Cuba’s socio-political context remain stable regarding the situation for children. Despite a 0.9 per cent decrease in GDP, national authorities have committed to ensure that social services maintain the levels of previous years. Foreign investment continues to be low, representing 6.5 per cent of total investment in the approved 2017 budget. The previously announced currency unification measure has not yet taken effect.

Emergency situations increase the vulnerabilities of Cuban children and women. Cuba is well recognized for having national institutions with the capacity to reach affected communities and prevent loss of life. Immediate relief and midterm recuperation to ensure health and education standards for children are areas where UNICEF Cuba has strengthened its preparedness and response capacity.

During the Zika outbreak, UNICEF Cuba supported an innovative communication for development (C4D) strategy, and during Hurricane Matthew, a timely response and the immediate mobilization of funds allowed UNICEF to support water and sanitation needs, as well as ensure children’s return to school in provisional safe spaces.

UNICEF Cuba plays a critical role as a knowledge broker between countries in early childhood development (ECD), forging knowledge-based exchanges through South-South cooperation with other countries seeking to adopt Cuba’s ECD model, which takes a holistic and integrated approach. A regional event entitled ‘Protection with Equity in Early Childhood’, under the leadership of the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (LACRO), gathered experts, representatives of the Cuban Government and from 21 UNICEF offices in the region. The event focused on the child’s first 1,000 days, the impact of violence on young children and the importance of child protection in this critical period. The discussions and technical exchanges from the event fed into the national annual teachers’ training, which for the first time included a module on violence prevention of violence for all teachers in the country.

UNICEF Cuba continues to work with reputable and specialized knowledge hubs to include a child and adolescent focus in ongoing research. Noteworthy pieces, developed with many partners, such as the Cuban Cultural Research Centre, the Youth Studies Centre and the Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research, describe behavioural trends among Cuban adolescents, their social transformation and their knowledge of certain cultural practices, among other topics.

In addition, incorporating an equity approach, UNICEF Cuba worked with key national and sub-national arts and culture partners actively involved with disadvantaged communities to engage adolescents in participation programmes. These combined initiatives targeted adolescents living in Old Havana, Los Sitios and Granma Province. As a result, 33,823 adolescents (20,293 girls) were empowered as agents of change within their respective communities in diverse areas ranging from scientific research to the arts. These adolescents, in turn, are widening adolescent participation networks, through mentoring by engaged adults, encouraging a more integrated and visible approach to their participation as full members of society.
Delays in construction of the reference centre for adolescents in Old Havana required an additional extension of the agreement with the European Union. The situation was discussed with national authorities, who agreed to give the highest priority to the project. The pace of implementation was renewed and completion of the project is scheduled for June 2017, following inauguration of the centre, expected in May 2017.

Other recurrent limitations that affected implementation of the country programme (CP) were the complexity of importing supplies (due to delays at national ports) and low connectivity, which impedes the Country Office participation in real-time in webinars and virtual working sessions, as well as limiting greater staff professional development.

UNICEF Cuba and the Iberostar Foundation consolidated a partnership on inclusive education for children with disabilities in Cuba through a three-year agreement. The initiative, embedded in UNICEF Cuba’s education outcome, is geared towards enhancing the capacity of teachers in mainstream schools to promote inclusion both inside the classroom and through sports. UNICEF Cuba also built a new partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) through a joint programme aimed at strengthening the resilience of families and vulnerable groups affected by drought in Santiago de Cuba. The partnership will address both weather-related phenomena and emergency response in line with the Sustainable Development Goals Fund (SGDF).

UNICEF Cuba also collaborated with The Guardian in the development of a podcast focusing on early childhood development in Cuba, which received international acclaim and shows potential for additional international coverage. UNICEF Cuba played an active role in developing inter-agency communication campaigns, particularly around the Secretary-General’s UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign.

Humanitarian Assistance

Hurricane Matthew (category four), hit Cuba’s easternmost areas in early October 2016. Although no lives were lost, the hurricane affected approximately 1.5 million people in 24 municipalities in Guantanamo and Holguin provinces. Guantanamo’s municipalities of Baracoa, Maisí, Imías and San Antonio del Sur registered significant structural damages, affecting 156,958 people of whom 38,094 are children.

Government-led assessments pointed to severe damages of the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure, affecting water supply and hygiene conditions in the medium term. Flooding, pipeline breakage and high tides led to water pollution. UNICEF Cuba led the WASH emergency response, in close partnership with the National Institute of Hydraulic Resources (NIHR), Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and Ministry of Education (MoE), focusing on the four most-affected municipalities in Guantanamo.

With support from Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) of approximately US$1,018,337, UNICEF Cuba procured 111,940 water containers, 282,524 purifying tablets (in packages of 50 tablets) and 3,700 hygiene kits able to serve 10 families. The main objective was to preventing morbidity and mortality linked to water-borne diseases and poor hygiene. Concrete actions consisted of providing communities with safe drinking water, options for safe water treatment and storage at the household level and information on their use. Other initiatives included hygiene promotion in education settings focusing on health-risk management, water treatment and safe storage. The emergency response also supported prevention and control of vector-borne diseases.
In relation to the education sector, according to official data Hurricane Matthew affected about 94 per cent of the school infrastructure in the four affected municipalities in Guantanamo province. Damages included partial or total loss of 290 school buildings. After being interrupted for about 10 days, regular classes resumed in temporary settings in most municipalities. UNICEF Cuba also led the emergency response for the education sector. CERF funds raised amounted to US$255,868. Implementation efforts focus on procuring school supplies to allow students to return to school in safe and protective environments. In partnership with the MoE, UNICEF Cuba procured 492 school-in-a-box kits, 352 ECD kits and 352 recreation kits, reaching 12,875 children aged zero-to-five, 25,219 children in schools and 4,680 teachers. In addition to the CERF Funds, a UN-wide action plan sought to cover basic needs and provide emergency response over a period from six to 18 months for approximately 303,392 people. UNESCO is part of the UNICEF-led education component.

In 2016, UNICEF Cuba was finalizing the repair process of ECD centres in response to the damages from Hurricane Sandy in 2012 (Santiago de Cuba, East). Some 225 girls and 260 boys are enrolled in newly repaired centres, and UNICEF Cuba will complete the rehabilitation of four additional centres that will provide safe learning spaces for about 376 girls and 420 boys by the first quarter of 2017. In the reporting year, UNICEF Cuba also supplied three pumps for water supply and disinfection equipment in the affected area as its WASH response to Hurricane Sandy.

The UNICEF-led WASH component included joint efforts by UNDP, WHO and UN Habitat to increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation in communities and health institutions, as well as to promote community-based hygiene practices, focusing on prevention of vector- and water-borne diseases.

**Emerging Areas of Importance**

**Climate change and children.** UNICEF Cuba incorporated elements related to climate change as an emerging area of importance during the reporting year. This responds to the heightened and multi-faceted vulnerability children are experiencing to droughts, hurricanes, water quality, balanced nutrition and resilience in schools. Cuba’s Eastern provinces, which hosts Cuba’s second largest city (Santiago) faced a drought affecting about 460,000 people; the region is also vulnerable to hurricanes and prone to earthquakes.

UNICEF Cuba addressed both weather-related phenomena through its emergency response. In partnership with the WFP and the UNDP, UNICEF developed a joint programme for strengthening resilience of families and vulnerable groups affected by drought in Santiago de Cuba, which addresses these issues. The programme was approved by SDG-Fund for implementation in 2017. As part of the programme, UNICEF Cuba will focus on increased access to safe drinking water and improved hygiene practices in household and at health facilities within an urban centre that is home to 36,000 people (4,000 families).

The joint programme employs a holistic vision whereby each output contributes to the strengthening of the phases needed for improved water management. It includes an early warning system to raise alerts prior to hydro/meteorological events; control, distribution and provision of safe water in scarcity scenarios; and capacity strengthening for the efficient use of water for food production. Results and lessons learned from this initiative will feed into the knowledge management system for planning integrated and sustainable water safety policies in local areas facing similar conditions. The programme is aligned with SDG targets related to building resilience, achieving universal and equitable access to safe drinking water, achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls as well as strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.
UNICEF Cuba and the Cuban Government have a long-standing tradition of promoting climate-related education and its linkages with disaster risk reduction (DRR). An output within the education outcome of the country programme incorporates elements related to capacity strengthening of community, school and family-based local education sectors to face natural disasters, with active participation by children. This initiative was carried out in close collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MoSTE), and focuses on the development of participatory community-level risk and vulnerability assessments.

Over the last three years of the current programme cycle, the programme has reached 107 communities, 128 schools, 1,812 teachers and 14,178 children in the Eastern region.

