

**ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES FACING IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVICE
DELIVERY STRATEGIES AMONG UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES**

A CASE OF UNICEF - KENYA

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**A Research Project Submitted to the School of Business in Partial Fulfillment for the
Award of the Degree of Master of Business Administration of Kenyatta University**

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DECLARATION

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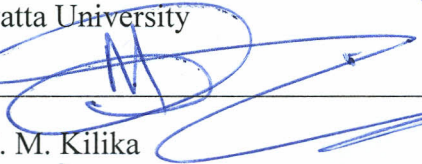
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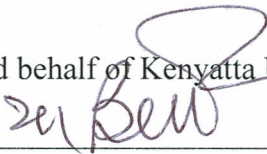
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to Mr. Bellete Anbessie, Mr. Lemma G. Giorgis, Ms. Mesgana Lemma, Ms. Adey Lemma, and Mr. Kidus Lemma for their advices, financial, and spiritual support they offered me throughout the study process.

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ABBREVIATIONAND ACRONYMS

CCI	Charitable Children Institution
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diversity
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ERS	Economic Recovery Strategy
EMRS	Emergency Medical Response Systems
ESA	Ethno-specific Agency
FGM/C.	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
HIS	Health Information Systems
HPC	Humanitarian Procurement Center
HRM	Human Resource Management
IT	Information Technology
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
KEPSA	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
LD	Logistic department
LMIC	Low and Middle-Income Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OI	Oral Interview
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SME	Small/Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNPF	United Nations Population Fund

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Goals:	General guidelines that explain what is to be achieved
Management	The organization and coordination of activities of an enterprise in accordance with certain policies and in achievement of defined objectives.
Strategy	The means by which objectives are consciously pursued and obtained over time.
Strategic Planning	Systematic process of envisioning a desired future, and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives
Strategic Management	The systematic analysis of the factors associated with customers and competitors (the external environment) and the organization itself (the internal environment) to provide the basis for maintaining optimum management practices.
Logistics	Is the management of the flow of operation between the point of origin and the point of destination in order to meet the requirements of customers or corporations.

ABSTRACT

This project focused on key issues regarding the implementation of service delivery strategies in UNICEF Kenya. A number of service delivery implementation problems were identified in the project, which entailed financial constraints, logistical factors, human resources, political, socio cultural and technological trends, as well as poor collaboration with other organizations. The purpose of the project was to clarify challenges of implementation of strategies and to identify key variables for implementation. This study employed descriptive survey design on UNICEF Kenya where primary information was obtained from a target population of top and middle management that adds up to 34 individuals. For the study to be successful, both secondary (Journals, websites, magazines, and periodicals) and primary data collection (questionnaire, and interview) approaches were utilized to enable sound gathering of the required information and to save time for analysis. The field data was analyzed through descriptive statistics and presented in the term of tables.

The study found that all the six factors in the conceptual framework influence implementation of service delivery strategies in UNICEF. This study concluded that challenges facing implementation of service delivery strategies arise from shortage of financial resources; influence of logistical issues; qualified human resources; level of collaboration within UN Agencies, Government counterparts, NGOs, and International Organization; political challenges; and socio-cultural and technological advancement. The study recommended that top management's function should not only create conditions for service delivery strategy plan, but also continuously monitor the implementation process so as to ensure harmony among the influencing factors.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Although formulating a consistent strategy is a difficult task for any management team, making that strategy work – implementing it throughout the organization – is even more difficult (Hrebiniak, 2006). A myriad of factors can potentially affect the process by which strategic plans are turned into organizational action. Unlike strategy formulation, strategy implementation is often seen as something of a craft, rather than a science, and its research history has previously been described as fragmented and eclectic (Noble, 1999b). It is thus not surprising that, after a comprehensive strategy or single strategic decision has been formulated, significant difficulties usually arise during the subsequent implementation process. The best-formulated strategies may fail to produce superior performance for the firm if they are not successfully implemented, as Noble (1999b) notes.

Results from several surveys have confirmed this view: An Economist survey found that a discouraging 57 percent of firms were unsuccessful at executing strategic initiatives over the past three years, according to a survey of 276 senior operating executives in 2004 (Allio, 2005). According to the White Paper of Strategy Implementation of Chinese Corporations in 2006, strategy implementation has become “the most significant management challenge which all kinds of corporations face at the moment.” The survey reported in that white paper indicates that 83 percent of the surveyed companies failed to implement their strategy smoothly, and only 17% felt that they had a consistent strategy implementation process.

It is, thus, obvious that strategy implementation is a key challenge for today’s organizations. Several (soft, hard, and mixed) factors exist that influence the success of strategy implementation, ranging from the people who communicate or implement the strategy to the systems or mechanisms in place for co-ordination and control. There is little controversy

regarding the labeling of the strategy implementation topic in the sixty articles that we have reviewed. Sashittal & Wilemon (1996) have pointed out that some terms synonymous with “implementation,” such as “execution,” and “actualization of goals” are often employed in the management literature, but are not frequently used by managers themselves. Hrebiniak (2006) notes, for example, “Formulating strategy is difficult. Making strategy work – executing or implementing it throughout the organization – is even more difficult.” Thompson & Strickland (2003) have stressed that the strategy-implementing / strategy-executing task is the most complicated and time-consuming part of strategic management (Schaap, 2006).

Strategy implementation focus on a process perspective and takes strategy implementation as a sequence of carefully planned consecutive steps. It treats as a series of more or less concerted (but often parallel) actions and examines these actions from a behavior perspective. Some authors combine the process perspective and behavior or action perspective and form a third approach, which we label as a hybrid perspective.

Implementation is the process that turns plans into action assignments and ensures that such assignments are executed in a manner that accomplishes the plan’s stated objectives. Kotler (1984) cited in Noble (1999b). Implementation was found to be a highly complex and interactive process with many variables impinging upon it – more of a spring than a simple cascade. Strategy implementation may be viewed as a process inducing various forms of organizational learning, because both environmental threats and strategic responses are a prime trigger for organizational learning processes (Lehner, 2004). Implementation is a process that takes longer than formulation (Hrebiniak, 2006). Strategy implementation is an iterative process of implementing strategies, policies, programs, and action plans that allows a firm to utilize its resources to take advantage of opportunities in the competitive environment (Harrington, 2006).

