Executive Summary

Countries in the Eastern Caribbean Area (ECA) continued to experience low economic growth in 2014 due to the residual effects of the 2008 global financial crisis, with detrimental impacts on public finances, public sector debt, unemployment and the social sectors. Economic growth remained low, at a forecast of 1.9 per cent. Unemployment levels across the sub-region continued to rise, with youth and women disproportionately affected. Despite some policy progress inequity persisted.

Key Achievements:
With support from the UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area Office (UNICEF ECA), progress in strengthening availability of strategic information was made through the completion and launch of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) in Barbados and Saint Lucia. The MICS reports contributed toward the availability of valuable social data to inform equity-focused programming and advocacy.

Building on the momentum from 2013, UNICEF ECA provided technical support for policy and legislative reforms in three countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and for completing their state party reporting on the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The process took place in a consultative manner and led to heightened focus on child rights.

Key policy initiatives accomplished were the formulation of National Social Protection policies in Grenada and Saint Lucia and a Social Protection Act in Saint Kitts and Nevis, in collaboration with the World Bank, European Union (EU) and UN Women. A budget analysis on the social sector was completed in Saint Lucia, and following a ‘Public Finance for Children’ training workshop, additional countries expressed interest in applying the approach.

In education significant progress was achieved in the drafting of national Behavioural Management Policies in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia. At a sub-regional level, UNICEF ECA contributed to the development of a regional education strategy in partnership with the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

UNICEF ECA moved beyond general public awareness on the issue of child sexual abuse and intra-familial violence, to building an evidence-informed platform of interventions based on opinion polls and social norms research. Enhanced momentum for change in each country was demonstrated through the emergence of national leaders with the capacity and willingness to take ownership and spur on societal change on public policy and political will for operationalising mandatory reporting by professionals. Although supporting institutional systems lagged behind in their reform to adequately respond to growing reports and demand for support, at least two countries (Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago) mounted institutional appraisals to map their system reform responses.
High-level advocacy on children’s issues was sustained with the CRC@25 commemorations providing a rallying point for national governments, civil society and children to draw attention or commit to addressing some of the stumbling blocks standing in the way of the realisation of specific rights. National events were held in Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, while sub-regionally an ‘Activate Talk’ focusing on how technology was driving initiatives benefitting children was held.

In partnership with Governments, UNICEF ECA successfully completed a consultative Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Multi-Country Programme, resulting in re-alignment to effectively address emerging issues.

Constraints:
Four key constraints affected implementation of the programme:
• Limited availability of up-to-date information on the situation of children, including the pending MICS report in Trinidad and Tobago and pending submission of CRC Country Reports from Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago
• Outdated policies and legislation in some countries that are not responsive to the current realities affecting children; e.g. social protection laws and absence of over-arching rights-based social protection policies, strategies and action plans remained a challenge
• Technical capacity gaps among key implementing partners
• Mobilisation of resources continued to be a problem during the year, despite UNICEF ECA’s resource mobilisation efforts.

Key Partnerships:
Partnership remained the cornerstone of the UNICEF ECA programme. Partnerships were forged with regional bodies, UN and Development Partner agencies, academic institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector. These partnerships led to increased attention on children’s issues in the sub-region and an increasingly harmonised and coordinated approach (statistics, social protection reform).

Humanitarian Assistance
Humanitarian response, which is integrated into UNICEF ECA’s development programming and support in Eastern Caribbean Area, was primarily in the form of capacity development for disaster risk reduction, including strengthening data systems. Although there were no emergencies in 2014, UNICEF ECA continued to respond to residual effects of the December 2013 weather system, which affected Dominica, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. While the Government of Dominica was able to respond quickly and adequately to the crisis, the damage in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and in Saint Lucia was more extensive and external support was required for immediate relief and long-term recovery.

In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 13,029 people were directly impacted and the Government declared four areas as “disaster areas” (Sandy Bay, Fancy, Spring Village, Rosehall). An estimated 2,325 people were displaced with 222 in emergency shelters for several weeks. Several children lost clothing and school supplies, limiting their full school engagement. Saint Lucia also experienced significant flooding; communities in the south, particularly Anse la Raye, Canaries and Bexon were most severely affected. Water damage at seven infant and primary schools resulted in damage to the school plants and significant loss of school equipment and supplies.
In both countries the drinking water was compromised immediately after the flooding and there was substantial road damage, with several bridges compromised or destroyed. As part of the wider response of Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and other UN and regional agencies, UNICEF ECA provided emergency supplies (water purification tablets and hygiene kits) to affected communities, as well as psycho-social support through the Return to Happiness programme aimed at helping children deal with trauma they may have experienced as a result of the emergency.

UNICEF’s humanitarian response included supplies, services, technical and coordination support in education and child protection. With funding from the Canadian Government, UNICEF ECA supported the education sector in both countries through the provision of educational equipment and supplies as well as rehabilitation of learning centres. A total of 1,887 students from 17 schools benefited from educational equipment, materials and supplies. Additionally, 775 children received first tier psycho-social support for post-emergency trauma. In Saint Lucia, 30 of these received follow-up, one-on-one counselling and 40 were also exposed to resilience-building workshops. To strengthen education sector emergency preparedness capacity, nine territories (Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Montserrat, Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Virgin Islands (UK), Barbados, Turks and Caicos and Trinidad and Tobago) carried out assessments of the status of school safety planning.

An assessment of the emergency readiness and response (After Action Review) in these two countries was initiated with the objectives of sharing lessons learned and making national capacity and systems more capable of responding to children’s rights and gender issues in time of emergency.

**Equity Case Study**

Promotion and mainstreaming of the equity approach in the UNICEF ECA advocacy, programme and policy work took three forms.

First, expansion of the work done in 2012-13 by re-focusing programme interventions and adjusting strategies to contribute to the effective removal of identified barriers and bottlenecks. For example, in child protection, support was given to countries to establish enabling environments for the institutionalisation of diversion programmes; while in C4D, messages were developed to directly counter specific identified social norms and individual behaviours that facilitate child sexual abuse.

Second, the Mid-Term Review process gave equity-based issues greater emphasis during the review and dialogue with counterparts. As a result, partners expressed a strong interest in fiscal space studies and child-sensitive and gender-responsive budgeting. Country-specific plans for Montserrat, Saint Lucia and UK Virgin Islands were initiated.

Third, the MICS4 data for Barbados and Saint Lucia allowed for a disaggregated analysis of past, current and emerging human rights issues faced by children and women. In both countries, MICS 4 data was presented by the lead ministry in collaboration with the Central Statistical Office and other line ministries, showing the importance and value of having: (i) recent and disaggregated data on past and current issues as a way to refine their analysis and come up with new strategies to address old issues; and (ii) recent data about non- or insufficiently documented issues that need to be better addressed by policy-makers.
A key element of this work was the holding of capacity building exercises in Saint Lucia and Barbados, during which stakeholders from a wide range of sectors, including civil society, were invited to review data from an equity perspective and draft policy briefs that contain concrete and prioritised policy recommendations.

The process helped to: (i) increase the lead ministry’s and other line ministries’ leadership in creating a dialogue on children’s rights issues and prioritising action to better address them, (ii) sustain and expand the contribution of the statistical offices to the MICS4 work beyond the collection and processing of data, (iii) strengthen the national capacity for equity-focused analysis of social data about children and women; and (iv) ensure greater use of MICS 4 data for decision-making.

It also helped to: (i) identify issues – such as prevention of diabetes and obesity across all socio-economic groups, acceptance of domestic violence by the youngest and least educated girls, safe disposal of diapers across all socio-economic groups, knowledge of HIV and AIDS risks by the youngest – that are insufficiently addressed by current policies and programmes and need greater policy interest and public attention, (ii) trigger discussions about the need to revise existing policies and programmes to align them better with current and emerging issues – such as non-communicable diseases across all socio-economic groups.

