

UNICEF Cameroon Country Programme 2018-2020

Strategy Note

Social Inclusion Programme 2018-2020

1. Introduction

This Strategy Note outlines the Theory of Change for the Social Inclusion Programme component of the Cameroon-UNICEF Programme of Cooperation for 2018-2020.

The biggest challenge facing the Social Inclusion sector is persistent inequality in Cameroon that has led to multiple deprivations for the most marginalised children. These deprivations, such as insufficient nutrition or housing, can have detrimental effects that are irreversible. Social protection interventions can mitigate this negative impact, but many children in Cameroon don't have access to these interventions.

While Cameroon is classified as a lower-middle income country, an estimated 40% of people live below the poverty line. The highest poverty rates are found among children (46.2%) with a significantly higher rate in rural areas. Children from vulnerable families have limited access to basic social services, including education, health, nutrition, water and sanitation. Compounding these deprivations, several emergencies also affect the country, including violence in areas where Boko Haram operates.

The UNICEF Social Inclusion Programme for 2018-2020 will prioritise ensuring children, especially the most marginalised, have access to sustainable and well-funded social inclusion interventions.

The core focus of the programme will be social protection and efforts to analyse and reduce multidimensional poverty and inequalities in access to social services. It will also work on public finance for children, decentralisation, and emergency issues, such as resilience, urbanisation and climate change.

UNICEF is uniquely placed to capitalise on this opportunity with its capacity to gather data, advocate for children at the national and local levels, mobilise funds, and develop partnerships to further social inclusion.

The Social Inclusion Programme will collaborate with the Ministries of Planning, Finance and Decentralisation and Social Ministries (Health, Basic and Secondary Education, Social Affairs, Labour and Social Security), as well as with the National Institute of Statistics, regional and decentralised stakeholders, civil society, communities, the World Bank and UN agencies.

2. Prioritised Issues and Areas

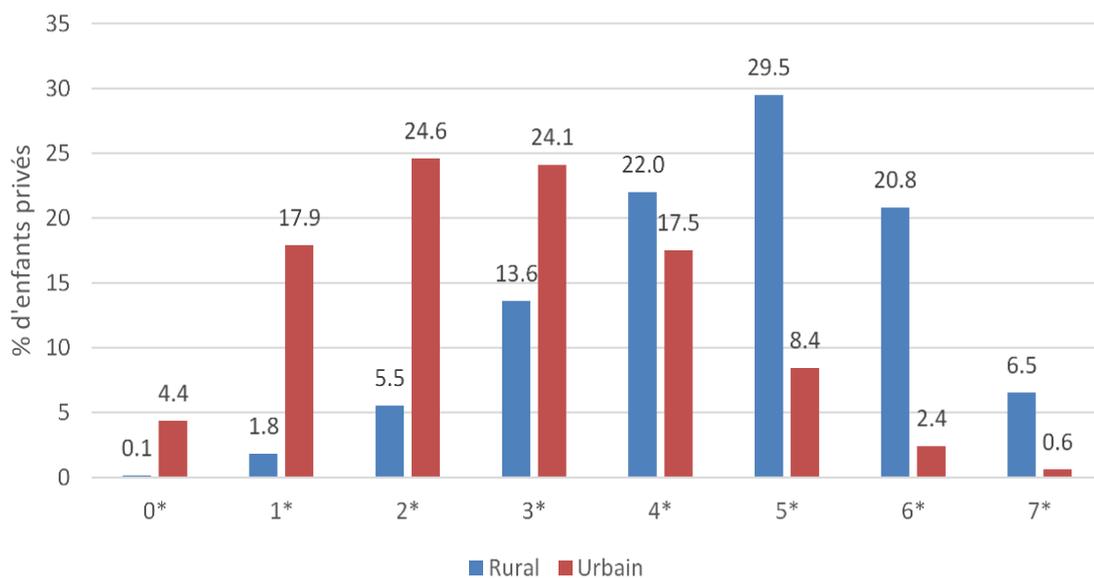
The coming Social Inclusion Programme will focus on supporting national and local institutions to implement central and decentralised social protection mechanisms, as well as to create plans and budgets for social inclusion and social service programmes that are sensitive to equity and child rights.

