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Update on the context and situation of children

Belize has a very young population: in 2019, the total population was estimated at 408,487, of which an estimated 171,723 (42%) are 0 to 17 years old. 55% of the total population live in rural settings.

In 2019, the United Democratic Party led government initiated its penultimate year of a third five-year mandate, and called for general elections which will take place in 2020, no later than November.

Belize's economy recorded growth of 3% at the end of 2018, projecting a slight decline to 2.8% for 2019. The country has continued to make efforts to reduce the fiscal gap in order to address its high level of indebtedness. Despite being classified as an upper middle-income country, over 40% of Belizeans and half of all children below the age of 15 years, lived in poverty (based on expenditures), with poverty levels in rural areas being double than in urban areas (latest poverty data from 2009; a new Country Poverty Assessment is planned for 2021). The country is highly vulnerable to natural disasters and to the effects of climate change, incurring an estimated average loss of 4% of GDP with each natural disaster.

The limited availability of official and updated data remains an important challenge to the effective monitoring of progress related to children's rights in Belize. The last Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 5) was undertaken in 2015 and released in 2017. In 2019, UNICEF piloted the new MICS Plus, including modules on Children Time Use, Air Quality, Children Not in Education, Employment or Training, and the country will undertake a new National Census in 2020. UNICEF is also piloting a multisectoral ECD tracker.

A 2020 draft ILO-UNICEF Social Protection (SP) and Expenditure Review for Belize shows that there are still several challenges in terms of social protection programmes coverage and investment: about 43% of the population receives SP benefits. 27% of the 5 to 19 years old are covered by the National Health Insurance, but only 8,3% of the 0 to 4 years. About 20,000 children or 11% of the total children population are covered by other SP programmes (BOOST, school subsidies and food pantry).

Birth registration is at 96% nationwide, but less than half of live births are registered in Toledo district. Violence, neglect and parenting remain key areas of concern: according to MICS 2015, 1 out of every 4 children under 5 are left alone or in the care of another child under 10 years of age for more than one hour during the week. 65% of children (1 to 14) experience psychological aggression or physical punishment. The number of children experiencing severe physical punishment has increased by 1.5% point to 6.5% between 2011 and 2015. Under the Spotlight initiative, in 2020, a baseline on family violence (including domestic violence against children, sexual violence and femicide) will be developed. Mental Health, particularly among older adolescents (15 – 19) is a growing concern: between 2014 and 2016, the attempted suicide rate increased annually by 39%, and between 2008 and 2017, they represented over one third (36%) of attempted suicides among all age groups. Additional challenges faced by adolescents include the following: about 1 out of 100 adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 has a live birth before age 15, and adolescents in the rural areas are twice as likely as their urban peers to have a live birth before age 15. One out of every 5 adolescent girls and one out of every 10 boys aged 15 – 19 years are married or in union. Over 60% of adolescents aged 10 – 14 years' experience violent discipline methods. Belize consistently ranks among the top 10 countries in the world for homicide rates, averaging about 40 homicides per 100,000 residents. Children and adolescents living in urban communities are exposed to gang activity and violence. These conditions lead to toxic stress giving way for mental health conditions.

MICS 2015 Early Childhood Development Index indicated that 82.5% of children aged 36 – 59 months are developmentally on track. In 2011 only 32% of them attended an Early Childhood Education (ECE) programme, but it increased to 55% by 2015. Disparities persist however as preschool is still not mandatory and only one in five of the poorest children currently attend ECE.

Education across the life cycle faces multiple challenges. MICS data indicates improvements in terms of coverage, but a shrinking on efficiency indicators: primary school net attendance rate increased from 90 to 96% between 2006 and 2015, but despite improvements, 4 of 10 children are still not attending secondary school, and the primary completion rate and transition rate to secondary school have declined between 2010 and 2015. Repetition rates for boys almost double the one for girls, and are especially high at secondary level, making boys particularly vulnerable to gang involvement. The school system requires instruction in English even though it is not the first language of most children.

