



Data Requirement Analysis and Data Mapping

UNICEF Lesotho

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PREPARED BY

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|--|--------|
| African Union | AU |
| Bureau of Statistics | BoS |
| Civil society organization | CSO |
| Country Office | CO |
| Country Programme | CP |
| District Health Information System | DHIS2 |
| Education Management Information System | EMIS |
| European Union | EU |
| Food and Agriculture Organization | FAO |
| Food and Nutrition Coordination Office | FNCO |
| Government of Lesotho | GoL |
| Gross Domestic Product | GDP |
| Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development | IEECD |
| Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS | UNAIDS |
| Lesotho Demographic Health Survey | LDHS |
| Lesotho Population-based HIV Impact Assessment | LePHIA |
| Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee | LVAC |
| Ministry of Development Planning | MoDP |
| Ministry of Education and Training | MoET |
| Ministry of Finance | MoF |
| Ministry of Health | MoH |
| Ministry of Home Affairs | MoHA |
| Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services | MoJCS |
| Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs | MoLGCA |
| Ministry of Social Development | MoSD |
| Monitoring and evaluation | M&E |
| National Identity and Civil Registry | NICR |
| National Information System for Social Assistance | NISSA |
| National Statistical System | NSS |
| National Strategic Development Plan | NSDP |
| Non-governmental organization | NGO |
| Results based management | RBM |
| Sustainable Development Goals | SDGs |
| United Nations Country Team | UNCT |
| United Nations Development Assistance Framework | UNDAF |
| United Nations Development Programme | UNDP |
| United Nations Resident Coordinator | UNRC |
| Violence against children | VAC |
| Water, sanitation, and hygiene | WASH |

Executive Summary

I. INTRODUCTION

The Lesotho Data Requirement Analysis and Data Mapping (“Data Landscape Diagnostic”) is part of UNICEF’s Strategic Planning of Data for Children in East and Southern Africa aimed at supporting the smart demand, supply, and use of data.

***Data ecosystem** includes demand, supply, and use of data. In a functioning ecosystem, the right data are in the right hands at the right time to impact decisions. When any element falls short, the potential of data to improve results also falls short. The same traits that make data powerful make data political: therefore, political realities must also be actively engaged to achieve the best results.*

***Data demand** can be defined as the needs and purposes of intended data users – often policy or decision-makers. If end users do not have an understanding of the potential applications or value of data, they are unlikely to demand it.*

***Data supply** is facilitated by technological and individual capacities to collect, process, and analyze data. Supply can be categorized by dimensions of data quality, frequency, and disaggregation. Data sources may include government, development partner, civil society, citizens, and private sector.*

***Data use** links facts revealed by data with relevant policy and programming implications. Achieving data use requires understanding user capacities, potential use cases, and constraints; having data of the appropriate quality, frequency, and disaggregation; and communicating data effectively. Data that are relevant, timely, accessible, and actionable are the most likely to be put to use.¹*

The Data Landscape Diagnostic is based on a combination of desk research and key informant interviews with UNICEF and UNICEF partners. This diagnostic particularly focused on understanding the data for children ecosystem as it relates to the achievement of UNICEF Country Programme (CP) 2019-2023 outcomes.

¹ (UNICEF, April 2017).

II. LESOTHO CONTEXT

The Kingdom of Lesotho faces a nexus of development challenges. Taken separately, high poverty rates, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, vulnerability to natural disasters, and challenges in government stability and public financial management would require holistic interventions. Taken together, these challenges require a **cross-sectoral approach** to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive.

To address these challenges, and achieve the long-term goals outlined in National Vision 2020, the Government of Lesotho has adopted a medium- and short-term planning framework. Also relevant are ongoing public financial management reforms and the implementation of a decentralization policy. These impact government data priorities related to financial information, and bring in new decision-makers and processes, respectively – which in turn impacts how UNICEF engages to achieve better outcomes for children.

The UNICEF CO and broader UNCT have aligned planning processes with the Government of Lesotho, with the UNICEF CO prioritizing areas spanning the first and second decades of life. Other data ecosystem actors are also working toward data for children-relevant priorities. Most relevantly, the UNDP Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development (“Lesotho Data”) project focuses on strengthening the National Statistical System and National M&E System of Lesotho – core components of the national data ecosystem.

Against this contextual backdrop, the following sections explore the demand, supply, and use of data for children in Lesotho, and new opportunities for strengthening the country data ecosystem.

III. DATA DEMAND

Planning and monitoring processes shape the data demands of GoL and UNICEF actors. As UNICEF works in close collaboration with the GoL and other UNCT agencies, data demands and priorities of UNICEF align with government data sources and priorities. The GoL has a foundational process for developing medium-term and annual plans at national, sectoral, and subnational levels. However, ongoing challenges prevent the full implementation of these plans.

Ideally, the data demand cycle would be one of (i) evidence-based planning, (ii) implementing programs according to plans (iii) M&E and reporting, (iv) analyzing data, and (v) making appropriate plan or program adjustments. However, due to limited compliance with government policies and perverse leadership incentives, this cycle has not been achieved. The extent to which plans are implemented (ii) and monitored (iii), and the extent to which data are analyzed (iv), varies across GoL actors.

Key barriers to data-informed decision-making **include policy compliance and leadership**, which impact data demand. **Policies that would generate priority data – including the National M&E Framework, and NSDP II – have not been fully implemented**; the under-resourcing of ministerial M&E/Statistical Units, as well as a whole-of-government prioritization of PFM reform, further complicate policy implementation. In addition, **political turnover, perverse decision-making incentives**, and the limited ability of MoDP to enforce its mandate create leadership obstacles to data demand. Until these challenges can be addressed, demand for – and by extension, use of – data will remain uneven.

IV. DATA SUPPLY

The Lesotho ecosystem benefits from foundational statistical and administrative data collection systems. However, the **lack of a legal or policy framework to facilitate data sharing** often means data are not available in the format, disaggregation, or timeframe users demand. Some data can only be accessed upon request. Due to varying GoL data management and staff availability, there can be a significant delay from when a request is sent, and when a response is received.

In addition, some sectors – particularly child protection, nutrition, and WASH – also suffer from limited data availability. Data quality is also of some concern, particularly related to discrepancies between national and sub-national data. Underpinning much of these supply needs are **limitations in the ability of BoS to enforce its mandate, as well as the bureau’s human and technical capacity**.

Ongoing initiatives – led by GoL, UNDP, UNICEF, and other development partners – aim to address some of these prominent needs. In light of the ongoing GoL and UNICEF priorities of decentralization and achieving more equitable outcomes; data demands for planning, monitoring, and responding to information requests; and the existence of significant amounts of data, “unlocking” greater access to existing GoL sources should be the top short-term priority in data for children supply.

V. DATA USE AND ECOSYSTEM OPPORTUNITIES

Achieving data use will require a whole-of-government approach to addressing human, technical, and skill-based capacity needs. In the short-term, this should include strengthening the financial and administrative stability of ministry M&E/Statistical Units. In the short- to medium-term, efforts should be made to ensure all GoL roles have a basic awareness of how data can be applied to decision-making, and the functionalities of existing systems. Methods for better dissemination, and tools to support easier data collection and digitization, are also needed.

Current GoL, development partner, and UNICEF initiatives are working to address some of the demand, supply, and use needs identified here. Of particular relevance is the **UNDP Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development project**, which seeks to strengthen the National Statistical System and National M&E System; the UNICEF **Decentralizing Access to Child Development Indicators project**, which aims to support data-informed decision-making at the subnational level; and ongoing initiatives to develop or enhance government statistical and administrative data systems.

VI. CONCLUSION

UNICEF is strategically placed to help address challenges related to data demand, supply, and use through continued advocacy; targeted capacity strengthening; and evidence generation.

This diagnostic provides an overview of the current data for children landscape, as well as preliminary recommendations for UNICEF. In the accompanying Action Plan, specific recommendations and timeframes for strengthening data for children demand, supply, and use are further elaborated.

Introduction

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Lesotho Data Landscape Diagnostic is part of UNICEF’s Strategic Planning of Data for Children in East and Southern Africa. Development Gateway (DG) is working with UNICEF Lesotho and six other Country Offices (Ethiopia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam) to develop data diagnostics and action plans to best support and promote the smart demand, supply, and use of data. This work is part of UNICEF’s Data for Children Strategic Framework, and aims to inform UNICEF Lesotho’s Country Programme (CP) 2019-2023 implementation.

The smart demand, supply, and use of data drives better results for children. When the right data are in the right hands at the right time, decisions can be more informed, more equitable, and more likely to protect children’s rights. Effective use of data can help monitor results for children, and shape interventions aimed at improving those results. Data can provide better insight about what works, and what does not; which children are thriving, and which are being left behind.

A. DIAGNOSTIC REPORT OVERVIEW

In what follows, the data for children ecosystem will be contextualized through an introduction of the nation’s socioeconomic and political background, government and UNICEF priorities, and an overview of relevant activities supported by other ecosystem actors.

In the following three sections, the data for children ecosystem will be analyzed through the lenses of **data demand**, by examining government and UNICEF priorities and prominent needs; **data supply**, by evaluating UNICEF-identified data for children sources and prominent needs across actors; and **data use**, which brings together findings from the previous sections, and identifies prominent needs to ensure that data are acted upon.

The following section further elaborates on relevant opportunities and initiatives relevant to the data for children landscape; needs identified across demand, supply, and use; and preliminary recommendations for the UNICEF CO on steps that could strengthen the data for children ecosystem. These recommendations will be further fleshed out in a separate Strategic Action Plan. Finally, the report ends with a conclusion that summarizes findings.

II. PURPOSE AND INTENDED USE

The Lesotho Data Landscape Diagnostic was developed from a combination of desk research and key informant interviews with UNICEF and UNICEF partners. While there are a number of data activities and innovations taking place in Lesotho, the scope of this activity focuses on the national level data for children “ecosystem,” and how it relates to UNICEF’s current and planned activities.

This diagnostic maps Lesotho’s existing data for children landscape, and future priorities for data related to children; identifies data gaps, constraints, and challenges; and provides actionable recommendations to address these gaps and inform strategic planning.

This diagnostic is particularly focused on understanding the Lesotho data for children ecosystem as it relates to the achievement of UNICEF Country Programme (CP) 2019-2023 outcomes.

These findings are based on desk research and twelve key informant interviews with thirty-three individuals carried out over a two-week period in June 2018.² As a result, there is a risk of potential misdiagnosis, or over-reliance on perceptual data (from interviews) or out-of-date information (from desk research). For this purpose, the project workplan includes a series of iterations on draft diagnostic with the UNICEF CO, and a validation of findings presentation with UNICEF, UN Country Team, Government, and other stakeholders as appropriate.

The DG team would like to thank Mr. Mokete Hobotle, Mr. Rodrigo Andres Chamba, and the entire UNICEF Lesotho Country Office that coordinated and facilitated the country mission and provided inputs to the findings of this report. We would also like to thank UNICEF ESARO and HQ for the opportunity and guidance in this work. We also express our gratitude to governmental institutions, UN and international agencies, and civil society organizations that took the time to meet with us and provided invaluable information that informed this diagnostic and action plan.

² See “References and Desk Review Resources” and Annex I.

Lesotho Context

I. SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a small, mountainous, landlocked country in South Africa with a population of approximately two million people. Despite having the highest social protection-spending rate in Sub-Saharan Africa,³ achieving inclusive and sustainable development remains a challenge due to economic, demographic, and environmental vulnerabilities.

Lesotho’s economy is heavily dependent on South Africa; the national currency is pegged to the Rand, and Lesotho remains vulnerable to external shocks.⁴ Public sector spending dominates the national economy, with recent controversies around high expenditure on public sector wages.⁵ Labor migration is a major theme of Lesotho’s foreign and public policies, and an estimated 15% of Lesotho’s Gross National Product (GDP) comes from migrant remittances. Over half of the population lives in extreme poverty, and both unemployment and inequality are high.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a major developmental challenge for Lesotho. The country has the second highest rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence in the world, placing enormous strain on the country’s health and social services. Lesotho also faces very high maternal and child mortality rates: 1,024 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, and 34 neonatal, 59 infant, and 85 under-5 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Positively, Lesotho has one of the highest literacy rates in Sub-Saharan Africa – 98.6% for women, and 90.6% for men. However, Lesotho risks seeing a regression in educational progress: school retention rates are in decline, and academic achievement remains low. Lesotho also has high levels of chronic malnutrition and food insecurity, and is highly susceptible to natural disasters and environmental shocks – as evidenced by the El Niño-induced drought crisis of 2015-16.⁶

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Population | 2,007,201 (2016 Census) |
| Land Area | 30,350 km ² |
| Administrative Divisions | 10 District Councils, 1 Municipal Council, 10 Urban Councils, 65 Community Councils |
| Human Development Index | 0.497 |
| Gini Coefficient | 54.2 (2015) |
| UNICEF Country Office Staff | 40 |
| UNICEF Country Office Budget | US \$8,551,000 (proposed) |
| Country Programme Document | 2019-2023 |

Table 1: Contextual Snapshot

³ (UNCT-Lesotho, September 2017)

⁴ (World Bank Group, May 2018)

⁵ (UNICEF Lesotho, November 2017c)

⁶ (UNCT Lesotho, September 2017); (Ministry of Health, June 2017)

A. POLITICAL ECONOMY

Present-day Lesotho emerged as a unified nation under King Moshoeshoe I in the early 1800s, and Basutoland became a British Crown Colony in 1884. Lesotho became independent from the United Kingdom on 4 October 1966.⁷

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a constitutional monarchy, with a multi-party parliamentary system of government. The prime minister is the head of government and has executive authority. Legislative power is vested in a Senate and National Assembly.⁸ The judiciary is comprised of the High Court of Lesotho, the Court of Appeal, magistrate's courts, and traditional or customary courts.