Poverty levels in Cameroon have stagnated since 2001, and poverty has, in fact, increased in rural areas and among marginalised groups. In rural areas, most children experience deprivations in five different dimensions, such as undernutrition or lack of schooling, at once. In urban areas, they typically experience two at a time (see the graphic below). In the country's North and Far North regions, poverty has soared and is now around 70%. The rate of early childhood mortality among the Bororo and Baka groups is double the national rate, and around half of their children never go to school.

Graphic 1: Number of deprivations simultaneously affecting children (Rural/Urban) %

Nombre de privations subies en simultanée selon le milieu de résidence, %

(Source Rapport Etude N-MODA, 2016)



The **absence of a national social safety net**, the high burden of **health and school costs**, and **humanitarian crises** (caused by climate change, conflicts in neighbouring countries or disease) all contribute to thwart efforts to reduce poverty and further marginalise underserved populations.

Yet, **few children have access to social inclusion interventions**. Current interventions for the most marginalised households (and children) only reach 1% of the population. Children in rural and marginalised regions have high rates of multiple deprivations, and social inclusion interventions are needed to help limit the negative impact of those deprivations.

Social inclusion receives short shrift in Cameroon. There is no national mechanism for social inclusion, and it isn't emphasised in community development plans. The health and education sectors don't sufficiently take into account marginalised populations, and very few budget resources are allocated to social services and social protection programmes. There also isn't enough data collected to feed evidence-based policies and strategies that would address vulnerable people.

Various shocks exacerbate the social exclusion phenomenon. The cumulative effect of these shocks exposes children and their families, already vulnerable, to particularly serious deprivations. Health risks include frequent outbreaks of cholera and measles, as well as the cross-border transmission of polio. The frequency of extreme climate events, such as droughts and floods, is increasing, especially in the North, due to the effects of the climate change. Conflicts in neighbouring countries, notably in the Central African Republic and northern Nigeria, have caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands poor women and children and increased the vulnerability of the communities that host them.

The **government has recognised that its policies don't do enough to redistribute wealth and address inequality.** That represents an opportunity for this programme since social inclusion has a proven record of redistributing growth towards the most marginalised populations.

3. Theory of Change

Children in Cameroon, particularly in the UNICEF areas of intervention, are facing multidimensional poverty with very little access to social protection. UNICEF's long-term vision is to ensure that all vulnerable children have access to social protection programmes, as a contribution to SDG1 (ending poverty).

During the period 2018-2020, the Social Inclusion component's outcome is: **"By 2020, children, especially the most disadvantaged, have access to sustainable and well-funded social protection interventions"**.

This is in line with UNDAF 1.2, which calls for women and children and other marginalised people to gain increased access to social protection measures in order to reduce inequalities.

To contribute to the achievement of this result, UNICEF will develop a two-pronged approach. At the upstream level, strategic partnerships, including policy dialogue and advocacy, will be developed with the World Bank, the European Union, the UN agencies and bilateral cooperation. At the downstream level, social accountability and capacity development will be the key strategies.

The programme will collaborate actively with the relevant ministries to ensure ownership and coordination of the actors intervening in the social inclusion area.

To achieve its goals, the programme is assuming that financial resources are available, beneficiaries (vulnerable populations) are aware of and prepared to claim their rights, and technical expertise to conceive, develop, implement and monitor social protection programmes exists. It is also assumed that the main stakeholders (Government, technical and financial partners, civil society, the private sector and communities) collaborate effectively to achieve this outcome and disparity-reduction policies are adopted and implemented.

Output 1: By 2020, public institutions and decentralised entities in the targeted regions have the capacity to implement national and local mechanisms for equity-focussed and child-sensitive social protection.

