UNICEF Dominican Republic continued to advocate for the fulfilment of children’s rights during 2016. UNICEF undertook successful evidence-based advocacy during the electoral period to include two priority issues for children within the new Government agenda: the reduction of maternal neonatal mortality and universal birth registration.

A breakthrough ruling was issued by Constitutional Court to respect children’s right to be heard before sanctions are applied in school, revoking school sanctions against a child and referring to UNICEF-supported Government standards for non-violence in schools. The case illustrates a good level of dissemination of the standards and awareness of respect for children’s rights among judges of the highest ruling court of the country, and sets an important precedent for the future.

UNICEF Dominican Republic embarked on tackling the on-line child pornography issue with cutting-edge investigation technologies, through partnerships with the National Crime Agency of the United Kingdom (through its British Embassy in the country) and Federal Bureau of Investigation of the United States. UNICEF supported the Government to establish its first specialized unit within the general prosecutor’s office to focus on on-line child pornography. The unit was strengthened with UNICEF’s support through equipment and training of specialists, and analysed 342 cases; law enforcement officers executed 32 search warrants during the second half of 2016. The theme sparked strong public interest and served as advocacy about children’s risks of becoming victims of this crime.

UNICEF’s traditional media presence was increased significantly through strengthened partnerships with mass media and on digital media platforms, with an online media coverage increase of 210 per cent compared to 2015. The launch of the State of the World’s Children report, with national information about inequalities, provided an important advocacy opportunity. It generated media debates and a new opportunity for political dialogue with the Vice-President, leading to the inclusion of a social protection component in the new Country Programme (CP) 2018-2020.

The ‘No Hay Excusas’ (‘No Excuses’) campaign was launched in collaboration with influential partners. It gave visibility to the country’s problem of sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), questioned social tolerance and called on the public to act and report cases. The public demonstrated interest in taking actions for children. The Vice-President joined the campaign and accelerated its dissemination through 1,200 small local businesses; partnerships with NGOs facilitated its dissemination to communities in tourist areas. The success of this campaign was reflected in a dramatic increase in reported cases of child sexual exploitation.

As the deportation of illegal foreigners continued, UNICEF installed observers at official border crossings and prevented 55 cases of deportation of children. In addition, UNICEF supported four children erroneously deported to Haiti who were repatriated and reunited with their families, as a result of good collaboration with the UN High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization on Migration (IOM), migration authorities and partners.
UNICEF took early action to control the spread of Zika virus and mitigate its impact at both the community and policy levels. UNICEF’s comparative advantage and partnerships with Government institutions and the private sector allowed an integrated response that incorporated community engagement, prevention through reproductive health and vector control and care and support for affected children and families. Cholera cases increased significantly, and UNICEF responded by supporting the coordination of WASH actors at local and national level.

UNICEF contributed to analysing the SDGs and cross-referencing them with the national development strategy 2030, with the Government’s newly created national commission for the SDGs and in close partnership with other UN agencies and universities.

A total of 97.34 per cent of programme resources were implemented, with 98.53 per cent of regular resources and 96.53 per cent of other resources (OR). All grants were utilized on time. Additionally, 96.01 per cent of OR planned in VISION was mobilized in 2016. Just 1.66 per cent of direct cash transfers (DCTs) were outstanding more than six months.

The Office continued to thrive efficiently by increasing the contract review committee threshold and reducing small-amount financial transactions, without compromising the transparency of the processes. Greening the office continued by reducing energy consumption.

Partnerships with the private sector increased and several companies participated in UNICEF’s communication campaigns, with in-kind donations of $1,752,595 with a 141 per cent increase in locally received cash donations. The Business Advisory Council of UNICEF Dominican Republic was created.

One of the challenges faced during the year was electoral period, leading to a Presidential election in May, delaying implementation of some planned activities. In August, the new Government took office, resulting in several changes of key ministers, although the President was re-elected from the same political party.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

In recent years, an increasing number of outbreaks caused by different vectors that develop in warm and humid climates contributed to widespread outbreaks of malaria, dengue and Zika viruses. The Dominican Republic experienced the Zika virus outbreak starting in early January 2016; due to its suspected link to birth defects, it was declared by WHO as a public health emergency of international concern in February 2016.

UNICEF Dominican Republic took early action to control the spread of Zika and mitigate its impact at both community and policy level. UNICEF’s comparative advantage and partnerships allowed an integrated response incorporating community engagement, prevention through reproductive health and vector control and care and support for affected children and families.

During the first phase of the emergency (January-July 2016) the intervention had a two-fold focus. First, a communication for development strategy for the Zika emergency response was developed to prevent and mitigate impact throughout the country. Ministry of Health (MoH) emergency actors played active roles in producing key messages and communication materials for Zika prevention and its response mechanisms. The messages were widely disseminated by Government counterparts, NGO partners and the private sector, reaching an estimated 2.9 million people, or approximately 30 per cent of the country’s population, in
supermarkets, stores and work-places throughout the country.

Secondly, community awareness-raising and community-based vector control was supported by local NGO partners, including Pastoral Materno Infantil. Four hundred volunteers were trained on Zika virus transmission, identification, symptomatology, breeding sites elimination and self-protection, and carried out home visits to 12,000 families living in marginal urban areas and high-risk provinces. Priority was given to households with pregnant women and/or women of childbearing age; families were provided with basic information, practical demonstrations and follow-ups at the household level.

The focus during the second phase of the Zika emergency (August-December 2016) shifted to the post-epidemic context: the general decrease of Zika virus infections did not mean the closure of activities, and the focus shifted toward addressing the congenital malformation for new-born babies (i.e. microcephaly). UNICEF directed its support to strengthening integrated care and support for affected families of newborns with Zika congenital syndrome. WHO declared in November that Zika virus was no longer a public health emergency of international concern, but it also stressed a need for a long-term effort to address the birth defects and neurological complications caused by the virus.

Meanwhile, the number of reported cholera cases significantly increased in 2016, despite UNICEF and partners’ continuous work and successful control of cholera since 2011: 1,154 cases with 27 deaths had occurred by 15 December (2.3 per cent lethality), compared to 485 cases with 14 deaths in 2015 (2.5 per cent lethality). Deaths from cholera in 2016 were much higher than expected by the national health authorities. The reasons are believed to centre on the important stress suffered by water and sanitation facilities during 2013-2015, caused by climate variability, overall scarcity of seasonal rains and prolonged drought conditions in some provinces, especially the southwestern region.

UNICEF’s response to cholera outbreaks focused on re-activating its support to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) through the country’s national and provincial water, sanitation and hygiene groups (GASH). UNICEF provided technical assistance to MoH’s environmental health directorate (DIGESA) to ensure proper coordination among key stakeholders and partners, such as water and sanitation service providers, international development actors, Red Cross, national NGOs, the private sector, and Government representatives at the local, provincial, and national levels.

In addition, category five Hurricane Matthew passed through the Dominican Republic in October, affecting 23,816 children in the south east of the country. In November, the northeast of the country was heavily affected by floods. In both cases, the United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETE) was activated, and the UN system remained on high alert, including for a possible cholera outbreak. Thanks to a good level of preparation and the Government’s capacity for disaster response, no official request was made for the international community to intervene. Nevertheless, during the hurricane’s watch/warning period, Government-led GASH activity was intensified, and coordination activities ensured the pre-positioning of emergency supplies and equipment such as mobile water plants, water tanks and water trucks, chlorine, etc., in at-risk provinces.

**Emerging Areas of Importance**

**Migration.** Historically, the Dominican Republic has two main migration-related issues: the migration of Dominicans to other countries, mainly to the United States and Spain, leaving children behind with grandparents or others; and immigration by Haitians to the Dominican Republic. The deportation of illegal Haitian immigrants has always taken place – without legal procedures, and sometimes on a massive scale. In 2014 the country established a
special procedure for the regularization of illegal residents in the country.

However, in 2013 Constitutional Court decision 168-13 put thousands of people at risk of becoming stateless by not recognizing the nationality of Dominican-born descendants of non-resident foreigners, and applying its effect retroactively back to 1929. In 2014 Law 168-14 established special procedures to regularize the migratory situation of people affected by the 2013 sentence, allowing them to nationalize when they hold Dominican birth certificates (Group A), or to regularize as foreigners, for those without Dominican birth certificates (Group B). While 55,000 people from Group A have been regularized, few practical solutions have been provided for the 4,484 people in Group B.

In August 2015 the Government started to deport foreigners who had not regularized their migratory status in the country. Thanks to advocacy by UN agencies and donors, including UNICEF, a formal deportation process was established. Although this process fails to meet some international standards, it strongly contributes to avoid erroneous deportations and commits the Government not to deport children, pregnant women or elderly persons, regardless their migratory status in the country.

Observing the process to ensure that no child is deported becomes an emerging issue of importance for UNICEF Dominican Republic. In June 2016 UNICEF installed observers at three official border crossings where the deportations take place. To date, UNICEF supported 55 cases of children identified during the deportation processes, and returned them to their families in the Dominican Republic, and four children erroneously deported to Haiti were repatriated and reunited with their families. This was possible because of good collaboration with migration authorities and coordinated work with UNHCR and the IOM.