The Government of Lesotho (GoL) has experienced significant periods of turbulence, particularly since 2014. Short-lived coalition governments have become routine, leading to perverse decision-making incentives with negative consequences for the social sector.⁹

Cabinet reshuffles – promoting then removing Ministers from positions – have also become a frequent feature of Lesotho politics. This is disruptive because ministers take time to “settle in” and familiarize themselves with new portfolios. Every time a minister is abruptly removed, there is a lag in getting a new minister “up to speed.” Furthermore, some senior bureaucrats are political appointments – meaning if a minister leaves, their permanent secretary, technical lead, and other appointments must also leave.¹⁰ As a result, **several ministries are caught in an “irregular cycle of policymaking”**.¹¹

⁷ (Commonwealth Secretariat June 2018)

⁸ (Commonwealth Local Government Forum, 2017)

⁹ (UNCT Lesotho, September 2017)

¹⁰ This relates to another increasing challenge of political patronage, versus technical expertise or merit, driving senior appointments within ministries.

¹¹ (UNICEF, June 2017)

II. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND PROCESSES

A. GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO

National Vision 2020 is a long-term strategic framework that identifies GoL priority policy areas and programming. It articulates the goal of achieving:

“a stable democracy, a united and prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours... [with] a healthy and well-developed human resource base. Its economy will be strong, its environment well managed and its technology well established.”

Vision 2020 identifies democracy, unity, peace, education and training, economic growth, management of the environment, and advancement in technology as seven “pillars” of national development. The long-term plan serves as a broad framework for medium-term and annual planning.

National Strategic Development Plans (NSDPs) are medium-term GoL plans, spanning five-year increments. The Ministry of Development Planning (MoDP) is responsible for leading the NSDP process. Development of NSDPs includes stakeholder consultations and inputs from Technical Working Groups to identify priority areas of focus.

The **NSDP I (2013/13-2016/17) identified children and youth as a crosscutting issue of importance.** Strategic objectives for children included “promote children [sic] development and protection of rights,” with actions focused on education, health, nutrition, and social protection; and “promote youth participation in development,” with actions focused on secondary and non-traditional education, employment, and social policy.¹²

Due to delays in NSDP II development, the NSDP I was extended to 2018. Cited reasons for the delay include the sudden resignation of a senior NSDP II advisor and political instability.¹³ Part of the UNDP Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development project will support the completion of the NSDP II and NSDP II M&E Framework, with additional support provided by the World Bank.¹⁴

The NSDP II (2018/19-2022/23) and NSDP II monitoring framework are still in progress; it is anticipated priorities in the NSDP II will be similar to those in NSDP I, with an emphasis on good governance, accountability, and private sector engagement. The NSDP II is anticipated to be in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, and Southern African Development Community Protocols.

The Lesotho National Planning Board was envisioned as the responsible body for monitoring and evaluating progress against the plan’s goals and targets. However, monitoring national progress has encountered key challenges. **The National M&E Framework for NSDP I (2013/13-2016/17) was never finalized. As a result, progress against the NSDP I has not been quantified, and the effectiveness of previous GoL efforts has not been systematically documented.**

¹² (Government of Lesotho, 2012, p. 151-152)

¹³ (Africa Business News, 2018)

¹⁴ (UNDP, July 2018)

In line with NSDP priorities, **line ministries produce sectoral policies and strategic plans**. These plans can run concurrently to the NSDP (i.e., five-year health sector plan) or for longer periods (i.e., ten-year education sector plan). Ministries must also prepare Annual Operational Plans, which aim to achieve progress against sectoral strategic plans. Annual Operational Plans are primarily used for estimating budgetary and resource needs in advance of annual budgetary hearings.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) publishes **Budget Strategy Papers, outlining two-year fiscal frameworks and government spending priorities**. Within Lesotho's National Assembly, five Portfolio Committees are responsible for oversight of assigned government ministries. Much of this oversight relates to budget – revenue, expenditure, and financial performance.

In line with the constitution of Lesotho, the Local Government Act of 1997, Local Government Elections Act of 1998, and National Decentralization Policy (2014), **local governments in Lesotho play an increasing role in determining development priorities**.

At the local level, council elections are held every six years. Once elected, councilors serve a five-year term, and are obligated to take a consultative approach to local planning and prioritization. A District Development Coordinating Committee within each district – comprised of representatives from the local council, non-governmental organizations, a representative from youth and differently abled communities, and public officers from the central government – support the local planning process.¹⁵

In addition to planning, National Decentralization Policy aims to devolve service delivery responsibilities to local councils within the next 10-15 years. The Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs (MoLGCA) is responsible for overseeing the policy's realization.

¹⁵ (Commonwealth Local Government Forum, 2017)

B. UNICEF LESOTHO PROCESSES AND PRIORITIES

The UNICEF CO identifies policies and priorities in close consultation with the GoL, UN Country Team, CSOs, other development partners, and UNICEF Headquarters and Regional Offices. Key to the CO's planning and cooperation is the **Country Programme (CP)**.

The CP is developed every five years, in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and NSDP processes. The UNDAF and UNICEF CP 2012-2017 were extended to 2018, in line with the NSDP I extension.

The CP outlines a supportive partnership between the CO and GoL – with MoDP as the GoL focal point – close collaboration with other UN agencies, CSOs, and development partners. The proposed CP is discussed and agreed at a Joint Strategy Meeting with key participants from GoL, UN agencies, UNICEF Regional Office (RO) and CO, and other key program and funding partners.¹⁶

The forthcoming CP 2019-2023 aligns with GoL priorities, as articulated in the Vision 2020 and NSDP; Agenda 2063; and the SDGs. The CP also aligns with the UNDAF 2019-2023; UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Gender Action Plan 2018-2021, and East and Southern Africa regional priorities; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

| Section | Priorities |
|----------------|---|
| Social Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection • Planning, monitoring, and evaluation (PME) • Public financial management (PFM) • Social support services • Decentralization and decision making • Social protection |
| Health and HIV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS • Maternal and child health • Nutrition and WASH • Youth and adolescent health |
| Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated early childhood care and development (IECCD) • Primary and secondary education |

Table 2: UNICEF CP priorities by section

UNICEF Lesotho has three programmatic sections – Social Policy, Health and HIV, and Education – with priorities spanning both decades of life. Disaster risk reduction and gender are incorporated across sections.

¹⁶ (UNICEF, June 2004)

On a yearly basis, UNICEF sections prepare **Rolling Work Plans** with specific activities, M&E and reporting inflection points, and resourcing needs. Work plans align with the CP, GoL priorities, and respond to relevant research or trends. The CO has an M&E indicator matrix to monitor progress against workplan timeline, spend, and target indicators. At the project level, interviewees address data demands through in-person monitoring missions or activity implementation reports – the latter often on an annual, semi-annual, or quarterly basis, focusing on achievements versus targets, and anticipated versus actual spend.

UNICEF Lesotho’s overall vision is to “reach every child, everywhere and every time, with opportunities to survive, develop and reach their full potential” through a combination of national and sub-national interventions during the first and second decade of life.¹⁷ Data-related key strategies of the UNICEF CP 2019-2023 include:

- Making programs fit for purpose by addressing data/evidence gaps, including the promotion of real-time data, and using this information for effective policy advocacy.
- Using sector platforms/systems to enhance synergies/deliver multisectoral interventions, thereby improving service delivery, in particular for vulnerable/marginalized populations.
- Accelerating coverage of high-impact interventions to address disparities by using a systems strengthening approach.

| Decade | UNICEF Areas of Focus |
|---------------|--|
| First | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Maternal, newborn and child health interventions, including HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment ii. Feeding and WASH interventions to reduce stunting iii. IECCD and pre-primary education access iv. Birth registration and protection from violence |
| Second | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Protection from violence and exploitation ii. Reducing new HIV infections iii. Children achieving optimal learning outcomes and having access to quality education options for children and adolescents in the second decade |
| Cross-Cutting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Strengthening public finance for children to ensure all benefit from GoL budgets ii. Supporting the establishment of an integrated child sensitive, gender and shock-responsive social protection system iii. Supporting robust evidence generation through survey, research, and evaluation to inform socio-economic policies iv. Effectively and efficiently achieving the goals and priorities of the UNICEF CP |

Table 3: UNICEF CP priorities by decade of life

¹⁷ (UNICEF Lesotho, April 2018)

III. OTHER ECOSYSTEM ACTORS

Lesotho is a UN Delivering as One country, which facilitates complementary and joint programming. During the interview process, key priorities and programs for non-UNICEF actors were also examined. Below are initiatives identified by interviewed stakeholders as relevant for UNICEF’s programming.

The **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP) provides technical assistance to the GoL, particularly the MoDP.

***Most relevant for UNICEF is the UNDP Lesotho Data project.** Running from November 2016-June 2019, this aims to strengthen the National Statistical System and National M&E System of Lesotho. This project includes a needs assessment and GoL capacity strengthening. UNDP are also supporting MoSD’s development of a National M&E Framework for the NSDP II, and will provide communications support to BoS for stronger dissemination of statistical data.*

The **United Nations Resident Coordinator** (UNRC) has a mandate to support all UN Agencies in Lesotho, focusing on streamlining and harmonizing country programming.

- UNRC recently led the creation of an online, centralized “voices” dashboard, containing perceptual information gathered from UN Agency programs. The voices dashboard may be integrated with the forthcoming UN Info platform, which will allow for real-time, online monitoring of the UNDAF and Business Operations Strategy.
- UNRC is also partnering with Vodacom and local universities to conduct mobile phone surveys regarding perceptions of the UN in Lesotho.

The **Food and Agriculture Organization** (FAO) focuses on household food security and resilience in Lesotho, which has implications for childhood nutrition.

- With the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, FAO developed the Lesotho Land Cover Database. The database uses publicly available satellite data to support more informed agriculture and food security interventions.
- FAO is also putting forth a project to gather more gender-related information related to women’s land ownership and earnings, which would feed into SDG Indicators 5a and 5b.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) thematic priorities overlap with those of UNICEF. Unlike UNICEF, CRS is a project implementer – focused more on service delivery, than providing technical or financial assistance. CRS activities are project-based, and tend to be at the sub-national level. Typically, CRS conducts project-specific data collection to determine baselines, and conduct mid- and end-point evaluations.

The **World Bank** also has a number of ongoing projects related to UNICEF priorities, which include a project with MoET to strengthen teaching quality,¹⁸ and supporting a MoJCS case management system.¹⁹

¹⁸ The Lesotho Basic Education Improvement Project; UNICEF “attached” a pilot tracking individual learners onto this work, in support of the OpenEMIS rollout.

¹⁹ This may be related to the World Bank’s Social Assistance Project for Lesotho.

IV. SECTION CONCLUSION

The Kingdom of Lesotho faces a nexus of development challenges. Taken separately, high poverty rates, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, vulnerability to natural disasters, and challenges in government stability and public financial management would require holistic interventions. Taken together, these challenges require a cross-sectoral approach to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive.

To address these challenges, and achieve the long-term goals outlined in National Vision 2020, the GoL has adopted a medium-, and short-term planning framework. Also relevant are ongoing PFM reforms and the implementation of a decentralization policy. These impact government data priorities related to financial information, and bring in new decision-makers and processes, respectively – which in turn impacts how UNICEF engages to achieve better outcomes for children.

The UNICEF CO and broader UNCT have aligned planning processes with the GoL, with the UNICEF CO prioritizing areas spanning the first and second decades of life. Other data ecosystem actors are also working toward data for children-relevant priorities. Most relevantly, the UNDP Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development Project focuses on strengthening the NSS and National M&E System of Lesotho – core components of the national data ecosystem.

Against this contextual backdrop, the following sections will explore the demand, supply, and use of data for children in Lesotho, and new opportunities for strengthening the country data ecosystem.

Data Demand

I. INTRODUCTION

Data demand can be defined as the needs and purposes of intended data users. This section will seek to understand for what purposes data ecosystem actors demand data, and how existing culture, incentives, and processes shape these demands.

II. GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

All agencies demand and produce information in some capacity. However, based on mandates and interviews, we have classified GoL agencies into the categories of data demanders, those who primarily require information from other actors; data producers, those who primarily generate data; and data demanders and producers, those who both oversee the production of data – often sectoral – and who use information to inform decisions regarding service delivery. In what follows, we provide an overview of the key needs and mandates of GoL agencies.

A. DATA DEMANDERS

MoDP has the mandate to coordinate GoL development priorities, as outlined in the NSDP; conduct M&E of the implementation of national strategies and programs; and respond to international reporting requirements. Its mission is to achieve development “through results oriented national development plans [NSDPs], policy advice to government, mobilization and coordination of resources.”²⁰ Within MoDP, the Department of M&E is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of government programs.

MoLGCA has the mandate to support the achievement of the National Decentralization Policy. This includes providing capacitation support to local councils, and communication back to national level information regarding new policies, resources, and guidance needed to achieve devolved governance.

The National Assembly demands financial data for budgetary planning and approval processes. The MoF produces Budget Strategy Papers, which provide guidance on GoL spending priorities, and issues the Budget Call Circular with guidance for ministries. Once ministry-submitted budgets have been reviewed by MoF, the final budget is presented to Portfolio Committees for interrogation; the Cabinet Budget Committee for approval; and Parliament for a vote to pass the budget.²¹

²⁰ (Government of Lesotho Web Portal, June 2018a)

²¹ (UNICEF, June 2017)

B. DATA PRODUCERS

Per the Lesotho Bureau of Statistics Act of 2001, **BoS is responsible for the coordination of the National Statistical System (NSS), with a mandate to oversee the production of official statistical information.**

The bureau has a mandate for “review[ing] all initiatives to collect data at the national and local government levels and approv[ing] instruments for data collection” carried out by government and non-governmental agencies. BoS also responds to ad hoc requests for information from other GoL ministries, development partners, CSOs, and academia

BoS priorities have been further elaborated in the National Statistical Development Strategy (2006/07-2015/16). Most relevant for the data for children ecosystem, these priorities include timely data collection; the establishment of a national data bank; challenges related to a lack of independence,²² in terms of being able to effectively coordinate the NSS; and the need for greater public awareness of how to access and understand statistical data.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) is responsible for ensuring a credible population register. MoHA is responsible for recording births and deaths of Lesotho citizens, and for issuing national identification numbers.

C. DATA DEMANDERS AND PRODUCERS

All interviewed stakeholders in the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services (MoJCS), and the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) identified data priorities related to planning and monitoring.

