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Update on the context and situation of children

Nicaragua is a middle-income country that has made significant economic and social progress in recent years. In the last Census conducted in 2015, the National Institute of Information for Development (INIDE) estimates the population of Nicaragua in 6.46 million inhabitants. Children and adolescents represent 37 percent (2.37 million). Nearly 60 percent of population live in urban areas.

The country experimented an accelerated macroeconomic recession because of the socio-political crisis that Nicaragua is going through since 2018. After eight consecutive years of favourable macroeconomic performance, average annual growth rate of 5.1 percent between 2010 and 2017, and important socio-economic advances -poverty reduction from 48.3 to 24.9 percent from 2005 to 2016 and fall of the GINI of consumption from 0.41 to 0.33, in 2018 the Central Bank of Nicaragua reported a severe economic downturn -fall of 3.8 percent of GDP-, with a tendency to further decrease between 5 to 10 percent in 2019 and 0.2 percent in 2020. The situation is also affecting other economic indicators as GDP per capita (-6.2 percent), social security contributors (-10.5), and open unemployment rate 6.2.

In Nicaragua, censuses and surveys in the social sector have been discontinued, causing a lack of updated statistical information. The only two national surveys producing information on children were conducted in 2012 "Demography and Health", and 2014 "Standard of Living Survey". Administrative records are the main source of information.

The access of households to public social services has been reduced, due to the fiscal and budget deterioration, expressed in the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit (MHCP) reports: i) reduction in tax revenues of 5.6 percent in 2018 and 11.2 percent in the first quarter of 2019; ii) the stagnation of public spending with an increase of only 0.4 percent in 2018 and reduction of 26.3 percent in the first quarter of 2019; iii) the low increase of social investment of 1.3 percent in 2018, and its reduction of 34.3 percent in the first quarter of 2019; and, iv) reduction of 3.3 percent in the direct public investment in children in 2018 (the decrease of public investment per child was 5.4 percent).

In Nicaragua, based on MoH's administrative records, under-five mortality fell from 67.5 to 12.3 per 1,000 live births between 2011 and 2019. Despite remarkable progress in reducing maternal mortality, there remain challenges to be addressed, such as cultural beliefs and practices that prevent the use of services, geographic barriers to access, gender violence and teenage pregnancy.

The last MoH's nutrition national survey conducted in 2018 indicates that overweight among under 5 children increased from 8.1 to 12.7 percent between 2009 and 2018. Obesity has a rate of 3.5 percent, and obesity in fertile women has specially increased in 17.2 percent from 2009 to 2018, with relevant presence in urban areas (66%). Chronic malnutrition fell from 18.1 percent in 2009 to 12.4 percent in 2018, but acute malnutrition has increased from 1 percent in 2010 to 4 percent of children under 5 years of age in 2018 at national level. Early initiation of breastfeeding (within one hour of birth) has increased from 54.4 to 77.3 percent and exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of a child's life is at 46 percent.

While the Early Childhood Development (ECD) services provided by the MoH's monitoring and promotion of growth and development programme covers 100 percent of children under 1 year of age and 62 percent of children under 4 years of age, more effort is required in early stimulation and comprehensive care. The barriers are: inadequate interinstitutional coordination mechanisms and poor coverage of protection services.

In the past five years, considerable progress has been made in primary and secondary education for ensuring free access, expanding coverage and improving quality. The gross average enrolment rate in the second stage of initial education (children aged 4 to 6) increased from 54.5 to 68.8 percent (source: MoE administrative data), reflecting an improvement between 2010 and 2019. For primary education, the gross enrolment rate in 2019 was more than 109.3 percent (indicating the capture of children of all ages, including underage and overage children) and the rate for secondary education increased from 67.9 to 78.2 percent. However, strengthening the quality of education remains a challenge, as doing so involves making further improvements to schooling infrastructure, providing teacher training -it is estimated that around 4.26 percent of initial education teachers, 12.96 percent of primary school teachers and 5.03 percent of secondary school teachers (source: MoE, July 2017), do not have a teaching qualification-, updating teaching materials, expanding and strengthening existing flexible modalities of education, and increasing the involvement of families in their children's education.

According to the Legal Forensic Institute (LFI)'s report 2016-2017, published in 2019, 24.4 percent of the 121,148 forensic analyses involved cases of physical and psychological violence against women, girls and female adolescents, 27.4 percent of which were classified as sexual violence, being 26.5 percent of them under 13 years old. 36.4 percent of cases of sexual abuse against girls and adolescents occurred at home. In Nicaragua, sexual violence is a taboo subject and the sexual abuse of children and adolescents is considered a "family matter". Social perceptions of age and gender condition this type

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of violence, which is also affected by the lack of knowledge of positive parenting practices among families. The highest risk group for cases of sexual violence includes girls and adolescents of primary schools. The main aggressors are members of the family—including parents, uncles and grandparents—and the crimes are mainly committed at home.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that, due to the socio-political situation, since April 2018, more than 80,000 people fled the crisis (52,330 people have applied for asylum in Europe, Central America and North America and other 30,285 are waiting for applying in Costa Rica). The migration trends are likely to increase because of the slowdown of economic activities and international economic sanctions, such as the approval of Nica Act by the US Government—principal market for Nicaraguan exports.

