and Robert Jenkins (rjenkins@unicef.org)

Overview

1. A rights-based, equity-focused Situation Analysis (SitAn) includes: a disaggregated assessment of the status of and trends in the realization of children's and women's rights; an analysis of the immediate, underlying and structural causes of shortfalls and disparities across various groups; and policy and programmatic recommendations to address the shortfalls and disparities and accelerate progress towards development goals and the fulfilment of human rights conventions[1]. By focusing on the key knowledge gaps related to inequities and child deprivations and promoting the broad engagement of all stakeholders, the SitAn is intended to make an important contribution to shaping national development strategies to accelerate achievement of the child-related goals with equity.

2. Central to the Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) is the recognition that UNICEF will increase its capacity to engage in policy discussions through evidence-based analysis. The renewed focus on equity further emphasizes the importance of undertaking a SitAn that systematically examines patterns of inequities in the realisation of children and women's rights, including understanding their immediate, underlying and structural causes. A strengthened SitAn must explore the causes of the differences in development outcomes between various population groups and also geographic regions within a country. As markers of progress in accelerating the achievement of results with equity, the choice of strategic results areas[2](SRAs) and the recently introduced enhanced planning and monitoring framework highlight the importance of the situation analysis in understanding the causes of inequities, including examining major bottlenecks and barriers to the non-fulfilment of the rights of children and women. The 10 determinants[3] used in the analysis of barriers and bottlenecks to equitable outcomes for children provide a useful frame for verifying the quality and completeness of the examination of inequities in the SitAn.

3. Several options exist in developing the Situation Analysis. The PPP Manual indicates that a new or updated Situation Analysis of children and women (SitAn) document, as a synthesis of new statistics, national policies, laws and trends, and new research and analysis accumulated over the past years, should be prepared *at least once* in the course of a Country Programme cycle. In some countries, an interagency Common Country Assessment or similar nationally-owned document, if sufficiently focused and comprehensive on the situation of children as well as analysing the prevailing disparities, may serve the purpose of a SitAn. A separate SitAn would therefore not be required. If a single document is developed, the SitAn may be a Government or national academic publication, a joint UN publication, or a UNICEF publication, depending on the local context and the Country Office's analysis of what would be the most effective format in positively influencing national policy and planning discourse.

4. Alternatively, the SitAn may take the form of a series of research and analytical products developed over time. These different approaches may be combined, effectively serving to strengthen the knowledge base and consensus on the situation of children over the duration of, and as an element of the Country Programme.

5. The SitAn process not only informs the planning of the UNICEF-assisted Country Programme and the UNDAF, but more importantly, is intended to support national capacity development and policy-making processes, and is inclusive of a broad range of stakeholders. The analysis

---

[1] Particularly the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Types of Discrimination Against Woman (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
[2] See the Note on Monitoring the Equity Approach (September 2011).
[3] See also Draft Note on Level 3 Monitoring of Strategic Results Areas (31 October 2011).

should therefore engage duty-bearers and rights-holders in a collective analysis of shortfalls and disparities and their causes; and on how to reduce inequities in child outcomes and better fulfil children's and women's rights.

6. In keeping with resolutions from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the UN Triennial Comprehensive Policy review (TCPR); government leadership and ownership in analytical processes should be fully supported. Where necessary, and to the extent possible, UNICEF will provide financial and technical capacity/support to participating partners.

7. Specifically, the process of developing a SitAn should:

a) use available data and other information to accurately identify trends, patterns, incidence and causes of key deprivations (e.g. child mortality, stunting, low levels of birth registration, low school enrolment and achievement or violence against children), disaggregated by relevant segments of the population.

b) identify and analyze the barriers and bottlenecks that prevent disadvantaged children and families from benefiting from required interventions and services, including the social, political and economic conditions that result in shortfalls in the creation of an enabling environment for the realization of children's rights.[4]

c) analyze the extent to which gender inequalities and the fulfillment/non-fulfillment of the rights of women affect overall inequalities and deprivations, including those affecting children.

d) assess the current or potential presence of emergency risks, including conflict, disaster risks, and other potential shocks; the likelihood of their occurrence, the underlying vulnerabilities, the nature of the hazard and the particularly vulnerable groups that will be affected. The capacities and coping mechanisms of families, communities, local and national institutions to mitigate these risks and deal with shocks should also be assessed.

e) analyze the extent to which the evidence-based interventions and services needed to address deprivations are prioritized in national policies, laws, strategies, plans and budgets, and supported by UNICEF and partners. This would include an analysis of the extent to which there is an enabling environment for the realization of the rights of all children including the promotion of positive social norms and behaviours, organization of services, institutional capacities at national, sub-national and community levels.

Purpose

8. A rights-based, equity-focused SitAn should serve the following purposes:

a) improve the understanding of decision-makers, partners and all other stakeholders of the current status of children's and women's rights in the country and the causes of shortfalls and inequities, as the basis for recommending actions;

---

[4] For further guidance on analysis of bottlenecks and barriers, see the note on Monitoring the Equity Approach (September 2011).

b) support national and decentralized planning and development processes including influencing policies, strategies, budgets and national laws to contribute towards an enabling environment for children that adheres to human rights principles, particularly in regard to universality, non-discrimination, participation and accountability;

c) strengthen national and sub-national capacities to monitor the situation of children and women, principally regarding vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and how their specific rights are being met;

d) contribute to national research on disadvantaged children and leverage UNICEF's convening power to foster and support knowledge generation with development, civil society and private sector stakeholders.

e) Strengthen the knowledge base to enable assessment of the contribution of development partners, including UNICEF and the UN, in support of national development goals.

Box 1: Key Questions for a Rights-based, Equity-focused SitAn

A rights-based, equity-focused SitAn supported by UNICEF should seek to respond to the following questions, either through direct consideration, or through reference to other documents in which these are adequately addressed:

1) How do child and maternal outcomes and trends differ across population groups and regions?

2) Which are the most deprived groups of children and women? Where are they located?

3) What forms of deprivation and exclusion do these groups face? What are the determining factors that give rise to and perpetuate their exclusion?

4) What are the underlying causes of gender and other inequalities across population groups and regions?

5) What are the immediate, underlying and structural barriers and bottlenecks to child and maternal well-being and to accessing and utilizing basic social services and other critical resources?

6) What risks (conflict, natural hazards, etc.) exist that are likely to affect the patterns of deprivation and exclusion, exacerbate or create barriers and bottlenecks?

7) What existing social, institutional and political factors (e.g. social norms, institutional capacities at all levels of government, accountability and coordination mechanisms, policy and legal frameworks) impede or could potentially support the creation of an enabling environment for the realization of children's rights?

8) Have the 'drivers' of inequity changed over time? If so, how has that been accomplished? If not, why not? Does the policy environment proactively address disparities and deprivations through legislation, policies and budgets? What gaps are there in policy response and in implementation?

9) What capacities exist at national, sub-national and community levels to participate in analytical processes that examine the causes and consequences of shortfalls and inequities and to what extent are disadvantaged groups involved in such efforts and with what results?

10) What programme interventions and resource mobilization and allocation options should be considered in the future, in order to address specific dimensions of inequity and pervasive vulnerabilities?

Timing and Sequencing

9. A SitAn should be undertaken or comprehensively updated *at least once in the course of a programme cycle (i.e., at least once every five years),* with the specific timing determined based on the potential impact on the planning of national development priorities and related policy-making exercises. Whether as a comprehensive publication or as a rolling process, the SitAn should be undertaken in conjunction with or as an input to other relevant analytical and planning opportunities, such as: the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), and Sector Wide Approaches (SWAps), as part of a broader UN Country Team's effort, or to feed into national reporting to the CRC, CEDAW and CRPD Committees. The timing of a SitAn development process may also build upon the release of new information on children, including from major surveys (e.g., MICS, Demographic and Health Surveys) and from other special research and studies. In countries with ongoing humanitarian situations or with high emergency risk exposure, lighter updates should be undertaken, feeding into Consolidated Appeal Processes or contingency planning processes depending on context.

10. The SitAn can take different forms, based on what would be most influential to national and decentralized policy and planning processes that fully integrate the realization of children and women's rights. Whichever of the three possibilities outlined in Box 2 is used singly or in combination, the relevant activities in support of the SitAn should be built into the main planning documents of the Country Programme (UNDAF, CPAP, Work Plans and the IMEP).