In partnership with the NIHR, UNICEF Cuba also developed another initiative with a more urban focus, employing a cultural approach toward saving water through photographic and artistic contests and the green map initiative. These activities revealed significant water waste challenges and informed corrective measures taken by the NIHR. On the disaster risk reduction side, UNICEF Cuba works with the High Command for National Civil Defence, providing technical assistance for the development of a core commitments for children-aligned protocol to protect children in humanitarian emergencies.

### Summary Notes and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMP</td>
<td>Annual management plan</td>
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<td>BCP</td>
<td>Business continuity plan</td>
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<td>BGAM</td>
<td>Broadband global area network</td>
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<td>C4D</td>
<td>Communication For development</td>
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<td>CCC</td>
<td>Core Commitments for Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>LARCSE</td>
<td>Latin American Reference Centre for Special Education</td>
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<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<td>MoSTE</td>
<td>Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment</td>
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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Country management team</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Country programme</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<td>CUC</td>
<td>Cuban convertible peso</td>
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<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster risk reduction</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early childhood development</td>
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<td>EMC</td>
<td>Emerging markets communications</td>
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<td>ERM</td>
<td>Enterprise risk management</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization</td>
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<td>GSSC</td>
<td>Global Shared Service Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>HACT</td>
<td>Harmonized approach to cash transfers</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDMI</td>
<td>High-definition multimedia interface</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency virus / Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome</td>
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<td>HMB</td>
<td>Human milk banks</td>
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<td>IB</td>
<td>Institutional budget</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMEP</td>
<td>Integrated monitoring and evaluation plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>NISPER</td>
<td>National Institute of Sport, Physical Education and Recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIHEM</td>
<td>National Institute of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIHR</td>
<td>National Institute of Hydraulic Resources</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information technology</td>
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UNICEF Cuba and the MoE’s Latin American Reference Centre for Special Education (LARCSE) strengthened the capacity of 114 teachers and specialists, reaching 1,945 children with disabilities who study in mainstream schools in three provinces. The effort to increase teacher capacity was carried out through a series of workshops designed to modify attitudes regarding the inclusion of children with disabilities, increase the quality of psycho-pedagogical diagnosis and stress the importance of family involvement to improve educational achievement for children with disabilities.

Partnerships with knowledge hubs have long-standing traditions and are key enablers in Cuba. Particularly, to pre-emptively tackle a possible Zika outbreak, UNICEF Cuba and LACRO worked with multidisciplinary technical teams formed with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) health promotion and prevention unit to develop a C4D strategy using a participatory approach to target pregnant women and those of childbearing age. The
workshop reached 50 health practitioners who, in turn, coordinated C4D campaign implementation.

With impressive rates of access to social services in the country, UNICEF Cuba’s capacity-strengthening efforts focus on incorporating quality standards in routine practices. To increase synergies between health, nutrition, hygiene and early childhood UNICEF Cuba, under the leadership the MoPH, held workshops for 101 primary health care workers and professionals in six provinces to roll out revised guidelines for assessing the quality of childcare. The roll-out, in addition to ensuring linkages with community-based ECD through an explicit effort to target ECD practitioners, showed that 38 per cent of those implementing the guidelines are working at a satisfactory level and increasing the quality of integrated services.

UNICEF Cuba also worked with the National Centre for Breastfeeding Training to develop and implement newly designed workshops for 213 health professionals in 111 municipalities to strengthen their capacity for promoting breastfeeding and donations to the Human Milk Banks (HMBs).

**Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

UNICEF Cuba coordinated an inter-sectoral, multi-disciplinary review of child-related data. This process, undertaken with key stakeholders, fostered dialogue between academics and practitioners in social sciences as part of the development of UNICEF’s situation analysis of children and women, which uses primary sources of data such as census, multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) results and annual yearbooks from child/maternal health and education registries.

UNICEF Cuba continued to work with reputable, specialized knowledge hubs that aim to include a child and adolescent focus in their ongoing research. Noteworthy pieces, developed with many partners (such as the Cuban Cultural Research Centre, the Youth Studies Centre and the Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research) describe behavioural trends among Cuban adolescents, their social transformation, their access to social media and networks and their knowledge of cultural practices. These pieces helped foster a knowledge exchange platform to share good practices on promoting adolescent participation and methodological tools, for both social research and community-based action.

This newly generated evidence also led to the incorporation of findings into better-informed advocacy for services that are designed to be adolescent-friendly and conducive to meaningful adolescent participation. In view of challenges of rural education, UNICEF Cuba provided technical and logistical support to documentation of the multi-grade system in 17 educational centres in five municipalities in three provinces (Matanzas, Ciego de Ávila and Sancti Spiritus). Part of this initiative informed the national discussion on updating policies for rural students.

Documentation of efforts previously carried out by UNICEF Cuba were taken up by the MoE, leveraging the results of UNICEF-led support on evidence generation about the multi-grade system and its methodology.

**Partnerships**

UNICEF Cuba partnered with the MoE’s section for special and pre-school education to share experiences at international forums on efforts to incorporate international standards and a human rights-based approach to the management of foster homes.
Further, UNICEF Cuba and the Iberostar Foundation consolidated a partnership on inclusive education for children with disabilities in Cuba through a three-year agreement. The initiative, embedded in UNICEF Cuba’s education outcome, is geared to enhance the capacity of teachers in mainstream schools for promoting inclusion, both inside the classroom and through sports.

UNICEF Cuba also built a new partnership with sister UN agencies to address both weather-related phenomena and emergency response. With WFP and UNDP, a joint programme, entitled ‘Strengthening Resilience of families and vulnerable groups affected by drought in Santiago de Cuba’, was approved by the SDG-Fund. UNICEF Cuba collaborated with The Guardian in developing a podcast on early childhood in Cuba, which received international acclaim and has potential to gain additional international coverage.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

UNICEF Cuba had an important presence in public events related to child and adolescent priorities during the UNICEF 70th anniversary, as well as the 25th anniversary of entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in Cuba. This provided critical windows of opportunity for advocacy, evidenced by a more frequent participation of the Representative in national television, particularly in ‘Round Table’ – among the most seen and watched TV programmes in the country.

UNICEF Cuba strengthened its partnerships with national media outlets, increasing from 187 to 280 references to UNICEF in the national press.

Increased coverage of children’s issues and UNICEF mentions on radio and television also took place in 2016. Nationwide dissemination of the MICS contributed to informing public opinion, as it remains the main reference for journalists for public discussions. The communication strategy includes an alliance with the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television to train journalists and media practitioners on children’s rights, reaching 180 professionals nationwide over the last three years.

As part of the decentralization of this strategy in 2016, three regional workshops allowed 290 participants from sub-national media outlets to increase their knowledge of child rights. In March, UNICEF Cuba launched a new website and a monthly newsletter distributed to 900 institutions, partners and potential donors, with a view to expanding the reach of its data-driven messages both within and outside of Cuba. By the end of the year, the website had 2,300 visits during one thirty day period. UNICEF Cuba played an active role in developing interagency communication campaigns, particularly around the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign.

**South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation**

UNICEF Cuba plays a critical role as a knowledge broker for early childhood development (ECD), forging knowledge-based exchanges in an increased South-South Cooperation with other countries seeking to adapt a similar ECD model using a holistic and integrated approach. As part of a two-year process of engagement between the Governments of Cuba and Honduras around the Cuban ECD model, UNICEF Cuba sustained its technical and logistical support for strengthening the partnership between the Cuba-based Latin American Reference Centre for Pre-School Education and Honduras’s Ministry for Development and Social Inclusion which focuses on a community-based ECD approach.

The Cuban ECD model, with UNICEF Cuba support under leadership from UNICEF headquarters (NYHQ) leadership, was featured in a podcast developed by The Guardian, which increased visibility of the model worldwide. A regional event, entitled “Protection with
Equity in Early Childhood”, under UNICEF LACRO leadership, gathered experts, Cuban government representatives and 21 UNICEF country offices. It focused on the first 1,000 days of a child’s life, the impact of violence on young children and the importance of child protection in this critical window. A UNICEF Cuba and UNICEF LACRO-developed publication documenting Cuba’s holistic ECD programme— as well as its good practices and lessons learned – rooted at both the institutional and community levels, provided a comprehensive background for informing the regional discussion and served as a regional model.

UNICEF Cuba complements its holistic support to the establishment of human milk banks, through South-South cooperation between Cuba and the Brazil-based Iberoamerican Network of HMB. The technical exchanges led to Cuba’s adoption of the network’s standards for HMBs.