In particular, interviewees identified the following data needs.²³

- Developing ministerial policies and strategic plans
- Monitoring progress against key strategic priorities
- Developing Annual Operational Plans
- Providing quality control over service delivery
- Monitoring resource allocation and expenditure
- Responding to data requests

MoET, MoH, and MoJCS have the mandate to oversee service delivery in the education, health, and criminal justice sectors, respectively. MoSD has the mandate to “lead and facilitate the provision of sustainable social development services that are universally accessible to all groups in Lesotho in collaboration with other key stakeholders.”²⁴

In addition to institutional mandates, ministries are guided by sectoral and thematic strategic plans, as outlined in Table 5.²⁵ Each ministry has an M&E/Statistical Unit responsible for monitoring progress against each ministry strategic plan, using GoL data systems and surveys.

²² BoS is a department within MoDP, not an independent GoL agency.

²³ These priorities were identified by stakeholders during key informant interviews. These perceptual data are likely not exhaustive lists of priorities. Stakeholders interviewed were all from ministry planning or M&E units.

²⁴ (Government of Lesotho Web Portal, June 2018b)

²⁵ A strategy for the justice and correctional services sector could not be found online.

| Strategy | Relevance to Data for Children | Decade |
|--|---|--------|
| Lead Agency: Ministry of Education and Training | | |
| Education Sector Plan 2016-2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies access, efficiency, and quality of IECCD, primary, and secondary education as key priorities Identifies data collection on non-formal education as a government plan of action | Both |
| National Strategic Plan for IECCD 2013/14-2017/18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calls for the establishment of a national child database and tracking system for vulnerable children Calls for the establishment of an Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (IECCD) Management Information System | First |
| Lead Agency: Ministry of Health | | |
| Health Management Information System Strategic Plan 2013-2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to improve data recording, reporting, processing and sharing, and establish the capacity to generate, process, and disseminate information at all levels; Aims to improve health data management at district levels, to identify unmet needs, establish data standards and periodic quality assessments, and improve data use; Aims to strengthen data analysis, dissemination, and use at the point of collection | Both |
| Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development | | |
| National Strategic Plan on Vulnerable Children 2012-2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> References the need for a database of vulnerable children; such a database could become part of the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) database, linked with other relevant ministry databases, Bureau of Statistics, and civil registry. | Both |
| National Social Protection Strategy 2014/15-2018/19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calls for the expansion of social protection information system functionalities, to include: (i) an infant nutrition grant program, (ii) capturing disability data, (iii) expansion to all rural households, and urban households on an as-needed basis, and (iv) capability to rapidly expand in the case of a humanitarian crisis. | Both |
| National Multisectoral Child Protection Strategy 2014/15-2018/19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlights the limited availability of baseline data on child protection issues Calls for surveys to be conducted regarding violence against children, and children in alternative care Calls for a child protection information management system to be established within the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) | Both |

Table 4: Policies and strategies relevant for children

III. UNICEF PRIORITIES

UNICEF data demand stems from joint planning with GoL, UNCT, and other stakeholders. To achieve results for each outcome area, the social policy section collaboratively develops a workplan that include outcomes, outputs, and activities that support CP priorities.

Similar to the GoL, the UNICEF CO also demands data for program planning, monitoring, and reporting. Sections reported providing inputs to the development of the CP, and planning and monitoring of progress against workplans. The CO relies on GoL for data needed to inform planning, prioritization, beneficiary targeting, and measuring progress.

In what follows, we provide an overview of the four key outcome areas for UNICEF Lesotho's CP 2019-2023, including outcome indicators, means of verification, indicative outputs, and major partners.²⁶ We also examine priority programs, as taken from section Rolling Workplans for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

²⁶ All information was taken from the UNICEF CP 2019-2023, June 2018 draft.

A. OUTCOME AREA 1

Outcome 1 focuses on the first decade of life, with indicators relevant for health, education, and social policy sections. Data sources from MoH and MoET will verify the achievement of each outcome indicator. In addition to MoH and MoET, national and district government; the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), and Ministry of Water; Food and Nutrition Coordination Office; and civil society organizations are identified as major partners for achieving results in this outcome area.

| Outcome 1 By 2023, young children (0-9 years), particularly the most vulnerable, benefit from gender responsive health, nutrition, and early learning services | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
| Indicators | Means of Verification | Indicative Outputs |
| 1. Proportion of HIV pregnant women who receive ARVs for PMTCT | DHIS2 (MoH) | <p>Output 1.1: By 2023, the capacity of the Ministry of Health and the Cadre of health workers is improved to deliver quality integrated MNCH and HIV services</p> <p>Output 1.2: By 2023, parents and caregivers, have increased capacity to practice and demand quality MNCH, IYCF and hygiene interventions.</p> <p>Output 1.3 By 2023, Improved capacity of the Government (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Development) to provide high quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education</p> |
| 2. Children < 1 year receiving diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus-containing vaccine at national level. | LDHS (MoH) | |
| 3. Newborns receiving postnatal care within two days of birth. | DHIS2 (MoH) | |
| 4. Percentage of children aged 0 to 23 months who are put to the breast within one hour of birth. | DHIS2 (MoH) | |
| 5. Gross enrolment of children in pre-primary education | Education Sector Reports (MOET) | |
| 6. Proportion of children under five whose births are registered. | LDHS (MoH) | |

Table 5: CP Outcome 1 indicators, data sources, and outputs

Within the UNICEF CO, the health and education play direct role in the achievement of this outcome area, with the social policy section supporting. In addition to the broader GoL and UNICEF processes and strategies outlined on pages 13-16, specific mandates – particularly within GoL actors – shape data demand for this outcome. Because of the consultative process undertaken for UNICEF programming, the priorities and data sources used by GoL and the CO are aligned for this outcome.

For CP reporting, the UNICEF CO has identified outcome indicator data sources that are expected to be regularly available. In addition, 2018-2019 Rolling Workplans included interventions related to:

- Health: maternal, newborn, and child health; child vaccinations; WASH; nutrition
- Education: IECCD services; primary education quality
- Social Policy: birth registration; expanding the local and national social protection system

B. OUTCOME AREA 2

Outcome 2 focuses on the second decade of life, with indicators relevant for health, social policy, and education sections. In addition to MoET, the work of MoH and MoSD; United Nations organizations, the United States President’s Emergency Plans for AIDS, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and Global Partnership for Education; and civil society organizations are identified as major partners for achieving results in this outcome area.

| Outcome 2 By the end of 2023, adolescents 10-19, particularly the most vulnerable, benefit from gender responsive quality health, HIV, learning and protection services | | |
|---|--|--|
| Indicators | Means of Verification | Indicative Outputs |
| 1. % of adolescents 15-19 with HIV infection receiving antiretroviral therapy by 2023 | UNAIDS Spectrum Modeling Estimates ²⁷ | Output 2.1: Adolescents living with or at risk of HIV have adequate knowledge to demand quality prevention, identification, care, and support services Output 2.2: Improved capacity of the Ministry of Education to provide high quality education, including alternative pathways |
| 2. Average learning outcome improvements (Grade 6) | National Assessment Survey (MoET) ²⁸ | Output 2.3: Law enforcement officials have an increased capacity to identify, prevent, and report violence against children and child marriage |

Table 6: CP Outcome 2 indicators, data sources, and outputs

Within the UNICEF CO, health, education, and social policy play direct role in the achievement of this outcome area. In addition to the broader GoL and UNICEF processes and strategies outlined on pages 13-16, specific mandates – particularly within GoL actors – shape data demand for this outcome. Because of the consultative process undertaken for UNICEF programming, the priorities and data sources used by GoL and the CO are aligned for this outcome.

For CP reporting, the UNICEF CO has identified outcome indicator data sources that are expected to be regularly available. In addition, 2018-2019 Rolling Workplans included second decade interventions related to:

- Health: adolescent awareness for HIV prevention
- Education: non-formal education opportunities for out-of-school children
- Social Policy: expanding local and national social protection system; child welfare, justice, and participation

Because UNICEF Lesotho has divided Outcomes 1 and 2 by decade of life, of particular importance is **access to age-disaggregated data** across sectors, both to monitor the success or progress toward outcomes and to make strategic decisions related to resourcing and advocacy.

²⁷ UNAIDS Spectrum Modeling Estimates are also used by MoH for planning and monitoring.

²⁸ The Examinations Council of Lesotho conducts these surveys on behalf of MoET.

C. OUTCOME AREA 3

Outcome 3 cuts across decades of life, with indicators directly relevant for the social policy section. Indicators also relate to health and education sections, as outputs are connected to crosscutting PFM and evidence generation and use for children.

Data sources from MoF and MoSD will verify the achievement of each outcome indicator. In addition to MoF and MoSD, the MoDP and BoS are identified as major partners for achieving results in this outcome area.

| Outcome 3 By 2023, all children, particularly the most vulnerable, benefit from gender-responsive social policies for the sustainable and equitable realization of their rights. | | |
|--|--|--|
| Indicators | Means of Verification | Indicative Outputs |
| 1. National Social Sector Budget as % of GDP | National budget document; PER document; Budget analyses report (MoF) | Output 3.1: By 2023, the Government of Lesotho has an improved child and gender sensitive, shock responsive social protection system Output 3.2: By 2023, the Government and citizens have increased awareness and capacity to enhance participation, transparency, accountability, equity and quality of public investment in children |
| 2. % of monetary and multi-dimensionally deprived children in poor family that are directly benefited from social assistance programmes (cash) | NISSA (MoSD) | Output 3.3: By 2023, improved capacity of Government to generate, analyse and communicate evidence on child rights to inform policy decisions |

Table 7: CP Outcome 3 indicators, data sources, and outputs

For CP reporting, the UNICEF CO has identified outcome indicator data sources that are expected to be regularly available. In addition, 2018-2019 Rolling Workplans included Outcome 3-related interventions that aim to strengthen the technical and institutional capabilities of MoSD, and expand service delivery at district level with the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs (MoLGCA).

UNICEF’s focus on district government aligns with the GoL 2014 National Decentralization Policy. Of particular relevance is a planned program between UNICEF, MoLGCA, and Limkokwing University, the Decentralizing Access to Child Development Indicators (“Child Development Indicators”) project. This work aims to **create dashboards of child development indicators for district, urban, and community councils, in support of evidence-informed decision-making**. The aim is to pull data from existing government information systems on a regular basis. **For the success of this project, UNICEF has identified the need for access to disaggregated, near real-time data from GoL ministry systems.**

D. OUTCOME AREA 4

Outcome 4 focuses on the effective implementation of CP 2019-2023 and achievement of results for children. All UNICEF partners are identified as playing a major role in achieving results in this outcome area.

| Outcome 4 The country programme is efficiently designed, coordinated, managed and supported to meet quality programming standards for achieving results for children. | | |
|---|--|--|
| Indicators | Means of Verification | Indicative Outputs |
| 1. Percentage of programme outputs achieved by end of the country programme. | Annual management plan, Governance Committee Meeting minutes (Programme Management Team, Country Management Team, Partnership Review Committee), rolling work plan, Integrated M&E Plan/ Insight reports | <p>Output 4.1. Guidance, tools and resources to effectively and efficiently design and manage the programme of cooperation are available to UNICEF and its partners.</p> <p>Output 4.2. Guidance, tools and resources to effectively generate, analyse and utilize statistical and qualitative information for Child Rights System Monitoring are available in the country.</p> <p>Output 4.3. Guidance, tools and resources for effective communication on child rights issues with stakeholders are available to UNICEF and its partners.</p> |

Table 8: CP Outcome 4 indicators, data sources, and outputs

Because UNICEF works closely with GoL to achieve government-identified priorities, it is important that **GoL partners work in a data demand-driven culture and are able to access, understand, and apply data and evidence to drive policymaking and programming** in order to reach the most vulnerable.

IV. PROMINENT NEEDS

Developing a culture of data use requires the existence of expectations and processes that facilitate or require data, generating demand. The GoL has policies that specify how these expectations – in the form of medium-term and annual planning and budgeting processes – will be developed and monitored. **However, the implementation and finalization of these processes has been uneven, due to challenges of policy compliance and leadership.**²⁹

A. POLICY COMPLIANCE

Many interviewees shared that “data-driven decision-making” as becoming a positive norm in GoL. Official statistics and externally produced research were identified as guiding medium-term national and sectoral planning, as well as annual workplans.

“If we say an issue is a big challenge, that must be backed up by information. We strive to base everything we put in [strategies] on tangible data.”

– Interviewee

However, the full implementation of these plans has not been realized. At the national level, ongoing challenges related to staffing and government instability resulted in the lack of a finalized M&E Framework for NSDP I, and delays in finalizing NSDP II.

Within sectors and ministries, planning and monitoring functions are often within M&E/Statistical Units. These units have varying human resource capacities; several are development-partner funded, and not yet formally incorporated into their ministry’s organizational structure.³⁰ As a result, M&E/Statistical Units – which should provide data-driven insights for decision-making – are often not well integrated into the government decision-making process. In addition, the extent to which progress against sector or annual plans is shared with other GoL or development partner agencies varies by ministry. There is not a standard publication of performance against targets across all GoL agencies.

A national results framework sends an important signal to implementing agencies regarding priority outcomes, and helps establish accountabilities for achieving those outcomes. The lack of a national framework not only limits the ability to measure progress against goals and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions; it also limits the effectiveness of a medium-term development plan as a framework for data demand.

Further complicating data demand is that **current incentives and expectations within GoL focus on budgetary reporting and compliance**, due to the priority of PFM reform. Parliamentary oversight focuses on reconciliation between ministerial and governmental budgets, and tracking the expenditure

²⁹ Framing adapted from Arenth et al, 2017.

