

AGORA

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016

A year of consolidation and expansion for UNICEF's global hub for learning





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## ▲▲▲ ABOUT AGORA

Agora is UNICEF's Global Hub for Learning and Development. It offers tailored learning solutions to UNICEF's staff, partners and supporters. Launched in 2015, Agora provides personalized access to over a thousand learning opportunities. The portal also supports career development and development planning through innovative online tools.

### DATA RESEARCH + POLICY

As of 2016, Agora is managed by the Learning and Knowledge Exchange Unit in the Division of Data, Research and Policy (DRP).



**COME IN AND LEARN MORE AT [AGORA.UNICEF.ORG](http://AGORA.UNICEF.ORG)**

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## ▲▲▲ FOREWORD



**IAN THORPE**  
Chief, Learning and  
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### LEARNING ANYTIME, ANYWHERE FOR UNICEF STAFF AND PARTNERS

Since its launch in February 2015, Agora has become a core learning and development tool for UNICEF staff, and increasingly for partners. Agora provides UNICEF staff with access to over 1,400 learning activities with new content being added on a continual basis.

In 2016, UNICEF staff recorded 26,732 course completions on Agora. The Learning and Knowledge Exchange Unit published 39 new custom e-learning programmes, localized existing programmes in UN languages, and curated a wide selection of external learning opportunities so that staff could include these in their learning plans. We also introduced a range of new functionalities to the platform. Offices can now directly publish learning events and share learning materials. Staff can also develop and track individual learning plans in Agora as part of their performance planning, and improved reporting means we can get a more complete picture of staff learning across the organization.

In 2017, we will continue to work with offices to support the creation, publication and management of learning activities. We will expand the catalogue, while also making improvements in how staff find courses and carrying out a review of the current catalogue to ensure all content is relevant and up-to-date.

Agora also brings learning on UNICEF priority areas to partners. Nearly half of all Agora users are from outside UNICEF. In 2017, we plan to extend outreach in order to make learning opportunities available to a wider audience and to harness the potential of the platform to build the capacity of partners worldwide. In addition, we will launch thematic learning channels to guide staff to high quality learning programmes in specific sectors, integrating formal and informal activities.

This report tells the story of learning in UNICEF as captured through Agora. It gives an overview of how the platform is being used by staff and partners and the kinds of learning opportunities that are available, and presents four case studies that illustrate how Agora is being leveraged to develop the capacity of staff and partners around key organizational initiatives.

We hope you will find this report of interest and that you will visit Agora regularly to check out the latest learning opportunities. If you have any comments or questions on this report, or if you are interested in how to make the most effective use of the platform, don't hesitate to contact us at [agora@unicef.org](mailto:agora@unicef.org).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Thorpe'.

**IAN THORPE**

# AGORA 2016 AT A GLANCE

## USAGE ANALYTICS

P.8



**27,602**  
ACTIVE LEARNERS

▶ 46% of whom were external partners



**500,000+**  
SESSIONS

▶ 50% increase from 2015



**40,272**  
LEARNING ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

▶ 25% increase from 2015



**4,081**  
PERSONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES RECORDED



**USED EQUALLY**  
BY BOTH MEN AND WOMEN



**ACCESSED**  
IN ALL COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD. WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

## AGORA STORIES

*With the help of Agora, UNICEF staff and partners strengthened their capacity through strategic learning initiatives. This report tells the stories of just a few...*

P.14



**3,000+** STAFF enhanced their ability to programme for results with the **RBM CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE**.

P.15



**THE GSSC'S ON-BOARDING TRAINING** prepared nearly **300 NEW STAFF** to take over the processing of transactions from all regions. P.20



**3,900 PROFESSIONALS** across 104 countries benefitted from the **IMMUNIZATION E-LEARNING INITIATIVE**. P.23



**21,000 ENROLMENTS** were attracted by the **SOCIAL NORMS, SOCIAL CHANGE MOOC**. P.26

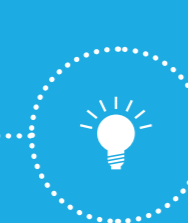
## PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

*To serve the needs of stakeholders worldwide...*

P.30



**39 NEW CUSTOM UNICEF COURSES** and programmes were published.



**AN INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING** solution was released to all staff.



**146 COURSES** were made compatible with the Agora Offline player.



**STRONGER HOSTING** capabilities improved performance in South Asia and Eastern Africa.



**ADDITIONALS AGREEMENTS** were established with IOM, OCHA and the Humanitarian Leadership Academy to facilitate the exchange of online courses.



**AGORA SUPPORTED THE RELEASE OF MAJOR COURSES** from OHCHR and UN Women to large audiences.

The background is a solid purple color with a repeating pattern of small, light purple triangles pointing downwards. Scattered across the page are several white icons: a speech bubble, a paper airplane, a book, a graduation cap, a Wi-Fi signal, a mouse cursor, and a document with a checkmark.

# USAGE ANALYTICS

## ▶ 2016 OVERVIEW

The number of active users moderately increased. Active learners connected more often and from more devices.



**27,264**

ACTIVE USERS

▲ 8% FROM 2015



**100,528**

DEVICES

▲ 48% FROM 2015



**503,174**

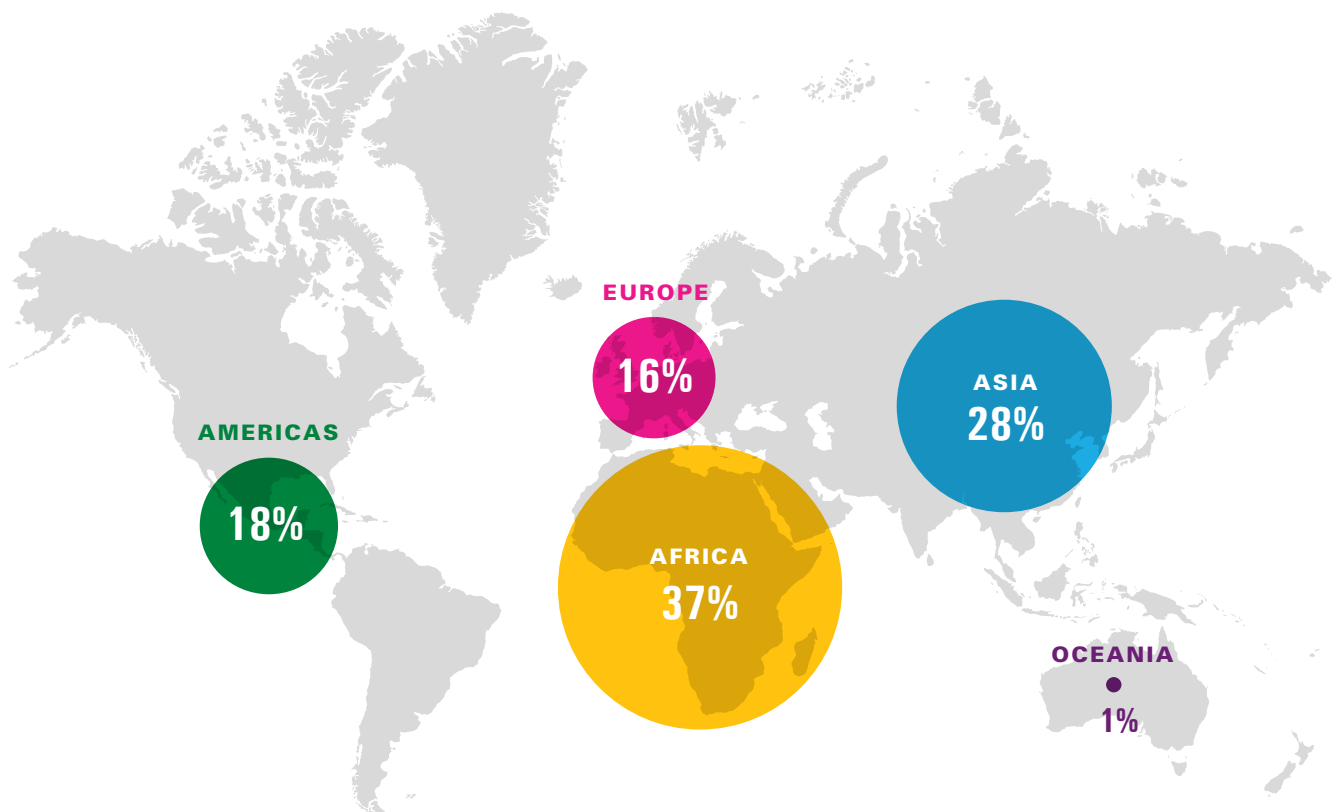
SESSIONS

▲ 50% FROM 2015

AVERAGE OF  
**18**  
SESSIONS  
PER USER;  
**1,374**  
SESSIONS  
PER DAY

## ▶ SOURCES OF TRAFFIC

As in 2015, *Agora was accessed from all countries in the world. Without exception.*



*Distribution of connections by continent*

## ▶ HOW LEARNERS ACCESSED AGORA

2016 saw a small progression in mobile access. However, computer access remains largely dominant.