Summary Notes and Acronyms

Acronyms

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome  
BCP – Business Continuity Planning  
BOOST – Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation  
CARICOM – Caribbean Community  
CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women  
CMT – Country Management Team  
CPAP – Country Programme Action Plan  
CPD – Country Programme Document  
CPMP – Country Programme Management Plan  
CR – Child Rights  
CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child  
C4D – Communication for Development  
DCT – Direct Cash Transfer  
DFID – Department for International Development-United Kingdom  
ECA – Eastern Caribbean Area  
ECD – Early Childhood Development  
ECHO – Early Childhood Health Outreach  
E-PAS – Electronic-Performance Appraisal System  
EWEA – Early Warning Early Action  
FAO – Food and Agricultural Organisation  
FBO – Faith Based Organisations  
GSSC – Global Share Service Center  
HACT – Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer  
HIV – Human Immuno Deficiency Virus  
HQ – Headquarters  
HR – Human Resource  
ICT – Information and Communication Technology
UNICEF ECA, in partnership with the Social Inclusion and Policy Division at UNICEF Headquarters and OECS Commission, organised a three-day sub-regional training workshop on “Public Finance for Children (PF4C): Building Capacity and Identifying Opportunities in the Eastern Caribbean Area”. The workshop built the capacity of UNICEF ECA programme staff, Government policy makers and senior managers on public finance issues, including key learning from PF4C activities globally; and identifying opportunities to further strengthen engagement in PF4C. In total, the full UNICEF ECA programme team (14 including the Representative and new Deputy Representative) and 16 Government officials from six OECS countries were equipped with practical tools and methodologies in public finance for children, in order to engage in the analysis and advocacy for investment in children at the country level.

This workshop was followed with the day-long internal discussion to develop an advocacy strategy on public finance for children in the Eastern Caribbean area, in order to address bottlenecks and barriers to raising the position of PF4C within national policy contexts. Public Finance for Children is a key priority area of work as part of UNICEF Multi-Country Programme Action Plan (2012-2016) in the Eastern Caribbean Area.

Furthermore, UNICEF ECA partnered with the UN Women Regional Office for the Caribbean, and the Ministry of Social Development and Housing to pilot a CRC and CEDAW Reporting Training Toolkit in Grenada, in light of Grenada’s upcoming CRC Periodic Report, due by June 2016. This brought together a range of Government and civil society actors involved in the implementation of and reporting on the CRC and CEDAW Convention. Over the four days of
training, the participants gained in-depth understanding of State and Alternate Reporting on CRC and CEDAW, need for data from administrative systems and the use of data in reporting. Thorough sessions on preparing and submitting the State report were also delivered, while participation as a right and its significance in the reporting process was emphasised; finally, the role of NGOs in the State reporting process, preparing NGO Alternative Report and the State’s follow-up on the Committees’ Concluding Observations were also elaborated.

**Evidence Generation, Policy Dialogue and Advocacy**

UNICEF ECA supported the production, further analysis and dissemination of evidence to inform advocacy goals for children. Violence against children (sexual abuse, corporal punishment) in schools and homes remained one of the key issues addressed by the Multi-Country Programme Action Plan (MCPAP). In addition to the MICS done in three countries (reported under Equity Case Study) and work in strengthening administrative data systems in Child Protection and Education, which are the cornerstones of evidence-generation and advocacy, UNICEF ECA conducted public opinion polls on corporal punishment in eight Eastern Caribbean countries. The evidence from these studies revealed that in all countries the public did not support teachers administering corporal punishment in schools; 86 per cent of those polled believed this form of punishment should only be administered by parents. In some countries there was a clear majority supporting the banning of corporal punishment in schools. UNICEF ECA used evidence from the opinion polls to advocate with education policy makers, through the OECS, for the implementation of policies to abolish corporal punishment. The evidence was also shared with media as a means of generating public demand for the non-use of corporal punishment. Although no policy changes on the administration of corporal punishment in schools have yet occurred, the evidence generated dialogue among policy makers at national and sub-national levels to re-examine the issue of corporal punishment.

While evidence generation was used primarily as a strategy to address corporal punishment, policy dialogue and advocacy were used as strategies primarily to address the issue of sexual abuse of children. As part of the “Break the Silence: End Child Sexual Abuse” campaign, UNICEF ECA supported the convening of various stakeholders, including those from the health, education, religious, sporting and finance sectors, to discuss policies and protocols that can be implemented to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse. This led to the development of inter-sectoral plans of actions in four UK-OTs; development of a plan of action to reach indigenous communities in Dominica; and in general increased awareness of child protection issues among stakeholders.

**Partnerships**

UNICEF ECA has increasingly placed a premium on sub-regional partnerships. In 2014, it strengthened its relationship with the OECS Commission, in the context of its new leadership. The OECS, which unites nine of the 12 countries in the MCP, used its convening powers and strong relationships with Governments to significantly enhance the child rights agenda in the sub-region. The partnership continued to drive initiatives in the areas of data collection, education, social policy, child protection and advocacy.

The Caribbean Child Rights Observatory Network was established in early 2014, tasked with monitoring the situation of children in the region, advocating on behalf of children and providing technical expertise to governments as they seek to respond to some of the challenges facing children. The Network was born from a mandate given to the CARICOM Secretariat by regional ministers responsible for children and youth in July 2012. The Network is housed at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine campus but is a virtual network, with academic and
research institutions in the English-speaking Caribbean.

A major partnership was also cemented with the West Indies Cricket Board, which built the capacity of cricket coaches in all 12 countries to prevent and respond to all forms of child abuse and neglect. With cricket being the most popular sport in the sub region, the Board also invested resources to advocate against child sexual abuse at premier matches across the sub region. UNICEF ECA’s partnership with faith-based organisations (FBOs) also led to the development of a Child Abuse Protocol for FBOs.

At the programmatic level, UNICEF ECA, UN Women, UNDP, FAO, and the ILO continued to roll out the UN Joint Programme on Social Protection Floor in the OECS, with UNICEF coordinating the joint programme implementation.

To leverage resources for children, UNICEF ECA partnered with PriceSmart, a distribution company with operations in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. A new two-year fundraising agreement was also signed with Going Places Travel, one of the sub-region’s main travel agencies with a presence in six of the countries in the MCP.

**External Communication and Public Advocacy**

UNICEF ECA raised the visibility of the child rights agenda and advocated to influence policy shifts and energise communities across the Eastern Caribbean to advance child rights. While communicating and advocating on all issues affecting children, especially the most disadvantaged, focus was placed on: (i) raising awareness and influencing the move to systems and support for mandatory reporting of child abuse, (ii) engaging countries to make quality early childhood services available to all children; and (iii) building effective data systems to keep a finger on the pulse on the situation of children and women.

While employing the traditional mode of advocating directly with policymakers on issues such as corporal punishment and engaging audiences using traditional print and broadcast media, focus was increasingly shifted to include digital tools, especially social media. This was in line with the new Global Public Advocacy and Communication Policy and also a realisation that the ECA is one of the most digitally connected regions, with an Internet penetration rate averaging over 75 per cent.

This use of social media was particularly evident in the ‘Break the Silence’ Initiative on child sexual abuse, which combined C4D strategies to reach victims and their families and communities with a message to speak out and denounce child sexual abuse, using short video advocacy messages on social media. The result was increased engagement by non-state actors, most notably faith-based organisations, sporting bodies and community groups on breaking the silence around child abuse.

Additionally data visualisation and infographics were employed to highlight the key facts highlighted in the MICS reports completed for Barbados and St Lucia. This included the production of youth-focused MICS publications for both countries in line with the strategy to more directly reach and engage the millennials.

The CRC@25 was a key communication priority, with a combination of activities in Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. Whether through children’s forums, drama productions, adolescent video productions and one sub-regional Activate Talk, rights-
holders and UNICEF ECA used the occasion to advocate for a renewed commitment to tackling
the challenges to the full realisation of the rights of all children.

South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

Working across eight countries and four UK Overseas Territories in the Eastern Caribbean Area
with varying systems and approaches makes South-South and triangular cooperation an
integral strategy for the MCP. UNICEF ECA facilitated exchanges and sub-regional meetings
within the Eastern Caribbean and wider Caribbean region in the areas of social protection, early
childhood development (ECD), child poverty analysis and monitoring and evaluation.

Reaching out beyond the sub-region, UNICEF ECA and UNICEF Belize collaborated with
OECS, Organisation of the American States (OAS), UN agencies and Belize’s Ministry of
Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation to facilitate a South-South
Knowledge Exchange between the Government of Belize and several countries in the
Caribbean (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts
and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines). The purpose of this exchange was
to share the experience of the “Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation – BOOST”
- Belize’s home-grown flagship social protection programme. The BOOST programme aims to
increase access to basic services, including banking services, and offers cash assistance to
poor households subject to specific conditions.

