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Summary of mid-term reviews and major evaluations of country programmes

Americas and the Caribbean region

Summary

The present report was prepared in response to Executive Board decision 1995/8 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), which requested the secretariat to submit to the Board a summary of the outcome of mid-term reviews (MTRs) and major country programme evaluations, specifying, inter alia, the results achieved, the lessons learned and the need for any adjustments in the country programme. The Board is to comment on the reports and provide guidance to the secretariat, if necessary. The MTRs described in this report were conducted in 2004. No evaluations are included.

Introduction

1. In 2004, UNICEF implemented programmes in 24 countries in the region. Ten countries (Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay) conducted MTRs in 2004. They considered how the county programmes were effectively contributing to the organizational priorities and international and national development goals. They were conducted in the context of strong United Nations inter-agency cooperation, which laid the foundation for the forthcoming Common Country Assessment (CCA)/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process. Due to space limitations, this report presents only MTRs, the findings of which are based on evaluations and studies commissioned as part of the MTR process.

* E/ICEF/2005/10.

Country mid-term reviews

Brazil

2. **Introduction.** The MTR was conducted from September 2004 to April 2005. The participatory process took place in several regions to capture the inputs from a diversity of UNICEF partners and allies: the federal and state governments, universities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media, indigenous and afro-descendant leaders, children and adolescents' associations and United Nations and other civil society partners. The country programme components were reviewed, and the findings, lessons learned and recommendations of 44 studies and evaluations carried out in 2001-2004 were systematized. A survey of the image of UNICEF was conducted and resource mobilization strategies assessed, with the aim of integrating programme areas with the private-sector section.

3. **The situation of children and women.** Since the last situation analysis in 2000, Brazil has undergone important political and institutional changes and economic-structural reforms in the context of globalization and economic integration within the Southern Common Market (*Mercado Común del Sur*, MERCOSUR).

4. Despite key policy changes in the areas of income support and hunger eradication, ongoing challenges remain in poverty reduction and the tackling of the dramatic social, regional and racial disparities affecting the 64 million children under 18.

5. The MTR showed that the Millennium Development Goals will be reached only if inequities are reduced. Children living below the poverty line, compared with other children, are 3 times more likely to die before age 5, 8 times more likely not to attend school (7-14 age group), 21 times more likely to be illiterate (12-17 age group), 2 times more likely to work (10-15 age group), and 30 times more likely to live in a home without an adequate water supply. Afro-descendent children are twice as likely to be out of school, with the average number of school years dropping from 4.2 for white children, to 3.3 for afro-descendent children, to 2.5 for indigenous children. Adolescent (12-17 age group) illiteracy likewise rises from 2 per cent for white adolescents, to 6 per cent for afro-descendent adolescents, to 15 per cent for indigenous adolescents.

6. Geographical disparities continue to be vast, and increased commercial sexual exploitation and physical, psychological and sexual violence against children represent significant challenges.

7. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The objective of the country programme is "Making Children and Adolescents' Rights Count" The programme components are based on the life cycle: Early Childhood Development (ECD), Education for Inclusion, and Adolescents' Citizenship.

8. In ECD, UNICEF focused on capacity-building of families and municipal governments. Through inter-sectoral partnerships, the "Strengthening the Brazilian Families" kit was developed to enhance the capacities and work of community leaders and health agents, and was launched in nine states.

9. In education, the main results include stronger legislation to provide full-day activities in schools; the involvement of partners and media in rural education; and

the adoption of quality- education indicators by federal, state and municipal governments. In 2004, as part of the UNICEF-Banco Itaú partnership promoting education, 163,000 children participated in social/educational activities organized by 1,268 NGOs, and 21,760 NGO staff were trained in 415 municipalities across 27 Brazilian states.

10. In rights and protection, UNICEF focused on building the capacities of the Councils of Rights; raising public awareness on the situation of indigenous and afro-descendent populations; building systems of notification of cases of sexual exploitation; and reducing child labour (5-17 age group), succeeding in diminishing the number of children involved from 5.4 million in 2002 to 5.1 million 2003. In Ceará state in 2004, the UNICEF Municipal Seal of Approval initiative, in its third round of awards, recognized 52 municipalities that showed significant progress on child rights and the Millennium Development Goals. The initiative is expected to expand to an additional 1,400 municipalities.

11. In monitoring and evaluation, key results included the creation of disaggregated databases using *DevInfo* technology highlighting income, ethnicity, gender and geographical inequalities; the monitoring of child budgets; and the active participation of the Civil Society Network for monitoring the *World Fit for Children* goals.

12. **Resources used.** Total other resources implemented in 2002, 2003 and 2004 were \$7.2, \$13.3 and \$10 million, respectively. Regular resources funds averaged \$700, 000 annually. The funds were spent in these areas and percentages: ECD (16); education (11) adolescents' citizenship (16); Rights Guarantees System (18); Communication / Monitoring and Evaluation (8); and the cross-sectoral component (30).

13. In 2001-2004, UNICEF Brazil underwent political and financial crises, which adversely affected the programme structure and work climate. The way UNICEF saw its role within the country's social and political context reduced its visibility and weakened its presence in the highest political spheres.

14. In January 2004, a valuable 18-year partnership with the Rede Globo television network, which had produced 39 per cent of locally raised funds for UNICEF, was dissolved, significantly affecting the programme implementation budget. The budget had already been weakened by reduced contributions from National Committees for UNICEF over the previous years and by a decrease in product sales in 2000-2002.

15. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** The MTR pointed to isolated activities that failed to build synergy and integration across programmes. Also noted was a lack of integration between Brasilia and the zonal offices and too much emphasis placed on Brasilia activities. The results framework of the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) adopted for the first three years of the country programme was found to be inefficient because it was excessively rigid and failed to take regional diversities into account.

16. **Adjustments made.** The updated situation analysis indicated seven major strategic challenges for UNICEF over the next two years: violence against children and adolescents; HIV/AIDS (vertical transmission and orphans); child survival and development; discrimination due to race and ethnicity; birth registration; illiteracy and social inclusion, and out-of-home-care for abandoned children.

17. It was strongly recommended to continue supporting the development of the Rights Guarantees System and promotion of the child-budget initiative as a means to advocate for higher investments in children and reduce poverty.

18. In addition, there were several other recommendations: (a) strengthen the presence of UNICEF in the Amazon Region; (b) strengthen the capacities of the São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro offices to work more effectively in Central and South areas, and expand the Private Sector Division (PSD) efforts to mobilize the support of the private sector and foundations; (c) strengthen the capacity of the Northeast and Brasilia Programme Group to support zonal office work in the semi-arid initiative; d) adjust the programme management structure to achieve better integration and synergy among the programme areas in Brasilia and the zonal offices; e) reinforce staff capacity in HIV/AIDS; and f) restructure and strengthen the Communication Group to better support PSD, institutional communication, and programme communication.

Belize

19. **Introduction.** The highly participative and transparent MTR was held between May and September 2004. Two committees of government, NGO and youth representatives were formed to review the country programme and to draft the outcome document.

20. **The situation of children and women.** At the beginning of the country programme, Belize was experiencing high levels of economic growth. Global and regional economic stagnation and a series of natural disasters dramatically curbed this growth and resulted in increased austerity measures, increased costs of living and pressure on poverty alleviation efforts.

21. Continued stagnation will make it difficult to maintain or increase the current levels of public social investment. The public revenue base is already eroded by extremely high external debt. Around 34 per cent of the population is poor, and 39 per cent of children live in poverty, with this figure rising as high as 85 per cent in indigenous areas. An already high incidence of HIV infection now increasingly threatens young women, with projections forecasting that by 2010, half of orphaned children will have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS. Despite substantial resource commitments to primary schooling, results are poor. In health, deficiencies in coverage remain, although good progress has been made in maternal and child care services. Violence against children continues to be of great concern.

22. **Progress and key results at mid-term:** The principal strategy has been the strengthening of “the country’s capacity to establish systems and structures to safeguard the rights of all children”. The country programme’s two major sub-programmes are Enhancing Holistic Child Development and Enabling Environments for Adolescent Development. The programmes have achieved several milestones:

(a) UNICEF and the National Committee for Families and Children brought together government and opposition groups to formulate the National Plan of Action for Children and Adolescents (NPA);

(b) A National Integrated ECD Policy was formulated, and support was given to education reform;

- (c) The quality of institutional care and services markedly improved;
- (d) A communication strategy on children's rights was formulated with the Government to achieve objectives of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- (e) Alternatives-to-custody arrangements and alternative dispute resolutions for children and adolescents in contact and conflict with the law were reinforced;
- (f) Child and adolescent participation in policy-making processes was strengthened, and an analysis indicated that such efforts had not created sustainable mechanisms for meaningful participation in the past and that more information is needed on the impact of such initiatives;
- (g) The formulation of a Proposal to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was supported, and the national and local HIV/AIDS Committees were strengthened;
- (h) Technical support increased for national development processes, especially in immunization, child protection, healthy family life education, orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) and HIV/AIDS;
- (i) The national social-sector data and information systems were strengthened, using *DevInfo* for monitoring implementation of the NPA and the Millennium Development Goals.

23. UNICEF and its United Nations partners have invested efforts and resources in strengthening coordination, which has improved processes such as the drafting of the NPA, the promotion of the Millennium Development Goals and the educational reform initiative. The United Nations Theme Group on HIV/AIDS has developed a new framework to assist the Government, the National AIDS Commission and civil society organizations to step up the fight against HIV/AIDS.

24. Resources used.

Projects and subprojects	Jan 2002-June 2004			Jan 2002-June 2004		
	Regular Resources			Other Resources		
	Planned	Avail.	Expend.	Planned	Avail.	Expend.
Enhancing holistic child development	538 125	592 841	520 531		43 613	43 416
Enabling environment for adolescent development	668 667	580 008	479 850		110 737	67 941
Emergency fund				0	147 739	146 865
Cross-sectoral	298 188	276 626	275 429		687	623
Total	1 504 980	1 449 475	1 275 810	625 000	302 776	258 845

25. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** The shift from service delivery to largely technical assistance was viewed with trepidation by several UNICEF counterparts. In addition, progress has been hampered by the devastation caused by hurricanes, the overwhelming external debt and the decreased social investment due to poor economic growth.

26. **Adjustments made.** A focus on protection was proposed as a central axis to link all projects and sub-projects. It was also proposed that the office structure be more functional in terms of tasks assigned and supervision of work. As a first measure, a temporary fixed-term post was created to provide immediate support in HIV/AIDS, communication and mobilization.

27. A revision of the current IMEP for 2003-2006 has been undertaken to ensure compatibility with the NPA and Millennium Development Goals.

Costa Rica

28. **Introduction.** The MTR was conducted from April to August 2004 through a Country Commission of government and NGO counterparts. A vulnerability analysis and a review of the country programme were commissioned. These studies involved interviews with the UNICEF team and counterparts and a workshop with children and adolescents. The results of the studies were discussed at a meeting of experts. To foster a spirit of inter-agency collaboration, the Resident Coordinator and the United Nations country team were kept abreast of the MTR process and results.