Immunization coverage is high: between 91 and 99% of live births depending on the vaccine. Significant progress has been achieved in reducing child mortality, but Belize faces the double burden of nutrition crises. As shown by MICS, under-five mortality was 22 per 1,000 live births in 2006 and went down to 12 by 2015. Similarly, infant mortality rates went down from 27 to 9 per 1000 live births. 7.3% of children under age five are overweight, which is slightly above the LAC regional average, and the country still has significant stunting prevalence in children under 5 years, despite a moderate decrease

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from 19.3% in 2011 to 15% in 2015. In Toledo district, one in every three children under 5 years is stunted. Exclusive breastfeeding under 6 months was very low (14.7% in 2011) but grew to 33% in 2015, reaching LAC region average. The prevalence of diabetes is very high in Belize and is directly related to obesity, which is in turn related to diet and physical activity patterns. Adolescent females aged 15 to 19 had the higher rate of morbidity due to diabetes during 2013-2017.

Major contributions and drivers of results

In 2019, UNICEF has been instrumental in supporting Belize SP system strengthening in a systematic and sustained manner, developing a comprehensive strategy of building blocks to strengthen the SP system and by building on the evidence generated from 2016 (UNICEF supported Comprehensive Review of Belize SP system, and BOOST cash transfer program evaluation), and in convening and catalyzing with government, a growing partnership with international agencies (ILO, WB, WFP, OPHI). Consequently, the successful organization of 4 SP conferences (2018-2019) - as a key element of the on-going Assessment-Based National Dialogue around SP- has enabled the Ministries' CEO Caucus commitment and the drafting of a Cabinet Paper to establish a SP Floor in Belize. Secondly, the SP conferences have catalyzed additional commitments and concrete results from all involved partners: UNICEF-ILO have finalized a SP Performance and Expenditure Review, providing key policy recommendations to assess Belize SP system's performance and enabling the further costing of the SP gaps and identification of fiscal space to implement the SP Floor, with an emphasis on children; WB has supported a Job Diagnostics exercise, a Mapping of Active Labour Market Programs, and is currently drafting a major SP project proposal (USD 25 million for 4 years) to double BOOST beneficiaries, expand the BOOST Plus wrap-around model countrywide, and develop a robust SP registry; and WFP has developed policy recommendations for SP in emergency, through the country's first case study on Shock-Responsive SP. In addition, PAHO/WHO has supported the Ministry of Health with costing and analysis of fiscal space for universalization of the National Health Insurance. Through all its support to Belize SP system strengthening, UNICEF contributes to SP cash and services being delivered to about 20,000 children (about 27% of the estimated children living in poverty) and is paving the way in enabling high level policy advocacy for the progressive establishment of a Universal Child Grant.

In addition to leading innovative data collection and dissemination (MICS Plus, U-Report), UNICEF has also been instrumental in advocating for -and providing technical expertise for- the upcoming development of the first national Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), with a focus on child poverty. Through the SP conference on Multidimensional Poverty (with the Ministry of Human Development -MHDSTPA- and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative -OPHI-), the country initiated discussions on the purpose and structure of a national MPI for Belize, and strengthened capacities of key government officials, members of the National Assessment Team for 2021 Belize Country Poverty Assessment. UNICEF also provided technical expertise and capacity building for the country to conduct Participative Poverty Assessments (PPAs), with specific focus on children. As a result, Belize now has a specific methodology to consult children on poverty, and 30 social mobilizers of MHDSTPA and field staff of the Ministry of Rural Development are trained in conducting PPAs. Through MHDSTPA and UNICEF partnership, initial data on adolescents and youth perspectives on poverty have already been gathered through a [Voices of the Poor exercise](#), as well as a [U-Report poll](#). UNICEF will continue to support the PPAs in 2020, as well as the development of Belize 1st national MPI, focusing on child poverty, in preparation for the 2020/21 Country Poverty Assessment.

In 2019, in close coordination with the Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF HQ, the CO has successfully supported the testing of new MICS modules (Children Time Use, Air Quality, Children Not in Education, Employment or Training), and methodologies (such as electronic height boards), while simultaneously establishing a baseline on core MICS indicators for women and children in Toledo district and Belize City Southside. In September, Belize launched the Global Pilot MICS Plus, by establishing its Research and Call Center, and testing data collection through the use of Mobile phones. U-Report now has 4,640 registered U-Reporters who were actively engaged in topics ranging from healthy nutrition, child poverty, child marriage and early unions, WASH. However, during the last quarter, U-Report slowed down due to lack of human resources support, and will be re-energized in 2020 through recruitment of an ICT4D staff.