**93%**  
DESKTOP / LAPTOP

**6%**  
SMARTPHONE



**1%**  
TABLET



### AVERAGE LOAD TIME

On average, it took 5.71 seconds for a user to open Agora pages (14% longer than the 2015 average of 4.99 seconds).

*As this report goes to print, we are still investigating the many possible causes of this poorer performance (internal or external to Agora implementation).*

## ▶ 2016 LEARNING ACTIVITIES ENROLMENTS AND COMPLETIONS

**116,770**

COURSE ENROLMENTS

▲ 15% FROM 2016

**40,272**

COURSE COMPLETIONS

▲ 25% FROM 2016

**725**

DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

▲ 230% FROM 2016

### FIVE MOST POPULAR COURSES



**Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) Form**

5,715 COMPLETED



**Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)**

3,142 COMPLETED



**Results-Based Management (RBM) e-Course**

2,970 COMPLETED



**Ethics and Integrity in UNICEF**

2,494 COMPLETED



**Basic Security in the Field II**

1,922 COMPLETED



## ► DEMOGRAPHICS OF UNICEF LEARNERS

### BY CATEGORY OF STAFF

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF STAFF WHO VISITED AGORA	NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES COMPLETED	NUMBER OF COMPLETION PER USER (AVERAGE)
Senior Managers (D, USG, ASG)	82%	115	0.87
IP	97%	3,523	1.91
NO	99%	4,066	2.61
G	88%	4,719	2.06
Consultants & interns	N.A.	1946	0.3

As in 2015, **national staff were the most active users of Agora.**

### BY REGION

**Overall usage distribution** is similar to that observed in 2015, although it is worth noting that New York Headquarters caught up with the rest of the world.

Uptake of the new development planning solution was more widespread in regions such as CEE/CIS and EAPRO than in Headquarters offices.

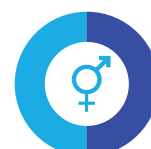
	NUMBER OF STAFF WHO VISITED AGORA	NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES COMPLETED	NUMBER OF COMPLETIONS PER USER (AVERAGE)
<b>REGIONS</b>			
CEE/CIS	610	1618	2.7
EAPRO	1109	3170	2.9
ESARO	2573	6061	2.4
LACRO	734	1541	2.1
MENA	1451	3327	2.3
ROSA	1579	3127	2.0
WCAR	2714	5432	2.0
<b>HQ OFFICES</b>			
Copenhagen (SD)	343	481	1.4
Brussels	11	3	0.3
Florence	28	24	0.9
Geneva (PFP)	210	206	1.0
New York	1067	2890	2.7
Tokyo	7	2	0.3

	% STAFF WITH GOAL(S) IN THEIR PLAN	% STAFF WITH LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN THEIR PLAN
CEE/CIS	65%	73%
EAPRO	63%	71%
WCARO	53%	61%
ROSA	54%	63%
ESARO	51%	60%
LACRO	37%	55%
MENA	46%	56%
Copenhagen	41%	49%
HQ (all but SD)	28%	36%
GLOBAL	48%	57%

### BY GENDER

Agora was used equally by male (6,468) and female (6,469) staff members. Women and men completed a nearly equal number of learning activities.

**6,468**  
MALE



**6,469**  
FEMALE

## IN FOCUS

# BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF PARTNERS TO DELIVER RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

In 2016, a number of new learning initiatives that aimed to build capacity of partners were made available or promoted on Agora. Social Norms, Social Change (p.26), Measles Control in Emergencies, the Immunization eLearning Initiative (p.23), and mini-courses such as Introduction to RapidPro are just a few examples.

**Agora is built on an open source platform, with very low usage-based costs. More and more UNICEF offices are capitalizing on this opportunity to create online learning products to disseminate technical expertise and promote best practices to external partners, in support of programme delivery. UN partner organizations have also benefitted from Agora for free hosting of major learning initiatives.**



**12,804 ACTIVE LEARNERS**  
WERE NON-UNICEF STAFF,  
REPRESENTING 46% OF  
ACTIVE USERS.

Most external learners report affiliation with NGOs (30%) or UN partner entities (22%). The proportion of users affiliated with government institutions grew significantly, up from 4% in 2015 to 12% in 2016.

## FIVE MOST POPULAR COURSES AMONG UNICEF PARTNERS



**Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)**

1,351 COMPLETED



**Immunization eLearning Initiative courses (collectively)**

933 COMPLETED



**Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) Form**

840 COMPLETED



**Competency-Based Interviewing for Interviewees**

579 COMPLETED



**Introduction to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

501 COMPLETED

# THE AGORA EXPERIENCE 2016 USER FEEDBACK SURVEY

Each year we carry out a survey of Agora users. This year, 132 users responded to the survey, promoted in December on the Agora homepage and in our monthly newsletter. Overall feedback was very positive. Colleagues and partners continue to appreciate Agora for both the features of the platform and content of the catalogue.

## ► USERS APPRECIATE

Access to quality online courses on demand

The use of practical case studies and exercises

The relevance and regular addition of content

Courses in different languages

The new Development Plan

“Everything!”

## ► USERS WOULD LIKE

Learning paths for sections/sectors

A more user-friendly catalogue

Interactions with the authors of courses

To see user ratings of courses

Tracking errors & glitches to be fixed

Solutions for low-bandwidth contexts

(suggesting the need to further build awareness of the Offline Player).

Users expressed interest in accessing additional learning opportunities via Agora on a diversity of subjects, with frequent mention of topics related to humanitarian action, health & nutrition, and skills development (including languages, communication, finance, leadership and management). They would also like to access more courses developed by or with renowned universities.

# STORIES



## STORY 1

# RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT (RBM)

Building capacity to deliver and demonstrate results

## ▲▲▲ OVERVIEW OF THE INITIATIVE

In his opening statement to a 2016 session of UNICEF's Executive Board, Executive Director Anthony Lake pressed for an "unrelenting" focus on achieving results. "Practical actions," Mr. Lake maintained, are what bring to life the rights enshrined in the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the United Nations Charter.

To enhance UNICEF's collective capacity to programme for results, the Field Results Group (FRG), in collaboration with the Learning and Knowledge Exchange Unit of the Division of Data, Research and Policy (DRP) launched a learning package. The initiative consists of three components:

1

An [online course](#), comprising seven modules outlining basic RBM concepts and processes, released in late 2016 in its Beta version to participants of RBM workshops.

2

A [face-to-face workshop](#), consisting of eleven modules, which build on the e-learning course through in-depth training on the application of specific topics in different programming contexts.

3

[Knowledge exchange communities](#), for ongoing discussion amongst colleagues on opportunities and challenges of advancing RBM in UNICEF.

A complementary RBM Handbook, that can be drawn upon for individual or group learning and for reference in offices, will be released in 2017 in English, Spanish, and French.



©UNICEF/UN032220/Nesbitt | UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake speaks at the second regular session of the 2016 UNICEF Executive Board at UNHQ.

 **IN FIGURES: WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?**

The RBM online course was released in its beta version to participants of RBM workshops. 4,310 enrolments and 2,970 completions were recorded in 2016 (exceeding the goal of 2,500).

3,141 staff (well over the annual target of 2,000) participated in 116 face-to-face workshops conducted by RBM Master Trainers across UNICEF (HQ, ROs, and COs).