Strategy implementation is a series of decisions and resultant actions, which commit resources to achieving intended outcomes. Implementation is a series of interventions concerning organizational structures, key personnel actions, and control systems designed to control

performance with respect to desired ends. Hrebiniak & Joyce (1984) cited in Noble (1999b). Implementation designates the managerial interventions that align organizational action with strategic intention. Floyd & Wooldridge (1992a) cited in Noble (1999b). Implementation is the actions initiated within the organization and its relationships with external constituencies to realize the strategy. Varadarajan (1999) cited in Homburg & Krohmer & Workman (2004). Implementation is a hands-on operation and action-oriented human behavioral activity that calls for executive leadership and key managerial skills. Dekluyver & Pearce (2003) cited in Schaap (2006). Implementation is operationally defined as those senior-level leadership behaviors and activities that will transform a working plan into a concrete reality (Schaap, 2006).

Having provided various literatures with regard to strategy as well as its implementation it was important to draw connections that derive from its very existence in organizations. One of such connections identified by this study was the issue of customers and service delivery. Changes in customer expectations can be identified throughout the world. Plessis, Jooste & Strydom, 2001 state that Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategies have become increasingly important worldwide due to these changes in expectations from customers as well as changes in the nature of markets. Changes have been noted across the world. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a managerial philosophy that seeks to build long-term relationships with customers. CRM can be defined as “the development and maintenance of mutually beneficial long-term relationships with strategically significant customers” (Buttle, 2000). Under certain circumstances, it may result in the termination of relationships.

1.1.1 Service Delivery Strategies in UN Agencies

The United Nations (UN) is arguably one of the most influential organizations in the world, Kenya included. Some of the UN agencies currently operating in Kenya include; United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) among others. Towards fulfillment of their mandates, these agencies inevitably formulate specific strategies

aimed at service delivery. How the implementation of these strategies towards realization of goals, among them, service delivery, within respective agencies is carried out and any challenges that may emerge in the process needs to be established.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to UN (2005) profile, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the driving force that helps build a world where the rights of every child are realized. It has the global authority to influence decision-makers, and the variety of partners at grassroots level to turn the most innovative ideas into reality. Nevertheless, the Organization in their endeavor to deliver services, it was faced with a number of challenges, which needed to be addressed first, for the organization to achieve its goals and objectives. Challenges were most influential factors and approaches of solving them needed to be part of the UNICEF penetration strategy in service delivery. UNICEF advocates for measures to give children the best start in life, because the organization believes that proper care at the youngest age forms the strongest foundation for a person's future, but the direct and indirect obstacles derailed their efforts. UNICEF was created with this purpose in mind – to work with others to overcome the obstacles that poverty, violence, disease and discrimination place in a child's path and it believes that it can, together, advance the cause of humanity. Implementation of service delivery by the organization involved everyone in creating protective environments for children since the strategies are based on how well they are enforced. It is present to relieve suffering during emergencies, and wherever children are threatened, because no child should be exposed to violence, abuse, or exploitation. All these objectives will only be achieved with proper coordination of services and collaboration with the Kenyan government.

Kenyan children continue to suffer from disease, hunger, and lack of access to education and other fundamental rights, yet there are various organizations dealing with service delivery. This implies the initial efforts had not born any effective fruits, and more strategies are needed for appropriate implementation of service delivery. For example, Radoli (2006) observes, "the Kenyan child is faced with many challenges. From sleeping hungry, failing to go to school, being sexually and physically exploited to being forced into child labour." These, among other reports, shift limelight to the persistence of problems and challenges

facing children in Kenya despite existence of UNICEF. They raise concerns on the strategies and capacity of UNICEF to mitigate problems of children in Kenya. It is on this basis that this study research to analyze the challenges facing implementation service delivery strategies within the UNICEF in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of Study

1.3.1 General Objective

To establish challenges facing implementation of service delivery strategies in UNICEF Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study was:

- i. To determine how financial factors affect service delivery implementation for UNICEF Kenya.
- ii. To establish approaches in which human resources concepts affects service delivery at UNICEF Kenya.
- iii. To find out how UN Agencies, NGOs and government collaboration impact on service delivery implementation strategy
- iv. To determine logistical challenges facing UNICEF-Kenya in service delivery implementation plans.
- v. To establish political challenges facing UNICEF-Kenya in service delivery
- vi. To determine how socio-cultural and level of technology among target populations affects service delivery strategies with UNICEF-Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were guide the study;

- i. How do logistical challenges influence service delivery implementation in UNICEF Kenya?
- ii. How do financial challenges influence service delivery implementation in UNICEF Kenya?

- iii. How do human resources concepts affect service delivery implementation in UNICEF Kenya?
- iv. How do the politics influence strategy implementation for UNICEF-Kenya?
- v. In what ways do socio-cultural and level of Technology factors among Kenyan communities present any challenge to strategy implementation for UNICEF?
- vi. How do close collaboration and partnership between the Government Counterparts, UN Agencies, NGOs, as well as private sector stakeholders influence implementation of service delivery strategies?

1.5 Significance of Study

The study provides the UNICEF policy makers and implementing organs with an opportunity to articulate their respective strategy formulation practices and the challenges that the organization faces in the processes of the strategy implementation. The findings contribute to the broad literature on policy formulation and implementation in organizations. The findings are a useful resource to governments in which UNICEF operates. For instance, if it emerges that political decisions or socio-cultural norms affect strategy implementation for UNICEF, and then rationale for review is supported by empirical findings.

1.6 Scope of Study

Although the presence of UN agencies dates back to pre-independence Kenya (UN, 2006) this study focused on the UNICEF, its formulation of strategies and the challenges of implementation of those challenges towards service delivery to targeted clients within the organization's mandate. The study was specifically interested in the period between 1992-2010 during which there is evidence that the UN itself has been making attempts to streamline its management practices to adapt to changing situations in member states (Hennes 1995 and Inomata, 2008).

1.7 Limitation of Study

Although the UN agencies have offices in Nairobi, their operations spread across not just Kenya, but Africa as a continent. As a result, the study faced a challenge of not being able to find relevant staff who can competently comment on issues of strategy formulation,

implementation processes, and the challenges that were likely to occur due to frequent travels on international assignments. This forced the study to pursue them to other stations, which may be quite far and expensive in terms of travel logistics. The issue of accuracy of information regarding whether or not UNICEF was facing any challenges in service delivery also poses a limitation. Situations happened where officers decline to state existing challenges instead insisting on strengths. The researcher made effort to explain the importance of the study and the need for accurate information that was useful to other organizations as well.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter deals with the literature review on service delivery implementation strategies by UNICEF Kenya. Most UNICEF services are delivered directly to the community concerned. Nonetheless, there are a number of challenges facing service delivery implementations strategies; hence, this chapter tries to analyze six broad categories of challenges to direct service delivery. It first begin by giving a detail explanation of the service delivery strategies concepts then reviews the main factors influencing service delivery. The factors being reviewed include financial, human resources, logistical, political, socio-cultural & technology, as well as collaboration aspects to service delivery implementation. The report then proceeds to give the summary and gaps in literature with a brief conceptual framework at the end.