**The second decade of life.** The UNICEF-supported publication of ENHOGAR-MICS 2014 indicated that there were a large number of child marriage cases in the country. Child marriage has been well known to the society and culturally accepted: the survey indicates that 37.1 per cent of women between the ages of 20 and 49 were in civil union or married before the age of 18, one of the highest percentages in the region. This figure increases to 58.6 per cent among the poorest quintile. The issue of child marriage is not on the public or political agenda with no specific plans nor policies, but the launch of the *State of the World's Children 2016* contributed to increasing public interest in child marriage and adolescent pregnancy.

In addition, commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is having negative effects on the second decade of life for children in the Dominican Republic. UNICEF Dominican Republic has been increasing its effort to combat this crime over the years, through training of specialists and equipping the Attorney General’s Office to persecute this crime, including on-line child pornography, through promoting the Code of Conduct developed by the international NGO End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT) within the tourism sector and through awareness-raising among adolescents, families and local communities. In 2016 UNICEF captured the momentum of public and media interest in sexual violence against children, which was generated by the successful communication campaign ‘No Excuses,’ which triggered important debates and increased public’s action on reporting this crime.
The Attorney General's Office established a monitoring system for on-line exchanges of child pornography, and trained key law enforcement officers, with technical support from UNICEF.
and the British Embassy. With this newly built capacity, the prosecution process was strengthened resulting in an increased number of cases, investigations and search warrants during the year.

UNICEF supported the poorest families to provide a good start in life for children. To improve the technical standards of services for young children, 380 caregivers from 10 early childhood development (ECD) centres were trained. They then will train 3,800 families living in the most vulnerable communities to improve daily parenting and practices related to early stimulation, adequate nutrition and protection from neglect, to reach 5,000 young children.

The implementation capacity of seven regional health services (RHS) to implement the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) was strengthened: 237 medical personnel were trained to establish a baseline, develop an improvement plan at each hospital and monitor compliance with the quality standards for medical and other interventions at the hospitals.

To reduce violence in schools, UNICEF strengthened the capacity of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to implement the ‘standards on harmonious coexistence in public and private schools’. Fifty MoE technical staff from throughout the country were trained on the action protocol and the school peer mediation programme. They then multiplied their learning, reaching 5,000 public school counsellors and psychologists during the summer training session.

To prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the tourism sector, UNICEF continued to work with the tourism industry and communities. Over 3,200 employees of tour operators and institutions, and 1,800 adolescent leaders were trained. Also, 12,550 children, 2,944 families, and 1,859 community leaders were sensitized about this exploitation.

**Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

A breakthrough ruling was issued by the Dominican Constitutional Court to respect children’s right to be heard before sanctions are applied in school. In December 2016, a Constitutional Court ruling revoked the sanction by a school against a child and acknowledged that the school had violated the MoE’s standards on harmonious coexistence in public and private schools, as well as the right of a child to be heard during a disciplinary proceeding. The case illustrates effective dissemination of the UNICEF-supported standards and awareness of children’s rights among judges on the highest court of the country, setting an important precedent for future cases. UNICEF has actively advocated to reduce violence in schools, and gave technical assistance to the MoE to develop the standards, which encourage mediation and promote a culture of peace and respect.

UNICEF Dominican Republic undertook successful evidence-based advocacy during the electoral period, using the statistical data from the MICS 2014 and evidence generated through UNICEF’s programmes to include two priority issues for children within the new Government agenda: reducing maternal and neonatal mortality and universal birth registration.

For the launch of *State of the World’s Children* report, the Office prepared a report ‘A Fair Opportunity for Every Child’, which illustrates existing inequalities in the country through an analysis of key indicators for fulfilment of children’s rights and through existing differences between the poorest and richest wealth quintiles and urban and rural areas. This work generated important debates in the media and a new political dialogue opportunity with the Vice-President about UNICEF’s future interventions in the area of social inclusion.
Partnerships

In partnership with WePROTECT-Global Alliance to End Child Sexual Exploitation Online-, innovative work was launched to end on-line child pornography. Joint technical assistance with the UK Embassy was provided to the Attorney General's Office to train experts in cutting-edge investigation technologies to prosecute these crimes, with a positive result in increased number of investigations, cases and search warrants.

With PAHO, UNICEF Dominican Republic supported the MoH’s Zika prevention communication campaign. Dissemination of the campaign was also joined by the Government and NGO partners, 16 private companies and associations of small store owners, and reached 2.9 million persons at stores, supermarkets and workplaces throughout the country.

UNICEF continued to work with the tourism sector to promote ECPAT’s Code of Conduct for the prevention of commercial sexual exploitation of children. In 2016 six hotels and a tourism television channel signed the Code of Conduct. The process is underway to include the Code of Conduct in the curriculum of the Government’s largest vocational training institute, which will ensure that all future graduates are trained to prevent such exploitation of children in the tourism sector.

UNICEF and the Attorney General’s Office jointly launched the ‘No Excuses’ campaign against commercial sexual exploitation of children to prevent and prosecute these crimes. The campaign had excellent exposure thanks to the partnership with seven media groups and companies that donate spaces valued at $1,752,592.

A business advisory council comprised of seven entrepreneurs from major companies was created to advocate for children’s rights within the private sector and create new opportunities for corporate engagement. Meetings were organized with the Board of National Entrepreneurs Association to promote social responsibility. UNICEF facilitated three workshops on children’s rights and business for the master’s programme at a local university.

External Communication and Public Advocacy

UNICEF’s media exposure was increased due to its focused communication and advocacy strategy. The launch of the State of the World’s Children report, with national information about inequalities, provided an important advocacy opportunity. It generated media debates and a new political dialogue opportunity with the Vice-President, leading to the inclusion of a new social protection component in the new Country Programme 2018-2020.

The ‘No Excuses’ campaign gave visibility to the country’s problem of sexual exploitation of children, questioned social acceptance and called on the public to act and report cases. The public demonstrated an interest in taking action for children. During the first two months of the campaign, the Government’s newly dedicated hotline received 283 reports, of which half were cases relevant to sexual exploitation, allowing authorities to intervene. UNICEF Uruguay assisted by sharing the creative concept of its successful 2103 campaign.

UNICEF’s 70th anniversary was celebrated, with the presence of 150 people. The video ‘Every Time’, illustrating UNICEF’s work and impact, was shared as were two testimonials by adults whose lives had been touched and changed by UNICEF’s interventions in the past. The videos also introduced UNICEF’s new branding. Official recognition of the contribution by UNICEF’s national Goodwill Ambassador Jatnna Tavarez was highlighted.

Media coverage related to key performance indicators was measured for the first time, the
1,120 news stories with UNICEF key messages and 91 per cent coverage was seen as positive. Online media coverage increased by 210 per cent compared to 2015.

UNICEF strengthened its presence across digital platforms by using more storytelling, increasing posting frequency, covering emerging and diverse issues and implementing a 'glocal' vision. High-impact online campaigns (#Replyforall, Zika prevention, No Hay Excusas, and Children on the Move) contributed to engage 272,742 people. Twelve million people were reached.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

The Dominican Republic and Haiti share approximately 400km of border, with over 100 known crossing points. Movement of people between the two countries is constant, and lack of adequate protection mechanisms make children on the move vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, including trafficking.

Child protection actors in both countries exchanged experiences and jointly sought ways to prevent child trafficking and protect child victims. UNICEF Dominican Republic, in coordination with UNICEF Haiti, organized two binational meetings in a northern border town in March (Ouanaminthe, Haiti) and in a southern border town in July 2016 (Pedernales, Dominican Republic). A total of 181 people participated, from protection authorities (National Council for Children and Adolescents, CONANI, and Institut du Bien-Etre Social et de Recherches), as well as the IOM, NGOs (Plan International and World Vision) and local child protection networks in both countries. United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti representatives participated in the meeting in Pedernales, where they have a presence.

Practical solutions and agreements were sought through the analysis of four actual cases of sexual exploitation, child trafficking, deportation and sexual abuse. Bottlenecks and coordination opportunities were identified, and available child protection services were mapped out. The meeting concluded with an agreement to develop a binational procedure for monitoring child trafficking and sexual exploitation cases on both sides of the border.

Identification/Promotion of Innovation

UNICEF embarked on tackling the on-line child pornography issue in the Dominican Republic with cutting-edge investigation technologies. Using real-time and real examples, 24 detectives and specialists in security, investigation and persecution of crimes mastered practical tools for the investigation of on-line child pornography cases, facilitated by experts from the US-based NGO Child Rescue Coalition. During the training, participants witnessed the actual traffic in on-line child pornography within a few blocks from the training site, learned different techniques to identify users and gather evidence for investigations and eventual arrests.

With this strengthened capacity, for the first time in the country, a specialized unit for of high-technology crimes (PEDATEC) was created within the General Prosecutor’s Office to focus on online child pornography. PEDATEC analysed 342 cases for investigations, and law enforcement officers executed 32 search warrants during the second half of 2016. UNICEF, with the support of the UK Embassy, facilitated the organization of the training courses for the specialists and provided PEDATEC with the latest information technology equipment with specialized software. The new technology analyses the profile of people who exchange on-line child pornography, thus allowing the justice system to prioritize investigations of those in environments and professions that provide easy access to children.

Until now, very little effort has been made to prevent this specific form of commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Dominican Republic. It is estimated that 21,000 persons were
involved in this crime during 2016, and too often those who look at child pornography eventually seek the real-life experience with children. The theme sparked strong public interest and served as an advocacy tool to educate about children’s risk of becoming victims of this crime.

