Executive summary

During 2017 the discovery of oil allowed Guyana to foresee increased revenues, while Suriname experienced financial crisis. A three per cent growth rate and potential offshore resources boosted Guyana’s wealth. Reliance on natural resource revenues exposed Suriname to commodity price fluctuations and inflation. These phenomena can deepen existing equity gaps if plans for use of revenues do not include the most vulnerable and if Surinamese loan arrangements do not strengthen the social system.

Most (90 per cent) of the population lives along the coast, about one-third are children. Belonging to indigenous or maroon groups in the interior makes access to services more challenging. Maternal mortality and teen pregnancy/early marriage remain a concern. These two countries have among the highest level of violence against children in the region.

During 2017 the UN System in the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean completed the first year of implementing the multi-country sustainable development framework (MSDF), with four priority outcomes: (1) an inclusive, equitable and prosperous Caribbean; (2) a healthy Caribbean; (3) a safe, cohesive and just Caribbean; and (4) a sustainable and resilient Caribbean. This new platform has enabled increased efficiencies among UN agencies and strengthened and streamlined cooperation with both Governments for development planning and monitoring.

UNICEF focused on identifying hard-to-reach children, improving services for the second decade of life and strengthening a safe and just environment. A decentralized approach was implemented in regions bordering Brazil. Results indicated an increase in youth-friendly access to health; higher connectivity using smart classrooms to improve access to secondary education (drop-out rates are 25 per cent, with 50 per cent in the hinterland).

Both countries faced disaster and epidemic challenges. The Zika virus response covered assistance to families and services, facilitating early detection of disability. Targeting flood-affected children and families, support included education and promotion around water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). An assessment of the impact of climate change on children will help shape initiatives for resilience and climate change response.

On the development front, both countries showed achievements. Early childhood development was integrated through intersectoral policy and health-nutrition services benefitting children in Guyana. In partnering with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) under the First Lady’s leadership, the launch of the Lancet’s early child development (ECD) series led to a commitment from all governments to prioritize ECD. Access to quality education in Suriname remains a challenge, with low performance by teachers and pupils. Despite free education, the sector suffered during the crisis and registration fees were re-introduced.

Reducing violence against (and among) children was prioritized. In Suriname, led by Social
Affairs, six ministers signed a pledge committing to a national child protection network to improve cooperation and curb the alarming phenomena of violence. Partnering with the University of Guyana to sustain protection capacity, a masters’ degree programme in social work and bachelor’s degree programme in psychology were established. A Sexual Offenses Court and a cadre of para-social workers acting as liaison between social workers and under-served communities became operational in 2017. Improved child-friendly proceedings for children in contact with the law and a youth court are next steps.

Governments in both countries have demonstrated commitment to honouring their human rights obligations. This provides an opportunity to position children’s rights on the government agenda and to support evidence-generation, including: out-of-school children studies in both countries, a study on indigenous women and children in Guyana and a study of violence against children in Suriname.

Building on Guyana’s green state development strategy (GSDS), an assessment of national expenditures was conducted, using a child-friendly lens, with recommendations for sharpening budgeting for children. Costing the juvenile justice bill was initiated for 2018 budget discussions. In Suriname despite the shortfall, advocacy led to a government contribution for the multi-indicator cluster survey (MICS), to obtain a solid baseline for SDG monitoring. In 2018 advocacy will be needed to promote a pro-poor social policy agenda and ensure effective delivery of violence reduction.

Partnership efforts were nurtured with civil society, academic institutions, diplomatic missions and the private sector to increase the areas where UNICEF works and provide greater opportunities to reach the most vulnerable young people. Advocating for a stronger legal environment, partnership with the Hague Conference (HCCH) and the judicial sector helped give priority to child protection conventions and formalize a Caribbean network of judges to facilitate solving inter-country cases. Further engagement with the corporate sector is foreseen in 2018, including advocacy on corporate social responsibility.

**Humanitarian assistance**

Both Guyana and Suriname are prone to floods. In 2017 Hurricanes Irma and Maria produced heavy rains and powerful winds but did not hit the coast. Active in the national disaster management framework in Guyana, UNICEF supported the flood-affected response in regions 7 and 8. Supplies were procured to ensure continued education in fourteen schools. Boys (410) and girls (390) received wet-weather protective footwear and equipment, such as school bags. Schools received hygiene and kitchen equipment to replace items lost to floods.

In Suriname, co-leading a joint UN response with the Pan-American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and the Ministries of Health and Regional Development, UNICEF supported WASH promotion for 3,000 flood-affected people in the eastern part of the country, bordering French Guinea. Installation of rainwater harvesting tanks, household latrines and hygiene promotion helped to build resilience for coping with natural disasters.

In both countries UNICEF continued Zika care and supported initiatives for affected families, especially in interior areas. Through training for community health workers, the provision of ECD kits (100 in Guyana; 319 in Suriname), UNICEF covered screening of 20,950 babies and infants. UNICEF supported strengthening the health system and behavioural awareness at the community level. In Guyana, with the Ministry of Health (MoH), UNICEF provided support to 16 babies born with microcephaly and their families.
As part of its risk-reduction strategy, UNICEF engaged with civil defence entities in both countries to build capabilities and a national platform to ensure planning, simulation and contingency, as well as partnering with community-based actors, such as the Red Cross and Medical Mission, to pre-position emergency supplies. Risk-informed child-friendly profiles were produced at the sub-national level in Guyana, and the next step is looking at Suriname.

As part of the response to hurricane-affected populations on neighbouring islands, UNICEF’s emergency officer was deployed as part of the emergency regional response roster for immediate support to UNICEF’s Eastern Caribbean Area office for a five-week period starting in early September. He provided initial impact assessments for Antigua, Anguilla, Barbuda and Dominica, focusing on WASH, education and child protection as well as facilitating UNICEF inputs to the post-disaster needs assessment undertaken in Barbuda.

**Equity In practice**

Both countries sought to identify equity gaps and interventions to narrow these gaps. UNICEF’s main support was for capacity development of counterparts in data collection, analysis and informed decision-making. Key results included: (i) risk-informed, child-friendly regional profiles using MICS data (Guyana); (ii) a first-ever study on indigenous women and children (Guyana); (iii) a violence against children report presented to the Parliament (Suriname); and (iv) studies of out-of-school children in both countries, documenting school drop-out, mainly at the secondary level. Reliable data and knowledge have improved national capacity to identify the most vulnerable and encourage action to leave no one behind. Powerful data have created momentum and awareness-raising in the media and triggered discussions among the public and policy makers.

Using evidence-generation, UNICEF supported both countries to target the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach children. Key areas included ECD and adolescent health. Through interventions aiming at fulfilling the needs of children in contact with the law, child protection systems were strengthened in areas with the highest rate of violence. Increased birth registration, through mobile registration, helped decrease the 11 per cent of unregistered children, who live mainly in the hinterlands, and are deprived of an identity.

Embracing innovation and digital technology, UNICEF supported the use of ‘smart’ classrooms allowing children in the hinterland to connect with coastal areas and access remote education. With the E-Governance unit of the Ministry of Telecommunications, UNICEF initiated a partnership to develop tools and populate digital content to reduce the geographical distance and increase access to services for children and families living in remote parts of the country.

**Strategic Plan 2018-2021**

Key opportunities include:

Goal Area 3 presents major challenges, e.g. the impact of violence on children, families and communities. There is an opportunity for enhancing both Governments’ role in reducing violence. Strategic efforts with government counterparts, NGOs and university partners to focus on violence in school and at home present challenges and opportunities, and UNICEF continues to promote positive discipline and a second-chance approach to reduce school drop-out.
Substantial investment in the safety/justice programme aimed to support violence reduction. Suriname has revitalized its child protection network (at the ministerial level) to improve case management and prevention. Guyana established a masters’ degree program in social work and diploma program in psychology to overcome the shortage of professionals capable of addressing violence prevention and response. Para-social workers liaising between social workers and under-served communities are operational. Having the highest level of violence against children in the region, Guyana and Suriname could play a domestic, regional and international leadership role in contributing to the global initiative to end violence against children. Guyana benefitted from the Global Partnership on Education.

Goal Areas 1 and 2 present challenges particularly in remote rural areas and communities where the most marginalized children face increased exclusion. UNICEF’s experience with decentralized authorities, tribal councils and local NGOs will provide a solid strategic platform.

Resource mobilization and leveraging partnerships for children will continue as top priorities, and the application of tools and strategies from the Strategic Plan may enable Guyana and Suriname to overcome the use of violent discipline in the school system and at home.

**Emerging areas of importance**

**Climate change and children.** Climate change adaption is high on the agenda in both countries. Guyana launched its GSDS as a roadmap for developing the country and reaching 2030 SDG objectives. At the COP-23 meeting in Bonn, Suriname reiterated its commitment to maintaining forest coverage of 93 per cent (top country in the world). In that context, UNICEF has initiated an analysis of the impact of climate, environment and energy-related issues on children. Recommendations will shape initiatives for resilience and climate change prevention and response. Results will also feed into the roadmap for promoting a ‘green’, inclusive and more child-sensitive economy.

