

Country Office Annual Report 2018

Mexico

Part 1: Situation update in the country

For UNICEF Mexico, 2018 was marked by elections and the migration crisis. The July electoral process dominated the political environment, with debates focusing on violence, insecurity and the economy. It was the largest electoral process in Mexico's modern history: 3,400 positions were elected at the federal and sub-national levels. The new President, from the newly-created party MORENA, won by a substantial margin. He is the first left-wing candidate elected president of the country. The new House of Representatives and the Senate assumed power on 1 September, with a simple majority from MORENA and with Permanent Commissions on the Rights of Children in both chambers. It is expected that the president will prioritize security and social programmes, fight corruption and stabilize the economy. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, upcoming challenges for the new administration include corruption, poor education outcomes, low levels of banking penetration, weak competition in some domestic sectors and high levels of informal employment.

As of November 2018, Mexico's economic outlook pointed to a gross domestic product (GDP) real growth of 2.2 per cent by the end of the year. Average annual growth was forecasted at 2.1 per cent for the next five years. At the beginning of November 2018, average unemployment rate was 3.5 per cent, with informal employment representing 27.1 per cent. Mexico's most recent Human Development Index score rose from 0.757 in 2012 to 0.774 in 2017, ranking 74 globally, as a high development country. A rise in inflation in 2017 decreased purchasing power of per capita labour income, which had an impact on the purchasing power of families and on poverty levels. Poverty and disparities are unresolved issues in the country.

The renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) led to a new agreement signed by the United States, Mexico and Canada, though it is yet to be approved by the three countries' congresses. Mexico's commercial and financial integration with the rest of the world, and especially with the United States as its main destination of exports, makes its economy sensitive to changes and the economic trajectory of its northern neighbour.

In this environment, the private sector, a key ally concerning UNICEF's resources for children, is cautious about the economic trends and, more importantly, the economic measures that the new Government can implement. There is uncertainty regarding the President's proposed austerity plans' effect on private investment in the country, and how strengthening local businesses and economies

will affect prices and the trade balance. Tax and labour reforms may also pose challenges to the private sector.

The Government's battle with organized crime continues. According to the Global Peace Index by the Institute for Economics and Peace, in 2017 Mexico was 140 among 163 countries in terms of peacefulness, a fall from 107th in 2010. Mexico has the highest homicide rate of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. Forty-six per cent of people report feeling safe walking alone at night in the area where they live, compared to an OECD average of 69 per cent. More recent data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography revealed that in 2017, the homicide rate rose to 25 per 100,000 (31,174 homicides, which represent an average of 85 deaths per day), the highest rate in 10 years. Of these, 1,468 were children under 18 years old (a rate of 3.7/100,000): 1,131 were boys, and 1,023 were 15 to 17 years old.

Mexico is among the world's countries most prone to natural hazards. Two thirds of the country is vulnerable to seismic risk, on the Pacific coast and in conjunction with the Cocos and North America tectonic plates. Mexico is also vulnerable to hurricanes generated in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Intense storms in the rainy season cause floods and landslides, often independent of cyclonic activity. Four to five cyclones a year penetrate into the territory from the sea and cause severe damage.

However, there are also prolonged rain shortages in certain regions, resulting in drought and forest fires that affect agriculture, livestock and the economy. The World Bank estimated that almost one-third of the Mexican population lives in areas exposed to hurricanes, storms, floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. In economic terms: 71 per cent of Mexico's GDP is susceptible to two or more natural risks. In the face of these types of situations, UNICEF Mexico responded in 2017 to the September earthquakes and floods that were still affecting children in 11 municipalities in Sinaloa in 2018.

In October 2018, the arrival of migrants from Central America brought challenges to the country as well as to the UNICEF country office. The presence of children, especially unaccompanied children, along the Mexican borders and traversing the country, required UNICEF Mexico to ensure adequate protection and physical integrity of migrant children in different locations and moving from one day to the next. Officially, 9,333 people in large groups from Central America entered Mexico across its border with Guatemala. UNICEF Mexico supported migrants who were stationed in Tapachula (mainly asylum-seekers) and children and families in the caravans, by providing assistance with child protection, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and early childhood development at the resting locations from the southern border all the way to Tijuana in the north.

According to 2018 National Population Council's (CONAPO) population estimates, there are 39,877,723 children and adolescents under 18 years old in Mexico, which is 32 per cent of the population. A reduction in the number of children and an increase in the number of adults and senior citizens is foreseen in Mexico, and CONAPO estimates that in 2030 the proportion of children under 18 will decrease to 27 per cent of the population (37.5 million). In 2018, the estimated child mortality rate (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3, Target 3.2) was 13.4 nationally, reaching 20.3 in Chiapas, 18.9 in Oaxaca and 17.3 in Guerrero, and 9.5 in Mexico City and 9.6 in Nuevo León. The

expected national child mortality rate for 2030 is 9.4. In 2015, the under-five mortality rate was 15.1 and the maternal mortality rate (one of the Millennium Development Goals that wasn't achieved) was 34.6.

Despite sound improvements in key indicators such as life expectancy at birth, years of schooling and access to housing, challenges remain concerning the number of people, particularly children, who live in poverty (SDG 1, Target 1.2). In 2016, 44 per cent of the population was poor (7.6 per cent lived in extreme poverty), and 54 per cent of all children lived in poverty (11.5 lived per cent in extreme poverty). Inequalities prevail for indigenous children (particularly girls and women) who live in rural areas.