**Support to Integration and cross-sectoral linkages**

In advocating for access by children with disabilities to quality comprehensive care, UNICEF supported the First Lady’s Office in developing a “roadmap for early detection and comprehensive care for children and adolescents with disabilities in the Dominican Republic” since 2014. The roadmap guides inter-sectoral coordination and response for early detection, comprehensive care and social inclusion of children with disabilities. Pilot implementation is planned for 2017.

The MoE continued to implement the ‘standards for harmonious coexistence in public and private schools, as the education sector response to the national roadmap for the prevention and elimination of violence against children and adolescents. The standards are intended to protect children from violence at school, and the result is also expected to contribute to improving the quality of education and children’s learning outcomes. While CONANI is the lead for this first national roadmap in the Latin American and Caribbean region, inter-sectoral collaboration is considered to be key for its successful and meaningful implementation. The health sector is also making progress, with its pilot implementation of a protocol that obligates medical doctors to report to the police suspected cases of child abuse seen in hospitals.

UNICEF continued supporting the implementation of the Government’s family and community-based integrated care programme, aiming to reach 26,000 young children in the country’s most excluded communities. Through the training of frontline caregivers who conduct household visits, families continued to improve their daily parenting and practices at home. By nature, such parenting practices require cross-sectoral technical guidance and interventions from various Government institutions. UNICEF promoted cross-sectoral coordination to ensure the quality of interventions for the families in areas such as early stimulation, adequate nutrition, breastfeeding, growth and development monitoring of young children, protection from neglect and psychosocial support, when needed.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

UNICEF Dominican Republic continued to follow-up on the concluding observations of the Committee charged with overseeing implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), specifically to the third to fifth periodic reports by the Dominican Republic, issued in March 2015. The recommendations in paragraphs 28, 40 and 63 of the concluding observations urge the Government not to expel children in the care of their family in the Dominican Republic and to ensure that children are not deported to a country where their protection is not guaranteed.

To support compliance, UNICEF installed observers at three official crossing points between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The observers maintained their presence during most of the deportation processes to ensure that no deportation takes place when someone claims to be a minor, a parent with children in the country or pregnant. To date, thanks to excellent collaboration with the Government, UNICEF supported 55 cases of children who were in deportation proceedings and returned to their families in the country. In addition, four children erroneously deported to Haiti have been returned and reunited with their families, in coordination with UNHCR.

The MoE continued to implement the standards for harmonious coexistence in public and
private schools, with UNICEF’s support, in line with the recommendation (paragraph 32) of the concluding observations. In addition, educational inclusion of children with disabilities was promoted, the national curriculum integrated an inclusive approach and ‘general guidance for attention to diversity’ was developed.

In line with the recommendation of paragraph 34, and in compliance with the optional protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, UNICEF supported the General Attorney's Office to install a special unit to prosecute on-line child pornography and developed a communication campaign "No Excuses" against CSEC.

The MoH advanced its implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital initiative (BFHI), with UNICEF’s support, in compliance with the recommendation to intensify efforts to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality (paragraph 50). MoH Resolution 000015 in 2015 officially adopted the BFHI as the policy for reducing maternal and neonatal mortality in the country.

Gender Equality

UNICEF, through BFHI, contributed to reducing dangerous procedures during childbirth. Medical personnel from eight participating hospitals were trained to avoid harmful practices and procedures that have become routine, such as artificial rupture of membranes, routine episiotomies, induction of labour by excessive use of medications such as oxytocin, and unnecessary Caesarean sections. The initiative is also promoting humane and dignified treatment of women during childbirth, through the traditional practice of Doula support. Doulas are women, often nurses, trained to support natural birth with less pain and to monitor and avoid unnecessary and harmful practices that can lead to medical complications and deaths of women during childbirth.

UNICEF and the Attorney General's Office jointly launched a campaign against the commercial sexual exploitation of children (‘No Excuses’) with Government authorities, local child protection networks, the tourism industry, communities, families and children themselves, to prevent and prosecute these crimes.

Although sexual violence against boys is increasing in the Dominican Republic, girls remain much more vulnerable to sexual violence, according to UNICEF’s 2016 “Report on Violence Against Girls in Latin America and the Caribbean.” The expected results of the campaign were to encourage the public to report cases of CSEC and to contribute to reducing impunity for such crimes. During the first two months of the campaign, 283 possible cases were reported to the Government’s hotline, half of which involved crimes against children.

UNICEF Dominican Republic's ongoing situation analysis observed high figures of child marriage in the country and a lack of policies and programmes to address it. UNICEF is exploring the possibility of designing a programme for the next country programme to reduce child marriage.

Environmental Sustainability

The Dominican Republic is highly vulnerable and exposed to disasters, primarily related to climatological events: tropical storms, hurricanes, and drought. Recent studies concluded that climate change in the region could influence the frequency and intensity of disasters by altering the variability associated with the climate (El Niño/La Niña).

The small island developing states of the Caribbean are characterized by small populations with high concentration and exposure of socioeconomic assets to a multiplicity of hazards, and can suffer from devastating damage from one single event. In this context, UNICEF contributes to climate change adaptation strategies through resilient development through
the WASH sector.

The ‘WASH in emergency - building resilience’ project, with a generous contribution by the Netherlands Government, aims to build resilience of the WASH sector by strengthening the capacity of national and local WASH actors to resist, absorb, respond to and recover from an emergency through networks and coordination. The project has four pillars: (1) preparation (mapping; training; inventory management; and pre-positioning of actors, equipment and supplies for the emergency); (2) mitigation (promotion and coordination of infrastructure improvement, supply management); (3) response (early warning mechanisms, damage and needs assessment, coordination, vector control and epidemic prevention); and (4) recovery (coordination for rehabilitation and reconstruction of services, information management, "build back better" approach).

UNICEF contributed to an administrative resolution by the MoH designating GASH as the coordinating body for the WASH sector in emergencies. Stakeholder mapping was updated, and a training plan developed for institutional strengthening of GASH, as well as for coordinating information with the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Regional Humanitarian Information Network Project (REDHUM). WASH sector coordination is done with tools, maps, evaluation forms, flow-charts for decision making, etc. The monitoring and development plan for local GASH was developed.

For greening the office, 90 per cent of air conditions were replaced with low-energy consumption and inverter technology systems in 2016 after an assessment last year. Kilowatt consumption was reduced by 18.53 per cent. UNICEF plans to install light sensors in corridors and conference rooms, and an application to the Greening & Accessibility Fund was submitted.

**Effective Leadership**

A one-year extension for finalization of the country programme document was approved, which had been requested by the Government to align UN agencies’ programmes with the new Government cycle. Preparation for the next Country Programme 2018-2022 is well underway.

A task force followed up the audit recommendations, which closed at the end of 2015. Among 11 recommendations, nine are closed, with one recommendation pending for closure. The remaining two recommendations are planned for closure in March 2017.

The country management team (CMT) played a key role in monitoring implementation of the harmonized approach to cast transfers (HACT) which was marked as the only high-risk area by the auditors. All HACT mandatory monitoring milestones were met.

The country management team met six times and monitored the progress of priorities established in the annual management plan and bi-annual work-plan for 2015-2016, as well as the correct application of standards, policies and procedures. All team meeting minutes were shared with all staff. Throughout the year, management indicators were carefully monitored.

The Country Office did not implement a business continuity plan exercise, but instead undertook a simulation exercise for communication equipment. In preparation for Hurricane Matthew, management carefully reviewed the business continuity plan and status of satellite phones, and updated vendors in VISION.

Weekly programme coordination meetings reviewed possible risks regarding the political
context, changes in authorities, extreme weather conditions, programmatic and financial implementation and other factors that could affect implementation of the country programme. The team discussed mitigation measures and provided systematic follow-up.

Management continued its efforts to improve the workplace climate. An improvement plan was developed with the staff association and approved by joint consultative committee. Interventions focused on the three issues with the lowest scores from the 2104 global staff survey. Eight all-staff meetings were held to improve internal communications. The plan was 95 per cent implemented, and the local survey indicated staff’s good acceptance.

Financial Resources Management

The country management team monitored compliance with financial controls, segregation of duties, audit recommendations, outstanding direct cash transfers (DCTs) and progress in HACT implementation. The UNDP carried out a macro-evaluation of the Government, to which UNICEF Dominican Republic provided inputs. The audit recommendations that closed at the end of 2015 were followed-up closely by a task force. Among 11 recommendations, nine were closed as of December 2016, with one recommendation pending for closure. Programme coordination meetings provided monthly monitoring of financial implementation and progress on the score card.

100 per cent of the institutional budget was implemented. The implementation rate of programme resources was 97.34 per cent, with 98.53 per cent for regular resources and 96.53 per cent for other resources (OR). All grants were utilized before their expiration dates. A total of 96.01 per cent of OR planned in the CPD in VISION was mobilized in 2016; 23 per cent of which was for thematic OR. Lack of allocation of thematic funds in health and social policy continue to jeopardize the achievements made so far.

All financial transactions were carried out by the local focal point through Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC). While the average time for processing a payment during the initial period of incorporation into GSSC was seven business days, this declined to 5.41 business day during the last six months of 2016. To improve efficiency, UNICEF Dominican Republic continues efforts to reduce the number of small-amount financial transactions. The Office had found that the majority were payments for travels within the country. Changes in the mechanisms for use of petty cash payments are being explored, with an aim to eliminate all small-amount transactions. All bank reconciliations were done on time, in collaboration with GSSC.