In both countries UNICEF partnered with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and local NGOs to organize climate-related actions, including the highly visible event for Earth Day in March. This helped to increase interest among the public and children on climate change, as well as promoting children as change agents, including for WASH promotion.

In line with the global rollout of the emergency preparedness platform, robust risk assessment at the sub-national level is underway, in partnership with the respective national disaster risk management (DRM) agencies and the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA). UNICEF provided technical and financial support to ensure the inclusion of child-sensitive indicators in these platforms.

**Second decade of life.** Efforts were made to: cost juvenile justice legislation, which provides a second chance to minor offenders and alleged offenders, and to support health services targeting adolescents, including the launch of adolescent-friendly health services in remote areas of Guyana. In 2018, the aim is to achieve one teen-friendly service per region.

**Early childhood development (ECD).** In Guyana, UNICEF supported the development of the first integrated ECD community based child care programme established in villages. As a result, 22 per cent of the population aged 15–85 years old, including young couples, are now positively engaging in interactive learning sessions with their children for improved child care practices.
Capacity development

The new country programme (CP) continued to build on and enhance capacities built over the 2012–2016 cycle in the health/nutrition, education, justice and security sectors. UNICEF
continued its care and support initiatives for families affected by Zika. Through training of community health workers and provision of ECD kits, screening of 20,950 babies and infants was completed in Suriname, allowing early detection. The adolescent-friendly services model was launched in three (of ten) regions in Guyana. The school-wide positive discipline initiative had national coverage in 2017.

A key bottleneck to ending violence is the scarcity of professionals able to provide psychological support to victims of violence or identify children who may have been victims. Guyana has six psychologists who have gained degrees abroad. In partnering with the University, a full-fledged academic program on psychology and social work was launched to increase domestic capacity to prevent, address and report cases of violence. The program is now self-sustaining and received support from the Caribbean Association of Psychologists.

Both countries have sound planning frameworks with over 60 per cent overall alignment to SDGs targets; meanwhile there is room for improved data collection and use of data to adjust national plans and programmes. Thirty Guyanese partners completed the final modules of the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET). In Suriname, the Planning Bureau benefited from training in results-based management and value-for-money thinking, which helped to strengthen support by monitoring units for planning by line ministries. The General Bureau for Statistics was equipped to prepare for the upcoming MICS, using digital tool for real-time data collection and analysis.

### Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy

Consolidating efforts to end inequities, a key study on indigenous women and children was completed under the leadership of Guyana’s Ministry of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs, in cooperation with UNICEF. This was the first study of this scope and in-depth analysis in the region. The findings highlighted deprivations faced by indigenous groups and led to a multi-sector response action plan.

Regional profiles of child deprivation and risk-sensitive hazard mapping equipped local authorities with key information required to address gaps in Guyana. Studies of out-of-school children conducted in both countries revealed qualitative information on school drop-out, showing an increased risk during last grade of primary education. The findings will lead to interventions to retain young adolescents in school in 2018.

A violence against children study was completed in partnership with the University of Suriname. Presented at the Parliament, the findings received considerable media attention and motivated the First Lady and the Head of Parliament to express their concerns and commit to act. A policy brief and short videos will be developed on addressing and preventing violence.

Preparations for the MICS6, co-funded by the Government of Suriname, are advanced and the survey will include a questionnaire for men and water-quality testing. To promote greater investment for children, indicators on multidimensional poverty in national poverty calculation were drafted in Suriname (pending approval). In Guyana, an assessment of public expenditure and training of key personnel on child-friendly budgeting paved the way for more investment in and discussions on social inclusion. Child-friendly budgeting and costing laws will continue as a focus in 2018, as UNICEF advocates for pro-poor social policy agendas.
Partnerships

The first year of the new Country Programme, in the context of the broader UN MSDF, enabled UNICEF to align with other UN agencies to enhance cooperation and increase efficiencies for working with both Governments. The platform includes 18 countries in the English-Dutch speaking Caribbean, 20 UN agencies and six UN country teams.

Partnership efforts were nurtured with civil society, academic institutions, diplomatic missions and the private sector. Building on successful social work/psychology programs at the University of Guyana, the partnership was expanded to include an internship scheme, community outreach and knowledge generation. Working with Surgicorps, Surinamese Medical Mission, Food for the Poor-Guyana, Guyana Peace Corps, Guyana Olympic Association, Red Cross societies and others enabled an increase in the geographic areas where UNICEF works and provided greater opportunities to reach the most vulnerable young people.

UNICEF joined forces with CARICOM to advocate for including ECD in the regional human development strategy and gain commitment from all CARICOM members. In addition, partnership with the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) and the judiciary sector helped Guyana to adopt Hague Conventions that address child protection, adoption, abduction and maintenance, as well as formalizing a Caribbean network of judges to facilitate the resolution of inter-country cases.

Regarding the private sector, Suriname’s International Mining, Energy and Petroleum company (SURIMEP) collaborated with UNICEF efforts to promote Child Rights and Business Principles among extractive companies. Engagement with the corporate sector will be deepen in 2018, including advocating for corporate social responsibility strategies.

External communication and public advocacy

UNICEF Guyana and Suriname’s communication strategy is aligned to the global communication and public advocacy strategy and the cause framework, covering advocacy on priority issues, storytelling via media platforms and adolescent engagement. Key issues affecting children were documented through videos and human interest stories, including on positive discipline (Guyana) and an end-violence cartoon (Suriname) to promote the reduction of violence.

Joining the global #EarlyMomentsMatter initiative, both countries engaged in ECD early stimulation and parenting initiatives, including ‘super dads’ day in June 2017. In support of ‘child play’ day and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC,) a film documented youth engagement with through a children’s ‘take-over’ the Parliament, the Prime Minister’s office and TV and radio shows.

Storytelling content strategy focused on work on the ground, through first-hand narrative and voices of youth, increasingly doing so via social media. The 2017 State of the World Children’s Report on ‘Children in a Digital World’ was launched in newly established ‘smart’ classrooms; eight (out of ten) regions were connected in Guyana. To protect children in online spaces, UNICEF and the Ministry of Telecommunications (E-governance unit) disseminated guidance on how to safely navigate social media, including research on child rights in the digital age.
South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation

UNICEF sits on CARICOM’s ECD Expert Group, supporting deeper inter-Caribbean cooperation and technical expertise in the areas of education and child protection. It also facilitates cooperation among countries liaising with UNICEF offices in the Caribbean sub-region.

Jamaica-Guyana cooperation took place on juvenile justice. To pre-empt the implementation of the draft juvenile justice bill, the Office of the Chancellor of the Judiciary, in partnership with UNICEF, is leading the establishment of a youth court to recommend less punitive sanctions for juveniles (13-18 years old). It will also be an opportunity for youth to be trained as jurors-judges or community youth advocates and hear real-life cases of youths who have committed low-level offences. Lead members of the judiciary and magistracy in Guyana and Jamaica have established a partnership supported by UNICEF. A Guyanese team (including the chancellor, chief magistrate and director of public prosecutions) visited Jamaica to observe the work of the youth court. Lessons learned and good practices will inform decision-making on the establishment of a youth court in Guyana in 2018.

Surinamese experience was cross-fertilized for the roll-out of a risk assessment tool in the Caribbean. Supporting the national DRM agency and CDEMA, a robust risk assessment and analysis at the sub-national level was initiated in Suriname. This will provide CDEMA participating states with guidance and practical examples for roll-out in their respective territories. Under the CDEMA Caribbean Community Risk Information Tool initiative, UNICEF provided technical and financial support to ensure the inclusion of child-sensitive indicators in the risk assessment tool to be used by all CDEMA members.

Identification and promotion of innovation

To improve knowledge on deprivations and narrow equity gaps, UNICEF supported Guyana to develop sub-national profiles using disaggregated MICS data combined with hazard maps to provide information for local authorities to adjust planning and programmes. These risk-informed child-friendly profiles are aligned with the requirements of UNICEF’s emergency preparedness platform (EPP) and ensure adherence to guidance for risk-informed programming (GRIP).

Embracing innovation and digital technology, UNICEF supported the use of 'smart' classrooms allowing children in the hinterland to connect with coastal areas and access remote education. With the E-governance unit of the Ministry of Telecommunications, UNICEF initiated a partnership to develop tools and populate digital content to reduce the geographical distance and increase access to services for children and families living in remote parts of the country.

Suriname’s MICS6 household survey will be carried out with tablets, using digital technology to collect data and fast-track transmission and analysis. In 2017 partners were trained to use the new technology, as going paperless will allow efficiency gains.