³⁰ (UNDP Lesotho, 2017) and interviewee responses.

of funds. Processes surrounding national budgeting have been shaped by a focus on addressing budget credibility, disbursements, and financial reporting challenges³¹ – not results-based management processes. As a result, **Parliament does not demand data related to the effectiveness of ministry programming in achieving better outcomes for children.**

At the subnational level, the ongoing implementation of the National Decentralization Policy means that policies and processes that contribute to data demand are still developing. However, it is safe to assume that the **demand for child relevant data at subnational level will increase over time.**

B. LEADERSHIP

As outlined in the introduction, political turnover – in particular, frequent turnover of ministers, their associated permanent secretaries, and technical leads – poses a challenge to the demand for data in Lesotho. Each time a new minister is installed, it can take several weeks or months for both the minister and their senior aides to get up-to-speed. This means GoL leadership may have limited familiarity with sectoral priorities and data; it also means there may be limited incentives for decision-making to achieve long-term goals, vis a vis opportunities for short-term gain.³²

Also contributing to limited demand for data are procedural loopholes and real or perceived limitations around MoDP enforcement authority. The lack of a National M&E Policy complicates the relationship between the MoDP Department of M&E and other government ministries.³³ Results-based reporting has “not [been] taken seriously,” and there are no accountabilities for unmet reporting obligations.³⁴

“We are also trying now to use these data more... trying to establish a better M&E system to track performance of programs. [But] the biggest challenge has been distractions within the government.”

– Interviewee

Within ministries, politics and public opinion – not data and evidence – were cited as greater drivers in the decision making of senior officials.³⁵ Mid- to lower-level ministerial staff may perceive the need for data as discrete to the M&E/Statistical Unit. There is also concern that incentives – remuneration³⁶ and expectations – exist primarily for data collection, not interpretation and use.

³¹ These challenges were identified by the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Assessment (2011). The GoL Public Financial Management Reform Action Plan (2012-2016), and the development partner-funded Public Financial Management Reform Programme (2014-2017), sought to address these challenges (UNICEF, June 2017).

³² (UNICEF, June 2017)

³³ (UNDP-Lesotho, 10 July 2017)

³⁴ (UNDP-Lesotho, November 2017). Unmet reporting obligations have also been linked to challenges of capacity.

³⁵ (UNCT-Lesotho, September 2017); (UNICEF, June 2017)

³⁶ Some cited the provision of per diems for data collection and trainings as particularly problematic.

One example of a compliance loophole was identified in the education sector. In the early 2000s, following the introduction of free primary education, access to primary education facilities was determined to be a bottleneck to achieving greater primary school enrollment. As a result, MoET received approval for a rolling school construction program.

The new Education Sector Plan 2016-2026 – based upon data and trend analyses – no longer identifies access to primary schools as a key constraint. However, MoET leadership continues to allocate significant resources towards constructing primary schools. Primary school construction is seen by some as a way for MoET leadership to build political prestige, by delivering a “tangible good” to constituents, rather than prioritizing less-tangible priorities like learning outcomes.

Both MoDP and the National Assembly have the authority to question ministerial activities out-of-line with national and sectoral strategic priorities. Because primary school construction was approved as a “rolling” program, it may be shielded from the typical fact-finding and evaluation process.

V. SECTION CONCLUSION

Planning and monitoring processes shape the data demands of GoL and UNICEF actors. As UNICEF works in close collaboration with the GoL and other UNCT agencies, data demands and priorities of UNICEF align with government data sources and priorities. The GoL has a foundational process for developing medium-term and annual plans at national, sectoral, and subnational levels. However, ongoing challenges prevent the full implementation of these plans.

Ideally, the data demand cycle would be one of (i) evidence-based planning, (ii) implementing programs according to plans (iii) M&E and reporting, (iv) analyzing data, and (v) making appropriate plan or program adjustments. However, due to limited compliance with government policies and perverse leadership incentives, this cycle has not been achieved. The extent to which plans are implemented (ii) and monitored (iii), and the extent to which data are analyzed (iv), varies across GoL actors.

Key barriers to data-informed decision-making **include policy compliance and leadership**, which impact data demand. **Policies that would generate priority data – including the National M&E Framework, and NSDP II – have not been fully implemented**; the under-resourcing of ministerial M&E/Statistical Units, as well as a whole-of-government prioritization of PFM reform, further complicate policy implementation. In addition, **political turnover, perverse decision-making incentives**, and the limited ability of MoDP to enforce its mandate create leadership obstacles to data demand. Until these challenges can be addressed, demand for – and by extension, use of – data will remain uneven.

Data Supply

I. INTRODUCTION

Data supply is facilitated by technological and individual capacities to collect, process, and analyze data. Supply can be categorized by dimensions of data quality, frequency, and disaggregation. Data sources may include government, development partner, civil society, citizens, and private sector. This section will seek to understand what data sources currently exist in Lesotho; and the challenges or unmet needs facing a healthy, demand-driven data supply.

II. EXISTING DATA SOURCES

There are a number of data collection efforts and systems in Lesotho, led by government, development partners, or both. Some sectors, such as health, education and social development, are considered to have robust data systems and collection methods, but may lack key information around equity or quality considerations. Other sectors, such as WASH and social protection, are considered “data poor” and in need of further investment.

As noted across many interviews, there is a strong working partnership between GoL and the UNCT regarding data systems strengthening and support. However, challenges of data access, government human resource capacity, and coordination mechanisms hinder data supply in Lesotho.

A. GOVERNMENT DATA SOURCES

The BoS is the official source of national statistical information in country, and coordinates the NSS. It also serves as a quality assurance clearinghouse for all surveys, whether managed by BoS, ministries, or development partners; and provides oversight of official statistics generated through administrative data systems. BoS will post statistical reports to their main website. However, **access to raw data,³⁷ or other more specific information,³⁸ must be done via written request.** It was noted across interviews that responses to these requests often represent a time constraint.

MoSD manage National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) – supported by UNICEF – which captures and manages socioeconomic data used by GoL and development partners for social transfer programs. MoH have recently transitioned to the District Health Information System (DHIS2), which streamlines facility-level data collection and sharing;³⁹ MoET are in the process of transitioning to a new Education Management Information System (EMIS) platform, to similarly streamline data collection and built-in platform analytical capability. Limited access to these systems is typically granted to one representative within UNICEF. However, more complex data queries, or inquiries by other staff, must be done via written request.⁴⁰ As with BoS requests, **delayed response times often represent a time constraint.**

The MoHA is responsible for overseeing civil and vital registration processes, using a National Identity and Civil Registry (NICR) database. UNICEF has supported pilots harmonizing civil registration and school registration processes; there are also discussions underway of creating inter-linkages between the NICR and administrative databases (EMIS and NISSA), and in further collaborating on data collection and registration processes.

³⁷ Data in machine-readable format, or with different filters or disaggregation levels than available in published PDF reports.

³⁸ “More specific” could include more up-to-date or unpublished data, information calculated via a different methodology, etc.

³⁹ Compared to the previous health information management system platform, based on interviews.

⁴⁰ GoL interviewees also mentioned that – particularly for systems supported by a development partner – regular data sharing agreements may be established. In these agreements, the custodial ministry shares a specific set of data directly with the development partner on a routine basis.

The MoHA is in initial stages of developing an interface between the National Identity and Civil Registration database and other GoL ministry information systems. In particular, MoHA would prioritize those agencies responsible for child programming and with existing information systems, such as MoET and MoSD. MoHA and MoSD are also exploring opportunities for subnational joint data collection for registration in NICR and NISSA.

These data harmonization efforts could help strengthen the quality of data supply, and pave the way for potential cross-sectoral use cases for data.

Finally, the Ministry of Finance has been implementing a public financial management reform process, with the support of the World Bank, European Union, and other donors. This process includes enhancing the ministry's Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS), Integrated Revenue Management System (IRMIS), and Payroll and Human Resource Information System. While UNICEF does not access data directly from these platforms, they are the basis for national budgeting documents used by UNICEF for public financial management for children.

The following GoL information sources – survey and report data, as well as GoL information management systems – were identified as relevant to UNICEF's work.⁴¹

⁴¹ Note that these systems were those identified by stakeholders during key informant interviews. These perceptual data are likely not exhaustive lists of information systems or mandated priorities.

| Government Survey or Report | Custodial Agency | Collection Frequency | Use Cases | UNICEF Support | Data Quality / Trust |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------------|--|
| Census | BoS | Every ten years | Program baselines, prioritization, and targeting Source for disability data | No | Good; timeliness of publication a challenge |
| Continuous Multipurpose Household Survey – Household Budget Survey module | BoS | Quarterly | Key deprivations for social assistance targeting | Yes | Good; small survey sample makes it challenging to use for hyper-local targeting |
| Lesotho Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) | BoS | One-time (not regular) ⁴² | Help address gaps in between LDHS Includes specific questions aimed at filling child data gaps | Yes | To be determined; optimism |
| Various Population Studies | BoS | Varies | Relevant demographic data | Varies | N/A |
| National budget and analysis reports | MoF | Annual | Public financial management information | No | Not enough level of detail/ disaggregation about child relevant program spending |
| Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs) | MoF | Every five years | Public financial management information | Yes | Not enough level of detail/ disaggregation about child relevant program spending |
| Education Sector Report ⁴³ | MoET | Annual | School enrollment, access, and retention data | No | Timeliness of publication, disaggregation, facility-level quality assurance mechanisms a challenge |
| National Assessment Survey | MoET ⁴⁴ | Every four years | Learning outcomes and performance by geographical location | No | Coverage limited to primary schooling |

⁴² In progress as of June 2018.

⁴³ Uses EMIS data; production supported by BoS.

⁴⁴ Conducted by the Examinations Council of Lesotho, on behalf of MoET.

| Government Survey or Report | Custodial Agency | Collection Frequency | Use Cases | UNICEF Support | Data Quality / Trust |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|---|
| Lesotho Demographic Health Survey (LDHS) | MoH | Every five years | Program prioritization and targeting | No | Good; timeliness of publication a challenge |
| Lesotho Population Based HIV Assessment (LePHIA) | MoH ⁴⁵ | Annual | Program prioritization and advocacy | No | Good |
| Annual Joint Review | MoH | Discontinued ⁴⁶ | Program prioritization and advocacy | No | Good |
| Violence Against Children (VAC) Survey | MoSD | One-time (not regular) ⁴⁷ | Baseline information for programming and advocacy | Yes | To be determined |
| National Social Protection Strategy | MoSD | One-time (not regular) | Costed programming proposal for advocacy and fundraising | Yes | Good |
| Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis Report | LVAC | Annual | Program prioritization, targeting, advocacy, and fundraising | Yes | Timeliness of publication Disaggregation by age, disability status |
| Child adjudication data | MoJCS | Ongoing | Information for programming and advocacy | No | Accessibility |

Table 9: GoL surveys and reports relevant to UNICEF's work

⁴⁵ Supported by PEPFAR, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and BoS.

⁴⁶ Was cited as a previously valuable resource.

⁴⁷ In progress as of June 2018.

| Government Information System | Custodial Agency | Collection Frequency | Collection Mechanism | UNICEF Support | Use Cases |
|---|-------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|---|
| National Identity and Civil Registry (NICR) | MoHA | Ongoing | MoHA staff direct registration | Yes | Population denominator for development indicators |
| Education Management Information System (EMIS) | MoET | Annual | MoET facility staff responsible for collecting data and sending to district; paper-based components | Yes | Monitoring and identifying needs related to education access and enrollment |
| District Health Information System (DHIS2) | MoHA | Ongoing | MoH facility staff enter facility-level data | Yes | Monitoring and identifying needs related to health and HIV service delivery |
| National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) | MoSD | Intensive initial database population, then ongoing data management | MoSD staff initial direct registration; district social worker maintenance and support | Yes | Managing beneficiary information for cash transfer program |

Table 10: GoL administrative information management systems relevant to UNICEF's work

B. OTHER UNICEF DATA SOURCES

In addition to the government sources listed above, UNICEF has identified the following data sources as relevant for program planning and monitoring:

General

- UNCT Common Country Assessment
- UNICEF State of the Children Assessment
- Various GoL reports, UN estimates, and research

Health

- Zero Hunger Strategic Review and Diagnostic Study⁴⁸
- Cost of Hunger in Africa – Lesotho Country Study⁴⁹
- Resource Mapping Data – Clinton Health Access Initiative
- UNAIDS Spectrum Modeling Estimates
- Findings on preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission⁵⁰

Social Policy

- UNICEF Child Protection System Mapping
- National Study on Child Poverty and Disparities in Lesotho⁵¹
- Estimation of Rates of Return on Social Protection Investments in Lesotho⁵²
- UNDP data on governance and decentralization
- Various data and reports from World Bank, UN Agencies

Education

- Information on regional education trends

⁴⁸ Supported by the WFP, FAO, WHO, and World Bank. See <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000071568/download/>.

⁴⁹ Supported by the African Union, UNICEF, and WFP. See https://static1.squarespace.com/static/527789a2e4b0a23a823e44cd/t/580756248419c29b918a267a/1476875942415/Lesotho_Summary.pdf.

⁵⁰ Supported by Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, in partnership with MoH.

⁵¹ Commissioned by UNICEF, based on the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities launched in 2007. See <https://www.unicef.org/esaro/2011-UNICEF-Lesotho-Child-Poverty.pdf>.

⁵² Report commissioned by UNICEF. See <http://www.merit.unu.edu/publications/uploads/1461167192.pdf>.

III. PROMINENT NEEDS

Prominent UNICEF stakeholder needs related to data access, availability, and timeliness; data quality was also identified as a stakeholder need, particularly when seeking to design programming aimed at reaching the most vulnerable, and to support decentralized decision-making. Underpinning these needs were persistent issues of human and technical capacity to facilitate supply.

A. ACCESS

All interviewees cited **access** to government data as a challenge. **BoS – head of the National Statistical System – does not have a standard policy or protocol for sharing microdata.** While efforts are underway to elaborate a protocol, there is no firm time horizon for when the policy would be finalized and approved – the estimated time horizon was 2-3 years.

In addition, **there is no Freedom of Information (FOI) law in Lesotho.** An FOI law would help codify expectations for data sharing and facilitate access to information.

“Freedom of information thus contributes to government openness and accountability... [and can] help increase government efficiency and responsiveness, along with civic trust... Although the right to information is not a substitute for good governance, it both supports and aids its implementation.

“Freedom of information contributes to enhanced empowerment and equality of all social groups, including women and indigenous peoples... there is a growing recognition of its relevance to socio-economic development.”

- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)⁵³

Data sharing is the practice of making data accessible to other stakeholders in order to speed up the achievement of common goals. Sharing data encourages diversity of analysis, opinion, and use. Good data sharing practices allow for the timely, regular exchange of datasets in machine-readable formats, with appropriate steps taken to safeguard data privacy.⁵⁴

While key ministries do share data, many do so through PDF or Word document reports – not machine-readable formats. **Accessing data beyond what is released via reports must be done upon request.**⁵⁵ Data requesters must send an official request in writing to the custodial ministry, stating which types of data are needed, how the data will be used, and what product will be generated. The custodial ministry may also reserve the right to review the final product before it can be published.

⁵³ (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 2017)

⁵⁴ Definition adapted from National Institutes of Health, 05 June 2003.

⁵⁵ Some interviewees stated that standing data sharing arrangements may be established, in the case of a development partner funding a specific data or statistical activity.

B. AVAILABILITY

All interviewees praised the breadth and regularity of data collection in Lesotho. Surveys, censuses, and sectoral reports involve regular data collection. Similarly, interviewees praised the methodological rigor of BoS data and survey collection efforts.

Yet due to the devolution of governance responsibilities, and human development inequities that demand more targeted interventions, **UNICEF data users demand more timely and disaggregated information than what the BoS currently provides** – particularly by sex and age (year) – in order to mainstream focus on the second decade.

***Statistical data** deals with the collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of large quantities of numerical data, collected within a specific time, place, and/or other characteristic. Such data are usually collected using methods to correct for at least one dimension – usually size – for the purpose of inferring proportions in a whole from a representative sample.*

***Administrative data** comes from civil registration and vital statistics systems, and sectoral management information systems. Administrative data are often collected at the point of service delivery, each time a service is provided, with the aim of completely capturing the indented beneficiary group.*

Administrative data systems are a potential resource for addressing data timeliness and disaggregation gaps in the NSS, provided the systems are accessible, regularly updated, and have data of sufficient quality. In particular, UNICEF staff identified the need for timely, age and sex-disaggregated data. As demonstrated in the table of perceived data availability below, **there was strong correlation between perceived data availability, and the existence of administrative data systems to capture this information.**

| Workstream | Data Availability |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Health | Good |
| Education | Good |
| Social Policy | Fair |
| Child Protection | Poor |
| Nutrition and WASH | Poor |

Table 11: Perceived data availability by UNICEF workstream⁵⁶

Generally, data relevant to health was considered of “good enough” quality for decision-making purposes. Ongoing partnerships between MoH, PEPFAR, the Global Fund, UNAIDS, and other development partners – as well as the ministry’s recent transition to DHIS2 – were identified as strengths of the national health data ecosystem.

Education data was also considered “good enough” for decision-making for UNICEF purposes. Noted data gaps for the first decade of life (CP Outcome 1) include information regarding private IECCD facility

⁵⁶ Based on interviewee perceptions, in the context of data availability for project planning and monitoring. There was general satisfaction with the data sources identified for CP Outcome-level measurement and reporting.

locations and enrollment rates. Expanding IECCD access is a noted MoET priority, as outlined in the Education Sector Strategic Plan. However, government information regarding private IECCD centers is currently limited.

Education data gaps for the second decade of life (CP Outcome 2) were more pronounced, and included out of school children (numerical amount and cause); teen pregnancies (number and impact on school attendance/ completion); and teaching quality. Understanding the causes of, and providing services to, out of school children is an identified priority of MoET, as outlined in the Education Sector Strategic Plan. Understanding how teen pregnancies impact school attendance would likely require collaboration between MoH and MoET. Finally, while national learning assessments exist at the primary level, no similar assessment exists for secondary education.

A noted need in both health and education workstreams was data disaggregated by age and sex, to enable better monitoring and targeting of interventions by decade of life. This disaggregation may already exist in government systems, but is not readily accessible.

Social development data are broadly available. The NISSA database serves as the key information system for social transfers, and interviewees expressed confidence in the data quality and completeness.

Child-relevant PFM data are also available, and the UNICEF CO has prepared relevant budget briefs and targeted advocacy in line with the national budget cycle. Interviewees identified these campaigns as useful tools that could be enhanced if GoL provided greater data disaggregation (by geographic location, beneficiaries, age, sex); linkages between spending and results (through implementing the National M&E System); or more “user friendly” agency budget proposals. Interviewees noted that GoL budgetary documents can extend to thousands of pages, which may be overly time-consuming for parliament, civil society, or other stakeholders to review and understand.

Nutrition and WASH data were also identified as gaps in the Lesotho data ecosystem. While the LDHS and LVAC capture data related to nutrition and WASH, administrative data systems do not routinely capture these data. As a result, **it can be challenging to access the timely, disaggregated data needed to understand coverage gaps and inform targeted interventions.**

UNICEF partnerships, advocacy, and commissioned research around child malnutrition and stunting also aim to address data and awareness gaps. In addition, the implementation of the OpenEMIS platform may offer an avenue to gather school-level nutrition and WASH data; and finally, the UNICEF-supported multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) also aims to address significant sectoral gaps.

Child protection was identified as a “data poor” sector in Lesotho. **Child protection is a nascent concept within the GoL – therefore, the current understanding of data needed to inform child protection planning and monitoring, and the prioritization and resourcing needed to develop the evidence base, is limited.** Ongoing UNICEF work related to child protection, including the support of Lesotho’s first Violence Against Children Survey, and capacity strengthening at national and local levels – as well as the World Bank supported implementation of a case management system – are aimed at strengthening the supply of data related to child protection.

C. TIMELINESS

Interviewees cited a lag between when data are collected, when data are scheduled to be published, and when publication occurs. Such delays are particularly common in the NSS. Reasons provided for these delays include data collection,⁵⁷ data processing,⁵⁸ and human resource constraints.

Delays are also linked to the time-intensive data request process, outlined on page 38. Many interviewees shared that **there can be a significant delay from when a request is sent, and when a response is received**. Such delays are particularly challenging in the context of humanitarian emergency response.

“I needed information for program design, but the [BoS] team responsible for that that data was away... we had to change the indicator we were intending to use because I could not get the data.”

– Interviewee

Data timeliness may be in part due to data management practices within GoL ministries or ministry sections. **Relevant data may be stored on individual staff computers, rather than a centralized database**. There is not a national data management policy, and interviewee responses suggest that, even if individual ministries have data management policies that are in line with good practices, these policies are not regularly followed.

⁵⁷ Particularly for EMIS, which uses paper-based collection.

⁵⁸ Concerns related to data quality or completeness were cited as potential reasons for some data publication delays.

D. QUALITY

Interviewees noted some data quality concerns, particularly related to data discrepancies when comparing national and sub-national data. Many felt there was a significant disconnect between data available at the national/ central level, and data available at the district level.

Reasons for these cited discrepancies include separate data repositories; limited ability of national systems to “communicate back” data collected to local level actors; and infrastructure barriers. Poor data quality may lead to persistent outcome inequalities, as programs and strategies may be based on incorrect information.

“Recently, we had a project that involved screening primary school children. We went to MoET to get school enrollment rates [in order to plan our intervention]... but when we got to the target district, we found a discrepancy between MoET and district-level enrollment data...which caused delays. I’m not sure why there was an inconsistency.”

– Interviewee

An in-depth assessment of data discrepancies and quality was not conducted as part of this work. However, interviewees indicated that district levels might have access to more accurate data regarding population numbers, geographic locations, and key deprivations (related to poverty, access to schools or medical facilities, etc.). In contrast, national level data may capture more nuanced information (related to malnutrition, education quality, etc.).

Increasing data accuracy will be important to harmonize policy approaches and priorities between national and sub-national government. As the GoL seeks to remedy growing sub-national inequalities and implement the 2014 National Decentralization Policy,⁵⁹ identifying and addressing bottlenecks that impact data quality between national and sub-national levels should be a key strategy.

⁵⁹ (Ministry of Local Government, Chieftainship and Parliamentary Affairs, February 2014)

| Government Information System | Quality Assurance Mechanisms | Potential Quality Concerns | Level of Trust | Current Initiatives |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| NICR | Office of Integrity and Quality Assurance, which examines vital registration processes | Completeness; entire population not yet captured in system | High confidence in existing data quality | Early discussion phases of interfacing NICR with EMIS, NISSA; linking NICR and NISSA data collection |
| EMIS | BoS works with MoET staff to clean data in advance of school census release | Data entry human error; tracking facility versus individual data | Concerns around data quality, completeness ⁶⁰ and timeliness | MoET implementing OpenEMIS system; discussion of interfacing EMIS with NICR for individual learner tracking |
| DHIS2 | MoH data clerks at facility and district level; statisticians at district level; MoH quarterly district data assessments ⁶¹ ; collaboration with PEPFAR and the Global Fund around HIV data | Data entry human error; tracking facility versus individual data ⁶² | Concerns about data quality and completeness | Ongoing initiatives to clean database; MoH piloting electronic medical records (EMRs) |
| NISSA | Enumerator and central-level process checks (i.e., resampling, spot checks); automated logic checks | Data entry human error ⁶³ | High confidence in existing data quality ⁶⁴ ; system has not yet been rolled out to all areas ⁶⁵ | Discussion of interfacing NISSA with NICR for beneficiary data quality control |

Table 12: GoL administrative information management systems data quality and trust

⁶⁰ Completeness regarding equity-related data (i.e., disability, reasons for out-of-school learners, WASH).

⁶¹ Both MoH initiatives were introduced in response to data quality concerns; in addition to data quality concerns from development partners, MoH noted discrepancies appeared when comparing year-on-year data.

⁶² This can lead to mis-counting if, for example, a patient visits another facility for follow-up HIV treatment.

⁶³ Specific concerns about data collected over two years ago, related to inconsistencies and incomplete fields.

⁶⁴ Some discrepancies noted when comparing current to historical data.

⁶⁵ Achieving full rural area coverage should be attained by the end of 2018; developing a methodology for urban areas is ongoing.

E. CAPACITY

There were also noted capacity constraints facing BoS that hinder the effective coordination of the NSS. These constraints span enforcement of mandates; GoL bureaucracy; and financial, human, and technical bottlenecks.

Despite having the legal mandate to coordinate the NSS, BoS has encountered challenges in enforcing that line ministries comply with BoS directives. Some GoL ministries are guided by separate legislation regarding statistical data production, which they consider superior to the 2001 Statistical Act. As a result, **not all ministries adhere to requirements regarding data collection and sharing needed for a functioning NSS**. In an attempt to address this legislation gap, BoS has signed memoranda of understanding with some line ministries. However, adherence to these memoranda is uneven, and no mechanism exists to enforce compliance.⁶⁶

In addition, the lack of an independent BoS limits its responsiveness to user needs. As a department of MoDP, BoS faces greater financial and administrative constraints than it would as an independent agency. For example, BoS must follow GoL civil service human resource and staffing processes. These processes are highly cumbersome, and take a great deal of time and “red tape” – limiting the ability of BoS to efficiently respond to user needs.⁶⁷ There are also indications that BoS and the NSS receive insufficient budget allocation to fulfill data mandates.⁶⁸ This results in mandates remaining unfulfilled, or over-burdening the workloads of existing staff.

Finally, challenges related to BoS technical and human capacities also limit the effectiveness of Lesotho data supply. As in other government ministries, limited internal BoS systems and processes for data management hinder the effective processing and sharing of information.⁶⁹ BoS staff may also lack the capacities needed to supply data and information relevant for decision-making. In particular, the UNDP Lesotho Data project found that BoS statistical products are not be packaged or communicated in formats suitable for decision-maker needs.

Interviewees also identified a potential skills gap in the expertise of BoS, and sector-specific analysis required by line ministries. Some interviewees felt that requesting support from “generalist” BoS statisticians led to incomplete analysis, because BoS does not possess both the statistical and sectoral expertise needed to effectively analyze and communicate statistics for line ministry use.

⁶⁶ (UNDP Lesotho, 10 July 2018)

⁶⁷ (UNDP Lesotho, November 2017)

⁶⁸ (UNCT Lesotho, September 2017)

⁶⁹ (UNDP Lesotho, November 2017)

There is also a risk that limited BoS capacity, coupled with the mandate over producing and verifying official GoL data, may crowd out technological innovations that could save time and resources while improving data quality.

One recurring example of data quality and potential innovative tools was the Lesotho census. BoS uses GIS to map enumeration areas and travels in-person to collect census data. Some interviewees raised concerns that there were a significant number of communities and individuals that were not reached by in-person data collection. Specific discrepancies were identified using satellite data – a relatively new tool used by some development partners for program planning. However, all concerned interviewees were reluctant to share misgivings about official data, for fear of censure.

Creating space to complement, critique, or improve official statistics would be beneficial for data quality, resource effectiveness, and process improvements. Strengthening the human and financial capacity of BoS – through agency independence, and increasing familiarity with innovative tools and processes – would benefit the national data for children ecosystem.

IV. SECTION CONCLUSION

The Lesotho ecosystem benefits from foundational statistical and administrative data collection systems. However, the **lack of a legal or policy framework to facilitate data sharing** often means data are not available in the format, disaggregation, or timeframe users demand. Some data can only be accessed upon request. Due to varying GoL data management and staff availability, there can be a significant delay from when a request is sent, and when a response is received.

In addition, some sectors – particularly child protection, nutrition, and WASH – also suffer from limited data availability. Data quality is also of some concern, particularly related to discrepancies between national and sub-national data. Underpinning much of these supply needs are **limitations in the ability of BoS to enforce its mandate, as well as the bureau’s human and technical capacity**.

Ongoing initiatives – led by GoL, UNDP, UNICEF, and other development partners – aim to address some of these prominent needs. In light of the ongoing GoL and UNICEF priorities of decentralization and achieving more equitable outcomes; data demands for planning, monitoring, and responding to information requests; and the existence of significant amounts of data, “unlocking” greater access to existing GoL sources should be the top short-term priority in data for children supply.