> **Box 2: Approaches in developing SitAns (singly or in combination)**
>
> 1. **A single comprehensive document** in long or short form *(e.g. An analysis of the situation of children in Viet Nam 2010; Children and Adolescents in Namibia 2010 – a situation analysis)*
>
> 2. *A series of issue-based, sector or region-specific and/or life-cycle-focused analyses* that increase knowledge and understanding over time. For instance on:
>   - selected sets of rights (e.g., in socio-economic policies, protection, education, health, participation);
>   - the status of children at infancy, childhood and adolescence at national or sub-national levels;
>   - specific issues (e.g., the nature and impact of conflict or disaster risk on children)
>   *(e.g.: Climate Change and Children in the Brazilian Amazon Region, 2009; Child Poverty and Disparities in Egypt 2010...).*
>
> 3. **Contribution to joint analysis** with government or other development actors (e.g.: UNCT Country Analysis, *Country Analysis of Maternal and Neonatal Health, Post Conflict Needs Assessments (PCNA), Child Rights Governance Analysis* with Save the Children*, etc..)*

11. Adequate preparations must be made, including the allocation of sufficient funding for SitAn activities. There is no "fixed percentage" on the extent to which UNICEF should financially support SitAn work. It should however be treated as a *core function* of UNICEF's work in the country, in the context of the overall CP and the UNDAF. Country Offices should provide adequate and catalytic support to national child-focussed research and analysis, and promote its use. The overall cost of supporting a SitAn should be considered on a country by country basis, in view of: the focus of the overall CP, the options for phasing of research and analytical activities, and the available budget. A SitAn, though it may be funded to a great extent by UNICEF and the UNCT, should also seek wider support from within the country and from relevant external partners.

Stakeholder Involvement

12. National ownership is necessary to build consensus on the analytical results, including the use of internationally recognized data and standards. Involvement of the government, civil society and other national stakeholders throughout the SitAn process is a pre-requisite for its acceptance in policy and strategy formulation, budget allocation, programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Stakeholder involvement should be strategically planned and managed throughout the process. Key stakeholders to the SitAn will normally include:
- key ministries and government agencies at the national and sub national levels;
- parliaments and other representative bodies
- relevant civil society organizations, including NGOs, professional associations, women's groups, youth organisations and other social partners
- international cooperation partners
- policy analysis, research and development institutions
- the private sector
- the media
- children and young persons
- groups subject to discrimination, including the poor, indigenous peoples and migrants.

Steps to develop a Situation Analysis

13. Whatever the approach adopted, conducting a SitAn follows a basic sequence of steps including, but are not limited to:

Step 1:   Assessment of the manifestations of child rights shortfalls and inequities in child outcomes

Step 2:   Analysis of the major causes of child rights shortfalls and inequities

Step 3:   Validation of the analysis for the realisation of child rights with equity

Refer to Annex 3 for details on preparation for the conduct of a SitAn through workplans, TORs etc... to complement and support the steps listed above.

Step 1: Assessment of manifestations of shortfalls in child rights and inequities

14. The process begins with a comprehensive review of the existing data, evidence and research on children and women. This review process involves all stakeholders and includes an assessment of the extent to which the data meets minimum quality standards.[5] Such an assessment will include a review of the trends in all the child outcomes in health, nutrition, education, HIV, water and sanitation, environment, child and social protection and participation in relation to international targets such as the MDGs and other goals related to the CRC, CEDAW and CRPD. A comprehensive review of data and research-based information will summarise current knowledge, enable in-depth understanding of key social, cultural and related economic issues and help to identify what additional primary (qualitative and quantitative) data or analysis is required. Secondary information should be identified and consulted through desk

---

[5] This step in the SitAn process may be used to stress the value of a strategy to develop and maintain a common database on human rights and development indicators that can be linked to national development plans, such as DevInfo.

reviews; requests for inputs from partners (government, bilaterals and NGOs); and bilateral meetings/focus group discussions with CSOs to gather additional qualitative information on issues of particular relevance.

15. In view of preparing to undertake a causality analysis that fully integrates an examination of bottlenecks and barriers in relation to improved outcomes for children, an assessment of country-specific indicators (quantitative and qualitative) will highlight areas of variance from nationally and internationally defined targets and goals. By assessing the relative value of specific indicators for any given service, intervention, system, behaviour or practice, the shortfalls in child related goals and in the fulfilment of specific rights are underscored. Once the shortfalls have been identified, a causality analysis will permit a causal examination of the determinants that support or impede the achievement of rights.

16. The analysis of the data and information should be disaggregated, to the extent possible, by various characteristics of children as relevant in each context. This may include sex, age and various population groups (female or child-headed households), area of residence (urban/rural), location (national, regional, community), educational levels, wealth quintiles, disability status, ethnicity, religion, caste and race. Analysis across different characteristics is important in understanding the multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion that girls or boys, at different ages in their childhood, as well as women may face. This would enable a comprehensive analysis of the patterns of inequities in relation to each development goal. Assessment of the nature of gender relations is critical at family, local and national levels to reveal patterns and scope of gender inequalities including in: a) development outcomes between girls and boys, b) access to and use of basic social services, including protection services, and c) the control of resources.

17. Recent national household surveys such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), and national census and household budget and expenditure surveys are important information sources, as they can provide disaggregated and increasingly trend data that will serve as a primary evidence base for a rights-based and equity-focused analysis. Survey reports and datasets often contain a wealth of untapped data on disparities, and in many countries UNICEF has supported further analysis of primary data on the status of a specific disadvantaged group. National household surveys may in some cases be limited in their potential to provide information on inequities, as certain population groups may be excluded due to the sampling approach. For example, children of ethnic minorities and refugees, children with disabilities, street children, children living in institutions, trafficked children, migrant children and children working in hazardous conditions, children in urban slums, and other groups may not be adequately accounted for in such surveys, rendering a rights-based equity-focused analysis challenging. Oversampling of these groups in the survey design may be used to overcome this limitation, or focus group discussions and other qualitative methods may be applied nationally, or to specific districts and communities. The use of multiple sources of information, as outlined in the Table 1, will allow for a comprehensive assessment.

18. Adequate preparation to conduct a SitAn establishes the groundwork for key issues to be examined, the appropriate methodologies for exploring each of these and the level of stakeholder engagement to ensure the strategic value of the effort. Sound preparation points to the need to incorporate the SitAn as a key intervention in the programme through the CPD, UNDAF Action Plan/CPAP and the IMEP. As such, research and analytic work is prioritised at key moments in the programming cycle. Sensitising stakeholders on the various reference frameworks against which the situation of children is analysed is important to building a common understanding on the relevance of the analysis for identifying avenues of action.

Table 1: Examples of Information Sources

Primary Data Sources
Routine statistics generated by Ministries or Statistical Offices – e.g.:
▪ Health Management Information System (HMIS)
▪ Education Management Information (EMIS)
▪ Finance Laws and National Budgets (Ministry of Finance)
▪ National Surveillance System
▪ Birth/Vital Registration systems
▪ National Disaster and emergency statistics
Special-purpose surveys – e.g.:
▪ Census
▪ Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)
▪ Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)
▪ Household Welfare Monitoring Surveys
▪ Household Budget and Expenditure Surveys
▪ Child Labour Surveys
▪ Baseline Surveys
▪ **Focus Group Discussions, Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) studies and consultations with representative groups of:**
- Children/adolescents
- Young people
- Women
- Communities
- Especially disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic minorities and children with disabilities
▪ **Socio-cultural/Ethnographic Research**
Secondary Data Sources
Routine Reports from Government
▪ Annual Reports of Ministries
▪ Sectoral and thematic reports
▪ Treasury expenditure reports
Reporting on internationally agreed Conventions, Treaties and Targets
▪ MDGs reports
▪ State party reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
▪ Concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee
▪ State party reports on the CEDAW and CPRD and concluding observations and recommendations of the Committees
▪ Alternative reports submitted by NGOs and/or independent national human rights institutions
▪ Report of country visits (if any) by Special Rapporteurs, Special Representatives, and/or independent experts
Studies and Analytic work
▪ Academic studies
▪ Thematic studies (ex. Child Poverty Studies)
▪ Poverty Mapping
▪ Vulnerability Assessments
▪ Conflict Analyses
▪ Hazard maps and risk assessments
▪ Previous SitAns, including those done by other institutions
▪ Sector-specific and macro-level analyses
▪ Analytical reports by other agencies (e.g., World Bank, specialized agencies, and regional commissions)
▪ Budget reviews (Example: World Bank Public Expenditure Reviews etc...)
▪ Legislative reviews (Penal Code, Juvenile laws etc.)
Reports from Programme Reviews and Evaluations
▪ Mid-Term Review findings
▪ Country Programme Evaluations

▪ UNDAF Evaluations
Databases
▪ DevInfo databases
▪ Other official database meeting international standards

Closing data gaps

19. An important aspect of Step 1 is the identification of knowledge gaps on priority issues. Where critical data gaps exist, UNICEF should advocate with government and other partners to fill the gaps through special surveys, studies and other research work. These exercises can be included in the national and UNDAF monitoring and evaluation processes. It may be necessary to undertake specific issue-based or sectoral studies. Ideally, additional, issue-specific analysis can feed into a relevant national planning, budgeting or legislative processes.