To prevent juveniles from entering into conflict with the law and embrace young people as agents of change, UNICEF collaborated with the Minister of Justice-Police to produce videos by adolescents on prevention of violence posted on social media in Suriname. Four adolescents who are widely followed on social media were part of this initiative and supported the crafting and spreading of positive messages. The initiative reached about 152,000 people (one third of the population).
Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages

In Guyana, nurturing knowledge, capacity building and behaviour change led to a cross-sectoral approach for childcare services. It brought together practitioners and parents through the baby-friendly hospital initiative (BFHI). This led to positive behaviour by at least 30 traditional birth attendants, 15 per cent of community workers and 40 per cent of nurses/midwives in maternal and child health. A decentralized approach was also implemented in the hinterland region bordering Brazil, bringing synergies between health/nutrition, education and protection interventions. Initial results indicated an increased youth-friendly access to health.

In Suriname, as part of the out-of-school children study, an inter-ministerial committee was established to maximize efforts addressing school drop-out, facilitating information-sharing and optimal collaboration. The committee provided significant guidance throughout the study and ensured that recommendations include joint responses. UNICEF also encouraged the revitalization the national child protection network led by six ministers committed to address collectively the issue of violence and abuse by signing a pledge to improve cooperation in case management and prevention.

Service delivery

Guyana has established a Sexual Offences Court for effective prosecution, increased reporting and conviction rates, as well as to reduce the length of hearings and secondary victimization of children. Through a partnership with the Ministry of Social Protection and NGOs, a ‘survivors’ unit was also created, with court-supported services for children. A child-friendly recording unit was supported by UNICEF. The Canada-funded judicial reform and institutional strengthening project (JURIST) provided model guidelines for the court’s functioning. During the day following the opening, five cases were addressed.

To build capacity for addressing the threat of Zika virus in Suriname, screening for early detection is now operational and centres were equipped with 319 ECD kits through the MoH and Medical Mission. Procuring two solar fridges helped to ensure safe storage and facilitate increased vaccination coverage. To standardize service delivery during neonatal consultations, UNICEF supported PMTCT protocols for HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B. In July, stakeholders were informed about the elimination initiative and finalized the protocols.

Implementing the First 1,000 Days initiative in Suriname, a breastfeeding week focused on awareness-raising about the baby-friendly hospital initiative (BFHI). The next step will be to draft legislation on marketing of infant formula, translating the international code for marketing breastmilk substitutes and integrating protocols for BFHI into standard guidelines. In cooperation with MoE validation of child-friendly standards in Paramaribo, UNICEF supported the pilot in 10 schools, beginning with the WASH component. In 2018, the aim is country-wide dissemination. To promote child-friendly work places, UNICEF supported a child-friendly space at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a window for extending the practice in public and private places.

Human rights-based approach to cooperation

In Guyana, reports on the Optional Protocols, due in 2017, remain in draft versions. UNICEF initiated discussions for drafting reports, including the report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, due for completion in 2018. In addition, a child-sensitive review of the Constitution of Guyana, was undertaken, generating knowledge and evidence to guide upcoming political
discussions on constitutional reform to ensure that children’s rights are kept centre-stage.

Partnering with the Rights of the Child Commission (a Guyanese constitutional committee for children), a review of the type and number of human rights complaints was initiated to promote accountability to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as the report is expected to be part of the Parliamentary submission. Access to legal aid was provided to 40 children in the justice system.

In Suriname, the latest set of Committee on the Rights of the Child concluding observations (2016) were used as background for shaping the current CP (2017–2021) and served as a reference for UNICEF’s advocacy work. A refresher training on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols for 50 legal professionals (judges and lawyers) helped to increase the application of international conventions to domestic cases when children were involved. An updated situation analysis is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

As part of the follow-up, UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Social Affairs to carry out a study on the status of children with disabilities, with a focus on access to services, existing policies and laws and children’s most pressing needs. Advocacy efforts led Suriname to ratify the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD) in 2017.

**Gender equality**

In education, UNICEF supported the Ministries of both countries in assessing girls-boys’ inclusion and completion of school using (i) out-of-school children national surveys in Guyana & Suriname, (ii) study on adolescent pregnancy (Guyana), and (iii) development of a re-integration policy for adolescent mothers and pregnant teens (Guyana). In both countries, reports on out-of-school children helped to identify bottlenecks, measure the magnitude of drop-out and develop strategies for reintegration.

In health, UNICEF continued to support the Ministry and partners to implement gender-responsive adolescent health programming under the mother-child health department, including launching youth-friendly services and community support parenting groups in indigenous villages. UNICEF also supported national efforts to reduce teen pregnancy and rollout the human papilloma virus vaccine; the Ministry succeeded in vaccinating girls aged 11-13.

Mainstreaming gender through the integrated ECD program in both countries, the focus was on consolidating fathers’ role in parenting. Using the first 1,000 days and ‘super-Dads’ campaigns, videos of proactive fathers were produced and broadcast. In Suriname, through the ECD training package and support to baby-friendly clinics, fathers’ role was embraced and parents are involved in early stimulation. Gender-sensitive issues were addressed through the child-friendly spaces initiative, including access to adequate WASH facilities for girls.

UNICEF’s senior management team strives to achieve better gender balance in new recruitments. The education officer continued to serve as gender focal point in 2017.

**Environmental sustainability**

The climate landscape analysis for children (CLAC) study is shaping initiatives for resilience and climate change prevention and response. Initiated jointly with the Office of Climate Change (part of the Office of the Presidency), results will feed into the GSDS to promote a ‘green’, inclusive and more child-sensitive economy, as well as serving to inform UNICEF’s programmes.
In both countries, UNICEF partnered with the World Wildlife Fund and local NGOs to organize climate-related actions, including the highly visible event for Earth Hour Day. This helped to raise public interest in climate change and to promote children as change agents, including for WASH promotion. In addition, an educational game on climate change and related topics was introduced in schools, reaching around 3,600 children.

The Office embarked on in-house office greening through its greening task force. Several initiatives were proposed and achievements were notable in areas such as: water conservation, electricity consumption, and enhancement of the working environment. The upgraded laptops that were issued featured a tablet mode and touch-screen functionality, which encouraged staff members to walk with their laptop during meetings to view agendas and other documents digitally, instead of printing. This contributed to the office green initiative reducing the paper and ink consumption.

**Effective leadership**

The country office management team (CMT) met every month, allowing real-time tracking. The agenda was informed by standard items such as funding and expenditures. Key indicators were discussed and bottlenecks and corrective actions were identified. The CMT approved proposals for: adoption of a risk-informed annual management plan, a staff retreat, a greening-the-office initiative and an office learning and development plan.

The early warning/early action platform and enterprise risk assessment were completed by end-March, as part of the preparation for the annual management plan. The emergency officer updated the senior management team on meteorological developments, including floods. Security issues raised by the UN country team were discussed either by the CMT or at key staff meetings.

A business continuity plan was established for UNICEF, relating mainly to flood-affected response and supply pre-positioning. The UN emergency task force is functional in Guyana. In Suriname, UN capacities and emergency coordination need to be strengthened. Both national DRM platforms are operational and UNICEF is an active member.

In addition to the country management team meetings, weekly meetings were held to keep management informed of the status of activities, track budget implementation and address emerging issues. Monthly programme and operations meetings were held to analyse indicator trends using the dashboard. The HACT assurance plan was developed and budgeted. The implementation rate for spot-checks and programmatic visit was 100 per cent in 2017.

UNICEF benefitted from results-based management (RBM) training combined with guidance on risk-informed programming. This provided staff with skills required to manage risk-informed interventions and support counterparts. In addition, a staff retreat took place in August, where a profile for each staff member was developed, using the Birkman method. The aim of this exercise was to strengthen people skills and working relationships, and consequentially office capacity and dynamics, to enable the fulfilling of our mandate in the most effective manner.

**Financial resources management**

Both teams consolidated the processing of all payments, ensuring a quick turnaround time for transactions, despite staff changes in operations and budget assistant). Operations staff supported the Office to verify financial transactions, review supporting documents, build local capacity on financial management and financial control mechanisms such as the table of
authority and standard operating procedures.

In 2017 transactions were processed on time. There was no DCT aged over nine months and those aged over six months accounted for just 0.04 per cent. Quality assurance and adherence to financial regulations were monitored by the CMT monthly, using dashboard reports generated by VISION. No issues related to open items in prior years had to be addressed.

Delays in addressing a few bank reconciliation items will be resolved in 2018. A bank optimization initiative for Guyana and Suriname was initiated, including on-line payment. Operational procedures were continually updated to reflect new instructions.

A budget report was produced and released every month to monitor progress on utilization and efficient use of funds. This close follow-up ensured a cumulative utilization rate of 98 per cent of the total allocated budget of US$3 million, split between Guyana (66 per cent) and Suriname (34 per cent). The breakdown was as follows: budget management allocation (100 per cent), other resources-emergency (87 per cent), other resources-regular (97 per cent) and regular resources (99 per cent).

**Fundraising and donor relations**

With a budget of US $3 million this year and about 30 staff and 15 consultants, UNICEF Guyana and Suriname ranked high on budget utilization and also in grants expiring in three months (100 per cent utilized). The Office benefited from non-earmarked regular resources and thematic funding.