29. **The situation of children and women.** Income concentration, according to the Gini coefficient, has significantly worsened, from 0.374 in 1997 to 0.425 in 2003. The national infant mortality rate (IMR) is 9.25 per 1,000 live births, but due to socio-economic disparities, in some areas has risen to 25 per 1,000. Nationally, secondary education coverage is 65.6 per cent for the 13-19 age group; in the poorest region, Brunca, coverage is only 45.7 per cent. There is a high rate of teenage pregnancy: in 2003, one out of five births was to a mother under age 20.

30. In 2003, nearly 19 per cent of households were poverty-stricken and 5 per cent lived in conditions of extreme poverty. Poverty is more prevalent in female-headed households. Close to half of the poverty-stricken population are children and adolescents.

31. The development of programmes for children at social risk have been hindered due to financial and management problems of public institutions. The management capacity of these institutions require further reform and development.

32. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The general objective of the country programme is to promote and support the formulation of policies, strategies and programmes that (a) are compatible with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and (b) contribute to a reduction in social inequalities, to the fostering of equality among the sexes and to a respect for diversity. Progress was made in several areas:

33. *Changes in institutional policies.* A redefinition of public policies related to children and adolescents modified strategies of the country programme.

34. Institutional Reform and Social Investment achieved the following results: (a) an Institutional Reform of the National Children's Institute was approved; (b) *DevInfo* was adopted by the Social Council to monitor its poverty plan; (c) steps were initiated to incorporate results-based management into the Government's development institution, *Fondo de Desarrollo Social y Asignaciones Familiares*

(FODESAF); (d) ECD programmes increased coverage from 4.5 per cent of children under 5 in 2001 to 13.5 per cent in 2003.

35. The National Comprehensive Protection System benefited from several developments: (a) the mobilization, through training and information exchange, of 400 Community Development Associations to support the rights of children and adolescents; (b) the mobilization of new social actors within the National Protection System, including the National Confederation of Community Development Associations (*Confederación Nacional de Asociaciones de Desarrollo Comunal*) and the National Community Development Directorship (*Dirección Nacional de Desarrollo Comunal*); and (c) strengthened citizen participation through support of a youth network encompassing 148 schools around the country, with 530 youths working for the prevention of violence in the educational system.

36. *Information and knowledge-management improvements.* Progress included the following: (a) consolidation of the National Forum on ‘Well-Being Dialogues’ promoting analysis, participation, and citizenship mobilization around development strategies and policies, and a similar Fiscal Reform Forum, held in 2004; (b) strengthened alliances with the media for the free production and broadcasting of communication campaigns; and (c) an alliance with University of Costa Rica on production of the *Annual Report on the State of Children’s Rights*.

37. *Efforts to strengthen the national risk-prevention and emergency response system* achieved these results: (a) the organization of community networks in three river basins, using an early warning system and psychosocial recovery methodology; (b) the setting up of 26 Community Emergency Committees with community emergency plans; (c) an increase in knowledge on disaster-risk prevention and management among teachers, community facilitators, adolescents and children; and (d) the development of educational materials, including a radio series, the Game *Riesgolandia* (Riskland), teacher and facilitator manuals, videos, a website, brochures and maps.

38. **Resources used.** In 2002-2004, the programme expended \$2.12 million, \$1.82 million in regular resources and \$301,870 in other resources (90 per cent of which came from the European Commission Humanitarian Office). Of regular resources, 34 per cent was spent on the Rights Approach in Social Management and Justice Programme, and 66 per cent went to the Citizenship Participation Programme.

39. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** A lack of sufficient means to support the required institutional reforms was largely addressed through the introduction of *DevInfo*, results-based management and decentralized planning.

40. It was suggested that the strategy used to implement a citizen social watch be adjusted to effectively address the circumstances, interests, political and institutional capacities of the organizations selected to operate as potential citizen “observatories”.

41. **Adjustments made.** The country programme was extended to 2007 in order to harmonize with the United Nations system.

El Salvador

42. **Introduction.** Participants in the MTR process (June–November 2004) included the Ministries of Public Health and Social Assistance, Education and the Interior, as well as the Legislative Assembly, the Supreme Court, universities, research institutions, the Corporation of Municipalities of the Republic of El Salvador, municipal representatives, NGOs, media organizations, the Salvadorian Institute for the Integrated Development of Children and Adolescents, and the National Secretariat for the Family.

43. **The situation of children and women.** Of El Salvador's 6.6 million population, 42 per cent is under 18. During the last decade, IMR has decreased from 41 to 24 per 1,000 live births. From 1991 to 2002, primary net enrolment rose from 78 per cent to 88 per cent. Social expenditure has shown an annual growth of 9.9 per cent following the signing of the Peace Accords in 1992.

44. However, the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) increased from 158 to 173 per 100,000 live births between 1990 and 2002–2003, with disparities pronounced between rural and urban women. Poverty, often hidden in national statistics because of disparities, is a major concern, with 43 per cent of households unable to cover their basic needs, and 52 per cent of the poor under age 18. An estimated 30 per cent of households are headed by women. El Salvador is regularly beset with natural disasters and is still recovering from the earthquakes of 2001.

45. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The country programme, based on a human rights framework, focuses at the national level on policies, legislation and public awareness, and at the municipal level on the promotion of local systems for child protection. Cross-cutting strategies in communication, mobilization and monitoring and evaluation help to ensure that reliable information on the situation of children is disseminated among all sectors of society. Other priority areas are Integrated ECD, girls' education, HIV/AIDS, immunization and child protection.