Fundraising and Donor Relations

UNICEF Dominican Republic completed its fundraising strategy including bilateral and multilateral donors, thematic funding and the private sector.

As a trusted partner with good relations with donors, new opportunities for additional funds in the country arose. With the UK Embassy, a bilateral agreement for a seed fund of US$45,000 was signed to continue the prevention of on-line child pornography work started with the End Violence Against Children Fund, to which the UK government is a principal donor.

During the year, an additional three project proposals were submitted to external donors for non-emergency funding: Embassy of Canada for prevention of violence in schools, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for birth registration, and US Fund for BFHI.
Seven donor reports were due in 2016 and all were submitted in time. The quality was assured before each submission through a careful review.

In 2016, 96.01 per cent of planned OR was mobilized, of which 28 per cent was thematic and 72 per cent non-thematic. Nearly 20 per cent (19.71 per cent) of OR was raised locally.

Locally raised funds from the private sector in 2016 totalled $2,116,845: $384,889 in cash and $1,752,592 in in-kind donations (principally for media spaces for UNICEF campaigns). This represents growth of 141.38 per cent in cash compared to 2015. The main donors were Melia Hotel International, with 27 per cent, through the 'Guest with Heart' programme, Grupo Ramos with 25 per cent and Fundación Rica with 19 per cent.

Regarding private fundraising, UNICEF Dominican Republic plans to partner with companies in selected sectors through three-year agreements, in accordance with UNICEF’s private fundraising and partnerships strategy, and to access their customers with fundraising campaigns and events.

Some 94.5 per cent of locally raised funds from the private sector supported the programme; the remaining 5.5 per cent was funds for response to Haiti’s emergency during Hurricane Matthew.

**Evaluation and Research**

The integrated monitoring and evaluation plan for 2016 was developed in conjunction with the programme area and in coordination with UNICEF LACRO, with details of monitoring activities that contribute to achievement of country programme results. It was composed of nine activities: one in health, one in education, two in protection, and five in social inclusion, monitoring and evaluation. Among them, three planned activities were completed: the situation analysis of children and adolescents (being finalized), a tool for monitoring social investment in children and the final report of the 2104 household survey (ENHOGAR/MICS 2014). Another three were in the process of being concluded, with finalization expected during the first quarter of 2017 (evaluation project on birth registration, study on out-of-school children and publication of the study on children with disabilities). Three were postponed (child rights fulfilment index, with observatory on the rights of children and adolescents; documentation of the BFHI, and publication of the characterization of children of immigrants). Progress on the plan was monitored during programme coordination meetings and the mid-year review.

One other evaluation study is underway, in line with the UN evaluation criteria. UNICEF’s initiative to increase birth registration at 12 target public hospitals is being evaluated; the work contributed a rise in birth registration at target hospitals from 40 per cent in 2013 to 69 per cent in 2016. The objectives of the evaluation are: to analyse the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and sustainability of the timely birth registration initiative in selected 12 public hospitals, and determine whether it can be scaled up; and to measure the progress of the indicator, which is a requirement for the certification of a hospital as baby-friendly. The study identified successful evidence, as well as challenges, for which the actions are already being taken.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

UNICEF Dominican Republic continues to reduce maintenance costs for the office premises by sharing common expenses with other UN agencies. In 2016, processes for selection of goods and services became more efficient by additional inter-agency agreements for acquisitions, messenger services, and an audit firm for HACT requirements, in addition to
existing interagency long-term agreements for travel and events.

The Office undertook an analysis of eight opportunities to streamline practices, and realized a cost savings by increasing the contract review committee threshold to US$50,000, without compromising the transparency of the process. In 2016 all five committee meetings reviewed contracts with amounts below this threshold, and with the adjusted threshold, the Office saved 12.5 hours for each committee member, as well as delays for coordinating meetings. Also, the partnership review committee analysed six agreements in 2016. With the introduction of the US$100,000 threshold, two cases were handled by the simplified method, and the savings in time amounted to 10 person hours. The adopted threshold should have saved the Office 70 person hours by end-2016, and reduced by two weeks the approval process for the programme cooperation agreement.

UNICEF Dominican Republic took concrete steps toward increasing the efficiency of office space use. Space-sharing agreements with the World Food Programme and International Labour Organization at UNICEF premises were not renewed; instead, the space will be converted into a multipurpose conference room, reducing the cost of logistics coordination. The agreement with UNESCO for shared office space remains unchanged.

**Supply Management**

The total value of procurement of goods and services in 2016 was US$296,678.74, of which 13.54 per cent was funded by the support budget and 86.46 per cent by the programme budget. The procurement of goods and services with programme funds represented 14.42 per cent of the total programme implementation amount in 2016.

Of the total of US$256,522.26 funded by the programme budget, 65.27 per cent corresponded to services and consultancies, 6.12 per cent to supplies and materials, and 28.61 per cent to goods delivered to counterparts, mainly printed materials and ICT and office supplies. One of the NGO partners, Pastoral Materno Infantil, purchased goods for a total amount of $5,020.54 through UNICEF procurement services. The Office assisted UNICEF Haiti with quotations and Dominican vendor liaison for several goods they purchased.

The Office has no warehouse; all procured items were delivered directly to the counterparts, as indicated by the responsible programme staff.

Although the Basic Cooperation Agreement with the government signed in 2004 stipulates that UNICEF is exempt from the payment of taxes, the Government has not provided UNICEF (or other UN agencies) with a legal document. The issue has been raised with the authorities by agency heads and the Resident Coordinator since 2013, but has not yet been resolved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Procurement</th>
<th>Services and consultancies</th>
<th>Supplies and goods</th>
<th>CO office renovation</th>
<th>Total per budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support budget</td>
<td>$2,314.08</td>
<td>$2,753.04</td>
<td>$35,089.36</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme budget</td>
<td>$167,420.58</td>
<td>$89,101.68</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Security for Staff and Premises

UN House premises comply with security requirements, and were approved by the security management team in October 2016. The Dominican Republic continues to be classified as level 2, 'low risk'. No major security issues were experienced in 2016, and no significant incident was reported. New staff participated in induction training sessions coordinated by the UNDSS. In addition, all UNICEF staff and consultants completed UNDSS Basic Security and Advanced Basic Security in the field training. The Representative also completed the security course required by the security management team.

The inter-agency security plan is updated for activation when required. While no business continuity plan exercise was undertaken in 2016, a simulation exercise for communication equipment took place, including phone-tree activation. In preparation for Hurricane Matthew, the Office carefully reviewed the business continuity plan and status of satellite phones, and updated vendors in VISION.

The UN country team (UNCT) recommended establishment of a task force in late 2015 to simplify procedures for the Security Drills proposed by UNDSS, after a failed simulation exercise due to overly complex procedures. The task force produced a simplified procedure for security drills, adapted to the country’s reality and context, and clarified roles and responsibilities in emergency situations. The document was shared with UNCT, pending for approval. The five VHF-repeater stations installed in 2014 continued to be non-functional; UNDSS is seeking a solution.

An attempted case of fraud was reported in 2016 when an unknown individual tried to purchase flight tickets using the name of UNICEF. The agent reported the suspicious case to UNICEF, and UNICEF verified the agreed procedures with the agent to avoid similar cases in the future.

Human Resources

While no staff recruitment took place in 2016, the Office faced many changes and challenges related to human resources, with the transition to the Global Shared Services Centre, changes in policies and procedures and the use of new tools (ACHIEVE, TMS, MyCase etc). During 2016 14 consultants were contracted to support different programmatic areas.

All performance appraisal system requirements from 2015 were completed, and objectives for 2016 were defined by end-February, with a mid-year review before end-October. Open discussions took place between supervisors and supervisees. Most of the activities in the training plan 2016 were undertaken. On-line HACT courses were added to the training plan, as per audit recommendation, and all the concerned staff members are now certified. The Office actively participated in the UN Cares initiative; HIV/AIDS standards in the workplace were complied with.

In support of staff professional development, the office participated in three stretch assignments and one mission for emergency support in 2016. For stretch assignment: a child protection officer (NOA) supported UNICEF Tunisia for three months; and an administrative and human resources assistant (GS4) supported the GSSC in Budapest for one month; and the Deputy Representative (P4) supported the education section at NYHQ for two months. In addition, a child protection officer (NOA) was deployed for three weeks to support UNICEF Haiti’s Hurricane Matthew response. In all cases, back-fill consultants were identified in a timely manner and interruption of work was minimized. The emergency focal point and communication officer was trained in humanitarian assistance.
A work climate improvement plan was developed together with the staff association, and approved by joint consultative committee. Interventions focused on three aspects that received the lowest scores in the 2014 global staff survey. The plan was 95 per cent implemented, and the local survey indicated good acceptance and appreciation by staff.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

During 2016 ICT services were outsourced to an external private service provider, after prior assessment of the risks involved, and taking adequate mitigating measures. The ICT service contract will be renewed until the end of 2017, however, it should be noted that the cost of outsourcing ICT services is higher than contracting a staff member.

The Office reduced its ICT footprint by streamlining IT operational services. The migration to “light” project was moved forward, and 22 per cent of remaining obsolete ICT equipment was replaced. In comparison to 2015, UNICEF saved approximately 600 kilowatt/hour per day through the acquisition of new laptops that are more energy efficient and provide updated technology, allowing optimum performance and rapid response in the use of the common applications such as Vision, One Drive, Citidirect and others. This significantly reduced users’ start-up time. An additional benefit of using laptops was that it allows users to work from home in case of emergencies with easy access to the Citrix receiver and One Drive for Business.