Despite the economic shortfall in Suriname, advocacy led to receiving co-funding for MICS-6 (US$250,000, 30 per cent) demonstrating the Government’s commitment to having a solid baseline for SDG monitoring. In 2018, advocacy and support will be needed to ensure effective delivery of violence reduction and to promote a pro-poor social policy agenda.

Efforts to reach out the private sector were materialized by the support of UNICEF UK NatCom for DRR-Climate Change and a pledge from the Guyana Olympic Association to expand the Sport-Culture for Development (SC4D) programme in the hinterlands.

On the corporate side, outreach to the extractive sector appears promising. Efforts have created a good basis for new funding opportunities in coming years. Supported by UNICEF’s Regional Office, a corporate fundraising potential mapping identified some opportunities at the Caribbean level, including the banking and telecoms sector. In Guyana, contact was initiated to benefit from the Guyana Redd+ Investment Fund to support climate change adaptation and hygiene promotion.

As part of the MSDF, UN country teams in the Caribbean are developing a joint fundraising approach to reach out to donors at the regional level. Donor interest has been nurtured for sustainable school feeding as well as for local governance and community-based capacity building in the hinterlands.

**Evaluation and research**

An integrated PRIME was developed and monitored quarterly by the CMT. Over 90 per cent of the activities were completed by 31st December. The year was quiet for evaluation; one evaluation was initiated with the MoE on the nursery programme (to be completed in 2018).
Consolidating efforts to reduce/end inequities, several key activities were completed, including: (i) a study on indigenous women and children highlighted deprivations faced by Guyana’s hinterland population; and (ii) a first assessment of public expenditure and training of key personnel on child-friendly budgeting aimed at boosting investment for children in 2018. In both countries, out-of-school children studies were conducted, informing about drop-out with disaggregated information by district and age for grade, to facilitate more focused interventions.

MICS6 preparations are well advanced in Suriname. Despite economic setbacks and as a result of UNICEF advocacy, the Government will provide financial support for implementation of the survey. This critical tool will help to measure progress towards national targets. MICS-6 will yield recent comparable data and information on the situation of children and women and will provide solid baselines for SDG monitoring.

**Efficiency gains and cost savings**

Although the operations team had less than two years’ experience by end-2017, much progress was achieved in developing soft skills for managing operational activities, thereby enabling efficiency gains and cost savings. The Country Office embarked on a greening-the-office initiative through its greening task force. Several initiatives were proposed, and achievements were notable in areas including: water conservation, management of electricity consumption, and enhancement of the working environment.

Efficiency gains were also seen in HACT assurance activities, through the use of long-term agreements (LTAs) for the provision of a macro-assessment and of micro-assessments of partners, resulting in hours saved and cost-sharing with UNDP for the macro (US$1,500).

Through joint UN procurement, the office gained from an LTA for security services. While the gain resulted from a slightly lower cost (just under US$60) compared with last year’s rates, the expected gain will be realized in better quality services. In 2017, the office also benefited from LTAs through OneUN initiatives in the areas of sanitary disposal and stationery.

**Supply management**

Procurement levels increased significantly compared with 2016, doubling on the programme side (US$523k, compared to US$220k in 2016). The first year of the CP saw accelerated delivery, coupled with emergency relief, for both countries.

As part of programme services (US$413,604), a significant amount (US$374,674) was invested in consultancies to carry out activities, including MICS preparations and evidence-gathering. For supplies, tablets (US$54k) were procured to conduct the MICS in Suriname.

Response to flood-affected areas included continued education in 14 schools where 800 children (410 boys/390 girls) benefitted from wet weather protective footwear, school bags, hygiene and kitchen equipment to replace lost items. In Suriname, 208 water tanks (US$20k) were procured to assist 3,000 flood-affected people. In both countries, emergency supplies (US$8,000) were pre-positioned for immediate response. As part of Zika response, ECD kits (US$19,000) supported screening of 20,950 babies & infants.

On the operations side, the Suriname office traded in an old Toyota Land Cruiser station wagon for a new Prado Land Cruiser, at a net value of US$41,500. Both offices improved Internet-communication capabilities (US$34,000) and security services (US$64,000). The team benefitted from a three-day retreat for staff development, using the Birkman method (US$11,000).
No construction projects took place in 2017; the table below summarizes 2017 procurement costs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme supplies</td>
<td>109,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme services</td>
<td>413,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations supplies</td>
<td>105,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations services</td>
<td>112,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>741,378</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Security for staff and premises**

Both offices are compliant with minimum operating security standards, as well as those for residences. UNICEF maintained its CCTV cameras and an electronic alarm system for the buildings, equipped with motion sensors. An emergency response support service was provided by the security company in event the alarm was triggered. In 2017, there were three reported break-ins at staff residences, including a security incident at the Representative’s residence that resulted in the stabbing of the security guard on duty.

Management and security focal points monitored potential security risks and maintained a close working relationship with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, which provides periodic updates on safety and security matters and incidents in-country. During 2017 Guyana experienced several murders and a prison break near the office.

**Human resources**

Staff members benefited from training in result-based management and guidelines on risk-informed programming, to apply to their respective functions. Recruitment of five posts included (i) HR assistant, (ii) child protection officer-Suriname, (iii) budget assistant-Guyana, (iv) child protection specialist-Guyana and (v) education specialist-Guyana –all in line with the programme budget review and approved in CPDs and country programme management plans.

The office received support from the MCSF, and the HR post (filled in June) attracted a stretch assignment in quarter-1. With respect to performance management, the office has seen continuous supervisee-supervisor interactions and conversations surrounding evaluation and efforts to improve overall performance. These efforts were made from an employee-development perspective as training needs were identified and addressed in the office learning and development plan. The office will continue to address these needs as resources become available, and strive to promote honest appraisal conversations to encourage effective performance evaluations.

With respect to the Global Staff Survey, the Office shared and discussed the findings in various meetings, particularly at all-staff meetings. Employee feedback was encouraged and staff shared thoughts, ideas and proposed actions. The tenure of the local staff association came to an end in 2017, and the office is the process of establishing a new one.

Staff members participated in UNCares training on stigma/discrimination and human rights.
Both offices continue to promote a comprehensive range of benefits, including prevention, treatment, care and support for all personnel and families. Both offices also continue to provide male and female condoms in the restrooms. Moreover, a ‘care for us’ committee is active and three peer support volunteers received basic training to effectively support their colleagues.

**Effective use of information and communication technology**

UNICEF issued upgraded laptops to staff members, which improved efficiency by reducing the downtime for maintenance and troubleshooting and released ICT staff to work on other office priorities. The upgraded laptops that were issued featured a tablet mode and touch-screen functionality, which encouraged staff members to walk with their laptop during meetings to view meeting agendas and other documents digitally, instead of printing. This contributed to the office greening initiative by reducing paper and ink consumption.

A secondary backup Internet link was activated for the Guyana office, providing redundancy and increased bandwidth. This improved the audio and video quality of Skype for Business meetings, leading to increased usage of Skype for Business by staff members. Staff members were also provided with refresher training on Skype usage, which further promoted its use.

The SharePoint website was revamped with an improved layout to allow easier access to key documents and information, which increased interest and usage by staff members. During the launch of UNICEF’s *State of the World’s Children* report, ICT staff collaborated with the E-Governance unit of the Guyana Ministry of Public Telecommunications and the MoE to establish a remote video-conference connection with schools located in various regions of the country, enabling live participation and interaction with students during the event launch.

**Programme components from RAM**

**ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** By 2021, national legislation is implemented to prevent, mitigate and address violence and other childhood abuses and the justice, education, public health, security and other sectors observe children's rights to this protection.

**Analytical statement of progress**

During the first year of implementation of the CP2017–2021, in the areas of safety and justice for children the office supported both countries to remove bottlenecks in various areas and levels, including service delivery, enabling environments and empowerment of right-holders to claim their rights. In both countries steps forwards were taken to ensure long-term, sustainable capacity of service providers. For instance, in Guyana, a country lacking psychologists, UNICEF partnered with the University to develop and launch university programs in clinical psychology, including a Master’s program. This will help to fill the gap caused by the currently weak capacity to provide psychosocial support to victims of violence, neglect and abuse; and may even be able to prevent certain cases of abuse. This will actively contribute to the country’s efforts to provide services to child victims of violence and abuse. Also in Guyana, UNICEF played a key role in supporting the development and opening of a Sexual Offenses Court that will provide justice in an appropriate manner to victims of sexual offenses – especially children. In Suriname emphasis was placed on developing the country’s first local-level child protection system. The system was piloted in three communities, mainly focused on security and justice. In January 2018 UNICEF will conduct an evaluation of the initial model to ascertain how well it has worked, what changes are necessary and to make recommendations on how to better embed other
services, enabling it to become a holistic child protection system in which a continuum of services can be provided.

