**UNICEF “Data for Children Strategy”**

Country Consultation - April 2016 - Nairobi, Kenya.

**Data for Children in Brazil: using big mobility data to promote equitable children’s rights**

**Introduction**

UNICEF we partne with the Brazilian government to use data and evidence to monitor and promote children’s rights across the country, at Federal, state and municipal levels. Brazil has high standard information systems, and strong research institutions that collect and analyse data, making high qualityation and knowledge publicly available at regular intervals.

UNICEF Brazil is well positioned in this context, as a credible partner in the use of official data for innovative analyses. past five years, UNICEF BCO has produced situation analyses focused on adolescents’ rights, out of school children and the impacts of gender and race on violence against children and adolescents. All these analyses use official data, but provide specific data treatments that offer new knowledge, focusing on age groups and other factors that impact the realization of children and adolescents’ rights, such as gender and race.

In addition to these traditional data collection and analysis efforts, UNICEF Brazil is also investing in other kinds of ground breaking data research, such as using big data from telecoms to understand how mobility may affect different aspects of children’s and adolescent’s lives.

**Working with big mobility data**

At the end of 2015, Brazil started to report a major situation in the country: the epidemic of Zika virus, disseminated by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, and its health consequences including the increase in the number of cases of microcephaly. Responding to a formal request by the Ministry of Health, UNICEF Brazil started to consider options to support the country in its efforts to control the vector, particularly with prevention methodologies at community level. We partnered with UNICEF Innovation Unit, to design a research proposal, based on big data to estimate how mobility influences risk areas and the possible spread of diseases related to *Aedes aegypti*.

We are working with national telecom partner *Telefónica*, who will be providing maps indicating how mobile phone users move across different areas within and between major municipalities. This data, overlapped with other geo-referenced data such as weather conditions, basic sanitation, levels of mosquito infestation and transport networks, will allow for a comprehensive mapping of higher risk areas for contamination and spread of diseases. This exercise will be applied at national level, and can be expanded to regional level, considering *Telefónica’s* reach across Latin America.

The first batch of results will be available in April, 2016.

This mapping research will be an important support to the Brazilian efforts to combat the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito and the Zika epidemic. However, our strategic vision is that it can be used for much more.

**A bigger plan**

While the Zika epidemic is an important entry point to mobilize our partners to provide and use mobility data in an innovative way, the data sets generated in the context of this research can have a much higher potential use in the promotion of children’s rights. UNICEF Brazil is increasingly strengthening its equity approach, with a strong focus on identifying and finding excluded children and adolescents, who still haven’t benefitted from the country’s universal social policies that have contributed to advancements in so many areas of rights.

In this context, the possibilities to use mobility maps are endless, and can be applied to several themes. Examples include:

* Estimating how much time children take to reach schools (thus allowing for an understanding of one of the key bottlenecks to school inclusion: mobility challenges);
* Understanding how migrations affect the lives of children and adolescents across the country;
* Estimating how children and adolescents move in the context of great infrastructure works and big events, such as the upcoming Olympic games, and how this relates to possible increases in the cases of violence and other violations;
* Understanding how natural events and climate change affect the wellbeing of children and adolescents;
* Mapping access to public services within municipalities and states.

Over the next five years (2017-2021), UNICEF will be implementing its new equity-focused Country Programme, where the generation of knowledge and evidence area a strong area of focus. Working with big mobility data will be a key step in introducing innovations to reach the excluded children, to inform decision-makers and managers, as well as to strengthen our programme in the most vulnerable areas of the country.