46. *Legislation and public policy* achieved the following results: a draft Bill for Children presented to the Legislative Assembly; an HIV/AIDS law passed; a draft Code on Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes presented to the Legislative Assembly; norms and procedures regarding pregnant adolescents in schools drafted; an Office of Juvenile Justice supported, and juvenile violence programmes developed; a draft proposal on public policy for early and nursery-school education; a new National Plan of Action for Children submitted for approval; alliances/proposals developed to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking; media and institutional communicators trained in child rights and vulnerability; and awareness-raising with the private sector on the benefits of corporate social responsibility in promoting children's rights and reducing vulnerabilities.

47. *Local systems for the integrated protection of children, adolescents and the family* achieved the following results: knowledge about realizing the rights of children and adolescents through community action projects was increased in 28 municipalities through the "methodological school" training process; four municipalities committed themselves to improving the conditions of children, and four municipalities declared themselves "child-friendly municipalities"; eight Children's Defence Councils were created or strengthened; early-education curricula were redesigned and validated; an early-education inter-institutional coordination mechanism was created and strengthened; families improved the attention paid to

early childhood development; local-level, multi-institutional groups were formed to prevent intra-family violence; teachers were trained to detect and prevent domestic violence; awareness on HIV/AIDS prevention and prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV increased among children, adolescents, teachers and parents; access to foods fortified with micronutrients was increased for children and families; malnutrition-prevention programmes were begun for children in coffee-growing areas; access was increased to Youth Cultural Encounter Centres, promoting violence-prevention, recreation, and integrated education; access was increased to educational programmes and water, sanitation, and environmental services in selected rural zones; a psychological rehabilitation programme was created for emergency situations; and the capacity of local actors to react in emergency situations was strengthened through the training of school and community groups in emergency risk-management and the psychosocial rehabilitation of children as well as through some use of early warning systems.

48. **Resources used.** Resources totalled \$10,419,000, of which 32.8 per cent (\$3,419,000) was regular resources and 67.2 per cent (\$7,000,000) was other resources. Programme funds of \$7, 045,000 were 67 per cent, and staffing costs of \$3,465,000 were 33 per cent. The fund-raising strategy has raised \$4,034,153.

49. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** Violence is a pervasive reality for children and families. Despite the desperate plight of children, donors have decreased their attention to the Americas, and the resulting decrease in funds has reduced programme flexibility and contributed to staffing constraints. Work continues with the Government in promoting coordination among actors at all levels, and the creation of alliances remains important for achieving programme goals. More joint initiatives with United Nations agencies and international cooperation are needed to continue work with the Government in promoting the rights of children, adolescents and women. This is particularly important — and challenging — in the context of United Nations reform and work in 2005 to develop a new CCA and UNDAF.

50. **Adjustments made.** Discussions with key high-level counterparts helped to define several new directions for the coming two years: (a) the formation of a temporary National Council for Child and Adolescent Protection that will design a participatory strategy for the development of the proposed National System for Child Protection; (b) local systems for child protection at the municipal level and the formation of municipal child and adolescent protection committees that will include mayors, governmental and non-governmental organizations, community members and representatives of child and adolescent organizations; (c) a permanent Communication and Social Mobilization forum to educate Salvadoran society about, and widen support for, the commitments of the State regarding the holistic protection of children and adolescents; (d) a National Observatory for children and adolescents to monitor the progress of national and local systems in child protection and evaluate progress against national and international commitments; and (e) for all of this to be successful, the development of a national system of social indicators.

Haiti

51. **Introduction.** The collapse of the Government in February 2004, combined with natural disasters, delayed the MTR process until September 2004. An interim government was installed in April 2004, allowing the Ministry of Planning to coordinate the MTR process. Government and United Nations agencies and NGOs participated in consultations on health, education and child protection, discussing studies, evaluations, and field mission reports of the programme.

52. **The situation of children and women.** Conditions have greatly deteriorated in recent years. Over 50 per cent of the 8 million population is below 18 years old, 43 per cent is under 15, and 61 per cent is under 25. With a gross domestic product of \$469 per person, it is estimated that 65 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. More than 52 per cent of children are considered poor or extremely poor, and almost 3 million of them live in “difficult conditions”. The disparity between rich and poor is profound, with 4 per cent of the population controlling 66 per cent of the country’s resources.

53. The poverty and difficulties of the Haitian population worsened during the crises that hit the country in 2004 stemming from the upheaval following the contested elections in 2000 and the floods in the Southeast and Northern districts. Nevertheless, positive results are reported, including a reduction in HIV/AIDS transmission rates, from 30 per cent to 9 per cent since 1999, and a lack of reported polio or measles cases since July 2001.

54. All development indicators continue to show a decline, which is expected to be revealed in the 2005 Demographic and Health Survey under preparation.

55. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The country programme has been implemented amid crises and related insecurity. The electoral crisis resulted in the blockage of most multilateral and bilateral assistance. This, combined with the recurrent natural disasters, has severely constrained implementation of the country programme. Hindrances also included institutional weaknesses, unmotivated government officials, frequent changes of counterparts and the migration of key technical staff that resulted from the unfavourable socio-political context.

56. The country programme has achieved several concrete results in health: staff in health facilities received training, testing kits, antiretroviral medicines, and prenatal services for the reduction of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS (from 9 per cent to 7 per cent since 2002). Integrated Management of Childhood Illness was promoted in 60 per cent of health facilities, with more than 500 medical staff trained. More than 100,000 children received de-worming treatment. Medicines and equipment were supplied to 15 maternity wards, and 40 doctors and 200 midwives were trained. Coverage with three doses of combined diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus vaccine (DPT3) increased from 32 per cent in 2000 to 54 per cent in 2003.