The importance of social protection in reducing poverty and child deprivations is increasingly recognised. In Latin America and increasingly in sub-Saharan Africa (South Africa, Ghana, Senegal, Cape Verde), social protection programmes have significantly improved indicators on nutrition, health, education and child protection. A coherent social protection system promotes human development by improving social cohesion and economic growth.

In addition, in humanitarian crisis situations, social protection can play a key role in reducing the vulnerability of both displaced people and communities that host them by strengthening cohesion and reducing conflicts over access to limited resources. In conjunction with the disaster-risk reduction, social protection is essential for improving the resilience of communities and systems.

UNICEF will build the capacity of national and local actors to plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and budget for interventions that are sensitive to equity and the rights of children, particularly social transfer programmes. This includes specific training on programme design and targeting methods. The use of Communication for Development (C4D) to further social inclusion programmes will be encouraged, particularly in the social safety net project funded by the World Bank. This includes increasing the familiarity of national and local actors with successful social inclusion interventions and ensuring that they know how to implement and monitor such programmes.

UNICEF will also build the capacity of national and local actors to develop a national social protection policy and establish a unified framework for social protection in Cameroon. Indeed, there are a multitude of social protection initiatives and projects but few synergies among them.

To improve funding for social inclusion, UNICEF will build relationships with partners who are working on financial reforms, such as the World Bank, the European Union and the IMF. UNICEF will produce and gather data and analyses on child multidimensional poverty and regional-, economic- and gender-based inequalities. This evidence will fuel advocacy efforts and help actors to conceive of and implement social protection interventions.

At the downstream level, the programme will encourage social accountability through specific tools and approaches (citizen participation, public reports, consultation, etc.).

Output 2: By 2020, public institutions and decentralised entities in the targeted regions have the capacity to develop plans and budgets that are sensitive to equity and child rights.

Plans and budgets largely determine the government's political will and commitment to working towards improving child rights, including in the field of social protection. Economic growth alone cannot do this. The ECAM 4 results showed an increase in both the poverty rate and in inequalities in the deprived regions, despite an increase in the overall rate of growth. The SITAN 2016 also showed that families bear a substantial share of social costs, including almost 70% of health care costs.

As a lower-middle income country, Cameroon is supposed to allocate more resources to social sectors and social protection. The current level of government funding of social protection and social programmes, however, does not reach the minimum required. Social protection allocations (subsidised programmes excluded) make up less than 1% of the total government budget. In the field of education, budget allocations barely reach 15%, as compared with the 25% recommended. Allocations for health are around 5%, against the 10% or 15% recommended, respectively, by the WHO and the Abuja Declaration. According to the social services expenditure reviews, efficiency is also a big challenge.

UNICEF will support studies and analyses on Cameroon's ability to increase its spending on social programmes. If needed, an Investment Case on Social Protection will be carried out. On the basis of these analyses and evidence, UNICEF, in partnership with the World Bank and others, will develop evidence-based advocacy at the highest levels for substantial national budget allocations for social services and social protection programmes for the benefit of deprived children and the most vulnerable populations. A policy dialogue will be sustained on national policies, quality, effectiveness, efficiency and the equity of public expenditures, inclusive of growth and governance.

The programme will also advocate for greater attention to and resources for equitable social inclusion interventions at local levels.

The capacity of national and local actors (including civil society and community-based organisations) will be developed in child-sensitive and equity-focused planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation.

The programme's theory of change is presented in the annex.

4. Results Structure

The programme aims to ensure that children, especially the most disadvantaged, have access to sustainable and well-funded social protection interventions.

The results structure is presented visually in Table 2.

5. Monitoring of Outputs and Demonstrating UNICEF's Contribution to Outcomes

The monitoring plan will take into account indicators at the outcome and output levels. Baseline data have already been collected at outcome and output levels from diverse sources.

Regular data collection will continue at various intervals during programme implementation to keep track of the status of the two outputs and their contribution to the outcome.

- Outcome: Rely on Government and World Bank routine data that can be collected easily. No specific study is necessary to determine such indicators.