Data Use

I. INTRODUCTION

Data use links facts revealed by data with relevant policy and programming implications. Achieving data use requires understanding user capacities, potential use cases, and constraints; having data of the appropriate quality, frequency, and disaggregation; and communicating data effectively. Data that are relevant, timely, accessible, and actionable are the most likely to be put to use.

The factors influencing data use – data demand and data supply – have been elaborated in previous sections. Therefore, this section will provide a broad overview of mechanisms within GoL and UNICEF, and explore challenges or unmet needs facing the use of data to inform policymaking.

II. EXISTING PROCESSES

A. GOVERNMENT

GoL data utilization is greatest during medium-term planning, and annual planning and budgetary cycles. Short-term planning focuses on budget, timeline, and output information. During implementation, initiatives for data use typically center around the management of financial resources and progress against timelines. The most high-profile data sensitization activity within GoL is the UNDP Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development Project.

As outlined above, a weak National M&E System, and lack of a National M&E Framework for NSDP I, have limited GoL ability to connect inputs with outcomes and impact to-date. This in turn limits capacity for results-based management and accountability.

Positively, several ministries with programming relevant to children – MoH, MoET, MoJCS – have established dedicated M&E/Statistical Units, some at both national and subnational levels. The UNDP Lesotho Data project is also supporting the training and deployment of Assistant Statisticians to line agencies, in support of NSDP M&E and SDG monitoring. New tools, capacity strengthening initiatives, and increasing norms around the importance of data also indicate steps toward strengthening the governmental “systems architecture” needed for evidence-based policymaking.

B. UNICEF

UNICEF data utilization occurs during medium-term and annual planning, in order to identify areas of need; what the priorities of GoL counterparts are; and where UNICEF would be strategically placed to support, based on UNDAF and CP priorities, current CO initiatives and networks, and CO human and financial resources. On an ongoing basis, UNICEF staff review data – requested from GoL, or submitted via implementing partner progress reports – to monitor indicator trends, progress against financial spend, and emerging challenges or priority changes.

UNICEF CP 2019-2023 will continue to have evidence generation and uptake as a core CO strategy – particularly targeting the Lesotho Parliament and MoDP. UNICEF have also been invited by UNDP to provide RBM training, as a component of the larger Lesotho Data project. UNICEF will also be working with district councils to strengthen the use of child-relevant data in local budgeting and decision-making processes.

Across the UNICEF CO, staff expressed comfort in their ability to analyze and apply data in their work. Across sections, staff identified a need for support regarding effective methods for data dissemination – particularly for parliamentary, district council, and ministry leadership. The UNDP Lesotho Data project may be able to provide usable insights. However, additional materials, guidance, and **support from RO and HQ – examples of regional good practices, expertise, or trainings – could also be an asset.**

C. MAPPING DEMAND AGAINST SUPPLY

The matrix below provides a basic gap analysis of key demands (“data for what”) and supply (“data from where”) by GoL ministry/ entity and UNICEF-CO outcome area, based on mandates and priorities. Recommendations to address these gaps will be further elaborated in the Strategic Action Plan.

| | Demand | Supply | Gap Analysis |
|-------------------|---|---|---|
| Government | | | |
| MoDP | Progress against NSDP | (Missing NSDP I M&E Framework) | Cannot measure progress; limited ability to communicate priorities or hold implementing agencies to account |
| National Assembly | Budget/PFM information | Budget/PFM Information | Limited understanding of results-based budgeting |
| MoET | Priorities of access, efficiency, and quality of IECCD, primary, and secondary education | Manage BEIS (enrollment/ access); in process of implementing OpenEMIS Oversee National Assessment Survey (Grade 6) | BEIS limited to annual “snapshot” M&E/Statistical Unit has limited staff and is donor-funded Non-data factors may influence prioritization Limited data on pedagogical quality after primary |
| MoH | Priorities of HIV treatment and prevention, immunization, managing childhood illnesses, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, sanitation and hygiene, and systems strengthening | Manage DHIS2 - facility level data | M&E/Statistical Unit has limited staff and is donor-funded Non-data factors may influence prioritization |
| MoSD | Provide services to vulnerable children and families | Manage NISSA database | N/A |
| MoJCS | Administer justice and correctional services | In process of implementing integrated case management system | M&E/Statistical Unit has limited staff and is donor-funded Data system under development |
| BoS | N/A | Manage NSS | Limited technical, human capacity, and ability to fulfill mandate as head of NSS |
| MoHA | N/A | Manage NICR | Exploring initiatives to facilitate data sharing between other GoL systems |
| UNICEF-CO | | | |
| Outcome 1 | First decade of life - health, education, social policy | MoH, MoET sources | Age and sex-disaggregated data (health and education) Information related to non-GoL IECCD facilities |
| Outcome 2 | Second decade of life - health, education, social policy | MoET and UNAIDS sources | Age and sex-disaggregated data (health and education) Awareness/ monitoring of child protection Education quality, information on out-of-school youth and teen pregnancies |
| Outcome 3 | Cross-cutting - social policies and spending | MoF and MoSD | Understanding of value for money of government programs Need for disaggregated, real-time data for subnational decision-making |
| Outcome 4 | Cross-cutting - CP success | All | GoL partners able to access, understand, apply data to decision-making |

Table 13: Demand/ Supply Gap Analysis

III. PROMINENT NEEDS

A. CAPACITY

Capacities – **human, technical, and skill-based** – vary across ministries and departments. Across interviewees, there was interest in data sensitization trainings across national and sub-national levels, as well as across staff roles. Of particular interest for trainings were what data exists, why it’s important, and for what the data could be used. This interest is in line with, and could help support, the broader need to shift from a culture of data reporting for compliance, to a culture of data and analysis for use.

Amongst interviewees, there was also a sense that data specialist, information system management, and program management roles are siloed within ministries, with negative repercussions for data dissemination, system fitness-for-purpose, and evidence utilization. **Strengthening the capacities and mandates of all GoL roles to have a basic awareness of data** uses, system functionalities, and programmatic needs could help fortify a self-reinforcing government data ecosystem.

| Role | Data Sensitization Needs |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Enumerators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the data will be used for, and why each question/ variable is important • Technological literacy |
| Information Technology Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good practices in data management • New tools and applications • Programmatic and data analyst needs |
| M&E and Statistics Specialists | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience-centric methods for presenting and disseminating data, particularly for parliament and ministers • Data quality assurance methods • General methodological refreshers |
| Program Managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to independently analyze and apply some data to daily work • Familiarity with information technology capacities and existing data • Identification of use cases for data • Technological literacy |
| Ministers and Parliamentarians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to draw policy conclusions from reports and statistics • Technological literacy |

Table 14: Proposed training needs by role⁷⁰

Importantly, a **change management process should be followed across capacity-strengthening initiatives to emphasize the role of data for daily decision-making**. As outlined in the “Data Demand” section, current data culture focuses on using data for planning. GoL stakeholders at all levels must learn to see data as a tool to be consulted regularly, not limited to an “annual snapshot of performance.”

The creation of ministerial M&E/Statistical Units is a positive step toward strengthening the data for children ecosystem. However, units are relatively small – having one to three personnel. Some units do not yet have formalized structures within their parent agencies, and are financially supported by

⁷⁰ Based on interviewee perceptions.

development partners. **Several interviewees noted the limited financial and administrative stability of M&E/Statistical Units as a barrier to GoL data use.**

“We [M&E/Statistical Unit] are very thin in terms of human resources. For example, we’re here at this meeting now, and our other colleague is at a district meeting. So nobody is in the office.”

– Interviewee

Formalizing the roles of these divisions and strengthening their human and financial capacities, would be further indications of GoL’s commitment to results-based management. **Commitments of ongoing support from development partners while the GoL seeks to address financial and human resource bottlenecks would also help stabilize needed capacities in the data for children ecosystem.** Additionally, providing advisory support and guidance to GoL regarding the types of skillsets needed for data-enabled work – emphasizing the need for a level of data literacy across all roles – would be valuable.

B. DISSEMINATION

Sharing available data to decision-makers within Lesotho is also a challenge. As highlighted through the UNDP Lesotho Data project, there is a need for GoL and other development stakeholders to conduct greater awareness-raising around existing data, and to provide more user-friendly data products to target audiences – parliament, ministers, and district leadership. **Current dissemination mechanisms and formats may not be fit-for-purpose when it comes to spurring awareness and application for decision-making.**

Many interviewees felt that lengthy, text-heavy reports – frequently produced by GoL and development partners – are not in line with information consumption culture in Lesotho. Some interviewees cited social media platforms like Facebook or WhatsApp as the most prevalent means of digital communication – potentially indicating that shorter, more visual dissemination methods conducive to “sharing” may be more widely viewed.

*As part of the Lesotho Data initiative, **new statistical data dissemination methods will be trialed** – including radio broadcasts, infographics, public gatherings, school events, and other public awareness campaigns. BoS will receive capacitation on how to “package” statistical information for different audiences, including more geographically targeted statistical information; BoS are also being encouraged to proactively hold meetings with other ministry national and district offices, to raise awareness about new data and trend analyses.*

Within the GoL, **limited dissemination and awareness is perceived to be most acute at the sub-national level.** Due to limited infrastructure and connectivity issues, a number of interviewees cited disconnect between data collected and available at the national level, and data collected and available at the district level. This disconnect not only reduces the use of data in decision-making; it also contributes to the duplication of data collection efforts, and can result in poor-quality information.

Information technology and internet access are a challenge in Lesotho; there is also no unified microdata sharing policy across government. GoL department and agency websites exist, but may be offline for periods of time – hampering digital dissemination of public reports. While BoS are working to develop a centralized data repository, many interviewees cited hardcopy, email distribution, or written requests as the most reliable means of accessing relevant data.

Furthermore, infrastructure and information technology limitations mean government websites may be inaccessible or non-functioning – with negative implications for both data access and awareness. Most interviewees cited development partners, other central GoL ministries, and universities or researchers as the most frequent audiences for GoL data. This indicates **greater online dissemination of data would respond to unmet needs of current key audiences**.

When it comes to national and sub-national data sharing, limited internet and infrastructure in rural areas poses a challenge to digital data dissemination; as stated earlier, sub-national staff may not have access to computers for data digitization or access. Therefore, **improving online or web dissemination alone will not adequately respond to national and sub-national data sharing needs**.⁷¹

C. TOOLS AND TIME

There was a general interest in dashboards and maps that could offer analytical insights, and help communicate information “back down” to sub-national actors. Current and future information systems – such as DHIS2, the HIV/AIDS Health Situation Room, and OpenEMIS – likely have the capacity to easily share information via permissioned dashboards.

UNICEF could consider working with the UNCT and GoL to leverage emerging information system features to address data access challenges. A “quick win” could include working with GoL to make some data and visualizations from the HIV/AIDS Health Situation Room and OpenEMIS publicly accessible. UNICEF support could include working with GoL to establish good practices regarding data anonymization and privacy; and support configuring public portal options.

Across GoL, there was general interest in tools and digitization as a way to make data collection, encoding, and visualization processes easier and less time-intensive. Several ministries use, or have experimented with, mobile data collection tools such as mobile phones and tablets. All ministries interviewed are either seeking to strengthen existing systems, or are commissioning new information platforms. There are also nascent efforts within GoL to strengthen systems interoperability. Such efforts should be complimented by the NSS-wide microdata sharing policy formulated by BoS.

Time was not initially cited as a constraint. However, based on cited human resource and capacity challenges, it can be assumed that limited time is also a barrier to data use.

⁷¹ This also underscores the value of current GoL and development partner practices of in-person data dissemination workshops, particularly at the sub-national level; as well as the exploration of innovative “low-connectivity” dissemination methods, like radio and school outreach.

IV. SECTION CONCLUSION

Achieving data use will require a whole-of-government approach to addressing human, technical, and skill-based capacity needs. In the short-term, this should include strengthening the financial and administrative stability of ministry M&E/Statistical Units. In the short- to medium-term, efforts should be made to ensure all GoL roles have a basic awareness of how data can be applied to decision-making, and the functionalities of existing systems.

The UNDP Lesotho Data project and UNICEF Child Indicators project will trial new approaches for data dissemination – another key need in the data for children ecosystem. Finally, all interviewees expressed a general interest in tools and digitization as a way to make data collection and visualization less time-intensive. Current initiatives are underway across GoL ministries – some with UNICEF support – to strengthen existing systems, or commission new platforms, to meet this need. These initiatives are further detailed in the following section on “Ecosystem Opportunities.”

Ecosystem Opportunities

I. INTRODUCTION

During the data collection for this diagnostic report, a series of initiatives relevant to the data for children ecosystem were documented. In what follows, overviews of these initiatives, and potential ways in which these respond to data for children demand, supply, or use needs, are detailed. More specific recommendations regarding potential UNICEF involvement are provided in the accompanying Strategic Action Plan.

II. CROSS-CUTTING INITIATIVES

As outlined below, the UNDP Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development Project, UNICEF Data for Children project, and ongoing GoL information system-related initiatives are poised to address prominent needs identified across demand, supply, and use.

A. UNDP LESOTHO DATA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

As mentioned above, the UNDP Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development (“Lesotho Data”) project aims to catalyze data analysis capacity, awareness, and use across the National Statistical System and National M&E System. GoL interviewees frequently cited the program needs assessment, when asked about data use challenges – indicating both the perceived legitimacy of the assessment’s findings, and openness in the GoL to constructive feedback regarding areas of improvement.

Based on UNICEF’s custodial role for child-relevant SDG indicators; current CP priorities; GoL interest in strengthening data-driven decision-making; needs identified in this and other research; and the existing levels of interest and momentum of the Data for Sustainable Development Program, **UNICEF should consider engaging with the national platform for coordination and decision-making begun by the Lesotho Data project.** As identified in the July 2018 project debrief, the platform is not yet fully functional, due to limited stakeholder engagement. UNICEF would be well-placed to work with UNDP, GoL, and the broader UNCT team to realize and sustain this national platform.

