

# Country Office Annual Report 2019

## Guyana and Suriname



### Update on the context and situation of children

Epidemic violence underpinned by harmful practices and inequities make growing up challenging for children in Guyana-Suriname. Children are half a million, with 293,915 in Guyana (39.4 percent) and 196,250 in Suriname (35 percent). Out of them, 4,248 (Guyana) and 7,722 (Suriname) are living with disabilities. Countries are ranking low in 2019 HDI report, respectively 98/Suriname and 123/Guyana, out of 189 countries. The ratio of the Gender Inequality Index (GII) indicates inequality between women and men. The index increased from 0.492 (2018) to 0.504 (2019) in Guyana and decreased from 0.465 (2018) to (0.441) in Suriname.

The economic growth reached 3.82 percent in Guyana and 2.2 in Suriname. Governments have invested in social sectors (14.5 percent/Guyana and 16.8/Suriname) to ensure access to services and social protection. Without sustaining these gains, they risk missing an inclusive economic growth. Exploiting off-shore oil is a game change. ExxonMobil has announced 15 discoveries, with potentially 6-billion barrels, putting Guyana in top-20 oil producers. Guyana has declared first-oil in December and expect incomes to double GDP and non-tax revenues by 2025. While commodity prices have benefited Suriname, reliance on raw-materials and high spending with poor planning have plunged the country into an economic crisis since 2016.

In 2019, the political landscape has been calm before a challenging period in 2020 with elections in March (Guyana) and in May (Suriname). In Guyana, the elections have been announced after the non-confidence vote late 2018 as it took time to clarify the motion passed by one-seat majority. In Suriname in December, the verdict against President Bourterse sentenced to 20-year jail for the murders of opponents (after 1982-coup) has added uncertainty. Turbulence will affect the Country Program 2017-2021, meanwhile offer a window to position children's agenda and have their voices heard.

On the humanitarian front, the Venezuelan migrants has affected Guyana with estimated 31,000 (4 percent of population); mainly families with 40% percent children. UNICEF has addressed the most vulnerable border communities, targeting 12,000 including 4,800 children. Facing strains on local services, the response included WASH in communities, outreach for the care givers of 2530 children as well as services to 391 women, girls/boys with risk-mitigation interventions to address gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse.

On the 2030 development agenda, Guyana has presented its first Voluntary National Report (VNR) to the July high-level political panel in New York. UNICEF was instrumental in ensuring youth engagement and child-focused development asks, including on climate change. The progress report emphasized the importance of leaving no one behind and acknowledged that *"youthful population presents an opportunity to advance its efforts towards the achievement of sustainable development"*. Despite qualifying upper middle-income countries, inequities exist. Child deprivation is high in the interior and in poorest quintile. The VNR has shown that poverty among teen-youth remains high with 33.7 percent (aged 16-25 years) under the poverty line and 47.5 (under 16) belong to poor families. Overall, 3.4 percent (26,000) are multidimensionally poor in Guyana and 9.4 (53,000) in Suriname.

Neonatal mortality is a concern. Under-5 child mortality rate is 39 (Guyana) and 19 (Suriname) per 1,000 live births while neonatal mortality rate is 23 (Guyana) and 12 (Suriname) per 1,000 live births (MICS-6). UNICEF worked with PAHO-WHO, partners, religious leaders and Government to achieve results for the survival-thriving of every child. In 2019, over 20,000 children were enrolled in immunization strengthened with advocacy booklets, solar cold-chain benefitting from a new-born plan.

Access to education has improved with enrollment in primary school (95 percent/Suriname, 97/Guyana) and equity. Challenges remain with retention and quality education. In Guyana, the Net Intake Ratio (primary) fell from 77.93 percent/male and 74/female in 2017-2018 to 68.81 percent/male and 65.17/female in 2018-2019. Total 15 percent of pre-primary age children were not participating in formal education, corroborated by the primary completion ratio of 83 percent (source: 2019 MoE-UNICEF Out-Of-School-Children Study). In Suriname, teen attendance dropped from 62 percent to 31 in lower secondary. Boys are underrepresented compared to girls in lower secondary (GPI 1.24) despite an equal start in primary education (GPI 1.01). 10 percent are at risk of dropping-out, which is corroborated by the primary completion ratio of 85 percent (87/female, 83/male). Main concern at upper secondary is 28% out-of-school children, 31 percent attendance and 24 percent completion rate. Students with disabilities start school later, have difficulty in accessing and highest drop-out rate.