This enabled the countries to learn from the BOOST model and its success in targeting the most
vulnerable population, development and functioning of a single registry and case management
system. This learning was replicated in St. Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia, which face similar
challenges.

In partnership with UN Women, OECS Commission and FAO, UNICEF ECA is coordinating a
UN Joint Programme on the Social Protection Floor to enhance equity, income equality and
reduce poverty by rolling out the social protection floor in the OECS. This South-South
exchange informed the ongoing national social protection reforms in the OECS with a focus on
establishing national child- and gender-sensitive social protection policy frameworks to equitably
reach income poor and disadvantaged children and their families.

In addition, through the UNICEF/DFID UK ‘Safeguarding of Children’ Project, the four UK-OTs
started to give increasing focus to the utilisation of quality administrative data to support
effective planning, as well as to influence budget allocations and policy decisions in the ECD
sector.

Identification Promotion of Innovation

UNICEF ECA supported its various partners to identify new ways of solving old problems
confronting children, especially those from the most disadvantaged communities. Technical
inputs were provided in the design and implementation of the Trinidad and Tobago
Government’s efforts to develop and roll out a web-based Implementation and Performance
Management System, which is allowing Government to use technology to closely monitor social
policy programmes being designed for children and other special groups in the population.

With consistent implementation of planned policies and projects being historically a problem for
several administrations in the sub-region, the integrated performance management system is
giving different government ministries and departments access to real-time information on the
progress of policies and any obstacles. A feedback module is driving youth and citizen
engagement and creating an opportunity for citizens to use the Internet to directly engage policy-makers. This avenue is being particularly used by adolescents and youth, who are taking advantage of the country’s high Internet connectivity to engage in direct interaction with policymakers on a regular basis.

In addition, UNICEF ECA used the Eastern Caribbean Activate Talks, which were produced as part of the CRC@25 celebrations, as an opportunity to showcase the initiative to other countries in the sub-region and encourage similar initiatives. Under the theme “Using Technology to Influence Policies for Children”, this talk was broadcast in the sub-region over the Internet to an audience that included policymakers.

Initial efforts were made to explore the further use of social media, including introduction of U-Report, which will create a platform for young people to use new technologies to help inform and influence policies for children.

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

Public Finance for Children was one of the priority areas in which UNICEF ECA used an inter-sectoral approach. In partnership with the Ministry of Finance in Saint Lucia, it carried out child-focused budget analyses in health, education, child protection and social protection and Fiscal Space Analysis for Social Protection Floor.

UNICEF ECA began to develop an advocacy strategy on public finance for children, to remove barriers and facilitate raising the position of PF4C within national policy contexts. Three focus areas were prioritised where greater leveraging of national resources are necessary: i) adequate public investments to scale up quality early childhood services for all children, ii) costing of pilot programmes in community-based programming and studies on social returns on investment in community-based rehabilitation for children in conflict with the law; and, iii) costing of key components of child-friendly schools interventions.

While child protection ministries publicly demonstrated political will for operationalising mandatory reporting by professionals of suspected child abuse, evidence from opinion polls and social norms research highlighted the need for large-scale capacity building among front-line professionals who work with children. Thirty per cent of the education and health professionals, and law enforcement colleagues received such training in Barbados, Grenada and Saint Lucia.

Multi-sectoral teams from the UK-OTs developed national strategic plans to combat the issue. The emergence of sectoral leaders in the health, education and law enforcement sectors with the capacity and willingness to take ownership of reporting and management protocols opened positive spaces in national policy dialogue towards improved, integrated programming on the very sensitive issue of child sexual abuse.

Introduction of the Care for Child Development methodology was accomplished through collaboration among Latin America Caribbean Regional Office, the UNICEF Offices of Belize, Guyana and Suriname and Eastern Caribbean and the Governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Adoption of a common framework for sector planning and education statistical digests adopted by OECS member states fostered a convergence in addressing children’s rights to education and early childhood services among member states in the sub-region.
**Service Delivery**

Working in middle-income and upper-middle-income countries, UNICEF ECA’s support to service delivery was limited to standard setting, documenting experience from the field and modelling cost-effective approaches that can be scaled-up or replicated by the various governments.

National level data showed that the UNICEF ECA-supported pilot services in Dominica, Grenada and Saint Lucia contributed to reduced levels of custodial sentencing of juveniles, benefitting some of the most vulnerable children in the sub-region. To better ensure the sustainability and expansion of these services, UNICEF ECA partnered with the OECS on a Commission-led evaluation, also supported by the US Agency for International Development. The results are expected to inform the development of appropriate models of service delivery, costing studies and financing options, as well as a cost-benefit analysis as the basis for policy and public financing dialogue on this sector.

In Education, feedback following the extensive flooding in Dominica, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines in late December 2013 confirmed that UNICEF ECA’s support, including funds provided by the Government of Canada, for basic educational supplies for schools and students, was integral to wider actions taken in ensuring the continued education of the most vulnerable and affected children. The lessons learnt from this experience will be integrated into wider efforts to strengthen the capacity of the education sector to adequately incorporate planning, mitigation and response measures at all levels and ensure that these are adequately linked to national planning and budgeting.

Additionally, to enhance the quality of ECD services, ECD practitioners in six countries were equipped with knowledge and skills to utilise developmentally appropriate curricula to support early learning and development in young children, while child-friendly schools programmes continued national level actions towards the mainstreaming and scaling-up of five key components, reaching 263 schools in nine countries.

**Human Rights-Based Approach to Cooperation**

UNICEF ECA maintained a human rights-based approach to programming at both the normative level and in the results focus of its initiatives. The Office continued its high-level engagement with participating countries to submit outstanding state reports on CRC implementation; ratify the Optional Protocols; examine, adapt and enact a number of laws, policies and practices affecting children; and advance children’s rights to protection, development and participation in decisions affecting their lives. Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines submitted their reports and, after many years of stakeholder deliberation, Antigua and Barbuda joined other countries in moving one-step further in its law reform efforts by completing its draft adaption of the OECS model child protection and family laws, while the UK Virgin Islands’ Cabinet approved its national reporting and management protocol on child abuse.

Based on the experience gathered in recent years and given recent successes, UNICEF ECA felt it important to shift its focus (i) from direct support to report formulation to national capacity building and (ii) from CRC report submission to effective implementation of the CRC concluding observations. The former was supported by the work with UN Women to draft and pilot a CRC and CEDAW Training Toolkit, while the latter was discussed and agreed with officials and technical counterparts during the MTR.
UNICEF ECA also broadened the debate on the child rights agenda within the context of CRC and CEDAW. It advocated for non-discriminatory and equitable public policies for children in focus areas of early childhood development, child protection, social protection, education, adolescence and public finance for children. Within the middle-income country context, UNICEF ECA advocated for reaching the unreached, socially excluded, poor and disadvantaged while programming for universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated rights for all children and their families as active participants.

**Gender Mainstreaming and Equality**

Child- and gender-responsive budgeting work was launched as a joint initiative of UN Women, the OECS Commission, selected governments and UNICEF ECA for the period 2014 - 2016. The initiative intends to mainstream gender into national budgets, social protection policies and investments for children.

The initiative explored the budgetary and fiscal space for sustainable financing of existing, as well as additional, investments and spending that benefit women and children in particular. The initiative was built on the premise that given the budget constraints faced by governments of the sub-region, fiscal space needed to exist (and/or be created) to allow governments to sustainably improve spending on gender-responsive and national children’s priorities such as education, health, child protection and social protection.

This gender-focused initiative was built on the integrated child- and gender- responsive social protection policies to complement the work on the budget and fiscal space analysis for investment in children done in Saint Lucia. It engaged government counterparts in a review and analysis of relevant social, economic and financial policy, programme and operational documents and included efforts to identify concrete interventions and actions to address disparities between girls, boys, men and women in budgetary frameworks and programmes. Some of the areas identified include the Public Assistance Programme; national targeting and central beneficiaries systems for social protection programmes; and monitoring and evaluation frameworks for Saint Lucia. Work started on a robust methodology, tools, instruments and a manual for costing the identified interventions and actions to promote gender equity and child responsive budgeting within the implementation of national social protection policies and strategic action plans.