Mexico has advanced its social policies, but child rights' fulfilment and access to protection services are hindered by a decentralized legal framework; insufficient coordination of government services; and the lack of clear mandates and responsibilities between sectors and government levels in terms of protecting and fulfilling child rights. In addition, social services are not always targeted to the most disadvantaged children, exacerbating disparities. The consolidation and strengthening of the child protection system (SIPINNA) is both a challenge and an opportunity for the new administration.

Based on a 2018 UNICEF Mexico situation analysis of children and adolescents, the need to accelerate progress will be focused on five priority issues to assure that no child is left behind:

1. Reduce violence against children (SDG 3, 5 and 16): The rates of violence are rising as a result of organized crime and other contexts. For example, in 2016, 39 per cent of women and girls (15 to 49 years old) had been subjected to sexual violence by someone other than an intimate partner since age 15 (SDG 5, Target 5.2). The adolescent birth rate was 1.6 (10-14 years old) and 65.4 (15-19 years old) per 1,000 girls (SDG 3, Target 3.7). In 2014, 21 per cent of women aged 20-24 were married or in a union before age 18 (i.e. child marriage) (SDG 5, Target 5.3). And in 2015, 63 per cent of children aged one to 14 years had experienced 'any physical punishment' by caregivers in the month previous to the survey (SDG 16, Target 16.2).

2. To improve early child development outcomes (SDG 4 and 16), Mexico must work on an integrated approach and policy for children under five years old. In 2015, 82 per cent of children under five years old were developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being (SDG 4, Target 4.2); 60 per cent of children under five attended an organized early learning/care and education programme (SDG 4, Target 4.2); and 95 per cent of children under five had birth registered with civil authority (SDG 16, Target 16.9).

3. In Mexico, overweight and obesity in childhood rates are high: 33 per cent of children five to 11 years old are overweight or obese; and almost 10 per cent of children under five years (SDG 2, Target 2.2). Thirty-three per cent of school-age girls, and 34 per cent of boys are overweight or obese; and of adolescents, 39 per cent of girls and 34 per cent of boys in 2016. Although there was a rise in the exclusive-breastfeeding rate of infants under six months old, the percentage of those breastfed was only 30.8 per cent in 2015 (SDG 2, Target 2.2)

4. **Overcome quality and access challenges in education** (SDG 4): 82 per cent of students in sixth grade do not achieve satisfactory learning in language and communication, and 77 per cent do not achieve satisfactory learning in math (SDG 4, Target 4.1). The out-of-school rate (SDG 4, Target 4.1) was 1.8 per cent for primary school and 13.8 per cent for lower secondary (12 to 14 years old). In 2015, 12.4 per cent of children five to 17 years old were engaged in child labour (SDG 8, Target 8.7).

5. The final priority is to **address the vulnerability of children who are on the move**, in the context of Mexico as a country of origin, transit and destination. According to the Immigration Policy Unit of the Ministry of the Interior, between 2013 and September 2018, 61,567 migrants under 11 years old were detained in Mexico for not possessing documents that prove their legal status in the country: the figure of child migrant detention rose 842 per cent, compared to the previous government's administration when the National Migration Institute detained 6,534 children under 11 years (55,000 less).

The President's agenda does not include issues concerning child survival and well-being, a challenge especially with the austerity measures that deter budgeting toward social programmes related to children and adolescents. However, there is an openness, positive engagement and political will present in key government sectors to work to change indicators on insecurity and violence, education, health and protection. UNICEF Mexico's early advocacy on child rights with the new administration has proven to be timely and strategic in opening doors for 2019 and beyond.

Part 2: Major Results including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the Country Programme Documents

Goal area 1: Every child survives and thrives

Improved protection and promotion of breastfeeding practices

Throughout 2018, UNICEF Mexico worked to ensure that children, especially the youngest, had a healthy upbringing with a focus on adequate breastfeeding. The promotion of breastfeeding contributes to United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Direct Effect 4 on food security and enhanced nutrition and tackles Mexico's double burden of nutrition. It also contributes to Output 3.4 of the Country Programme Document by enhancing nutrition outcomes of the most vulnerable children.

UNICEF Mexico supported the Ministry of Health with technical recommendations to enhance the quality of the norms and guidelines that protect and promote breastfeeding and for early childhood health. UNICEF and the Ministry of Health produced a revised version of the Guide to Promote Breastfeeding Practices in the Workplace, with collaboration from the Ministry of Labour, the Institute of Social Security and the private sector.

UNICEF Mexico advocated to highlight the value of exclusive breastfeeding, including the organization of the 7th Annual Breastfeeding Week. An information leaflet of the National Institute of

Public Healthcare to fathers to support breastfeeding was developed and distributed to the public. It was recognized by UNICEF Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office and UNICEF headquarters as a good example for other country offices. The 6th Annual National Breastfeeding Forum, co-organized by UNICEF with partners from civil society, was an opportunity to advocate for the protection and promotion of breastfeeding among recently-elected members of Congress and new authorities from the Ministry of Health.

Discussions to monitor the International Code, which resulted in constructive debate and advocacy among key stakeholders from Government, academia and civil society from Mexico and the region, were introduced in the Latin American Nutrition Society Congress, co-organized by UNICEF and the National Institute of Public Health. This was the first Latin American Nutrition Society Congress organized without sponsorship from the private sector, to avoid any conflict of interest. UNICEF and National Institute of Public Health also conducted a study on breastfeeding practices in Mexico that found violations of the International Code: 59 per cent of the mothers reported having received breastmilk substitutes while at the hospital to give birth, and 26 per cent reported having received gifts and samples of breastmilk substitutes. Results of this study were used as a reference for the discussions in both the Latin American Nutrition Society Congress and the National Breastfeeding Forum.