Access to early-childhood-development has increased. Regarding the ECD Index, Guyana has 95 percent (36-59-months) for Guyanese and 50 percent for migrant children who meet at-least 3 of the developmental milestones. In Suriname, children have improved in 4-domains from 71 (2010) to 77 percent (2018). Children (3-years) were least developmentally on track, while the physical and learning domains scored high (respectively 98 and 96 percent).

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Epidemic violence remains high despite breakthrough using innovation. From 2010 to 2019, 70 percent of children (aged 2-14 years) reported experiencing violent discipline by an adult of the household in Guyana; in Suriname, the level increased from 84 to 87 percent. Further, 8-in-10 students have seen bullying in school and 1-in-3 adolescents (13-15 years) had been bullied at school. Sexual gender-based remains an issue; meanwhile MICS-6 has showed a decrease in domestic violence in Suriname. 12.9 percent of children (Guyana) and 6 (Suriname) are reported engaged in child labour. The minimum age of criminal responsibility remains at 12 years in Suriname and has been changed from 10 to 14 in Guyana (source: 2019 Juvenile Justice Bill).

Access to water is high with 98 percent (Suriname) and 94 (Guyana); meanwhile access to clean drinking water is 57 percent (Suriname). 89 percent of households (Suriname) and 87 (Guyana) use improved sanitation facilities. In Suriname, 22 percent have no sanitation facilities. In Guyana, access to water is 99 percent (urban) and 71 (hinterland). The availability of a handwashing facility with soap-water is 65 percent (Suriname) and 79 (Guyana). About 8 percent of households have no hygiene facility in Suriname (source: MICS-6). Water quality and maintenance are major barriers to achieving SDGs with weak hygiene that can lead to high-disease burden.

### Major contributions and drivers of results

2019 marks the third year of the implementation of the Country Programme, which is aligned to UN Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) and national priorities, including the Green State Development Strategy (Guyana) and the yearly Development Vision (Suriname). The midterm cycle review was successfully completed with technical insights and leadership of the Regional Office and participation of partners. At mid-cycle, eight strategy notes were revised ensuring alignment with Strategic Plan 2018-2021, regional/national priorities looking forward to "A Decade-of-Action and Acceleration of SDGs".

Both countries have achieved development gains for children. The provision of services has improved in terms of access; meanwhile inadequate care, quality of education, remaining violence against children and children on-the-move are areas of concern. More was done to ensure that no-child is left behind by improved targeting in remote areas, maternal and newborn focus, quality education and decreased violence. Epidemic violence underpinned by harmful practices, CRC@30, evidence generation, inequity and youth employability were high on the agenda to influence policy and to strengthen service delivery.

Guyana has witnessed a continuous influx of Venezuelans or Guyanese-returnees with an estimated 31,000 (of which 30% are children) entering the country, which represents 4% of the total population (highest in the region). The response to Venezuela migrants in strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus was a key achievement identified by stakeholders. UNICEF has been front line in responding to the needs of migrant children and host communities at border areas, targeting 12,000 (incl. 4800 children) and ensuring programming excellence for at-scale results for children. UNICEF WASH response at Guyana-Venezuela border has been documented among the 25 good practices that ring the Global Refugee Compact-to-life in the report "Action for Refugee Children".

In both countries, UNICEF supported community-based disaster risk reduction planning, including follow up on contingency plan and supply repositioning. Both countries have been profiled as good practices in the new guidelines for Governments on child inclusive resilient development that has been developed by the LAC Regional Office based on consultations with partners/CDEMA. The child-centered Climate Change Plan/CLAC is featured for Guyana and the Child-centered indicators rolling out the CDEMA Caribbean Community Risk Informed Tool (CCRIT) is documented for Suriname.

To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC), both Governments have renewed their commitments as part of the global pledge to continue ensuring that children's rights are at the heart of the development agenda. In Suriname, the Palace of the Presidency was lighting up [#GoBlue](#) showing its support for CRC@30. UNICEF supported the follow-up of the CRC report or- in the case of Guyana- in anticipation of its submission. The CRC report, the 2 Optional Protocols, the CRPD report and the UPR will be submitted in 2020 for Guyana and in 2021 for Suriname.

The gender agenda progressed in a strategic way. In Guyana, UNICEF advocated for and partnered with the Ministry of Education to influence policy change for a gender sensitive approach when developing the Education Sector Plan 2019–2023/Vision 2030. In both countries, UNICEF participated in the UN Inter-agency Gender Group and provided support to the National Statistics Bureau to collect gender-related and gender-segregated data through MICS-6. The Office aligned its program with the UNICEF Gender Action Plan (2018–2021) and integrated gender results across program areas.