2.2 The concept of service delivery strategies

Until the 1980s, providing basic services at low cost to large populations was relatively straightforward, given political will and sufficient resources. Consequently, scaling up the delivery of UNICEF service delivery was relatively easy.

As individuals become able to survive within their environmental challenges, where they are pressed to acquire other issues related UNICEF management, most of which now cannot be addressed effectively. Hence, constantly increasing the complexity of the service delivery required. The inability to manage this increased complexity resulted in persistently high management failure rates from manageable conditions at a time when corresponding service delivery rates were falling in Kenya (Andreev *et al.*, 2003). The rise in resistance by local communities to adopt UNICEF guidelines of how to solve local problems provides one of the most graphic examples of the consequence of the failure to manage the service delivery. Yet

even where the financial resources and the political will exist to deliver effective services, many UNICEF systems contain numerous constraints to success (Hanson et al., 2003).

At the first level, that of the community or household, there may be inadequate demand for services or physical, financial, or social obstacles to their use. This situation calls for action to increase access and affordability, including a number of financing reforms. It also requires policies to ensure that services are culturally appropriate, that they address the particular needs of underserved populations, and that they provide dignity and privacy. Moreover, services delivery by UNICEF should be physically accessible, both in terms of distance from population settlements and in terms of their construction—that is, facilities must be responsive to the needs of persons or community concerned (World Health Organization, 2011).

At the second level, the delivery of services, there may be a shortage of resources, such as staff members, machinery, and equipment. However, to bring these resources together would require actions at the third level that anticipate future needs, as well as actions that ensure that the needed community solution and equipment are purchased at the best price possible, are subject to appropriate quality controls, and are distributed where needed.

Effective action may be constrained by weak systems of management that are unable to take into account the changing service delivery needs of the population and the changing demands on service providers. UNICEF other Management weaknesses include inadequate regulation and supply, ineffective training of service professionals, inability to engage with civil society, and a failure to put in place incentive systems to facilitate effective service delivery. Constraints at this level may originate outside the country, as donors to follow paths that either undermine their policy goals or remove the flexibility needed to achieve them face governments with demands. Constraints acting at this level also arise when policies in other areas affect the service sector, such as when a weak, overly bureaucratic, and unreformed civil

service system implements obsolete regulations; when there are inadequacies in infrastructure, such as poor communication and transportation links; or when there are weaknesses in the banking system (World Health Organization, 2011).

The other challenge is based on the environmental and contextual constraints on effective policies. The physical environment, including climate and population dispersion, may affect the delivery of effective services. However, an equally important constraint is weak governance working within unsupportive policy frameworks, which may be compromised further by corruption, weak rule of law, political instability, weak public accountability, and lack of a free press. For example, de Soto (2000) has shown that, in many middle-income countries (Kenya included), it is almost impossible even to create a simple garment repair business because of a failure of legislative reform, in particular a lack of clearly defined property rights. As a result, much of the economic activity in those Kenya is informal or even marginally illegal, a response that is of particular concern in service delivery, given the scope for unlicensed and incompetent providers to endanger the public (Dekluver & Pearce, 2003).

This study underscores the relevance of coordinating functions at multiple levels. Service delivery may operate effectively only if policies are set in place at the community level to make sure that those in need have access to services, and only when if policies are in place at higher levels to ensure that the resources are available to offer those services.

Kenya is a nation of children and youth with more than half the estimated population of 36 million under the age of 18 years. An estimated 6 million children require special care and protection of which approximately 2.4 million children are orphans. The 2006 Kenya Demographic Health Survey shows that 13.1% of all children below 15 years (about 1.9 million) are living in households other than their parents. There is no reliable data on the number of children living on the street or in Charitable Children Institutions (CCIs). Protective services responding to violence against children are not yet available throughout

Kenya. The youth (age 15-35) in Kenya, who numbered about 9.1 million as of 2006, account for about 32 per cent of the population. They form 60 per cent of the total labour force but some 75 per cent of them have not been absorbed in the job market. Increased capacity of both UNICEF and the Government for emergency preparedness and response to natural and humanitarian emergencies had enabled timely and effective responses to humanitarian needs. The Ministry of Water & Irrigation for example has responded to the natural disasters quickly through diversion of funds from its regular budget to meet the humanitarian needs of the communities. In the pre-election period, the office conducted a risk analysis as part of the emergency planning exercise leading to pre-positioning essential emergency supplies, set-up stand-by arrangements with implementing partners; secure donor pledges for preparedness and build capacities of staff. Following the 2008 post-election violence, the UN system provided a coordinated response and readiness to fulfill-cluster lead responsibilities.

Child Protection partnership with civil society demonstrated the feasibility of providing legal aid to vulnerable children who were unable to afford it. Learning from this initiative by the two NGOs and others has convinced the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to launch a government funded Legal Aid Scheme, which will soon be inaugurated. Additionally, partnership with faith-based organizations has demonstrated that they are powerful allies in the area of child protection advocacy, such as the abandonment of FGM/C.

During the last two decades, most African countries embarked on comprehensive service delivery reform programmes, and in many cases received assistance from international institutions. However, despite the tremendous efforts and resources that have been allocated to this endeavor, progress remained scant. Public sector management reforms are a central feature of economic policy reform programmes. However, the performance of such reforms in Africa remains hindered by a myriad of factors including lack of efficiency, lack of accountability, ineffective management practices, and corruption.

The intent for this project was to serve as an advisory tool for the Governments of member States that are undertaking service reform initiatives. Best practices were identified, and recommendations were provided. However, it was clear that not all of the methods and tools outlined were applicable to all countries. Therefore, a careful and selective adaptation of some elements to selected areas was essential. In that regard, it was also important to note that public sector management was concerned with a continuous improvement in all aspects of government work. It aimed to improve results continuously by improving capacity. The public service (ministries, parastatals, and extra-ministerial departments) has always been the tool available to African governments for the implementation of developmental goals and objectives. It is seen as a pivot for growth of African economies. It is responsible for the creation of an appropriate and conducive environment in which all sectors of the economy can perform optimally, and this catalytic UN agencies service role that propelled governments worldwide to continuously search for better ways to deliver their services.

