

# UNICEF ANNUAL REPORT for Costa Rica



## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the new Government came into power in May, the Office re-established good working relationships quickly with the new authorities and signed AWP's with all major counterparts. UNICEF negotiated continuation for all major programmes and increased emphasis on ECD, in line with the Government's priorities.

The Office established new contacts with the private sector to advance child rights in 2010. Important results were achieved in ECD through a broad partnership between UNICEF, public institutions, private sector representatives and NGOs, to promote the right to education without corporal punishment. Through this partnership and in a follow-up to the Law that makes corporal punishment illegal, a national baseline study was carried out and a subsequent campaign designed to educate parents and caregivers.

UNICEF carried out advocacy for children's rights in connection with Presidential and Mayoral elections through TV and radio campaigns (Who are you voting for?); and by organising dialogues between children and mayoral candidates. On these occasions the candidates signed declarations prepared by children and young people for each municipality.

As a milestone in 2010, President Oscar Arias signed an Executive Decree to make Local Child Protection Systems (SLP) compulsory in every municipality, as a direct result of UNICEF support to the SLPs.

The most disadvantaged children were reached through the support to the SLP programme, advocacy for those groups, and via intercultural education. Three studies make visible the rights of these children; a 'Survey of Perceptions of Afro-descendants' among the main population; a 'Diagnostic Study of Teachers in the Indigenous Communities'; and the 'State of Migrant Children and Adolescents: Rights and Human Development of Nicaraguan Children and Adolescents in Costa Rica'.

The Office accomplished several additional tasks in 2010: a Mid-Term Review was carried out through several studies, internal meetings and external workshops with counterparts; in April a Programme Performance Assessment mission from NYHQ visited Costa Rica; and a UNICEF Submission for the Costa Rica Country Report to the CRC was sent to Geneva in preparation for the February pre-session and June session.

The programme implementation level was high in terms of programmatic results and utilisation of financial resources.

## 2 COUNTRY SITUATION AS AFFECTING CHILDREN AND WOMEN

2010 was a year of elections in Costa Rica: Presidential elections took place in February and elections of mayors in December.

Laura Chinchilla, the first female President of Costa Rica, places high priority on child rights, especially quality care for early infancy. First steps were taken toward the establishment of a National Network for Child Care and Development, where UNICEF supports the Government. The President signed an Executive Decree with this aim.

There is an urgent need to increase the coverage and quality of public care services for early infancy, since only 6% of small children receive these services.

Poverty increased from 18.5% of poor households in 2009 to 21.3% in 2010; with extreme poverty at 4.2% in 2009 and 6% in 2010 (change in methodology may affect these figures somewhat). Also, 13% of households are vulnerable to poverty, bringing the total to 34% of households with serious problems in satisfying their basic needs.

In 2009 poverty affected 32% of children under 12 years of age: 8% were children in extreme poverty and 24% children whose basic needs were not satisfied.

Costa Rica was again affected by natural disasters. Flooding took the lives of 23 people in November. More than 4,000 victims had to be evacuated into temporary shelters,

among them hundreds of children. Children are lacking in the integrated care and protection while in shelters, thus they need support from UNICEF and other agencies. The government began a nationwide consultation to draft a National Policy for Citizen Safety and Promotion of Peace, defined as one of the nation's priorities. The increase in violence has led to reactive responses to insecurity and proposals to reduce the age for criminal responsibility and a stiffening of penalties for under-aged persons in conflict with the law.

As a follow-up to the Law on the Rights of Children to Discipline without Physical Punishment, a national baseline was published in 2010 on Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) on patterns of upbringing. In the survey, 64.5% of caregivers indicated that physical punishment is sometimes the best way to educate. Costa Rica is one of the first countries in the world with a legal instrument of this type.

During 2010 a legislative reform increased the percentage of GDP destined to education to 8%. However, low levels of secondary education completion continue to be a concern; only 38% of students who begin their secondary schooling complete it.

In spite of some advances in education, indigenous children suffer from illiteracy rates six times higher than the national average, 30% compared to 4.5% for the rest of the population, while their average education lasts 3.4 years, compared to 7.6 years for the rest of the population.

Indigenous children also suffer from largely preventable diseases and experience infant mortality twice the national rate, which has decreased during the last years.

In a UNICEF study on the perceptions of citizens regarding the Afro-descendent population in Costa Rica, 33% of those interviewed thought that the rights of children of African descent were not respected on an par with children not of African descent, and 58% think that persons of African descent face discrimination.

Costa Rica is one of the countries with the highest percentages of immigration in the hemisphere, 7.8% of the total population. About 30% are persons under 18 years of age.

In spite of Government efforts, access and utilisation of social services is lower among Nicaraguan immigrants than among the overall population. This is especially true of school attendance.

The new law on migration went into effect this year, recognising the protection of the rights of children and adolescents, specifically in matters of trafficking of persons. This legislation aims to integrate immigrants into the country's development.

Towards the end of the year, a border conflict emerged between Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Costa Rica has appealed to the Organization of American States to find a solution. The excavation of a channel from the San Juan River to the Caribbean Sea is openly supported by the Government of Nicaragua.

## **3 CP ANALYSIS & RESULT**

### **3.1 CP Analysis**

#### **3.1.1 CP Overview**

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organising dialogues between children and mayoral candidates. On these occasions the candidates signed declarations prepared by children and young people of each municipality.

As a milestone in 2010, President Oscar Arias signed an Executive Decree to make Local Child Protection Systems (SLP) compulsory in every municipality, as a direct result of UNICEF support to these systems.

The most disadvantaged children were reached through support to the SLP programme, advocacy for those groups, and intercultural education. Three studies make visible the rights of these children; a Survey of Perceptions of Afro-descendants among the Costa Rican population; a Diagnostic Study of Teachers within the Indigenous Communities; and the State of Migrant Childhood and Adolescence: Rights and Human Development of Nicaraguan Children and Adolescents in Costa Rica.