All GoL interviewees expressed interest in the administrative data use training being provided to the Ministry of Energy, Forestry, Trade, Gender, and Bureau of Statistics as a part of the program.⁷² Building upon this the momentum of the Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development project, UNDP have proposed that UNICEF provide results based management (RBM) trainings to GoL at national and sub-national levels. UNICEF government partners not included in the UNDP cadre have also expressed interest in RBM trainings. However, the July 2018 debrief notes that the initial cadre of trained GoL staff have not yet applied their training-of-trainers capacities. As a result, there is a risk that the capacities and momentum will be lost. We recommend **UNICEF refrain from providing RBM training support to GoL under this initiative, until the root cause of this bottleneck can be identified.**

In addition, the Lesotho Data Project also involved training and deploying Assistant Statisticians across line agencies, to support the NSDP II and SDG monitoring and reporting process. However, there is a risk that GoL may not be able to absorb these staff at the conclusion of the Lesotho Data Project. Given the current weak institutional arrangements of M&E/Statistical Units, and the identified need for these units in order to support the data for children ecosystem, **we recommend UNICEF work with UNDP, GoL, and the broader UNCT to explore mechanisms for sustaining these data-oriented roles, particularly within UNICEF partner ministries.** Such mechanisms may include financially supporting these roles over the medium-term, and working with GoL to address bottlenecks related to formalizing M&E/Statistical Units, and addressing bottlenecks related to government hiring and human resource practices.

Finally, UNDP will engage a communications specialist for the latter half of the program, to support BoS in strengthening data dissemination at national and sub-national levels. Potential dissemination

⁷² Capacity strengthening will cover methods for accessing, analyzing, and using administrative data for NSS priorities.

methods that will be explored include incorporation of radio broadcasts, various types of community-level dissemination methods, and more tailored information products.

Based on UNICEF's district-level Child Indicators Project, **UNICEF should consider trialing new BoS/UNDP data dissemination products in communities of operation.** This would be an opportunity to gather and provide feedback to BoS on the products' feedback on fitness-for-purpose, leveraging existing programmatic investment. UNICEF should also consider adapting dissemination methods found to be successful for its own programming.

B. UNICEF DATA FOR CHILDREN PROJECT

In partnership with the MoLGCA and Limkokwing University, UNICEF Lesotho are implementing a Decentralizing Access to Child Development Indicators ("UNICEF Child Indicators") project. This project aims to provide district and community leaders with access to reports, data visualizations, and graphics showing needs and progress related to child development priorities. The project will leverage existing GoL information platforms – bridging the national to sub-national data quality and access divide – and raise awareness amongst and capacitate local decision-makers about how to understand and apply data for policy purposes.

C. NEW GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

MoH recently launched the Lesotho HIV and Health Situation Room, with support from UNAIDS. The Situation Room pulls real-time service delivery data from DHIS2. It aims to help track progress and gaps in HIV, tuberculosis, and maternal health programming.⁷³ The platform does not capture new data; rather it pulls existing data from information systems, and displays via intuitive charts and graphics. MoH will make the Situation Room available to relevant development partners, and is considering creating publicly accessible visualizations.

In addition, the MoET is in the process of implementing a new education information management system, OpenEMIS. This new system offers an opportunity for more real-time data, accessible in more useful digital formats, such as automated charts and graphics. UNICEF is supporting the rollout of the OpenEMIS, with the medium-term goal of moving from tracking school facility data, to individual learner performance. This work is beginning with a 2018 pilot in one hundred low-performance schools, leveraging an existing World Bank project.

UNICEF should leverage the newness of the Lesotho HIV and Health Situation Room and forthcoming OpenEMIS to **advocate the GoL to make the systems' data visualization tools available to the public.** Both the Situation Room and OpenEMIS reportedly have functionalities that would allow for limited public access – access that would not violate ethical considerations related to individual data privacy.

Additionally, many interviewees opined that current GoL data dissemination methods were not effective in communicating timely information to target audiences. These dissemination methods are hindered in part by poor data management practices, and the lack of a framework for requesting and sharing information. We recommend **UNICEF engage with the European Union, BoS, and UNCT to identify**

⁷³ See http://ls.one.un.org/content/unct/lesotho/en/home/presscenter2/news0/Launch_of_HIV_and_Health_Situation_Room_in_Lesotho.html.

potential opportunities to “speed up” the development of an NSS microdata sharing policy, that facilitates access to key GoL datasets while addressing ethical and privacy good practices.

We also recommend **UNICEF explore facilitating the creation of a national data management policy and FOI Law** with the EU, UNCT, BoS, and other relevant GoL actors. A data management policy would help clarify procedures and expectations within all government ministries and departments for the management of data; such a policy could also include considerations regarding quality assurance, anonymization, and data storage formats. The passage of an FOI Law would add “teeth” to microdata and data management policies. Passing a law may also help avoid some of the accountability and enforcement challenges faced by BoS when seeking to coordinate the NSS.⁷⁴

The MoJCS is in the process of implementing a case management system, supported by the World Bank. This system would involve all ministries in the criminal justice system, including MoJCS, the courts, and law enforcement; and would include information on both children and adults. MoH is also considering adopting electronic medical records in the medium to long-term. MoH are currently piloting e-registries in a few locations in order to better track individual patient care, particularly for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and maternal and child health. If successful, MoH aim to scale up this new approach. Both initiatives are in early stages, so **UNICEF should evaluate potential engagement based on initial progress**.

⁷⁴ (UNDP Lesotho, November 2017); (UNDP Lesotho, 10 July 2018)

III. NEED-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

The emerging data sources, as well as the nascent GoL information system-sharing initiative, may address needs related to data demand, supply, or use.

A. INNOVATIVE DATA SOURCES

1. Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey to Fill Data for Children Gaps

UNICEF Lesotho, in partnership with BoS, is supporting a nation-wide Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2018. UNICEF CO interviewees in particular expressed keen interest in the MICS results, relevant for filling data gaps demanded for UNICEF's work (especially in WASH, nutrition, IECCD). It was also cited as a data source that can address timeliness needs, in between LDHS processes.

2. GIS and Satellite for Greater Sub-National Data Accuracy

As a consequence of Lesotho's mountainous terrain, relatively high levels of resources are needed to collect data. Greater use of satellite information could represent a more high-quality, cost-effective data collection method, addressing data supply needs.

Currently, several GoL agencies use GIS tools to map facility location for planning purposes. For example, MoET maps school facilities to identify gaps in access and BoS maps enumeration areas for national surveys. This is particularly useful, as Lesotho's mountainous terrain make in-person data collection time- and resource-intensive; planning data collection enumeration areas supports resource efficiency.

Some development partners, like FAO, via the National Land Cover Database, are supporting GoL satellite data usage; other development partners are using satellite data to more precisely identify population numbers and locations for targeting. **Expanding capacities for analyzing GIS and satellite data to UNICEF partner ministries could help produce more accurate data and analysis, particularly of sub-national populations – addressing a key data supply need.**

3. Telecommunications Partnership for Evidence Generation and Dissemination

UNRC is partnering with Vodacom and local universities to conduct SMS surveys regarding perceptions of the UN in Lesotho. While nascent, this partnership could provide a basis for future partnership between UNICEF and Vodacom to collect timely perceptual data from adolescents, or to raise awareness about available data and information amongst youth populations.

4. Tablets and Mobile for Digital Data Collection

Several GoL interviewees cited mobile data collection tools as particularly relevant to supporting data timeliness and completeness. Ongoing initiatives to expand digital data collection – including OpenEMIS and the new social protection information management system – are evidence of GoL's commitment to digitizing data collection and management. The use of tablets and mobile also offer as opportunity for mobile-based data visualization and communication methods, potentially leveraging the same data collection devices. Expanding the use of tablets and other mobile collection methods could support the demand for more timely data.

B. CONNECTING NATIONAL IDENTITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE DATA SYSTEMS

The MoHA is in initial stages of developing an interface between the National Identity and Civil Registration database and other GoL ministry information systems. In particular, MoHA would prioritize those agencies responsible for child programming and with existing information systems, such as MoET and MoSD. MoHA and MoSD are also exploring opportunities for subnational joint data collection for registration in NICR and NISSA.

UNICEF should encourage linkages between NICR and administrative data systems. While still in conceptual stages, such an interface would offer a significant opportunity to strengthen systems interoperability; improve administrative data quality; and set the groundwork for a more real-time understanding of child outcome and service delivery trends. **Supporting MoHA/MoSD joint data collection would be in line with UNICEF's goals.** Doing so would help address the issue of un-registered children, strengthening data quality; and strengthen NISSA data quality by matching enrollees with national identification numbers.

Conclusion

I. THE CURRENT DATA FOR CHILDREN LANDSCAPE

The Lesotho data for children ecosystem encompasses the demand, supply, and use of data to inform planning and decision-making. Currently, data are most demanded by GoL actors for planning purposes. The extent to which data are used to monitor and adapt programming varies across actors, in response to issues of accountability and mandates; technical and human capacities; and access and dissemination. These issues cut across demand, supply, and use – and as such, call for holistic approaches to system strengthening.

A potential response to these issues – where UNICEF may be best-placed to spearhead new initiatives, or work with other partners to begin new or support existing programming – will be explored in the accompanying Action Plan.

II. AREAS FOR STRATEGIC SUPPORT

UNICEF is strategically placed to help address challenges related to data demand, supply, and use through continued advocacy; targeted capacity strengthening; and evidence generation. Efforts to strengthen data use should focus on institutionalizing and enhancing foundational systems, processes, and staff capacities needed to manage, analyze, and disseminate information.

At the national level, UNICEF advocacy could center on why accessible data are essential for inclusive development for children. These same points of advocacy are likely shared across the UNCT, and with other development partners.

Capacity strengthening at the national and sub-national levels could include curriculum on data literacy and application of data in one's staff function. Throughout, UNICEF evidence products will likely remain valuable resources for spurring policy action and underscoring accessibility and utilization gaps. UNICEF should also continue to engage in local and regional child advocacy networks, to strengthen ties with potential data producers, users, and communicators in CSOs and academia.

In the accompanying Action Plan, specific recommendations and timeframes for strengthening data for children demand, supply, and use will be further elaborated.

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Annexes

ANNEX I: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

| Staff Name | Title | Agency | Date |
|--------------------------|--|---|------|
| Ms. Asel Abdurahmanova | Coordination Specialist | Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator | 5/10 |
| Ms. Rebecca Dawson | Youth and Gender Officer | Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator | 5/10 |
| Ms. Cassy Harvey | Women and Youth Mainstreaming Officer | Food and Agriculture Organization | 5/10 |
| Mr. Hotso Mathafeng | GIS Specialist | Food and Agriculture Organization | 5/10 |
| Dr. Anthony "Tony" Asije | Child Survival and Development Specialist, Chief of Health Section | UNICEF Health | 5/10 |
| Ms. Maria Vivas Alicea | HIV & AIDS Specialist | UNICEF Health | 5/10 |
| Ms. Lineo Mathule | Health and Nutrition Specialist | UNICEF Health | 5/10 |
| Ms. Blandinah Motaung | Health Officer | UNICEF Health | 5/10 |
| Mr. Makhetha Moshabesha | Youth and Adolescent Development Officer | UNICEF Health | 5/10 |
| Mr. Moeti Makoa | Health Officer | UNICEF Health | 5/10 |
| Ms. Trine Petersen | Chief of Education Section | UNICEF Education | 5/14 |
| Ms. Lipotso Musi | Child Protection Officer | UNICEF Child Protection | 5/14 |
| Mr. Paseka Mohanoe | Manager, Civil Registry and National Identity | Ministry of Home Affairs | 5/15 |
| Mr. Tumelo Raboetsi | Director, Civil Registry and National Identity | Ministry of Home Affairs | 5/15 |
| Mr. Hlaoli Ramahapu | Economic Planner | Ministry of Education and Training | 5/15 |
| Mr. Sebothama Moshoeshoe | Senior Economic Planner | Ministry of Development Planning | 5/15 |
| Ms. Thembile Makbesi | Planning Officer | Ministry of Social Development | 5/15 |
| Mr. Makatleho Mokholokoe | Monitoring and Evaluation Officer | Ministry of Social Development | 5/15 |
| Mr. Moses Lehloma | Probation Unit Officer | Ministry of Justice and Correctional Service | 5/15 |
| Mr. Seoaholimo Phorisi | Monitoring and Evaluation Unit Officer | Ministry of Justice and Correctional Service | 5/15 |

| Staff Name | Title | Agency | Date |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Ms. Tsoamathe Maseribane | Programme Manager, Lesotho Data for Sustainable Development | United Nations Development Programme | 5/16 |
| Ms. 'Malehloa Molato | Director | Bureau of Statistics | 5/16 |
| Mr. Tšiu Litšiba | Head of Survey Methodology and Cartography Division | Bureau of Statistics | 5/16 |
| Mr. Mothakathi Phapano | ICT Assistant | UNICEF ICT | 5/16 |
| Mr. Rodrigo Andres Chamba | Social Protection Officer | UNICEF Social Policy | 5/17 |
| Mr. Liau Motoko | Programme Manager, Decentralization | UNICEF Social Policy | 5/17 |
| Ms. Mookho Thaane | Social Policy Officer | UNICEF Social Policy | 5/17 |
| Mr. Godfrey Kyama | NISSA Specialist | UNICEF Social Policy | 5/17 |
| Mr. Mokete Khabotle | M&E Specialist | UNICEF Social Policy | 5/17 |
| Ms. Monaheng Nkaiseng | Senior Statistician | Ministry of Health | 5/17 |
| Mr. Makheta | M&E Officer | Ministry of Health | 5/17 |
| Ms. Monehela Tau | MEAL Officer | Catholic Relief Services | 5/17 |
| Mr. Samuel Rapapa | Chairperson of the Economic Cluster | National Assembly | 5/18 |

ANNEX II: KEY PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND PRIORITIES

| Document | Purpose | Time Frame | Developed By | Articulated Priorities |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| National Vision 2020 | Long-term planning | 15 years | GoL National Steering Committee | Seven pillars of national development: democracy, unity, peace, education and training, economic growth, management of the environment, and advancement in technology. Three factors “pivotal” to Lesotho’s development: political commitment, foreign direct investment, and public sector management |
| National Strategic Development Plan | Medium-term planning | 5 years | GoL Ministry of Development Planning | Key goals of NSDP I include: (i) pursue high, shared and employment creating economic growth; (ii) develop key infrastructure; (iii) enhance the skills base, technology adoption and foundation for innovation; (iv) improve health, combat HIV and AIDS and reduce vulnerability; (v) reverse environmental degradation and adapt to climate change; and (vi) promote peace, democratic governance and build effective institutions. |
| Sectoral Strategies | Medium-term planning | Varies; 5-10 years | GoL Ministries | Varies; based on NSDP. |
| United Nations Development Assistance Framework | Medium-term planning | 5 years | UN Country Team | UNDAF 2019-2023 pillars of focus include: (i) accountable governance, effective institutions, social cohesion and inclusion; (ii) sustainable human capital development; and (iii) sustainable and inclusive economic growth for poverty reduction. |
| UNICEF Country Programme | Medium-term planning | 5 years | UNICEF Country Office | CP 2019-2023 prioritizes interventions and advocacy across the first and second decade, in social policy, child protection, health and nutrition, WASH, and public financial management (see Table 3). |
| Budget Strategy Paper | Short-term planning | 2 years | GoL Ministry of Finance | BSP 2018/19-2020/21 includes policy targets of economic growth; employment; food security; HIV prevention and treatment; and governance and stability. |
| Annual Operational Plan | Annual planning | 1 year | GoL Line Ministries | Varies; based on NSDP, Sectoral Strategies, and national budget. |
| Annual Workplan | Annual planning | 1 year | UNICEF Country Office Sections | Varies; based on UNDAF, CP, and resources. |

ANNEX III: RELEVANT DATA ACTORS

Relevant data actors for the achievement of the UNICEF Lesotho CP 2019-2023 include the following.