20. Population-based surveys, which are a rich source of data, are generally ill-equipped to accurately capture information on issues related to the demand for certain services, such as household behaviours in seeking education and health care, as well as social norms and cultural practices. This potential blind spot can be an impediment to the analysis of the drivers of inequities. This gap can be filled with supplementary research tools, such as focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, appreciative enquiries and rapid assessments with members of the focus group[6]. This supplementary information is important as there may be significant barriers to achieving children's rights and addressing inequalities which will only be captured through qualitative data collection exercises – for example, the persistence of harmful and discriminatory practices or the perception of children and parents that services are inappropriate, unsafe, or of low quality. Similarly, it is important to obtain geographically disaggregated data collection in zones with very high emergency risk exposure.

Step 2: Analysis of the major causes of child rights shortfalls and inequities

21. Following the assessment of the situation of children and women based on existing data and trends, the next step is to analyse available information to systematically analyse the socio-political, judicial and institutional environment, systems, behaviours and practices that facilitate or hamper the fulfilment of the rights of children and women. Whatever the form or approach the Country Office decides to adopt for its SitAn, the following interrelated and mutually reinforcing tools will support a quality and adequately structured analytical effort.

1. a causality analysis will examine the *causes* of shortfalls and inequities within a conceptual framework, probing beyond the immediate causes of non-realisation of children's and women's rights to determine the underlying and structural causes of the problem; identifies the *bottlenecks and barriers* relevant to the *critical determinants* in the provision and use of essential interventions and services for children and women in order to support the establishment of a baseline for action in reducing inequities and accelerating progress towards child development goals;
2. a role-pattern analysis delves into the *roles and relationship*s between duty-bearers and rights holders in relation to specific rights;
3. a capacity-gap analysis, examines the *capacity* of key individuals and institutions responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of children;

---

[6] See guidelines for Assessing Social and Cultural Factors and Bottlenecks Related to UNICEF's Strategic Result Areas, October 2011 (draft prepared by C4D unit NYHQ)

4. an <u>analysis of the enabling environment</u> examines broader policy, legal, administrative and budgetary issues and social norms which influence the realisation of human rights of children and women and the reduction of inequalities.

22. These tools will enable a human rights approach and equity focus to the SitAn process. Gender should be mainstreamed throughout the analysis, and environmental sustainability also emphasized, as collectively constituting the normative framework. The 2010 revised CCA/UNDAF Guidance package of the UNDG stresses the use of a Human Rights Based Approach and integrating climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR) to Programming. In many cases, the development of the SitAn also makes use of other analytical tools to complement the causal, role/pattern and capacity-gap analysis and complemented by the analyses of bottlenecks and barriers (for example, using marginal budgeting for bottlenecks - MBB), vulnerability and emergency risk assessments, sector-specific analysis and gender analysis, as the different cause and effect relationships in the conceptual framework (see figure 1) are examined (see also Annex 2 for other analytical components).

23. It should be noted that the construction of the analysis using these proposed tools need not be undertaken at the same time. An inclusive approach that pays attention to developing capacity will likely take time and constitute an important aspect of programme implementation. Efficient management of the process may call for a phased or sequential approach, that builds a body of analysis over time using the most appropriate tools opportunistically, in innovative ways and making strategic use of entry points, such as the revision of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, or micro-level planning activities. Country Offices should view these frameworks as tools to support analytical work <u>progressively</u>, rather than as a prescribed menu to be used in a rigid manner. Situation Analysis processes that foster "learning by doing", involving different actors and stakeholders is encouraged. Building on analysis conducted by others rather than "beginning from scratch" allows for efficiency and keeps the effort manageable.


Causality Analysis

24. The first step to completing a causality analysis is to develop the conceptual framework. A rights-based, equity-focused Situation Analysis, based on the human rights-based approach (EXDIR 1998-04), highlights in concrete terms the current patterns, scope and trends regarding inequities, their causes and the structural gaps that perpetuate disparities, exclusion and deprivations for children. The causal analysis represents the starting point in establishing relationships between likely causes and observed outcomes among children and women.

25. This will facilitate the following:
   a. examining the manifestations of shortfalls in the achievement of rights and inequities through an exploration of their patterns, scope and trends relative to key indicators;
   b. organizing or clustering multiple causes into a pattern of relationship, to identify the immediate, underlying or basic (structural) causes;
   c. structuring a bottleneck and barriers analysis that highlights the major causes and drivers of inequities and shortfalls for particular population groups and/or geographic regions;
   d. assessing macro-level determinants comprising legislation, policies, budgets and other factors such as migration, remittances and the aid environment and the extent to which these determinants of development outcomes are focused on the realization of rights and reduction of inequities;
   e. facilitating a discussion with partners on specific underlying or basic causes, including those that may be politically or socially difficult to discuss.

26. The scope of the conceptual framework (Figure 1) will vary according to different situations, the nature of the key development processes at national, regional and local levels and the specific factors affecting children's and women's rights within a country. It may prove useful to develop various issue, age or human-rights specific conceptual frameworks, such as for young children, or a particular minority, in order to analyse the specific cause-effect relationships related to a specific group or issue. Any causal analysis is in varying degrees a simplification of reality and the analysis will be continually revised during the course of consultations, and as future information is received.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for the development of a rights-based, equity-focused SitAn
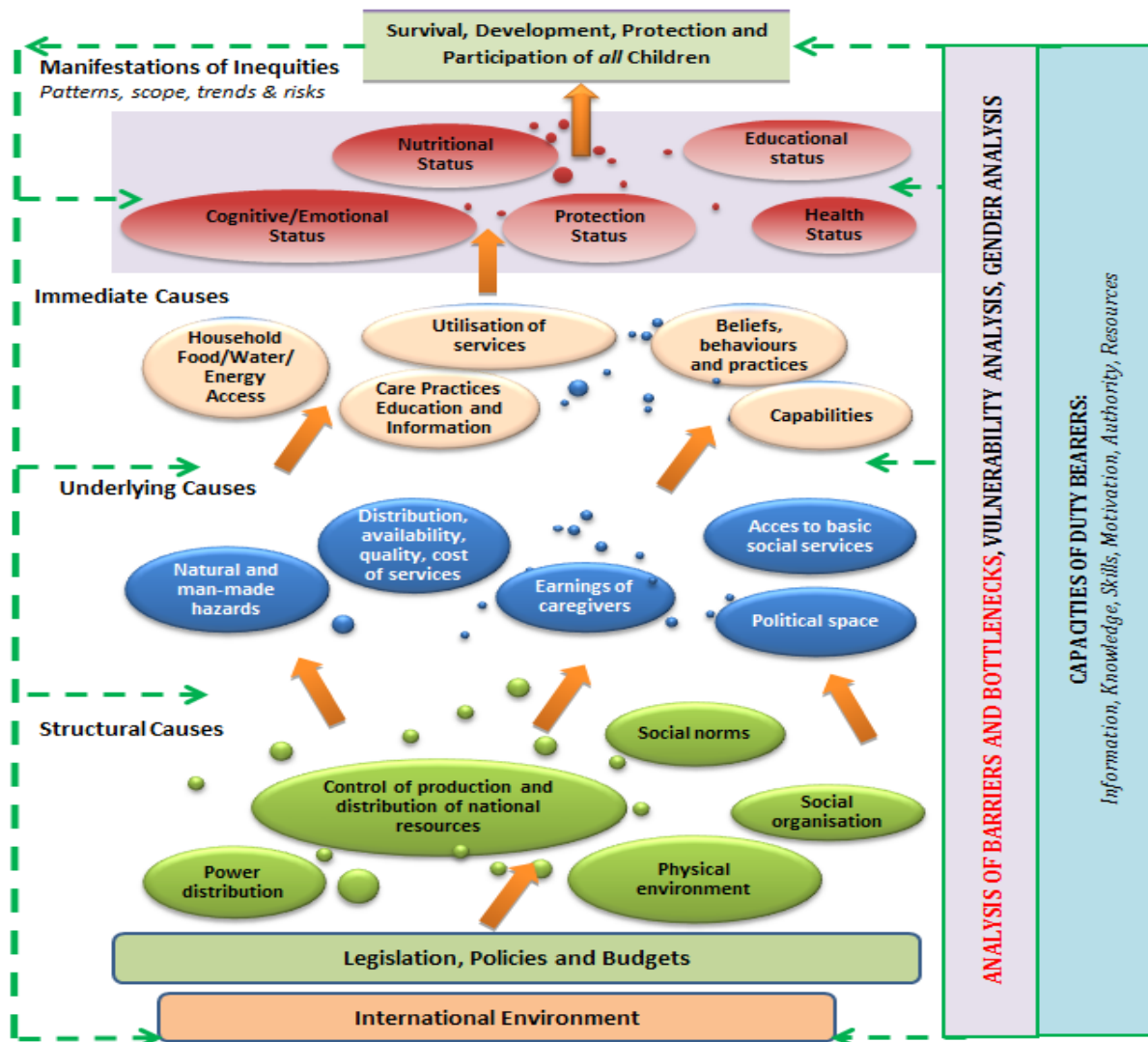
27. The causal analysis will examine a number of determinants in order to construct a comprehensive picture of the cause-and-effect relationships at the various levels. This analysis needs to be context specific, as an underlying cause of a problem in one country may be regarded as a more deep-rooted structural determinant in another. This in turn will affect and help to tailor strategic responses. Figure 1 illustrates a rights-based equity-focused conceptual framework that can be adapted for use in accordance with the specificities of country contexts.