In both countries UNICEF, has been a key partner in strengthening enabling environments for child protection. For instance, in Suriname it supported the re-establishment of a child protection network at the ministerial level, in charge of coordination and cross-sectoral work to prevent and respond to the alarming number of cases of violence against children. In Guyana, thanks to UNICEF support, international norms on justice for children were translated into the juvenile justice bill, which was costed and ready for adoption by the Parliament by end-2017.

Adhering to its equity agenda, as 11 per cent of Guyanese children, especially those living in the most remote areas of the country, do not get registered at birth, UNICEF focused on working closely with the Ministry of Citizenship to develop mobile birth registration units. Implementation began in the last trimester of 2017, enabling registration of an additional 500 children.

In Suriname UNICEF supported campaigns aiming at raising awareness among children about violence against children, and how to recognize it and report it; and on the consequences of committing a crime. Both were undertaken using existing media platforms, local champions and visuals to spread the message in a child- and culturally sensitive manner.

Some challenges emerged related to Guyana’s child protection agenda, where there is still a need to ensure political and other buy-in and action for the development of a national framework for universal birth registration. Inter-ministerial cooperation in child protection at the service delivery level is still weak in both countries. Further, in Guyana action plans for implementing legislation on domestic violence and sexual offences remain in draft, along with the country’s alternative care policy. This, and the need to ensure that the national task force represents both civil society and State partners and works in a consistent manner, has in part stymied progress for the sector. In both countries greater emphasis needs to be placed on moving the alternative care policies forward and starting implementation.

**OUTPUT 1** Increased country capacity to promote and ensure justice and systems that enable the prevention and treatment of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF in 2017 focused its efforts on several areas in an effort to address some of the systematic bottlenecks related to access to services and capacity development in the areas of child protection and children’s access to justice.

A specialized court for sexual offences was created in Georgetown (Guyana’s capital), a commitment was made to establish a youth court and the child advocacy centre for reporting of abuse was extended to Linden (one of the main urban centres). The sexual offences court (recommended by an independent review of implementation of the Sexual Offences Act) was established in November, and by the end of the year five cases had come before the Court. UNICEF conducted a ‘light’ mapping of drug referral systems in schools as a means to create another pathway for alternatives to sentencing, in light of the draft juvenile Justice Bill, which was developed and costed.

To institutionalize capacity development in child protection, UNICEF has partnered with the University of Guyana to develop the first-ever diplomas in psychology (certificate, diploma and bachelor’s) and masters’ degrees in clinical psychology and social work. Both courses were
launched in 2017. Due to additional advocacy efforts, the State provided eight scholarships for students to attend the programme (including one student with a disability). Additionally, in partnership with the University of Guyana and a regional network of national organizations and groupings of psychologists in the broader Caribbean, UNICEF hosted a public symposium on ‘youth, suicide and violence’, which allowed for broader discussions and feedback on the programmes in psychology and generated knowledge about preventing and responding to violence.

To address bottlenecks related to the scarcity of social workers available in remote and sparsely populated areas, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Social Protection to develop a cadre of para-social workers (respected community members who have shown an interest in and commitment to child protection). These individuals will receive training to serve as first responders and promoters of non-violent discipline, as well as to detect potential cases of violence, neglect and abuse, liaising with social workers who can then intervene and/or ensure provision of adequate services.

As part of DRR mainstreaming, UNICEF partnered with the Guyana Red Cross in support of the Ministry of Social Protection’s development and finalization of a child protection preparedness and response plan and pre-positioning of different kind of supplies (e.g., water purification tablets, jerry cans and water testing kits) that could be made immediately available to 1,500 families in case of an emergency.

**OUTPUT 2** Strengthened political commitment to legislate a budget for strengthening interventions that prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect

**Analytical statement of progress**

Following up on concluding observations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF supported the participatory development and costing of the juvenile justice bill. The President, in a speech opening the Parliament’s session in October, confirmed that adoption of the bill is a government priority. The costing will be key in providing evidence on both the budgetary needs deriving from the bill, and for the 2018 budgeting exercise.

With regard to improving the overall legal framework for children, reviews of laws on child labour and civil registration (with a focus on birth registration) were completed. These two reviews remain critical as Guyana seeks to ensure that it achieves universal birth registration and develops a policy on child labour. To demonstrate the need for and potential effects of the reform, UNICEF supported mobile units in two of the regions where birth registration is lowest; as a result 500 children received birth certificates.

Through UNICEF support administrative data on violence against children were reviewed, providing greater understanding of the prevalence of violence. UNICEF also completed a review of data on child injuries, given the linkages to violence. Both reports were utilized, especially during ‘Child Protection Week’, and will inform the study on social norms. A commitment was also obtained to review part of the administrative data for birth registration, since Guyana seeks to ensure universal birth registration.

Additionally a review of the types of child rights complaints received through Guyana’s only constitutional committee for children (Rights of the Child) was also initiated as part of a series of actions to promote accountability for realizing child rights; a rapid assessment was completed for the detention centre in light of UN minimum standards for juveniles deprived of their liberty.
The results will be used to improve the delivery of services for children.

UNICEF continued to follow-up on the initial draft reports under the Optional Protocols and agreement was reached regarding completion of reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. To ensure that children’s rights are kept at the centre of the dialogue on constitutional reform, the constitution was reviewed with a child-rights lens to ensure that children’s rights remain centre-stage. Additionally, in partnership with the HCCH the Government committed to signing the Hague child protection conventions on adoption, child maintenance and abduction.

**OUTPUT 3** Increased capacity of rights holders and duty bearers to foster positive practices and norms to protect children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF is undertaking a study on social norms which will contribute to greater understanding of social norms in Guyana related to sexual, physical and emotional violence, in all settings. The findings will inform a culturally appropriate C4D approach and programmes to prevent and protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation.

**OUTPUT 4** Increased country capacity to promote and ensure justice and systems that enable the prevention and treatment of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF supported efforts by Suriname’s Ministry of Justice and Police to open child protection points (meldpunten) where children and adults can safely report cases of violence against children. Three communities with large numbers of cases of violence were selected, each with a different typology: one is in a predominantly indigenous community in the hinterland, one in a poor suburb of the capital and the other in a rural area. The pilots sought to: strengthen the capacity of local service providers to provide support in an adequate and culturally sensitive manner and ensuring the availability of such support; inform children about the services’ availability and their rights; and sensitize the broader population on the need to protect children and report cases of violence and abuse. Throughout the pilot approximately 300 children and 200 adults (including teachers and government officials) were reached. An assessment of the pilots will be conducted in 2018, to inform changes, improvements and scaling-up.

Considering that Suriname’s legal system allows judges to make direct reference to international conventions that the country has ratified (even if not yet incorporated into national legislation), UNICEF supported the training of 50 legal professionals (judges and lawyers) on how the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols can be applied in national cases involving children.

**OUTPUT 5** Strengthened political commitment to legislate a budget for strengthening interventions that prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

**Analytical statement of progress**
Following creation of the high-level child protection network in 2016, a pledge was signed in 2017 by the speaker of Parliament, the First Lady and Ministers of: Social Affairs; Justice and Police; Health; Foreign Affairs; Labour, Youth and Sports; Regional Development; Trade, Industry and Tourism; Education, Science and Culture; Home Affairs; Public Works,
Communication and Transport; Natural Resources; Physical Planning, Land and Forestry Management; Finance; Defence: Agriculture, Husbandry and Fishery, committing to a strengthened and integrated child protection system. The focus areas will be:
- Provision of optimal care and protection for children in cities, districts and the interior
- Strengthening systems for prevention of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children
- Strengthening the social welfare system to better protect the most vulnerable families
- Strengthening child protection services.

Additionally, UNICEF supported a study on violence against children. At the request of Suriname’s National Parliament, UNICEF partnered with the University of Suriname to conduct research on violence against children. Study findings were presented at the Parliament in the presence of, members of Parliament, line ministries, key CSOs, international donors, the youth parliament and the media. As a next step, user-friendly policy briefs extracted from the main research findings will be developed to further raise awareness and inform initiatives and programmes aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against children.

UNICEF and partners’ advocacy efforts over the past few years, partially contributed to Suriname’s 2017 ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**OUTPUT 6** Increased capacity of rights holders and duty bearers to foster positive practices and norms to protect children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF supported efforts by the Ministry of Justice and Police to increase reporting of cases of violence. This was achieved through the development of short animated videos that provided age-appropriate information to young children on: their rights, different types of violence and how to recognize and report violence. The videos were launched on the anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (20th November) at an event hosted jointly by the Minister of Social Affairs and UNICEF, in which the First Lady, the chairwoman of Parliament and five additional ministers participated actively.

As part of efforts to prevent juveniles from entering into conflict with the law, UNICEF and the Minister of Justice and Police partnered to support the development of short films made by adolescents on violence-prevention. Four adolescents with large social media followings were part of this initiative and supported the crafting and dissemination of positive messages. The initiative reached 152,000 viewers (one third of the total population) and focused on encouraging discussion of interpersonal problems and awareness of the consequences of violence, drug abuse and committing a crime.