Training sessions took place on Office 365, Skype for Business, OneDrive, and UNICEF Learning Resources. Approximately 80 per cent of staff has already moved to Cloud-based work.

Using mobile tools with partners was promoted. Three RHS created Whatsapp groups to promote the BFHI, to exchange information such as daily activities and programmes, ideas for improvement, needs for blood and transfer of patients.

UNICEF strengthened its presence across digital platforms by using more storytelling, increasing posting frequency and covering emerging and diverse issues. High-impact online campaigns included #Replyforall, Zika prevention, No Hay Excusas, and Children on the Move. Twelve million people were reached, an increase of 79 per cent from 2015.

**Programme Components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** Effective and efficient programme management and operations support to programme delivery

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF Dominican Republic continued to have effective and efficient programme management and operations in 2016.

**OUTPUT 1** Effective and efficient governance and systems

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
A task force followed up the audit recommendations that closed at the end of 2015. Among 11 recommendations, nine were closed as of December 2016, with one recommendation pending for closure. The remaining two recommendations are planned for closure in March 2017.
The CMT played a key role in monitoring HACT implementation, which was marked as the only high-risk area by the auditors. By year-end, all HACT mandatory monitoring milestones had been met: 26 programmatic visits; nine spot-checks; and one micro-assessment.

The CMT met six times, and monitored the progress of priorities and results established in the annual management plan and the bi-annual work plan 2015-2016, as well as correct application of standards, policies and procedures. All CMT meeting minutes were shared with all staff. Throughout the year, management indicators were carefully monitored.

The Office did not implement a business continuity plan exercise, but instead undertook a simulation exercise for communication equipment. In preparation for Hurricane Matthew, management carefully reviewed the business continuity plan and status of satellite phones, and updated vendors in VISION.

Possible risks were shared during weekly programme coordination meetings regarding: the internal and external political context, changes in authorities, extreme weather conditions, programmatic and financial implementation and factors that could affect CP implementation. The team discussed mitigation measures and provided systematic follow-up.

Management continued its efforts to improve the workplace climate. An improvement plan was developed with the staff association, and approved by the joint consultative committee. Interventions focused on three areas with lowest scores from the 2104 global staff survey. The plan was 95 per cent implemented, and the local survey indicated acceptance by staff. Eight all-staff meetings were held during the year to improve internal communications.

OUTPUT 2 Effective and efficient management and stewardship of financial resources.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Progress continued in the implementation of HACT. To comply with recommended procedures, the Office contracted an external audit company to undertake 26 programmatic visits, nine spot-checks and one micro-assessment. An audit of the MOE started. A reduction in the number of low-amount transactions was achieved, as was efforts to make all payments through bank transfers. The implementation of electronic payments directly from VISION (BCM payment process) and the migration to GSSC in November were completed. All replenishment and bank reconciliations were completed on time.

The Office continued to have reduced maintenance costs for premises as a result of sharing common expenses with other UN agencies. In 2016 processes for selection of goods and services was made more efficient through additional inter-agency agreements for acquisitions, messenger services and an audit firm for HACT requirements, in addition to existing inter-agency long-term agreements for travel and events.

OUTPUT 3 Effective and efficient management of Human Capacity.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The Office continued to have effective and efficient management of human capacity in 2016. It undertook the analysis of eight opportunities to streamline practices, and decided to gain cost savings by increasing the contract review committee threshold to US$50,000, without compromising transparency. In 2016 all five committee meetings reviewed contracts of an amount below this threshold, and with the adjusted threshold, the office saved 12.5 hours of each committee member’s time and avoided delays related to coordination. Also,
the PRC committee analysed six agreements in 2016. With the introduction of the US$100,000 threshold, two cases would have been handled by the simplified method, and the savings in time amounts to 10 person hours. The adopted threshold would have saved the office 70 person hours by end-2016, and reduced by two weeks the time required for PCA approval.

The training committee implemented 75 per cent of activities foreseen in the 2016 training plan, along with 25 per cent of time devoted to activities identified throughout the year to promote staff’s professional development.

**OUTCOME 2** By 2016 UNICEF will have contributed to reduce the average and the gaps in maternal and infant mortality and the vertical transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis, to improve access to inclusive and quality health services, strengthening the early detection of disabilities, and to increase the coverage of health and nutrition programmes for children 0 to 5 years of age.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF advocated at the highest level of the Government during the electoral campaign to prioritize the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality in the new Government’s programme. The outcome was positive, and UNICEF’s advice was reflected in one of the Government’s key objectives: the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortalities by 2020 to 70 per 100,000 live births for maternal mortality, and 14 per 1,000 live births for neonatal mortality.

In 2016 the Government undertook an important reform within the health sector by separating the functions between the MoH (normative) and the National Health Service (NHS, service delivery) through Law 123-15.

The MoH recognizes the effectiveness of the UNICEF-supported BFHI, and is committed to go to scale. In June 2016 UNICEF signed an agreement with the newly established National Health Service, now responsible for quality assurance of public health services. The agreement aims to strengthen NHS capacities to implement the BFHI and to scale it up for all public hospitals and health centres by 2022, through their territorial branches (known as regional health services).

Joint monitoring by UNICEF and RHS of the baby-friendly hospitals showed a positive impact on reduction of avoidable death. Maternal deaths in four hospitals and neonatal sepsis in five hospitals decreased during the 2014-2015 period. In addition, neonatal sepsis is no longer the leading cause of death, overtaken by respiratory difficulties, distress and hypoxia. This indicates improvement in applying biosecurity measures and the availability of a safe water supply, which had been one of the focus areas of the baby-friendly hospitals.

The main results of the evaluation of the elimination of mother to child transmission initiative evaluation pointed out the need to expand HIV test to all health centres, including primary health care units, and to implement all such services at municipal hospitals. It also emphasized the importance of strengthening the human rights-based approach among health personnel, to avoid stigma and discrimination against HIV-affected people and maintain confidentiality. UNICEF provided technical and financial assistance for responding to the evaluations’ recommendations; HIV paediatric units were reinforced with a “Guide for Evaluation of Development” for each step in the child’s life cycle.

UNICEF responded to the Zika epidemic emergency, playing a leadership role in coordinating state and non-state actors in two key areas: definition and implementation of a
communication strategy for the pre-epidemic/prevention phase, and in the post-epidemic phase to offer affected families psycho-social support and social protection. The Zika prevention communication campaign was widely disseminated, reaching 2.9 million people throughout the country.

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework includes two elements in its ‘social services’ component: reducing maternal and neonatal mortality and early pregnancy, and reducing contagious and non-contagious diseases.

OUTPUT 1 By 2016, the continuing care for mothers, new-borns and children, including the steps of the "Child Friendly Hospital Initiative," are implemented by the network of public health services and communities of 10 prioritized provinces.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF advocated at the highest level of the Government during the electoral campaign to prioritize the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality in the new Government’s programme. The Government’s reform of the health sector, separating the functions between the MOH (normative) and the NHS (service delivery) provided an opportunity for accelerated implementation of the BFHI, and an agreement was signed with UNICEF.

While nationwide progress has been slow, evidence generated by UNICEF-supported monitoring at baby-friendly hospitals indicates that avoidable maternal and infant mortalities have declined. Maternal deaths at four hospitals and neonatal sepsis at five hospitals decreased during the period 2014-2015. In addition, neonatal sepsis is no longer the leading cause of death, overtaken by respiratory difficulties, distress, and hypoxia. This indicates improvement in applying biosecurity measures and the availability of safe water supply, which had been one of the focus areas of the BFHI. UNICEF continued to improve obstetric practices through training for 92 health personnel as doulas.

The BFHI made good progress, despite delays in the sector caused by health sector reform, the Zika epidemic and frequent strikes by medical personnel. Eleven baselines and nine improvement action plans are now available and monitored jointly by MOH and UNICEF at 12 hospitals. The monitoring team from four newly established health regions by the NHS received training on baby-friendly hospital standards, tools to develop baselines, improvement action plans and monitoring forms. Also, 1,786 health personnel were trained on quality standards related to prenatal control, clean birth, emergency obstetric care, breastfeeding, prevention of infections and neonatal care and preventing harsh practices during childbirth.

UNICEF supported reinforcement of the public voice and social surveillance by Maternal Mortality Observatory (OBMM). The OBMM, which monitors selected indicators in three hospitals and jointly seeks improvement with health authorities, now has evidence to support their findings through two studies undertaken by a local NGO, INSALUD. The first study “Survey on pregnant women’s origins” found that the majority of pregnant women come from neighbourhoods surrounding hospitals, contradicting medical doctors’ complaints that an overwhelming number of pregnant women are referred from other hospitals, preventing them from providing quality health services. The second study 'Characterization of Delays and their Influence in Maternal Mortality and Extreme Maternal Morbidity’ found that the most frequent delay in receiving attention occurs when arriving to the third hospital as a result of referrals. The main causes for such delays are lack of supply, equipment, unavailability of specialized health personnel and inadequate follow-up during labour or the immediate post-partum period.
UNICEF is working to amplify the voices of the users of public health services through strengthening the role of communities. The BFHI was presented in selected municipalities to civil society organizations, local government and congresspersons, using informative brochures and human interest stories.