**Identification Promotion of Innovation**

The C4D campaign implemented as part of the health emergency response to the spread of Zika with the MoPH health promotion and prevention unit, with technical support from UNICEF Cuba and UNICEF LACRO, included a built-in monitoring strategy. The assessment of the Cuida tu Sueño (Care for your Dream) campaign used the knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP) methodology to measure its impact, as well as the effectiveness of its materials. The materials were designed for key target groups, and their validation marked the first Zika campaign in the region designed exclusively for pregnant women and women of childbearing age.

The campaign also marked the first-ever introduction of tablets for data collection through KoBo – an electronic social research application for data collection and consolidation. The ongoing assessment will provide critical behavioural and quantitative data to feed into the design of a nationwide C4D strategy for preventing a Zika epidemic. This introduction, in addition to enhancing the quality of the research, also presents an opportunity for capacity development for frontline workers and public health institutions to expand the use of electronic applications for the design and measurement of additional health promotion campaigns. This will, in the long term, enhance the link between real-time monitoring and a more informed C4D design strategy.

**Support to Integration and Cross-Sectoral Linkages**

Inclusion of children with disabilities and children living in disadvantaged conditions is a critical cross-sectoral area of work for UNICEF Cuba. The cross-sectoral approach is reflected in initiatives coordinated within the education sector for the inclusion with children with disabilities. UNICEF Cuba strengthened capacity of 108 specialists in a training of trainers who work with children with disabilities in mainstream schools to better equip them to meet the development needs of these children in an inclusive environment and to increase family involvement towards educational achievements.

Inclusive approaches in sports and leisure constitute a programming opportunity to promote inclusion, as seen through the participation of 950 children with disabilities in the group of 2,056 children participating in sporting events, broadcast on national television. UNICEF Cuba’s advocacy helped generate momentum towards inclusion, resulting in increased attention from the MoE, notable in its decisions to prioritize and allocate resources to the organization of a nationwide initiative that targets all teachers in the country through a seminar on educational inclusion.

UNICEF Cuba’s efforts to promote social inclusion also expanded beyond the education sector, reaching a key segment of Cuban society: arts and culture. UNICEF Cuba’s
partnerships with the ministries of education and culture, as well as community-based cultural networks, focus on participation and empowerment of adolescents in disadvantaged settings who work within cultural spaces to express their views, concerns and to take actions on specific issues directly affecting them. This responds to a wider approach to promote inclusion and a culture of rights.

A good example of the wide span of these expressions was a photography contest in Havana that highlighted poor water management practices and influenced corrective actions. This empowerment through participatory cultural expressions helped children to become agents of change in their communities.

**Service Delivery**

UNICEF Cuba continued in 2016 to support Government immunization efforts, due to the lack of availability of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. UNICEF procured doses of MMR vaccines that reached 66,500 children aged 12 months. In addition to the South-South technical exchange and capacity strengthening initiatives that form UNICEF Cuba’s holistic approach toward establishment of HMB, the Office also supplied specialized equipment to selected hospitals that are modelling the initiative for potential nationwide replication. These combined efforts led to the fully functional establishment of an HMB in Camagüey (East). The HMB reached 94 per cent of children (1,315) in neonatal departments, providing pasteurized human milk. To complement this initiative and ensure its sustainability, UNICEF provided technical support to help ensure the implementation of quality standards in the designated areas for HMB.

UNICEF Cuba also procured essential commodities in support to the Government response to Hurricane Matthew (see the Humanitarian Assistance section).

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

In 2016 UNICEF Cuba continued to focus on groups and geographic areas with heightened vulnerability through programmatic interventions supporting the rights of the most disadvantaged. The programme’s equity focus is evident in the areas of inclusion for children with disabilities through sports, education and culture; its initiatives to improve the quality of maternal and child health; and its efforts to promote a culture of rights and adolescent participation.

An ongoing programme entitled ‘A Right World’ implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) sharpened its focus in 2016 by identifying gaps between national legal instruments and international legal standards. The evidence-generation component of this effort will support national processes to update policies and legislation on child protection.

Beyond its traditional partners, UNICEF Cuba also provided technical support to the National Union of Jurists and the University of Havana, with a view to developing a course on mediation, gender and child rights. UNICEF strengthened its ongoing efforts with the MoE and Ministry of Interior (MoI) to foster an international knowledge exchange platform on child protection, incorporating international standards and a human rights-based approach to management of foster homes, which house approximately 400 children in Cuba.

The Cuban Government, in the context of an interactive dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Children and Armed Conflict and the SRSG on violence against children (Human Rights Council, 31st session), reiterated its commitment to child protection.
Gender Equality

UNICEF Cuba focused on developing communication materials to support the priorities of the gender action plan. These efforts included a joint publication by UNICEF and the Cuban Women Federation of a gender-based analysis of the MICS results to analyse trends on pre-natal care, fathers’ participation in ECD and domestic violence. The study, publicly available on the UNICEF Cuba website, highlighted the need to develop targeted C4D to ensure fathers’ involvement in their children’s education and to promote an environment of gender equality.

Recommendations revealed a need to work with sectoral partners (especially the MoPH) to develop an integrated gender perspective into their service delivery, to ensure gender-specific quality services for adolescent girls and boys.

To promote gender-responsive adolescent health, UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH worked with adolescents to deepen their understanding of masculinity and prevent gender-based violence, as part of health promotion trainings. The training reached 3,289 (1,600 girls) and built on UNICEF Cuba’s communication materials to prevent sexually transmitted infections and promote safe sexual behaviour.

To address a gender-specific approach in community engagement of the ‘Educate Your Child’ programme, UNICEF Cuba continued to advocate with central Government authorities for increased participation by fathers in children’s home-based early stimulation activities.

Environmental Sustainability

UNICEF Cuba prioritized initiatives on climate change adaptation in the reporting year as part of its education component. The component’s outcome included an output with an explicit focus on strengthening resilience in disaster-prone schools and communities.

UNICEF Cuba, with financial and technical support from UNICEF LACRO and in partnership with the MoE, rolled-out a DRR training programme for 26 communities in two municipalities in the eastern province of Santiago. The training reached 5,418 children (49 per cent girls) and 774 teachers from 36 schools who now have the necessary knowledge and information to respond to emergencies, and included gender equality components.

To follow up, and to measure the effects of the training, UNICEF Cuba led field missions, and administered questionnaires and surveys that showed key results in 50 per cent of the participating schools. These included the development of risk-informed maps on community environmental issues developed by children, teachers and families; empowerment among boys and girls who took a leading role in DRR activities; an explicit link between DRR and school and extracurricular activities; and the updating of DRR plans.

In addition, 633 children and 40 women from eight communities in four municipalities used the ‘Green Map’ methodology for enhanced risk reduction to identify vulnerabilities and environmental challenges.

In other initiatives related to environmental sustainability, UNICEF Cuba worked with NIHR to raise awareness on water-saving measures. This partnership focused on adolescent participation through two national contests entitled ‘Trazaguas’ (Depicting Water) and ‘Cero Derroche’ (Zero Waste) in which 3,996 and 76 children participated, respectively. The latter was a photography contest held in Havana that revealed excessive waste of water resources and led to corrective measures taken by the NIHR.
Effective Leadership

The country management team (CMT) met six times in 2016 and monitored office management priorities. All agreements reached were documented in the team’s minutes.

UNICEF Cuba revised its enterprise risk management (ERM) matrix twice in the reporting period. High risks all have risk mitigation plans and are documented in InSight/ERM: constraints for funding the country programme; economic, commercial and financial embargo; shortages on the local market; constraints related to logistics, infrastructure and mechanisms among national counterparts; and natural disasters.

UNICEF Cuba updated its business continuity plan (BCP) through a simulation exercise and constant updates of its Early Warning Early Action system. The Office, as part of its monitoring and evaluation tasks, carries out regular monitoring of indicators in the management dashboard, allowing for forward-looking planning and taking corrective steps when necessary. Tasks related to updating the annual management plan (AMP) included a review of membership of all statutory committees and their terms of reference, as well as of focal points for specific areas. The table of authority was updated and signed by every staff member. The operations officer reviewed the table, which guarantees necessary adjustments in accordance with financial and administrative policies in line with mitigation measures related to the segregation of duties. All donor reports were submitted on time and met quality standards. Trip reports and field missions met rigorous reporting controls and travel authorizations were certified within 15 days.

Financial Resources Management

UNICEF Cuba prioritized payments to providers with foreign bank accounts through transfers from UNICEF NYHQ. This minimized bank-associated fees and reduced local replenishment of US dollars, as transfers using an intermediary bank result in a four per cent loss due to the commercial embargo on Cuba. The local payments method through bank transfers was modified in mid-2016 due to challenges in Cuba’s banking structure.