The Office undertook several additional tasks during 2010: a Mid-Term Review was carried out through several studies, internal meetings and external workshops with counterparts; in April a Programme Performance Assessment mission from NYHQ visited Costa Rica; and a UNICEF Submission for the Costa Rica Country Report to the CRC was sent to Geneva in preparation of the February pre-session and June session.

Programme implementation was high in terms of both programmatic results and utilisation of financial resources.

### **3.1.2 Programme Strategy**

#### **3.1.2.1 Capacity Development**

UNICEF promoted dialogue among social organisations and Government representatives to draft a proposal for the constitution of the National Network for Child Care and Development (REDCUDI) through Executive Decree No. 36020, and preparation of a document on strategic and technical perspectives, which summarises the objectives and guiding principles of the Network. UNICEF supported the technical capacities of the Implementation Unit of the REDCUDI.

UNICEF strengthened teachers' capacities to include intercultural aspects as a central theme of curriculum reform, with a focus on populations at greater social disadvantage through a diagnostic of the situation of indigenous teachers, and the seminar on Intertwined Roots of Yesterday and Today, during which teachers from primary and secondary schools designed strategies and guidelines that will be applied in 2011 at educational centres throughout the Caribbean zone, which concentrates the largest proportion of the African descent and indigenous population.

In order to improve the quality, relevance and equity of education UNICEF supported the training of teachers to apply innovative techniques for the exchange of experiences among teachers and students.

UNICEF supported the joint programme "Giro 180°" in two coastal provinces where adolescents have increased their knowledge and communication abilities to promote processes of peer education. The strategy is crucial for introducing the topic of HIV and AIDS prevention in an adequate and innovative way, using a broad and integrated vision, such as focusing on healthy lifestyles. The institutional capacities of the MEP and the Ministry of Health to deal with issues related to sexual and reproductive health, HIV and AIDS and adolescent-friendly services using a rights approach were strengthened at the local level.

Within the framework of the SLP programme, UNICEF prioritised awareness-raising and training for municipal officials to include issues concerning children on the municipal agendas, plans and budgets in order to comply with the rights of children.

The Joint Programmes of Culture and Development and Culture of Peace promoted the inclusion of an intercultural approach in the policies of State institutions, as well as a prevention-based approach on violence by means of sports, culture and recreation.

### **3.1.2.2 Effective Advocacy:**

UNICEF and the United Nations System carried out two campaigns to have a bearing on the presidential and mayoral elections. Mayoral candidates, under the slogan 'Cantón como te quiero', youth and community organisations were given support to organise forums among candidates and children and adolescents in nine municipalities. The letters of commitment from these encounters are the basis for the inclusion of the priority topics for children in the municipal plans of the local governments, as well as to work towards active and systematic participation of children in the design and application of policies and programmes that concern them.

Advocacy and technical support by UNICEF was a key factor in forging links between public efforts and those of the NGOs around early childhood with a focus on rights and comprehensive development, from an equity perspective. This was highlighted by the fact that the CNNA took on implementation of a KAP survey on child-rearing practices, as well as a communication strategy to favour a rights-based approach. Another achievement of UNICEF, together with NGOs, was the technical assistance provided for the drafting of the Executive Decree concerning the National Network for Child Care and Development.

UNICEF advocacy was crucial for promoting the design of a National Plan for Peaceful Coexistence that includes school, family and community environments; inclusion and application of the Child Friendly Schools programme; and inclusion of the intercultural approach in curriculum reform.

UNICEF advocacy and support were also instrumental in the signing of the Executive Decree that makes Local Protection Systems compulsory; in reactivation of the partnership with the Commission on Childhood of the Parliament; and in the inclusion of a question concerning self-perception of the Afro-descendent population in the National Population Census 2011.

UNICEF advocated for the current administration to adopt the Policy on Childhood and Adolescence approved by the previous administration. This policy will be included in the National Development Plan of the current Government. Similarly, an agreement was signed with the Government to carry out a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS).

### **3.1.2.3 Strategic Partnerships**

**Public-private alliances:** On the topic of early childhood, a working relationship was achieved with AED, Procter & Gamble, CNNA, PANI and UNICEF to carry out a KAP survey on child-rearing patterns, a qualitative study among parents and caretakers and a communication campaign called "Eduquemos en Positivo" ("Let's Educate Positively") to provide practical advice for parents and caretakers on raising children.

**Public sector:** Plans of Action were signed with the Ministries of Social Welfare and Family, Education, Health, Culture, Public Safety and Justice and Peace, as well as with the CNNA to promote policies, norms and programmes aimed at fulfilling children's rights. Likewise, agreements were signed with PANI, the Commission on Childhood of the Legislative Assembly, the Judicial System, the Ombudsman, the Youth Council, the General Directorate for Migration Services and DINADECO.

**NGOs and community organisations:** Linked to the topics of early childhood, protection, public policies, excluded populations, migrants, emergencies and adolescent participation, ties were strengthened with: COSECODENI, Paniamor, Cenderos, Proyecto Caribe, Centre for Afro-Costa Rican Women, Red Cross Youth, as well as a series of youth organisations present in 14 of the priority municipalities.

### **3.1.2.4 Knowledge Management**

In 2010 the office reinforced its knowledge-generation strategy aimed at supporting the strategic orientation of programmes, communications, advocacy and social mobilisation.

**Early Childhood:** The KAP study on child-rearing patterns is the first of its kind in Latin America and establishes a national baseline to measure the impact of the application of

the Law against Physical Punishment (2008) and changes in child-rearing patterns of parents and caretakers over the short and long-term.

**Education:** The diagnostic on indigenous teachers forms part of the curriculum reform for the inclusion of the intercultural approach, and will serve to strengthen alliances between the MEP and universities to improve the capacities and abilities of indigenous teachers.

**Protection:** A study was carried out that will serve to establish conceptual and operational guidelines for the actions carried out by the Local Protection Systems regarding different forms of violence against children within households, schools and communities.