- Outputs: Rely on partners' routine data collection systems, including at the decentralised level, to get access to annual data that will inform the indicators for the programme's annual review. The data will be disaggregated by region and sex where possible.

The monitoring and evaluation plan of the UNDAF will be taken into consideration to reinforce synergies and determine UNICEF's contribution to UNDAF Social Inclusion Outcome.

6. Resources Required

The Social Inclusion Programme was created when the Social Policy and Planning section was divided in two after the 2015 mid-term review. The budget of this new programme in 2016 is around USD 655,000, of which USD 55,000 was OR (thematic funds).

The estimated budget of the Social Inclusion Programme for the three years of the next cycle is USD 3.3 million, of which USD 1.8 million is regular resources (RR) and USD 1.5 million is other resources (OR). Part of the OR funds will be funded by other programmes.

Table 1: Estimating Output Level Resource Requirements (USD)

Output 1: By 2020, public institutions and decentralised entities in the targeted regions have the capacity to implement national and local mechanisms for equity-focussed and child-sensitive social protection.		Total 3 years	
Staff requirement & Strategies	Details	RR	OR
Staff and Technical Assistance	UNICEF personnel, Temporary Assistance	650,000	500,000
Strategies			
Capacity development	Development of materials, training workshops	250,000	200,000
Evidence generation	Situation Analysis, research, studies (child poverty), surveys, knowledge management, innovative approaches	120,000	300,000
Policy Dialogue and Advocacy	Strategy/Policy formulation, convening meetings, organising workshops, partnership-building, media communication, behavioural change at all levels to improve institutional communication, budget exercises.	100,000	
Social accountability	Promoting awareness and citizenship, training workshop (participatory monitoring, children and youth participation challenges)	80,000	
Total non-posts		550,000	500,000
Total Output 1		1200,000	1,000,000
Output 2: By 2020, public institutions and decentralized entities in the targeted regions have the capacity to develop plans and budgets that are sensitive to equity and child rights.		Total 3 years	
Staff requirement & Strategies	Details	RR	OR
Staff and Technical Assistance	UNICEF personnel, Temporary Assistance	250,000	140,000
Strategies			
Capacity development	Development of materials, training workshops	250,000	
Evidence generation	Studies (budget analysis), surveys (public expenditure surveys), knowledge management,	130,000	280,000
Policy Dialogue and Advocacy	Strategy/Policy formulation, convening meetings, organising workshops, partnership-building, media communication, behavioural change at all levels to improve institutional communication, budget exercises.	70,000	80,000
Total non-posts		450,000	360,000
Total Output 2		690,000	500,000
Total Outcome		1,800,000	1,500,000

7. External Risks and Planned Responses

Cameroon's economy relies heavily on oil exports and other primary resources. A reduction in exports or commodity prices would weigh heavily on growth, likely leading to less interest in and financing for social protection interventions and social services. A rise in the price of imports would cut into already tight household incomes, rendering planned social protection measures insufficient.

Cameroon also faces an uncertain security situation, with the conflict in Nigeria with Boko Haram and unrest in Central African Republic both spilling over into its borders. A deterioration of either or both of these situations, leading to a greater influx of people into Cameroon and a displacement of people within the country, could result in a more pronounced humanitarian crisis. In that situation, the government would be forced to concentrate more resources on defence, likely to the detriment of social protection and social services.

Cameroon, like many sub-Saharan African countries, is susceptible to the effects of climate change, and natural disasters could lead to a deterioration of the sanitation situation and increase the precariousness of the population. This might reduce UNICEF's and our partners' ability to work with marginalised children in need of social protection.

To mitigate these risks, UNICEF will generate evidence to show the ability of social protection interventions to fight child poverty and inequality. The programme will advocate for increased social services and social protection, engage in a political dialogue with civil society organisations and communities, and reinforce interventions at the local level, aiming at the promotion of social accountability by Government and other stakeholders.