As a part of global polio eradication initiative, the Dominican Republic destroyed all tOPV vaccines and switch to the bivalent vaccine, bOPV.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2016, at least 80 per cent of the hospitals and health centres in the 10 prioritized provinces will have counselling, diagnosis and treatment services for HIV and STIs for pregnant women, children and adolescents.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF supported the MoH’s General Direction of the Control of Sexually Transmitted Infections and AIDS to improve services for HIV+ pregnant women in 21 municipal hospitals in three health regions (Metropolitana, Bahoruco and El Valle), where UNICEF supported the training of health personnel in 2015. The 2016 report demonstrated an improvement in same-day delivery of results for HIV and syphilis tests for pregnant women: 85 per cent, a significant increase from 57 per cent in 2015. However, the ART delivery to HIV+ pregnant women was discontinued due to the MoH’s delay in installing a registration system that controls clinical management and drug delivery, which should be finalized in 2017, when services should be resumed.

Forty-seven psychologists from paediatric units serving HIV+ children and adolescents were trained, with UNICEF’s support, in the use of the tool ‘Criteria for the Evaluation of the Development of Children and Adolescents,’ which allows them to monitor the development status of children and adolescents. Although it was designed for services related to HIV patients, it will be used in other services such as primary care units, the Government’s ECD programmes and evaluation of the development of children affected by Zika virus.

UNICEF provided technical and financial assistance to undertake a UNAIDS-Government study ‘Cost and impact of the HIV/AIDS investment framework in the Dominican Republic,’ which aims to identify the most cost-effective HIV intervention strategies during the next 15 years. UNAID’s fast-track scenario would have prevented 7,500 new infections and 40,000 deaths by 2030, through early intervention with HIV+ persons and increased coverage, compared to other plans that result in an estimated 25,000 new infections and 60,000 deaths. The study will be published in 2017, and UNICEF will continue advocacy with the Government to increase the public budget for HIV/AIDS programmes, in order to achieve planned results of the national development strategy 2030.

**OUTCOME 3** By 2016 UNICEF will have contributed in building the capacity of the education system and social security system to implement integrated, inclusive, and quality programmes for early childhood development (0 to 5 years), pre-primary, primary, and secondary education, integrating out-of-school children and adolescents, and ensuring their retention.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The Presidential election in May 2016 resulted in changes of the Government’s key cabinet members, and a new Minister of Education was appointed. This led to changes in MoE programme/division directors, resulting in some delays in planned activities.

In 2016 very slight improvement was observed for average scores on national exams for eighth grade children, except a small decline in Spanish language. However, the Dominican Republic obtained the last place in the results of the Programme for International
Assessment of Students 2016 in science, reading, mathematics and collaborative problem-solving.

The first phase of the Dominican Initiative for Quality Education (IDEC in Spanish) concluded in 2016 with the seventh monitoring report on MoE progress toward achieving the goals of its 2012-2016 programme. With UNICEF’s support, the report highlighted progress in areas such as implementation of extended school hours, and significant delays in the implementation of the national plan for comprehensive protection for early childhood, due to its overly ambitious objectives.

UNICEF supported the MoE to define nine prioritised policy areas for the Education Strategic Plan 2016-2020, through leading donor coordination of IDEC, providing key recommendations and facilitating international experts’ opinions. The generation of evidence and knowledge on the most excluded children, due to factors such as poverty, early pregnancy, early marriage, and disabilities, is now included as an MoE priority.

A breakthrough ruling was issued by the Constitutional Court to respect children’s rights to be heard before sanctions are applied in school. In December 2016, a Constitutional Court ruling (TC/0643/16) revoked the sanctions placed against a child and acknowledged that the school violated Government standards on harmonious coexistence in public and private schools, and the right of a child to be heard during a disciplinary proceeding. The case illustrates good dissemination of the UNICEF-supported standards, as well as awareness of children’s rights among judges of the highest ruling court of the country, and sets an important precedent for future cases.

The preliminary results of UNICEF’s ongoing out-of-school children study indicated that the first years of primary school presents one of the first major challenges that children face, as a high repetition rate was observed. UNICEF continued to support the MoE to improve children’s learning achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in the lowers grades of primary education, through improving the teachers’ capacities.

UNICEF continued to support Government ECD programmes by strengthening technical capacity to extend coverage and provide quality services. Over 53,000 children under five benefited from ECD services during the year.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2016 the Ministry of Education has agreed upon, validated, and is in the process of implementing a management model for quality education in at least three prioritized educational regions and their districts to support its implementation in schools.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF continued to support the MoE to advance with its decentralization, which is one of the ministry’s priorities during 2016-2020. In 2016, the MOE completed the design of a quality management model, which aims to improve decentralized management at the regional and district levels. The model includes four focus areas for improvement: 1) standardized workflow for administration, finance and pedagogy; 2) management procedures; 3) human resources; and 4) risk management. Four of 18 education regions participated in the pilot phase (Bahoruco, Santo Domingo East, and La Vega). There was a significant delay by MOE’s in developing and implementing the model, which was reflected in the progress of the indicators established at the beginning of the Country Programme for implementation of annual operational plans in MOE’s regional and district levels.

Together with the European Union, UNICEF continued to lead International Council for Educational Development (IDEC) for the fifth consecutive year. With its members’ support (the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, USAID, the Organization of American States, the Organization of Ibero-American States, French Development Agency,
the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank), IDEC completed its seventh progress monitoring report of the MoE’s 2012-2016 programme. The findings indicated that 72.4 per cent of planned activities had been completed or were in-process, 20.7 per cent were in process with some delays, 4.6 per cent were behind schedule and 2.3 per cent had started, after delays.

UNICEF supported the MoE to develop its strategic plan 2016-2020 with the new Government. Nine priority policy areas were identified, and UNICEF contributed by providing three international specialists who supported the policy designs for primary and secondary education, and for the inclusion of the most excluded children.

OUTPUT 2 By 2016, in four prioritized educational regions, the completion of basic and secondary education is improved with a gender focus, through the implementation of inclusive quality education programmes for students, including children with different capacities, and the reduction of the risk factors which impede their integration and retention.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Efforts continued to include children with disabilities in regular public schools, whenever it is the best interest of the child. To implement the roadmap for early detection and comprehensive care for children and adolescents with disabilities in the Dominican Republic – which UNICEF has support since 2104, through the First Lady’s Office – UNICEF supported the MoE to include access to quality education for children with disabilities in the new curriculum. The MoE also conducted a technical review of the ‘general guidance for attention to diversity’, with UNICEF’s technical assistance, which provides specific measures that each school can take to welcome children with disabilities and other conditions in school, and to ensure their quality of learning. Over 100 MoE technical staff at different educational levels were trained to train other teachers.

The preliminary results of UNICEF’s ongoing out-of-school children study indicated that the first two years of the primary school present the first major challenge that children face, as high repetition rates were observed. UNICEF continued to support the MoE to improve children’s learning achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in the lower grades of primary education by improving teachers’ capacities. Two teacher training modules were updated to align with the national curriculum: for reading-writing, and mathematics for the lower grades of primary education. Pilot efforts in 50 public schools in Santo Domingo began at year-end. Implementation of reading, writing and mathematics modules for the lower grades of primary education is included in the MoE’s new strategic plan 2016-2020.

To reduce violence in school, UNICEF continued its support for MoE implementation of its standards on harmonious coexistence in public and private schools. In 2016, the action protocol and a school peer mediation programme were published, and 50 MoE technical staff from different parts of the country were trained. They then multiplied their learning with 5,000 public school counsellors and psychologists during the summer training session. In addition, a pilot project was recently launched in 30 public schools in Santo Domingo East, which includes peer mediation.

UNICEF’s three-year interventions in the framework of Human Security Trust Fund concluded this year with a positive outcome. No one dropped out of school from among the 1,434 children who participated in ‘Learning Spaces,’ the MoE’s intervention strategy for the most excluded Bateye communities in the eastern region of the country. In addition, 10 per cent of children had left school prior to the project and have since resumed their education, thanks to the project intervention. The final assessment indicated 20 to 30 points of improvement in children’s learning outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics, compared to the initial assessment. In partnership with a local NGO (ASCALA), UNICEF supported 10
after-school programmes for children aged between six and 14. UNICEF will continue advocating with the MoE to invest in the most excluded Bateye communities.

OUTPUT 3 By 2016, in six prioritized provinces, early childhood development programmes are established for children 0 to 5 years of age at home, communities, day care centres, and schools.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF continued to support implementation of the Government’s ECD programme, ‘Quisqueya Starts with You’, by strengthening the family and community-based integrated care programme, reaching over 26,000 young children and 23,800 families in the most excluded communities of the country.

Through partners from different sectors, such as the National Institute for Early Childhood, the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences and the NGO partner Pastoral Materno Infantil, 380 technical staff members from 10 ECD centres were trained to meet technical standards for cross-sectoral services such as early stimulation, early childhood education, services for children with disabilities, nutrition and protection from abuse, thus contributing to children’s development during the early years of their lives. Various technical materials were developed to support the training and their day-to-day work. For example, the illustrated early stimulation materials will help caregivers to guide families in day-to-day activities at home with young children, and key messages and communication materials such as posters, flyers, brochures and audio materials will encourage families and communities to take part in practicing ECD-related activities.