There are different concepts relating to the service delivery by UNICEF-Kenya. However, different organizations have different approaches, but all work towards attaining the same goals. The organization for economic co-operation and development for instance, in 2008, stated that as the international community strives to clarify its policies for aid to fragile states, the aid donors have developed principles for engagement in these settings and commissioned several work streams to formulate guidance. The work stream on service delivery in fragile states, initiated in 2005, attempts to gain an understanding of the impact of fragility on services and with that knowledge offers guidance to donors wishing to strengthen service provision and governance in these states. The work stream focuses on four strategically important service sectors: justice and security, healthcare, education and water/sanitation. UNICEF Kenya mainly decided to concentrate on these areas because of their importance in the everyday lives of most people and they represent core functions of a strong state. State fragility disrupts service delivery systems in general, undermining both the public and non-state agencies involved.

Ted Baggett (2011) adds that the levels at which a service delivery strategy requires to be sustained will be based on the composition of services provided by, and organizational structure of the public and private service providers. Those providing a disparate set of services, delivered through a multiplicity of organizational units might initially need a strategy for every single unit – and a wider ‘vision’ plan for the provider as a whole. The ‘vision’ or greatest level service delivery must be possessed at the uppermost level of the public service provider through an executive champion. In the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS) of 2003-07, the government of Kenya outlined its commitment towards the improvement of the general performance in service delivery through enhancement of ministries and state owned corporations.

Harris Kern and Anthony Tardugno (2002) also stated that the other concept of service delivery is that, whereas the client needs must often be at the core of the service design process, so too should the requirements of the provider. The two authors argued that service design would be a balancing act between the value developed for the client and that for the provider. In this view, value to the customer will be reflected as a better service, value to the provider through cost savings and/or the understanding of the policy objective underpinning the service. The concept embraces several fundamental ideas of service design. In fact, USAID, UN Agencies, Non-governmental Organization (NGOs), and other institutions jointly state that community needs should be at the heart of the design process. With this information in mind, usability and accessibility through multiple devices must be central to the design of services. The community can also cross boundaries between providers: existing silo-based delivery must be challenged with an emphasis on coupling up services around the needs of the user instead of the organizational structure of the provider. Partnership operating across organizational boundaries will be encouraged. This is because all the objectives and activities of every organization are to ensure eradication of poverty, unemployment, poor health standards, education, and improve individual economic standards. Therefore, in working together will even hasten the rate of realization of their objectives and ultimately agency recognition (UN report, 2009).

Harris Kern and Anthony Tardugno (2002) illustrated the other service delivery concept, which utilizes existing citizen or UN agencies service providers before investing in or upgrading public e-services strategies. This concept is designed to ensure that existing cross-government initiatives are exploited fully before further strategies are made. Specifically, UNICEF-Kenya and those who care for the welfare of the community are expected to: Investigate the use of private, voluntary or public sector intermediaries, deliver services through transparent, or if appropriate through mutual organizations. In addition, they are also supposed to build and design all citizen-facing services so that they can be easily incorporated into appropriate systems later, if immediate delivery via joint systems is not possible. Lastly, they are to consult specifically corporate institutions in designing services focused on Small/Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

On the other hand, Goldstein, Johnston, Duffy, and Rao, (2002) added yet another service concept, in which they illustrated a design, and deliver services according to e-Government service standards. This will include Government customer segmentation guidance, government service standards, and usability, search, and navigation guidelines. There should also be service models for authentication and identity management, government branding guidelines, and government service operations standards e.g. routing between self-service channels and call center handling some of these standards in existence where they will be incorporated into a more comprehensive service design and delivery standards framework when necessary. The other concept is setting up and managing a migration plan, which progressively moves members to cheaper channels and lower community challenges, whilst maintaining or improving the quality of the service. This concept ensures there are specific milestones for switching off or winding down challenging channels.

The mechanics of migrating society issues from one form to another vary from service to service and provider to provider. UNICEF perception took this concept mean that challenges within the society will need to be measured according to a structured measurement framework. For providers, it may be difficult to measure activity-based costs. However, a way of benchmarking must be found in order to produce meaningful performance and cost data.

The overall quality of the service should not suffer because of a drive to lower community issues (Kern & Tardugno, 2002). Ted Baggett (2011) also emphasized pertaining to these concepts that improving public service delivery matters not only to children, but also to the whole community. UNICEF also understood that improved delivery of service in Kenyan national departments and provincial administrations, as well as in components within these organizations such as hospitals, tax offices, schools, etc., was essential for the future economic prosperity and social development of the country. This was because public service delivery improvement was not a one-off exercise. It was an ongoing and dynamic process, because as standards were met, they must be gradually raised. This document marks only the first stage in that process. According to the UNICEF Kenya, there was a great deal to do, and progress will sometimes be frustratingly slow; but the task is one of the most worthwhile and rewarding that the public service faces, and the need is urgent, so there is no time to lose. This is a process, which must involve every public servant, at every level, in every department, whether they work behind the scenes or directly with the public.

Kenyan agencies and other transformation units in national departments and provincial administrations will have a key role to play in helping UN Agencies', USAID's and Non-governmental Organizations' (NGO) efforts to improve service delivery. These institutions and agencies may be undertake this by feeding in fresh ideas for improvements and identifying areas where existing systems are a stumbling block to better children, woman, and young people's service. They will also monitor the results of their department's service delivery improvement programme and offer suggestions for making more rapid and effective progress. At national and provincial level, the various transformation coordinating committees will be valuable as focal points for sharing experience and best practice, and ensuring that momentum is maintained right across the Public Service (Johnston & Clark, 2001). Johnston and Clark (2001) also claimed that not only the public who would like to see service delivery improved. Many dedicated public servants, particularly those who serve the public directly, are frustrated by systems and procedures, which are often a barrier to good service rather than a support for it. It is essential to the success of service delivery implementation that the commitment, energy, and skills of these people are harnessed to tackle inefficient, outdated,

and bureaucratic practices, to simplify complex procedures, and to identify new and better ways of delivering services.

2.3 Empirical Challenges Facing Implementation of Service Delivery Strategies

2.3.1 Financial Factors vs. Service Delivery

Many counties and towns in Kenya struggle with how to provide affordable services in a financially sustainable way, to all citizens. Financial aspects involve service pricing, implementation costs provided by donors, and affordability, sources of aid for other institution operation. Without finances, UNICEF and other organizations with same interests can do nothing because most of the work is carried out in remote areas where there is poor accessibility of essential factors. Traveling, building site offices, insurances, and provision of services requires a sizeable amount of funds. Hence, service delivery depends greatly on the availability and flexibility of resources.