In order to improve the capacities and knowledge of the members of public institutions and community organisations, UNICEF prepared several training documents on violence prevention through sports, culture, recreation and alternative conflict resolution in educational centres. Furthermore, an Educational Kit was prepared on community participation and children's rights.

To have reliable disaggregated information that would allow a clear view of the situation of the most vulnerable and excluded groups and promote public policies and programmes aimed at reducing existing gaps and inequities, UNICEF promoted several studies focusing on Afro and migrant populations. UNICEF also carried out a study among children and adolescents on their views and perspectives regarding participation.

### **3.1.2.5 C4D - Communication for Development**

The campaign 'Eduquemos en positivo (Let's Educate Positively)' promotes comprehensive development in early childhood, providing caregivers with knowledge of positive discipline measures.

H1N1 campaign promoted hand-washing and was aimed at adolescents and adults. The materials were validated by experts and focus groups.

'En el cole pasan cosas increíbles, tenés que estar aquí' (Incredible things are going on at school, you must be there) urged adolescents to stay in secondary school. The strategy was complemented with a documentary: 'Transformar el cole' (Transforming secondary) that brought together art and cultural projects by students and teachers to prevent dropouts. 'Tiempos de SuperArte' (SuperArt Times) was designed to allow children between five and 10 and their teachers to express their rights through art.

'Giro 180: Cambiemos el Rumbo' (180° Turn: Let's change direction) consisted of messages concerning the prevention of HIV from 'youth to youth' that are distributed during the Giro Tour, where adolescents use art and recreation to promote the topic in secondary schools and communities.

'Compartimos más que un país' (We share more than a country) promotes a change in attitude among adolescents regarding discrimination. As regards indigenous children, UNICEF posters and bus stop advertising provided information on their situation.

A communications strategy was prepared to promote intercultural aspects among adolescents and adults. Adolescents worked on a series of youth-to-youth messages concerning youth cultures. Messages were produced in video, photography, radio, web 2.0 and animated drawings. A strategy and campaign were developed to promote intercultural aspects at farmers' markets.

The strategies contemplate prior studies, life stories and validations with target populations. The strategies include activities with the press, photographic and audio-visual records, focused on voice, participation, life stories and the promotion of a positive image of children. Communications contributed to highlighting the situation of excluded populations and providing evidence of the results achieved by the cooperation programme regarding childhood and adolescence.

On average, the media published a news note daily concerning UNICEF, at a cost of more than \$397,000.

### **3.1.3 Normative Principles**

#### **3.1.3.1 Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation**

The Human Rights Based Approach to programming (HRBA) is an integral part of the programmatic action within the scope of the goals and results of the cooperation programme in Costa Rica. It applies primarily to an effective approach to overcoming disparity and guaranteeing rights for excluded populations. We have reinforced the actions for follow-up and monitoring in both the Mid-Term Review process and the pre-session meeting reports to the CRC and CEDAW committees (acting in the latter case together with the UNCT).

UNICEF has continued strengthening the use of HRBA in concrete actions for awareness-raising, knowledge generation and advocacy with regard to the populations at greater social disadvantage, such as indigenous, Afro-descendant and migrant children and adolescents. Similarly, we have promoted the inclusion of the HRBA in the approach taken by the National Network for Child Care and Development, to overcome an approach centred on women's needs according to which day care is seen as a child depository and advance to an approach that takes into account the rights and comprehensive development of children.

In the area of violence prevention, UNICEF played a role through the inclusion of the HRBA in the National Policy for Citizen Security by including the Human Development perspective and following-up on the guidelines of the Secretary General's Report on violence against children (2006).

UNICEF maintains strategic actions in promoting child-friendly programmes and services, both to improve the quality of education and to promote healthy lifestyles to prevent HIV among adolescents.

In 2010 the rights-based approach was strengthened during the MTR in accordance with partners, since this approach must permeate all levels of the Country Programme process, as well as the content of programme strategies and definition of the organisation's policies. The Situation Analysis (SITAN) was undertaken using an HRBA in social, political, institutional, economic and legal matters, with an emphasis on the rights of children and adolescents.

#### **3.1.3.2 Gender Equality and Mainstreaming**

UNICEF participated in drafting the inter-agency report on the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), contributing to the identification of challenges, such as the construction of a national care system; the promotion of adolescent-friendly health and educational services that would allow for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS; and the promotion of public policies for migrant children.

The special vulnerability of gender-linked poverty was included as a component of the SITAN, in the framework of the MTR.

The National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity (PIEG, 2007) includes among its main tenets the co-responsibility for childcare. Starting in 2010, support has been given to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Family to develop a National Network for Child Care and Development, which will contribute to accomplishing the PIEG Plan of Action and strengthening gender equality and equity in the country.

UNICEF forms a part of the Inter-Agency Group for Gender of the United Nations System, the objective of which is to advise the UNCT on strengthening gender mainstreaming within and outside the United Nations System.

#### **3.1.3.3 Environmental Sustainability**

Environmental sustainability is not directly part of the country programme, but was addressed by the UNCT in several joint activities during the year, including UN day.

### **3.2 Programme Components**

#### **Title: *Child development and quality education***

##### **Purpose**

The Child Development and Quality Education Component is organised into three sub-components:

**(1) Early Child Development:** Strengthening of national capacity to provide integrated care services for early childhood within the framework of establishing a quality National Child Care and Development Network (REDCUDI), and supporting parental capacities.

##### **Main results planned in 2010:**

- A high quality National Network of Child Care and Development promoted in 15 municipalities and 25 priority communities
- The supply and demand situation for child care and development services established in the municipalities of Desamparados and Upala
- Inter-institutional and inter-sectoral linkages fostered to improve and expand the integrated care services for early childhood, attending to the poorest and most vulnerable populations
- Promotion of greater know-how in child-rearing practices and parental competencies addressed to parents and caretakers
- C4D strategy execution undertaken to promote positive child-rearing attitudes and practices.

**(2) Universalisation of secondary education:** Support to the country's efforts to universalise secondary education and improve its quality with gender equality.