Improved health and nutrition initiatives with data and evidence

UNICEF promoted evidence-based policy-making to improve the health and nutrition status of children in Mexico. This work contributes to UNDAF Direct Effect 3 on health promotion, as it promotes better access to health for the most disadvantaged populations, and Direct Effect 4 on food security and enhanced nutrition, as it tackles the double burden of nutrition that affects Mexico. It also contributes to Output 3.4 of the Country Programme Document by enhancing health and nutrition outcomes of the most vulnerable children and adolescents.

UNICEF Mexico financed and managed the evaluation for the government school-feeding programme, carried out by request of the Ministry of Education. The programme offers meals to children in areas of high poverty and vulnerability; often it's the only daily meal a child receives. The objective was to evaluate its adequacy and implementation performance. Ninety per cent of beneficiaries accepted the programme's operation and service; but the evaluation also noted that only 20 per cent of full-time schools have the infrastructure to deliver school-feeding services, and only 33.5 per cent of schools have adopted the minimum hygiene protocols for delivering food and beverage. Recommendations will be presented to the new authorities of the Government's transition in the Ministry of Education in early 2019.

UNICEF Mexico completed the impact evaluation of the intervention 'caring for the mother and the newborn at home' in Zongolica, Veracruz. The intervention promoted volunteer community health workers' home visits to women before and after they gave birth, to increase their knowledge on early signs of alert during pregnancy, as well as adequate care for themselves and their babies. Findings of the evaluation highlighted this relevant information by community health workers, as there was a significant increase in the knowledge of women around early-warning signs, exclusive breastfeeding for six months rose from 14 per cent to 41.7 per cent in the beneficiary group, compared to the control

group, which had a minimum increase from 12.1 per cent to 15.9 per cent. The findings and policy recommendations were presented to new government authorities advocating to strengthen and scale up the services.

Lastly, UNICEF Mexico completed the qualitative evaluation of Prospera Digital pilot, which aimed to improve maternal and child health care through mobile phone messaging. The evaluation measured the knowledge the mothers had acquired, and found that 75 per cent of participants had increased knowledge on maternal and child care, compared to 67 per cent who did not receive messages. The findings and lessons served as the basis for other initiatives, such as 'Mi Salud' (my health) and the m-Health project.

Tackling the double-burden of nutrition through advocacy and innovation, with a focus on child overweight and obesity

UNICEF Mexico supported advocacy and innovations that prevent overweight and obesity. This contributes to UNDAF Direct Effect 4 on food security and enhanced nutrition as it tackles the double burden of nutrition that affects Mexico, and contributes to Output 3.4 of the country programme Document by enhancing nutrition outcomes of the most vulnerable children.

To generate awareness and create incentive to adopt measures that tackle child overweight and obesity, UNICEF Mexico, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and PAHO established a joint initiative to address the issue. The initiative provided recommendations and lines of action to the new federal Government, including: strengthen the current strategy to reduce overweight and obesity by adopting fiscal measures; promote clear and easy-to-understand front food labelling; and adequately regulate and monitor food and beverage marketing targeted to children.

In terms of innovation, UNICEF Mexico designed and tested a pilot initiative known as MHealth, which utilizes mobile technology to support the prevention of child overweight in Yucatán and Morelos. Personalized text messages on adequate nutrition and adoption of healthy habits were sent to 400 mothers and 12 health care professionals during the testing phase. In addition, UNICEF developed information material on the prevention of overweight and obesity targeted to parents (especially mothers), which was received by more than 150,000 women. Such information generated awareness on how to prevent child overweight and obesity at the household level.

Government capacities enhanced in nutrition in emergencies

UNICEF Mexico provided technical support and capacity-building to 600 municipal and state authorities on the promotion of breastfeeding in emergencies and compliance with the International Code of Marketing Breastmilk Substitutes. Thirty officials from the Ministry of Health, civil protection, the Federal Commission for the Protection Against Sanitary Risks, and the national welfare system were trained on improving infant and child nutrition during emergencies, for which UNICEF also developed communication materials. Guidelines on how to protect breastfeeding in emergency settings and shelters were provided and disseminated among government agencies and officials that set up emergency response.

In the context of the humanitarian assistance for the migrant caravans, UNICEF Mexico led a rapid

nutrition assessment in collaboration with National Institute of Public Health, whereby data from 110 children under five years old was obtained and the involved mothers were provided with advice and support. The findings were used to develop a series of practical recommendations for municipal authorities on the northern border on how to ensure adequate health and nutrition for children on the move. UNICEF Mexico established a breastfeeding and complementary feeding space, with World Vision and Liga de la Leche, to provide advice on these practices in migrant shelters in El Palillo, Mexico City, and in Deportivo Benito Juárez and El Barretal in Tijuana.

Goal area 2: Every child learns

Quality standards for the health and initial education sectors

In 2017, the National Early Childhood Development Commission designed a comprehensive “route of attention” with the objective to outline public services (child health visits, nutrition counselling, early education, parenting programmes, and social and child protection interventions) and provide a multi-sectoral package to enhance children’s development outcomes in the early years. UNICEF Mexico developed the first ‘proposal of quality standards’ for initial education services, for children under three years old delivered by public day-care centres, and for health interventions. By 2018, all public service providers had approved the standards and implemented them in daycare centres, benefiting 548,869 children nationwide.