Strategies

Advocacy for the establishment of a social protection coordination body

Capacity development of social protection actors; coordination body for social cash transfer programme formulation, targeting, implementation and monitoring/evaluation

Partnership to accompany social transfer programmes with EFP and other behaviour changes (C4D)

Social accountability

Evidence generation: produce and disseminate data and analyses on multidimensional child poverty

Capacity development of national and local actors on strategic planning and child-sensitive budgeting, monitoring and evaluation

Advocacy for the increase of social sector and social protection allocations

Capacity development of and partnerships with actors involved in public finance reform

The capacity to manage social protection mechanisms is improved.

The knowledge and use of social protection measures are increased.

The partnership with the government, the World Bank and other partners promotes the implementation of child-sensitive social protection programmes.

The availability of reliable data on disadvantaged children is improved.

Understanding, popularisation and appropriation of the programmatic, budgetary and advocacy rules and tools are improved.

Theory of Change

Output 1: Public institutions and decentralised entities in the targeted areas have the capacity to implement national and local mechanisms for equity-focused and child-sensitive social protection.

Output 2: Public institutions and decentralized entities in the targeted areas have the capacity to develop plans and budgets that are sensitive to equity and child rights.

Most disadvantaged children are targeted by social protection programmes.

Social protection programmes are developed and implemented by the government.

Budgets for social protection and the social sector are increased with more focus on efficiency.

Assumptions: Disparity-reduction policies are adopted and implemented; financial resources are available; municipalities, communities and civil society are committed

Outcome: Children, especially the most disadvantaged, have access to sustainable and well-funded social protection programmes.

RISKS: An economic crisis or worsening security in the North could lead to a reduction in social spending. An increase in the price of imported goods could cut into household income.

Assumptions: Coordination mechanisms are functional and stable; synergies and multi-actor partnerships promote coherent strategic and operational planning

Table 2: Results Structure

Outcome/Output	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of verification
Outcome 1: By 2020, children, especially those in rural or marginalised regions, have access to sustainable and well-funded social protection interventions.	<p>-Number of children covered by cash transfers programmes</p> <p>-% of the national budget allocated to social sectors (health and education)</p>	<p>63000 (2016)</p> <p>health: 5% (2016) Education (basic and secondary): 10%</p>	<p>120000</p> <p>Health: 7% Education (basic and secondary): 12%</p>	<p>-Social Safety Note project - World Bank -</p> <p>Finance Act</p>
Output 1: By 2020, public institutions and decentralised entities in the targeted regions have the capacity to implement national and local mechanisms for equity-focussed and child-sensitive social protection.	<p>-Existence of a national policy for social protection that takes into account children's needs</p> <p>-% of section programme heads trained in social protection</p> <p>-% of local leaders (mayors, social sector advisers, community development agents, Secretary General) trained in social protection</p> <p>-% of heads of regional services (MINAS, MINPROFF, MINTSS, MINFI, MINEPAT, MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINSANTE, MINJEC) trained in social protection</p> <p>-Existence of a functioning</p>	<p>No</p> <p>0% (2016)</p> <p>0% (2016)</p> <p>0% (2016)</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>50%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>Review report</p> <p>Review report</p> <p>Review report</p> <p>Review report</p> <p>Review report</p>

	framework for the coordination of social protection			
Output 2: By 2020, public institutions and local governments in the targeted regions have the capacity to develop plans and budgets that are sensitive to the rights of children.	-Government measure on multidimensional poverty in children	Yes (2016)	Yes	Child Poverty report
	-Number of sectors with updated medium-term budget frameworks	0 (2016)	3	Review report
	-% of parliamentarians trained in public finance for children (PF4C)			
	-% of section programme heads trained in PF4C	0 (2016)	30%	Review report
	-% of local leaders (mayors, social sector advisers, community development agents, Secretary General) trained in PF4C	0 (2016)	50%	Review report
-% of heads of regional services (MINAS, MINPROFF, MINTSS, MINFI, MINEPAT, MINEDUB, MINESEC, MINSANTE, MINJEC) trained in PF4C	0 (2016)	100%	Review report	
		0 (2016)	100%	Review report