The Office continued to use the UNICEF LACRO long-term agreement with travel agents for the purchase of plane tickets. UNICEF Cuba posts payment to the agency and the payments are paid by the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC). As airlines do not provide credit options to UN agencies in Cuba and reservations must be paid within 72 hours, this option has improved transaction times and management. The UN system in Cuba is still not authorized to implement HACT. All 11 recommendations issued by the office of internal audit and investigations in 2015 were closed in March 2016. The announced currency unification process had not taken place at the time of this report, and its timeline is still unknown. It would imply elimination of the Cuban convertible peso (CUC) as a currency.

Planned financial resources were utilized as follows: institutional budget: 100 per cent; regular resources: 98 per cent; other regular resources: 100 per cent; other resources—emergency: 100 per cent

Fundraising and Donor Relations

Despite a more favourable environment for foreign investment, fundraising remains a challenge. UNICEF remains dependent on income from global, regional thematic and set-aside funding, in addition to its regular resources allocation. However, thanks to the support of the Spanish National Committee for UNICEF, UNICEF Cuba entered two new partnerships – one with Iberostar and one with Iberia Airlines. The former consists of a three-year agreement on social inclusion of children with disabilities that will benefit over 40,000 children across the country by 2018. The latter, beginning in the second half of 2016, invited
Iberia customers to donate, through the booking website, in support of UNICEF Cuba’s immunization programme.

Hurricane Matthew, a category four hurricane, hit Cuba’s eastern region on October 4th. UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the Government, developed an action plan for the emergency response and received CERF funding of about US$1.2 million, as well as a further US$100,000 from the UNICEF’s United Kingdom National Committee. Emergency programme funds were also received to support the Zika response.

A joint proposal with UNDP and WFP was approved by the SDG-F to strengthen the resilience of families and vulnerable groups affected by drought in Santiago de Cuba, with US$500,000 allocated to UNICEF. UNICEF Cuba also launched a new website and a monthly newsletter with a view to increased communications with current and prospective donors.

In addition, UNICEF Cuba hosted visits from the Spanish and Canadian National Committees.

In 2016, both donor reports were developed on time and in line with UNICEF standards. All grants with 2016 expiration dates and RR were utilised at 98 per cent, as foreseen in the annual work-plan and in accordance with UNICEF procedure and policies. Other resources funding raised in 2016 (US$735,813) represent 41 per cent of the planned OR amount.

Evaluation and Research

UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the National Institute of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology (NIHEM) is currently leading an evaluation of the effects of nutritional guidelines for children under-two years. The guidelines focus on improving the knowledge and practices of mothers and caregivers. UNICEF Cuba works hand in hand with NIHEM, making technical inputs geared to ensure that UNICEF global quality and impartiality standards are met. A partial report is currently under review, and the design of a management response will be carried out in 2017.

Other integrated monitoring and evaluation plan (IMEP) activities are on track; the 2016 annual review with partners served as an appropriate forum to disseminate partial results/findings. The deadline for the final review of studies and the planned evaluation was extended to the first quarter of 2017, to ensure a more thorough and comprehensive analysis and guarantee quality standards. A key challenge in relation to optimizing the updated plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation (PRIME) tool area relates to the need to build linkages between evidence generation and knowledge management for inter-sectoral coordination, capacity strengthening and advocacy.

Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings

UNICEF Cuba, given the country context, was able to implement only three of the eight alternatives to improve efficiency gains and cost savings, as it is not possible to implement HACT or use procurement cards. UNICEF Cuba discontinued the practice of printing and signing travel authorizations. The number of office committees will be reduced to the minimum in 2017 and the contract review committee ceiling will be raised to US$50,000. The Office continues to gather groups of payments to reduce transactions under US$500, which account for 35 per cent of all transactions. This situation will continue, since some services and contracts in Cuba have very low costs.

The UN system began implementation of standard operating procedures. The operations management team (OMT) established several task forces under the business operating
strategy. The process is expected to be finalized in 2017. There were no cost savings in 2016. The Office closely monitored efficiency and savings indicators: electricity (13 per cent) and water services (17 per cent), and paper use was reduced by 25 per cent compared to 2015. Additional controls included work by the office security staff to ensure that air conditioners and lamps were switched off as staff left their work stations. Air conditioners were monitored to ensure that the temperature was pleasant but not cold. Air conditioning equipment was replaced to install inverter technology for lower energy consumption. UNICEF Cuba encouraged the maximization of sunlight with a view to reduced use of light fixtures. UNICEF Cuba also continued to encourage paper product savings through conscientious use of printing. Other results are included in the environment footprint assessment.

### Supply Management

1. - Total value of supplies received:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF Cuba 2016</th>
<th>Value of all supply input (goods &amp; services) in USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>$1,842,001.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>$20,609.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>$312,968.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. - Procurement Services: UNICEF Cuba is not engaged in Procurement Services either with partners or with the Government.

3. - Total value of procurement by UNICEF Cuba:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF Cuba 2016</th>
<th>Value of locally managed procurement in USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>$1,197,387.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational supplies</td>
<td>$20,609.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>$312,968.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The current value of inventory in the CO’s controlled warehouse is zero, as is the value of programme supplies issued from locally controlled warehouse. No supplies were managed at the controlled warehouse and no construction projects were undertaken.

The 2016 supply plan was finalized in December 2015. The local market does not offer options to purchase supplies. Imports continued to be brought into the Country as “donations”, under which UNICEF Cuba carries out procurement and contracting and Government-designated import enterprises pick up and distribute the supplies to ministry warehouses. The Government has designated eight such importers, of which UNICEF Cuba worked with four. Negotiations are ongoing with the remaining four. The supply process continues to be a high risk for UNICEF, as the extraction process takes an excessive amount of time. The only supplies delivered in a timely fashion were related to workshops, which were contracted directly with UNICEF’s Supply Division and extracted by UNICEF Cuba.

During the reporting year, sporting equipment and board game supplies bought for initiatives with the National Institute for Sports, Physical Education and Recreation (NISPER) and the Ministry of Culture (MoC) was lost due to the inability of the import enterprise to carry out the
extraction. As a result, the supplies were classified as “abandoned” and confiscated by customs authorities. With UNICEF Cuba’s advocacy, about US$102,743 worth of supplies (88 per cent) had been recovered from the port by late 2015.

UNICEF Cuba continued efforts to reduce the amount of sales orders, leading to the issuance of 76, with 66 associated purchase orders. UNICEF Cuba does not have a warehouse for receiving supplies.

Security for Staff and Premises

Security conditions in Cuba and within UNICEF Cuba are good, meeting most of the minimum operating security standards for premises. No security incidents were reported in 2016, and UNICEF maintained security standards sufficient to mitigate any potential vulnerabilities. The Office periodically updated its warden system and carried out simulations to test its functionality. An active inter-agency group of security focal points met periodically to propose recommendations, which were later approved by the security management team.

With the financial support of all agencies, the UN recruited a local security assistant, who is now on active duty. With the assistant on board, UNICEF Cuba reviewed its security standards. The review revealed the lack of a reliable communications system in case of emergencies, since the UN does not have a radio communication system. In such cases, the satellite systems would have to be relocated in doors to secure them and UN offices would be left without a reliable connection outside of Cuba. The inter-agency study for the use of VHF radios did not offer any results. There was also no agreement with amateur radio broadcasters to use their networks in case of emergencies. The BCP was updated and its activation was tested during a simulation exercise. All UNICEF Cuba staff have updated their security courses for both basic and advanced certificates. UNICEF Cuba monitors security clearance requests prior to travel inside and outside the country.

Human Resources

No changes to the human resource structure approved for the 2014-2018 cycle were required. The recruitment processes for the representative and programme specialist posts were concluded by the end of 2016. As planned, UNICEF Cuba complied with the transfer of human resources functions to the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) in August. UNICEF LACRO also established a multi-country support facility. The operations officer is the focal point for human resources, and UNICEF Cuba also fine-tuned issues related to workflows and service-level agreements.

The upcoming currency unification process continues to be a key staff concern, as it would imply the elimination of the currency used for payroll. UNICEF LACRO and UNICEF NYHQ were informed of this concern. There were no variations in the staff salary scale, as per the 2015 comprehensive salary survey.

Two activities out of the nine planned for the learning and development plan were postponed. One relates to the competency-based interview for panel members, and was cancelled due a weather-related emergency (Hurricane Matthew). The funds planned for this (US$1,600) were returned to LACRO. A team-building activity was postponed to 2017, with a view to carrying it out after the arrival of the new representative and programme specialist. The funds planned for this activity (US$2,500) were also returned to LACRO. UNICEF Cuba updated its action plan to prevent HIV/AIDS in compliance with the 10 basic norms. Support to UNCARES was included in the OMT work-plan. The Office work environment is positive, and UNICEF Cuba followed up on the results of the global staff survey. The final stages of performance evaluation reports (PERs) were concluded in February. In accordance with the
new procedures, UNICEF Cuba used ACHIEVE to develop the reports, and met all deadlines.

Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology

UNICEF Cuba implemented measures from the NYHQ-led connectivity study. Despite these efforts, connectivity in the Office continues to be very poor. The use of video applications and corporate applications (MyCase, VISION, Sharepoint, e-mail) is either unavailable or very slow, limiting learning opportunities for staff.

In 2016, UNICEF Cuba bought five X260 Yoga laptops, updated the backup & Replication HP Proliant G8 servers.

The Office is taking daily actions to improve the Internet connection and monitors the emerging market communication link. UNICEF Cuba also updated the application performance management implementation in mission control firewall and is improving conditions for videoconference via Skype for Business, as well as for presentations through laptops/HDMI-TV/HDMI. UNICEF Cuba also reactivated telecommunication equipment in case of emergencies, including broadband global area network and Iridium. The Office also updated its IT disaster recovery plan as part of the business continuity plan. This included a simulation exercise that showed positive results.

Very small aperture technology (VSAT) is the only communications link available. The lack of a secondary back-up option is the Office’s most significant IT vulnerability in case of an emergency. Alternatives in this case would include the use of mobile and satellite phones for voice-based communications and the use of FAO and WFP VSAT connections for Internet and data.

UNICEF Cuba’s presence and reach through digital and social media grew significantly. The website serves as a reference for updated information about children and youth in Cuba. Social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter gained a large number of followers: from 50 to 3,400 on Facebook and 0 to 678 on Twitter. This occurred in great measure thanks to UNICEF Cuba’s increased capacity to produce and share updated content documenting the latest UNICEF programmes in the Cuban context.

Programme Components from RAM

ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS

OUTCOME 1 Support: Effective and Efficient programme management and operations support to programme delivery

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Specific and time-bound mitigation action plans for identified high risks were established and reviewed periodically. The human resource structure was 100 per cent completed by the end of the year. The Office continues to provide a good working environment. The action plan of the 2014 global staff survey was reviewed and reported as part of the 2016 COAR.

OUTPUT 1 Output 1: Effective and efficient Governance and Systems

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Seven local committees were established at the beginning of the year to manage the Office. As part of the AMP process, all committee terms of reference were reviewed. All AMP tasks were completed, and financial resource implementation was carried out as planned.
OUTPUT 2 Output 2: Effective and efficient management and stewardship of financial resources

Analytical Statement of Progress:
This output was replaced by Output 4, with the same name, as it cannot support the RR and OR budget included in previous years. It will be closed in 2017 when all previous commitments are completed.

OUTPUT 3 Output 3: Effective and Efficient management of Human Capacity

Analytical Statement of Progress:
2015 PERs were finalized in February 2016. The performance planning phase for 2016 PERs was completed by the May 31st deadline established in the new appraisal system. In 2016, the learning and development plan foresaw nine activities, of which seven were completed on time and the remaining two postponed for 2017, following arrival of the incoming Representative and programme specialist. No budget was planned in 2016 for this output.

OUTPUT 4 Effective and Efficient management

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Bank reconciliations for the Office’s two bank accounts and cash on hand) were carried out in accordance with the established schedule. Availability of funds in the two bank accounts was guaranteed during the whole year. Periodic review of VISION roles was carried out, to avoid and/or mitigate conflicts. The table of authorities was 100 per cent in compliance with UNICEF financial policy.

OUTCOME 2 By 2018, improved quality of maternal, child and adolescent care, reduced nutritional problems in children and pregnant women most at risk, and integrated safe hygiene practices, with a focus on equity and gender equality.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Through knowledge exchange, UNICEF Cuba and the National School of Public Health focused on developing a roadmap for generating evidence and strengthening systems related to maternal and child health linkages with the SDGs. UNICEF Cuba provided technical support to establish knowledge exchange platforms and disseminate key information on the SDGs to decision-makers and practitioners. This included workshops for the analysis of gaps, quality and strengths seen in the child and maternal health system, with the participation of 240 (about half women) members of the scientific community.

Further, UNICEF Cuba worked with 577 health professionals from primary and secondary health institutions, at both the national and provincial levels, during workshops geared to increase their capacity to adopt a more integrated approach in the delivery of health services when treating pregnant women in maternity homes. The workshops were designed in response to the most frequently seen cases of morbidity among pregnant women, and aimed at ensuring better case management for high-risk cases. They also included topics related to nutrition and men’s involvement in responsible parenthood.

In partnership with the Centre for Nutrition and Food Hygiene of the MoPH, UNICEF Cuba developed initiatives around evaluation and evidence generation. Five specific target groups were analysed: children under-two, pregnant and breastfeeding women, children under three at risk for anaemia, communities vulnerable to national disasters and provinces showing increased risk of vitamin A deficits. The newly generated evidence seeks to develop
healthier nutritional practices in the ECD sector for children under five, leading to early prevention of non-communicable diseases. It also incorporates elements related to nutritional resilience. One of these joint efforts is part of an ongoing evaluation of the implementation of dietary guidelines, focused on improving knowledge and practices of mothers and caregivers.

UNICEF Cuba worked with key health sector partners to respond to several new and emerging issues in 2016: the Zika outbreak, a climate-change-related drought silent emergency and the impact of Hurricane Matthew.

In response to the Zika outbreak, in partnership with the MoH and LACRO, UNICEF Cuba introduced a C4D campaign with a built-in monitoring strategy, resulting from UNICEF Cuba's advocacy for measuring its results. The assessment of the campaign Cuida tu Sueño, (Care for your Dream) used KAP methodology to measure impact, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of its materials. The materials were designed following validation by key target groups. The initiative marks the first-ever introduction of tablets for data collection, through KoBo – an electronic social research application for data collection and consolidation.

UNICEF Cuba also brokered a partnership with UNDP and WFP for a joint programme addressing the effects of drought in Cuba’s eastern provinces. The programme, entitled “Strengthening the resilience of families and vulnerable groups affected by drought in Santiago de Cuba” was approved by the SDG-F. As part of the programme, in 2017 UNICEF Cuba will focus on increasing access to safe drinking water and improved hygiene practices, both in households and health facilities, within an urban centre housing 36,000 people (4,000 families).

As Hurricane Matthew struck the eastern province of Santiago, UNICEF Cuba led the WASH emergency response alongside UNDP, UN Habitat and the Pan-American Health Organization and in close partnership with the NIRH, MoPH and MoE. The response focused on the four most affected municipalities in Guantanamo. UNICEF Cuba’s WASH response included procurement of 111,940 water containers, 282,524 purifying tablets (in packages of 50 tablets), and 3,700 hygiene kits, each of which was enough for 10 families. The response aimed at preventing morbidity and mortality linked to water-borne diseases and poor hygiene. Concrete actions consisted of providing communities with safe drinking water and options for safe water treatment and storage at the household level, including key information on their use.

OUTPUT 1 By 2018, basic health services have the capacities for quality care.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH held jointly designed workshops targeting a more integrated approach for managing high-risk pregnancies. The workshops reached 368 health professionals through other institutions, such as agriculture and sports, who now have an enhanced skill-set to improve care services in maternity homes. The synergies with these two sectors sought to strengthen linkages to improve community-based nutrition and physical activity in preparation for birth.

In an effort to address risk factors driving maternal mortality, the other joint UNICEF Cuba-MoPH capacity-strengthening initiative targeted 109 practitioners in six provinces, seeking to improve their skills for diagnosing and managing venous thromboembolic disease in pregnant and post-partum women.

UNICEF Cuba also continued its support for the establishment of HMB, by supplying specialized equipment to selected hospitals that are modelling the initiative for potential
nationwide replication. In addition to equipment, UNICEF Cuba provided technical support to ensure the implementation of quality standards. These combined efforts led to the establishment of an HMB in Camagüey Province. This achievement was also a concrete result of UNICEF Cuba’s support for South-South cooperation, through an exchange with the Brazil-based Iberoamerican Network of HMB. In Cuba, the HMB reached 94 per cent of the children (1,315) in neonatal departments, providing pasteurized human milk. To complement this initiative and ensure its sustainability, UNICEF Cuba also worked with the National Centre for Breastfeeding Training to develop and implement newly designed workshops for 213 health professionals in 111 municipalities, focused on strengthening capacity for promoting breastfeeding and donations to the HMB.