##### **Main results planned in 2010:**

- Educational quality promoted through the Child-Friendly Schools Programme to transform schools and their milieu into Child and Adolescent-Centred environments with a rights focus
- Incorporation of children's and adolescents' perspectives into the teaching-learning process supported through participation, creativity and educational innovation in curricular and extracurricular activities
- Educational communities promoted as safe environments and spaces for peaceful coexistence
- Communication strategies implemented to prevent secondary school dropout and to promote rights in primary schools.

**(3) Prevention of HIV and AIDS:** UNICEF participates in the joint programme with UNFPA, UNDP, The Ministry of Culture and Youth and the municipalities of Puntarenas and Limón, with emphasis on skills and knowledge generation.

##### **Main results planned in 2010:**

- Adolescents in highly vulnerable zones receiving friendly health and educational services to prevent HIV
- Advocacy and social dialogue on the suitability and urgency of HIV-AIDS prevention
- Campaigns and educational materials aimed at adolescents developed to encourage change in sociocultural practices for HIV-AIDS prevention.

### **Resources Used (in US Dollars):**

<b>BA Source – Donor</b>	<b>Appr. Budget / CPR</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>% Expenditure</b>
SC/2006/9901-B3	181271.8	181110.72	99.91
SC/2006/9902	21018.8	21018.8	100
GS/2009/0055	45000	45000	100
SC/2009/0068	1761.73	1753.7	99.54
SC/2009/0365	49680.06	49654.28	99.94
SC/2009/0739	42583.34	42583.34	100
SI/2009/0068	29607.31	29607.31	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>370923.04</b>	<b>370728.15</b>	<b>99.94</b>

### **Results Achieved**

#### **Early Child Development**

- UNICEF facilitated dialogue between the Government and civil society on the objectives and guiding principles for establishing the National Network of Child Care and Development. As a product of this dialogue, the NGOs and UNICEF strategic and technical perspectives constituted the main input in the Governmental Decree establishing the National Network
- The Office organised an early exchange of international experiences and good practices for early child care systems, as part of the construction of the National Network
- UNICEF supported the establishment of an implementation unit within the Ministry of Social Welfare for the National Network of Child Care
- UNICEF produced basic and geo-referenced statistics to estimate the demand for early child care at the district level, using the Strategic Network Plan
- Technical assistance was provided in coordination with NYHQ for the appropriate design of child care centres, in order for the Network infrastructure to consider the rights and needs of children
- UNICEF prepared a mapping and diagnostic of the supply and demand of child care and development services in two vulnerable municipalities within the framework of the Joint Programme on Youth, Employment and Migration.
- The Office promoted a broad public-private partnership on care practices to implement a baseline KAP study for the application and follow-up of the Law on the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment (see Innovations), which was undertaken by the National Council of Childhood and Adolescence (CNNA) as a baseline instrument to measure the country's advances in this area
- A National Campaign for the prevention of contagion from AH1N1 was supported by UNICEF, including the promotion of hand-washing among children
- UNICEF negotiated the inclusion of a module in the National Household Survey 2010 on the situation of breastfeeding and immunisation in children aged 0 to 3 years, which will allow a better comprehension of existing gaps and trends.

#### **Universalisation of secondary education**

- Within the Child-Friendly Schools Programme (CFS) in high vulnerability zones, teachers participating in CFS received tools to ensure compliance with classroom rights and progressively convert schools into quality spaces, with support from UNICEF
- UNICEF raised visibility within the Government of the most disadvantaged children at schools (migrant, Afro-descendant and indigenous), proceeding to contextualise diversity into classroom care
- Quality standards for the intercultural milieu were improved through forums, and a diagnostic on the situation of teachers in indigenous communities was carried out; construction of the national basic curriculum began

- UNICEF supported improvements in teacher competencies in the citizenship and art subjects to apply new curricula for the inclusion of multiculturalism.
- Peaceful coexistence in educational centres was promoted, by developing teacher capacity to apply alternative conflict resolution methodologies
- Student leader gatherings were held for participation and exchange of experiences. Within the Joint Programme: Builders of Peace, the elaboration of the National Plan for Coexistence in Educational Centres began, led by UNICEF.

### **Prevention of HIV and AIDS**

- UNICEF promoted protective and friendly environments in health and education services for healthy lifestyles and prevention of HIV and AIDS through the Joint Programme 'Giro 180°'.
- Innovative demonstrations were carried out that included the adolescent and indigenous population, sporting events, informational fairs, youth carnivals and interchanges between schools. In Limón and Puntarenas, training events and projects aimed at adolescents, their families, communities and schools were took place.
- Information, education and training methodologies were developed regarding topics of sexual and reproductive health and HIV and AIDS prevention. The peer-training methodology led to shared-growth experiences. The results had a positive impact on the lives of the participants, documented through testimonies and proactive attitudes in materials for dissemination on promoting healthy lifestyles and prevention.
- UNICEF participated actively in the organisation of Central American Congress on HIV/AIDS and STD together with other UN agencies, where participation adolescents in the Joint Programme 'Giro 180°' was supported.

### **Future Workplan**

Within Early Childhood Development, UNICEF will continue support for a high quality National Network for Child Care and Development, with progressively expanding coverage, and an inclusive approach and respect for diversity. Priorities for 2011 are:

- Provide technical assistance for the establishment, in the medium term, of a high quality National Network for Child Care and Development with universal access through inter-institutional coordination
- Promote a national policy for early childhood
- Support a review of legislation regarding early childhood
- Support the expansion of the childcare and development services, starting with a pilot project in two vulnerable municipalities (Desamparados and Upala)
- Mobilisation and communication to improve child rearing practices of parents and caregivers in compliance with child rights
- Technical assistance to design prototype childcare centres
- In education, actions will be prioritised to improve educational quality; promote peaceful coexistence at schools; contextualise the basic national curriculum
- Improve the quality of education, consolidating and expanding the CFS Programme at the municipal level
- Support national and local plans that stimulate coexistence in the educational community, through national and local participatory plans for peaceful coexistence
- Promote curricular reform by expanding the Programme on Ethics, Aesthetics and Citizenship into primary education
- Update the national basic curriculum to achieve its contextualisation into the local cultures in the country
- Generate knowledge on inequities and inequalities within the educational system.