Generation-Unlimited (Gen-U) and Youth Challenge continued to be a priority. In 2019, the partnership with UNDP has been formalised to seek that every young person is in school, learning, training or employed by 2030. A high-level Summit on the Caribbean launch is scheduled for June 2020 in Trinidad. Looking ahead, the Gen-U Youth Challenge (both countries

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are selected) has been an opportunity to engage on education-skills, creativity-employability and positivity.

Based on the Communication-for-Development Strategic Framework 2018-2021, the Office has developed a social behavior change communication (SBCC) strategy for breastfeeding and maternity protection in the workplace and rolled it out in 5 ready-made garment factories. This rapid scale-up was facilitated by a partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO), WHO-PAHO and the Ministry of Health.

This year has seen a steep curve to further engage with the Private Sector on best way to position children with the oil-related growth in Guyana and leverage the power of business and market for children, including advocating for more fiscal space and investment for children. A child-focused Public Expenditure Assessment (Guyana) and multi-dimensional child poverty analysis (Suriname) were done. On resource mobilization, UNICEF has reached a budget of US\$ 5.1 million, increasing by 150% its annual allocation.

To achieve key results for children these strategies were focused; using the power of evidence, developing and leveraging resources and partnerships, fostering innovation in programming and advocacy, winning support for the cause of children from the young people, decision-makers and the wider public. Efforts were also made through gender-responsive programming and leveraging the power of business and working together with United Nations for several goal areas. Below are some key achievements in line with goal areas and outcomes.

### Goal Area 1: Every Child Survives and Thrives

Focus has been on Every Child-Alive commitment to promote essential newborn care. Even though early initiation remained stable (50% from 2010 to 2019), efforts to improve exclusive breastfeeding has seen modest improvement from 3% (2010) to 9% (2019), which is still below average. UNICEF's support in 2019 advanced on system strengthening in terms of data management, policy development, and further technical support in improving service delivery.

In Suriname, Early Childhood Development (ECD) focused on the best start in life for every newborn through strengthening baby-friendly care and optimal nutrition by supporting breastfeeding in hospitals and primary health care facilities, parental awareness, counseling on early stimulation, nutrition and advocating for family-friendly policies. The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) was implemented in all-5 national hospitals and primary health care facilities out of which 2 hospitals progressed to the external BFHI assessment stage. Percentage of healthy births in hospitals covered by the BFHI increased from 9,063 (91 percent) in 2018 to 9,616 (96 percent) in 2019.

In Guyana, the integrated approach bolstered by an ECD technical working group ensured the completion of the Integrated-ECD policy. A partnership with CARICOM and UNICEF resulted in the review of the 2010 Learning Outcomes for ECD in the Caribbean. In Guyana, about 4,540 people (50 percent female) of which 1,106 are migrants (including 442 children) were reached with sustained Infant-Young Child Feeding (IYCF) outreach for the care givers of 2530 children, ECD outreach for 947 children.

In Guyana, UNICEF procured about 7,000 HIV testing kits, which helped the Government to save at least 50 percent of the market costs. In Suriname, more than 15,000 adolescents (60% girls, 40% boys) were reached, 52 percent received HIV counselling-testing and were referred to adolescent-friendly health services. In Guyana in preventing teen pregnancy, support was provided to the Ministry of Public Health for adolescent-friendly health services. Over 1,500 children have increased their knowledge of healthy choices and life skills reducing their vulnerability. A total of 60 peer educators and 40 health workers benefited from training and are now equipped with skills to reach the adolescent population.

In Suriname, the EPI system was strengthened by the addition of four clinics with innovative solar-powered hybrid vaccination refrigerators supporting the coverage of more than 10,000 infants. An effective improvement plan was developed to mitigate any funding gaps in the procurement of life-saving vaccines. UNICEF established partnership with WHO-PAHO, UNFPA and religious authorities on mental health to prevent suicide among adolescents. In Guyana, UN-AIDS partnered with UNICEF to support mother-to-mother peer support groups. UNICEF's technical and financial support to ECD in Guyana out weighted its financial support except in the case of ECD humanitarian agenda.