Through capacity strengthening, UNICEF Cuba supported MoPH efforts to strengthen the inter-sectoral approach to early child care. Multi-disciplinary trainings including ECD practitioners reached 101 primary health care professionals from six provinces (Guantanamo, Santiago de Cuba, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Pinar del Río and Isla de la Juventud) who were equipped with greater knowledge about integrated health care of children and adolescents. UNICEF Cuba’s efforts focused on incorporating quality standards into routine practices for integrated services and increasing synergies between health, nutrition, hygiene, injury prevention and early childhood.

UNICEF Cuba continued to support Government immunization efforts resulting from the lack of availability of the MMR vaccine. UNICEF procured doses of MMR vaccines that reached 66,500 children aged 12 months.

Within the framework of the Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunization, UNICEF Cuba and the Pan-American Health Organization jointly monitored Cuba’s transition to inactivated polio vaccine.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2018, families of the most vulnerable areas have knowledge and capacities on hygiene practices, responsible sexuality, HIV and unintentional injuries prevention.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Initiatives taken in the reporting year included a targeted UNICEF Cuba-MoPH C4D campaign to improve household-level behaviours on water safety. The campaign reached 4,484 people in two communities with key messages on safe water management and storage. Adolescents were among the main stakeholders in these initiatives, as they conducted family visits to monitor water quality and teach families about standards. In addition to empowering the adolescents involved, their active participation helped to increase the reach of the campaign. Separate awareness-raising workshops targeted other specific stakeholder groups, such as pregnant women, food handlers and community leaders.

In 2016 UNICEF Cuba also continued its support for the on-going MoPH initiative involving the training of adolescents as health promoters. The workshops, held in four provinces and reaching 3,289 adolescents, built on UNICEF Cuba’s communication materials to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections and promote safe sexual behaviours.

UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH designed a capacity-building intervention to coach families on injury prevention, based on qualitative information gathered through family visits. The trainings reached 60 health professionals with user-friendly information for practical use at home. This particular initiative targeted Santi Spiritus, taking into account the already strong capacity for community-based action, and will be documented for potential replication. In conjunction with community-based efforts on injury prevention, UNICEF Cuba also worked with institutions to enhance the management and response of injured paediatric patients. UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH targeted the 175 health professionals most involved in this
kind of response, covering three provinces, to enhance their skills for higher-quality immediate care of injured children and adolescents, mitigating the risk of long-lasting health effects.

UNICEF Cuba supported the procurement of supplies for provincial-level hydraulic authorities to rehabilitate water supplies and thus finalize the WASH response to hurricane Sandy (2012). As a result, 76,000 people have access to safe water.

OUTPUT 3 By 2018, families of the most vulnerable areas have knowledge and capacities on healthy nutrition of children under two and pregnant women.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Acknowledging the double burden of malnutrition and increased risk for anaemia, UNICEF Cuba and the Centre for Nutrition and Food Hygiene designed and rolled out a quantitative survey on food consumption, as part as an ongoing evaluation of the impact of nutritional guides for children under two years of age. The preliminary findings confirmed anecdotal evidence on excessive energy consumption and insufficient iron consumption. In parallel, findings also showed that health workers had low levels of understanding about the nutritional requirements for children under two. This newly generated evidence will pave the way for an action plan involving the design of targeted approaches to specific stakeholders, as well as a management response.
A complementary evidence-generation initiative with the same institution focused on non-nutritional risk factors that contribute to the prevalence of anaemia in the eastern region. Preliminary results point to a correlation between infections and anaemia. The study will form the basis for developing care protocols and guidelines to promote practices that improve nutritional status.

UNICEF Cuba also worked in partnership with the Centre for Nutrition and Food Hygiene on data collection efforts that inform the design of dietary guidelines for pregnant and lactating mothers. The Centre’s survey process, led by 207 community-based health workers, also incorporated the delivery of key messages on food and nutrition during pregnancy and lactation to 1,706 pregnant mothers.

Recognizing Cuba’s vulnerability to weather-related emergencies, UNICEF Cuba continued efforts to promote nutritional resilience in selected disaster-prone communities. In this context, UNICEF Cuba and the Centre for Nutrition strengthened capacities to face emergencies at three levels – in communities, primary health care facilities and schools. In communities, the initiative included the roll-out of workshops for 4,374 community leaders in four provinces focused on preparedness for a potential nutritional emergency. At the primary health care level, the workshops had a built-in emphasis on breastfeeding and resilience, reaching 553 practitioners.

UNICEF Cuba continued to advocate for targeted interventions to address challenges related to lower-than-average levels of Vitamin A. UNICEF promoted the dissemination of key evidence showing province-level data and provided technical support for the development of a multi-sectoral action plan to improve the nutritional situation of children under five. Additional capacity-development initiatives in the same geographic area enhanced the multi-sectoral coordination of 60 representatives from different sectors, including health, education and agriculture. As a follow-up measure, UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH continued to monitor implementation of the newly developed action plan.

OUTCOME 3 By 2018, Improved the education and development of children and adolescents, with the strengthening of the link between the school, family and community and teacher training.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
ECD in Cuba underwent a thorough curriculum review, with the overall goal of strengthening the education network to ensure children’s smooth transition to primary school and improve school readiness. As part of this process, UNICEF Cuba supported the systematization of both community and institutional models to document new ECD integration practices. These models will serve as the basis for development of the new curriculum. In addition, in partnership with national education authorities, UNICEF provided technical support to efforts related to capacity strengthening and knowledge sharing in six provinces -- Pinar del Río, Artemisa, Havana, Mayabeque, Villa Clara and Santiago de Cuba.

At the national level, 95 per cent (117,140) of children who passed to 1st grade (five to six years of age) demonstrated satisfactory results in terms of developmental indicators. Of these, 23,112 are from rural areas and 2,586 benefited from the ‘Educate Your Child’ programme.

According to Centre for Orientation and Diagnosis evaluations and special education specialists, 20 per cent of children with disabilities participating in educational programmes do not demonstrate favourable developmental outcomes. Quality bottlenecks related to teacher’s ability to ensure inclusion were identified and were tackled through provincial and national action plans. Additional bottlenecks were related to knowledge gaps, as didactic guides for curriculum adjustment for ECD practitioners are lacking. As a response to evidence on diagnosis, knowledge and quality, UNICEF Cuba partnered with the MoE to engage in advocacy, awareness- raising and capacity development of teachers in 60 per cent of the country’s provinces to foster an inclusive environment in schools. Considering the need for cross-sectoral integration, capacity development was expanded to other specialists in the health and justice fields and to grassroots leaders, to enable them to address the needs of children with disabilities. Further, UNICEF Cuba supported the finalization of a study that provides a snapshot of gaps between the needs of children with disabilities and teachers’ skills to ensure their inclusion. The study covered three additional provinces (Matanzas, Villa Clara and Guantánamo) and incorporated a multi-disciplinary approach by engaging psychologists, teachers, families and community agents.

Emerging issues in the education sector also included disaster risk reduction preparedness and the response to Hurricane Matthew. As part of the global initiative ‘Disaster Reduction Begins at School’, UNICEF Cuba and the MoE worked with technical inputs from the MoSTE (through its local branches), to sharpen the focus on strengthening resilience in two municipalities in Santiago Province (Tercer Frente and Santiago). The municipalities include 26 communities vulnerable to emergencies in eastern Cuba. The effort resulted in enhanced multi-sectoral coordination between Civil Defense, the Red Cross, MoPH and MoSTE and local authorities at the community level. This in turn led to better preparation of children, adolescents, families and communities to cope with natural, technological and sanitation disasters.

UNICEF and the Cuban Government also coordinated a plan of action to address the emergency response to Hurricane Matthew through CERF funds allocated to facilitate the quick and safe return of 38,094 children and adolescents to school in Guantanamo Province and four of its municipalities (Maisí, Baracoa, Imías and San Antonio del Sur).

OUTPUT 1 By 2018, the initial education curriculum model has been updated for formal and non-formal care modalities of children under 5.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Cuba supported MoE-led capacity strengthening initiatives reaching 94 per cent of ECD practitioners in six provinces, testing the updated ECD curriculum. The updates consisted of a more integrated, multi-disciplinary approach that is informed through by
community participation. Low availability of learning materials that would expand the curricula’s reach to families constitutes a critical supply barrier.

Along with nationwide specialists from the MoE, UNICEF also reached 4,293 ECD practitioners at the sub-national level, as well as a multi-sectoral national technical group, strengthening their capacity to implement the new curriculum in both community and institutional modalities. With a view to ensuring the grounding and field-oriented focus of the “Educate your Child” programme, UNICEF Cuba also strengthened its partnership with the multi-sectoral national technical group through field visits covering 38 municipalities and 49 communities (seven of which are from mountainous zones and two from socially complex areas). The field visits inform community-specific action plans to identify access and quality gaps, which are then addressed through community action under the local government leadership.