28. Systematically asking the questions "who?" and "why?", based on the available data/information will help to move from immediate causes of a situation, such as low enrolment rates for girls or non-utilisation of health services, to considering the underlying and structural causes of these manifestations as they affect different groups in society. A causal analysis allows for different streams of a problem to be examined in-depth. Causes are not linear, but are often a complex interaction of multiple streams that reinforce each other. More immediate causes are often easier to address, while more structural causes are more difficult and often longer-term, but tend to provide more sustainable solutions and results. Factoring in the effects of hazards that cause emergencies to these complex interactions, is an additional lens that should not be overlooked. This is critical in countries with high emergency risk exposure.

29. Deprived populations face particular bottlenecks and barriers, which often differ in nature and severity from those faced by other population groups. Consequently, a bottleneck analysis[7] may be undertaken for different groups (geographical location, language/ethnicity, gender, disability, etc.) to help identify constraints to the critical conditions or *determinants* needed to realise the rights of children and women with equity. This in turn implies that information on all relevant determinants needs to be obtained. In this way, the differentiated strategies identified to address the specific bottlenecks and barriers that affect the most deprived, will be an essential component of effective equity-focused policies and programmes.

30. Ten essential determinants summarised in Table 3 below, have been developed to guide the analysis of barriers and bottlenecks faced by children in realising their rights. These ten determinants have been categorised into: *i) the enabling environment, ii) supply, iii) demand, and iv) quality of services/interventions for children*. Understanding the determinants for each relevant service, intervention, system, behaviour or practice and assessing how they affect desired results for children is a prerequisite for sound programming. The bottleneck analysis as part of the SitAn constitutes an important component in the assessment, analysis and continuous monitoring of key catalytic conditions for the achievement of equity in child survival, development and protection[8].

31. In addition to an overall conceptual framework, the development of specific problem trees will help to uncover the overlapping or structural causes of deprivations which relate to multiple manifestations of problems. Figure 2 below is a simplified example of connecting problem trees. The example shows that gender discrimination is a common structural cause which manifests itself in both the education sector (e.g., lower girls' enrolment) and HIV/AIDS (e.g., higher incidence of HIV infection among young girls and women). Geographical location and ethnic affiliation can compound gender discrimination as a cause of deprivations, leading to multiple and intersecting inequities experienced by teenage girls in a particular region of a country for example. Multivariate analyses can shed additional light on the identity of disadvantaged populations and the factors that determine disadvantage or vulnerability. Additional analysis can be undertaken by combining several background characteristics, such as gender disparities across various quintiles of wealth, or by performing a separate analysis of urban poor neighborhoods.

---

[7] The approach was originally proposed by Dr T. Tanahashi in the 1970s and has been incorporated into the Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks (MBB) approach as well as a number of other tools/approaches/initiatives that aim to identify and alleviate bottlenecks to coverage of health care.

[8] For a more comprehensive explanation see "Monitoring the Equity Approach", Sept.2011 and "Level Three monitoring of Strategic Result Areas (SRAs): Explaining the concept and future work plan" Draft Oct 2011.

Figure 2: Connecting Problem Trees
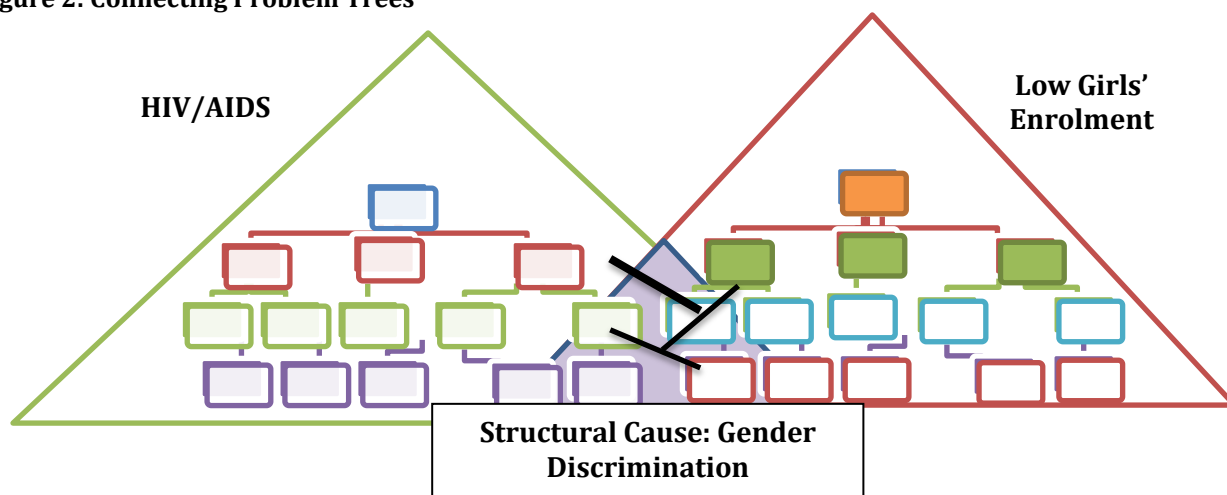
32. As part of the causality analysis, a bottleneck and barriers analysis considers the constraining influences on the achievement of a particular goal and uses the causal logic (structural, underlying and immediate causes) to ensure that the reasons for these are fully explained. This will serve as a basis of identifying the appropriate strategies to address the bottlenecks and barriers relative to achieving rights with equity. A full assessment of the 10 determinants – some of which may often be more critical than others - can then serve as baseline for monitoring progress in overcoming bottlenecks at national and subnational levels (see Table 3).

33. The conceptual framework and each problem tree, including the analysis of bottlenecks and barriers, needs to be validated by a broad range of relevant stakeholders, including children, young people, parents, community members and key programme partners (see Guidance Note on Promotion of Participation of Children and Young People and on Reaching Marginalised Children and their Families).

Role-Pattern Analysis

34. Following the development of the conceptual framework and completing further analysis of various issues or sub-populations through the development of problem trees, a role-pattern analysis is undertaken to understand the roles of relevant stakeholders. This involves understanding who is responsible for the various rights not being respected, protected or fulfilled. It is important to clearly define the rights-holders and duty-bearers and their respective roles and relationships in each context. Who are the rights-holders and also the duty-bearers and what obligations are they supposed to meet? What is the relationship between the rights-holders and duty-bearers for each development issue being examined, sub-divided to the extent possible – including at community, regional, national level if possible. Completing the column entitled 'role-pattern analysis' in Table 2 below should help guide this process.

Capacity-gap Analysis

35. Building on the role-pattern analysis, an important aspect of a human rights-based and equity-focused Situation Analysis is to understand the capacity constraints of those responsible for ensuring that children and women's rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled. Helping national partners in a process to identify (and subsequently address) the capacity gaps among duty-bearers, ranging from families and communities to the national level - and providing

support to addressing the identified gaps – is often a comparative advantage of the United Nations system.

36. During the process of uncovering the underlying and structural causes, the following questions will be asked:

- Why is it so or what causes this to happen/not to happen?
- Who is supposed to do something about this?
- What capacities are lacking for these institutions or individuals to carry out their duties?
- What capacities are lacking for rights-holders to better claim their rights?

37. Capacity gaps may include a lack of information, knowledge, skills, will/motivation, authority and financial or material resources. Duty-bearers might not be aware of their responsibilities, or may not be provided with the authority and support to carry out their duties. Different views, for instance among parents, service providers and government officials about their respective duties and accountabilities are indicative of also a potential gap in capacity. It is also essential that mechanisms and systems, including capable organisations, judicial and political processes, planning and review and accountability mechanisms, are able to effectively provide the means for rights-holders to assert their claims and seek redress.