However, the recent government transition in public administration posed a risk to the continuation of this work, in particular the reduction of public expenditure for programmes targeting children under five years old. To this purpose, UNICEF has advocated, and will continue to advocate, individually with each public institution providing day-care services for the quality standards to be included in their monitoring and evaluation systems.

Quality standards for early childhood development services form the operational basis of a national early childhood development multi-sectoral implementation plan, designed to guarantee the rights of all children under five, especially those living in extreme poverty. This work contributes directly to Outcome 3 of the Country Programme Document to guarantee the right to survival, development and protection of children under five through an early childhood development policy and is in line with target 4.2 of the SDGs in ensuring quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education.

The endorsement of quality standards for early childhood development service delivery contributed to the first Direct Effect of the UNDAF, the implementation of a social development strategy that fulfils child rights through public policies on poverty reduction, improving the quality of life, and reducing gender-based inequalities, as well as those based on age, ethnicity, economic, geographical locality and disabilities.

Increase indigenous students in urban schools by enhancing teaching quality and implementing the national educative programme for indigenous peoples

The new national curriculum was approved in 2017 including a new subject, indigenous languages, after continuous debate and advocacy undertaken by UNICEF Mexico. As a consequence, in 2018,

the Ministry of Education produced official programmes in indigenous languages and textbooks for primary grades. UNICEF Mexico trained 315 teacher trainers (53 per cent women) to read and write in their first language (Ralámuli, Odami, Nomndaa, Me'phaa and Náhuatl), as most knowledge is based on an oral tradition and, in some cases, the teachers do not know it themselves. During the training, they learned how to use the new textbooks to strengthen teaching methods, and improve teaching processes and learning in indigenous languages. These results are linked to Output 3.3 of the Country Programme Document that focuses on access, permanence and learning, and contributes to UNDAF's Direct Effect 2 in improving quality education and inclusion with cultural pertinence. In line with these goals, UNICEF Mexico and the General Coordination of Intercultural Education also developed guidelines and materials to implement intercultural education in urban settings, where teachers of 175 schools in Mexico City and Hidalgo will be trained on the guidelines and materials to lessen discrimination of indigenous students and minimize their risk of school drop-out.

Develop an alternative educational model based on the child-friendly school concept to encourage completion of lower secondary school education

To better articulate best practices and generate alternative secondary education programmes to address the most vulnerable populations, UNICEF Mexico and the Mexico City Government launched an initiative to fulfil the right of adolescents who are in conflict with the law to access education. An adolescent-friendly school education model (based on child friendly school concept) was developed by UNICEF with the Autonomous Metropolitan University to develop the initiative, and was piloted in two correctional facilities, training 40 teachers, guards, directors and others. The model envisaged how adolescents in correctional facilities (90 per cent male) could finish secondary school through the modalities. Two risk factors in implementing the model were the September 2017 earthquakes, which damaged the infrastructure of the correctional institutions and resulted in an unplanned mobilization of most of the male adolescent population to another detention centre; and the change of Government administration in December 2018, which undermined staff and resources available to implement the model. Nevertheless, the National Security Commission recognized the model's value and will adapt it to the national model to reinforce adolescents' learning and education in a correctional facility. This result contributes to Output 4.1 of the Country Programme Document on the development of adolescents and to SDG 4 by ensuring access to inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong opportunities for all.

Meaningful child participation in decision-making

UNICEF Mexico prioritized support to institutionalize gender mainstreaming in adolescent participation spaces through partnerships with the Executive Secretariat of the National Child Protection System (SE-SIPINNA) and INMUJERES. The fourth and last adolescent participation forum with the participation of 160 adolescents took place this year. The Leadership School for Adolescents was another space created by UNICEF with INMUJERES, where 130 adolescent girls participated in a six-month programme to address issues such as violence prevention, school drop-out, adolescent pregnancy and adolescent mental health. These activities, in line with the objective of Generation Unlimited to empower girls, include opportunities to civically engage, to voice their opinions and develop solutions that will help young people, especially women. Enabling participation of adolescents contributes to Outcome 4 of the Country Programme Document and is aligned with SDG 5 to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

In October 2018, UNICEF Mexico was awarded the Omecihuatl medal for promoting education and fostering leaderships of girls and adolescents in Mexico City. This award is provided by INMUJERES and recognizes the work of women and institutions enhancing women's rights.

Goal area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

Coordination mechanisms and action plans to prevent and address violence against children

In the framework of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, Mexico continued implementing the 2017-2018 Action Plan of the Global Partnership. In line with Goal Area 3 of UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2018–2021, the Action Plan positions ending violence against children as a priority issue in the national agenda. UNICEF provided technical support in the development and implementation of the Action Plan, which contributes to SDG target 16.2. To support Mexico as a pathfinder country, UNICEF provided technical assistance in the preparation of a final progress report on the legislation, evidence generation, change in social norms and coordination mechanisms to prevent and respond to violence against children with SE-SIPINNA.

UNICEF Mexico supported the development of local action plans to prevent and respond to violence in Baja California Sur, Tamaulipas and Guerrero, and collected and systematized knowledge from counterparts and trained authorities on ways to elaborate the plans. The plans are aligned with the National Institute of Public Healthcare's strategies and cross-sectoral and gender-based approaches, and include five lines of action for local governments to prevent and respond to violence against children, including measures that address sexual violence against girls. The plans have not yet been signed by local governments, mainly due to government changes after the elections.

