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Short-duration country programme document

Costa Rica

Summary

The short-duration country programme document for Costa Rica is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval. The Board is requested to approve the aggregate indicative budget of \$601,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$243,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the year 2007.

The situation of children and women

1. Inequalities related to geography, gender and ethnicity persist in Costa Rica. National indicators hide the unacceptable living conditions experienced by many children in the most vulnerable areas: counties bordering the north and south of the country, coastal areas, indigenous territories (where more than 90 per cent of the population lives in poverty), marginalized-urban neighbourhoods, and various rural areas. The access to basic services is not universal; the demand for increased quality and coverage is growing, especially for public education.

2. While the national poverty rate is over 21 per cent (2005), poverty affects 32 per cent of households in some regions of the country (e.g., Chorotega, north-west border). Inequalities are growing: the Gini coefficient increased from 0.38 in 1995 to 0.41 in 2005. The number of female-headed households in extreme poverty grew from 37.9 per cent in 2004 to 43.6 per cent in 2005. The infant mortality rate is more than 22 for every 1,000 live births in the counties of Talamanca and Coto Brus

* E/ICEF/2006/18.

(in 2005, the national average was 9.75). The situation of adolescents presents a particular challenge. In San José Province, more than 33 per cent of mothers are adolescents. Four out of 10 adolescents are not in secondary school, and an estimated 27 per cent of adolescents neither work nor study. Adolescents generally do not have adequate opportunities, spaces for expression of ideas and talents, or avenues for participation. Only 0.4 per cent of the national budget is dedicated to culture, recreation and sporting activities, and this low investment affects adolescents as well.

3. During the first part of 2005, the National Child Welfare Board (*Patronato Nacional de la Infancia*, PANI) covered 6,562 children: victims of physical abuse (2,860), sexual abuse (2,171), psychological abuse (986) and substance abuse (546). Children are affected by domestic violence at a growing rate: in 2004, more than 6,388 cases were reported, 12 per cent of which involved children under 9 years of age, and 9 per cent of which involved children 10-14 years of age. As children increase in age, so does the incidence of abuse, especially among girls.

4. The country's principal challenges are to implement policies and programmes to reduce poverty, disparities and growing inequalities, and to introduce reforms in institutional management that will improve the efficacy, efficiency and equity of social investment. UNICEF support will include capacity-building, articulating the functions of the National Comprehensive Protection System at the local, regional and national levels, and ensuring necessary budget support to the institutions responsible for guaranteeing the fulfilment of child rights and preventing their violation.

The country programme, 2007

Summary budget table

<i>Programme</i>	<i>In thousands of United States dollars</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	
Rights approach in social management and justice administration	266	100	366
Active citizenship for child rights	266	100	366
Cross-sectoral costs	69	43	112
Total	601	243	844

Reasons for this short-duration submission

5. The country programme cycle for 2002-2006 is being harmonized with those of the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Programme, which end in 2007. This harmonization seeks to strengthen joint programming within the framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2008-2012. Preparations for the Common Country Assessment and UNDAF are under way this year, and in 2007, UNICEF will present the new country programme to the Executive Board.

Goals, key results and strategies/relationship to national and international priorities

6. The majority of the approved objectives in the 2002-2006 country programme are maintained. Some objectives have been adjusted in line with the midterm review (MTR) and the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2009, and some changes were introduced in the strategies to improve the scale and impact of the programme.

Programme components

7. The **rights approach in social management and justice administration** programme will strengthen the focus on public institution capacity-building to improve social programme management and the promotion of quality services for children, incorporating a human rights-based approach and results-based management. This will be accomplished through, among other means, the collection, analysis and dissemination of disaggregated data. *Expected results:* more targeted policies for children; a new platform of services offered by PANI at the regional and local levels; managerial reports for decision-making in the execution of social plans and programmes (through use of *DevInfo-Costa Rica Info*); and evaluation reports on the results of the social investment made by the Social Development and Family Allocation Fund (*Fondo de Desarrollo Social y Asignaciones Familiares*, FODESAF).

8. Activities encompassing capacity development in decision-making through the production and dissemination of knowledge; establishing priorities; confronting inequalities; and citizen vigilance and accountability will have the following expected results: a more developed culture of child rights; disaggregated data on the fulfilment of child rights at the local level-based on *DevInfo-Costa Rica Info*; and *Dialogos sobre el Bienestar* (“discussions on social well-being”) as a platform of social deliberation and dialogue; reports on the advancement and achievement of local protection systems; and reports on local disparities in topics such as health, education, poverty, and the indigenous population, among others.

9. The **active citizenship for child and adolescent rights** programme will emphasize increased adult and adolescent citizen mobilization and participation in the promotion of human rights and vigilance over their fulfilment. *Expected results:* the establishment of 20 Local Protection Boards and 75 Guardianship Committees involving development associations and local governments; three Local Protection Sub-systems in key municipalities; three municipalities applying monitoring and mobilization tools (*DevInfo*, Child Index); heightened awareness about the situation of indigenous children in 100 per cent of the Indigenous Development Associations; 136 high schools in vulnerable areas participating in the strategies for violence prevention within the education system.

Major partnerships

10. The programme will continue working in coordination with the same partners identified in the original country programme recommendation as well as those added during the MTR. An alliance is expected to be formed with the new Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements (administrator of the programme for poverty reduction), established within the present administration (2006-2010).

Monitoring, evaluation and programme management

11. There are no significant changes in monitoring, evaluation or programme management.