With regards to HIV and AIDS assistance will continue to 'Giro 180', in collaboration with UNFPA, UNDP and the Council of Young Person, to achieve a model for HIV prevention

and encourage healthy lifestyles through child/adolescent-friendly health and educational services by public institutions:

- Expand the model for HIV prevention and healthy lifestyles to the Local Child Protection Systems supported by UNICEF
- Promote adolescent participation through information, education and communication strategies that strengthen children's abilities that reduce risk and vulnerability
- Support updating the national basic educational curriculum to include HIV/AIDS prevention, sex education and healthy lifestyles.

**Title: *Protective environments and effective social policies***

**Purpose**

The Protective Environments and Social Management component provides support for the country to strengthen the National Child Protection System (SNPI) Local Child Protection Systems (SLPs), particularly in 14 high-risk communities. It is carried out via three sub-components:

**1) Integrated social protection in the local environment:** favours the generation of protective environments for children in 14 zones of high child vulnerability, including indigenous communities, working simultaneously through universal and selective social policies, and programmes for special protection and restitution of rights.

UNICEF has five guidelines for intervention: 1) Promotion of SLP in 14 priority municipalities; 2) Support to local governments on issues concerning children; 3) Design and implementation of a strategy for violence prevention through the creation of protective environments; 4) Prevention of human trafficking at community level, and; 5) Enhancing an intercultural approach and increasing visibility of disadvantaged groups.

**2) Strengthening the National Child Protection System and Social Management with a rights-based focus:** This sub-component promotes the adequate performance of the SNPI and its entities by supporting the preparation of a Plan of Action to implement the National Policy on Childhood and Adolescence, the generation of knowledge for decision-making, and mechanisms for reviewing and strengthening the legal framework. Special emphasis is given to the consolidation and effective impact of national plans and programmes related to special protection.

**Main results planned in 2010:**

- Dialogue promoted for the Plan of Action to implement the National Policy on Childhood and Adolescence
- National Plans and Programmes for special protection of children and adolescents strengthened and subject to permanent monitoring and evaluation.

**3) Effective investments for children** to promote improved efficiency and equity of social investment at the national, regional and local levels.

**Main results planned in 2010:**

Social investment directed to children and adolescents includes a monitoring and evaluation system to re-allocate resources with greater efficiency and equity.

### **Resources Used (in US Dollars):**

<b>BA Source – Donor</b>	<b>Appr. Budget / CPR</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>% Expenditure</b>
SC/2006/9901-B3	4964.55	4964.55	100
SC/2006/9904	61121.11	59673.42	97.63
SC/2006/9905	28240.01	28240.01	100
SC/2008/0426	127309.38	126618.41	99.45
SC/2009/0068	8712.91	8697.91	99.82
SC/2009/0374	234203.46	233729.72	99.79
SC/2009/0617	176770.3	169668.67	95.98
SC/2010/9904	30966.06	30966.06	100
SI/2009/0068	27854.99	27854.99	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>700142.77</b>	<b>690413.74</b>	<b>98.61</b>

### **Result Achieved**

#### **Integrated Child Protection in the local environment**

President Oscar Arias signed the Executive Decree in which public institutions are requested to coordinate their operations and coordinate resources within Local Child Protection Systems. Work plans for the SLP in 14 communities were prepared. In 2010, the SLP involved around 185,000 children and adolescents directly and indirectly. Educational materials were produced for the community promoters of DINADECO, promoting Child Safeguard Committees throughout the country.

A mapping of activities promoted by the Coalition for Prevention and Care of Victims of Trafficking was carried out with the General Directorate of Migration Services. A local pilot plan was undertaken in four communities to coordinate attention and care for victims of human trafficking using the available national protocols of the Immediate Response Teams.

Indicators were designed to measure the performance of the SLP in the prevention of violence as one of the key areas of action. Guidelines were drafted for a Violence Prevention Model within the framework of the Joint Programme: 'Communities without Fear'. Sports and cultural activities were promoted as a means for violence prevention, accompanied by the C4D strategy together with the Ministries of Justice and Public Safety. Violence-prevention activities reached approximately 30,000 persons, of whom 80% were below 18 and the rest were parents, public officials and community leaders.

**Advocacy for excluded populations:** A UNICEF study on citizens' perceptions of the Afro-descendant population was presented to the public and the media. It concluded that discrimination and adverse situations among children and adolescents persist and are evidence of the challenges that exist in the fulfilment of their rights and the generation of public policies that would decrease gaps in inequality. An initiative was promoted to enhance intercultural youth organisation with the participation of indigenous and non-indigenous children. The first steps were taken to articulate an SLP from the indigenous cosmic perspective and with a presence in the area.

**Commitments by local government to support children's rights:** A working strategy was developed with local governments that included agreements between them and PANI to promote SLPs. Municipal agendas concerning children were drafted and commissions or offices for children and adolescents were created. Before the municipal elections in December, UNICEF supported encounters and agreements among the mayoral candidates and children and adolescents in the municipality. In cooperation with NGOs, UNICEF was part of the '5th Central American Encounter on Children's Rights and Local Development' to promote municipal public policies on children.

**A strategy for local level adolescent participation:** In collaboration with the CPJ, the MEP and civil-society groups, UNICEF carried out a diagnostic on adolescent participation that served as the basis to strengthen adolescent networks in the priority municipalities.

### **Strengthening of the National Child Protection and Social Management System with a rights-based approach**

*First advances in drafting the Plan of Action for the implementation of the National Policy for Childhood and Adolescence 2009-2021 (PNNA).* UNICEF's technical and economic support and the leadership assumed together with PANI and MIDEPLAN, were crucial in pushing this process forward. Links between the PNNA and the priority actions of the National Development Plan 2010-2014 were promoted and institutional integration of goals and actions was designed, as well as the global and sectoral commitments of each entity involved.