The Spotlight Initiative is an inter-agency plan between United Nations Population Fund, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Women, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF. It was designed and approved in 2018 to eradicate femicide and other forms of violence against women and girls. UNICEF will provide technical assistance for coordination and public policy; change of social norms and provision of services for survivors of gender-based violence against children, adolescents and women in Chihuahua, Estado de Mexico and Guerrero, and will ensure that each pillar has a child rights-based approach. Implementation will begin in 2019.

State and municipal child protection authorities trained in special protection mechanisms

The consolidation of child protection systems remained a priority during 2018, in line with Output 2.2 of the Country Programme Document on strengthening child protection mechanisms and UNDAF Direct Effect 1 on ensuring equality, equity and social inclusion. Child protection authorities, a role created in 2015, have limited operational capacities and technical knowledge to guarantee the protection and restitution of the rights of children affected by violence and exploitation. UNICEF Mexico provided training on special protection mechanisms to 13 (of 32) state and 32 municipal child protection authorities, including protection during emergency situations. The training was supported with a handbook on the representation of children in administrative and judicial procedures that provides quality standards for child protection authorities to represent children in court. Enhancing the

capacity of actors who are in charge of identifying, referring and responding to violations of children's rights could potentially reach 174,018 children in Baja California, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Estado de México, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Puebla, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tamaulipas and Veracruz.

To enhance the capacity of frontline operators, UNICEF Mexico and Child Helpline International prepared a feasibility study on the creation of a helpline for children and adolescents who have been victims of violence and who require psychosocial attention or a support service. UNICEF is advocating for the establishment of this helpline, and 30 operators of various emergency and help lines, including help lines for girls and women, were trained in special protection mechanisms and child helpline standards.

The Judiciary's capacity to respond to cases of violence against children was also strengthened: 899 officials completed two courses on access to justice and forensic psychology offered by the SCJN, which was designed by UNICEF and partner ODI. Both courses integrated a child rights-based approach and a gender perspective, and will enable judges, judicial staff and psychologists to ensure children's special access to justice. With UNICEF Mexico's advocacy, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography produced disaggregated data on child crime victims by age in the national justice census for the benefit of the National Commission for Security and the State Penitentiary System. The data allowed authorities to make informed decisions and promote specific policies and actions that guarantee due process for child crime victims.

In terms of migration, UNICEF Mexico's presence on the southern border helped ensure the quality of special protection services for 1,065 migrant children through case management technical assistance and trainings. Special protection measures were aligned with the relevant procedures of local child protection authorities together with UNICEF (best interest assessment/determination process). UNICEF also trained 200 consular staff and 64 new child protection officers of the National Migration Institute, potentially reaching over 18,000 children mainly from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador on Mexican territory, but also Mexicans and other nationalities.

Foster care programmes for children without parental care, and alternative care models for migrant children and adolescents

Due to the absence of family-care alternatives and deinstitutionalization in the public agenda, there are more than 30,000 children institutionalized in Mexico. UNICEF Mexico continues to support authorities to develop foster care programmes in Mexico City, Campeche, Chihuahua, Morelos and Tabasco. In 2018, UNICEF Mexico, together with RELAF and JUCONI accompanied child protection authorities so that 30 children and adolescents were placed in foster care in these states. A pilot phase of the programme was concluded in June 2018. To ensure programme sustainability and continuity, UNICEF and RELAF developed a handbook that was approved and disseminated by the federal child protection authority to all state child protection authorities. The handbook provides guidelines to establish foster care programmes in other parts of the country, thereby increasing the offer for family-based care, rather than institutional care, to a growing number of children. This contributes to Country Programme Document Output 2.2 on strengthening special protection mechanisms for children deprived of family care.

UNICEF Mexico extended the implementation of alternative care for migrant children, a mode implemented in Tabasco in collaboration with authorities. The first public open-door shelter El Colibri was opened in Tabasco to provide long-term care and protection for asylum-seekers and refugee children with UNICEF support. The model, recognized by the National Council of Governors (32 state governors), promotes the integration of children in the host community and helps them to prepare for an independent life upon exit from the shelter and has been accepted by Campeche, Jalisco, San Luis Potosí and Sonora and the municipality of Palenque, Chiapas. It is as an alternative to detention and is in line with Country Programme Document Output 2.2 on strengthening special protection mechanisms and Outcome 4 on adolescent development.

Child protection in emergencies: Special protection and psychosocial support to children and adolescents affected by natural disasters and migration flows

UNICEF Mexico worked on strengthening institutional mechanisms across sectors for more integrated, equitable policies, programmes and systems to ensure protection of children against violence, abuse and exploitation, including during emergencies, in line with Country Programme Document Outcome 2 on protection of children. Six trainings on child protection in emergencies were designed and delivered by UNICEF in Chiapas, Mexico City, Morelos, Oaxaca and Puebla; 231 government officials attended the workshops and represented the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, DIF, child protection authorities, civil protection authorities, amongst others. The trainings were designed using IASC training guidelines on child protection, mental health and psychosocial support and gender-based violence mainstreaming.

As part of the early recovery phase following the 2017 earthquakes in Mexico, UNICEF Mexico and implementing partners provided psychosocial support to 6,427 children (58 per cent girls and 42 per cent boys), as well as to 1,057 caregivers in 42 child-friendly spaces (child friendly schools). UNICEF Mexico's partner Fútbol Más trained 62 adolescents to become sports instructors. In the context of internal displacement in Chiapas, 251 children attended child friendly school. Rapid child protection assessments were undertaken in Oaxaca following another earthquake, as well as in Sonora and Sinaloa in September after severe flooding in September 2018.