**OUTCOME 2** By 2021, all children and adolescents, especially the most disadvantaged among them, have improved their education and developmental outcomes and accessed equitable and inclusive learning environments across the life cycle, including in emergencies.

**Analytical statement of progress**
In 2017 UNICEF supported Guyana and Suriname to advance efforts to increase the number of children on track for various developmental milestones. In Guyana for the first time a culturally appropriate, holistic ECD approach was utilized in communities, leading to an 22 per cent increase in community members’ use of interactive learning sessions for early stimulation, promotion of positive discipline and improved child care practices. In both countries, important
efforts in ECD were also expended as part of the Zika response; in Suriname, for example, 244 health workers now have improved capacity for growth monitoring and early detection.

As part of raising awareness on the importance of ECD, UNICEF Guyana and Suriname launched, with CARICOM, the Lancet series on ECD as part of an event in which all Caribbean ministers formally committed (through inclusion in the CARICOM human development strategy) to strengthening ECD services. UNICEF also customized the ‘Super Dads’ campaign for each of the two countries and conducted activities highlighting the important role of fathers and men in children’s development.

In both countries one of the bottlenecks identified regarding ECD is lack of support for exclusive breastfeeding – especially in Suriname. As a result, Guyana focussed on capacity building for health practitioners, resulting in 40 per cent of health workers adhering to criteria and protocols to foster the practice. In Suriname the focus was on strengthening the enabling environment, as exclusive breastfeeding rates are particularly low.

Important studies in both countries on out-of-school children were conducted and provided valuable information on which children are out of school and why school drop-out peaks among young teens. The studies are fully owned by the respective ministries of education; UNICEF provided the support required to ensure the quality of information and adherence to formats used in other countries. This constitutes a key baseline for programmatic interventions aimed at increasing enrolment and school completion. As part of its support for schools retention UNICEF partnered with ministries of education and health to support policies and programmes aimed at reducing teenage pregnancy, reintegrating adolescent mothers in school, and overall strengthening of healthy behaviours and services, all tailored to adolescents.

In Guyana to address bullying and corporal punishment, UNICEF partnered with the MoE to introduce the positive discipline programme, which increased capacity and demand for positive interactions between adults and children and among children.

UNICEF also supported the response to flooding in both countries, to ensure schools’ continuity. Support included WASH interventions and education material.

UNICEF faced some challenges, which at times slowed down progress under this outcome. In neither country was progress made toward inclusive education for children with a disability; knowledge gaps remain about this vulnerable group of children.

**OUTPUT 1** Strengthened national frameworks, policies, plans and standards to increase access to high-quality, equitable, inclusive, and holistic early childhood development, learning and care environments for girls and boys (0-8 years) and their families by 2021, including in emergencies

**Analytical statement of progress**
Cross-sectoral approaches led to greater interaction between ECD, health, education and child protection practitioners and caregivers, parents and siblings fostering: (a) adherence to quality childcare services for the 0-8 age group and (b) adequate stimulation to ensure that children aged 36 to 59 months are developmentally on track.

The first community-based, integrated ECD programme was established in riverine villages in Guyana. Twenty-two per cent of the population (aged 15–85 years, including young couples) are now engaging in interactive learning sessions with their children.
As a result of programmatic efforts (including advocacy and capacity development) over 40 per cent of health care workers at district and community levels are now promoting breastfeeding and adhering to the 10-step criteria for BFHI certification. Thirty traditional birth attendants received training to enable them to provide safe delivery in a culturally appropriate manner.

UNICEF – besides strengthening capacity – focused on supporting partners to ensure that services provided by both public and private providers are adequately monitored. As a result 10 registration and licensing officers were appointed, trained, certified, and now monitoring the standards for ECD services across Guyana, to ensure stimulation in healthy, safe environments.

UNICEF adapted the ‘first 1,000 days’ and ‘super dads’ campaigns to increase awareness about the importance of ECD and men’s role in child development. Twenty-five fathers across Guyana have been demonstrating positive fathering role for optimum child development through videos showing their interactions with their children and support to their wives during and after pregnancy. Campaign materials were distributed nationwide.

Within the ECD framework in Guyana, UNICEF continues Zika care and support initiatives for families affected especially in the interior. Through the provision of specialized training for health practitioners in screening for developmental issues in babies and young children, and the equipping of health centres with 100 ECD kits in Guyana, UNICEF has supported capacity development of the health sector for current and future challenges posed by Zika and other emerging threats. Forty per cent of all nurses and mid-wives increased their capacity thanks to this initiative.

OUTPUT 2 Enhanced capacity of national and sub-national entities in education planning, collection and use of data, system monitoring and budgeting, to provide equitable, inclusive and relevant education for all children and adolescents by 2021

Analytical statement of progress
UNICEF’s knowledge generation product helped to enable the MoE to identify barriers and bottlenecks keeping children away from school, understand the magnitude of the problem and identify strategies for their return to school for successful completion.

The main initiatives were: 1) national survey on out-of-school children, highlighting the main causes for children not attending and/or dropping out of school; 2) a study on the situation of adolescent pregnancies, exploring both socio-economic and behavioural causes; and 3) a broader study on indigenous women and children, looking also into their vulnerabilities and bottlenecks for obtaining an education.

These studies were invaluable to UNICEF and its partners – especially the ministries of education, public health and indigenous peoples’ affairs – for evidence-based programming aimed at inclusion, equity and understanding the deprivations faced by indigenous peoples, especially children and women.

In Guyana UNICEF initiated a CLAC study in coordination with UNICEF LACRO and UNICEF NY Headquarters, examining the baseline situation of climate, energy and environment-related issues affecting children and how they relate to UNICEF’s priorities. This was initiated jointly with Guyana’s Office of Climate Change (part of the Office of the Presidency), and will contribute to development of strategies and plans for prevention and response to the specific
vulnerabilities climate change poses for children. The report derived from this analysis focused on reaching stakeholders and influencing public policies and relevant programmes in Guyana. It also provided recommendations on how UNICEF Guyana, and the country overall, could further incorporate and strengthen work on climate, energy and environment-related issues in its country programme. In particular, the analysis focuses on how to mainstream climate change within the education sector.

OUTPUT 3 Strengthened organizational capacity of key stakeholders to design and deliver equitable, inclusive and relevant education services, transitioning strategies and protective learning environments, including in emergencies, for all children and adolescents within rights-based educational frameworks and principles by 2021

Analytical statement of progress
Guyana’s Education Act permits the use of corporal punishment in schools. UNICEF, while advocating for the law’s amendment, also supported programmes aimed at changing social norms. In 2017 UNICEF focused on establishing the ‘child advocacy for positive discipline in schools’ programme, which led to: a 5 per cent increase in 11 education districts with child advocates for positive discipline in two regions (one in rural coastal Guyana and the other in the interior). Some 209 teachers are now using positive discipline strategies and engaging 58 parents and 3,967 children (2,057 boys/1,910 girls) at 180 primary schools where positive discipline committees were formed to monitor overall trends. Children in the 180 targeted schools began creating their own mechanisms for managing and solving disagreements.

UNICEF also focused on increasing school attendance, performance and completion, through:

1. Strengthening the health and family life education (HFLE) and sports and culture for development (SC4D) programmes. This enabled 4,500 boys and girls to participate in SC4D in the three targeted hinterland dormitory schools. The HFLE programme benefitted from finalisation of an HFLE policy and revision of the curricula from nursery to secondary education. One of the main features was the inclusion of comprehensive sexuality education at all levels.

2. While supporting secondary school retention, UNICEF and partners realized the importance of tackling issues related to teenage pregnancy and adolescent health in general. Hence the Office supported development and adoption of the reintegrated policy for adolescent mothers, which gives them the opportunity to continue their education during and after pregnancy. UNICEF also supported the opening of the first three adolescent health units in the interior, which provide services, counselling and information in a way that makes such services more appealing to adolescents. Some 120 adolescents were exposed to sessions related to healthy sexual behaviours, good nutrition, violence and other health-related concerns.

3) Working with PAHO, UNICEF supported the MoH programme for raising public awareness (especially parents, leaders of faith-based organizations, CSOs, professionals and adolescents) about the importance of the human papillomavirus vaccine. This supported successful roll-out of the Ministry’s campaign in schools and communities. When articles against of the campaign were published in the media and on social media, professionals, CSO leaders and faith-based organization leaders came to the defence of the vaccine.

In Guyana UNICEF supported the MoE, as part of the national disaster management framework, to respond to flood-affected schools in two hinterland regions. UNICEF focused on supporting schools’ continuity by providing essential equipment lost in the floods. This directly
benefited 14 schools and 410 children (390 girls).