GoL agencies, departments, and bodies, including:

- Bureau of Statistics
- Cabinet
- Lesotho Parliament
- Local Government
- Magistrate Courts
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
- Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology
- Ministry of Development Planning
- Ministry of Education and Training
- Ministry of Energy and Meteorology
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Home Affairs
- Ministry of Labour and Employment
- Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs
- Ministry of Police and Public Safety
- Ministry of Small Business, Cooperatives, and Marketing
- Ministry of Social Development

United Nations Agencies and other development partners, including:

- United Nations Development Programme
- UNAIDS
- UNESCO
- World Food Programme
- World Health Organization
- Food and Agriculture Organization
- United Nations Population Fund
- World Bank
- GAVI
- USAID
- PEPFAR
- IOM
- UNRC
- European Union

Civil society organizations (CSOs), including:

- Catholic Relief Services
- Help Lesotho
- Lesotho Network of AIDS Service Organizations
- Lesotho Red Cross
- Partners in Health
- Sentebale
- World Vision

And child-relevant networks, including:

- Local Education Group
- National Orphans and Vulnerable Children Coordination Committee
- Child Rights Network for South Africa
- Justice for Children Network
- Community Child Protection Committees / District Child Protection Team

ANNEX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDES

A. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INTERNAL UNICEF

Interviewee organization:

Interviewee name and business title:

Date:

Time:

INTERVIEWER: We know your time is valuable, so thank you for agreeing to meet with us. We're conducting these interviews in order to get a better understanding of the decision-making and data use processes within UNICEF. Could you begin by describing your role within your organization?

1. Decision Making Processes (15 Minutes)

List 2-3 examples of the most important decisions/advocacy goals you make/influence?

For example, regarding the planning and program design, resource allocation, program implementation, or advocacy/policy objectives of your team?

| Decision | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Fit into CO Priority/ Objective | Frequency | Process | Data Used | Data from where (internal/ external) | Combine data from multiple sources? challenging? |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

1. Decision 1:
 - a. How does this fit into country office priority/objective?
 - b. Frequency of decision?
 - c. Decision-making process?
 - d. What data are used in this process?
 - e. Where did you find these data? Internal or external systems?
 - f. Did you need to combine multiple sources of data? If yes, was this challenging?
2. What other non-UNICEF organizations are involved in this process?
3. What was the conclusion? Can you walk us through how you and your team come to these decisions?
4. At what stage of the [decision-making process] process do you find that this data is most used/influential? What stages is it least useful?
 - a. How important was data in the decision-making process?

5. Was there anything else that played a big role in this process?

[IF THERE IS A NEED TO GET A CLEARER PICTURE OF DATA IN DECISIONS, ASK SOME OF THE QUESTIONS FROM ABOVE, BUT USING A DIFFERENT EXAMPLE PROVIDED IN QUESTION I.1]

2. Smart Demand and Use (20 Minutes)

1. Which UNICEF data collection activities do your team/office currently use or wish to use?
 - a. [PROMPT] For example, mobile surveys
 - b. How are these data used by UNICEF in its strategy, programming, or advocacy processes? OR how could they be used?
 - i. If you are not currently using the data, why not?
 - c. Are these data made available to government and other stakeholders?
 - i. If yes, to who? how are these data used by these stakeholders?
 - d. Approximately how much funding is used to collect these data?
2. Which official statistical data or household survey data do your team/office use or wish to use?
 - a. [PROMPT] E.g. Census, agricultural census, etc.
 - b. How are these data used by UNICEF in its strategy, programming, or advocacy processes? OR how could they be used?
 - i. If you are not currently using the data, why not?
 - c. How are these data used by government or other stakeholders?
 - d. Does UNICEF provide funding for the collection of these data?
 - e. Approximately how much UNICEF funding is used to support the collection of these data?
3. Which government administrative data systems do your team currently use or wish to use?
 - a. [PROMPT] HMIS, EMIS, etc.
 - b. How are these data used by UNICEF in its strategy, programming, or advocacy processes? OR how could they be used?
 - i. If you are not currently using the data, why not?
 - c. How are these data used by government or other stakeholders?
 - d. Does UNICEF provide funding for the collection of these data?
 - e. Approximately how much UNICEF funding is used to support the collection of these data?
4. What are the priority [unmet] needs for the various data stakeholders that you have encountered?
5. If you could have access to any set of data to drive your work, what would it be?

3. Data Supply: Fit-for-Purpose Data (15 Minutes)

1. What kinds of data typically inform your work? What kinds of reports do you typically request of your staff, for your consumption, or the consumptions of others? [if confused, acknowledge that we understand there are many different “kinds” of data, but ask what comes to their mind generally]

| | Data Type | Analysis type | Frequency of access |
|----|-----------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |

2. How do you determine which data source to use? Why do you use these particular sources?
 - a. Do you consult with anyone about what source(s) to use? If so, whom?
 - i. Are you part of any community or network that you can rely on in this process? If no, why not? And what type of network would you find most useful?
 - b. Let's consider the specific data types listed above, how do you evaluate the quality of the data sources?
 - i. Have you ever encountered (or are you currently encountering) any barriers that prevented you to assess the quality of the data? What were these barriers and how have you overcome them (if at all)?
3. Can you recall an instance where you asked for particular information and were told it was not possible to provide you with it? Can you describe that instance? What was the reason the information to be unavailable?
 - a. [PROMPT] Was this due to data availability?
 - b. [PROMPT] Was this due to staff skills?
 - c. [PROMPT] Was this due to availability of tools/technology for analysis?
4. Which government administrative systems currently exchange data?
 - a. What are key integrations or interoperability improvements you wish to see?
5. Where are areas of particular strength in existing government data systems?
 - a. Administrative data
 - b. Official statistics
6. Where are areas of particular weakness in existing government data systems?
 - a. Administrative data
 - b. Official statistics
7. On a scale of 0-10, zero being not at all and 10 being completely, how well are the data and evidence your team currently uses meeting your needs? Why or why not?
 - a. About internal UNICEF decisions and resource allocation choices
 - b. About the performance and/or results of programs/policies
 - c. GET EXAMPLES

4. Smart Demand and Use: Gaps and Frontiers (10 Minutes)

1. Can you recall an instance where you felt that you could have been able to make a more informed decision had you had better data?
2. Which innovative data tools have you observed in recent years?
 - a. What have been their strengths and weaknesses?
 - b. Who has used these tools?
 - c. How have they been used?
3. What non-traditional data sources do you feel hold promise for filling data gaps in [your country]? Why?
 - a. Satellite/geospatial
 - b. Big data (examples)
 - c. Social media
 - d. Other (ask for examples)
4. Which data formats are you most comfortable using? [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY] Why or why not?
 - a. Excel
 - b. Geospatial
 - c. Database (e.g., Access)
 - d. Data visualizations (e.g., dashboards)
 - e. Other (examples)
5. Which of the mechanisms listed below are most needed for your team [and non-UNICEF stakeholders that you work with] to more effectively use data? Please give examples for each [e.g. “training on geospatial data collection,” rather than simply “training on data”]
 - a. Trainings [PROMPT FOR SPECIFICS]?
 - b. Tools [PROMPT FOR SPECIFICS]?
 - c. Data access [PROMPT FOR SPECIFICS]?
 - d. Time availability for analysis?
 - i. If time is a limiting factor, what would you do with more time?
 - ii. Is there a particular piece of the data use process that is taking up a lot of time that could be more efficient?
 - e. None. We use sufficient amount of data

5. Wrap-Up

1. Do you have any additional comments or topics you feel that we have missed?
2. Are there other people you think we should interview?
3. [INTERVIEWER NOTE: Start tracking/making note of who asked for follow-up information/reporting]

B. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GOVERNMENT PARTNERS / DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Interviewee organization:

Interviewee name and business title:

Date:

Time:

INTERVIEWER: We know your time is valuable, so thank you for agreeing to meet with us. We're conducting these interviews in order to get a better understanding of the decision-making and data use processes for data for children. The interview should take around one hour.

1. Smart Demand: Decision Making Processes (15 Minutes)

Please explain your agency (brief introduction of functions and tasks), your role at your agency and how you are engaged (planning / implementation / monitoring / evaluation) with policy for children?

Please list 2-3 examples of the most important program decisions that you make/influence in your role in relation to children and/or UNICEF?

- For example, regarding the planning and program design, resource allocation, program implementation, or advocacy/policy objectives of your team?

| Decision | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Fit into CO Priority/ Objective | Frequency | Process | Data Used | Data from where (internal/ external) | Combine data from multiple sources? challenging? |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

1. Decision 1:
 - a. Please explain this decision process
 - b. Frequency of decision?
 - c. Do you use data in this process? What data are used in this process?
 - i. Where did you find these data? Administrative or statistics?
 - ii. Did you need to combine multiple sources of data? If yes, was this challenging?
 - d. What organizations are involved in this process?
 - e. At what stage of the [decision-making process] process do you find that this data is most used/influential? What stages is it least useful?
 - i. How important was data in the decision-making process?
 - f. Was there anything else that played a big role in this process?

2. Data Supply: Fit-for-Purpose Data

1. What kinds of data typically inform your work around children? What kinds of reports do you typically use or are requested to create?
2. How do you determine which data source to use? Why do you use these particular sources? Do you consult with anyone about what source(s) to use? If so, whom?
 - a. Are you part of any community or network that you can rely on in this process? And what type of network would you find most useful?
3. How do you assess the quality of the data?
4. Have you ever encountered (or are you currently encountering) any barriers that prevented you to assess the quality of the data? What were these barriers and how have you overcome them (if at all)?
5. On a scale of 0-10, zero being not at all and 10 being completely, how well are the data and evidence your team currently uses meeting your needs? Why or why not?
 - a. About decisions and resource allocation choices?
 - b. About the performance and/or results of programs/policies?

3. Smart Demand and Use: Gaps and Frontiers

1. Can you recall an instance where you felt that you could have been able to make a more informed decision had you had better data?
2. Can you recall an instance where you asked for particular information and were told it was not possible to provide you with it? Can you describe that instance? What was the reason the information to be unavailable?
 - a. [PROMPT] Was this due to data availability?
 - b. [PROMPT] Was this due to staff skills?
 - c. [PROMPT] Was this due to availability of tools/technology for analysis?
3. Which innovative data tools have you observed in recent years? Please list them.
 - a. What have been their strengths and weaknesses?
 - b. Who has used these tools?
 - c. How have they been used?

4. Do any of the following non-traditional data sources do you feel hold promise for filling data gaps in Lesotho? Why?
 - a. Satellite/geospatial
 - b. Social media
 - c. Big data (ask for examples)
 - d. Other (ask for examples)

5. Which the following data formats are you most comfortable using? [CHECK ALL THAT APPLY]
Why or why not?
 - a. Excel
 - b. Geospatial
 - c. Database (e.g. Access)
 - d. Data visualizations (e.g. Dashboard)
 - e. Other (give examples)

6. Which of the mechanisms listed below are most needed for your team to more effectively use data? Please give examples for each [e.g. “training on geospatial data collection,” rather than simply “training on data”]
 - a. Trainings?
 - b. Tools?
 - c. Data access
 - d. Time availability for analysis?
 - i. If time is a limiting factor, what would you do with more time?
 - ii. Is there a particular piece of the data use process that is taking up a lot of time that could be more efficient?
 - e. None. We use sufficient amount of data for all of our processes

4. Data Supply and Smart Demand: Country Data Systems and UNICEF Investments (20 Minutes)

1. Which data collection activities do your team/office currently use or wish to use regarding data for children? For example, mobile surveys, administrative data.
 - a. How are these data used by your office? OR how could they be used?
 - i. If you are not currently using the data, why not?
 - b. How are these data stored? Where do they go?
 - c. [As appropriate] Approximately how much funding is used to collect these data?

2. Which statistical data or survey data do your team/office use or wish to use?
 - a. [PROMPT] E.g. Census, agricultural census, etc.
 - b. How are these data used by your organization? OR how could they be used? If you are not currently using the data, why not?
 - c. How are these data used by government or other stakeholders?

3. Which government administrative data systems do your team currently use or wish to use?
 - a. [PROMPT] Does your Ministry/Department have its own data system or do you access data systems of any other line ministries?
 - b. How are these data used? OR how could they be used?
4. Do you receive or exchange data with any other organization or government agency?
5. Where are areas of particular weakness in existing government data systems Ministry/Department systems and Official Statistics?
6. If you could have access to any set of data to drive your work, what would it be?

Thank you for your cooperation!