38. The following questions should be asked during this process: Do rights-holders – including children in accordance with their age and maturity – have the capacity to claim their rights, including the ability to access information, organize and participate, advocate claims and policy change, as well as obtain redress? What mechanisms of delivery, accountability, and redress exist, and what mechanisms should be established? Who are the specific actors or institutions responsible for performance and do they have the capacity to meet obligations (including responsibility, authority, data, and resources)?

39. Duty-bearers may vary according to the problem to be addressed. For example, in relation to child protection issues, the duty-bearers may include employers (in respect to exploitative labour), media (in respect to raising awareness and respecting the rights of victims) and religious leaders (in respect to orphan care or elimination of harmful traditional practices).

40. Table 2 should be completed for each identified issue or bottleneck and barrier, (from the Conceptual Framework and the various Problem Trees).

Table 2: Role-Pattern and Capacity Gap Analysis

Level of Duty	Role-Pattern Analysis	Capacity Analysis		
As defined in relation to the issue at hand and local situation	Who is supposed to do what to help solve the problem?	**Motivation** Does the duty-bearer accept the responsibility? If not, why not?	**Authority** Does the duty-bearer have the authority to carry out the role? If not, who does?	**Resources** Does the duty-bearer have the knowledge, skills, organisational, and human and material resources? If not, what's missing?
Immediate Care Giver				
Household				
Community Group				
Local Govt.				
National Govt.				
International				

41. One element of the capacity of basic service systems is the availability, accessibility, appropriateness and acceptability of essential services and commodities (e.g., vaccines, textbooks, educational materials, water point spare parts, bed nets, essential drugs, health information, essential obstetric care, voluntary and confidential testing and counselling for HIV/AIDS). This translates into an examination of the bottlenecks and barriers related to **supply**, **demand** and **quality** determinants of the provision of services for children and women as a prerequisite for any action geared towards reaching all children, particularly the hard to reach (*see Table 3 for a summary of the 10 determinants*).

42. An analysis of **supply** determinants examines for instance, the capacity of the systems required to provide services to implement good care practices and protect children. The smooth functioning of a system should be analysed for: 1) c*ontinuous availability of essential materials or inputs* (e.g. drugs, vaccines, learning materials, financial resources), including an analysis of distribution channels, logistics and infrastructure, necessary to provide services for children (see CF/PD/PRO/2007-05 on essential commodity assessments); 2) *access to adequately staffed services, facilities and information.* This draws attention to the physical access of targeted population to services, facilities and information points or persons.

43. Where indicated by the severity of problems in accessing such services and commodities, including as a result of specific inequalities, further analysis of the determinants of **demand** for services should be undertaken. This reflects the financial, social and cultural factors that facilitate (or hinder) a specifically targeted population from benefiting from the services, facilities, systems or desired practices. Three main determinants can be used to measure the *demand* for services, these include: 1) *financial access* which reflects the affordability of services to the target population (including ability of families to contribute to user fees), 2) s*ocial and cultural practices and associated beliefs,* representing recognized social roles and responsibilities, and 3) c*ontinuity of use* which is a measure of the full and adequate utilization of services (particularly, the completion or on-going use of services), and a reflection of functioning systems or positive outcomes from recommended practices.

44. Examining the **quality** of services, systems or practices in the SitAn as a determining influence on the achievement of equitable outcomes for children, requires for instance that, the performance of health, education, water and sanitation and protection systems and practices be assessed. As such, the bottlenecks and barriers behind current status, coverage and outcomes must be analysed, including their compliance to internationally and nationally defined minimum standards and norms.

45. Again, it is important that analysis of the determinants of bottlenecks and barriers to equitable child development constitute an integral part the causality analysis, and are fully incorporated in a role-pattern and capacity gap analysis. Such an analysis can only be completed once the different facets of the enabling environment have also been reviewed to provide a comprehensive picture of shortfalls in the realisation of the rights of children and women, whatever the approach adopted for the exercise (*refer to Box 1 on approaches to the SitAn*).

Analysis of the Enabling Environment

46. An analysis of the **enabling environment**, as highlighted in Table 3, will complete the rights-based, equity-focused SitAn as it permits an in-depth examination of the strengths and weakness of national institutions, social policies, and legislative and budgetary systems that influence the realisation of the rights of children and women.   An examination of social norms, a policy-gap analysis, a legislative analysis, a budget analysis and an institutional analysis are important analytical components in understanding the shortfalls related to the fulfilment of

rights with equity. In undertaking a causality analysis, these determinants would be examined at the level of structural causes in the shortfalls to the realisation of the rights of children and women, and equity.

47. **Social Norms:** A social norm is a context-specific rule or behaviour that members of a community follow in the belief that others expect them to do so[9]. Relevant social norms, key actors who perpetuate them and the degree to which they influence disadvantaged population groups should be examined. Discourse and practice on a particular issue (e.g FGM/C, early marriage etc...) may reflect a dominant position based on social and cultural beliefs. Further, social groups, organizations or networks may promote widely differing norms one from the other. The SitAn should reflect the variations in social norms and the degree to which they influence disadvantaged populations groups, particularly as they affect child survival, development and protection.

48. A **Policy Analysis** examines the principles and long-term goals that form the basis for making rules and guidelines, giving overall direction to planning and development. The following should be considered as part of the policy analysis:
- Consideration of the efficacy of existing child-focused policies (health, nutrition, education, child protection systems, physical and social protection and gaps therein);
- Appreciation of other social and development policies including PRSs, employment and agricultural policies, etc., that may not primarily concern children and women but affect their rights;
- Administrative, political and fiscal decentralization and the balance of responsibilities between the different tiers of government (national, regional/provincial and local);
- Engagement of children, including adolescents, in policy formulation and implementation, responsiveness to child rights related concerns;
- Issues of governance and accountability that affect gender relations and equalities as well as disadvantaged children and communities;
- Examination of policy development processes, including the extent to which they are inclusive and participatory, during formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

49. The Global Studies on Child Poverty and Disparities conducted in over 50 countries provide examples in generating evidence of policies, insights and networks that can be used as leverage to influence national development debates and planning.[10] It also should allow an assessment of the extent to which children are engaged and represented in policy making processes and the level to which they are responsive to key child rights related issues and concerns.

50. A **review of national legislation** should be included in the analysis of the enabling environment, comparing the legislative framework with the provisions of the CRC, CEDAW and the CRPD. The existence of a legislative framework that provides opportunities for all children, with special focus on the most disadvantaged, constitutes a significant element of the SitAn. As such, the laws, legal bodies and judicial decision-making and implementation systems should be reviewed. Specifically, such an analysis would include:
- Assessment of the existing legal system and gaps and weaknesses relative to the CRC, CEDAW, CRPD and other international child-related instruments. This includes a gender analysis of legislation, traditional and customary practices, and an assessment of questions of equality before the law *de jure* and in practice. Latest concluding

---

[9] See "Assessing Social and Cultural Factors and Bottlenecks Related to UNICEF's Strategic Result Areas. October 2011. C4D Unit DPP (in draft form).
[10]The goal of the Global Study is to improve national, regional and global awareness of the scope and causes of child poverty, and to improve the results public policies can deliver when they are specifically aimed at reducing child poverty and deprivations, and at reinforcing family, community, private and civil society efforts.

observations of the CRC Committee and the concluding remarks of the CEDAW Committee and action taken are also included;

- Identifying gaps in the legal framework, such as the weaknesses of any legislative reform initiatives, including constitutional provisions, children's statutes, and also assessing their main constraints in effective implementation;
- Analysis of institutions entrusted to enact, enforce and/or implement legislation, including women and girls' access to justice and redress;
- Analysis of government capacity (including institutional and human resource capacity) to undertake legislative reform;
- Analysis of the opportunities for, and ability of, citizens to claim their rights and to monitor implementation of policies and legislation in favour of children and women's rights.