57. In child protection, a Child Code was drafted and is being considered for adoption by Parliament. A child unit within the Office of the Ombudsman, an “SOS” unit within the Child Welfare Institute, and a unit for the Protection of Minors within the National Police were established. A mobile clinic reached 80 per cent of all children who live or work on the street, primarily with HIV/AIDS prevention and primary health care services.

58. **Resources used.** The programme spent \$17,460,000 during the first three years: \$5,800,000 in regular resources, \$7,660,000 in other resources and \$4 million in emergency-related other resources. These figures are in line with the master plan of operations (MPO). However, the health and nutrition programme spent \$8,735,000, more than double the amount planned. Other programme areas spent less than what was planned, in the following amounts and percentages: education \$3,120,000 (76); protection \$1,840,000 (85); participation, information/communication \$975,000 (a little less than 50); and capacity-building/monitoring and evaluation \$1,152 million (71). Cross-sectoral work accounted for \$1,520,000, about 50 per cent more than originally budgeted.

59. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** Socio-economic, political, and environmental instability, insecurity, institutional weakness, poor governance and insufficient baseline data have weakened programme implementation and are likely to continue to have an adverse affect. In the face of weakened government accountability, UNICEF strengthened cooperation with United Nations agencies, NGOs and other partners, and took on a coordinating role in nutrition, protection and the back-to-school programme.

60. Because of recurrent crises, emergency preparedness and response activities took over the implementation of the regular programme. The adjustments by new partners to UNICEF procedures also delayed activities.

61. **Adjustments made.** The country programme will have four rather than five components, with monitoring and evaluation being integrated into all sectors. The programme will add two new projects: nutrition into the area of health, and psychosocial support into the child-friendly school project. While still cross-sectoral, HIV/AIDS activities will be integrated into the child and mother survival project, with the child-friendly school project focusing specifically on HIV-prevention activities for adolescents.

62. To enhance results on HIV/AIDS, emphasis will be moved away from prevention activities for youth towards reinforcing PMTCT. The nutrition project will go beyond micronutrient support to include infant and young child feeding and response to protein-energy malnutrition.

63. A new sub-project on psychosocial support will be introduced in the education programme to respond to trauma and the other consequences of the violent environment on children. Parents, teachers, families and communities will be involved in the creation of a much-needed culture of peace. Water and sanitation elements will be reinforced through child-friendly schools.

64. The Child Code, when adopted, will constitute the basis for protection interventions. Emphasis will continue to be placed on disarming armed groups of children and on peace-building with communities. Support will be provided for the creation of a watchdog to monitor child rights implementation and abuses. Increased attention will also be given to communication for behaviour change.

65. Emergency preparedness and response will be mainstreamed and reinforced. The programme will reinforce collaboration with the Dominican Republic in areas such as cross-border vaccinations, child trafficking and HIV/AIDS.

Honduras

66. **Introduction.** The country programme was reviewed in August 2004 during the MTR process in which Government and NGO counterparts participated. The final MTR report was signed by the Government in November 2004.

67. **The situation of children and women.** The social, economic and political situation has not changed significantly. Half of the population of 6.5 million is under age 18, and 44 per cent are children under 14. Poverty afflicts 64.2 per cent of the population, and extreme poverty afflicts 44.6 per cent. The rural population is affected the worst, with 70.3 per cent living in poverty, and 61.4 per cent in extreme poverty. Around 25 per cent of poor households are headed by women. Between 1996 and 2001, the IMR decreased from 36 to 34 per 1,000 live births and the under-5 mortality rate (U5MR) also decreased, from 65 to 45 per 1,000 live births. Around one third of children aged 1-4 suffer from malnutrition, with vitamin A deficiency affecting 14 per cent of these children.

68. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The country programme seeks “to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of children, adolescents and women; realizing their rights to survival, development, protection and participation”. This work is carried out by three programmes.

69. The Public Policy and Promotion of Children’s and Women’s Rights Programme, designed to impact Government legislation and policy, has contributed to the following results: (a) the promulgation and drafting of laws for revision and approval; (b) the development of communication strategies to disseminate information on international conventions and national laws; (c) after the follow-up and evaluation of the fulfilment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the formation an inter-institutional and inter-agency Millennium Development Goals Committee, which was strengthened through work with the National Institute of Statistics and the Millennium Development Goals Indicator Committee. Both committees have Millennium Development Goals monitoring databases.

70. The Monitoring of the Fulfilment of Children’s and Women’s Rights Programme uses the life-cycle approach and has promoted birth registration; the training of parents on nutrition in 27 communities; and the widening of access to safe water and sanitation, primary health care and early childhood development support.

71. The local development component has supported the commitments and capacities of local governments to deliver basic social services and work towards the fulfilment of rights.

72. The HIV/AIDS Prevention Programme developed a successful youth communication strategy directed primarily at high-risk groups and adolescents. The successful initial pilot strategy for PMTCT has been scaled up to be a national programme.

73. **Resources used.** The total resources for the country programme are \$10,510,000, representing \$4,260,000 (40 per cent) of regular resources, and \$6,250,000 (60 per cent) of other resources. The resources in cash and supplies are \$7,822,104 (75 per cent) and staff costs \$2,687,896 (25 per cent). Fund-raising initiatives have raised \$4,003,878 of the \$7,500,000 planned. The projects that have

contributed are Local Development, mainly with water and sanitation (\$1,394,825), HIV/AIDS (\$1,238,067) and Good Start to Life (\$936,424).

74. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** The impact of the “Hard Hand” (*mano dura*) political discourse around juvenile justice issues, along with the denunciation by some presidential candidates of international human rights treaties, has negatively affected the child protection programme and child rights advocacy initiatives. Problems faced by the main child rights institute, the Honduran Institute for Children and the Family, currently managed by an interim administration, have further impacted this programme.

75. Other constraints have been the frequent government staff turnover; changes in policy orientation, particularly in the area of education, which is also affected by the stance of the teachers unions towards the Government; and the weak capacity of local government.

76. Honduras qualifies for consideration of debt reduction under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, which represents an enormous opportunity to free up resources for poverty alleviation. UNICEF will provide technical support and participate in the political dialogue around this process.

77. **Adjustments made.** A concerted effort is under way to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacity both of UNICEF and of national counterparts, primarily through the strengthening of the municipal-level information systems.

Jamaica

78. **Introduction.** The MTR process began in January 2004, involving national and local governmental entities, NGOs, civil society organizations and other United Nations organizations. The process employed a desk review, interviews with programme personnel, programme review meetings, an external evaluation of programme components, joint field trips, and technical advisory meetings on HIV/AIDS, children and violence.

79. **The situation of children and women.** Children below age 18 comprise 37 per cent of the population. More than 516,000 Jamaicans live in poverty, almost half them children. In 2002, over 45 per cent of households were headed by females.

80. The immunization rates, with the exception of the anti-tuberculosis vaccine (BCG), have declined in the past three years. Adolescents, particularly females, face an increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. Of all reported AIDS cases, 10 per cent are among the under-19 age group, and 20 per cent fall in the 20-29 age group. An estimated 6.8 per cent of children 12-16 years old are not enrolled in school.

81. By October 2004, the numbers of murders had reached an all-time high, averaging over four murders per day. An average of 25 children under age 16 were killed in each of the last three years.

82. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The national legislative, planning and policy frameworks were strengthened through the implementation of the Child Care and Protection, Early Childhood Commission and the Early Childhood acts; the National Plans of Action for OVCs; juvenile justice reform; the drafting of a National Framework of Action for Children; and the National Strategic Plan for Adolescent Development. The frameworks were also strengthened through the

development and implementation of three national adolescent-friendly policies on Youth, HIV/AIDS Management in Schools, and Guiding Access of Minors to Contraceptives.

83. The quality and standards for the delivery of early childhood services were enhanced through the development of a training delivery model, the certification of 4,597 practitioners and the training of 2,400 early childhood practitioners and 1,270 health workers in immunization, breastfeeding, asthma, acute respiratory infections, HIV/AIDS, PMTCT and diarrhoeal illnesses. The Roving Caregivers programme provided services in early childhood stimulation to 2,500 children and their parents.

84. Supportive environments in families and communities were improved through the establishment of two parish-based Parent Support Advisory Teams, two Youth Information Centres and an inter-agency parenting education and support programme, involving approximately 5,000 parents and community leaders.

85. Approximately 15,000 adolescents benefited from two videos promoting the adoption of healthy lifestyles. Adolescent participation was enhanced through several means: (a) a television series on reproductive health, child rights and adolescent participation that was researched, designed and hosted by teenagers; (b) the capacity-building of 100 adolescents and partners through training in Participatory Action Research (PAR); (c) peer-to-peer education training for 59 adolescents, using PAR methods; and (d) the training of 200 adolescents and teachers from 68 schools in effective participation in decision-making.

86. Emphasis was given to two protection areas: OVCs and the impact of violence on children. On both issues, national steering committees were established and plans of actions created. Training was given to 214 people in providing psychosocial support to children. Three organizations were supported to provide services to over 1,000 child labourers and children who live or work on the street, efforts that contributed significantly to reducing the number of children on the streets.

87. Support was provided to the creation of a national data management system using the *DevInfo* software, with 70 partners trained.

88. **Resources used.** By September 2004, \$3,688,700 (53 per cent of planned other resources) had been raised, and \$1,763,000 (68 per cent of planned regular resources) had been received. In the same month, UNICEF Jamaica also received \$66,267 from the United Kingdom National Committee for UNICEF to respond to the Hurricane Ivan emergency.

89. During 2002-2004, UNICEF Jamaica earmarked \$4,988,436 for programme implementation, excluding cross-sectoral costs, 98 per cent of which was spent by December 2004.

90. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** Human resources constraints among Government agencies, and the staff recruitment freeze in the Civil Service, delayed project implementation. Limited intra-agency and inter-agency communication led to a fragmented approach to project implementation and hampered progress.

91. It was recommended that the programme invest in developing a National Parenting policy and strategic plan and review the deployment of human resources within the social sector. Gender perspectives should be more broadly and

systematically integrated in programme design, planning, implementation and evaluation.

92. **Adjustments made.** The following MTR recommendations require strengthening of current staffing:

- (a) Pay particular attention to HIV/AIDS and violence;
- (b) Create a post for Child Protection;
- (c) Develop a comprehensive strategy for partners' capacity-development and build capacity in communities to protect child rights;
- (d) Work with partners to use greater advocacy and monitoring of social investments within the Medium-term Socio-Economic Policy Framework in the face of declining social sector expenditure, and increase efforts to leverage resources for children from local foundations, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, given the decline in bilateral assistance;
- (e) Intensify and improve monitoring and evaluation.

Mexico

93. **Introduction.** The MTR followed a methodology established jointly by UNICEF and its counterparts. The process involved a situation analysis and an evaluation of programmes and projects. Initial results were presented to key governmental and non-governmental counterparts, and final results were analysed and discussed in depth with Government authorities.