Seeking to address a gender-specific approach to community engagement in the ‘Educate Your Child’ programme, UNICEF Cuba continued to advocate with central government authorities for increased participation by fathers in their children’s home-based early stimulation. During 2016, the MoE reported that fathers’ involvement had reached 49.7 per cent.

Some 225 girls and 260 boys have better educational conditions in three rehabilitated childcare centres damaged by past natural disasters in Santiago de Cuba Province (Hurricane Sandy). Another four centres are in the last phase of rehabilitation, and it is expected that 376 girls and 420 boys will be able to enjoy safe educational spaces as of January 2017.

OUTPUT 2 By 2018, the inclusive education process in regular education is strengthened to stimulate the learning development of children and adolescents with special educational needs.

Analytical Statement of Progress: UNICEF Cuba and the MoE strengthened the capacity of 114 teachers and other specialists working with 1,945 children with disabilities (ages seven-to-18) who study in mainstream schools in the provinces of Matanzas, Villa Clara and Guantanamo. The strengthened capacity seeks to ensure that teachers meet children’s developmental needs in an inclusive environment. Efforts to increase teacher capacity in this regard involved a series of 12 workshops designed to: modify attitudes about inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools, increase the quality of psycho-pedagogical diagnosis and to increase family involvement in pursuit of educational achievement by their children. Results from capacity-development and awareness-raising workshops included a transformation whereby 70 per cent of selected schools showed improved learning environments – in the form of better conditions within classrooms to teach children with disabilities – as well 47 per cent of schools within the same sample that adjusted learning schedules for children with psychological/mental disabilities. Critical bottlenecks for improved inclusive conditions are mostly related to supply availability in the country.

Inclusive approaches in sports and leisure constitute a key programming opportunity to promote inclusion, as seen through the participation of 950 children with disabilities of a total of 2,056 children that participated in football and badminton events nationwide, as well as 198 children with disabilities (of a total of 990 children) who participate in the weekly ‘Juguemos’ (Let’s Play) television programme and active engagement by 384 physical education teachers in these events.

As part of its partnership with NISPER, UNICEF Cuba advocated for widespread dissemination of messages around sports as a tool for inclusion. As a result, Maracuba (an
annual nationwide family race event), was dedicated to UNICEF for its 70th anniversary, under the slogan 'Together for Inclusion through Sports'. The event was instrumental to disseminating UNICEF’s advocacy around inclusion and diversity within the public. This momentum resulted in increased attention from the MoE, as seen by its prioritization of, and resource allocation for, the organization of a nationwide initiative targeting all teachers in the country through a seminar on educational inclusion.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2018, mixed, boarding and rural areas primary and secondary schools have better conditions and better trained directors and teachers.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Cuba and the MoE continued joint efforts to improve the quality of education in rural areas, with a focus on mixed centres (primary, secondary and schools for children with disabilities) and boarding schools, considering that there are about 151,786 students in rural areas (22 per cent of all children aged six-to-11 in the country), as well as 14,430 adolescents in boarding schools and 12,865 in centres with different education levels.

These efforts consisted of capacity development for 247 teachers, principals and specialists through a training-of-trainers that, through its multiplier effect reached 11,198 teachers. Earlier UNICEF Cuba-led support for evidence generation about the multi-grade system and its methodology informed the national discussion on updating policies for rural students. It also led to leveraging of resources; the documentation efforts previously carried out by UNICEF have now been taken up by the MoE.

The trainings resulted in a specialized bibliography compiling the specific needs of rural children and increased family involvement, particularly among 7,678 rural families.

Given the challenges particular to rural education, UNICEF Cuba provided technical and logistical support for the documentation of review processes on the multi-grade system in 17 educational centres in five municipalities of three provinces in the central part of the country (Matanzas, Ciego de Ávila and Sancti Spiritus). Opportunities seen through this process included the advantages of the single class for interacting with multi-grade groups, highlighting the need to continue improving the quality of educational activities.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018, schools and communities of the most vulnerable areas to disasters strengthened their resilience capacities.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Cuba, with financial and technical support from LACRO and in partnership with the MoE, rolled out a DRR training programme for 26 communities of two municipalities (Tercer Frente and Santiago de Cuba) in the eastern province of Santiago. The training reached 5,418 children and 774 teachers from 36 schools who now have the necessary knowledge and information to respond to emergencies.

To follow up, and to measure the impact of the training, UNICEF Cuba led field missions, questionnaires and surveys that showed key results in 50 per cent of the participating schools. Results included the development of risk-informed maps on community environmental issues developed by children, teachers and families; the empowerment of children who played a leading role in DRR activities; an explicit link between DRR and school and extracurricular activities; and updated DRR plans.

In addition, in other communities 633 children and 40 women from eight communities in four municipalities in the provinces of Pinar del Río (West), Havana (Centre), Cienfuegos (Centre) and Holguín (East) identified and addressed vulnerabilities and environmental
challenges in their communities through the “Green Map” methodology for enhanced risk reduction.

Further, UNICEF Cuba worked with the NIHR to raise awareness about water conservation measures. This partnership focused on adolescent and child participation through two national contests ‘Trazaguas’ and ‘Cero Derroche’, in which 3,996 and 76 children participated, respectively. The latter was a photography contest held in Havana that revealed excessive waste of water resources and led to corrective measures by the NIHR.

**OUTCOME 4** By 2018, children and adolescents enjoy improved comprehensive protection, strengthening mechanisms, and implementation of innovative forms of participation, rights promotion and violence prevention and other risk behaviours.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Cuba continues to work with reputable and specialized knowledge hubs with a view to including a child and adolescent focus in ongoing research and evidence generation. Noteworthy results, developed with many partners (such as the Cuban Cultural Research Centre, the Youth Studies Centre and the Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research) describe the behavioural trends of Cuban adolescents, their social transformation and their knowledge of certain cultural practices. These studies were instrumental to CP implementation through joint work-plans with these knowledge partners, as they pertain to adolescent participation. The studies helped to foster a knowledge exchange platform for sharing good practices on promoting adolescent participation and methodological tools for social research and community-based action. The findings of this newly generated evidence led to better-informed programming and advocacy for the design of cultural services that are adolescent-friendly and conducive to their meaningful participation.

Incorporating an equity approach, UNICEF Cuba collaborated with key national and sub-national cultural partners working with disadvantaged communities to engage adolescents in participatory programmes. These combined initiatives targeted adolescents living in Old Havana, Los Sitios and Granma Province. As a result, 33,823 adolescents (20,293 girls) were empowered as agents of change within their respective communities in diverse areas, ranging from scientific research to the arts. These adolescents, in turn, are widening adolescent participation networks, with mentoring by engaged adults, and encouraging a more integrated and visible approach to adolescent participation as full members of society. The curriculum included topics on gender equality, children’s rights and prevention of violence.

In relation to child protection, UNICEF focused on capacity-strengthening initiatives and knowledge and technical exchange with key partners at the decision-making level. These initiatives focused on violence prevention and identification of risky behaviours. As a result, international standards are being integrated into institutional protocols for routine practices at the response stage—such as foster homes, comprehensive training schools and child protection centres—by Cuba’s justice sector. All interventions in this respect foster multi-sectoral coordination for enhanced collaboration between relevant ministries; mainly the MoE and Ministry of the Interior, which have specific roles and accountabilities linked to different child protection programmes.

The ‘For a Right World’ initiative sustained its original momentum in 2016 and expanded its outreach at two levels: at the institutional level, by adding more partners to its network through capacity building, such as practitioners in the justice system; and among individuals active in the promotion of rights, including children and adolescents knowledgeable about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Registers show that 5,434 children were reached with key child rights messages through this initiative in 2016. These children express this new knowledge through cultural activities with nationwide reach.
OUTPUT 1 By 2018, children and adolescents in Old Havana and other municipalities of the capital have spaces and services for their meaningful participation and the development of life skills.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Cuba continued its ongoing partnership with the Havana City Historian’s Office (HCHO) and the EU to strengthen local networks that ensure appropriate adolescent-friendly services. In the reporting year, these efforts were mainly targeted towards capacity strengthening in key areas such as sexual and reproductive health, stress management, fostering peer-to-peer support, responsible use of technology and behavioural trends among Cuban adolescents.