*A bi-national initiative to understand the situation of migrant children and adolescents was executed.* A study on the current situation and perspectives of children and adolescents in the migration processes between Nicaragua and Costa Rica was carried out. The study recognised the situation of vulnerability faced by the migrant population in the country, and encourages placing the need for policy actions and integrated protection on the public agenda.

In conjunction with national and local counterparts, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Ministry of Health to implement the first MICS, which will highlight disparities and inequalities among disadvantaged populations.

### **Future Workplan**

#### **Integrated Social Protection in the local environment**

- Promote Local Protection Systems for children and adolescents in the communities with highest indices of child vulnerability
- Support the participation and strengthening of local governments in matters concerning children
- Promote the 'Cantón como Te Quiero' Programme in 14 of the country's municipalities
- Technical assistance to improve the institutional response in special protection
- Promote the participation of children at the local and national levels
- Establish alliances with the Red Cross to address the psychosocial impact on children and adolescents during and after emergencies.

#### **Strengthen the National Integrated Protection and Social Management System with a rights-based approach.**

- Promote culturally adequate public policies and institutional frameworks, oriented mainly to protect and guarantee the rights of the excluded and socially disadvantaged populations
- Design plans and guidelines for the implementation of policies at the local level and strengthen the frameworks for monitoring and evaluation
- Develop the survey, data analysis and dissemination instruments for the results of the MICS
- Generate strategic knowledge on the situation of and compliance with the rights of disadvantaged children and adolescents, especially indigenous, Afro-descendant and migrant groups.

## **4 OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Governance & Systems**

#### **4.1.1 Governance Structure:**

UNICEF Costa Rica has an operational and programming structure that is organised in three areas: Programmes, Communications and Operations.

The Country Management Team plays a strategic and managerial role. The Joint Consultative Committee has met to deal with staff affairs, the Contract Review Committee has reviewed the process for awarding contracts, which has been facilitated this year by the increase in the contract review limit to \$40,000. The Local Property Survey Board has met to make operational decisions on equipment being dropped from inventory for having reached the end of their useful lives or due to damage, and the Training Committee has played an outstanding role in the search for and development of training proposals that take into account the personnel's requests and the results of the staff survey from 2009. The office has an annual calendar for staff meetings and for programmes, which are held weekly and fortnightly to share relevant topics for all personnel and communication.

The Office areas have work plans that were approved during the first quarter of this year and reviewed every three months to analyse programme and operational-financial accomplishments. The plans are adjusted by the responsible officers with Management consent.

The office has an operational and control structure for emergency situations. CMT improved the mechanisms for programme and financial planning in 2010 by using a managerial report, weekly budget monitoring and weekly meetings for coordination and control. The Office does not have pending observations from the 2008 audit.

#### **4.1.2 Strategic Risk Management**

This year an internal evaluation of major risks and control was carried out, identifying the principal risks and evaluating the current control mechanisms for the 26 possible risks for the office in programmes, operations, natural emergencies and financing. Following-up on this exercise, a plan of action was designed to improve the current level of risk control, together with the terms for compliance, appointing responsible personnel for implementing the changes and drafting indicators to measure achievements. This process was carried out with the participation of all of the personnel.

Technical assistance will be requested from the regional office and headquarters to strengthen the knowledge and abilities of the personnel in risk management. It is important to note that most of the working plans include an emergency component. In addition, there is an updated Business Continuity Plan.

#### **4.1.3 Evaluation**

The office has an annually updated IMEP facilitating the evaluation of the current programme of cooperation and identifying of the institutional and social impact and changes in the country. During 2010 the office undertook the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Country Programme as a substantial exercise evaluating the achievements and constraints, systematizing lessons learned and formulating recommendations, all done in a participatory manner with partners.

The MTR was conducted together with government authorities, primarily with the Ministry of National Planning as the government entity responsible for the formulation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the Government strategies and priorities. To ensure objectivity and impartiality as required by the MTR process, consultants were hired mainly for the preparation of the SITAN and to facilitate and systematize the work, in addition to coordinate consultations and focus groups both internally and externally.

The results of the MTR provided useful feedback and permitted a readjustment of strategies for the remainder of the current Programme as a management response to

the findings. The MTR showed that the achievements and progress made by the Country Programme effectively address the issues and areas of greatest relevance for children through national and local capacity building, generation of strategic knowledge to change cultural practices, advocacy and social mobilisation and technical assistance for policy formulation, approaches and establishment of operational mechanisms for the enforcement of human rights.

Similarly, in 2010 discussions were initiated with various authorities to identify any possible evaluations of national importance for 2011, and in particular, to promote the strengthening of institutional of institutional capacities in monitoring, evaluation and accountability in the context of the development and monitoring of the National Policy for Children and Adolescents 2009-2021.

#### **4.1.4 Information Technology and Communication**

All change processes programmed and released by HQ and TACRO have been carried out, the infrastructure for application of the changes is being prepared (Operating systems, office applications, new financial-administrative system, etc.).

Improved technological platform and infrastructure to achieve better performance and functionality of the different systems, minimising failures, which continue to occur infrequently.

Response operations to the emergency situation in Haiti were supported, in the ICT area, Data-Communications and field coordination between UNICEF and other agencies. The Costa Rica office collaborated in trained human resource mobilisation management.

All of the recommendations made by the Regional ICT Chief were adopted in planning and execution in October 2009, which were focused on achieving improvements in management and service provision.

In the inter-agency ICT group, there was innovation in the use of virtual meetings. UNICEF provided and demonstrated operation of WebEx, OPS and Elluminate. The interchange of abilities within the Group has been promoted.