51. The analysis of the enabling environment for the realisation of children and women's rights with equity should also include a **review of budget allocations and disbursements**. This will entail an analysis of the share of resources allocated to government functions related to the realization of children's rights and the overall distribution of public investments. The analysis of public spending should include the extent to which expenditures sufficiently prioritise and reach the most disadvantaged children and women. This analysis should include both national and sub-national budgets (e.g., primary health care, basic education, water and sanitation, environment, child protection services, social protection mechanism and HIV and AIDS programmes, among others) and also include a gender analysis. Specifically, as far as possible, it should include:

- financing policies (budgets, user fees, taxation, social insurance, etc.) and how they address access to basic services and equity;
- assessment of fiscal priority of the social sector and child development within the national budget and economy
- assessment of budget distribution by region (state, province, district, etc.) by type of service;
- review of implementation of budgets and outputs and the extent to which resources actually reach and benefit local service facilities and families (operational efficiency);
- review of public sector budgetary and financial management systems, with attention to fiscal discipline, flexibility, transparency and accountability;
- trend analysis of public investment in social service sectors over time, disaggregated by region and smallest geographical or service unit level possible;
- revenue trend analysis to determine the sustainability and predictability of revenue generated for these public investments (proportion of investment coming from tax system, from external debt, from central bank financing, from multi-lateral or bilateral aid, 'off budget' funds).
- Examination of national and sub-national budgets targeted to appropriate social service sectors (e.g., primary health care, basic education, water and sanitation, environment, child and social protection, HIV-AIDS programmes, etc.) and essential commodities provision within each sector.

52. Understanding **management and coordination mechanisms** within and between institutions will support the analysis of the context in which the provision of services for children and women take place. Analysing administrative and institutional dynamics, governance and other accountability related issues is an important facet in investigating the extent to which the rights for children and women and reductions in inequities can adequately be addressed.

53. Analysis of the enabling environment should explore the availability of spaces and channels and mechanisms through which children are able to meaningfully participate in policy making and the extent to which these are institutionalized. This analysis should focus on:

- Existence of standards, structures and mechanisms around which consultations with children take place, including the legal and regulatory framework for information sharing and consultation (such as possibilities for young people to have the right to develop democratic structures in their schools, or by introducing formal mechanisms for political dialogue between youth and officials at all levels of government);
- Availability of mandated and allocated resources towards involving children in policy-making and implementation processes.

Table 3: 10 Critical Determinants for assessing Bottlenecks and Barriers to Equitable Outcomes for Children

	Determinants of Bottlenecks and Barriers	**Description**
Enabling Environment	**Social Norms**	Widely followed social rules of behaviour
	Legislation/Policy	Adequacy of laws and policies
	Budget/expenditure	Allocation & disbursement of required resources
	Management /Coordination	Roles and Accountability/ Coordination/ Partnership
Supply	**Availability of essential commodities/inputs**	Essential commodities/ inputs required to deliver a service or adopt a practice
	Access to adequately staffed services, facilities and information	Physical access (services, facilities/information)
Demand	**Financial access**	Direct and indirect costs for services/ practices
	Social and cultural practices and beliefs	Individual/ community beliefs, awareness, behaviors, practices, attitudes
	Continuity of use	Completion/ continuity in service, practice
Quality	**Quality**	Adherence to required quality standards (national or international norms)

Include an analysis of vulnerabilities and risks

54. It is important that each SitAn include the identification of environmental and emergency risks and a corresponding assessment of vulnerabilities and capacities relevant to addressing these risks, especially amongst the most disadvantaged children and families. In high and medium emergency-risk countries, it is critical to undertake a robust analysis of priority disaster and/or conflict risks as part of the SitAn. An emergency-risk informed SitAn would include hazard and risk mapping with child vulnerability information at various levels (national, sub-national, including communities), a causality analysis of disasters, and an assessment of both duty bearers and rights holders capacities to reduce the emergency risks. The guidance on emergency risk informed SitAns guides Country Offices through these steps. Please refer also to Annex 2 for a more detailed description of the analytical frameworks for emergency risk analysis.

Step 3: Validation of analysis for the realisation of child rights with equity

55. The third step reinforces the importance of the process of conducting a SitAn, to build stakeholder commitment and to optimise its use in influencing dialogue towards equitable human development outcomes and the realisation of children's and women's rights. Working with others, the SitAn can help stakeholders agree on a vision that reflects and is aligned with

development results for children, and that complements UNICEF's agenda at country, regional and global level.

56. The validation of conclusions and recommendations from the analytical effort with stakeholders sets the foundation for issue prioritisation and for developing scenarios towards addressing the barriers and bottlenecks that impede the achievement of results with equity. This confirms the importance of a clear articulation of policy and programmatic implications as integral to the Situation Analysis.

57. The construction of the analysis will likely reveal the absence of information in certain areas for which further investigation or research will be required. As such, adoption of the SitAn and its main findings and conclusions serves to build consensus on priority topics for future research and action for the realisation of child rights. It provides a platform for galvanizing collective action for children, including the establishment of an on-going research agenda that draws on both internal and external resources, always with the aim of strengthening capacities and national leadership for child-focused analysis.

Mapping of partners and their activities

58. A disciplined and strategic approach to developing a SitAn that is broad-based and inclusive holds value in laying the groundwork towards coordinated partnership actions around the achievement of equitable results. Such partnerships should involve national and local governments, civil society groups, private firms, donors, international agencies, IFIs, and other development actors. The principles of partnership, participation and resource sharing are critical to the vision of reducing inequities and promoting the realisation of rights. Inter-sectoral linkages should also not be overlooked (acknowledging the importance of the environment, water, sanitation and education for reaching health goals, for example).

59. A mapping of partners in the SitAn process, their agendas, approaches as well as their capacity for action will provide a basis for seizing opportunities offered by strategic partnerships and other collaborative arrangements. A stakeholder mapping exercise can be used to examine the strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats with regards to partner relationships, using a SWOT analysis, or any other appropriate methodology. This exercise should highlight opportunities for UNICEF to use its comparative advantages most effectively to continue supporting knowledge generation, strategic planning and the achievement of equitable results for children's and women's rights.

60. An understanding of the capacities of development institutions (IFIs, bi-lateral, multilateral, CSOs, private sector and private institutions) across the following areas will provide fresh insights into the SitAn and cement development collaboration:
- main mandate and level of capabilities (economic, human, political, socio-cultural, protection, security)
- types of intervention and interests (project, programme, policy advice)
- evaluations on the impact of their interventions
- potential areas of collaboration.

Positioning the SitAn for Use

61. A Situation Analysis is undertaken as part of UNICEF's long-term collaboration to develop national capacity for evidence-based, child-focused research and to influence policies and programmes for children. Whichever approach or combination of modalities is adopted, the SitAn must remain relevant and its form must be appropriate for use in the context in which it is developed. Packaging the SitAn for use may include a highly attractive and well-structured

document, a series of issue briefs, documentaries or thematic publications, or as part of Social Observatories and other innovative technological platforms designed to reach varied and wide audiences *(see the UNICEF [Advocacy Toolkit](#) and also Annex 4 on ways to optimise the use of SitAns).*

62. A systematic and effective approach to the SitAn builds local research and analytical capacities, makes available knowledge products, identifies shortfalls in policy and programmes and supports the identification of potential partners. This suggests a dynamic and iterative process of learning and exploration of best solutions to support strategic intervention at different levels for equity and the realisation of children and women's rights.

63. The SitAn can in many cases be an effective instrument to identify and sharpen focus on both local and (sub) regional priorities. It can also help government meet increasing demands to act regionally or sub-regionally on issues that affect the well-being and rights of children and women. The analysis can enhance country commitment to regional strategies and help government to identify where regional approaches could reinforce their national agendas and strengthen the international aid efforts to support multi-country efforts.

Conclusions

64. The following **10 key considerations** highlight and summarise several major aspects that have been raised in this Guidance and are worth reiterating for the design and conduct of the SitAn to optimise its strategic value for policy advocacy, programme development and the strengthening of knowledge bases on children and women.

1. ***Promoting national ownership*** of the SitAn while ensuring rigour in the conduct of the analysis of all children and women, particularly the most deprived, will contribute to the credibility and worth of the exercise. A balance should be maintained between the involvement of think tanks, research institutions, NGOs, grass-roots organizations, the private sector and other alliances for children; and working closely with governments in order for analysis and evidence to be accepted and used to place children high among national priorities.

2. ***Positioning the SitAn*** – ensuring that it remains a continuous and dynamic process that is embedded within work plans and the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP). A *focused and phased approach* can keep the analysis central to Country Programmes of Cooperation with studies and analyses undertaken at defined moments to contribute to a comprehensive picture of the situation of children and women. This analytic work should be fully institutionalized and systematic, generating data and knowledge as *a core function* of UNICEF Cooperation and a basis for rigorous programming and a key input to policy advocacy.

3. ***Synchronizing with national development***, transition or recovery plans and frameworks, recognizing the aid environment, including SWAps etc. It is imperative to seek out opportunities for generating, positioning and using evidence and analysis to address inequalities.

4. ***Strengthening both data and qualitative analyses***, including the conduct of socio-cultural research, for which different methodologies are available including KAP and ethnographic studies, as well as vulnerability assessment to highlight causes and drivers of intersecting inequalities and variations within the same society.