This series of workshops reached about 314 practitioners who work with adolescents on a day-to-day basis. Some 113 of them are part of the local adolescent development and participation network that was established through the programme over several years and continues to grow. The members of this network work with adolescents in several areas, such as culture, health, education, sports and child protection, as well as volunteering to carry out specific activities within their areas of expertise as part of community outreach to adolescents. The capacity-strengthening initiatives also reached about 201 professionals who conduct trainings with adolescents on a regular basis on a wide and diverse range of topics using a rights-based approach.

In all, members of the network and professionals, with UNICEF Cuba’s guidance and technical support, reached 923 adolescents (65 per cent female) in the Old Havana neighbourhood. The 59 workshops, which each lasted for several months, took place both year-round and during the summer, contributed to building adolescents’ confidence, vocational skills and life skills. Other related initiatives included sports activities with 226 adolescents, promoting fair play and values. The a+ programme also included communication and outreach strategies, as seen in the nationally broadcast weekly one-hour radio programme ‘Contigo Somos Mas’ and a quarterly adolescent cultural agenda promoting adolescent participation in cultural activities, which reached 1,700 people.

UNICEF Cuba leads the a+ steering committee and, in this capacity, advocated for the selection of topics, identified specialists and provided technical support to ensure that all outreach initiatives use adolescent-friendly methodologies that foster participation and help support adolescents’ role as agents of change.

With a view to expanding partnerships and broaden the network, UNICEF Cuba and HCHO engaged in knowledge-exchange initiatives with a number of stakeholders. These initiatives at the local level targeted university students, teachers, cultural leaders and social researchers. At an international level, the a+ experience was part of a triangular exchange in Brussels at which donors and other countries expressed interest in adapting this experience for use in their respective context.

Regarding spaces, construction work to complete two adolescent reference centre buildings is ongoing, and expected to be finalized by mid-2017. UNICEF Cuba monitored progress and advocated with stakeholders for a speedy process with quality standards. The pace of implementation increased in 2016, and completion of the project was set for June 2017 after the centre is inaugurated, which is planned for May 2017. Adolescents were actively engaged in the design stage.

OUTPUT 2 By 2018 cultural, sports and recreational spaces of different territories, have capabilities to deliver quality services that promote the meaningful participation of children and adolescents.
Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Cuba and the MoC continued to promote adolescent participation in culture, through capacity strengthening. UNICEF collaborated with the National Fine Arts Museum to organize three art appreciation and creativity workshops for 592 children (65 adolescents, 53 girls) using a rights-based approach focused on participation and inclusion of children with disabilities and children from disadvantaged communities. Participating children exhibited their work with large audiences and through a yearly joint newspaper.

UNICEF strengthened its partnership with the MoC’s Cuban Institute of Cultural Research Juan Marinello to better understand adolescent participation in culture, as well as to incorporate findings into better-informed programming and advocacy. The aim was to ensure that the design of cultural services are adolescent-friendly and conducive to meaningful participation by adolescents. Findings revealed different cultural practices among adolescents, as per social determinants, and were instrumental for advocacy on child rights targeting other stakeholders (such as decision-makers in child protection and education).

At the grassroots level, UNICEF Cuba worked with the MoC at the sub-national level for the geographic expansion of the ‘Communities for the Rights of Children and Adolescents’ initiative. In 2016, it reached four municipalities in Granma Province (East). UNICEF Cuba provided technical support for the design of capacity-strengthening initiatives targeting staff providing cultural services, with the goal of incorporating meaningful participation standards and a human rights-based approach. UNICEF provided supplies to these local-level stakeholders offering cultural services, and advocated for the use of an equity focus that included children and adolescents in peri-urban, rural, coastal and hard-to-reach areas. In keeping with this, and integrating a participatory approach to empower adolescents in cultural creations and decision-making, staff delivering cultural services reached about 26,437 children (61 per cent female) and 4,057 adolescents (53 per cent female) with art appreciation and creativity workshops and community-based initiatives.

UNICEF Cuba supported cross-sectoral integration through the promotion of rights in sports, partnering with the National Sports Institute to promote gender equality as well as solidarity and fair play in the national “Football for All” tournament. This UNICEF-supported initiative involved 2,208 children in mixed gender teams from all provinces, through schools, who were exposed to child rights messages, along with their teachers and families.

UNICEF Cuba partnered with the Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research to foster a knowledge-exchange platform to share good practices on promoting adolescent participation and methodological tools for social research and community-based action. In 2016, this platform concluded the documentation of a model intervention in the disadvantaged Los Sitios neighbourhood in downtown Havana. The documentation process promoted good practices for working with adolescents to empower them as agents of change in their communities. The process also featured a built-in feedback mechanism among the scientific community. Findings will be disseminated in 2017, and will feed into community-level violence prevention interventions.

OUTPUT 3 By 2018, homes for children without parental care across the country have the capacities for quality care.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF Cuba and the MoE joined forces to strengthen capacity for the protection of children without parental care through a series of workshops for specialized staff and decision-makers who work with foster homes. The workshops enabled 214 foster home staff working with 417 children (167 girls) to incorporate international standards into their routine practices. With a view to providing continuous technical support and follow-up in this regard, UNICEF
Cuba conducted field monitoring visits to generate more informed technical guidance and
helped establish a more regular information-sharing system. These combined efforts, in
turn, fostered synergies with other sectors and UNICEF interventions, leading to greater
participation and empowerment of adolescents in foster homes in other UNICEF-supported
initiatives.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018, prevention, evaluation, treatment, rehabilitation and protection services
for children and adolescents at risk, juvenile offenders or victims of crime, have the capacity
to provide comprehensive care.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Cuba strengthened its partnership with the MoI, which led to a productive
environment for policy dialogue on streamlining of international standards into child
protection practices. As part of this partnership, UNICEF and the MoI held capacity-building
sessions for 120 child protection specialists, focused on strengthening a rights-based
approach for practitioners who work with children and adolescents in contact with the law at
12 comprehensive training schools and three child protection centres. Within the schools,
UNICEF provided supplies, awareness-raising materials and technical assistance to support
an approach facilitating a more protective environment, conducive to better social
reintegration through sports, culture and preparation to join the workforce.

**OUTPUT 5** By 2018, children, adolescents and adults of selected communities and
prioritized groups have knowledge of the Convention of the Child Rights and the national
legislation.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Cuba continued to work in partnership with the MoJ within the framework of the
“For a Right World” initiative, which has a three-pronged approach including: capacity
strengthening, research and public advocacy.

As part of the capacity building component UNICEF and the MoJ held a national symposium
on coordination of child protection systems, targeting 90 practitioners from the justice
system. The aim was to encourage the incorporation of a rights-based approach to their
daily work with children and adolescents in diverse areas, such as administrative and
criminal processes. These practitioners have updated tools to better interact with children
and participating adults within these settings.

The research aspect of “For a Right World” in 2016 consisted of a finalized documentation
process that highlights the key challenges and potential adjustments needed to face
emerging issues.

As part of the public advocacy component, UNICEF Cuba and the MoJ jointly held a national
contest on knowledge of rights. About 1,617 children participated, demonstrating their
understanding of children’s rights through cultural expressions such as literature and art. In
addition, UNICEF provided child-friendly materials on the Convention on the Rights of the
Child, violence prevention and child participation to 196 extracurricular children’s clubs that
focus on child rights (up from 184 in 2015), which include about 2,103 children and
adolescents as members.

UNICEF Cuba brokered partnerships between the Cuba Youth Studies Centre and other
stakeholders with a view to expanding the reach of child rights training for children,
adolescents, university students and adults. In 2016 the scope of training was widened to
reach 599 children (53 per cent female), 1,115 adolescents (39 per cent female) and 1,377
adults from different sectors, as well as 340 university students and 400 soon-to-graduate
teachers in six provinces.
UNICEF Cuba provided technical inputs to a national study on adolescents that describes behavioural trends among Cuban adolescents and their social transformation. This helped to strengthen the knowledge-based partnership with the Cuba Youth Studies Centre by incorporating international standards for context and global trends on adolescents. These pieces have been instrumental to CP implementation, filling an identified knowledge gap in relation to the current adolescent environment. This information was grounded in an additional group of seven case studies disseminated through UNICEF Cuba’s networks, which were also critical to the ongoing high-level policy dialogue related to adolescent policies.

UNICEF Cuba provided technical support for the design of an International Forum of Youth Researchers that took place under the leadership of the Cuba Youth Studies Centre. The conference, which focused on ‘Adolescents and young people: challenges and opportunities in the global development agenda’, resulted in a final statement expressing social researchers' priorities on these issues. It gathered 423 experts from several countries and different regions, and was an opportunity for capacity strengthening of Cuban partners.

### Lessons learned

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<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Measuring the impact of a Zika social communication campaign targeting pregnant women and women in childbearing age.</td>
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### Programme documents

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