**OUTPUT 4** Strengthened national frameworks, policies, plans and standards to increase access to high-quality, equitable, inclusive, and holistic early childhood development, learning and care environments for girls and boys (0-8 years) and their families by 2021, including in emergencies

**Analytical statement of progress**

As part of its response to the Zika emergency, UNICEF partnered with Medical Mission (an NGO working in the hinterland) and the MoH with the purpose of enabling health workers to provide holistic/comprehensive ECD services to children and to detect potential disabilities. Thus, 114 community health workers in the interior, and 130 health care providers in the coastal area were trained in providing ECD services, with an emphasis on early detection, and monitor child development and growth. Additionally, 139 ECD kits were distributed to polyclinics countrywide, providing key equipment needed for service provision and training caregivers and parents on how to best interact with their children, including children with a disability. As a result, 2,000 families were provided with a continuum of services. With the provision of two solar-powered vaccine refrigerators for interior health posts, UNICEF supported Suriname’s health system to ensure safe storage and enhanced coverage of vaccination in the interior.

Considering the very low rate of exclusive breastfeeding, UNICEF continued to promote breastfeeding through advocacy, technical support and ad hoc events such as ‘breastfeeding week’. Support included: the BFHI, implementation of the IYCF+ strategy; and improving child nutrition in the first 1000 days of life. UNICEF also supported the development and production of counselling cards to assist health workers to counsel mothers and other caregivers on IYCF and facilitate the delivery of messages on breastfeeding and infant feeding. To promote breastfeeding and overall child care among working women, UNICEF partnered with Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish a supervised, child-friendly room for children of employees and visitors. This initiative will be extended to other stakeholders in the coming year.

To support Suriname’s commitment to eliminating mother-to-child transmission of disease, UNICEF provided technical support to the MoH for standardizing, finalizing and disseminating prevention protocols for HIV, syphilis and Hepatitis B. It also began supporting training of healthcare workers, who are on the front-line of caring for pregnant women. The training brings together theory and practice; its effectiveness will be assessed in 2018 (at the end of the first cycle) to enable the Ministry to continue it on its own for the years to come.

**OUTPUT 5** Enhanced the capacity of national and sub-national entities in education planning, collection and use of data, system monitoring and budgeting, to provide equitable, inclusive and relevant education for all children and adolescents by 2021

**Analytical statement of progress**

Together with Suriname’s MoE, UNICEF undertook qualitative research to identify and help to understand the scope of the issue of school drop-out, its determinants, barriers, potential high risks and causes. The research design of the out-of-school research included capacity strengthening and knowledge-building of the ministry’s research staff, facilitating the development of research tools and methods, carrying out qualitative interviews in the field and data analysis. To ensure and maintain Government ownership key products, including policy recommendations, were developed and finalized in close collaboration with major stakeholders, under MoE leadership. The report will serve as a crucial input for policies and
programme interventions to further improve the quality of education in Suriname. The report will be launched in 2018.

In line with the global rollout of the EPP, a robust sub-national risk assessment and analysis is underway in Suriname, with UNICEF’s support in partnership with the NCCR and CDEMA. UNICEF provided technical and financial support to ensure the inclusion of child-sensitive indicators within the risk assessment tool. During 2017 assessments were conducted in six of the country’s 10 districts.

**OUTPUT 6** Strengthened organizational capacity of key stakeholders to design and deliver equitable, inclusive and relevant education services, transitioning strategies and protective learning environments, including in emergencies, for all children and adolescents within rights-based educational frameworks and principles by 2021

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF continued its support to the MoE for validating child-friendly school standards and guidelines – including training of teachers and school leaders. UNICEF began supporting the piloting of the standards in 10 schools, beginning with the WASH component. This will be continued in early 2018 so that the Ministry can then disseminate country-wide.

UNICEF, through a joint response project with PAHO, ministries of health and regional development units, initiated WASH promotion for 3,000 flood-affected people in riverine communities. Through the installation of rain water harvesting tanks at homes and schools and household latrines, and accompanying hygiene promotion interventions, some 3,000 people are becoming more resilient to future emergencies resulting from climate change.

**OUTCOME 3** By 2021, national systems and policies are effectively addressing multiple deprivations affecting the most vulnerable boys and girls across the life cycle and building their resilience through adequately funded social investments and rights-based quality social policies based on adequately disaggregated data on children

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF’s 2017 focus on evidence-generation provided an important tool for developing partner capacity on evidence-generation, analysis, monitoring and evaluation. In Suriname preparations for the MICS6 (which is going to be the most comprehensive implemented in the Latin America and Caribbean region) and evidence on violence against children were at the forefront. In Guyana the office supported the Ministry of indigenous Peoples Affairs to conduct a study on the situation of indigenous women and children. The study provided important information on the multiple vulnerabilities of this population due to: belonging to a minority, living in remote areas, gender and age. Important initiatives aimed at obtaining more information related to the education sector and early pregnancies were also conducted (as detailed in outcome 2).

UNICEF supported the development of risk-informed, child-friendly regional profiles bringing together regional rights deprivation highlighted by MICS and maps on vulnerabilities due to living in areas of the country prone to natural emergencies. This provided a unique opportunity to see how certain vulnerabilities can be exacerbated by a sudden emergency.

Guyana conducted its first child-friendly budgeting assessment in 2017, but neither Guyana nor Suriname has focused sharply on social protection, as a result of multiple factors. This will be
rectified in 2018.

**OUTPUT 1** Strengthened national and sub-national human and institutional capacity to develop and deliver inclusive and equitable social protection systems to strengthen the resilience of and protect boys and girls from all forms of poverty and social exclusion

**Analytical statement of progress**
In recognition of Guyana’s need for better understanding of social protection systems, a mapping was planned to ascertain what exists and identify gaps and how to address them. However, due to other priorities it was agreed with the Government to shift this exercise to 2018.

**OUTPUT 2** Improved national and sub-national capacity to systematically collect, analyse and use disaggregated data and other forms of information to monitor, inform policy decision-making and report on the situation of children and child poverty in all of its dimensions, using an equity-based approach

**Analytical statement of progress**
Strengthening efforts to better target programmes and interventions, a study on indigenous women and children was conducted jointly with the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs. The study highlights the kinds and extent of deprivations faced by indigenous peoples, especially children and women. This served as strategic information for advocacy and new and existing projects and programmes to address deprivations among indigenous peoples. This study will be a useful addition to the central repository and knowledge centre, when it becomes operational.

UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Communities and the Civil Defence Commission to develop risk-Informed, child-friendly regional profiles. These profiles are key for better identifying vulnerabilities for programming on children and women, and also for strengthening disaster preparedness initiatives. When emergencies occur they will support a more immediate response to populations identified as most-at-risk and vulnerable.

The out-of-school children study was finalized and provides clear evidence about some of the causes for early drop-outs and or not attending school. This will inform programmes and the development of the education strategic plan in 2018.

Studies on adolescent pregnancy and an evaluation of nursery education are well underway.

In addition, 30 Guyanese from 17 ministries, committees and CSOs completed the final eight modules of the IPDET, significantly improving national and sub-national capacity to systematically collect, analyse and use disaggregated data to monitor and report on the situation of all children in Guyana, especially the most vulnerable.

**OUTPUT 3** Enhanced national systems that govern the volume, efficiency and impact of invested resources towards building resilience of the most vulnerable boys, girls and adolescents

**Analytical statement of progress**
Under the leadership of the Ministry of Finance, with UNICEF’s support, Guyana successfully
conducted its first assessment of public expenditure and training of key personnel in each sector on children-sensitive budgeting. The aim of both exercises was to ensure clear budget lines for child-related expenditure, across sectors, beginning from the 2018 cycle, as well as to build the competence of sub-national managers in child-friendly budgeting. These initiatives clearly demonstrated commitment by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to sustained investment in children, thus paving the way for more purposeful discussions on other areas of social inclusion.

**OUTPUT 4** Improved national and sub-national capacity to systematically collect, analyse and use disaggregated data and other forms of information to monitor, inform policy decision-making and report on the situation of children and child poverty in all of its dimensions, using an equity-based approach

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF held discussions with the Government to support mapping of Guyana’s social protection system; it was agreed to undertake this exercise in 2018

**OUTPUT 5** Enhanced national systems that govern the volume, efficiency and impact of invested resources towards building resilience of the most vulnerable boys, girls and adolescents

**Analytical statement of progress**
UNICEF began discussions with the Government on addressing child poverty and allocating dedicated budgets lines for programmes targeting children’s issues. Training on calculating multi-dimensional child poverty, provided by UNICEF in 2016, led to attempts in 2017 to define the national poverty line (including a multi-dimensional child poverty dimension). However, the exercise was not concluded.

**OUTCOME 4** Programme effectiveness

**Analytical statement of progress**
In 2017 UNICEF improved its coordination, quality assurance and overall monitoring capacity. Emphasis was placed on ensuring better adherence with corporate guidelines and regulations so to properly and timely meet requirements.

Considering that the Office covers two offices in different countries, programme and operations worked closely to ensure better coordination, use of resources and exchange whenever possible.