Education system, which is the strong hold for providing personnel and consequently manpower to service delivery, has been affected by lack of sufficient funds enhanced by corruption and poor management and implementation of sustainable strategies. The government in 2003 introduced the free primary education, which led to a large number of student enrolment to various classes. However, this has ever been faced with insufficient funds through which it can enable the students proceed uninterrupted through all their classes. UNICEF in bid to rescue this sector depends on donors and well-wishers for resources to be used in this sector, which a time slows down service delivery since they have to wait for donors to provide a smooth transition of the implementation strategies in this sector. The UN agencies are, therefore, forced to lag behind in their plans or even sometimes forced to negotiate with international governments to assist the local sectors funds. This process involves a lot of documentations, communication, and investigations, which will eventually hinder the service delivery strategies. Pattison (2007) argued that different people involved in the education change programme would have different views of the precipitating event, of the

underlying causes of the problem, and of the desirable outcomes of the programme. They will therefore measure different outcomes, and measure them differently. The evidence must consider whose measures are to be used.

Given the likely impact of the global financial crisis on employment, notably on young people, some studied regions, and “Jua kali” sectors pose many challenges to the implementation strategy. In essence, remote areas at risk of disadvantage have been identified as part of the social inclusion agenda as well as the “KaziKwaVijana” initiative, which was introduced by the government in attempting to reduce the rate of unemployment. A place-based response, this combines the poverty eradication strategy, the implementation of vision 2030 is also a challenge to service implementation because there are no clear outlines in relation to service delivery sector. In fact, the government put in place measures of jobs fund creation (job and skill development), and the innovation fund (for disadvantaged job seekers) in addition to the family-centered employment project, establishment of children and family centers and the communities for children initiative (Office for Youth, 2010).

2.3.2 Human Resources Factors vs. Service Delivery

Fiscal stringency can pose problems in the absorption of available human resources. In Kenya, it is reported that trained personnel are not currently employed in the service sector, primarily because expenditure and establishment ceilings mean that the public sector does not have effective demand for their services, although they are needed according to technical criteria. Private-sector employment possibilities are presumably limited by the stagnation of personal incomes, in line with the overall stagnation of the economy. Human Resource at UNICEF is mandated with common role central to responding to the population’s need and demand for community growth. Nevertheless, the organization’s provision network is only the more visible part of the complex aggregate of institutions, norms, and values involved in the functions of steering, financing, and resource generation, which impose conditions on the functioning of the provision network. Proper management of human resources is critical in providing a high quality of service delivery. A refocus on human resources management in

community considerations and more research are needed to develop new policies. Effective human resources management strategies are greatly needed to achieve better outcomes from and access to service delivery in Kenya (Stefane, Orchard, & Howard, 2009).

Osborne and Gaebler (1992) referred to citizens as customers for governments, since governments need to empower rather than serve, to shift from hierarchy to teamwork and participation, to be mission oriented and customer focused, and to focus on prevention other than cure. Governments worldwide are faced with the challenge of transformation and the need to modernize administrative practices and management systems (Tapscott, 1996).

Service delivery and performance measures can vary widely from financial (cost, implementation funds, community resources) to operational (number of services per day, average time per service) to engagement (community satisfaction). The service concept and its associated goals for both community and the service delivery organization can be employed to help determine the most appropriate performance measures for a particular service. The choice of performance measures should subsequently drive structure and infrastructure investments to support community and organizational goals. In particular, the chosen performance measures will affect the behavior of those involved directly or indirectly in all functional areas of an organization, and hence the service processes as well. Heskett (1987) and Chase and Bowen (1991) suggest that the design of a service delivery system includes the role of the people, technology, physical facilities, equipment, and the processes by which a service is created and delivered. All these aspects must be in proper coordination; otherwise, the organization will face other internal challenges under the human resource department since it is in charge of aligning organization objectives and approaches on how to attain them.

The lack of qualified professional has been identified by UN agencies and other international organizations as a serious challenge requiring immediate attention for better service delivery

in developing countries. In fact, the recruitment of professional technical specialists with required competencies (such as procurement/logistics coordinators) remains a challenge. Seeking the required skill-sets and competencies to match the job requirements at times takes longer than expected, leaving a gap in operational needs and service delivery implementation.

2.3.3 Logistical Aspects vs. Service Delivery

The frequency of natural disasters and other related problems occurring each year has increased, characterized by a marked tendency in localized small to medium-size disasters, predominantly triggered by climatic hazard events. The current logistics infrastructure provides good response capability for larger-scale disasters, but needs to be extended to become more accessible and flexible for small to medium disasters. In addition, the logistics geographical coverage is not fully aligned with the zonal structures, and needs to be adjusted to offer easier access to required logistics expertise. Logistic department (LD) has substantially developed its global network, tools and systems since 2005, when there was a transition from a central to a regionalized model of service delivery. Analysis of the regionalization approach to logistics service provision has confirmed quantifiable improvement in the disaster response chain in all aspects: from reducing delivery times and costs, to increasing effectiveness and efficiency.

UNICEF in 2008 confirmed that LD has an established platform for operating a Humanitarian Procurement Center (HPC), which offers selected services to internal and external humanitarian actors. The HPC portfolio needs a final boost in terms of consolidating and clearly articulating capacities and service levels to potential users. Offering selected logistics services to external organizations will help to reach more beneficiaries, contribute to logistics sustainability, and maintain membership services at a lowest cost. Peter *et al.* (2009) stated that strengthening service delivery is a key strategy to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. This includes the delivery of interventions to reduce child mortality, maternal mortality, and the burden to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria¹. The indicators include facility infrastructure (water, electricity, latrines, infection control), equipment and supplies

(exam tables, lab tests, pharmaceutical commodities, sterilization and disinfection), support systems (training, supervision, quality assurance, equipment maintenance, guidelines, visual aids), management systems (adequate information system for clients, logistics systems, equipment maintenance), providers' adherence to standards (patient history, risk assessment, health education, relevant examinations, infection control procedures). On the other hand, Facility assessments, through surveys and censuses, are used to monitor a wide range of aspects of service delivery, focusing on the availability and basic elements of quality of services. The potential indicators can be grouped into infrastructure, infection control, services offered according to a minimum standard, laboratory services, drugs and commodities, basic equipment and supplies. The challenge is to come up with a parsimonious set of sensitive and specific indicators that can easily be collected in all facility assessments and in some cases become part of regular facility reporting systems.