94. **The situation of children and women.** Mexico has achieved important results in most child rights indicators and goals. IMR was reduced from 24.8 to 21.4 per 1,000 live births between 2001 and 2002. The pre-school enrolment rate for the 4-5 age group increased from 76.5 per cent in 2000 to 82.8 per cent at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year, and primary school enrolment rate increased from 98.6 per cent to 99.3 per cent.

95. Despite notable advances, inequalities are evident between regions and states, different ethnic groups and income groups, and poverty and the unequal distribution of wealth hamper the fulfilment of children's rights. This situation is reflected in several key indicators: 2.1 million children aged 5-14 not attending school; 3.3 million children aged 6-14 working; and 63 per cent of children and adolescents under 18 living in poverty.

96. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The MTR highlighted the following results: UNICEF has exercised growing leadership in the building of a collective national vision of the universal fulfilment of children's rights; research and documentation have improved; UNICEF, with key allies, has secured consensus among different political sectors for legislative reform; and programme activities have yielded replicable models of action.

97. The results were achieved in several concrete ways: For example, the 2003 *Consulta Infantil/Juvenil* (children's survey) gathered and publicized the opinions of more than 3 million children and adolescents. The Interstate Connectivity Project, which uses child-centred information technology to promote awareness of rights, was expanded to 12 states, and included the participation of 48,000 children.

UNICEF contributed to the approval of a constitutional reform aimed at establishing a juvenile justice system by promoting consensus among parties, providing technical assistance and training nearly 3,000 judges, lawyers, prosecutors and decision makers.

98. **Resources used.** According to the MPO, \$3.5 million in other resources and \$1.3 in regular resources were planned for 2002-2003. During this time, implementation reached \$3.6 million (67 per cent other resources and 33 per cent regular resources), a 75-per-cent implementation of available resources. As of December 2003, funding of other resources was 41 per cent of the country programme's authorized budget. Because of new fund-raising strategies, the office expects full other resources funding for the rest of the country programme.

99. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** Knowledge and awareness of children's rights in Mexican society are incipient and lack wide recognition. As a result, rights have relatively low impact on government policies. Rights protection measures adopted to date have been small-scale but with considerable impact. Despite research conducted on a number of child rights areas, gaps in knowledge exist on several critical issues such as child labour in rural areas, violence and abuse against children and women, and the impact of poverty.

100. **Adjustments made.** There no changes in programme goals or structure.

101. The office and its counterparts agreed to strengthen efforts to influence public policy and public opinion towards the universal fulfilment of child rights. Four basic strategies were defined for the second half of the country programme: (a) promotion of a culture of child rights; (b) support of legislative and institutional reform processes; (c) support for an index of children's rights; and (d) redoubled efforts for the All Children in School initiative.

Panama

102. **Introduction.** The MTR process was coordinated by a committee led by the Ministry of Economy and Finance, NGOs and UNICEF. It included the participation of government institutions, NGOs, United Nations agencies, and the active participation of children. This participatory process was executed first by project, then by programme and finally by the entire country programme. The MTR made it clear that country programme cycle should be harmonized with that of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund.

103. **The situation of women and children.** Panama has a population of 2,839,177. The average gross national income per capita is \$3,500. However, there is a large gap between the highest 10 per cent of the population, earning an average of \$6,500, and the lowest 10 per cent, earning an average of \$207. The population living under the poverty line is 37 per cent, of which 53.2 per cent are children under age 5, and most are from rural and indigenous communities.

104. The levels of poverty have remained constant and are manifested in great differences in coverage and quality of services among the urban, rural and indigenous populations. As for the country's legal framework, there is no comprehensive children's law.

105. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The programme achieved several key results: (a) the approval of protection laws that include Health and Education for Pregnant Adolescents, Paternal Responsibility and the Law against the Sexual and Commercial Exploitation of Children and Adolescents; (b) the elaboration of the National Strategic Plan for Children and Adolescents 2003–2015; (c) the construction in indigenous communities of 185 mini-aqueducts, at low cost with appropriate technology, reaching 20,000 people; (d) the declaring of Panama free of iodine deficiency disorders, following an inter-agency evaluation; and (e) the teaching of sexual and reproductive health, emphasizing HIV prevention, in grades 4, 5 and 6.

106. **Resources used.** Between 2002 and 2004, the expenditure ceiling for regular resources decreased from \$600,000 to \$400,000, according to the approved budget. The Government of Panama is willing to support the country programme and has already provided an additional sum of \$600,000 for other resources, which was vital for the implementation of the MPO in Panama. The Government is expected to maintain this level of contribution, provided that UNICEF keeps a minimum ceiling operating in the country.

107. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** The main constraints were the lack of awareness of existing disparities in the country and of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

108. As its main opportunities, UNICEF can take advantage of its credibility as a serious advocate for children's rights and its capacity to mobilize important actors.

109. **Adjustments made.** The MTR concluded that the country programme should have three programmes concentrating on these areas: (a) the development of an appropriate legal and institutional framework, aiming to strengthen the formulation of public policies in accordance with the principles of the Convention; (b) local protection systems, which at the community level will ensure that all children and adolescents can fulfil their rights and opportunities; and (c) social mobilization, monitoring and alliances, aiming for country-wide mobilization for compliance with the Convention.

Paraguay

110. **Introduction.** The MTR, carried out in mid-2004 with government and NGO counterparts, included an update of the situation analysis of children and women, an assessment of progress made and programme reviews. The MTR final meeting in November 2004 resulted in some adjustments to the programme of cooperation.