Regarding cross-sectoral work, UNICEF ensured mainstreaming of DRR and emergency preparedness, equity and gender. In 2018 it will also better ensure that disability is mainstreamed throughout programmatic components and interventions.
OUTPUT 1 Programme coordination

Analytical statement of progress
The programme team held monthly programme coordination meetings with teams from the two countries, in which main synergies were analysed in relation to how best to work in an intersectoral manner to achieve results for children, and coordinate – through exchange of experiences, lessons learned and practices – between the two countries. The programme group this year specifically focused on ensuring that the different paths taken by the two countries are leading to the same CPD results in a coherent and parallel manner. The team also achieved 100 per cent utilization of the programme budget by end-2017, with continuous monitoring to ensure effective use of funds. The programme team used programme coordination meetings to monitor the office dashboard and HACT status and recommend actions to be taken to ensure the office’s good standing vis-à-vis global requirements.

Members of the programme team developed their capacity to perform from both a technical and management perspectives, in accordance with their individual plans and the office development plan. All programme team members completed all mandatory courses. The results-based management (RBM) course was followed by a face to face RBM/GRIP training facilitated by LACRO.

OUTPUT 2 Cross sectoral

Analytical statement of progress
Jointly, the programme and operation teams worked to ensure cross-sectoral coordination and effective use of resources.

In Guyana UNICEF agreed with the Government to focus on providing support in an intersectoral manner – bringing together social policy, child protection, education, ECD, health, nutrition and WASH – in a hinterland region on Guyana’s southern border with Brazil. In 2017 this entailed planning, collection of baselines, developing partnerships and beginning some concrete activities (in ECD and development of adolescent’s health services). This will continue in 2018 and aims to demonstrate how intersectoral work can support the country to accelerate the realization of children’s rights and meet the SDGs a cost-efficient manner.

DRR and emergency preparedness activities are fully integrated in all components of the CP and the office provided technical capacity and support to various ministries for mainstreaming these climate change mitigation activities. In addition, the Office supported the CLAC study in Guyana, which also looked at how climate change might exacerbate children vulnerabilities and contained recommended steps for prevention, preparation and response.

Throughout the entire programme particular attention was paid to equity, through specific interventions in each sector, for example: developing the capacity to provide child protection services to children in remote areas, supporting ECD services in the hinterland and ensuring an equity lens for all studies and assessments conducted.

The programme team ensured that gender was taken into consideration during data collection and when developing and monitoring programmes. In all sectors actions were taken to understand the different causes of school drop-out for boys and girls; develop systems able to prevent adolescent pregnancy and provide adequate support to teen mothers; and have a sexual offenses court that can provide justice and support in a gender-sensitive manner.
OUTCOME 5 Staff Costs

Analytical statement of progress
The CMT met every month, which facilitated real-time tracking of operations. Key indicators were discussed and bottlenecks were identified and addressed. In 2017 the CMT approved proposals for: adoption of a risk-informed annual management plan, a staff retreat, a greening-the-office initiative and an office learning and development plan.

The early warning/early action platform and enterprise risk assessment were completed by the end of March, as part of the preparation of the annual management plan. The emergency officer updated the senior management team on meteorological developments, including floods. Security issues arising from the UNCT were discussed either by the CMT or at key staff meetings.

A business continuity plan was established for UNICEF, relating mainly to flood-affected response and supply pre-positioning. The UN emergency task force is functional in Guyana. In Suriname, UN capacities and emergency coordination need to be strengthened. Both national DRM platforms are operational and UNICEF is an active member.

Aside from the CMT, weekly meetings were held to keep management informed of the status of activities, track budget implementation and address emerging issues. Monthly programme and operations meetings were held to analyse indicator trends using the dashboard. The HACT assurance plan was developed and budgeted. The implementation rate for spot-checks and programmatic visit was 100 per cent in 2017.

UNICEF benefitted from RBM training combined with guidance on risk-informed programming. This provided staff with skills required to manage risk-informed interventions and support counterparts. In addition, a staff retreat took place in August, where a profile for each staff member was developed, using the Birkman method. The aim of this exercise was to strengthen people skills and working relationships, and consequentially office capacity and dynamics, to enable the fulfilling of our mandate in the most effective manner.

OUTPUT 1 Staff Costs

Analytical statement of progress
While the operations team possessed less than two years of experience at the end of 2017, much progress was achieved in developing both technical and soft skills to manage operational activities, enabling efficiency gains and cost savings. The office embarked on an in-house office greening through its Greening Committee. Several initiatives were proposed and progress made in areas such as: water conservation, management of electricity consumption, as well as enhancement of the working environment and furthering the goal of a paperless office.

Through joint UN procurement, the office gained from an LTA for security services. While the gain resulted from a slightly lower cost (just under US$60) compared with last year’s rates, the expected gain will be realized in better quality services. In 2017, the office also benefited from LTAs through OneUN initiatives in the areas of sanitary disposal and stationery.
OUTPUT 2 Human Resources Management

Analytical statement of progress
In both countries the processing of all payments was consolidated, ensuring efficient processing of transactions despite changes in key operations posts. The operations staff supported offices to verify financial transactions, review supporting documents and to build capacity on financial management and financial control mechanisms, such as the table of authority and standard operating procedures.

In 2017, transactions were processed on time. There were no DCTs over nine months and those over six months accounted for just 0.04 per cent. Quality assurance and adherence to financial regulations were monitored at CMT monthly meetings using dashboard reports generated by VISION. There were no issues related to prior year open items (e.g., PAR entries, payables, TRIP certification or clearing of advances).

Delays in addressing a few bank reconciliation items will be resolved in 2018. A bank optimization initiative for Guyana and Suriname was initiated, including on-line payment. Operational procedures were continually updated to reflect new instructions.

A budget report was produced and released every month to monitor progress on utilization and efficient use of funds. This close follow-up ensured a cumulative utilization rate of 98 per cent of the total allocated budget of US$ 3 million, split between Guyana (66 per cent) and Suriname (34 per cent). The breakdown was as follows: budget management allocation (100 per cent), other resources-emergency (87 per cent), other resources-regular (97 per cent) and regular resources (99 per cent).

OUTPUT 3 Communications/External relations

Analytical statement of progress
Staff members benefited from training in RBM and GRIP, learning to apply these approaches to their respective functions. Recruitment of five posts included (i) HR assistant, (ii) child protection officer-Suriname, (iii) budget assistant-Guyana, (iv) child protection specialist-Guyana and (v) education specialist-Guyana, in accordance with the CPD and CPMP/PBR process.

The Office received support from LACRO through the MCSF. Although the HR post was finally filled in June 2017, the HR function was performed by the operations officer, with support from MCFS and a stretch assignment in quarter 1. With respect to performance management, the Office has seen continuous supervisee/supervisor interactions and conversations surrounding evaluation and efforts to improve performance holistically. This effort had an employee development perspective, as training needs were identified and addressed in the learning and development plan. The Office will continue to address these needs as resources become available, and strived to promote conversations to encourage effective performance evaluations.

With respect to the Global Staff Survey, the Office shared/discussed the findings at various meetings, particularly all-staff meetings. Employee feedback was encouraged and staff shared their thoughts, ideas and proposed actions for improving the Office. The tenure of the local staff association (LSA) ended in June 2017; the Office is in the process of establishing a new association.

Staff members participated in UNCares training on stigma/discrimination and human rights,
reminding staff of the importance of having an inclusive workplace free of stigma and discrimination. The Office continued to promote a comprehensive range of benefits, including prevention, treatment-care and support for all personnel and families. The Office also continued to provide male and female condoms in restrooms. Moreover, the Office has an active ‘care for us’ committee and three peer support volunteers who received basic training for effective support of colleagues.

OUTCOME 6 External relations

Analytical statement of progress
In 2017 UNICEF Guyana and Surname improved its coordination, quality assurance and overall monitoring capacity. Emphasis was placed on ensuring better adherence to corporate guidelines and regulations, to meet requirements properly and on time.

Considering that the Office covers two offices in different countries, programme and operations worked closely to ensure better coordination, use of resources and exchange between the two offices whenever possible.

In regard to cross-sectoral work UNICEF ensured mainstreaming of DRR and emergency preparedness, equity and gender. In 2018 will also better ensure that disability is mainstreamed throughout programmatic components and interventions.

OUTPUT 1 Protocols, governance and management mechanisms and capacity building plans throughout the sectors support the development of human and institutional capacity (including budgeting) to prevent violence, strengthen investigation, accountability/ referral and response.

Analytical statement of progress
The programme team held monthly programme coordination meetings with teams from the two countries, in which main synergies were analysed in relation to how best to work in an intersectoral manner to achieve results for children, and coordinate – through exchange of experiences, lessons learned and practices – between the two countries. The programme group this year specifically focused on ensuring that the different paths taken by the two countries are leading to the same CPD results in a coherent and parallel manner. The team also achieved 100 per cent utilization of the programme budget by end-2017, with continuous monitoring to ensure effective use of funds.

Members of the programme team developed their capacity to improve both their technical and management performance, in accordance with their individual plans and the office development plan. All programme team members completed mandatory courses, and the RBM course was followed by a face-to-face RBM/GRIP training facilitated by LACRO.
### Evaluation and research

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### Lessons learned

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