109 of the 300 RBM Champions (colleagues from around the world tasked to broaden the cultural operation of RBM on ground using RBM) have already joined the RBM Champions Community, launched in October 2016, to share questions, insights and examples of their experience in implementing RBM in their programmes. In addition, 35 RBM Master Trainers exchange on ways to customize and improve the training in a dedicated online community.

**2,970**  
ONLINE COURSE  
COMPLETIONS

**4,310**  
ENROLMENTS IN  
THE ONLINE COURSE

**116**  
FACE-TO-FACE  
WORKSHOPS

**3,141**  
STAFF TRAINED IN  
WORKSHOPS

**109**  
RBM  
CHAMPIONS  
joined a dedicated online  
community

**35**  
RBM MASTER  
TRAINERS  
joined a dedicated online  
community



## IN THE WORDS OF OUR LEARNERS

This level of satisfaction was supported by testimonials from learners, such as:



Module 1: Introduction to RBM at UNICEF

**94% OF LEARNERS RATED THEIR EXPERIENCE OF THE ONLINE COURSE AS GOOD, VERY GOOD, OR EXCELLENT**

“This course should be made mandatory to all Programme Officers at the beginning of their appointment with UNICEF or another UN agency. Unfortunately, I could only do it after 10 years in UNICEF. It would have helped me to understand the issues better, if done much earlier. Thanks!”

“After taking this course I am more confident in applying the Theory of Change, evidence-based planning, programme monitoring and reporting on activities.”

“As an introduction to the concepts and lexicon of RBM, it is just right.”

“UNICEF partners should be exposed to such training for Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) development and approval.”

“This was one of the best online courses I’ve taken. Loved the realistic examples from the field.”

### FEEDBACK ON THE WORKSHOPS WAS EQUALLY POSITIVE



Participants to the June 2016 RBM Workshop in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region

“A real value-added of the face-to-face training was the highly interactive and participatory approach, in working groups and in the very vibrant plenary discussions.”

“The RBM training was extremely motivating for myself and my colleagues, as we enter into the process for developing our new country programme.”

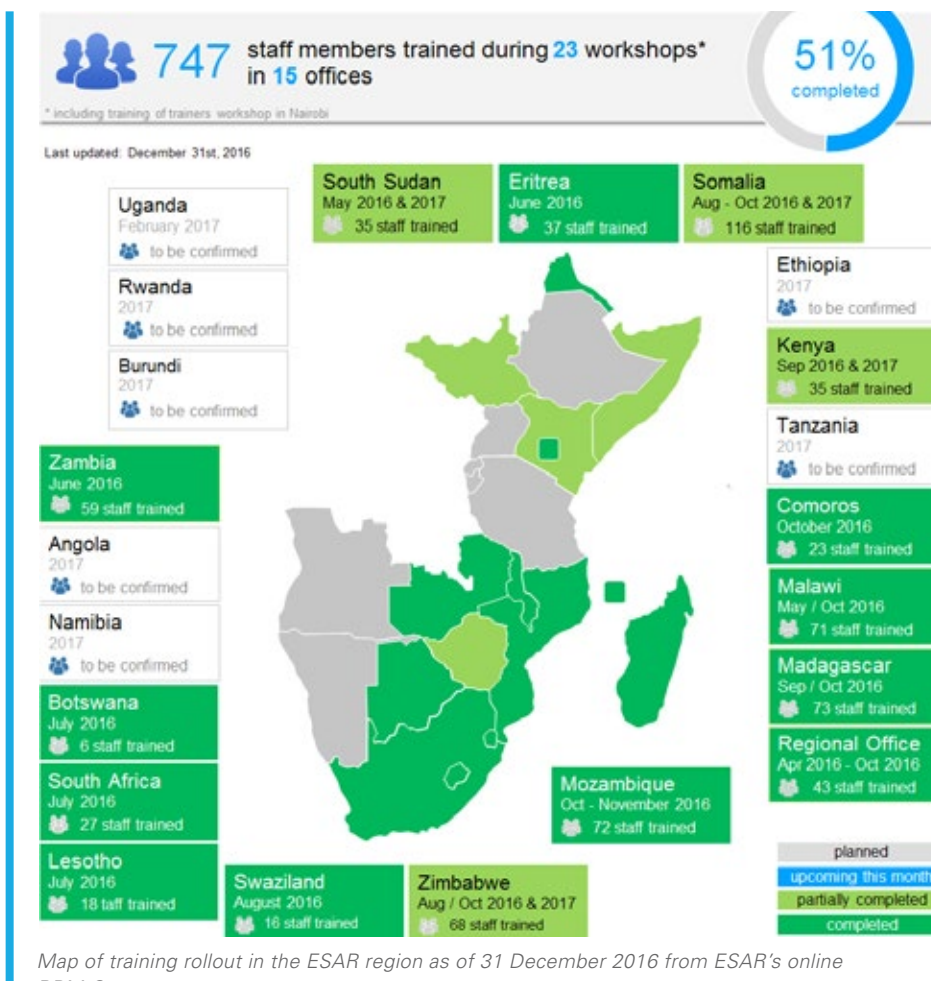
**PRACTICAL RESULTS WERE REPORTED BY REGIONS**



*ROSA Health Team publication: Reducing newborn mortality in South Asia: A results-based management approach to improving knowledge and accelerating results.*

For example, in the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) the training helped with the quality of prioritization and formulation of results in four Country Programme Documents that were under development at the time of the training. Sections embraced the renewed emphasis on RBM, as demonstrated by the ROSA Health Team’s release and sharing (in the community of practice) of a flagship publication entitled: [Reducing newborn mortality in South Asia: A results-based management approach to improving knowledge and accelerating results.](#)

In the Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESAR), an online ‘RBM corner,’ set up in August 2016, receives an average of 115 unique monthly visits. Other regions have followed suite with dedicated SharePoint sites to share the latest updates on rollout of RBM training in their regions.







## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **Defining and explaining RBM concepts in simple terms was no easy task.** The development of the learning materials was challenging, requiring consultation and consensus building across divisions and with colleagues at different levels. Feedback from learners confirmed the need for a common language for programming, and the contribution of the course to this end.
- ▶ **Releasing an early version of the online course led to substantial technical issues.** The Beta release of the online course presented tracking issues that led to learners' frustration and to significant extra work for the Agora team to troubleshoot issues.
- ▶ **The package effectively supports country-programming milestones.** Experiences of UNICEF country offices developing a new Country Programme Document were best, as the learning was immediately applied. Overall, when the course was linked to a programming milestone, participants were most attentive and eager to learn.
- ▶ **Tailor-made approaches require more preparation time but the investment is worthwhile.** In the LAC region, almost all offices preferred to work with tangible cases from their own country programme or similar contexts. 'Champion' trainers, who received a one-week orientation to ensure quality, consistency and adaptation to the country context, facilitated this process.
- ▶ **Learners expressed demand for additional opportunities for reflection and exchange.** The communities of practice may be directed to facilitate continuing exchange on common challenges faced while applying the RBM framework (e.g. negotiating with donors on conditions impacting activities/results), concrete examples (e.g. good results frameworks, theory of change narratives, country evaluations, donor reports) and good practices from different sectors.
- ▶ **While initially intended for UNICEF staff, the online course and workshops are proving to be of use also to national counterparts, UN country teams, and other development partners,** to build capacity and common language for programming. The workshop material will be customised in 2017 for this purpose.