The Children on the Move initiative in Mexico includes targeted interventions to strengthen the mental health and psychosocial support services for children on the move. During 2018, 7,730 children benefited from psychosocial activities in nine shelters located along the migration routes. Mexico faced a new humanitarian emergency in October 2018, as an estimated 10,000 migrants passed across the Guatemalan and Mexican borders, seeking to cross to the USA. UNICEF Mexico responded to the needs of the children and adolescents of the migrant caravans at the southern border, during their travel across the country (including Mexico City), and at the northern border (Tijuana). UNICEF's response entailed coordination, technical assistance, advocacy and direct implementation of: child services pavilions, with Government and civil society partners (Tech Palewi, Futbol Mas, World Vision, CRESER, Save the Children, OXFAM and Cantaro Azul), where children access psychosocial support and protection services; WASH services; nutrition; and early childhood development services. UNICEF also provided technical assistance to child protection authorities and other key actors to: ensure the rapid identification, registration and care for unaccompanied and

separated children; and apply standard procedures and case management to ensure that protective care arrangements were determined following the best interest of the child.

Finally, UNICEF Mexico designed and disseminated tools for migrant children as well as for professional caregivers. All tools were developed following a resilience- and child rights-approach, and include: (1) material for child protection professionals working in shelters on how to conduct age, gender and culturally-sensitive activities to provide psychosocial support; (2) a guide on how to identify and refer cases of sexual abuse, violence, suicidal tendencies and addictions; (3) a child-friendly calendar to help children understand the asylum-seeking procedure in Mexico; (4) a guide to conduct first interviews for children without re-victimization; and (5) child-friendly migration route maps, a deck of cards with their rights and self-care tips, and child-friendly travel book to keep track of their migration experience.

Using these tools, UNICEF strengthened the capacities of the staff who work directly with migrant children to protect and provide psychosocial support in 30 shelters along an important migration route in Mexico. A mental health and psychosocial support network with experts from all over the country was also established. The Ministry of Health, National Autonomous University of Mexico, the National Institute of Psychiatry and PAHO/WHO are members of the network, and working on the development of a distance learning course on psychosocial support for migrant children.

Goal area 4: Every child lives in a safe and clean environment

Children affected by humanitarian emergencies have guaranteed access to safe drinking water and adequate hygiene and sanitation services.

In 2018, 24,345 people affected by humanitarian emergencies (12,019 male and 12,326 female), 90 per cent of whom were children and which includes 22,001 children in earthquake-affected schools, were provided access to safe drinking water and adequate hygiene and sanitation services.

As a follow-up to the 2017 earthquake response, a comprehensive WASH situation analysis was conducted. Results were used to design the WASH early recovery plan, implemented in Chiapas, Oaxaca, Morelos, Guerrero and Puebla, improving WASH services in 104 learning spaces (schools or temporary learning spaces). The early recovery plan, based on a gender-responsive WASH systems' approach and aligned with the Interagency Steering Committee's child protection minimum standards, included access to safe water; water for cleaning facilities; construction of safe, sex- and age-segregated, culturally appropriate toilets; installation of hand-washing facilities, hygiene promotion activities and hygiene kits distribution, implemented by UNICEF with Cántaro Azul, Oxfam, World Vision and SARAR.

As a result, 22,001 children (10,983 boys and 11,018 girls) had access to quality WASH services in schools and temporary learning spaces. Menstrual hygiene management kits were also distributed and short workshops were conducted in schools. A research study about the knowledge, aptitude and practices of the use of WASH installations in rural schools, of 1,536 students in four states, was conducted using the 'risks, attitudes, norms, abilities, and self-regulation' approach methodology. The study included an analysis of the menstrual hygiene management situation at schools in rural areas in

Guerrero, Chihuahua, Chiapas and Oaxaca, in order to identify barriers and improve access and promote menstrual hygiene management. All actions pertaining to menstrual hygiene management and gender-sensitive approaches to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation in schools contribute to Outcome 3 of the Country Programme Document focusing on improving quality primary education for children between six to 11 years, as well as to Result 2 of UNDAF on improving quality education.

The availability of safe drinking water, sanitation facilities and hygiene kits was ensured in response to the Migrant Caravan crisis. In October 2018, an estimated 10,000 migrants entered Mexico in Chiapas to reach Tijuana, in an attempt to cross the US-Mexico border. With Oxfam, UNICEF installed 76 latrines for children and women, 40 handwashing points and 10 bathing spaces, benefitting 1,726 children and 618 women in shelters and resting points. In total, 2,300 families received hygiene kits. These actions were coordinated with the authorities; and 47 officials were trained by UNICEF Mexico in WASH in Emergencies.

These humanitarian WASH activities were developed in coordination with public authorities (Puebla, Morelos, Chiapas and Oaxaca, and municipal level) to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity, as well as in coordination with the WASH working group on a monthly basis in which the National Water Authority and Ministry of Health actively participate. WASH services were provided, as well as government capacity-building activities in WASH, to help Mexico achieve SDG 6 to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. UNICEF implemented WASH in Emergency trainings in Chiapas and Oaxaca, building capacity of 47 people of 23 public institutions (civil protection, [CONAGUA](#), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and child protection authorities).

Disaster risk reduction was brought into WASH implementation in humanitarian assistance and regular programming. Drainage systems were constructed to avoid mosquito-breeding areas; latrines were designed to avoid water surface contamination and to support an increase in water pressure in case of floods; and in Oaxaca, water tanks were protected against strong winds. Rehabilitation and construction of WASH services were accompanied by hygiene promotion activities to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases.