**Environmental Sustainability**

While no specific initiatives were taken in environmental sustainability, efforts relating to the humanitarian response and emergency preparedness actions highlighted the vulnerabilities of the sub-region to natural disasters. The annual ‘hurricane season’, heavy rains resulting in mudslides as well as earthquakes and tremors are taken in stride by governments and communities. Adjustments in practice for improved preparedness, especially in terms of measures such as the use of schools as emergency shelters, which affect resumption of classes, are areas for advocacy with national disaster response planners and educators.

The spread of mosquito-borne diseases such as Dengue Fever and Chikungunya in 2014 stressed the need for wider UN System response and partnership. In late 2014, two UNICEF ECA specialists joined the sub-regional training on Emergency Risk Communication by the World Health Organisation/Pan American Health Organisation in an effort to enable greater engagement in awareness-raising in this emerging challenge.
Effective Leadership

Major initiatives undertaken by the Country Management Team (CMT) to enhance efficiency in operations and programme management performance revolved around key Office priorities for 2014. These were: (i) completion of the MTR with partners, to sharpen focus for more realistic and SMART outcomes for the current Country Programme; (ii) systematic and strategic fundraising and partnership for raising at least US$1 million, leveraging an equal amount for key components (M&E, Education, Child Protection and Social Protection); (iii) review and strengthening of current business work processes specific to payments, contracts, travel and HACT management; (iv) managing staff development, motivation and team performance in the context of the changing global and regional realities for greater programme operational effectiveness and staff satisfaction, care and support; and (v) timely preparation of the Audit Response and implementation of the follow-up plan for 2013 audit recommendations.

In addition to the formal management structure, a number of oversight committees – such as the Joint Consultative Committee, Central Review Board, Contracts Review Committee – along with regular programme, operations and all staff meetings complemented CMT efforts to monitor performance against planned results, including emergency risk management. With two staff representatives on the CMT, matters raised by staff were addressed as a standard agenda item of the monthly CMT meetings.

Initiatives to improve operational and programme performance, while focussing on addressing areas of weakness and using a structured approach for identifying risks, included:
• Full implementation of the recommendations from the 2013 oversight visit by the Regional Chief of Operations, which included shifting of the supply function to operations, centralising all budget monitoring with the Senior Budget Assistant and key recruitment of the Finance & Accounts Assistant, M&E Programme Assistant, Temporary Programme Assistant – Education and the use of key Temporary Assistance specialists in the areas of Child Protection and Social Policy to bridge critical capacity gaps;
• Successful completion of a work processes review by an external team focusing on travel, cash payments and contracts, carried out with staff participation and input resulting in adjustments to be made in 2015.
• Staff representation in the consultative process for the preparation of the Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) and MTR submissions and in other oversight and ad hoc office committees;
• GSSC and MTR budget submissions successfully completed, adjusting office operations and programme structures to streamline and strengthen office efficiency and effectiveness (E&E);
• Regular monitoring of management indicators, with specific focus on addressing Direct Cash Transfers (DCTs) in Operations, Programme and CMT meetings;
• Periodic review and update on the matrix of actions drawn from the Regional Director’s annual letter for enhanced E&E;
• HACT assurance plan with links to risk rating of implementing partners completed and fully executed, both with the use of internal staff and an external audit firm;
• Regular compliance with mid- and end-year closure reporting requirements;
• Regular monitoring of work and staff development plans and timely completion of Performance Appraisal System (PAS) requirements; and,
• Updated the Early Warning and Early Action, Risk and Control Self Assessment and the Business Continuity Plan (BCP).
Financial Resources Management

The Audit report was received in March 2014 and the recommendations were all acted upon. Of note was the satisfactory rating in financial management. Continued efforts were made to remain compliant with financial, human resources, information communication technology and other management audit requirements and financial policies. Bank reconciliations continued to be completed on a monthly basis; outstanding reconciling items were expeditiously cleared, along with processing of liquidations.

The continued adherence to IPSAS and VISION, successful completion of mid- and year-end closure activities following guidelines and feedback from the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office and UNICEF HQ continued to be instructive in sustaining improved financial and administrative systems and procedures to ensure efficient, timely, cost–effective and transparent utilisation of resources.

The institutional budget was effectively utilised as planned to achieve objectives. Monitoring was consistently done by the CMT in its quarterly reviews of both programme and operations budgets. With the shift to the matching principle, cost relating to programme equipment, travel, courier costs and bank charges were appropriately allocated to the programme budget thereby balancing the burden on the limited support budget.

Compliance with Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) guidelines continued to be of paramount importance; spot-checks, micro-assessments and programme monitoring was done on an ongoing basis to ensure that any risks identified were mitigated. UN Wide HACT training was completed following the revision of the HACT framework and a reconstituted UN HACT team was appointed.

Monitoring of key management indicators was accomplished through various committees. UNICEF ECA managed to decrease outstanding liquidations through regular follow-up with implementing partners and closer management oversight. High implementation rates were attained in 2014, with expenditure exceeding an average of 80 per cent across all the components for an overall 96 per cent.

Fund-raising and Donor Relations

UNICEF ECA monitored donor contributions systematically and prepared a status report of donor contributions quarterly for discussion by the Programme and Country Management Team. Given the limited number of “Other Resources” funding sources, the few donor reports were completed in time. Timely inputs were provided for those that were prepared by other offices (Jamaica and the Regional Office) for joint funding. To ensure high financial utilisation, UNICEF ECA put in place a quarterly monitoring mechanism. As a result, in 2014, an over 80 per cent expenditure rate was achieved.

With new funding from the United Kingdom (DFID) received in 2014 for the four UK overseas territories, the successful recruitment of a project manager in October resulted in strengthened reporting and monitoring of this special funding.

Evaluation

Evaluation work was given particular attention. The annual Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) aimed at ensuring that UNICEF ECA’s work in the area of policy reform and promotion of equity-focused models was formally assessed to inform stakeholders, identify
pending performance and sustainability issues and share knowledge at the national and sub-
regional levels.

Following the 2013 evaluation of social assistance programme, to inform its scaling up, and the
national dialogue on social protection reform, the Early Childhood Health Outreach (ECHO) and
HighScope programmes were evaluated in 2014 in three countries.

The evaluations were conducted with active participation by key stakeholders. To ensure quality
evaluations UNICEF ECA provided regular technical guidance on equity-focused evaluations
and ensured comprehensive and systematic quality review of draft evaluation reports, using the
Global Evaluation Report Oversight System checklist. As a result, recommendations from the
2013 Saint Lucia ‘Koudmen’ programme evaluation report, that were accepted by the national
counterparts, are currently being acted upon by stakeholders. One of the main stakeholders, St
Lucia Social Development Fund, conducted a formal review of the programme using some of
the tools developed for the evaluation with technical support from UNICEF ECA.

Two UNICEF ECA 2013 studies and evaluations were ranked in 2014 as outstanding and listed
under “Best of UNICEF Research”: the Koudmen evaluation and a Child Mortality study in
Trinidad and Tobago.

Overall, of the seven categories of activities (surveys, studies, capacity building, events, etc.) in
the IMEP, 50 per cent of the planned 2014 activities were completed, 34 per cent are ongoing
with expected completion by February 2015 and 16 per cent (mainly events) were postponed to
2015. Performance on surveys, studies and evaluations was low, with four of 10 completed and
six still ongoing, with completion expected by February 2015.

**Efficiency Gains and Cost Savings**

UNICEF ECA continued to benefit from efficiency gains with the expanded use of multi-trip
Travel Authorisations (reducing the number from 174 in 2013 to 162 in 2014), wire transfers
(reducing the use of cheques from 213 in 2013 to 31 in 2014), utilising other UN drivers to
bridge capacity gaps and continued efforts to reduce travel expenses by the use of virtual
meetings.

In 2015, UNICEF ECA will continue to pursue other efficiency gain and cost-cutting measures.

**Supply Management**

The value of supplies procured was US$1,006,201.08 (16 per cent) of the overall MCP budget
($6,163,128 Programme Budget - $4,834,327; Support Budget - US$1,328,801).