5. ***Promoting an inclusive approach*** that fully optimizes national and local capacity and knowledge, including engaging research think-tanks and partnerships to support continuous adaptation. In order to ensure full use of products generated, the SitAn must not be seen as solely a UNICEF process. It is worth identifying *champions* among key stakeholders who will support evidence generation on the one hand, and also facilitate the use of that evidence for policy advocacy, programme development and local initiatives.

6. ***Facilitating a viable consultative process*** that is transparent and establishes a clear understanding in advance among all those involved in the process on the content and purposes of the analysis, timelines, methodology, the organisations/individuals who will be involved (and in what roles), the resources that may be used, the form of the final product and how and to whom it will be disseminated.

7. Based on the understanding of participation as a human right, Country Offices should develop a systematic approach for the effective and ***meaningful involvement of children, including adolescents and young people*** in the SitAn. A particular challenge lies in ensuring genuine participation of youth and children from marginalised groups, families or regions who are poor, children with disabilities and in difficult circumstances. Similarly, many societies have additional barriers to the participation of women and girls and other groups subjected to discrimination, including indigenous peoples, displaced people and migrants. *Different strategies* may be required to overcome youth and/or gender-specific barriers to participate, and the common exclusion of children with disabilities.

8. ***Paying attention to sensitivities*** that may arise from a consideration of human rights, governance issues and the politics and power structures surrounding inequalities. These need to be deftly addressed to ensure full stakeholder involvement and eventual consensus on and use of findings.

9. Recognizing the inclination by some organisations or individuals to retro-fit a situation analysis to predetermined policy and programmatic choices. Care must be taken to ***maintain the objectivity of the exercise*** and to ensure that conclusions are constructed from an evidence base.

10. Being mindful of ***entry points, opportunities and specific outcomes and products*** according to contextual specificities. The nature of the analytical effort will differ based on the requirements of a particular country. In addition to the general purposes outlined, a country specific exercise may use the opportunity to pursue systems strengthening through, for instance, social observatories, analytical capacity development of research institutions or making available advocacy materials through publications.

Annex 1: Addressing sensitive issues within the Situation Analysis

65. A rights-based SitAn guides UNICEF's contribution to achieving national development priorities and rights of children and women. Where necessary, and as far as possible, UNICEF should ensure and/or carry out, independent analysis on child rights issues which are considered critical to understanding the situation and necessary as a means for advocacy and influencing policy, i.e., in situations where national partners are reluctant or unwilling to do so.

66. Use a rights-based approach in the SitAn process under difficult cultural and political conditions (one- party states, conflict affected countries or sub-regions, post-conflict transition countries, or countries facing emergencies) needs a very good understanding of the historical and political environment. This may also require stronger methodological focus on historical and political trends in the analysis in the context of a long term vision for social progress, development strategies, and programme interventions. It may equally require a technically solid evidence base and politically firm but nevertheless non-confrontational advocacy strategy, including on-going dialogue between UNICEF and high level government partners. The SitAn process is a key opportunity to influence partners on issues of children's and women's rights and expose government staff to international fora and debates. This may be particularly useful to ease resistance encountered when encouraging the participation of children or civil society or validating studies on sensitive cultural traditions.

67. There might well be some reluctance among national partners to acknowledge issues which are sensitive, either from a cultural perspective or because they show the government or society in a negative light. Wherever possible, UNICEF should try to negotiate to include these issues in the report. There is, however, a balance between ensuring the analysis includes all key issues affecting children and their underlying causes, and producing an analysis with a high degree of consensus and ownership. Decisions on this balance need to be made on a case-by-case basis.

68. While it may not always be possible to persuade partners to include sensitive issues, here are a few ideas on how to tackle this problem:

a. Try to persuade partners of the importance of this being a jointly-produced product and that joint work adds both to the quality of the information and the credibility of its contents.

b. Where appropriate, stress that acknowledgement of sensitive issues is helpful in terms of demonstrating transparency and accountability and that acknowledging issues can help diffuse criticism and engage critics in working together to solve a problem.

c. Concentrate on the facts and evidence, using verifiable and credible sources of information including, where possible, from official or internationally-recognized sources.

d. Use international obligations and commitments of the government as well as recommendations of Treaty bodies, in particular concluding observations of the CRC Committee and concluding comments of the CEDAW Committee, as basis for raising sensitive issues and reaching a common understanding.

e. Use children's and youth peoples' voices to present some issues in a more neutral way, while being careful not to expose children to political retaliation. An excellent example of youth participation in data collection practices is an innovative study of sexual exploitation of young people in six countries in Eastern Europe. Adolescents who were interviewing their peers were found to have elicited more comprehensive responses.

f. Don't single out government alone for criticism, but stress responsibilities of all duty bearers to protect and promote children's rights.

g. Use helpful and comparable examples from other countries, or inter-governmental and regional peer review processes to help address sensitive issues.

Annex 2: Other Analytical Components

Environment Analysis

69. An environmental analysis supports exploration of major *environmental trends and factors* that may currently or in the future affect the realization of the rights of children and women - for example, environmental health issues related to urban overcrowding, severe water shortages or contamination, air pollution, industrial hazards, soil erosion. It will examine the the implications of environmental degradation and climate change and linkages to poverty, malnutrition, urbanization and deterioration in livelihoods, and impacts on children, especially those in ecologically vulnerable areas (*see UNDG document on mainstreaming environmental sustainability in the CA*). The following questions will usually be included in the environmental analysis:

- What are the key environmental assets of the country, what is their importance to economic and social development, particularly poverty reduction?

- What are the key environmental concerns in the country and their causes, and how do they contribute to major development problems, such as poverty, disease and disasters?

As part of a stakeholder mapping exercise, an environmental analysis will try to find out:
- Who are the key government, donor and civil society actors that shape development priorities and influence environmental policy and natural resources management?
- Who amongst these actors would "champion" environmental mainstreaming in ongoing country analytic work and national development planning?
- What are their capacity assets and critical capacity development needs, including national and subnational working arrangements?

Conflict analysis

70. In countries affected by or at risk of conflict, this should draw on joint conflict analysis carried out as part of the Country Analysis of the UNCT and/or other inter-agency processes (such as the UNDAF, Post Conflict Needs Assessment or the Integrated Strategic Framework for contexts where there is a Security Council mandate).   The specificities of conflict-affected and conflict risk contexts requires an appropriate analytical tool to assist in elucidating the causes of conflict and dynamics between different elements likely to be or actually involved in such situations. The aim of a conflict analysis is to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in places affected by violent conflicts and insecurity, to provide a basis for assessing the potential of conflict-sensitive interventions and to support peace and security. It can be conducted at various levels and phases of the development cooperation process and programme cycle. Translation of the findings and conclusions of such an analysis into the prioritization and revision of strategies is critical whether at an inter-agency level or specific to action that UNICEF must undertake for children in that context.

71. Country Offices must be aware that the methodology of a conflict analysis can be applicable to situations where there is no overt conflict, i.e. the analysis of underlying risks of conflict are equally important in order to better understand context and design early prevention programmes. Inter-agency tools exist and are used at different levels. A technical note on undertaking conflict analysis is being prepared by EMOPS to be shared shortly. Training modules are also being developed and technical support from HQ is available for conflict analysis.

Annex 3: Planning and Preparation for a SitAn

72. Both the process of conducting a SitAn and the output of the analysis and report are important. A SitAn should not be a report prepared in isolation by a specialized group, but rather an outcome achieved through participatory processes, involving multi-disciplinary teams and diverse institutions and approaches at different levels in the country. For best results, capacity development and advocacy strategies for creating greater awareness on children's and women's rights should be integral to the process from the start.

73. To be effective, the timing of the process and the report should take account of the wider political and policy processes (UNDAF, PRS review, UNDAF or CP Mid-Term Review, elections, and key policy/sector reform, among others) to ensure the analysis is available at the appropriate time to influence relevant decisions.

74. The multi-sectoral nature of the SitAn requires well-coordinated teams and integrated work plans for its implementation. The work plan must reflect a comprehensive set of activities with clear linkages and building blocks.

75. A range of sub-national activities, including dialogue with communities, local government, and community assessments will be required and, therefore, should be included in the Annual Work Plans. These activities are key particularly as they may involve facilitating the participation of children and young people. Prioritising these activities in Work Plans will provide the foundation for ensuring issues of exclusion, inequalities, vulnerability and marginalization are adequately analysed.

Developing the Terms of Reference

76. A poor quality SitAn normally starts out poor in concept and design. Ensuring quality means focusing initially on developing a strong Terms of Reference (ToR) that sets out a detailed rationale for the effort, the goals and objectives for the exercise, a description of the conceptual framework, outputs and accountabilities, timelines and resource commitments. The ToR should also include specifics on participation of women, children and young people, on ethical considerations as well as guidelines on publication. Country Offices and their partners should use an agreed ToR to establish milestones and intermediate products expected throughout the process as entry points to monitor and strengthen the quality.