OUTCOME 4 By 2016, UNICEF will have contributed to building the institutional capacity of local and national Child Protection Systems, through administrative and judicial channels, to ensure the protection of children and adolescents from violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking, and to guarantee their right to an identity, to live in a family, and to due-process in cases of conflict with the law.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
During 2016 there was continued implementation of Law 169-14, rooted in the Constitutional Court’s decision 168-13, which retrospectively denies citizenship to children of foreign parents without legal residence (mostly of Haitian origin) putting thousands of people at risk of becoming stateless. The deportation of foreigners without legal residency continued. UNICEF installed observers at three border crossing points who interviewed all people in the process of deportation who claim to be under 18 years old, a parent with children in the country, or pregnant. To date, UNICEF had identified 55 children during the deportation processes and facilitated their reunification with their families in the Dominican Republic, thanks to effective collaboration with migration authorities. In addition, four children erroneously deported to Haiti were repatriated and reunited with their families due to coordinated work with UNHCR.

UNICEF supported the Government with the implementation of the ‘National Roadmap for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children’, which was approved in 2015. The MoH developed a protocol to make it obligatory for hospitals to report suspected cases of child abuse.

UNICEF supported the creation of PEDATEC within the General Prosecutor’s Office to focus on online child pornography. Critical technical support was provided by the National Crime Agency of United Kingdom and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. The impact of this unit was evident: during the second half of the year, 342 investigations were initiated and 32 search warrants were executed.
UNICEF also continued to strengthen efforts on the “demand” side, to prevent CSE. Together with the Attorney General’s Office, a communication campaign ‘No Hay Excusas’ was launched in September.

UNICEF successfully advocated at the highest level of Government and provided technical assistance during the electoral campaign to prioritize increased birth registration in the new Government’s programme.

More children were registered at birth in 2016. UNICEF continued to support the Central Electoral Board and MoH initiative to ensure the timely birth registration of children born in 12 priority public hospitals; 68 per cent of children obtained birth certificates before leaving the hospital, compared to 64 per cent in 2015.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2016 the Dominican Republic has an established national policy for the prevention of violence against children in accordance with international human rights treaties and the recommendations of the UN Secretary General’s Study on Violence against Children.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
In September the General Attorney’s Office and UNICEF jointly launched a communication campaign against CSEC ‘No Hay Excusas’ to sensitize the public about this social problem, encourage their commitment for its prevention and report this crime. The Vice-President joined the campaign and accelerated its dissemination through small local businesses, who are implementing partners of the Government’s PROSOLI social protection programme. More than 1,200 owners of small grocery shops across the country were sensitized against CSEC. The success of this campaign was reflected in a dramatic increase in reported CSEC cases. During the campaign’s first two months, the General Attorney’s Office received 283 calls, of which 40 were CSEC reports, 71 were reports of sexual abuse and other violence against children and 24 were phone calls to follow up on previous reports.

UNICEF continued to strengthen Government capacity to respond, investigate and sanction the crime of child sexual exploitation. In 2016, a new programmatic opportunity arose to tackle on-line child pornography, and the General Attorney’s Office created the country’s first specialized unit to prosecute on-line child pornography. UNICEF facilitated installation of a cutting-edge investigation methodology and monitoring system to track on-line child pornography exchanges to, from, and within the Dominican Republic – with technical assistance from the British National Crime Agency and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. A total of 356 officials from the Office of the Attorney General, the national police and the judiciary were trained in the latest on-line investigation tools and procedures. An International Congress on Online Child Pornography was held in May with participation by more than 80 members of the justice system, the Attorney General’s Office, national police and child protection authorities. These efforts resulted in 342 investigations initiated and 32 search warrants executed during the second half of 2016.

To prevent CSEC in the tourism sector, UNICEF continued its work with the National Association of Hotels and Restaurants, the tourism industry and local communities. Six hotels and one tourism television network signed ECPAT’s Code of Conduct against CSEC. A total of 3,229 employees from tour operators and institutions, as well as 1,848 adolescent leaders were trained. In addition, 12,550 children, 2,944 families and 1,859 community leaders were sensitized to prevent CSEC.

Five community-based child protection networks in the touristic province of La Altagracia (where Punta Cana beach resorts are located) were strengthened to protect children against CSEC. These networks developed action plans and proposals to ensure the sustainability of
their operation. In addition, 375 members of 55 new local protection boards were trained in their roles and responsibilities, including the implementation of protection measures in 30 municipalities.

OUTPUT 2 By 2016 in 6 prioritized territories the Registrar's Office delivers birth certificates to non-documented children and pregnant adolescents.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF successfully advocated at the highest level of the Government during the electoral campaign to prioritize the increase of birth registration in the new Government’s Programme.

Timely birth registration increased from 64 per cent to 68 per cent during the year, with 28,310 out of 41,991 children born registered as of the end of October 2016. Approximately 52 per cent of all birth in the Dominican Republic take place in these 12 public hospitals. UNICEF continued to strengthen the initiative to improve birth registration at civil registry offices in 12 public hospitals through the BFHI, despite the delay caused by the Presidential and general elections in May, which were the central focus of the Central Electoral Board at that time. The initiative, which started in 2014, aims to improve coordination between the MoH and Central Electoral Board, to provide monthly monitoring of new-born babies registered before leaving the hospital, to sensitize pregnant women about the importance and requirements for birth registration and to inform health personnel about their supporting role.

Applying an equity lens, UNICEF and counterparts identified that the great majority of the unregistered babies are of adolescent or foreign mothers. The data from UNICEF-supported monitoring suggests that among 13,681 babies who left target hospitals without being registered, 60 per cent (8,213) were babies of adolescent mothers and 27 per cent (3,684) of foreign mothers.

An evaluation is being carried out to improve the efficiency and impact of UNICEF-supported birth registration initiative, identify successes and the challenges and explore the possibility of scaling-up the initiative to 60 public hospitals with civil registry offices.

Regarding the late registration, a pilot initiative was implemented in coordination with World Vision in the border province of Dajabón. Fifty-six children and adolescents obtained their birth registration, and 16 mothers of Haitian nationality were supported to obtain their passports in order to register their children.

OUTPUT 3 By 2016 mechanisms exist for the prevention, control and care of children victims of trafficking and smuggling in border regions and prioritized territories.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Preventing the deportation of children has become an increasingly important issue for UNICEF Dominican Republic since the end of the ‘foreigner’s regularization plan’ in July 2015, which also has its roots in Constitutional Court ruling 168-13 in 2013. In 2016, UNICEF strengthened its monitoring by installing observers at three border crossing points. One observer at each of the three official deportation points interviewed people in the process of deportation to identify those who claimed to be under 18 years old, a parent with children in the country or pregnant. To date, UNICEF supported 55 cases of children identified during the deportation processes, and returned them to their families in the Dominican Republic. In addition, four children erroneously deported to Haiti were repatriated and reunited with their families, due to coordinated work with UNHCR. The work was
undertaken in close coordination with the United Nations inter-agency group on statelessness and in collaboration with migration authorities.

With UNICEF’s support, the Special Prosecutor against Trafficking trained 149 members of specialized land border security corps and specialized tourist security corps in the investigation and prosecution protocol for cases of child trafficking. The inter-institutional training among these Government institutions contributed to improving coordination among special forces, prosecution and child protection authorities.

UNICEF continued to strengthen the capacities of local communities in provinces bordering Haiti to prevent child trafficking and provide protection to children on the move between the two countries. The mapping of 98 community-based organizations providing protection services in Dajabón, Bahoruco and Jimani was completed, in partnership with World Vision. This mapping will support local actors to better understand who, where and what services are available to protect children’s rights and support their restitution.

In six border provinces, 25 community-based child protection networks were created and strengthened to protect children and adolescents from trafficking. In addition, 14 different local networks developed work plans in collaboration with Plan International and World Vision. A total of 1,123 children were trained in child rights and prevention of violence and trafficking. Adults in these communities were sensitized (624 parents and 144 members of protection networks and local child protection boards), and 371 community leaders and local government officials were trained in child rights and protection.

To improve the protection of children on the move, UNICEF Dominican Republic collaborated with UNICEF Haiti to organize two binational meetings (March and July 2016) in border towns of Ouanaminthe, Haiti and Pedernales, Dominican Republic, with 181 participants from protection authorities (CONANI and Haiti’s Institute for Social Well-being and Research and NGOs from both countries. Representatives from IOM Dominican Republic and Haiti also participated.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2016, policies to care for abandoned children meet international standards on the rights of children.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF continued to strengthen the capacity of the Dominican justice system on juvenile justice. UNICEF provided support to the Attorney General’s Office through the development of a procedures manual for implementing alternative measures to the deprivation of liberty of adolescents in conflict with law. The manual will harmonize the follow-up procedures of these alternative measures; the procedures also include providing information to the court that ordered the measures and support for the families of the affected adolescents.

To promote the application of alternative measures to the deprivation of liberty for adolescents, three coordination meetings were organized; in Santo Domingo, Santiago, and Barahona. A total of 128 judges, prosecutors, public defenders, CONANI technical team and civil society participated. Despite UNICEF’s support over the last years, no progress was registered with the Commission for the Execution of Justice for Boys, Girls and Adolescents to improve the conditions of adolescents in detention centres. Leadership issues at CONANI hindered continuity, including planned monitoring visits to adolescent detention centres.

To ensure the protection of children in legal proceedings, the Supreme Court of Justice installed two new interview centres, at Puerto Plata and Samaná, with UNICEF’s support. These centres will be equipped with psychologists and staff with technical knowledge and skills to conduct interviews with child and adolescent victims or witnesses of crimes, without
re-victimizing them.