The first ever National Children's Parliament, held on 20 November, was viewed via the media by over 20,000 people, and showcased 40 adolescents who spoke passionately to the nation on the state of education, child protection and access to health in Belize. All 9 urban municipalities were certified as Child-Friendly on 22 November in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the CRC with different levels of certification issued based on performance in each municipality against selected indicators.

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Along with civil society and other government representatives, UNICEF provided technical inputs through a national validation exercise held by Government as part of preparation of its State report to the CRC Committee. A final draft is now available and awaits completion of a data annex, covering the period 2005-2019. The State report is expected to be submitted in 2020.

Violence remains one of the major challenges faced by children and adolescents in Belize. In 2019 Belize secured a Euro 3 million grant through the Spotlight Initiative, for an interagency violence prevention programme. The 3-year project led by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, will focus on domestic violence - including against children, sexual violence faced by adolescent girls, and femicide.

An evaluation of the Metamorphosis Programme - a comprehensive gang violence prevention programme targeting adolescent boys, was finalized in 2019. The evaluation found that the programme is viable to move to scale; it included 13 recommendations in three categories: programme expansion and changes, enhanced stakeholder participation and partnerships, and institutionalization. A key result in 2019, includes the integration of the Violence Against Children Technical Seminar in the implementation of Care for Child Development (CCD) starting with training of national trainers. CCD remains a strong platform for supporting the prevention of abuse, malnutrition and nurturing care.

In 2019, with support from UNICEF and UNFPA, Belize finalized a first national RoadMap to end Child Marriage and Early Unions (CMEU), establishing a committee to oversee its implementation. The RoadMap aligns with global, regional and national commitments and seeks to accelerate actions to end CMEU. It contributes to the achievement of SDG target 5.3 by outlining a set of strategic actions to address the identified drivers of CMEU, (poverty, violence, early pregnancy, education, social and gender norms, and legal and policy frameworks). Based on lessons learned from global programming on CMEU, the roadmap proposes actions in five key areas: Empowering girls and boys; Strengthening prevention and protection systems; Strengthening legislation and policy frameworks; Social and behavior change communication to address social and gender norms; Strengthening data and evidence. The roadmap acknowledges that strategic actions in all sectors contribute to improving outcomes for girls and boys, and thereby reducing CMEU. Ending CMEU is a target of Belize's National Children's Agenda. Belize is the first English-speaking country in the LAC region to initiate actions to end CMEU.

UNICEF led a partnership exercise to finalize an action plan to modernize Birth Registration. While average national birth registration is high (96%), there are still critical equity gaps that need to be addressed (less than half of live births are registered in Toledo district, the gap affecting mainly Maya children), and improvements to be made for the sustainability of the results. Consultations with stakeholders were convened by a National Steering Committee, led by the Solicitor General Office from the Attorney General Ministry, with membership from Vital Statistics Unit, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Human Development, Immigration Social Security, Central Information and Technology Office, UNHCR and UNICEF. Together, these stakeholders held national consultations, met with stakeholders including families who have utilized birth registration services. The Committee also examined several country experiences on modernizing the Birth Registration System (Costa Rica, Mexico) and launched a U-Report Poll to gauge young people's opinion of the current services and recommendations for modernizing the system. The Action Plan was finalized and endorsed, and work commenced with development of communication materials to support public awareness of birth registration. This work is the result a strong partnership between UNICEF and UNHCR with funding from the UK Government.

In 2019 UNICEF supported implementation of the recommendations of a 2018 Capacity Needs Assessment of the Justice Sector by training 100 child justice actors. The training established a standardized definitions for a child and for children deprived of liberty as well as procedures for interviewing children. This has led to the development of draft Modules for Child Rights for the Security Forces and finalized Modules for Professionals that interface with the Family Court (magistrates, social workers, clerks of court). It is expected that the Modules for the Security Forces will be finalized and integrated into the national training curriculum in 2020. Representatives from the Ministry of National Security and Ministry of Human Development were supported to go on a study tour to Jamaica to learn about the development of a center to investigate sexual abuse and child abuse as is being considered for Belize. The center will provide access to child-friendly services when child abuse and sexual abuse are reported. UNICEF and partners have advocated for the implementation of a National Diversion Programme, that was piloted in San Ignacio town. Diversion remains a challenge to implement, however, as only one of the 3 pilot districts identified have initiated implementation. Plans are to accelerate