77. When engaging consultants or institutions as part of the implementation of the SitAn research process, the ToR will serve as a reference for quality assurance benchmarks and standards and as a guide on ethical issues in the work of consultants.

78. The main responsible parties involved in the development of the SitAn are the SitAn steering team, UNICEF Representative, Resident Coordinator, UN Country Team, the UNICEF/Government SitAn Steering Committee, Thematic/Working Groups and the Regional Office. National research or development studies institutions are often also involved. Practical responsibility within the UNICEF Country Office, for leading and coordinating UNICEF inputs to the SitAn exercise will vary according to the Office structure and available expertise and skills. In some cases the Deputy Representative, M&E Officer, Knowledge Management Officer or Social Policy Officer may take the lead in managing UNICEF contributions, with the assistance of a task group drawn from different sections. Good coordination and timely review of reports are essential and these functions should be routinely monitored by the senior management and/or the CMT.

79. The following roles of the main actors are suggested for the development of the Situation Analysis of Children and Women:

a. **The SitAn Steering Committee**: A policy level inter-sectoral steering committee co-chaired by the UNICEF Representative and the highest-level administrator (e.g. Permanent Secretary, Director, Deputy Minister) of the government coordinating body for the UNICEF-supported Programme should be established to oversee the process. The SitAn Steering Committee should be accountable for:
  i. Approval and overall monitoring of the work plan for the development of the Situation Analysis;
  ii. Early identification and filling of specific critical capacity needs for the entire process;
  iii. Formation and evaluation of the performance of Working Groups (covering different aspects of the situation analysis), their specific ToRs and deadlines, including clear deliverables and reporting hierarchy and responsibilities.
  iv. Full participation in all key milestone events in the work plan including decision on the work, the Conceptual Framework, validation of the final draft.

b. **The UNICEF Representative**: In collaboration with the other UN Country Team members and non-resident UN agencies and supported by the UN Resident Coordinator:
  i. Obtain agreement of the highest authority in the government coordinating body on the strategic importance of the Situation Analysis of Children and Women in supporting Country Analysis and the national development framework;
  ii. Provide overall leadership, mobilization and commitment of adequate resources, including time, in order to achieve quality implementation of all the SitAn activities within the scheduled time;
  iii. Engage and maintain teamwork of the UN System, including specialized agencies and non-resident agencies to ensure development of quality analyses relevant to country priorities and international goals and commitments;
  iv. Obtain the endorsement and participation of different government ministries, the national policy analysis body, the coordinating body for the UNICEF-supported programme, at the highest level to achieve its full ownership of the entire process and products;
  v. Organize full involvement of regional experts, relevant government line ministries, public institutions, international, regional and sub-regional development partners, relevant NGOs, civil society and private sector representatives, children, young people and women in the milestone events including validation;
  vi. Ensure dissemination of the draft Situation Analysis of Children and Women to all stakeholders for comments and their consideration;
  vii. Ensure the signing of the final document;

c. **The Regional Office**: The Regional Office will play a pivotal role in supporting the SitAn including in sub-regional cross-border issues such as immunization, child trafficking and immigration, among others, and reviewing/advising on timing, the ToR, scope of work, etc. Regional Offices will equally have a major support, advocacy, quality assurance and oversight role to play in conducting the SITAN. Their role will include:

- commenting on draft ToR and selection of consultants
- commenting on the SITAN work plan
- technical support in the development of the conceptual framework
- facilitating access to regional resources and inter-country exchange
- commenting on draft reports
- overall oversight in ensuring that evaluation norms and standards are maintained
- advocating as needed with partners, including UN Agencies during the CCA/UNDAF stage to provide support and inclusion in the UNDAF Results Matrix and M&E Plan

- possibly advocating for funding of specific areas of national research on children and women, for example as a Joint Programme
- technical support to the process, as needed and agreed.

d. **Headquarters**: HQ will play a key role in clearing data and methodologies to be used in the analysis; supporting the Regional Office roles as needed; and will provide updated global guidelines and advice on available good practice examples of SitAn documents and processes.

Annex 4: Optimising the Use of SitAns

80. The following points may be useful to make the SitAn a more effective advocacy/communication tool:

- It should be written using accessible language. Highly technical material can be annexed, or references provided to more detailed background information. The material needs to be substantive and technically sound, but written in a way that non-experts can understand. It is not necessarily being written for the general public: complex but important issues should not be omitted for simplicity's sake.

- An executive summary should be included highlighting the most important conclusions of the analysis as well as the main advocacy/action points that have been identified. Consider also placing a summary of the main points at the beginning of each chapter or subject area covered for ease of reference.

- Any document should be visually attractive and easy to navigate - people will pick it up and read it and will easily be able to retrieve the information of interest.

- Include a table of contents, index, and glossary.

- Use images to make a document attractive, but also to illustrate the issues being raised.

- Use of diagrams and charts will help present statistical data in a complementing and compelling way, or to explain illustrate conceptual models or complex analyses so they can be easily understood. DevInfo could be used to generate diagrams, maps and charts.

- Use illustrative examples such as individual (human-interest) stories, appropriate citations/quotes to put a real face to some of the issues raised.

- Conduct "Podcasts" – short video interviews - on a range of development and children's issues, to enrich and accompany the SitAn.

- Consider publishing a "pocket" summary version of the report and main conclusions which can easily be carried to meetings and used as a reference. Similarly, good advocacy products with visuals (graphs, maps) and summary powerpoints might be helpful.

- Any document should be accessible and easily available to both internal and external audiences where feasible. It should be available electronically in PDF format, as well as in print so it can be easily shared.

- Local Websites (Government, UNICEF, research institutions, UN and National on-line DevInfo) can be used to present SitAn studies, survey results, findings, information on consultations and provide a forum for commentary on the research – including by young people.

- SitAn CD-ROM product with all data, research analysis, background reports, meeting minutes and final report can be produced for local and national distribution. Also an "on-line" version can be made available on local government and UN web-sites.

- Summarized versions translated into local languages will facilitate use of the SitAn findings by young people and community groups.

Useful Links and Resources

UNICEF
1. [Guidelines for conducting a Situation Assessment and Analysis of the Rights of Children and Women](#) UNICEF, 2008
2. [Reaching Marginalised Children and their Families](#)
3. [UNICEF Guidelines for Undertaking a Communication for Development (C4D) Situation Analysis](#)
4. [Guidance Note on Promotion of Participation of Children and Young People](#)
5. [Handbook on Legislative Reform: Realising Children's Rights, UNICEF, 2008](#)
6. [Summary: Integrating Legislative Reform into the Programming Process](#)
7. [Conducting an emergency-risk informed Sitan: Risk assessment and critical questions.](#)
8. [Conducting an Assessment of Essential Commodities](#)
9. [MBB reference tools](#)
10. [Advocacy Toolkit](#), UNICEF 2010
11. [Q & A document on Equity](#) UNICEF, 2010
12. [Promoting Gender Equality: An Equity-Focused Approach to Programming](#)
13. [Training Manual on the Equity Focus in UNICEF, 2011.](#)
14. Assessing Social and Cultural Factors and Bottlenecks Related to UNICEF's Strategic Result Areas. October 2011 (in draft form). C4D Unit, DPP
15. Toolkit: Qualitative Research and Rapid Assessment Methods for Use in Level 3 Monitoring (2011). C4D Unit, DPP
16. [Manual for the measurement of indicators for children in formal care](#), UNICEF 2009
17. [Adapting a systems approach to child protection: key concepts and considerations.](#) UNICEF/U. of Chicago, UNHCR, Save the Children, 2010.

UN Agencies
18. [Guidelines for conducting a Country Analysis](#)
19. [UNDG Guidance on Conducting a Capacity Assessment](#)
20. [Conducting a Post Conflict Needs Assessment](#)
21. [Mainstreaming Environmental Sustainability in Country Analysis and the UNDAF](#)
22. [Including the rights of persons with disabilities in UN programming at country level. A guidance note for UNCTs and Implementing Partners](#)

Other Institutions
23. [Equity in development: Why it is important and how to achieve it. Harry Jones (ODI, 2009)](#)
24. [Tools for Institutional, Political, Social Analysis of Policy Reform (World Bank, 2007)](#)
25. [Child Rights Situation Analysis](#), Save the Children, 2008
26. [Independent Budget Analysis](#) (World Bank)
27. [Capturing the political?](#) The role of political analysis in the multi-disciplining of development studies. Sam Hickey. GPRG/ESRC