## STORY 2

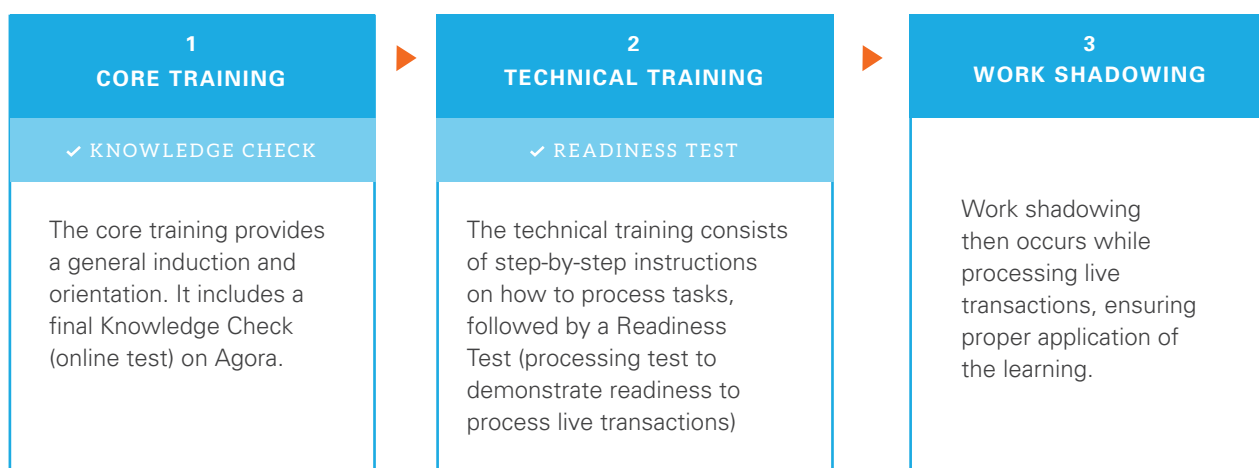
# GLOBAL SHARED SERVICES CENTRE (GSSC)

Excellence through on-boarding and technical training

### ▲▲▲ OVERVIEW OF THE INITIATIVE

UNICEF's Global Shared Services Centre was established in September 2015 to increase efficiency in processing transactions in the fields of finance, payroll, human resources and IT. Within the space of one year, around 300 new staff were recruited and trained to take over the processing of all transactions from all regions.

Their training consisted of the following building blocks:



The first two stages of this process relied heavily on Agora for the management of all learning activities in a blended approach.

The core training consisted of a face-to-face session and several mandatory e-learning courses (e.g. "Ethics and Integrity at UNICEF"). Agora was used to enrol participants, structure and deliver resources and video tutorials, provide easy access to mandatory e-learning courses, create and deliver a Knowledge Check in the form of a multiple choice quiz and host a short survey on the language skills of new staff (their language certificates).

Technical training was delivered face-to-face using training databases of VISION and MyCase. Agora was used to share supporting documents (e.g. invoices, purchase orders, etc.) for processing exercises, provide instructions and administer the "Readiness Test". During the Readiness Test, students had to document their processing steps of selected transactions, including screenshots, and submit this as an assignment. Instructors were notified by Agora of the submissions, and graded the attempts. Students were, in turn, notified of the grades entered into Agora.

Agora makes it possible to access real-time records of participation in new hire training as well as all the results of Core Knowledge Checks and Technical Readiness Tests for staff working at the GSSC.



### IN FIGURES: WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?

**279**  
STAFF  
MEMBERS  
COMPLETED  
THE CORE  
TRAINING

279 new staff members completed the core training.

In the fields of finance, data management payroll and HR administration, 100% of locally recruited staff members processing transactions were “certified,” having undertaken technical training and passed the readiness test. Technical training was provided in eight different fields of processing with the number of sessions varying according to the number of recruitments in the given field.

This systematic and innovative on-boarding approach is certainly one of the reasons the GSSC is reaching high performance standards after only a year of existence. The table below indicates the percentage of processing requests closed within the deadline defined in the Service Level Agreement as of the end of January 2017.

STREAM	SLA ACHIEVEMENT
Finance	99%
Master Data Management	100%
Payroll	97%
HR Administration	99%



UNICEF Global Shared Services Centre



## IN THE WORDS OF OUR LEARNERS

These are some comments received from participants of our Core Training sessions:

“I appreciated that facts and figures were followed by other activities, for instance matching games, knowledge checks, etc. I also liked the interactive way of organizing the training.”

“I feel that the training could benefit from an additional segment at the end - a discussion on the topics covered, to review what was learnt.”

“It was nice to learn of lots of new information about UNICEF and the UN. I feel even more proud and honoured to be part of this organization.”

“The Core Training was very well-structured. The topics were interesting and informative even for people coming from the UN system. The activities/games were also well picked.”

“I would suggest having other staff members join and help start off discussions by sharing their experiences and views.”



## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **It is possible to develop and deliver complex blended training initiatives using the native features of Agora** without support from external vendors / developers.
- ▶ **Face-to-face sessions and online learning complement each other effectively.** Online content offers flexibility in terms of timing and pacing, while face-to-face components are best for acquiring skills where human interaction is important (e.g. through group exercises).
- ▶ **The reporting features of Agora allow for monitoring completion** of mandatory training, to help ensure that staff members are properly trained.
- ▶ **Course pages can be used as repositories to deliver reference documents.**
- ▶ **The current user management setup of Agora was challenging for this initiative** in that many new hires who were not yet registered in VISION needed to log in to Agora at least once before course organizers could enrol them in a training programme.



## STORY 3

# THE IMMUNIZATION E-LEARNING INITIATIVE

UNICEF and WHO partner to build global capacities

### ▲▲▲ OVERVIEW OF THE INITIATIVE

The Immunization eLearning Initiative (IEI) is a series of online courses designed to help the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) professionals strengthen knowledge and skills deemed vital to achieve national, regional, and global immunization goals. UNICEF and WHO co-developed the initiative, with a curriculum based on feedback from a 2014 Global Survey. Through that survey, more than 520 WHO and UNICEF staff members working in immunization identified the training topics that would have the most impact on immunization support. The IEI courses reflect those insights.

The Immunization eLearning Initiative e-courses (over 16 hours of instruction) are available through Agora to anyone working in support of EPI.



©UNICEF/UNI155431/Ohanesian | In Somalia, a girl receives a dose of oral polio vaccine.

**ONE "ORIENTATION" COURSE**

[Immunization Staff Orientation](#)  
(6 MODULES, 10-40 MIN EACH)

**THREE "MINI COURSES" (< 1 HOUR)**

[Multi-Dose Vial Policy\\*](#)  
(15MIN)

[Vaccine Vial Monitors](#)  
(25MIN)

[Microplanning for Immunization\\*](#) (45 MIN)

**FOUR "CORE" COURSES**

[Immunization Supply Chain Management\\*](#)  
(6 MODULES, 30-35 MIN EACH)

[Communication for Immunization\\*](#)  
(5 MODULES, 30-45 MIN EACH)

[Immunization Coverage Data](#)  
(5 MODULES, 25-40 MIN EACH)

[Planning for Immunization](#)  
(1 MODULE, 60 MIN)

**FIVE "ADVANCED ISCM" COURSES**

[Temperature Monitoring in the Vaccine Cold Chain\\*](#)  
(40 MIN)

[Solar-Powered Cold Chain Equipment](#) (60 MIN) ±

How to Use Passive Containers and Coolant Packs (40 MIN) ±

How to Design a Repair and Maintenance System for Cold Chain Equipment (45 MIN) ±

How to Manage Immunization Stock (45 MIN) ±

\* ALSO AVAILABLE IN FRENCH ± COMING SOON



**IN FIGURES: WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?**

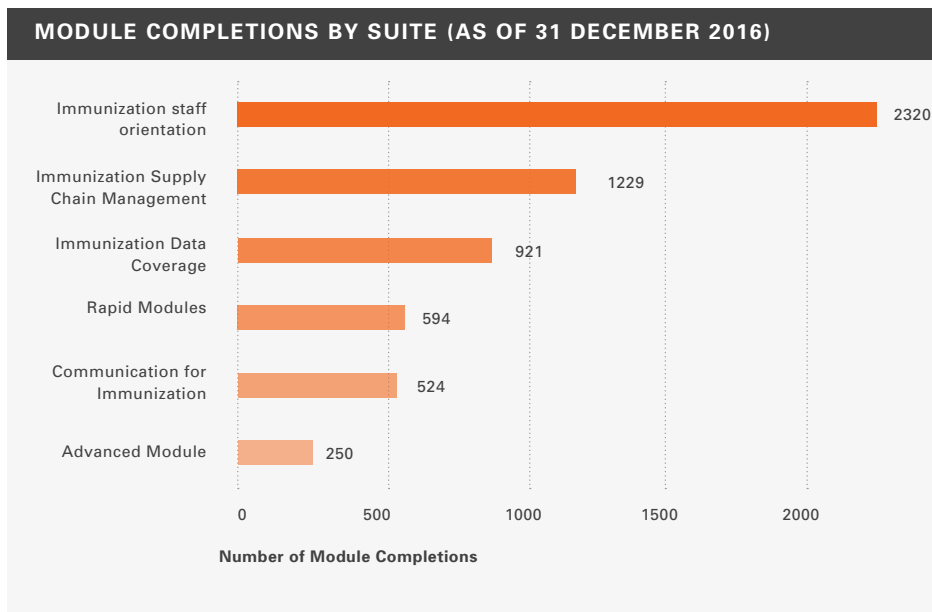
To-date more than 3,900 professionals across 104 countries have enrolled in this programme. These enrollees have completed over 5,800 modules (2,800+ hours of training).