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actions in 2020. Free legal representation is not provided to youths: in partnership with IDB a feasibility study of legal aid was completed in 2019. The study noted that legal aid is not free for youths even when they are being prosecuted for offences that do not involve jail time or significant fines, or when charged as adults, thereby exacerbating the situation. The only offence for which free legal aid is available is murder, and that service is not limited to youths. Adoption of the recommendations of the study will be explored in 2020. The work in justice for children remains a priority given the need to adopt and implement international standards that protect children who are both victims and alleged perpetrators. As a result, UNICEF hired a specific Child Justice consultant in early 2020.

In 2019, UNICEF Belize completed and launched the Protocol for an Integrated Protection for Children and Adolescents during Disasters, which was envisioned by UNICEF Belize, and developed with support from LACRO and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). The Protocol guides national units responsible in emergencies on how to effectively take the needs of children and adolescents into consideration while developing emergency response strategies and programmes. The objectives of the Protocol are: (1) to protect the rights of children and adolescents in disaster situations, with the purpose of avoiding or minimizing the impacts of these events on children and (2) to use as a guide for government agencies, members of civil society, the private sector and international cooperation agencies in the stages of prevention, preparation, response and recovery in disaster situations in CDEMA participating countries. This was one of the major actions that resulted from the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNICEF and CDEMA in April 2019, and a key result of UNICEF Belize, which provided extensive support to several other COs in the Caribbean in the development of their national protocols, thereby strengthening emergency preparedness measures and response for the vulnerable population in Belize and the sub-region.

In January 2019, Belize showcased the best practices of CCD and supported the Eastern Caribbean countries in the roll out and implementation of CCD in the Caribbean. Through this south-south collaboration, in partnership with UNICEF's Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area, CARICOM and the Organization for Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), more than 20 international attendees learned from the Belize experience and showcased their own practices. UNICEF supported the Government with resources and technical assistance for capacity building to strengthen national standards for increased access to high-quality, equitable, inclusive, and holistic ECD, learning and care environments for girls and boys, including with disabilities. The joint capacity building in CCD was one success of the efforts of the ECD Technical Working Group which coordinates joint planning and initiatives across the three-line ministries. UNICEF Belize supported the Government to implement the national framework on ECD and violence prevention by increasing the numbers of qualified persons in CCD. In 2019, there were 9 intersectoral training events facilitated by trained senior officers from the health, education and human development ministries, resulting in a total of 108 persons trained in CCD in the districts of Corozal, Cayo, and Punta Gorda. Stann Creek District will be targeted for training in 2020. In August 2019, 3 CCD Trainers were hired and an additional 3 will be hired in early 2020. The trained ECD providers include rural public health nurses, social workers, teen mothers from the Youth Enhancement Services, Roving Caregivers, and preschool teachers. The roll-out of the CCD capacity development initiative has helped establish a solid network of providers offering multiple points of contact and opportunities for parental support which enhances ECD outcomes, preparedness for lifelong learning and prevention of violence in early childhood. Work in 2020 will continue on a documentation of a case study of CCD in Belize. This will include information on a newly drafted national CCD monitoring and evaluation and surveillance system.

In 2019, UNICEF provided the resources for advocacy and sensitization of over 300 stakeholders on the new national Parenting Guide that was launched in late 2018. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture (MoEYSC) and other stakeholders to strengthen organizational capacity to deliver equitable, inclusive and relevant education services with emphasis on (a) child friendly school principles; (b) improved connectedness to schools (parental engagement, stakeholder buy-in) and, (c) national standards for quality learning through to secondary. With concentrations on the reduction of disparities and elimination of inequities, UNICEF collaborated with MoEYSC in advocacy for reading and quality learning. Technical assistance was given for literacy interventions and support for the development of a life skills curriculum in secondary schools.