The current value of inventory is US$58,882.18, representing programme supplies amounting to
US$42,638.02 and pre-positioned emergency supplies of US$16,244.16. All in-country
warehousing facilities are based at the UNICEF ECA office, with one warehouse dedicated to
programme supplies and the other to emergency supplies to facilitate response to the 12
countries covered by the Multi-Country Programme. Total value of supplies issued –
US$80,133.70 representing US$10,099.99 of emergency supplies and US$70,033.71 of
programme supplies. Total value of supplies received was US$64,560.35, for programme
supplies. There are long-term agreements (LTAs) in place for editorial services and UNICEF
ECA plans to utilise LTAs for printing of advocacy materials and procurement of standard and
emergency supplies. No supply in-kind assistance was received.
Security for Staff and Premises

In conjunction with other UN agencies, the following actions were taken to enhance safety and security of staff and premises.

- Upgrading the security monitoring systems, including replacement of obsolete cameras
- Upgrading access control systems for better monitoring and tracing of access to the building and agencies
- Updating and implementing procedures for access to the building for staff, dependents, security and visitors for better tracking in the event of an emergency
- Conducting a fire drill for emergency simulation
- Updating the country security plan
- Updating the agency warden security plan.

The critical outstanding security issue that was not resolved during the year is the raising of the exterior perimeter fence as cited in the MOSS self-assessment. This will be addressed in 2015 in consultation with the Government of Barbados, which has provided the building to the UN. Ensuring that full information is available on staff residences for emergency contact in the event of non-functioning landline and mobile phones is still underway.

Human Resources

In addition to the GSSC preparation budget submission in early 2014, which required streamlining of Operations functions, UNICEF ECA also reviewed the programming results and made adjustment to staffing, in line with MTR findings. It was subsequently agreed and approved that one M&E Specialist post would strategically be out-posted to the OECS Commission in Saint Lucia. The recruitment process for the addition of a GS7 M&E technical assistant and an NOB Child Protection Officer was initiated. These are expected to ensure programme delivery and produce enhanced results for children.

The requirements of the global exercise for the GSSC preparation are anticipated to have serious implications for office-based operational management when they are put in place. Thus efforts were made to redesign operational requirements in terms of capabilities and competencies required to maintain programmatic results, especially given the complexities of a multi-country programming context.

While the results of the most recent global staff survey are not available, the audit did raise concerns on team cohesion; to this end a plan of action to address the issue was developed. With concerted efforts by the Staff Association Executive Committee and senior managers, staff participation in the 2014 global staff survey increased to 80 per cent over the previous survey in 2011 which was below 15 per cent.

PAS and electronic PAS for 2013 were completed for all staff. Formal and informal discussions throughout the year, along with coaching and training in Managing Performance for Results, were incorporated as part of the UNICEF ECA culture to facilitate regular feedback on performance. By using an adjusted module, UNICEF ECA undertook the exercise combining supervisors and supervisees in some segments, as well as expanding on the module for supervisees for greater engagement.

UNICEF ECA maintained implementation of nine of the 10 minimum standards on HIV/AIDS in the work place, with the only outstanding issue being access to male and female condoms in the common UN areas, which used to be provided by UNFPA. However, UNICEF ECA has
sought a quotation for condoms to assess the affordability of funding procurement on an on-going basis.

**Effective Use of Information and Communication Technology**

ICT initiatives used to improve efficiency and effectiveness included:

- Introduction of Office 365 (cloud) to ensure easier access to office mail, Lync and OneDrive for improved interaction with office and counterparts
- Increased use of virtual meetings with partners using Lync and Skype for enhanced interaction
- Continued improvement in the performance and stability of the VISION, APPROVA and performance management systems
- Recycling of toner cartridges and drums
- Migration of back-up systems to external hard drives for better reliability and management
- Provide consistent and reliable access to UNICEF corporate applications
- Upgrade office telecommunication connections for faster and more reliable access to systems
- Update the Business Continuity Plan and develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan
- Use Facebook and YouTube to post short advocacy messages to engage stakeholders in conversations on children’s issues.

**Programme Components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** Equity-sensitive national policies, programmes and budget allocations are made based on reliable, disaggregated data reflecting the actual situation of girls and boys and their families in line with the CRC, CEDAW and the Millennium Development Goals. By 2014, all countries will have fulfilled their Convention reporting obligations and by 2016 will have taken actions to comply with all Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

**Data for evidence-based policymaking for children**

Chronic institutional constraints (reduction in resources, staff turn-over, lack of demand for social data, competing priorities, etc.) are still faced in the production, analysis and use of reliable social data on the situation of children. However, significant progress could be made in providing recent disaggregated data and influence policy work, as presented in the examples below:

1. Two countries – Barbados and St. Lucia – have launched their MICS 4 report and used the disaggregated data on children to produce equity-focused policy briefs that will be presented to the respective Cabinets in 2015. This was part of the broader MICS data dissemination strategy.

2. Support for institutional strengthening of administrative data systems in the ECD/Education sector and for child abuse data management has also led to some significant results that include: (i) increased timely production of education statistical digests (St Lucia, Grenada, Turks and Caicos, etc.), (ii) use of data to support management (teacher’s absenteeism and child discipline at schools in Grenada), policy-making (education sector strategy) and reporting on the sector ‘s performance. Among UNICEF’s key contributions to this work is the provision of technical assistance (including for standardisation and harmonisation), convening partners to encourage cross-sector work, as well as cross-country exchange of experience. However, a number of long-lasting barriers and bottlenecks are still faced (continued limited demand and use of data to inform policy, planning and budgeting, limited
capacity and resources for social data production and analysis, archaic Statistical Acts), seriously hindering the sustainability of initiated institutional changes.

3. Through its advocacy work, technical support and strategic partnerships – with UNDP, the Caribbean Development Bank, UN Women, the World Bank and the OECS Secretariat – UNICEF has contributed to the adoption of a multi-dimensional poverty measurement by key partners (OECS Commission, Statistical Offices, etc.) that is now being piloted in Grenada and St. Lucia, while a child poverty study is planned in St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago for 2015.

4. The Caribbean Children's Rights Observatory Network, whose hub is at the Institute of International Relations (IIR) at the University of the West Indies, was launched and plans to issue a special edition of the IIR Journal on children's rights in the Caribbean in early 2015.

5. Support for CRC and CEDAW reporting resulted in Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts, completing their reports. In partnership with UN Women, capacity development for CRC and CEDAW reporting was conducted in Grenada; similar training is planned for Turks and Caicos in 2015.

OUTPUT 1

By 2016, 5 countries have strengthened national systems (admin data and survey plan) for the production of social data on children in at least the Child Protection and Education sectors.

Analytical Statement of Progress:

2014 saw significant achievements in several areas. The MICS reports for St Lucia and Barbados were finalised, launched and has led to a sequence of dissemination activities to be continued in 2015. An important milestone was achieved with the production of equity-focused Policy Briefs by counterparts in both countries using MICS4 data. These will be finalised and presented to Cabinet in 2015.

Two evaluations (ECHO pilot in one country, Highscope pilot in three countries) were completed and findings presented to a wide range of stakeholders who are now using the recommendations to inform their decision about scaling up the pilots. The use of the 2013 Koudmen evaluation recommendations has supported and informed the social protection reform debate in St Lucia (need for better targeting mechanism, integrated M&E systems, etc.) and contributed to strengthening national capacity for monitoring and evaluation of social assistance programmes. One such programme (SSDF) conducted in 2014 a review of Koudmen-Phase 2 using its own resources and some of the tools developed for the 2013 evaluation.

In the area of Administrative data system strengthening, efforts focused on increasing cross-sectoral work within UNICEF ECA and with counterparts from the various social sectors. Progress could be seen in the education sector (increased number of timely statistical digests) but was slower in the Child Protection and ECD sectors as they faced more challenges (lack of harmonised indicators, weak capacity for data collection and processing in the line agencies, absence of dedicated staff, etc.). DFID funds received for the UK-OTs will help remove some of the observed constraints. DFID funds will also be used to conduct a SitAn in the four UK-OTs that will help develop a model approach for the remaining islands of the Caribbean and support UNICEF ECA's upstream (advocacy, policy-work) and programme work (focus, strategies and development of the next Country Programme). The launch of the Caribbean Children's Rights Network Observatory (CCRON) has brought together key universities from the entire Caribbean
region with the long-term objective of becoming an independent voice for children and shorter-term objectives of exchanging information and monitoring the situation of children.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2016, all 12 countries have submitted any due and outstanding State Reports on CRC implementation and ratified CRC Optional Protocols through a consultative process including participation of boys and girls.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Building on momentum from 2013, considerable progress was made in mobilising states to prepare and submit their reports on the implementation of children's rights, with Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines submitting their reports after many years of stakeholder deliberation, leaving Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago with outstanding submissions. Nevertheless, the fact that this iterative process is still not yet an institutionalised process in state machinery and is largely driven by UNICEF's advocacy, remains a bottleneck for sustaining the reporting process. Consequently, while UNICEF continues its high-level engagement with participating countries to submit outstanding state reports on CRC implementation, focus has shifted from direct technical support for state report formulation to national capacity building for state preparation, and from CRC report submission, to effective implementation of the CRC concluding observations. The former was supported by work with UN Women to draft and pilot a CRC and CEDAW Reporting Training Toolkit in Grenada, in light of Grenada’s upcoming CRC Periodic Report, due in June 2016.