**3,900**  
ENROLMENTS

**104**  
COUNTRIES

**5,800**  
MODULES

**2,800+**  
HOURS OF TRAINING





## IN THE WORDS OF OUR LEARNERS

Course participants shared the following feedback on their experience:

“I feel confident that these courses will sharpen my overall knowledge on immunization.”

“The entire content was great. All very relevant. I especially appreciate how current and practical the information and examples are.”

“I really appreciated the flexibility of the modules. Depending on your workload, you can leave and resume whenever possible to continue the module.”

“I got to solve challenges, real-world and very motivating.”

“I will use this knowledge by comparing the cold chain and logistics management practices in my current responsibilities with the same in this course and overcome any gap.”

“I came to understand some really basic things that I used to take for granted.”

“These courses should be made mandatory for all UNICEF staff members supporting immunization.”



## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **Learners appreciate real world, relevant scenario-based instruction.**
- ▶ **Learners are more willing to complete modules of shorter duration (e.g. 15-30 minutes).**
- ▶ **Word-of-mouth is a critical channel for sharing information about such courses**
- ▶ **Course utilization is stronger in regions/countries in which senior management routinely:**
  - encourages staff to enrol in online learning programmes and include immunization e-learning as part of their annual evaluation;
  - prioritizes which courses staff should take, so learning is appropriate and not overwhelming;
  - sets a specific timeline in which to complete a specific course.
- ▶ **It is important to continue to raise awareness of the availability of Agora’s offline player.** A number of learners requested to take the courses offline and were not aware of that option.



## STORY 4

# SOCIAL NORMS, SOCIAL CHANGE MOOC

A popular course now available to the world, for free

### ▲▲▲ OVERVIEW OF THE INITIATIVE

UNICEF began to focus on social conventions and social norms in 2003 through study of the practice of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). The example is illustrative: families carry out FGM/C in order to ensure the marriageability and status of their daughters within the intramarrying group. For marriage, and to ensure the status of the family, what one family chooses to do depends on what other families in that community choose to do. No one family can abandon the practice on its own. Recognising that a number of harmful practices enjoy some degree of social acceptance and are most likely to change through collective action, UNICEF has since made substantial investment in developing the skills and knowledge necessary to design, implement, and manage programmes that result in positive social norms.

To maximize this investment, in 2016 UNICEF launched its first [Massive Open Online Course \(MOOC\) on 'Social Norms, Social Change.'](#) Developed jointly by the Learning and Knowledge Exchange Unit /Division of Data, Research and Policy (DRP) and the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn), the course consists of eight weeks coursework, divided into two parts and integrating videos, readings, quizzes and discussion forums. Hosted on the Coursera platform, it can be freely accessed by anyone, UNICEF staff or partner.

The MOOC draws on content of a two-week face-to-face workshop run by UPenn for UNICEF since 2010. Participants learn how to diagnose social

norms, determine whether they cause certain behaviors, and introduce tools to promote positive change. Drawing from UNICEF's experience in the field, the course features examples of norms that sustain behaviours like child marriage, gender-based violence, and poor sanitation practices. Through video interviews filmed especially for the MOOC with colleagues from around the world, from Sudan to Haiti, participants learn from cases of remarkable change in entrenched social practices.

UNICEF and the University of Pennsylvania  
are pleased to announce

## SOCIAL NORMS, SOCIAL CHANGE

A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)  
for anyone interested in positively transforming societies.

**FREE**  
web-based and  
open to all!

Starting  
20 June 2016

Learn more and self-register at:  
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/norms/>

This is a course on social norms, the rules that glue societies together. It teaches how to diagnose social norms, and how to distinguish them from other social constructs, like customs, practices or conventions. These distinctions are crucial for effective policy interventions aimed to create new, beneficial norms or eliminate harmful ones. Through lectures from Professor Becker, discussions and assignments the course explores the following questions: What are social norms? How can social norms be measured? How can change and long term social progress be achieved? Drawing from UNICEF's experience in the field, the course includes many examples of norms that sustain behaviors like child marriage, gender violence and poor sanitation practices.

Questions? Email Dylan Welch at [dwelch@unicef.org](mailto:dwelch@unicef.org)

Flyer advertising the course





## IN FIGURES: WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?

**21,000**  
ENROLMENTS

The MOOC attracted some 21,000 enrolments, of which some 6,600 became active learners. As of 30 December 2016, 776 participants had completed Part 1 and 108 had completed Part II.

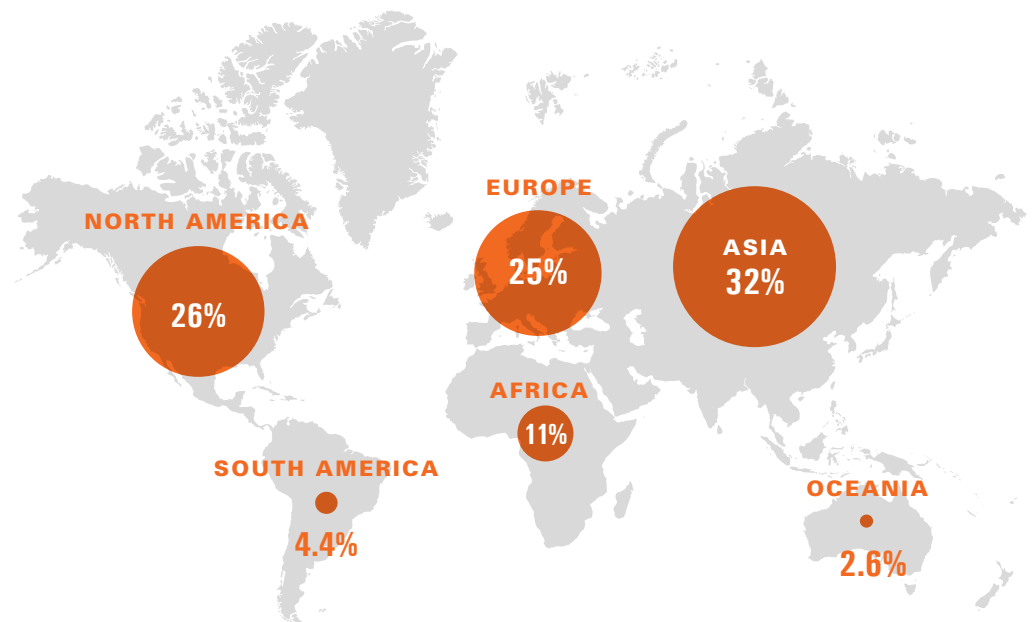
**6,600**  
ACTIVE  
LEARNERS

Despite significant drops in numbers from enrolment to active participation, and from active participation to completion, the course achieved its goal of reaching many more stakeholders than those who could previously participate in the workshop (50-60 per year). Although user analytics by organization type are not provided by Coursera, testimonials were submitted by members of the broad target audience representing UNICEF, partner organizations (e.g. Plan International, World Bank), governments, universities, and civil society.