### Goal Area 2: Every Child learns

UNICEF played a led role with the Education Strategy Plan (ESP) 2019–2023 Vision 2030 for Guyana, as critical piece to transform access to knowledge and quality of learning. The Ministry of Education has appointed UNICEF as the Coordinating Agency for the local education sector group and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for ESP implementation. UNICEF supported the EDUstars school quality model and an easy-to-use online application for assessing school performance in 5 areas: safe learning environment, community, child-centered learning, leader (well-functioning school management) and trained motivated teacher in social mobilization and community engagement to improve primary education outcomes.

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In both countries, progress are made using the Positive Discipline approach and anti-bullying strategy; noting 0.5% (Guyana) and 13% decrease (Suriname) in targeted school, in bullying thus demonstrating the huge task schools face in the reduction of violence. Regarding access, UNICEF contributed to the enrollment of 67,690 students (35,106 boys and 32,584 girls; 94.6 percent of net enrolment rate for boys and 92.8 percent for girls) in Suriname and 84,988 students (boys 43, 191 and girls 41, 797, with 92.71 percent of net enrolment rate for boys and 91.51 percent for girls) in Guyana.

In Suriname to address the main concerns (28% out-of-school children, 31% attendance and 24% completion rate) at upper secondary level, UNICEF supported system strengthening and capacity building for decentralizing education assessment, data analysis, planning and monitoring at the school level to improve the quality of education. The capacity of stakeholders to review the sector policy was enhanced through MICS-EAGLE analysis and data sheet. Investing on out-of-school children and using the ability-based accelerated learning model, UNICEF supported a program for reintroduction and practical physics education. Another area of partnership is ensuring a robust framework for providing skills to child with disabilities. In 2020, UNICEF and partners will be discussed on a multi-pronged approach that includes developing a comprehensive skills framework for child with disabilities and piloting service delivery models.

In Guyana, 15,000 host community and migrant children benefitted from innovative teaching and learning approaches. Through the Guyana Safe School Initiative, new design and scope of works were done for doubling learning space in six schools in bordering region 1 to absorb 2,280 pupils ; along with furniture and bi-lingual education materials for 110 in-school and 670 out-of-school migrant children.

### **Goal Area 3: Every Child is Protected from Violence and Exploitation**

Improved case management, access to justice and increased punity resulted from an integrated approach, with convergence and inter-agency collaboration to reduce violence against children in both development and humanitarian contexts.

In Guyana, UNICEF contributed to scale-up access to justice services for survivors of sexual abuse from the commissioning of one court (2018) court to two decentralized courts (2019) in partnership with the Judiciary and the British High Commission. This has resulted in at least 50% of all cases (>30) in the criminal assizes being tried and an increase in conviction rate from 10% to 60% over the past 2 years. UNICEF facilitated access to specialized training for members of the judiciary and allied professionals (<60) in partnership with the University of Guyana in "Forensic Psychology & Sexual Offences" which resulted in, among other things, improved practice of sexual offence matters and greater buy-in by the MOPH for the use of revised protocols for the management of cases.

Partnering with UNICEF, the Ministry of Legal Affairs has accelerated action in drafting local legislation on international adoption and legislation as part of the agreed priorities under the Family-related HCCH Conventions in place/adopted by relevant sector -with Guyana being the first country in the Americas to accede to all 4- and the one on the Apostille.

In Suriname, focus has been on capacity strengthening of service providers and coordination to create a safe responsive environment that protects children from violence and exploitation. The program invested in the national social welfare workforce system and case management tools such as Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS) to improve the collection and analysis of data and information, as well as enhancing the quality of case management. Suriname has strengthened its Integrated Child Protection Network to an effective responsive system by applying processes and tools namely: for case management, for referral pathway, intake referral forms, the code of conduct, work protocols and other tools deemed necessary within the Surinamese context. Child protection inter-agency case management steering committee standardized tools and systems, promoting synergy between health, justice, law enforcement and education to deliver better case management and child protection services. Interagency coordination contributed to 83 percent of caseloads receiving one child protection service, while 30 percent accessed two or more.

In Guyana, UNICEF made headway on the momentum with partners gained at the end of 2018, through the passage of the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act. In 2019, focus was drafting regulations and creating part of the institutional structure needed by supporting 3-key posts and ensuring that those posts are included in the national budget. Further, following the approval (end of 2018) of the policy regarding "Children Without Adequate Parental Care", a draft plan of action was agreed in keeping with the priorities to strengthen services for the prevention of children from coming into care and to support the deinstitutionalization of children - currently over 500 children in care.