UNICEF provided technical assistance to the WASH multi-sectoral body to disseminate communication materials on creating safe, healthy and clean environments. Further work continued in capacity building for over 50 Community Health Workers in understanding/improving Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) practices for women and young girls. In celebration of Global Handwashing Day (GHD) 2019, UNICEF alongside the WASH Multi-Sectoral Body supported the remodeling and construction of new bathroom facilities for four schools in the Corozal District. The bathrooms, equipped with proper

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handwashing facilities, recognized the inclusion of students with special needs with the provision of ramps and bathroom stalls outfitted to accommodate children with disabilities. School launch events included the participation of the communities, official presentation of the bathroom facilities, and WASH education messages/performances from the students. Key messages were shared on local radio talk shows on communication for development education efforts on clean hands, clean water and proper hygiene via the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) curriculum. Communication activities impacted over 25 communities in the Corozal and Stann Creek Districts.

To reduce exposure and illness due to parasitic infections as well as missed learning opportunities due to absenteeism, in partnership with CROCS and UNICEF US Natcom, UNICEF supported the acquisition and distribution of 25,000 pairs of shoes to vulnerable school children in Belize and in the OAS Adjacency Zone. The second part of an additional 25,000 pairs of shoes will be distributed in 2020. This was an important exercise in service delivery and the first ever opportunity for partnership between UNICEF and CROCS.

As a part of the workplan on DRR with the National Emergency Management Organization and with the Government of Belize, a core group of trainers were trained in the Return to Happiness (RTH) methodology to enhance psychosocial support for children post-disaster. In partnership with the Government and community-based agencies, UNICEF supported training of 150 volunteers in RTH.

Cabinet endorsed Belize's first ever Adolescent Health National Strategy (2019-2030). The Strategy and accompanying Operational Plan, and Norms and Standards were developed with support from UNICEF and implementation will be coordinated and funded jointly by the Ministries of Health, Education and Human Development. As a first major result of UNICEF advocacy in this area, the government has committed USD 200,000 per year for Adolescent Health (AH), and will hire an AH coordinator. UNICEF supported the government to conduct a nationwide consultative process to develop the comprehensive National AH Strategy and Operational Plan. Over 82,000 adolescents will be impacted by the implementation of the AH Norms and Standards. This framework supported by UNICEF includes a clearly defined set of national performance indicators. Personnel in the Ministry of Health are now in a stronger position to focus on strategic areas for improved implementation. Training of personnel on the AH Norms and Standards will be conducted in tandem with nationwide roll out of the AH Strategy in 2020.

In addition, Belize is in the forefront for crucial learning on mental health in adolescents. The CO worked closely with the Ministry of Health, and UNICEF HQ and LACRO on two global initiatives: 1) 7 mental health personnel and 10 enumerators were trained to implement the Measurement of Mental health among Adolescents at the Population level (MMAP) survey in Belize. The information from in-depth focus group discussions with 40 adolescents was utilized to strengthen the data collection tool that will be administered to 300 adolescents enrolled in schools in the Belize District in early 2020; 2) Helping Adolescents Thrive: the in-depth focus group discussions with 52 adolescents that UNICEF supported have offered Belize a new and extremely valuable perspective on mental health – insight that the Government will use to transform the way we speak about, measure, respond to and plan for mental health from the individual to the policy level.

In late 2019, the CO hired an international nutrition consultant to support implementation of the Nutrition Global Thematic Funds in 2020, aiming at preventing overweight, obesity and stunting, with an emphasis on early childhood. In 2019, PROBITAS Foundation provided additional funding to UNICEF Belize to expand Belize rural primary health care initiative: the country's 54 laboratory technicians have been trained in biosafety/security, quality management and blood bank, and laboratories are being fully equipped in 2 Corozal district polyclinics serving vulnerable and remote rural communities.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

With the growing scope of the programme (additional output on AH; expansion of the violence prevention programme with 3-year Spotlight grant; strengthening of Nutrition programming with thematic funding; CPD ceiling raised in USD 1 million; growing imperative for action on migration; relevance of emergency/climate change and development nexus in a country prone to hurricanes and floodings; and growing UN joint programming) there is a need to further strengthen intersectoral work and prioritization of main expected results, adapting to updated situation analysis especially of the most vulnerable children. The 2019 CO SMR around the Mid Term of the CPD, the upcoming launch of the SITAN, expected submission of Belize State report to the CRC, and 2020 Belize VNR on the SDGs, provide important opportunities to inform the programmatic priorities of the last two years of the current CPD, and to transition and start developing -in 2020- the new CPD for 2022 onwards.