Enhanced capacity of Mexico's education sector in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation

UNICEF Mexico's partnership with the National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change supported development of teaching manuals on climate change with a child-rights approach. The manuals were tested in Veracruz and Mexico City to ensure their appropriateness to support the school curriculum for the 2019-2020 school cycle, and will complement science and technology, history, geography and civics and ethics subjects. By reinforcing climate change capacities in the education community, students will learn of climate change, its affects and how they can address it by modifying and adapting daily behaviours. This responds to SDG Target 13.3 on improving education, and raising awareness and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

In line with Outcome 3 of the Country Programme Document on ensuring quality education and

Outcome 4 on supporting adolescent development and participation, while contributing to the achievement of SDG target 4.A to build and upgrade education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all, a South-South cooperation between India and Mexico on school safety underlined with children's participation was initiated in November 2018. Government officials from Ministry of Education from Chiapas, Oaxaca, Puebla and Morelos were brought to India to learn about the implementation of safe schools and disaster risk reduction. This was followed by an intensive training on education in emergencies in Mexico in December 2018 for state authorities of all earthquake-affected states. The formalization of South-South cooperation between the two countries is aimed for 2019.

Goal area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

Multidimensional child poverty analysis and diagnostics were utilized to shape the agenda of the new Government.

In 2018, UNICEF supported evidence to enrich the formulation and implementation of policies that promote the fulfilment of children's rights. The multidimensional child poverty analysis and diagnostics contributes to UNDAF Direct Effect 1 on Equality, Equity and Social Inclusion by ensuring that data is available to develop effective public policies to reduce child poverty. This data also contributes to Output 1.1 of the Country Programme Document by ensuring that government has access to quality data that enables it to give an equity focus on public policies affecting children.

In this respect, UNICEF developed documents to inform the newly elected federal government authorities regarding the situation of children in Mexico and how poverty and social deprivations are affecting them. UNICEF finalized the SITAN, which provided a comprehensive analysis of the vulnerabilities and deprivations faced by children. The information and analysis provided was given as an input to the ongoing formulation of the National Development Plan 2019-2024. Furthermore, UNICEF supported the development of a subnational SITAN of children and adolescents in Tabasco, which was used by SIPINNA to promote state policies for children.

UNICEF Mexico maintains its solid partnership with the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policies (CONEVAL), the government institution responsible for measuring poverty and evaluating key social development programmes. Given the incoming Government's need to have updated policy analysis and knowledge to guide their priorities, UNICEF and CONEVAL jointly developed a child poverty policy brief that details key deprivations affecting children and offers relevant considerations to tackle the situation. The document will be utilized in 2019 to guide policy dialogue with the new Government, especially with the Social Wellbeing Ministry on its efforts to reduce exclusion and close coverage gaps of key social programmes.

Social programme delivery and social protection of the most vulnerable children are enhanced through evidence and advocacy

UNICEF Mexico supported evidence-generation to enrich the formulation of social policies for children. This contributes to UNDAF Direct Effect 1 by ensuring evidence and best practices are considered within government authorities in their effort to reduce poverty in the country; and to Output 1.1 of the Country Programme Document by ensuring that Government develops public policies that

are better targeted at children and more equity focused.

For more effective social programme delivery, especially for children under five years old, UNICEF Mexico developed a strategic paper on considerations for the development of an early childhood development policy in Mexico. This was instrumental in initiating strategic dialogue with government authorities and the civil society partners who advocating for comprehensive early childhood development. These dialogues encouraged partner alignment on messages and recommendations delivered to new government authorities which helped make a strong case for an early childhood development policy.

UNICEF Mexico completed a study that identified the multi-dimensional impacts from the 2017 earthquakes on children. The study noted the absence of a comprehensive response to the needs of earthquake-affected children, especially the lack of effective social protection mechanisms. Findings are being utilized as the basis for further technical research and dialogue in 2019 that will help design a social protection mechanism to respond to children in humanitarian situations.

Advocacy for public resource allocation to programmes and services for children

UNICEF Mexico worked intensively to enhance the allocation of public resources to strengthen child protection mechanisms. This contributes to UNDAF Direct Effect 1 by ensuring evidence and best practices are considered within government authorities in their effort to reduce poverty, as well as to Outputs 1.1 and 2.2 of the Country Programme Document, by ensuring that government develops public policies that are better targeted to children and support the development of a special child protection system that prevents and addresses all forms of violence against children.

A study and costing exercise of the functionality of child protection authorities, a key figure in charge of children's special protection and rights restitution plans, was conducted by UNICEF Mexico in 2017 and disseminated in 2018. The study found that child protection authorities received only 27 per cent of the funding required to reach an optimal level of service. To generate awareness of the study's findings, UNICEF advocated with the SE-SIPINNA, key government institutions and members of Congress on the need to allocate more resources to child protection authorities at all levels. Advocacy actions resulted in the allocation of US\$ 640,000 by policy makers from Chihuahua to the state child protection authorities. Similar advocacy actions will be initiated in other states in 2019.