Under its mandate to further the survival, development, protection, and participation of Kenyan children and youth, UNICEF with its partner agencies adopts a flexible approach to working with the realities of the different parts of the country. Efforts are concentrated at the community level, and strategies are designed to yield specific results. Emphasis is placed on working with communities to identify critical needs, and to prioritize provision of support where it is required. Mobilization of communities themselves to take on the responsibility for management of services, together with direct support, is the main strategy for achieving communities' ownership of interventions, including their close involvement in decision-making and the use of resources.

In most cases, the first steps are availability and capacity to deliver the services. If the minimum standards are not fulfilled, quality is bound to be poor. The mere availability and capacity of services, however, does not guarantee service quality. Assessing quality of service can be difficult in that it can cover both the complex processes of evaluating, diagnosing, and providing solutions to different aspects as well as the outcomes of such practices for the community. In most definitions, quality of service is seen to be multidimensional. Sociologist

Ulrich Beck (2000) famously argued that social change and globalization has brought new risks and hazards such as the decline of traditional institutions and social roles. Freed of these former social binds, it is now up to individuals to create their own identity and biography, reflect upon, choose between life's options, and navigate the many risks (Beck, 1992). From a developmental perspective, for young people still forming their identity, these social changes provide an added challenge. Psychologists and educators have taken up the problem of young people and risk in a major way. There is no shortage of literature examining these perceived social risks, which include underage drinking, substance abuse, mental illness, suicide, sexually transmitted disease, teenage pregnancy, early school leaving, unemployment, antisocial behavior, and incarceration. In addition, a UNICEF review of two major studies examining non-school risk factors for educational disengagement in Kenya drew their attention to individual factors, e.g. poor self-esteem, low intelligence, frequent or chronic school non-attendance. Attention also was focused to family factors, e.g. large or dysfunctional family, parental illness, low socioeconomic status, and finally on social factors, e.g. gender inequality, tribal, or ethnic difference, neighborhood, or regional characteristics (Murray *et al.* 2004, p.9). Critical to implementing a strengths-based or capabilities approach concerned with the economic and social rights of young people is the movement toward integrated service delivery. In practical terms, this is the 'joining up' of services that address different facets of youth wellbeing (e.g. health, education, housing, social support).

Perceived challenges of culturally and linguistically diversity (CALD) groups accessing respite services include either not having knowledge about services or cultural inappropriateness of services. UNICEF tends to work in rural areas and often most people in these regions are poorly educated and only use their local language for communication. service delivery is thus, influenced by challenges, which include language barriers, cultural barriers (e.g. food/religious requirements), lack of links between organizations and CALD groups, as well as a lack of available bilingual staff in some areas (Gallagher & Truglio-Londrigan, 2004; Kruger, Tennant, Smith, & Peachey, 2007; Migrant Information Centre and Yooralla, 2006). Above all, language and communication consistently emerge as the primary barrier to accessing services (Bartlett *et al.*, 2006; Thomas, 2007). One study highlighted how

the needs of refugees often are considered within those of IDPs or CALD older people more generally (Hugman, Bartolomei, & Pittaway, 2004). The impact of trauma for this group was found to be a common experience, which researchers suggest can lead to a range of mental health problems (Mackiewicz, 1996).

Other writers suggest that racism in the health and social service system may also lead to unmet needs (Blakemore, 2000). Tribalism in this context includes how individuals from different CALD backgrounds face more barriers to accessing healthcare, education, or other service delivery in relation to individuals from the dominant group or those in urban areas. A regional study revealed that older people regard mainstream services and society as being both old and tribalistic. The literature indicates that while Ethno-specific Agencies (ESAs) have been criticized for their potential to marginalize ethnic groups, so too has mainstreaming, but for different reasons. Xynias (2002) illustrated that as cautioned that mainstreaming can marginalize CALD people due to their relatively small numbers and their specific needs being overlooked. Furthermore, Fuller (1997) identified how a mainstream service system, whilst appealing, simply serves to advantage those whose values most closely fit with the dominant social norms.

Providing services based on cultural background, however, can be problematic as it may obscure other factors that determine a person's preferences and care needs (Sciegaj, Capitman, & Kyriacou, 2004). Furthermore, a service delivery model that only focuses on ESAs is unrealistic, unfeasible, due to the heterogeneity within ethnic groups, and ethnic identity (Matsuoka & Sorenson, 1991). Assumptions that ESAs share the same ideologies as their clients can also be problematic (Sakamoto, 2007). However, Evidence suggests that cultural competence needs to be addressed at several levels (individual, professional, organizational and systemic) for mainstream services to be effective (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2006; Stewart *et al.*, 2006).

The other sector of concern posing some challenges to the UNICEF-Kenya service delivery implementation is the poor or inaccessibility of adequate facilities. Any strategy, for it to succeed has to be set up in appropriate facilities (building environment, and close to access to other necessary resources and facilities like near to the road). Kenyan facilities pose a number of problems to the service delivery because most of the networks links are not complete; hence, the UN agencies face hardship in reaching the desired areas to set up stations for their activities. In addition, due to the poor facilities the organization set up satellite stations, which are far apart. This leads to transportation problem where they will need to be travelling constantly to these regions to deliver their services. This leads to time wastage and is costly since personnel will live in other areas of which the organization will take care of the travelling and accommodation expenses.

2.3.4 Political Factors vs. Service Delivery

Most of the development and implementation strategies in Kenya are control and influenced by politicians. Since UNICEF activities and service delivery needs, first to consult the government, it implies that their operations will be hindered or based on politicians views. For instance, UNICEF main objectives is to ensure children rights are observed and maintained but the government if it does not have any interest will set regulations for this organization, which will restrict their scope and practices. This way, service delivery by this organization will not attain their intended objectives within a specified time. On the other hand, different groups consider the Kenyan students and children differently. Many scholars have taken this as a challenge because while they are working hard to implement strategies, the students are adamant to adopt the strategies. However, in most cases, the youth are usually seen as a problem, which should be solved. This termed as 'deficit approach.' Jeffs and Smith (1999) argue that the politicians (Kenyan politicians included) consider young people in three ways: as thugs, users, and victims.

As thugs they steal cars, vandalize estates, attack older (and sometimes, younger) people and disrupt classrooms. As users, they take drugs, drink, and smoke to excess, get pregnant in

order to jump the housing queue and, hedonistically, care only for themselves. As victims, they cannot find work, receive poor schooling and are brought up in dysfunctional families. Yet so many of the troublesome behaviors associated in this way with young people are not uniquely theirs (Jeffs & Smith, 1999).