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As the single largest source of statistically representative survey data on human development and social policy issues in Belize, MICS is an important source of evidence base to support reporting on national development policies. In the absence of regular national household surveys, UNICEF's support to the continued implementation of MICS is critical to the achievements of results for children in Belize.

The long-term objective of the Sustainable Child Friendly Municipalities Initiative (SCFMI) is to ensure sustainable results for children and a commitment to advancing child rights at the local level. As such, the Initiative is inextricably linked to the pursuit and achievement of the SDGs. The SCFMI approach supports local governments in implementing the 2030 Global Agenda through inclusive processes, holistically addressing issues related to the well-being of families and the youngest citizens. The SCFM experience in Belize indicates that success in SDG achievement will depend strongly on responsive policy translation at local level, requisite resources and clear, tangible engagement spaces with stakeholders who are especially capable of localizing the SDGs as part of program planning.

The issue of violence is complex and multifaceted. Therefore, the approaches to violence prevention should be pertinent to the national context, comprehensive and sustainable. Relationship-building at community level is integral to success. However, it remains evident that stronger emphasis needs to be placed on addressing trauma at household and community level and support is needed to improve responsiveness in the Child Protection System. The Child Protection Technical Working Group (CPTWG), a multi-agency group providing technical guidance and advocacy for child protection, is a functioning group with a 5-year strategy. While the working group reconfigured itself to be able to adequately respond to the challenges of the Child Protection System, major child protection gaps remain in the system. Questions around leadership and decision-making made it difficult to advance some key changes within the child protection system for the last few years, and work was only taking place around available funds, rather than on addressing key service delivery gaps. To this end, a major lesson learnt for the working group is the growing need to enhance and strengthen coordination and multisectoral response to issues affecting children nationally. As a result, together with UNICEF, the National Committee for Families and Children worked with the committee to identify key gaps and priorities needed and established a plan of action to address these issues. The major lessons remain buy-in across all sectors and the importance of setting priorities collectively and not solely around available funding.

Investment in advocacy, public awareness, and Communication for Development (C4D) based on evidence greatly impact results and resource mobilization. UNICEF Belize has built on evidence generated from research such as the MICS, for different sectors, and advocacy in AH and ECD has contributed to greater investment by the Government of Belize. Evidence generation, coupled with opportunities for South-South collaboration, contributed to Belize showcasing best practices in the Caribbean. This has been the case for CCD and effective programming in emergency preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction as well as for AH through multiple presentations at the First Caribbean Congress on AH in 2019.

Positive parenting is highlighted as key in the development of children and adolescents, and in Belize, multi-sectoral approaches to programming have proved successful. This is particularly in the case of the integration of the Violence Against Children Technical Seminar in the implementation of Care for Child Development (CCD). CCD remains a strong platform for supporting the prevention of abuse, malnutrition and nurturing care and is a key home-based intervention promoted by the Violence Against Children Regional Strategy document.

The important work that UNICEF Belize has supported on emergency preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction over the past two years has shown that success is dependent on the key cross-sectoral component to all development outcomes for children and adolescents. This also impacts supply management and logistics. With increased emergencies in the region, the National and Regional Protocols for the Integrated Protection of Children and Adolescents in Disaster Situations for the Caribbean (2019) have the opportunity to support strengthened actions for the protection of children and adolescents. There was strong collaboration and coordination among LACRO, CDEMA and 18 participating states in the Caribbean, which ensured the success of a quality document, resulting from successful consultations and peer review. Well managed resources were optimized and mobilized where required.

The CO SMR in early 2019 and the SMR with other Caribbean MSDF countries in late 2019 informed modest changes to the structure and strategic adjustments for consideration to ensure more effective delivery and of results as well as positioning in light of emerging issues.

Key recruitments were finalized and multiple long-term consultants continued to support important aspects of programme delivery enabling expansion and influence of the SP work, development of critical policy frameworks on AH as well as evidence generation on the neglected area of mental health.

L&D and LSA collaborated to organize a thematic session for the entire team at the end of the year which helped serve dual objectives of team building and team learning. The experience was extremely positive and cost-effective. The approach is well worth adopting for optimization of limited L&D funds.