**776**  
COMPLETED  
PART ONE

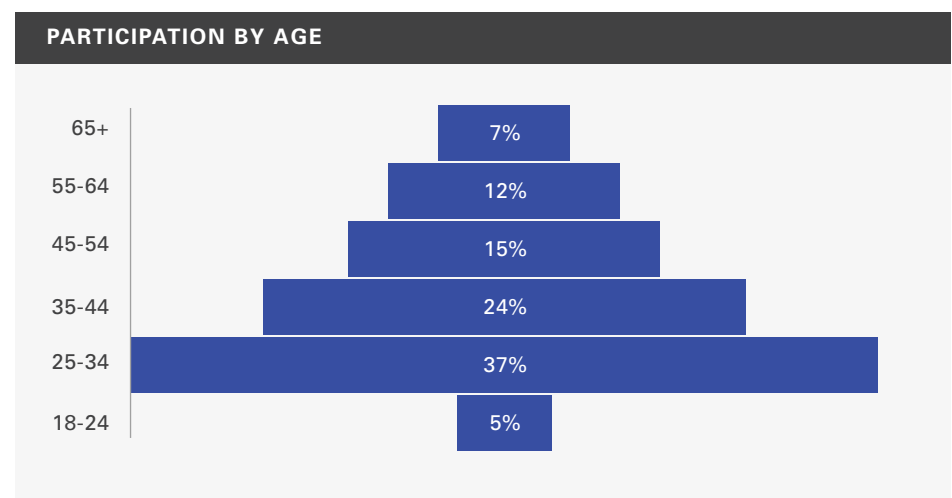
Participants came from all continents, with the strongest participation from Asia. The age spread was relatively wide, with 40% in the 25-34 range.

**108**  
COMPLETED  
PART TWO



Participation by region

**37%**  
OF USERS  
IN THE 25-34  
AGE RANGE



## “ IN THE WORDS OF OUR LEARNERS

98% of the 2,709 participants who voted indicated that they 'liked' the course. In addition, among those sharing a public rating, the course received an average of 4.6/5 stars (4.5 for Part I and 4.7 for Part II).

This level of satisfaction was supported by testimonials from learners:

**98% OF 2,709 PARTICIPANTS WHO VOTED INDICATED THAT THEY "LIKED" THE COURSE**

**“It was really exciting that all examples were from UNICEF practice. I hope to apply my new knowledge in our anti-bullying programme.”**

– EDUCATION OFFICER, UNICEF UKRAINE

**“As a Health Officer, I am always amazed at the complexity of human behavior and the unique decision-making algorithm that accompanies it. Many a colleague have decried why despite high levels of knowledge on HIV and AIDS, people are not changing their behaviors. While I understand the broad social determinants of health, how people's beliefs, customs and attitudes interact with wider social norms has always raised my curiosity. I thus leapt at the opportunity to take this course. I thank you for your crystal clear lectures and detailed notes that offer useful learning resources, as well as a well-researched, well-designed course that is easy to follow both on a computer desktop and on Android phone whenever I have to travel to the field.**

– HEALTH OFFICER, UNICEF KENYA

**“This course...helped me to understand how different factors such as culture, religion, mentality etc. influence decision-making and finally how all these variables can be tracked and measured.”**

– POLITICAL SCIENTIST, PARLIAMENT OF MACEDONIA

**“This was my first online course and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I would like to attend more of your classes.”**

– DEPUTY DIRECTOR, INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

**“I loved that the course was grounded in theory of development issues as well as smaller, easy-to-grasp examples. It drew a wonderful connection that helps the student envision this same knowledge in their own experiences in the field.”**

– MASTERS CANDIDATE IN DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

**“I come from a small village in the Western part of Ghana where people [believe] that there are witches or some bad spirit in the community. Therefore, anyone who moves on ought not return, else he or she would be killed. This belief has prevented many successful people from ever coming back to the community. It has prevented the community from developing, and children and youth from enjoying the benefit of having more educated and successful people in their community. I am always in the community during vacation. I have tried several ways to change the normative beliefs of my colleagues about this issue, but they did not work. This course has given me numerous insights I can use to cause the change that ought to have occurred.”**

– STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST, GHANA



## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **The partnership and cost-sharing arrangement with UPenn proved beneficial to both parties, resulting in a compelling blend of theoretical and practical content.** UNICEF benefitted from the expertise of Professor Cristina Bicchieri and the University's Program Design and Delivery team, as well as UPenn's existing arrangement with Coursera. UPenn, in turn, appreciated UNICEF's contribution, especially the videos from Country Offices filmed especially for the course.
- ▶ **The development of a MOOC is a lengthy process.** The process took 1.5 years, on par with industry standards. Based on a less participatory content delivery model (as compared to a face-to-face course), the MOOC format requires clear and short video lectures, with 3 formative assessment questions per 20 minutes of video content, and other activities.
- ▶ **Breaking the course into two parts at the last minute (to revise content) caused significant confusion** and resulted in a drop in participation between the parts.
- ▶ **MOOCs allow us to reach a vastly wider audience. However, it is key to be able to assess the extent to which this coincides with our primary target audience.** The Coursera platform did not allow us to access user analytics by organization-type, nor to identify how many UNICEF staff members took the course. In contrast, the Agora platform collects and allows reporting on such metrics.
- ▶ **The importance of practical arrangements is not to be underestimated.** The process for UNICEF staff to receive a free certificate via Coursera proved complicated, with significant support required from the Agora Team. In addition, relying on UPenn as a liaison in the absence of our own Coursera account presented a challenge, as UPenn had to create a new admin level status to allow us administrative access.

The background is a solid pink color with a repeating pattern of small, dark blue triangles pointing in various directions. Scattered throughout the background are several white icons, including speech bubbles, books, graduation caps, Wi-Fi symbols, and a mouse cursor.

# PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

# 1 LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES PUBLISHED

The Agora catalogue consisted of 1,428 learning activities as of 31 December 2016.

## AMONG ACTIVITIES PUBLISHED IN 2016 WERE

39

NEW UNICEF CUSTOM ONLINE LEARNING PACKAGES

5

UNICEF VIDEOS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

84

NEW COURSES AND ACTIVITIES FROM THE SKILLSOFT LIBRARY OF SKILLS-BASED COURSES

(e.g. Business Skills & Leadership, IT Skills & Certification, Digital Skills & Compliance). Over a hundred unused or outdated Skillssoft assets were also retired.

93

MOOCS RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF UNICEF STAFF MEMBERS

16

UN SYSTEM COURSES

(2 from UN; 11 from FAO; 1 from UN Women; 2 from UNITAR)



©UNICEF/UN08247/Khuzaiie | *Welcome to UNICEF* is a new flagship introduction to the history, work, values and priorities of the organization.

### ORIENTATION:

- [Welcome to UNICEF](#)
- [9 GSSC orientation curricula](#) (see p.20)
- [The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Induction](#)
- [The Private Sector Fundraising and Partnerships Orientation series](#)
- [Advanced Security in the Field \(new release\)](#)



The PPP online course allows staff and partners to familiarise themselves with UNICEF's programming processes at their own pace.

### PROGRAMMING:

- [Results-Based Management \(Beta\)](#)
- [Programme Planning Process \(PPP\)](#)
- Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) Form translated into [Spanish](#) and [Portuguese](#)
- Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

<sup>1</sup>Massive Open Online Courses are online courses using a mix of self-learning (quizzes, videos, documents) and peer-learning (discussions, peer-reviewed assignments) elements. Many MOOCs are delivered by renowned universities and offered free of charge.



*Procurement at UNICEF is a comprehensive self-learning solution for the many staff members involved in procurement initiatives.*

**SUPPLY AND PROCUREMENT:**

- [Procurement at UNICEF](#): 4 modules of 8 lessons, created by the Supply Division
- [Vision Supply Chain courses](#), also by the Supply Division



©UNICEF/UNI172870/Niaz  
*The Cold Chain Logistics and Vaccine Management course provides actors of the GPEI initiative with access to quality training.*

**SECTORS / TECHNICAL TRAINING:**

- [Social Norms, Social Change](#): A MOOC co-developed by UNICEF and UPenn (see p.26)
- [Strengthening Enabling Environment for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene \(WASH\)](#)
- [10 courses in the Immunization eLearning series](#) (see p.23)
- [Cold Chain Logistics and Vaccine Management during Polio Supplementary Immunization Activities](#)
- Measles Control in Humanitarian Settings



*Agora hosts the HeForShe course, developed by UN Women for staff, partners and the general public.*

**ETHICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS:**

- Ethics in Evidence Generation localized in Portuguese and Chinese
- [UN Human Rights Responsibilities](#): A new UN system mandatory training hosted on Agora on behalf of OHCHR for those without access to Inspira
- [Building Gender IQ](#)
- [Inclusive Communication](#) video training

**▶ HOW IS ONLINE LEARNING DEVELOPED IN UNICEF?**

For most UNICEF online learning projects, the Agora Team provides technical support upon request from subject matter experts from a UNICEF office or division. This may include recommendations on choice of technologies, high-level instructional design, and project management. The Agora Team manages and provides access to various Long-Term Agreements with online learning service providers, allowing rapid response to demand, using vetted vendors who have experience working with UNICEF. Finally, testing and set up on the Agora platform is usually managed centrally by the Agora Team. The team is also more directly involved in strategic cross-sectoral and high priority learning initiatives.