**Status of corporate systems:** Successful ProMS upgrade to version 9. Lotus Domino: without problems. CITRIX: with sporadic connectivity faults. Connection through SITA: due to limitations in the way that the system is monitored, it is not possible to identify proactively when the system has a dropped connection. BlackBerry: sporadic connectivity problems whose cause is difficult to identify.

**Principal tasks and improvements carried out in the office infrastructure:** upgrade of ProMS to version 9.1, upgrade of Proms Admin module 8.5.2 EBF 124, acquisition and replacement of equipment according to the ICT plan, replacement of the VoIP equipment, upgrade of Lotus Notes 8.5 in Citrix, update of all workstations to the most recent corporate software image version 2.00, installation and configuration of annexed offices, related connectivity equipment and services under the mode of establishment and shared resources with UNFPA, we took part in the Closed Pilot for Briefing Book 561.

#### **4.2 Fin Res & Stewardship**

##### **4.2.1 Fund-raising & Donor Relations**

**Multilateral:** Thematic multi-lateral cooperation funding and from the Spanish fund for achieving the MDG increased, representing 56% more during 2010 as against 2009.

UNICEF is one of the few TACRO offices that rely on very little cooperation from the National Committees. In 2010, visits were made to a few National Committees and financial support was received from the Finnish and US Committees. In 2011, the efforts will be continued with headquarters and the committees to ensure financing for the Country Programme.

**Private Sector:** In order to strengthen the financial sustainability of the Country Programme, over the last two years a strategy for partnering with the private sector has been implemented. One of the successful partnerships was with Procter & Gamble. Through fundraising efforts with artists, churches and the private

sector, \$37,000 was collected for the children affected by the Haiti earthquake. The programme 'Huesped de Corazón'(Guest with a Heart) was carried out with Mapache Rent a Car. This year, significant negotiations were undertaken with important firms, such as Unilever, ScotiaBank, Dos Pinos, La Nación newspaper and others.

**Individual Donors:** UNICEF is laying the technological bases to facilitate the implementation of individual donations and guarantee the security of the financial transactions on the web page.

#### **4.2.2 Management of Financial and Other Assets**

With a 36% increase in the use of the financial resources, there was an increase in OR funds. Efforts were made with resource administration institutions to simplify the process and use of funds by government counterparts. Internal financial processes were met and those of the counterparts that were trained in HACT. Bank reconciliations are carried out daily, as well as reports to headquarters.

The use of RR funds is at 99% and OR funds at 95%. For the year-end close, it was possible to liquidate the DCT's funds for more than nine months, which underwent delays due to bureaucratic processes that delayed fund and activity implementation; finally it was possible to achieve work plan results.

Similarly, the Office implemented closer monitoring and follow-up of the budget with managerial and expense reports, which allowed implementation of the necessary controls. In 2011, this control will be carried out weekly.

#### **4.2.3 Supply**

Country Programme supplies were procured locally in their entirety, following UNICEF procedures in respect of contracting, purchasing and selection of suppliers. This is not an important line item of the cooperation programme.

#### **4.3 Human Resource Capacity**

This year, the Office made three new recruitments for the positions of Operations Officer and two Programme Assistants. This process implied temporary adjustments in the functions of some staff members to guarantee achieving the goals for the programme areas and operations. Due to these changes, some of the results foreseen in the operations working plan had to be re-programmed for early 2011.

**Staff welfare:** Personnel were trained in languages and stress management; these activities were coordinated by Representation, Operations and the Personnel Association.

**Staff Survey:** The training and operations committee drafted a series of proposals for addressing the main recommendations of the global staff survey 2009; however, most of the activities had to be re-programmed for the first two months of 2011.

**Training:** Ten staff members participated in training sessions outside the country (representing 50% of all travel) related to areas that the organisation is changing, such as, the new VISION system, Simplified Results Structure and Rolling/Multi-year work plans, Budgets and Investment for Children, among others.

**PER:** Most of the officers completed and signed their PER with their supervisor. The PER has become a very useful tool for identifying achievements and areas for improvement. HR staff and supervisors analysed the common points from the PERs to draft a capacity-building strategy that would allow staff to obtain the competencies needed for successful performance.

New incoming personnel are informed about UN Cares and the HIV Standards at Work; additionally they participate in workshops organised by the Learning Strategies Group from the United Nations on HIV/AIDS in Costa Rica (GEAV).

#### **4.4 Other Issues**

##### **4.4.1 Management Areas Requiring Improvement**

Savings were made through the common services system that is operated together with UNDP and UNFPA and the UN House. For example, we share additional rent

expenses with UNFPA for the placement of the new incoming personnel, as well as operating costs.

#### **4.4.2 Changes in AMP**

During 2011 the Office will continue strengthening its monitoring and evaluation functions to ensure that programmatic priorities, including an increased focus on equity, are met in the Country Programme and that all new administrative systems are smoothly adopted by the staff.

Another area of attention will be partnerships with the private sector, which were under negotiation at the end of 2010. A consultant was hired in November 2010 to ensure continuous contacts with four companies that have shown interest in working for children with UNICEF.

## **5 STUDIES, SURVEYS, EVALUATIONS & PUBLICATIONS**

### **5.1 List of Studies, Surveys & Evaluations**

- 1. Technical Report from the National Survey on Child-Rearing Patterns*
- 2. Contributions for the construction of a model for violence prevention through sports, culture and recreation*
- 3. Theoretical-Regulatory and Conceptual Framework for peer-to-peer Alternative Conflict Resolution in Educational Centres*
- 4. Facilitator's Manual for peer-to-peer Alternative Conflict Resolution in Educational Centres*
- 5. Guide for peer-to-peer conflict managers in educational centres*
- 6. The State of Migrant Childhood and Adolescence: Rights and Human Development of Nicaraguan Children and Adolescents in Costa Rica*
- 7. Our occurrences and experiences: a proposal for sounding out Nicaraguan migrant childhood and adolescence*
- 8. Fathers, mothers and caretakers in respect of early childhood development and child-rearing patterns*

## **6. INNOVATION & LESSONS LEARNED**

**Title: *The Prohibition of Corporal Punishment in Costa Rica and the Promotion of Child Rearing Practices from a Rights-based Approach through a Broad Public-Private Partnership***

**Contact Person:** Seija Toro, UNICEF Representative, [storo@unicef.org](mailto:storo@unicef.org)

### **Abstract:**

The process promoted in Costa Rica to approve, disseminate and implement the 8654 Act 'The rights of children and adolescents to discipline without physical punishment or humiliating treatment' (August 2008), includes: Advocacy (legislation and public policies), Partnerships (UNICEF-State-NGOs and Private Sector), Knowledge generation, and C4D to promote positive parenting practices from a rights-based approach.