Deficit approaches focus on avoiding undesirable social outcomes. Identifying and managing perceived risks, or what could go ‘wrong’ with young people, is a common approach. The main barriers to reform are political and institutional, including weak state capacity, elite capture, centralized systems, and poor accountability mechanisms. Many different actors are involved in reform, for example, donors, civil servants, elites and citizens, and they play key roles in either driving or impeding progress especially on rural service delivery.

On the other hand, despite the upturn in economic growth, uncertainty in the political sector and inadequate policy and legislative framework to deal effectively with corruption coupled with rising insecurity and poor infrastructure keeps investors and charitable organizations away resulting in low levels of improved service delivery. Unemployment remained high and poverty levels remained unchanged in many Kenyan households. The wrangles that characterized the Kenyan coalition government slowed the momentum and the enthusiasm generated by the last elections in 2002 and shifted focus from development efforts to political issues. UNICEF thus, has been a victim of circumstance and its service implementation strategies faces a number of political challenges.

2.3.5 Socio Cultural and Technological Factors vs. Service Delivery

Modern Kenyan societies especially those living in urban areas are cosmopolitan. This has affected the traditional community set up and how they handle issues vary greatly in relation to those living in rural areas. Rural areas individuals still value their moral standards, beliefs, and practice. Service delivery and implementation strategies, therefore, may face a lot of resistance or other traditional factors slowing down the UNICEF plans of raising their

people's standards. Technological advancements, on the other hand, are on the increase making serious revolutions in every Kenyan sector. Government, NGOs, foreign agencies are compelled to embracing IT in every practice because of its numerous advantages and service efficiency. The advent of the Internet, digital connectivity, the explosion and use of e-commerce and e-business models in the private sector are pressuring the public sector to rethink hierarchical, bureaucratic organizational models. Customers, citizens, and businesses are faced every day with new innovative e-business and e-commerce models implemented by the private sector and made possible by ICT tools and applications, are requiring the same from governmental organizations. UNICEF being an international organization requires most of its service and practice to be online because international communities monitor them. The application of this advancement can lead to efficient and quick service delivery. In fact, UNICEF members encourage everyone to be technologically literate since it will make their work even in rural areas simpler.

However, recently, the public sector has begun to recognize the potential opportunities offered by ICT and e-business models to fit with citizens' demands, to offer better services to citizens and to increase efficiency by streamlining internal processes. Tapscott and Caston (1993) argue that ICT causes a "paradigm shift" introducing "the age of network intelligence," reinventing businesses, governments and individuals. Paradigm shifts prevail in the public sector too. The traditional bureaucratic paradigm, characterized by internal productive efficiency, functional rationality, departmentalization, hierarchical control and rule-based management (Kaufman, 1977), is being replaced by competitive, knowledge based economy requirements, such as: flexibility, network organization, vertical/horizontal integration, innovative entrepreneurship, organization learning, speed up in service delivery, and a customer driven strategy. The e-services have now hit the market whereby they are being implemented in every sector. However, the UN agencies have experienced more problems brought by these developments where the public demand is very high but the literacy rate is very low. For instance, a critical mass of professional and community users of ICTs in health has not yet been reached in developing countries. Many of the approaches being used are still at a relatively new stage of implementation, with insufficient studies to

establish their relevance, applicability or cost effectiveness (Martinez, *et al*, 2001). This makes it difficult for the Kenyan governments to determine their investment priorities (Chandrasekhar and Ghosh, 2001). However, a number of pilot projects that have demonstrated improvements such as a 20% reduction in mortality or 25-50% increases in productivity within the healthcare system (Greenberg, 2005).

2.3.6 Collaboration vs. Service Delivery

Meester and Seifert (2009) indicated that in respect to service delivery, and driven by organizational pressures, UN agencies and other service firms are increasingly collaborating with independent organizations to create service networks that deliver performance while ensuring high service delivery quality. In the management of call center networks, these partnerships are common and form an integral part of the UNICEF and service delivery strategies in the community upgrading and children care. For a charitable firm, configuring such a call center network entails determining which partners to select and how to distribute service requests among providers with same interest of improving the people's living standards, while incorporating their capabilities, costs, and overall abilities of reaching the community.

Hasiya *et al.* (2008) examine how different contract structures enable firms to manage service delivery when there is information asymmetry. Some researchers have considered staffing and scheduling issues without specifically incorporating call outsourcing or vendor selection. The traditional approach to staffing and scheduling first determines staffing levels, by period, to satisfy service-level requirements. Then, to satisfy the staffing levels, this approach determines the number of agents needed on each shift schedule (from a given set of feasible schedules), while minimizing total costs. In addition to these challenges, the UN Agencies also face the training challenges, where as much as they want to provide excellent services to the community, there are not enough trainers in the field of their specifications. This discourages their implementation strategies and consequently the service delivery calling for more collaborations interest in order to achieve their goals. The staff hired may only be

specialized in one area and removing them to offer training in some fields would mean they work in which they were handling will have to be post-pone or suspended form some time. This therefore, looks into the consequences of collaboration, which will be of beneficial in such cases because one organization may have trainers, but no resources of moving them to the desired location (Hasija *et al.*, 2008).

Successful implementation of this service delivery calls for close collaboration and partnerships between the Kenyan ministries, UN agencies, NGOs, and other Government agencies as well as with private sector stakeholders. The strategies for this plan will follow the approach enshrined in the vision 2030 where the economy is Government-led but industry-driven. Therefore, the intended and crucial logistics in every ministry will step up its coordination and facilitation role creating an enabling environment for the development of private sector and community-based initiatives. The Vision is anchored on three “pillars”: the economic, the social, and the political. The adoption of the Vision by Kenya comes after the successful implementation of the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS). The human rights framework provides a significant tool for achieving country’s development goals since the modern strategies offer grounds for equitable, just, and sustainable access, distribution, and management of resources that are utilized to address the socio-economic and political elements that influence people’s livelihoods. Through the applications of appropriate collaboration, UNICEF realizes that there is need to develop effective planning, monitoring, and evaluation systems/tools in order effectively monitor progress in strengthening transparency and accountability in the service delivery sector (Edwards & Sharkansky, 2001).