Meanwhile, the status of ratification of the Optional Protocols to the CRC has remained static. Of the eight independent countries, four have ratified the OP-SC and three have ratified the OP-AC. No country has ratified the OP on a Communication Procedure and none of the OPs have been extended to the four UK-OTs by the United Kingdom. The state of affairs should in no way be construed as a display of oppositional indifference or apathy on the issue. Even as governments are being constantly reminded about the need for ratification of the OPs, while capacity for effective human rights reporting is limited, several legislative provisions in line with the OPs exist in the sub-region. These factors appears to be the main considerations that deter urgent action by sub-regional governments.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2016, duty bearers have increased capacity in child rights and multi-dimensional child poverty to respond to the CRC concluding observations.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Country-level development plans, poverty reduction strategies and post-MDG development priorities in most countries do not include CRC Committee Recommendations. UNICEF has supported a number of countries (St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago), directly or indirectly (e.g. through the Caribbean Development Bank) in the Eastern Caribbean Area to do so.

Although some key achievements were made in the areas of planning for children, the approach until now has been opportunistic. There are no standard procedures in place in the countries to systematically ensure that children and their rights are identified, highlighted and clearly articulated in national development and poverty-reduction plans and strategies. As country focal points share responsibility for this Output, the management of the Output has been ad hoc and financial implementation has been low. It is suggested that Output 1.2 and 1.3 be merged for great synergy between CRC Reporting and ensuring that national planning for child rights are closely linked.
OUTPUT 4 By 2016, duty bearers have increased national capacities to effectively implement a child and gender sensitive budgeting approach in national and sectoral budgets.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
UNICEF ECA, in partnership with the Social Inclusion and Policy Division at UNICEF Headquarters and the OECS Commission, convened a three-day sub-regional training workshop on “Public Finance for Children (PF4C): Building Capacity and Identifying Opportunities in the Eastern Caribbean Area”. The objectives of the training workshop was to build the capacity of UNICEF programme staff, Government policy-makers and senior managers on public finance issues, including key learning from PF4C activities globally; and to identify opportunities to further strengthen engagement in PF4C, both internally (e.g. linking with different sectors) and externally (e.g. prioritising possible interventions and partners). In total, 14 UNICEF ECA programme team and office management, and 16 government officials from six OECS countries were equipped with practical tools and methodologies in public finance for children, in order to engage in analysis of and advocacy for investment in children at the country level.

This workshop was followed-up with a day-long internal discussion to develop an advocacy strategy on public finance for children in the Eastern Caribbean area, in order to overcome bottlenecks and barriers to raising the position of PF4C within national policy contexts. Public Finance for Children is a key priority area of work as part of UNICEF Multi-Country Programme Action Plan (2012-2016) in the Eastern Caribbean Area.

OUTPUT 5 By 2016, policies, strategies and plans are in place to increase integration and deliver coordinated social protection programmes which benefits excluded and disadvantaged boys and girls and their families in four countries.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
In 2014 UNICEF ECA, in partnership with the UN Women Regional Office for the Caribbean, continued its high-level technical support to Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia and is advancing the social protection reform process by developing national social protection strategies that will ensure that a high proportion of poor and vulnerable children benefit from social assistance. Through EU budget assistance and UNICEF technical assistance, St. Kitts and Nevis has become the first country in the OECS region to develop a human-rights based Social Protection Act. The Government is also developing a common targeting mechanism (mix of proxy means test and community-based targeting), central beneficiary registry and management information system. The Government of St. Lucia has developed a National Social Protection Policy that was presented to the Cabinet for approval. In addition, the Government has devised a comprehensive social protection reform work plan jointly supported (technically and financial) by the World Bank, UNICEF and UN Women. UNICEF provided high-level technical expertise in the development of St. Lucia – National Eligibility Test that is a proxy means test to be rolled out as a central targeting instrument in the country.

In addition, UNICEF continues to assist with the development of management information systems and consolidation of the Public Assistance Programme and Koudman Sent Lisi Programme. Furthermore, the Government of Grenada, in partnership with UNICEF ECA and UN Women, launched a National Social Safety Net Policy Framework that establishes a new and reformed approach to the delivery of social assistance, to address the challenges of poverty and vulnerability faced by the population of Grenada, Carricou and Petite Martinique. Also in 2014, UNICEF and UN Women jointly prepared two technical papers; a) a proxy means test and b) conditionalities for high-level dialogue and advocacy with policymakers. UNICEF conducted a
national dialogue with policymakers in three countries: Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Kitts and Nevis.

**OUTPUT 6** By 2016, national and regional partnerships and networks are strengthened to support knowledge sharing on children's rights issues and promote a culture of M&E

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In 2014, three main results were achieved in strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacity in the Eastern Caribbean Area:

1 - The Caribbean Children's Rights Observatory Network (CCRON), composed of universities from the entire region, was launched in May 2014 with the aim of becoming the independent voice of children. Planned results (CCRON website, e-library and special edition of the IIR journal on Children's Rights) for 2014 were delayed, but are expected for early 2015.

2 - The Eastern Caribbean Development Partners Groups on data and social policy were merged into one to increase exchange of information and coordinated work. It now also includes the IMF, in addition to DFID, CIDA, the WB, the CDB, the OECS Commission, UN Agencies, etc. A special group works on statistics and the regional strategy.

3 - Relations with the Caribbean Development Bank, University of the West Indies and Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) were sustained in 2014, following the 2013 joint work on evaluation (IDEAS global conference, followed by a one-day regional workshop); as a result UNICEF has given guest lectures on Evaluation at UWI and engaged in initial discussions about joint activities for the 2015 Evaluation Year. Monitoring and evaluation capacity development will be further enhanced through the multi-year cooperation agreement signed between UNICEF and OECS.

**OUTCOME 2** By 2016, all girls and boys in 12 Eastern Caribbean countries benefit from rights-based laws, policies, programmes and institutions that provide equitable systems for positive development, lifelong learning and protection

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Significant, albeit uneven and slow, progress is being made within the sub-region in line with the outcome sought. The enabling environment for protecting children from violence, abuse, discrimination and exploitation is slowly improving, with evidence of growing acceptance that the problem exists in its most insidious forms, stated public policy that there will be no impunity on the issue and increasing readiness of caregivers and frontline professionals to act on suspected cases. Use of policy dialogue and advocacy to increase awareness and support for children's rights with senior policymakers, judges, magistrates and social workers has expanded the uptake of model legislation and resulted in the reduced use of custodial sentencing for children in conflict with the law.

For example, of 12 ECA countries, Barbados, Dominica and St. Lucia remain the only countries in which none of the OECS Family Law and Domestic Violence bills have been adapted for parliamentary approval. Four countries have approved legislation, while others have drafted national reporting protocols on child abuse to guide frontline professionals. In Dominica, Grenada and St. Lucia, where court-diversion programmes have been supported by UNICEF, the numbers of children entering custodial facilities are declining appreciably. Nevertheless, as the building of awareness about justice for children in all its forms drives demand for more responsive services, crucial investment is required to both reform and sustain diversion services that can no longer be carried by UNICEF’s limited resources.
The wider protective environment for children has been helped by the declaration of universal early childhood education by 2015, which accelerated access in Dominica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Kitts and Nevis. Participation rates average 71.6 per cent (96.5 per cent (3-5); and 17 per cent-31 per cent (0-2). Service expansion is supported through community-based programmes and use of available spaces in primary schools.