Contact us at [agora@unicef.org](mailto:agora@unicef.org) to find out more.

## IN FOCUS

# THE NEW AGORA DEVELOPMENT PLAN SOLUTION

An innovative tool to promote development best practices

The screenshot displays the 'My Goals' interface. At the top, there's a 'My Goals' header with an 'Add new development goal' button. The main goal is 'Develop networking skills', which is currently 'In Progress'. It includes a description, 'Related work plan deliverables (3)', and 'Learning activities (2)'. Two learning activities are listed: 'Networking Leadership 101: Building Your Core Professional Network' and 'Professional Networking Essentials: Finding Opportunities To Make Connections'. Below the goal list are three buttons: 'Add Personal Learning', 'Create Personal Learning', and 'Add Personal Learning'. The 'Activities for my review' section shows two items: 'Implement and learn to use Adapt Authoring tool' and 'RBM workshop'. The 'Create plan' section includes a 'Development discussion' tab, a 'Year wrap up' tab, and a 'Print version' button. A text box prompts the user to 'Add a comment', and there are 'Sign off' buttons for 'My signature' and 'Manager's endorsement'.

Agora's development planning tool

On 1 March 2016, a new development planning solution was launched on Agora. With this tool, each staff member can create a unique learning plan linked to his or her Performance Review on Achieve.

## PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT PLANNING BEST PRACTICES IN UNICEF

The new tool is simple to use, with all details displayed on one page. As it sits in Agora, it allows **easy access to hundreds of development activities** that can be attached to the plan in a few clicks. The system automatically reports **progress and completion**. Other activities, formal or informal, can be added to the plan in the form of 'personal learning' activities.

An important change is the **focus on development goals rather than the completion of specific courses or learning activities**. Staff members and their managers are encouraged to identify formal or informal learning opportunities throughout the year. Goals can be linked to work plan deliverables as defined in the PER in Achieve, through live synchronization between the two platforms.

Each plan is developed by a learner and his/her direct supervisor. At the bottom of the plan, **the discussion and approval process can be documented** in a workflow similar to the one used in the Achieve PER process.

With the introduction of this tool, development plans are, for the first time, captured globally in a **structured format that allows reporting** on learning intentions, goals and progress monitoring. Access to development planning reports has been delegated (in Q4 of 2016) to hundreds of HR professionals and learning focal points worldwide.

# IN FOCUS

## DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: 2016 IN FIGURES

### 50% OF STAFF MEMBERS MADE USE OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING FEATURE IN 2016

The launch of the development planning solution rapidly led to a surge in enrolments.

About 50% of staff members made use of the development planning feature in 2016.

Over the year, 22% (5,532) of learning activities completed by fixed-term & permanent staff (the users of Achieve Performance Plans) had been planned on Development Plans. This peaked in Q3 where 52% of completed learning had been planned in advance.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPTAKE	% OF STAFF MEMBERS
Have added one (or more) activities	57%
Have created one (or more) development goals	48%
Have linked a performance deliverable to a development goal	43%
The plan creation phase was formally signed off by the staff member and/or her/his manager	49%

### CHALLENGES

Development planning is not part of any (learning or performance management) policy. It is not formally required in the performance review process, nor was it mentioned in any global communication related to the PER. This explains why figures are lower than for the Achieve process. As such, the new solution can only be presented to learners as a tool that can help them develop more strategically and effectively or facilitate development discussion with their manager.

The reporting line data from VISION has around 10% of staff with missing or incorrect supervisor information. We developed a Manager block that made the assigned supervisor visible and enabled users to add a Temporary Manager.

Not all staff understand the steps required to link an activity to a goal, with some leaving pre-selected activities in the "Activities for My Review" section of the plan. We will need more targeted communication and training to address this.

### OPPORTUNITIES

Overall, the tool is well received by learners, who manage to make the most of all features with little to no training. As HR and Learning Focal Points can now be given access to reports (such as a mapping of the "learning intentions" of colleagues in their office), they are better equipped to plan how to support learning needs.

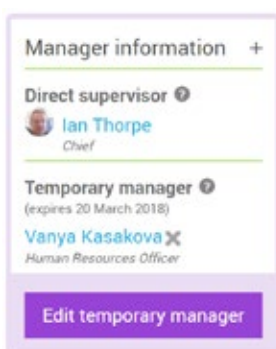


## 2 FEATURES UPDATES

### 2.1 AGORA DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Development Planning solution, integrated with the Achieve Performance Management system, was the most significant new feature launched this year (see p. 33).

### 2.2 TEMPORARY MANAGER BLOCK



Information on the direct supervisor of staff members is automatically retrieved from VISION HR data to Agora. For most staff members, this information is accurate.

However, for over 10% of colleagues information was missing or inaccurate, due primarily to vacant posts or temporary managerial arrangements. With the Manager Information block, which appears on the record of learning and development plan pages, staff members can easily verify the accuracy of the information received from VISION HR and self-select an additional temporary manager if needed. The temporary manager will have the same rights as the 'official' manager to view the record of learning, approve certain enrolment requests, and sign off on development plans.

### 2.3 MUMBAI CDN IMPLEMENTATION



A significant percentage of Agora users come from the South Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa regions. Traditionally, these regions have suffered from rather poor internet access, as cloud providers rarely have servers available there. When it became possible to host Agora courses and resources on a server in Mumbai (India), we decided to adapt the hosting infrastructure with the hope that it would better support users in both regions (as several undersea cables serving east Africa come from Mumbai). While it is early to draw conclusions (the implementation was completed in early December 2016), initial figures indicate a reduction of 30% in time needed to load pages and course content.

### 2.4 OTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN BRIEF

#### New Active Directory Federation Services (ADFS) responsive design page

Agora became the first UNICEF system to adopt the responsive corporate login page, allowing easy access on phones and tablets.

#### Reporting improvements

To ensure better quality of reporting data, a review of reports led to the development of a solution to automate their production at regular intervals and better define geographic audiences.

#### Skillsoft upgrade to Version 8

We completed the upgrade of the Skillsoft backend platform. The main result is an improved experience for the users of the Books 24/7 library. We are also now able to begin implementation of the Skillsoft mobile app, which appears to be a promising solution.

#### Publishing Workflows

To support secondary administrators in publishing learning assets on Agora, we produced a video on the publishing workflow, as well as a User Manual and a learning activity page.

## 3 SUPPORT

As in 2015, the workload associated with all support and troubleshooting tasks is estimated as equivalent to a full-time job, shared among the team members.

### 3.1 END USER SUPPORT

#### 3.1.1. Support through the [agora@unicef.org](mailto:agora@unicef.org) mailbox

The number of support requests remained steady throughout most of the year, at around 10 to 15 per day. Most requests were easily answered by guidance, with the remainder consisting of course-related issues (e.g. completion tracking, missing plugins on the user's computer, or bugs within the courses themselves). 95% of issues were addressed by the end of the following working day.

#### 3.1.2. Support through the Service Manager

Out of 336 incidents registered, 61% were managed by the Agora Team, with the remainder handled by the Global Help Desk and other entities. This is a small amount of incidents overall, indicating that learners use the generic [agora@unicef.org](mailto:agora@unicef.org) mailbox for all types of requests.

### THREE PROJECTS GENERATED A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL REQUESTS THIS YEAR

**The launch of the new development plan** required accompanying guidance as the process was new to most staff members. In addition, there were occasional technical issues. *Response:* Additional handouts, training sessions and global email messages were sent to support users. Issues have been resolved and a number of improvements initiated through a new contract with the LMS implementing vendor.