Three high-level prosecutors reinforced their capacity to prosecute offenses against children through their participation in the 19th International Course on Jurisdictional Protection of Children's Rights in Chile in November.

OUTCOME 5 By 2016 UNICEF will have contributed to knowledge generation and management on the situation of children, with an emphasis on the most excluded groups, advocating for improvements in the coordination of national and local public policies, with a special attention to health, education and child protection. UNICEF will strengthen the capacities for social surveillance and participation to improve social investments to overcome existing inequities.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF began to develop a situation analysis on various themes that affect children in the country, which will serve for public and political advocacy and as a key input to the new CP. The analysis was based on data from MICS 2014, other official data and studies. By end-2016 the situation analysis on birth registration was complete and two others were being finalized: maternal and child health, with a focus on maternal and neonatal mortality; and adolescent health, including early pregnancies. Other analyses being worked on are: violence against children, including early marriage, sexual violence and corporate punishment; and education.

The Office of the Resident Coordinator took leadership of the development of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; UNICEF actively participated in the process.

The outstanding evaluation study is underway, in line with UN evaluation criteria. The Office’s initiative to increase birth registration in 12 target public hospitals is being evaluated. The main objective is to analyse the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and sustainability of the timely birth registration initiative in selected hospitals.

Within the framework of the launch of the State of the World's Children report, UNICEF produced a document 'A Fair Opportunity for Each Child', with data provided by the 2014 MICS and household survey. The document clearly illustrates wealth and geographic inequalities in the Dominican Republic and how they impact negatively on the lives of children and adolescents.

The general election took place in May and caused some delays in implementation of planned activities. In August, the new Government took office, and there were several changes of ministers; the President was re-elected. During the electoral period, UNICEF undertook successful evidence-based advocacy using the statistical data of MICS 2014 and from the evidence generated through UNICEF’s programmes to include two priority issues for children within the new Government agenda: the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality and universal birth registration.

To initiate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the Government created by decree a National Commission for Sustainable Development to analyse the SDGs, and to compare and cross-reference them with the country’s national development strategy 2030. The UNCT created a coordination group for the Agenda 2030 and SDGs to work with the Commission. UNICEF has been actively involved in this process, led by UNDP. The committee made initial contact with the National Statistics Office (ONE) to discuss monitoring of the SDG indicators.

Subsequently, the Vice President, as president of the office of coordination of social policies,
was appointed to lead the first five SDGs. UNICEF requested the inclusion of violence against children in SDG 16, and has strengthened its partnership with the Vice President’s office, also responsible for the country’s most important social protection programmes. UNICEF is carrying out an analysis of the components related to children in different social protection programmes.

The Office also undertook a study of perceptions of UNICEF in the country.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2016 the Ministries of Planning and of social sectors, as well as local governments and civil society organizations, manage and utilize quality information, with a gender and equity focus, for public policy decision making and the allocation of resources.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

The development of a situation analysis on various themes that affect children in the country is underway. The analysis included data from MICS 2014, other official data, and studies. By end-2106 the situation analysis on birth registration was complete and two others were being finalized: maternal and child health, with a focus on maternal and neonatal mortality; and adolescent health, including early pregnancies. Other analyses being worked on are: violence against children, including early marriage, sexual violence and corporate punishment; and education.

The outstanding evaluation study is underway, in line with UN evaluation criteria. The Office’s initiative to increase birth registration in 12 target public hospitals is being evaluated. The main objective is to analyse the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and sustainability of the timely birth registration initiative in selected hospitals and to evaluate the possibility of scaling up to the 60 hospitals with civil registration offices.

The outstanding evaluation study is underway, in line with UN evaluation criteria. The Office’s initiative to increase birth registration in 12 target public hospitals is being evaluated. The main objective is to analyse the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and sustainability of the timely birth registration initiative in selected hospitals.

The Office carried out a study about perceptions of UNICEF in the country in order to refine the current communication strategy and serve as a baseline for the new CP. The study revealed that UNICEF is the second-best known institution in the country in relation to the theme of children, with 21 per cent of people answering that they know of UNICEF. Of those, 80.5 per cent showed willingness to collaborate with UNICEF. The best-known institution was the Government’s CONANI.

In addition, two studies are underway: an analysis of the components related to children in different social protection programmes, and corporate social responsibilities of Dominican companies in the areas of health (including breastfeeding), education, child labour and community development.

UNICEF facilitated improvements to the information system for the Government’s social protection programme by including additional dimensions to identify the most vulnerable children in the families. New variables will include information on ECD practices, breastfeeding, early pregnancy, child labour, disabilities and means of child discipline, among others. Eighty-five per cent of the country’s homes are covered by this information system.

The ONE published the final results of the survey ENHOGAR/MICS 2014, with UNICEF’s technical and financial support. The survey was found useful by different sectors of the Government as well as civil society actors.
OUTPUT 2 By 2016 in the prioritized territories adolescents rely on mechanisms for demanding their rights and for participating in relevant decision making processes.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The public voice of the Maternal Mortality Observatory was reinforced through UNICEF’s alliance with local NGO partner, INSALUD. The OBMM monitors a set of indicators on a monthly basis in three hospitals and shares the results with health authorities, for improvements. Evidence to support OBMM findings was generated through two studies conducted by INSALUD in 2016. The first, ‘Survey on pregnant women’s origins that demand for the reproductive health services in the selected hospitals’ found that the majority of pregnant women come from neighbourhoods surrounding hospitals, contradicting complaints by medical doctors’ that the overwhelming number of pregnant women are referred from other hospitals is the obstacle to providing quality health service.

Another important finding was that 43 per cent of pregnant women do not know warning signs during the pregnancy, basic child care or family planning. The second study ‘Characterization of Delays and their Influence in Maternal Mortality and Extreme Maternal Morbidity’ found that the third delay is the most frequent. In the hospital studied, 10 maternal deaths and seven extreme maternal morbidity events occurred in one year, among them, 60 per cent of maternal deaths and 57 per cent of extreme maternal morbidity were caused by lack of supplies and equipment, the lack of specialized health personnel at the needed moment and inadequate follow-up of the patient's evolution in labour or immediately post-partum.

UNICEF continued to encourage the participation of the children and the adolescents in coordination with Dominican Federation of Municipalities. In a national event to promote Agenda 2030 organized jointly with the UN Resident Coordinator’s office, UNICEF worked with representatives of the network of advisors for youth and children (AJI) to identify interventions that youth can implement to be a part of Agenda 2030. They also publically requested that municipal governments’ make efforts to achieve the Agenda 2030. AJI also actively participated in the communication campaign for the prevention of Zika.

UNICEF signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Public Finance and the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development (MEPyD) to build technical capabilities for periodic monitoring of public investment in children. An electronic monitoring tool was installed to facilitate identification of the country’s investment in children. Twenty-five technical staff of both ministries (10 from the Ministry of Public Finance and 15 from the MEPyD) were trained in the design and the use of the tool.

OUTCOME 6 Conferences and meetings

Analytical Statement of Progress:
Activities are on track.

OUTPUT 1 Conferences and meetings

Analytical Statement of Progress:
The human resources and materials required for programmatic implementation have been adequately processed. Four FT positions were financed under this Output during 2016, whose supports were essential for an effective implementation of the programmes. The breakdown of the funded posts under this Output was: programme assistant (GS-6) who processes procurement at level 1 and acts as the HACT focal point; a logistics assistant
(GS-3); and 2 drivers (GS-2).

Thanks to the monthly review of the outstanding DCT and continuous close follow-up, the Office maintained a low level of outstanding DCTs over the course of the year: 1.66 per cent.

### Document Center

#### Evaluation and research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sequence Number</th>
<th>Type of Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and Adolescents with Disabilities in the Dominican Republic.</td>
<td>2016/000</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Care Units and Child Survival</td>
<td>2016/000</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Guide for the development of competencies in mediators</td>
<td>2016/000</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediation as a Tool of Resolution of Conflicts.</td>
<td>2016/000</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol for the promotion of peace culture and respect in schools</td>
<td>2016/000</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public investment on children in the Dominican Republic 2010-2013.</td>
<td>2016/000</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENHOGAR/MICS 2014</td>
<td>2016/000</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Other publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation Analysis of Birth Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF Calendar 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s Hope Osmar (Video)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s Hope Katherine (Video)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Time… There’s Hope (Video)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“No Excuses” Campaign Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Protect Yourself from Zika” Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Programme brochure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Fair Chance for Every Child, the State of the Dominican Republic’s Children Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative brochure for medical personnel</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Lessons learned

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Document Type/Category</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Building Capacity to Tackle Online Child Pornography</td>
</tr>
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## Programme documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Dominican Republic Situation Analysis: Birth Registration</td>
<td>SITAN_Registro_de_nacimiento_low.pdf</td>
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<td>UNDGLAC approval for CPD one-year extension</td>
<td>UNDG aprobacion.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>RC’s request to UNDGLAC for CPD one-year extension</td>
<td>Comunicaciôn No. 1069 Sra. Jessica Faieta.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Government request to UN for CPD extension by one year</td>
<td>Carta Extension MEPyD MANUD 2014.pdf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>CPD 1-year extension request to UNICEF Executive Board</td>
<td>Dominican Republic 1-YEAR DR Extension request 0216.docx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Documents</td>
<td>Analisis de la Situacion de la Infancia y Adolescencia</td>
<td>Dominican_Republic_Sitan_2012.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTR</td>
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