Expanded birth registration services at the health care centers remain the issue. In Guyana, the community action in partnership with the Department of Citizenship (MoP) has been complemented by "upstream" work for the prevention of statelessness and strong advocacy to ensure free birth registration and the improvement in the overall system. This has led to a first draft of both protocols and suggested early draft legislation on the subject.

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In Suriname, focus was on strengthening family policy with parenting (Positive Parenting Program) and training basic social workers, para-social workers and community leaders. These professionals have reached about 800 children (55%/male and 45%/female) who were victims of violence. UNICEF supported tested communication materials and messages for the end-violence against children's campaign.

In Guyana in partnering with the Ministry of Social Protection (MoSP) and the Department of Citizenship, mobile teams were deployed for front-line outreach, including child protection and social services. The mobile birth registration teams have covered 15 communities with 8,490 people in Region 9 ensuring access to documentation for 25 children who were previously unregistered. Deployed extra locally-recruited social workers and child protection officers have boost service delivery at bordering regions covering the needs of 8,700 migrants and host community persons of which 3,480 are children. Partnering with the MoSP, UNICEF provided cash assistance to migrant families accessing funds through the shock-responsive social welfare safety net. The initial provision covers twenty families and 10 most-at-risk families have received funds. Plan is to expand the coverage to semi-urban areas. UNICEF cost-shared with the Ministry of Education (UNICEF 65% and MoE 40% funding ratio) to advance system strengthening for the development of the ESP and the introduction of the Open EMIS.

### Goal Area 4: Every Child Lives in a Safe and Clean Environment

In Guyana, UNICEF supported the Migrant-WASH Improvement Program implemented by Guyana Water Inc (GWI) in coordination with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in six indigenous communities hosting Venezuelan migrants. About 4,540 people (50 percent female) of which 1,106 are migrants (incl. 442 children) reached with sustained Infant-Young Child Feeding (IYCF) outreach for the care givers of 2,530 children, Early Childhood Development (ECD) outreach for 947 children.

In Suriname, the WASH-in-School (WinS) program in 13 selected most marginalized schools in the interior covered the need of 2,444 students (1,282 boys and 1,162 girls). Schools are in the preparatory stage of implementing the Three Star Guide, baseline assessment of school, basic upgrading of WASH facilities and further WASH awareness activities. In supporting the Ministry of Natural Resources, a WASH BAT (Bottleneck Analysis Tool) identified gaps and steps required to meet the SDG targets. Around 109 (17 male, 92 female) national and sub-national WASH, education, health and nutrition professionals and policymakers participated on the workshop on evidence-based WASH-life cycle approach programming, which resulted in the draft action plans for water-sanitation in the interior and urban areas. Through UNICEF funding and technical guidance, interventions have been implemented for WASH, health, nutrition and ECD in communities hosting Venezuelan migrants.

### Goal Area 5: Every Child has an Equitable Chance in Life

Data generation, knowledge management and capacity strengthening have been high a priority. In Guyana, the Sports & Culture for Development (SC4D) program (2013-2018) was evaluated with ground breaking in using value-for-money (VFM) criteria in evaluation. In addition, a mapping of social protection systems and a KAP on Positive Discipline in school (advocating to remove corporal punishment from the law book) were done. Data were collected as part of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) round 6 to contribute 48% of the (household) data for SDGs.

While the advocacy for increasing public finance for children is in progress, both countries contributed over US\$ 300,000 (cash) in Guyana and US\$ 526,000 in Suriname for conducting MICS-6. In Suriname, UNICEF conducted the IYCF evaluation to inform the C4D strategic plan.

In Guyana, UNICEF conducted for the first time a national training on VFM measurements to over 50 M&E practitioners across line ministries, civil society organizations, bilateral-multilateral development partners. This has resulted in commitment by Government to include VFM as a module in the national M&E capacity strengthening curriculum.

In the Caribbean sub-region, UNICEF led the mapping of data generation, knowledge management and capacity strengthening initiatives, towards aggregating results in key M&E functions. In Guyana, partners have agreed to develop the curriculum outline for the first master's program in Monitoring and Evaluation. A partnership between the University of Guyana, the Ministry of Finance and UNICEF is expected to begin mid-2020.