Significant progress has taken place in support for countries to adopt child-centred, gender-sensitive and inclusive education sector plans and policies that are aligned with regional and sub-regional frameworks. As of 2014, five (55 per cent) of the targeted nine countries have such plans in place. Work has been initiated in another four, to be completed in 2015. Addressing the needs of low achievers and differently-abled girls/boys remains a key feature of CFS, and efforts continue to build teacher capacity to effectively deliver child-friendly education. Nearly every island has a Pupil Rehabilitation/Support Unit to help students with learning difficulties, but these units face challenges such as very low staffing levels, lack of funding and other supportive infrastructure (such as educational assessment and research services). For the fourth indicator, 57 per cent of students passed Grades I – III with five subjects. The proportion of children in first grade of primary school with ECD experience will only be determined once the 2014 school census data are analysed by the OECS, which is spearheading this effort. Progress in reducing repetition rates has been slow; in 2014 repetition was at 2.8 per cent in primary schools and 5.9 per cent at secondary level.

The outcome addresses five barriers: Management/Coordination; Legislation/Policy; Social and Cultural Practices and Beliefs; Quality of Care; and, Budget/Expenditure; and several others, including, lack of or unapproved: ECD policies/standards/regulations; sustainable community-based programmes for quality ECS; utilisation of data for programming; education and child protection laws; policies to support inclusive, student-centred learning. Other obstacles include weak institutional capacity, weak planning frameworks and planning and management capacity. OUTPUT 1 By 2016, girls and boys (0-5) living in households in the poorest communities in 9 countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago and Anguilla) have access to quality developmental and education services

Analytical Statement of Progress:
ECD policies were approved in eight countries, while standards and regulatory frameworks were approved in nine countries. However, weak governance and limited supervisory capacity constrain systematic application. Two checklists developed are used to support harmonised system for routine monitoring of quality in ECD programmes, and baselines of quality established in Grenada and Virgin Islands UK. The ongoing strengthening of systems for data management in programming in Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St. Lucia, and UK overseas territories are improving evidence-based programming. Declaration of universal early childhood education by 2015 accelerated access in Dominica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and St. Kitts and Nevis, with participation rates averaging – 71 per cent-96.5 per cent for three-to-five-year-olds and 17 per cent for children under two. Expansion of services is being supported through community-based programmes whose evaluation in 2014 demonstrated the positive impact on children’s access to early childhood services.

National strategic plans developed for seven OECS countries with UNICEF assistance now provide a sound basis for ECD. There is enhanced knowledge and skills among parents and caregivers (230) through capacity building in areas such as: positive childrearing; ECD for
peaceful communities; and right to survival, protection and development. ECD practitioners are now equipped with knowledge and skills to utilise developmentally appropriate curricula. The findings of the HighScope Curriculum evaluation are informing decisions to extend the use at national level in four countries. Focus is being given to establishing protocols for monitoring children’s developmental progress for early identification and intervention.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2016 duty bearers in 8 countries have increased capacity, supported with policy frameworks, to employ positive disciplinary and learning practices in student-centred teaching and learning environments within school effectiveness/child friendly schools framework

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Three countries are piloting the effective schools/CFS monitoring tool; feedback received in late 2014 will be used to update the instrument. At the same time, efforts are on-going to integrate key areas into administrative data systems.

Political endorsement at the regional level, coupled with the deepening of engagement at national level, on the key focus areas have contributed to the roll-out of CFS in nine countries: Anguilla, Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Programming expanded from 2011, when 53 schools reached 21,125 students to 2014, when 249 schools were reaching 70,007 students. Currently 48.6 per cent of primary and 16.9 per cent of secondary schools are using positive behaviour management strategies; 84-100 per cent of primary and 63-100 per cent of secondary schools are teaching Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) and 8-31 per cent primary and 54-66 per cent secondary schools have established Student Councils.

The positive feedback from schools on the effectiveness of child-centred approaches has energised full mainstreaming efforts throughout the education systems. As part of these efforts, and to ensure consistency across school and long-term sustainability, increasing emphasis is being placed on putting in place the relevant policy framework to support the school-level actions. Development of national ‘Behavioural Management Policies’ have commenced in Antigua, St. Lucia, Barbados and Dominica. St. Kitts and Nevis is now undergoing a legal review of draft behavioural management, child protection and school safety policies

**OUTPUT 3** Child centred, equity-focused and costed national sector plans reflecting regional frameworks in place in 9 countries (OT 208)

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

The OECS Commission completed an Education Sector Strategy with the support of various partners, including UNICEF, during the first year of the multi-country programme. The strategy continues to provide the basis for realising the rights of children to quality inclusive education in the sub-region. Implementation of the strategy has seen significant capacity enhancement in management and decision-making, sound templates for designing national level strategies for the realisation of children’s right to quality, equitable and inclusive education and early childhood development services among the member countries. There has been significant progress producing costed, gendered education sector plans that are aligned with the sub-regional strategy. As of 2014, five of the targeted nine countries have sector plans; with work initiated in another three to be completed in 2015. Efforts to gain better understanding of the current status of disaster risk reduction in education were initiated through a study
commissioned in 2014. The draft report is available and will provide a sound basis for strengthening disaster risk reduction in education sector planning. Efforts are being made to ensure that the plans developed in 2014 (including Anguilla, St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, and the UK Virgin Islands) fully mainstream disaster risk reduction in education.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2016, duty bearers in 12 countries have national capacity to support the adoption of rights-based child protection legislation.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

While legal reform is still on course to be achieved, progress by participating governments remains slow, in spite of ongoing efforts to resolve persistent bottlenecks pertaining to bureaucracy of executive power, judicial disarray in some cases and inadequate technical capacity in others.

Therefore, in 2014, dialogue was spurred around outdated and inadequate legislative provisions and capacity-building undertaken, focusing on judges, court personnel and social workers, on international standards for children’s protection. This work was supported by UNICEF and its partners, including the OECS Commission, UN Women, Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, the Caribbean Association of Women Judges, the Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers and national Governments.

Twinning advocacy with capacity building and technical assistance led to: passage of the Status of Children Act 2014 in the Virgin Islands, review and adaptation of six OECS model bills for parliamentary approval in Antigua and Barbuda and a law review process in the four British overseas territories, under the UNICEF DFID (UK) Safeguarding of Children Project. However, tracking the impact of revised laws on outcomes for children still remains a challenge.

In follow-up to an MTR recommendation (stating that parliamentarians, as key opinion leaders and representatives of the people, ought to benefit more systematically from knowledge on children’s rights) the OECS Commission and UNICEF agreed on a Parliamentary Forum that will provide systematic engagement with parliamentarians on children’s human rights issues. This process aims at better ensuring that national legislative standards offer the best possible protection from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

**OUTPUT 5** By 2016, duty bearers have new standards, knowledge and abilities for developing improved children protection systems to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse against children.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In 2014 focus continued on enhancing systems to combat the sexual abuse of children. The Virgin islands’ Cabinet approved its national child abuse reporting and management protocol and is planning its professional capacity-building rollout, while 30 per cent of professionals in the health and education sectors in Barbados, Grenada and St. Lucia are now able to work within the approved child abuse reporting protocol framework.

Increasingly, States are turning to a systems approach to establish and otherwise strengthen comprehensive child protection efforts. Trinidad and Tobago completed its mapping and assessment exercise as the first step, while Grenada conducted an appraisal of the agency responsible for Child Protection. Both countries are considering their study results and
implications for institutional reforms, as inefficient service response to growing reports of child abuse remains an area of concern.

Similarly, timely, credible data on the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children are required. Therefore, unanalysed data from existing national sources was processed and draft Child Protection Statistical Digests were produced for Barbados, Grenada and St. Lucia. In addition, a situation analysis on the juvenile justice system in Barbados was drafted and the four UK-OTs agreed on core child protection indicators ahead of support for a child protection EMIS. These combined efforts are contributing to the growing appreciation for data and its application for enhanced programming for children left out of the policy process.

With standards-setting an integral part of system development, the OECS and ECA Governments, with UNICEF support, finalised sub-regional standards for children in alternative care and now need to nationalise these standards. Earlier efforts to build capacities and knowledge on the management of children in humanitarian situations bore fruit, as all 845 affected children in St. Lucia and St. Vincent benefitted from psychosocial support, following the floods of Christmas 2013, using national capacity.

With the transition to upstream programming, in line with UNICEF core roles in MICS countries, UNICEF ECA service delivery support for diversion programme came to an end, having provided evidence of the reduction of deprivation of liberty through alternative measures. For example, in 2014, St. Lucia registered a 58.3 per cent decline in boys given custodial sentences since 2011. A remaining concern is the need for greater state support to systematise these programmes. The imminent results of the OECS/USAID/UNICEF evaluation of diversion programmes for children in conflict with the law will be utilised to inform model programmes, which will be costed for State and private sector investment.