**The early release of the RBM** course in its Beta version led to many tracking issues. The vendor did not address the issues for months, and hundreds of cases had to be handled "manually." *Response:* Temporary solutions were found for the problematic modules, and the e-learning vendor will not be recommended for future projects.

**The release of the Social Norms, Social Change MOOC** before many course delivery aspects were clarified (e.g. when Part 2 would be available, what statistics and information UNICEF would be able to obtain, how we would be able to provide certificates free of charge) led to some frustration from learners and extra work for the team. *Response:* Solutions now exist for these issues. The programme is delivered on a rolling basis (every few weeks) with minimum need for support. (see p.26)

### 3.2 SECONDARY ADMINISTRATORS SUPPORT

With the continued decentralization of the learning function, it became increasingly important to provide support and guidance to learning specialists and learning focal points in various divisions and offices. Different levels of administrative rights are provided based on the needs of colleagues. This provides a great level of autonomy for teams working on projects through Agora. The Agora Team is available to troubleshoot or assist with technical requests.

### 3.3 SYSTEM TESTING AND BUG FIXING

As no major software upgrade was performed in 2016, the testing and bug fixing workload was reduced as compared to 2015. Its primary focus was on the release of the new Development Planning solution and subsequent improvements and fixes. The second biggest area remained the integration with other systems to obtain staff members' and/or consultants' details. A contract signed at the end of 2016 will lead in 2017 to receipt of better information on temporary staff members and consultants, smoother change of status between external user, temporary staff, consultant and staff member, and easier connection to Agora from other internal systems without the need to re-identify as a UNICEF staff member.



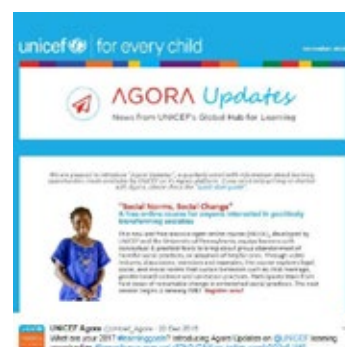
## 4 COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

### 4.1 SYSTEM DEMONSTRATIONS AND OVERVIEW SESSIONS

In addition to providing a few general overview presentations of the system, mostly to UNHQ divisions, the Agora Team focused on introducing the publishing workflows and new development plan features. In 2017, we will refocus on general presentations of Agora and the services provided by the Learning and Knowledge Exchange team - especially to new staff and consultants.

### 4.2 "AGORA UPDATES" NEWSLETTERS

The team sent monthly newsletters to staff members, featuring highlights of new courses, new features and relevant MOOCs starting soon. The impact of each newsletter on connections to Agora was measurable, and the annual user survey confirmed the usefulness of this information channel to staff members. We also sent our first newsletter targeting external partners registered on Agora.



### 4.3 EXTERNAL PROMOTION

We presented Agora to other UN agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, the UN Secretariat, WHO) who expressed interest in the adoption of a similar platform. The Agora Team leveraged existing and new partnerships with UN agencies, IOs and INGOs to disseminate information on UNICEF online courses. To enable outreach to wider audiences, we initiated more systematic and strategic use of Facebook, Twitter and Yammer, continued to promote new courses on sites such as ReliefWeb, WhyDev, and Human Rights Careers, and helped other divisions and offices to share information on relevant courses with external partners.

### 4.4 PARTNERSHIPS

We signed new agreements with IOM, OCHA and the Humanitarian Leadership Academy to share online courses. These come in addition to the 11 agreements already signed in 2014 and 2015 with UN agencies and NGO partners. We also responded to requests from UN Women and OHCHR, providing them a solution to disseminate online learning initiatives ("UN Human Rights Responsibilities" and "Gender IQ") to large audiences, without having to pay a user-based license fee. Finally, collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania allowed us to develop and host our first MOOC through the Coursera platform.

## 5 GENERAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT

### 5.1 EXTENSION OF THE LONG-TERM AGREEMENT (LTA)

Following discovery of discrepancies between the RFP documentation, the original CRC submission, and the LTA, the Agora Team initiated a market review, eventually requesting an 18-month extension of the LTA for the hosting, maintenance and custom development of the Agora platform. Preparation of the required documentation (technical validation, evidence of value for money) took a significant amount of time, followed by months of internal systems challenges, which put the continued availability of the system at risk.

Learning from these experiences, the project team will initiate the complex work of a new RFP as early as Q1 of 2017. The new LTA should include provision for the continuation of services for at least 4 years, to ensure that more time is spent supporting learners, learning specialists and managers, and less managing procurement and contracting processes.

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### 5.2 PROJECT TEAM

In 2016, the Agora Team was composed of one fixed-term position (P3), one temporary position (P2), and two consultant positions.

With the growing number of online learning initiatives developed by UNICEF around the globe, the team began to engage less frequently in the direct management of projects or in provision of technical support at critical steps, often relying on the expertise of other technical learning specialists (in DHR, ICTD, Supply Division, DFAM).

On that basis, we no longer have a consultant position solely dedicated to supporting online learning initiatives. Instead, we recruited a "Learning Portfolio Management Specialist" who will focus on strategic communication and curation of the global learning offering, in addition to providing technical support to key e-learning projects. We are glad to welcome Haley Horan for this position. Haley previously worked with the UN System Staff College and other UN organizations on learning, knowledge exchange and communication initiatives.

The background is a solid orange color with a repeating pattern of small orange triangles pointing downwards. Scattered throughout the pattern are several white icons: a speech bubble, an open book, a graduation cap, a Wi-Fi signal, a mouse cursor, and a play button.

# LOOKING FORWARD

## LOOKING FORWARD

### BY ABEL HENRY, AGORA PROJECT MANAGER

In 2017, a new **UNICEF Learning Strategy** will help structure and reinforce the decentralized learning function in UNICEF. The Agora Team will continue to provide services to all learning actors in the organization to promote **quality, clarity and consistency in the global offering of learning opportunities**.

To this end, the team will focus on the following priorities for 2017:

**Curator of the learning portfolio:** We will update the Agora catalogue in view of organizational priorities and user feedback. New Learning Paths and Channels will guide learners according to their areas of responsibility and interest to formal and informal learning opportunities.

**Communication and outreach for learning:** We will develop and share guidance and templates with Learning Specialists for the promotion of their initiatives, promote development planning best practices, disseminate newsletters and messages, and invest in social media to promote initiatives to partners.

**Streamlining of our content development support services:** As an increasing number of learning initiatives emerge across the organization, we will provide guidance on technologies, instructional design and project management. We will continue to ensure easy access to specialized vendors through LTAs, and encourage the development of video-based and multi-device content. Direct management of e-learning initiatives will be limited to crosscutting and emerging issues and critical initiatives.

**Platform improvements and integration:** The main developments to expect in 2017 are better search capabilities and improved integration with other UNICEF systems. A new integration with the onboarding platform, combined with the creation of Learning Paths, will ensure early and systematic induction of new staff. We will engage in the design of a new phase of development based on the needs of learners and managers as well as innovations in learning technology. A new procurement process will identify a vendor to support the development, hosting and maintenance of Agora for the next three to four years.

**Delegation of administrative rights and access to learning reports:** In support of a decentralized learning function, the Agora team will provide more training and delegate more rights to authors and secondary administrators. We will improve the quality of reporting tools and scale up the delegation of reports, particularly in support of development planning and mandatory training compliance monitoring.

**Partnerships:** We will continue to invest in partnerships with UN agencies, INGOs and academic institutions to source relevant content, promote UNICEF courses externally, jointly develop new programmes including MOOCs, and collaborate on platform improvements with those who share the same open source platform.

These developments and the continuation of current initiatives will ensure access to relevant learning opportunities and services for staff and partners around the world in support of individual performance, organizational change and implementation of the Strategic Plan.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you any questions related to this report or how Agora can support your work, please email us at [agora@unicef.org](mailto:agora@unicef.org) or reach out directly to:



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# WHERE WILL AGORA TAKE YOU?



CONNECT NOW AND FIND OUT MORE AT [AGORA.UNICEF.ORG](https://AGORA.UNICEF.ORG)



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