UNICEF Costa Rica supported the formulation of legislation and provided technical assistance to the Costa Rican government, NGOs and the private sector to conduct a national baseline study on Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) of the Costa Rican population regarding child-rearing practices. It is important to mention that UNICEF Costa Rica succeeded in advocating with private entities to fund the study, which includes an analytical paper and a specialist technical paper as methodological support for future international reproduction. The results of these investigations guided advocacy efforts, partnerships, capacity building and C4D.

## **Innovation or Lessons Learned**

**1) Policy reform:** With the approval of the 8654 Act, the country took an important step in the progressive implementation of the CRC and became one of the four Latin American countries to eliminate the use of corporal punishment. This development implied a repeal of legislation, an explicit ban on the use of any other form of abusive or degrading treatment and the reform of Article 24 of the National Child and Adolescent Code.

**2) Partnerships:** As a result of UNICEF's coordination, the Business Association for Development (AED), Procter & Gamble, Paniamor Foundation, PANI and the CNNA joined forces to develop plans and programmes to promote positive child-rearing practices. Procter and Gamble agreed to finance the KAP study, in addition to the costs of designing the national campaign on child-rearing practices (to be launched in 2011). The Paniamor Foundation and the CNNA also joined this public-private partnership. With the national baseline study on KAP regarding child-rearing practices, Costa Rica became the first country in the region, and one of few in the world, to boast this important tool to enable monitoring compliance and effects of the law.

**3) Knowledge Generation:** The KAP study used a nationally representative survey and was a key initial step in implementing the new legislation. The study includes a base line providing a systematic analysis of the current situation, which in turn guides efforts aimed at producing change and measuring the impact of the Act and the National Child and Adolescent Policy in the near future. It is also an ideal instrument to track results within the legal, educational and communication fields.

**4) Public Policy Advocacy:** The CNNA adopted and led, with PANI and with UNICEF support, a National Action Plan of Action to implement the 8654 Act.

**5) C4D:** The information obtained by the national survey is complemented by a qualitative study (using focus groups) to analyse the everyday practices and concerns of caregivers. Both studies provided inputs and a framework for the design of the C4D strategy.

## **Potential Application**

As Costa Rica is one of only four countries in the region to have prohibited corporal punishment as a corrective measure, and one of the few in the world with a baseline on the progressive implementation of the legislation, there is ample potential in using this experience as a methodological framework for replication.

The national survey includes: a database, an analytical paper and a reference paper describing the methodology, the instruments applied and results achieved, useful for any country wishing to develop a baseline in this subject. It also includes the methodology and tools applied in the qualitative study (focus groups) conducted with adults and children.

The study includes the communication strategy, terms of reference and the materials and messages (television, radio and leaflets, etc.) produced for the campaign, which can be adapted and used in other countries in the region. Notably, the campaign promotes and reinforces daily activities that parents and caregivers can use to positively educate their children. Costa Rica developed a good practice that can be used to develop ties of South-South cooperation with other offices in the region, thus transcending the original boundaries of the initiative.

## **Issue/Background**

In Costa Rica, the use of corporal punishment and other forms of humiliating treatment are accepted as part of corrective measures and cultural practices of raising children within families and other social spaces, such as the school. The studies reveal the main problem: parents and caregivers do not have enough knowledge on how to promote the holistic and full development of children. They should, therefore, be provided with the

skills that will empower them to develop attitudes and practices for the application of positive and respectful disciplinary measures.

### **Strategy and Implementation**

To support approval and application of the 8654 Act, UNICEF implemented the following strategies:

- i) Support for formulation of the law
- ii) Public-private partnerships (government institutions, NGOs and private sector)
- iii) Knowledge generation (a KAP study on the use of physical punishment and on child rearing practices as a National Baseline for follow-up)
- iv) Policy advocacy (including the issue in the National Child and Adolescent Policy and the CNNA Action Plan);
- v) Capacity building (Government and NGOs)
- vi) C4D (national campaign to promote changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices).

### **Progress and Results**

**Policy:** Established baseline for the implementation of the 8654 Act

**Partnerships:** Established strong public-private partnerships to institutionalise and coordinate efforts and provide resources to sustain the initiated actions

**Knowledge generation** that will strengthen implementation of Law 8654 and provide greater protection to children from violence

**Advocacy:** Political influence resulting in the CNNA assuming the development of the survey on knowledge, attitudes and practices of child-rearing and a communication strategy to promote a human rights approach in this topic

**C4D:** Obtained information for the formulation of media messages aimed at preventing the use of physical punishment as a corrective measure and promote child-rearing practices that respect the rights of children. The campaign will be launched in 2011.

### **Next Steps**

In 2011 the Office intends to:

- Strengthen established partnerships to integrate new human and financial resources to expand and deepen the implemented strategies
- Integrate the results of the KAP into staff training programs on early childhood care within the framework of developing and consolidating the National Network for Child Care and Development
- Strengthen capacity building and the skills of fathers, mothers and caregivers as one component of the Network
- Coordinate efforts with the Ministry of Public Education for the progressive incorporation of this topic in the primary and secondary curricula, to train and strengthen the parenting skills of new generations
- Follow up the baseline study of the KAP for: further analysis of data obtained with other actors (universities, research institutes, professional associations and teacher unions, etc.) and perform a systematic monitoring of progress in law enforcement and measurement of the impact of actions.