Improved data collection methodologies in national surveys to enhance monitoring of child and family well-being

UNICEF Mexico provided technical support to the National Institute for Public Health in the development of an early childhood module, which integrates key Multiple Indicator Survey Cluster (MISC) indicators in the national health and nutrition survey (Encuesta Nacional de Salud y Nutrición), including a specific sample for Prosperafamilies (the main cash transfer programme). Results will be available in 2019. This contributes to UNDAF Direct Effect 1 by ensuring that data is available to develop effective public policies to reduce poverty. UNICEF Mexico worked with UNICEF headquarters and the global MICS team to field test the early childhood development index as a contribution to the global measurement on early childhood development in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNICEF sent proposals to the 2018 National Census of Government, Public Security and Penitentiary System, advocating for disaggregation and addition of key items to improve the information on juvenile justice. With advocacy by UNICEF Mexico, National Institute of Statistics and Geography now disaggregates data on child victims of crime, with a new limit set at 18 years in the National Census which is conducted every year. The result of this work contributes to Output 1.1 of the Country Programme Document by ensuring that Government has disaggregated quality data that enables it to give an equity focus on public policies affecting children.

With regards to birth registration, UNICEF and National Institute of Statistics and Geography published the study on the status of birth registration in Mexico, which includes updated information on timely registration at municipal level and a geo-referenced analysis of the accessibility to civil registry offices. UNICEF, jointly with the national identity authority (RENAPO), developed software to harmonize birth registration and other civil acts in the country. The software could reach two million children a year.

Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

In terms of political advocacy, as a core part of the strategy to implement the current country programme, UNICEF Mexico increased networking during the government transition to establish contacts and a close working relationship with the new Government. Other activities were delayed as a result of the focus on advocacy. After the 2018 elections, the government transition meant that the out-going administration became less active which slowed down the implementation of the work plan, but it also was an opportunity to sensitize the incoming administration on child rights' issues. A good practice that evolved was the establishment of an 'elections task force' in the country office, where information was shared on a weekly basis and advocacy decisions made based on the rapidly evolving situation. It is an example of a task force and working mechanism that the country office should try to replicate on other issues and in similar evolving contexts.

Three of the four presidential candidates signed a commitment on the UNICEF premises to implement child rights policies if elected. This important achievement is unprecedented in the history of UNICEF Mexico. The country office organized the effort immediately upon the start of the presidential campaign, making it easier to mobilize the candidates, to join the signing ceremony at the UNICEF Mexico office. The strategy of seeking available contacts was a good lesson.

With the intensity of the transition to a new Government, UNICEF Mexico's good practice was to position and make visible priority issues and actions for the protection of the rights of children and adolescents through the use of evidence, tools and concrete solutions. For example, the Agenda for Children and Adolescents, a brief document UNICEF Mexico produced, provided five priorities with solid evidence and action required for each. Likewise, a document on the actions required to care for children and adolescents in an emergency context---in this case, the migration crisis---positioned UNICEF as a strategic actor and an organization equipped the incoming authorities.

In general, and particularly in times of transition and changes in government, the demand for UNICEF training on children's and adolescents' rights is great, with limited capacity for response. In 2018, a more coherent and prioritized child-rights' strengthening initiative for civil servants was initiated, involving SE-SIPINNA, Save the Children, UNICEF Mexico and two non-government organizations. The initiative consists of four, 120-hour online courses on child rights for up to 500 civil servants per cohort. While this is the most strategic initiative thus far, it still requires additional investment and resources dedicated from UNICEF for it to be a viable and sustainable solution.

At the sub-national level, a best practice strategy involved technical consultants in the field who addressed specific issues, generated results, and enabled UNICEF to have a direct benefit on the lives of children and adolescents. The work in the field also generated evidence to bring projects to scale and that verified the application of the models, the protocols and other tools promoted by UNICEF. However, as regards the sub-national strategy in general, new approaches would help UNICEF have effective inter-sector presence and also incidence at state level as well.

In 2017, UNICEF Mexico responded quickly and comprehensively to two massive earthquakes that struck Mexico within 12 days of each other. Building on the immediate experience of this emergency, and two after-action reviews UNICEF conducted, ensured a more agile and swift response to the migrant caravans from Central America that passed through Mexico in 2018. For example, supplies were quickly procured as needs were clearly established; the country office was equipped with experienced human resources who were working on rehabilitation of the earthquake response; stand-by programme partnerships had been established; internal procedures, including reporting, meetings, roles and responsibilities, were activated quickly and with experience; and UNICEF staff were able to apply their recent experience gained from the earthquake response. These accomplishments were a testament to the country office staff quickly learning lessons from the previous emergency experience. Despite the fact that the caravan was a complicated emergency, UNICEF Mexico was able to respond on different fronts simultaneously and accommodate, literally, a moving target.

Regarding communications and advocacy, UNICEF Mexico made a strategic shift to specifically address messages and message forms to specific audiences. Live streams and short video clips were recorded for posting on the internet. As a result of strategic relations with media outlets, the UNICEF Mexico presence rose in the top-tier media by 289 per cent compared to 2017.

In terms of internal processes, UNICEF Mexico followed its ambitious PRIME plan that contemplated 18 studies, evaluations and surveys. With focus shifted to the incoming Government, which had been difficult to anticipate and plan for, the bar was set unrealistically high for PRIME in 2018 and a number of PRIME activities were delayed. The effort that was required to manage, supervise and provide feedback for each outsourced study or evaluation was not sufficiently assessed. In 2019, more realistic planning will be considered.

The fifth year of the Country Programme Document's implementation reached a point of maturity, particularly in terms of strengthening child-protection mechanisms. The achievements of 2018 would have not been possible without the progress made since 2014. The work of UNICEF Mexico has proven that a well-constructed vision results in life-changing programmes for children in the country.

The sound experience provided a solid basis to design the new country programme document, together with the Government and partners from civil society and academia. UNICEF Mexico will continue to fulfil child rights in the country, leaving no child behind.

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