OUTPUT 6 By 2016, duty bearers responsible for civil registration have the knowledge and skills to achieve timely, free and fully completed birth registration and certification.

Analytical Statement of Progress:
UNICEF ECA-supported advocacy and technical inputs led to the introduction of a bedside birth registration system in Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These birth registration systems are state-sustained and now eliminate the issuance of birth certificates in these countries, without children’s full names and other particulars at birth. Meanwhile, the Governments of Dominica and St. Lucia continue their efforts to reform the structural impediments to inefficient civil registration systems, and the new administration in Antigua and Barbuda ended the discriminatory practice of withholding the issuance of birth certificates pending full payment of hospital maternity fees. The remaining challenge for the independent countries remains the small cost required to issue birth certificates.

Systemic challenges to full implementation of the right to a name and nationality in the independent countries where nationality is granted by birth in territory (jus soli) versus the challenges presented by descendence (jus sanguinis, as in the UK-OTs) came into sharp focus. In 2015 UNICEF ECA will conduct a Situation Analysis which will, among other things, explore the nature of birth registration and its implications for nationality and statelessness for some children in the UK-OTs.

OUTCOME 3 By 2016 all boys and girls from the poorest communities are accessing pre-school and early stimulation opportunities, are benefiting from positive child-centred approaches at
school and are benefitting from law and polices that protect them from neglect, violence, exploitation and discrimination.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

Data and information on where the most vulnerable children reside in the various ECA countries remains limited, but UNICEF support for intervention in countries with Government and non-governmental partners have contributed to greater awareness of children’s rights and an enabling environment for children to be protected from neglect and violence.

As a result of UNICEF’s partnership with the WICB, cricket coaches in all 12 countries who work with grassroots cricket programmes in communities have knowledge about child abuse and how to prevent it within a sports setting. The partnership with the OECS has also resulted in heads of other sports also having increased knowledge of abuse and a commitment to ensuring that the information reaches their constituents, so that children can be better protected.

UNICEF’s partnerships with national Child Protection Departments have led to the mobilisation of stakeholders who work at community level around prevention of violence against children. For example religious leaders were mobilised in all countries through advocacy opportunities; Barbados has partially finalised a protocol for religious leaders.

In Dominica, partnership with the Child Protection agency has led to development of community-based interventions aimed at reaching indigenous children and their families in Kalingo Territory.

In eight countries UNICEF ECA supported awareness-raising and training for educators and persons who work in school-based settings on positive approaches to discipline, leading to improved knowledge of alternatives to corporal punishment – and four countries the use of corporal punishment was reported to have declined.

Back-to-school campaigns and advocacy initiatives have led other partners, such as Kiwanis and Crime Stoppers, to play a greater role in raising awareness of children’s rights, especially their rights to be protected from harm and violence.

**OUTPUT 1**

By 2016, duty bearers in the education sector and rights-holders have knowledge and skills to prevent violence against children in school-based settings.

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**

In 2014 progress was made in changing educators’ knowledge, attitudes and practices in relation to corporal punishment. More than 85 per cent of primary school educators from a sample in five countries revealed that their knowledge on PBM techniques have increased; More than half of them (50-82 per cent) reported a decline in the use of corporal punishment, and more than 75 per cent in four of five countries reported that views on the necessity for corporal punishment have changed since sensitisation.

However a challenge that remains to be addressed is the normative expectation among educators that others, namely parents and students, expect them to administer corporal punishment.

The knowledge and skills of non-educators who interact with children in school-based settings on PBM have also increased, but progress was limited to Antigua and Barbados.
Children's knowledge on what to do in the event of bullying was also enhanced. For example in five countries more than 80 per cent of children aged 8-11 reported they knew what bullying is and what to do in the event of bullying. However, there is still need for further sensitisation on non-obvious forms of bullying, such as verbal bullying, as these forms were not easily identified by students.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2016 duty bearers in the protection sector and rights holders have knowledge and skills to protect children from harm and violence

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
As a result of campaigns developed by UNICEF ECA and interventions in countries around Break the Silence, supported by UNICEF, progress was made in increasing the general public’s and children’s knowledge of CSA and how to respond to it. More than 90 per cent of men and women in eight countries could identify both touching and non-touching actions of child sexual abuse. More than 90 per cent of children aged 8-to-11 years from five countries could identify the touching actions that constitute sexual abuse and knew what to do if sexually abused.

In addition, as a result of UNICEF’s partnerships with the ministries of Education and Health progress was made in enhancing the skills of approximately 30 per cent of professionals working in the health and education sectors in three countries in relation to addressing child sexual abuse. UNICEF was able to leverage the resources of the West Indies Cricket Board to also ensure that the skills of coaches in all 12 countries have been enhanced to respond to child abuse, and that the awareness of audiences attending cricket matches was enhanced through strategic development and placement of CSA awareness materials.

However, while knowledge of CSA has increased and persons indicate a willingness to report it, there are still factors related to fear and other social norms that prevent them from reporting CSA. These will be addressed through strategic partnerships with other UN agencies, civil societies as well as government and non-governmental partners in ECA countries.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2016 duty bearers and right holders have increased awareness of children's rights issues in the Eastern Caribbean Area

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
Intense public scrutiny of child rights issues came to the fore through the posting of a few videos of violations to children on social media platforms. This highlighted the role social media is increasingly playing in influencing public discourse in the Eastern Caribbean Area, which boasts internet penetration rates ranging from a high of 89 per cent in Antigua and Barbuda to 54 per cent in the British Virgin Islands.

In recognition of that reality, UNICEF ECA began to align its social media presence in line with the Global Communications Strategy and the trend being observed in the multi-country area. This increased focus led to a 241 per cent increase (650 to 2,220) in Facebook fan base throughout the year. The main messages resonating with this audience, which is predominately female and between the ages of 18 and 35, were on child protection issues, especially child sexual abuse and bullying in schools.

While social media is an important avenue to reach the under 35 demographic, the Eastern Caribbean Area remains a region where traditional media - radio, television and newspapers – is still the main news-sharing and attitude-shaping platform for the majority of the population. Consequently media presence and subsequent transmission of advocacy messages was a key
factor as UNICEF ECA planned or supported over 12 events in eight countries. These advocacy messages reached an estimated audience of over 300,000 and were directly received by over 1,800 officials and policymakers.

Partnerships continued with the Caribbean Broadcasting Union, the Grenada Media Workers Association and the Dominica Media Workers Association to ensure that media practitioners are aware of issues affecting children and explore avenues for becoming children’s advocates through ethical reporting on child rights issues.

**OUTPUT 4** Advocacy for child rights agencies, artistes, sports people and the private sector are engaged in partnerships promoting the rights of all girls and boys in a gender sensitive way (OT 796)

**Analytical Statement of Progress:**
The 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was used as a rallying point to engage stakeholders and draw attention to some of the remaining issues confronting the safety and well-being of children in the sub-region, and also to urge rights-holders and duty-bearers to advocate on these issues. Adolescents in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago used a variety of media, including film, drama, dance, song and speech to advocate for such issues as making education more responsive to their needs, protection from abuse, increased avenues for participation in national decisions as well as systems to deal with increasing incidents of bullying etc.

The artistic community continued to advocate for the rights of children through various art forms. The popular calypso genre was used by artists such as the National Calypso King in Anguilla and the junior calypso monarchs in Barbados and St. Lucia to advocate to the public on a range of issues. The latter produced a music video which advocates against corporal punishment, one of the most deep-seated and culturally accepted practices in the sub-region.

Throughout the sub-region, officially and unofficially recognised champions and civic organisations continued to place children’s rights on their public agenda. This was particularly evident in the ‘Break the Silence’ initiative, which drew support from groups including a men’s group on Dominica and the umbrella Caribbean women’s organisation.

Engaging the private sector in fundraising partnerships continued to be a slow process, particularly due to: limited understanding of concept of corporate social responsibility, the small number of pan-Caribbean companies and the reduced return on investments based on the depressed economic situation facing the majority of countries in the sub-region. Nonetheless there was evidence that sustained engagement with carefully selected companies could bear fruit.
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