2.4 Summary and Research Gaps to be Filled

UNICEF’s bottlenecks are not resolved with Band-Aid; they must be examined and opened. When timely provision and service delivery is hindered by access barriers and implementation gaps, the most effective first step is to understand what is not working, and why. Improving access to care services mandates a close examination of all of the factors that create barriers

and implementation gaps between those who need the services in a particular community, and the community's actual delivery. UNICEF's recent work has concentrated on assessing the quality of service coming out of decentralized organization system and ways of improving those issues (Edwards & Sharkansky, 2001). There has been little focus on the functioning of the implementation strategies in the public sector and the quality of service delivery they portray although a great deal of work has been directed to community issues (Elmore, 2000). There is however agreement that the services offered by the UN agencies is likely to conform to desired quality standards and measures need to be put in place to ensure that these services are aware of quality measures and can at least achieve truth in execution (Berman, 1997).

National HRM databases need to be further strengthened to allow for good quality description of worker (in all fields and economic sectors) distribution in rural and remote areas. The methods used to identify workers preferences and choices for location need to be further refined. They will need to consider – among other things – whether differences exist between different types of workers. Children and youth advancements depend on the foundation that they get from their level. As grownups, nothing much can be changed but if proper approaches are instill to the individuals while they are still young, they can grow knowing the challenges facing the society and work of methods of improving them.

As the current evidence points out, there is a large body of knowledge on the descriptive aspects of retention (i.e. factors influencing motivation and retention, job satisfaction, youth empowerment, etc.), but far less knowledge on the impact of the various strategies and the challenges related to their implementation. In fact, the UNICEF 2010 report indicates that there are very few evaluations to show the impact and effectiveness of interventions in Kenya. There is very little rigorous evidence to support any financial, regulatory, education, or management interventions to improve access to public and private sector employees in remote and rural areas. Methodological challenges for these kinds of evaluations are often one of the reasons for this dearth of knowledge (Pawson *et al.*, 2005).

Applying rigid criteria to assess the quality of these evaluations will even further reduce their numbers. However, the issue of grading or assessing the strength of the evidence needs to be

further discussed, because in the serviced delivery system policy domain, it is difficult to design feasible analytical studies of the type used for community enhancement (particularly randomized controlled trials). In service delivery systems, policy interventions, the context in which a policy is designed and implemented varies from country to country and even within the same country and from region to region or between different time periods. In recognition of this context-specificity when considering service implementation interventions, there has been a growing interest recently in the use of “realist reviews” to better understand and interpret the evidence on service delivery systems interventions, whose effectiveness and impact depend very much on the context in which they are designed and implemented (Pawson *et al.*, 2005). Assessing the impact of retention strategies is also difficult because of challenges in attributing the effects to the intervention or to other confounding factors.

UNICEF from their regular studies has established another finding where the various schemes are proposed without a baseline study to understand the factors that influence service delivery and workers’ decisions. Sustainability is an issue, as many interventions start as pilot experiments in a region or district, with little capacity for scaling up or for even sustaining the interventions for a longer term. Interventions to improve service delivery need to consider the local situation and context. A baseline analysis of factors influencing workers choices and preferences for location should inform the development of service strategies for rural and remote areas. Single interventions may not work, as the underlying factors are complex, so the interventions will need to address the complexity of these factors. Monitoring and evaluation measures should be built in the strategy from the very start of the programme. Cost analysis should also be part of these regular evaluations. Inter-sectorial collaboration is crucial in this area, where changes in practice and regulation would require interventions from other sectors, such as labor, finance, local development, education etc.

In the area of disease surveillance, UN representative state that more and better research is needed to compare and contrast health interventions, including having community health workers collect data, self-reporting data, and obtaining data from clinic and hospital records.

Comparative studies that examine a range of reporting mechanisms are needed for more informed investments by governments and organizations like the NGOs and the medical research institutes in surveillance and response activities. In particular, systems that combine surveillance with point-of-care support tools need to be increasingly deployed and studied. Health presents an opportunity to break down the traditional information barriers between diagnosis and treatment and surveillance activities. The widespread use of mobile technologies in Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) for data collection and improving access to information as part of Health Information Systems (HIS) and point-of-care support tools is well-documented in the gray literature. However, studies in peer-reviewed journals are generally weak and the results focus on intermediary benefits such as cost savings and improved reliability of data, but do not go to the next level to show improved workflow, efficiency, quality of care, and/or health outcomes. Implementations remain modest in size and often sit outside of the broader government-led district HIS deployments. The term ‘improving access to information’ is very broad and needs to be defined more specifically. The types of health information that have been shown to be more accessible through health are treatment protocols, drug information, and guidelines for facility-based health workers (nurses and physicians).

While programs exist to provide similar tools for community health workers, limited research has been done to assess their effects. These point-of-care support tools also enable real-time data collection through structured question and response fields. These tools may – if implemented effectively to capture the data needed for national surveillance and health information systems reporting, displace traditional approaches to HIS, which focus on the implementation of data collection platforms for aggregated facility and community-based health information within a service delivery context. UNICEF have also realized that a shift exists toward decision support tools aimed at improving service quality, which also enable data capture for more real-time reporting as well as use of information for management purposes. As in other areas, the trials have tended to be of single solutions, rather than integrating those with broader patient and provider information flows.

Throughout the world, there has been a mounting interest within the health sector to take advantage of the overall improvements in telecommunications and the rapid uptake of mobile communication technologies. Despite the interest in this emerging field particularly as it pertains to LMICs, in-depth examination and synthesis of what works and does not work or the evidence base for health has yet to be rigorously assessed and established. Absence of such information hampers efforts to capitalize on expanding telecommunications networks and successful health pilot projects.

In relation to emergency medical response, there has been very little work in LMICs on the role of mobile phones in Emergency Medical Response systems (EMRS). In high-income countries, the focus of research tends to explore effects of health applications on aging populations, introducing high-tech medical devices, wearable devices, and wireless network sensors with integrated alarm systems connected to emergency departments. In LMICs (Kenya under discussion), qualitative studies have shown that mobile phones are used in the general population and the health sector to improve access to transportation and emergency coordination, although often in the absence of a formal EMRS.

Encouraging as this is, Grown, Gupta, & Pande, (2005) argued that an enormous gap persists between growing interest and the actual health outcomes of vulnerable groups. In the face of new investments in global health, the persistence of poor outcomes for so many is an ongoing tragedy. Providing access to care, a central focus in today's global health landscape, is the starting point, but is not sufficient. Following practice in business, the focus must shift to value, defined as actual health outcomes experienced by patients. Value must become the central goal that drives global health delivery.

Dramatically improving the value of care will be necessary if the new resources for global health are to be used effectively to meet the pressing needs of the developing world. Demonstrating value, not just expanding volume, will also be necessary to ensure that funding