In Suriname, evidence-based effort was focused on raising issues with a bearing on child rights, notably the effects of violence against children, the school drop-out and the investment in children. First in LAC region, the MICS-6 report was launched in July 2019, producing equity-focused child-centered analyses through 150 SDGs indicators, and subsequently, secondary data analysis of disparities across the 26 snapshots produced. This was used to inform programs, the Strategic Moment of Reflection and dialogue with partners. This contributed to the advancement of child-poverty agenda, evidence-based advocacy and resource mobilization. Based on MICS-6 data, the Office improved youth participation in decision and secondary data analysis have help promoting actionable SDG-friendly policies.

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### Lessons Learned and Innovations

#### LESSONS LEARNED

**Leveraging the Demand for & Utilization of Evidence for Decisions** -- Through continued advocacy and generation of high-quality evidence, UNICEF has seen an increased demand for and utilization of evidence for decision making in both countries. Partners report less sensitivity of existing data and increase demand for evidence for planning or reporting, case in point Guyana's voluntary national report for the Sustainable Development Goals. Child-sensitive social protection was put on the policy table through UNICEF-assisted evidence generation MICS-6. Showing and "making the social protection schemes more visible" proved to be a strong tool for engaging on child-friendly budgeting and social inclusion including multiple child deprivations. MICS was a crucial source of data for Guyana, as it informed about 40% of the indicators at household level for the national development plan and the VNR in Guyana. In 2020, MICS-6 data will be a major source of information for the Suriname-VNR.

**Value-for-Money and Cost-sharing Approach increased commitment for Public Finance for Children** -- UNICEF advocated for more fiscal space for children, by promoting Public Financing for Children and brokering discussions in new areas like value-for-money. The advocacy included capacity building and awareness on multi-dimensional child poverty. As a result and for the first time, both countries have allocated tangible financial resources to MICS-6, with over US\$ 300,000 in Guyana and US\$ 526,000 in Suriname. Such commitment paved the path for increased public finance for children and fiscal space to address child poverty and deprivation. In 2020, efforts will be made to influence the newly-elected Government (both countries) to leverage more resources for children, especially from oil incomes.

**Review of Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Logic** -- As a part of the midterm cycle review of the Country Programme, eight (8) programme strategy notes -including ToC/result framework were reviewed and aligned to the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021, regional (i.e. 4 flagships) and national priorities. This will also guide the 202-2021 work planning.

**Balancing of upstream and downstream** -- The implementation of the country program has been made using a sound balancing of upstream and downstream work in 2019. Several high-level efforts were made to influence policies and plans in favour of children as mentioned earlier. However, the political situation in Guyana and in Suriname have been bit challenging and affected the "policy window opportunity" to some extent. Despite these turbulences, building on strong alliances at technical level has facilitated the implementation of the Programme.

#### INNOVATIONS

**Value-for-Money in Evaluation** -- For the first time, UNICEF included value-for-money criteria in evaluation. These criteria were comingled with the DAC evaluation criteria to form a robust complement for the Sport and Culture for Development (SC4D) evaluation. Findings included a need to increase the scope of gender as a cross-cutting criterion and to add 'environment' as a new evaluation criterion. Amidst climate change and global Oceans' regulations, the environmental impact of programs is recommended.

**Technology-assisted Evidence Generation** -- Tablets have been used for collecting data in the MICS (CAPI) round 6 in both countries. While UNICEF has championed the use of computer-assisted data collection, it is a first in Guyana and in Suriname with a direct result of fast-tracking and improving data quality and efficiency in the processing phase (reducing time from 3 months to 3 weeks). This technology-assisted evidence generation experiences have since been replicated by national exercises, beyond MICS. In Suriname, the use of T4D concepts via easy-to-use mobile and web application of the EDUstars quality model allowed for decentralized action planning adapting to the local context of the school system. It should be noted that Suriname was the first in LAC region to produce the MICS-6 report in July 2019. Guyana has collected data in 2019 and will finalise the MICS-6 report in early 2020.

**Child Friendly Community Initiative** -- In Suriname, UNICEF piloted a child-friendly community initiative by utilizing the existing structures at the community level. Through this programme, UNICEF supported to assess the financial-management capacity and for the first time, transferred funds directly to the community. This accelerated the design, implementation and community ownership of the programme on ECD.

**Innovative Partnership in Emergency** -- Partnering with the Faculty of Technology of the University of Guyana, field assessments for civil engineering and architectural work were conducted by students in 6 schools (Region 1) to absorb migrant children from Venezuela. Students scoped and documented environmentally appropriate designs to double the learning space and decrease the footprint to ensure that all children enjoy a comfortable workspace. The work met the parameters of the Safe School initiative and allows schools to cater for more migrant children in need.

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