111. **The situation of children and women.** Paraguay is plagued by socio-economic, ethnic, gender and language inequalities that have made it one of the most unequal countries in the region and the world. Poverty affects well over half of the country's children, or almost 1.3 million children, while extreme poverty affects some 27 per cent of children, more than 670,000.

112. The MMR was 180 per 100,000 live births in 2003. The current IMR is 19.6 per 1,000 live births, while the U5MR is 29 per 1,000 live births. It is estimated that from 1990 to 1999, some 585,000 births were unregistered. While 4.6 per cent of children under 5 suffer from malnutrition, this figure rises to 11.9 per cent for

children whose mothers lack formal education. The average number of school years completed is 7.5.

113. **Progress and key results at mid-term.** The Child Rights and Public Policy Programme aims to strengthen the legal framework, protection and rights guarantee systems, and public policies. This programme has contributed to the Government's ratification of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); the implementation of the National Code on Children and Adolescents, including training for 47 judges; the creation and implementation of public policies benefiting children; and the allocation of government funds to social expenditure. The Ministry of Finance committed to increasing the proportion of such funds from 38 per cent to 50 per cent by 2008, as recommended by UNICEF and UNDP. In child protection, UNICEF and ILO provided technical support for the creation of a National Plan to Combat Sexual Exploitation and a National Plan to Eradicate Child Labour; both plans were officially approved.

114. The Community Empowerment and Social Services Programme, which aims to empower communities and improve access to and the availability of social services, has three projects: community empowerment; family; and social services. The Programme contributed to the strengthening of organizations at the community and municipality levels and succeeded in raising awareness and mobilizing target groups around the promotion and protection of children's and women's rights. Training was provided to 1,400 families and volunteers in ECD and child care practices.

115. **Resources used.** According to the MPO 2002-2006, \$2.03 million was planned for regular resources for 2002-2004, and \$2.04 million was allocated for this period. Approximately 87 per cent of the available regular resources were spent by November 2004. More specifically, \$1.8 million (88.39 per cent) was spent in these areas and percentages: Child Rights and Public Policy (40.31), Community Empowerment and Social Services (37.85) and cross-sectoral costs (21.84).

116. The MPO estimated a contribution of \$1.7 million in other resources for 2002-2004, and the allocated amount was \$2.15 million, of which \$1.59 million (74 per cent) was spent by November 2004 in these areas and percentages: Child Rights and Public Policy (69), Community Empowerment and Social Services (27.4) and cross-sectoral costs (3.6).

117. **Constraints and opportunities affecting progress.** Several programme activities did not fit entirely with the MTSP, as the country programme was approved prior to the MTSP's finalization. Changes within the country office's technical staff were a constraint.

118. The openness to transparency shown by several national authorities represents an opportunity for UNICEF. The Ministry of Finance, for example, provided UNICEF and UNDP with online direct access to the National Integrated Financial Administration System, which allows UNICEF to maintain a continuous monitoring and analysis of social expenditure.

119. UNICEF can take advantage of several other opportunities: (a) the strong interest of sub-national authorities in working with UNICEF; (b) the interest of new municipal administrations in receiving support and technical assistance; (c) the strengthening of work with indigenous communities and ethnic groups; (d) the

possibility of linking social policies with social services in key areas such as HIV/AIDS; and (e) the extension to the subnational level of the UNDP-UNICEF project on social expenditure in the budget.

120. **Adjustments made.** Some changes have been made to the Child Rights and Public Policy Programme to further include the MTSP priorities. The public policy project will also focus on HIV/AIDS, on monitoring of and advocacy for social expenditure, and on combating malnutrition.

121. Cooperation on HIV/AIDS prevention activities and test-kit provision will be strengthened, as will work in nutrition, especially the provision of technical assistance. Taking into account the positive inter-agency work with UNDP, the project on social expenditure in the budget will be implemented at the subnational level in 2005.

122. From 2005, the operational guidelines of the Community Empowerment and Social Services Programme will include issues such as identification of communities' needs, promotion of and support to Municipal Councils for Child and Adolescent Rights and counterparts' implementation capacity.

123. The number of activities planned in both programmes will be reduced, allowing greater focus on MTSP priorities.

Conclusion

124. The MTRs highlight the emphasis given to public policy development, decentralization and community-based child rights programming against a backdrop of continuing disparities, inequalities and natural disasters and economic disturbances. The reviews highlight the diversity and proliferation of activities undertaken by UNICEF in effective partnership with governments and United Nations agencies and at different levels within national governmental and civil society systems. A concerted effort is under way across the region to ensure that otherwise 'invisible' children in Latin American and the Caribbean are prominent in national statistics and development efforts and that children's issues are visible in all future CCAs and UNDAFs. In this way, the region is striving to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals are reached for all children.

125. One of the conclusions of the reviews and evaluations is that continuing efforts are needed to build the capacities of national governments, districts and civil society to plan, implement and monitor programmes. However, the diversity of regional activities noted does not necessarily signify fragmentation, as this diversity is often underpinned by common structural issues. In the future, monitoring and evaluation should study individual cases to identify and analyse change processes that can be generalized across a range of activities, national contexts and levels of a political system. Evaluation, in particular, might be further developed to discover common threads among what appear to be disparate and sectoral efforts.

126. The MTRs involved an invaluable process of reinvigorating relations with partners, strengthening strategic alliances and setting the foundation for the inclusion of children's issues in the forthcoming CCAs and UNDAFs. All MTRs were conducted in the spirit of United Nations reform and inter-agency collaboration that will help to integrate children's issues into the wider United Nations agenda in each country.