Major contributions and drivers of results

UNICEF Nicaragua started this year the implementation of the 2019-2023 Country Programme of Cooperation (CP). In line with SDGs 2,3,5,6 and UNICEF Strategic Plan goal areas 1 and 4, the Early Child Survival and Development (ECD) programme component seeks to improve national capacities to increase coverage and improve the quality of services that favor the survival and full development of children under 6 years of age, especially those in situations of exclusion, as well as to strengthen parents and caregivers knowledge and tools to practice positive parenting in the family and community environments.

According to MoH's reports, UNICEF contributed to reduce under 5 mortality from 19.7 to 12.3 per thousand live births between 2018-2019 and to reduce neonatal mortality from 10.7 to 8.3 per thousand in the same period in 10 Local Systems for Integrated Health Care (SILAIS, acronym in Spanish) prioritized by UNICEF's cooperation. Also, the percentage of births attended by qualified personnel increased from 88 to 90 percent from 2018 to 2019, out of the 46,300 live births that were registered in UNICEF supported areas, 41,670 were delivered in health facilities. UNICEF has also contributed to reduce stunting rate from 12.8 to 11.1 percent and acute malnutrition from 5.4 to 5.2 percent in the same period and mentioned geographic areas. Also, the number of prioritized municipalities with "non-optimal" (below 90 percent) immunization coverage has been reduced from 19 to 16 between 2016-2019.

To achieve these results, UNICEF provided support to strengthen the MoH capacities to deliver quality health and nutrition services, positively impacting on child mortality, nutrition and immunization rates. With UNICEF support, the MoH designed and implemented a plan of action to reduce child mortality, which includes improving health facilities' newborn services in the 10 prioritized SILAIS. In this context, 2,000 health workers were trained on nutrition and feeding standards for pregnant women and children; equipment was also provided for regional hospitals to increase access to specialized tests for children with disabilities for timely detection and care, improving the living conditions of children who don't need to travel to Managua for diagnostic tests, reducing missed opportunities.

UNICEF collaborated with the Ministry of Family, Adolescence and Childhood (MoFAC), to increase from 13,098 (2018) to 14,851 (2019) the number of girls and boys under six years of age who receive comprehensive care for their development, using the institutional modality. In addition, the number of mothers, fathers or guardians with sons and daughters under 6 years old who received training on parental competencies increased from 3,542 to 6,072. This has benefited 50 thousand children, mainly children under 3 years, to receive early stimulation and receptive care from their parents, exceeding the expected goal which was 40 thousand children. According to the baseline, Child Development Centers (CDCs) did not have a learning evaluation record in 2018, nowadays 39 percent of children attending CDCs have such a record.

With UNICEF's support, the MoE through the Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN), developed and implemented a postgraduate course on "Early Education with emphasis on child development", aimed at 200 staff (teachers and pedagogical advisors), which will benefit hundreds of children throughout the country. Using the virtual modality, teachers were trained in areas such as the dimensions of child development, brain development in early childhood, the role of the family in the context of child development, school environments, project-based learning, among others, to contribute to the effective development of children aged 3 to 5 years.

In line with SDGs 4,6,12 and UNICEF Strategic Plan goal area 2, the quality and equitable education programme component seeks to reinforce technical capacities of the MoE to guarantee inclusive, quality education, whereby children and adolescents, especially those from more vulnerable populations, have access to remain in and perform successfully in school. It also contributes for children, adolescents, families and communities to participate in the creation of comprehensive education spaces that promote to quality education with gender equity and safe and protective school environments.

In this framework, UNICEF contributed to ensure access to school of the most vulnerable groups, such as working children, children living in remote areas, children who for one reason or another are unable to attend regular school, UNICEF supported the MoE's special programs in primary and secondary education. To this end, [170 primary school teachers](#), who

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work with around 2,690 primary students, were trained on scientific and methodological teaching approaches, considering the particularities of the targeted student groups that are clustered in "cycles" (1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles to complete 'primary education), they meet once a week (Saturdays) and occasionally benefit from mid-week teaching support to provide follow up to their learning process.

In addition, 190 education advisors at regional and municipal levels have worked together to identify ways to use and produce training material using social media and the MoE's web site, with the objective to spread the knowledge among secondary school teachers on different teaching methodologies. By having access to digital material directly from the source, the MoE ensures that the knowledge is passed on to teachers without filters that may alter the content.

This year, the MoE also embarked on the task to harmonize the curricula being taught at the eight Teachers Institutes and the one being used in primary education. MoE came to the realization that Teacher Institutes were not effectively preparing the new teachers to take on the task of developing the curricula that had been designed for primary schools. Four workshops were conducted, where 53 staff, among teacher trainers, pedagogical advisors and national education officials, worked on reviewing, adapting, incorporating contents in the different subjects, redefining competencies and indicators of achievement, defining the new teachers' profile, more in tune with what is expected from teachers in the new era.

Another important UNICEF contribution was to help develop leadership, managerial and pedagogical skills of school principals around the country. To support this effort, more than 150 school principals were trained, aiming to develop their technical capacities on areas such as pedagogical mediation, school conflict resolution, facilitation and evaluation of teachers training processes, for which the expertise from the Nicaraguan Autonomous National University (UNAN) was provided. As leaders in their territory, school principals, targeted through this training, are in charge of conducting monthly teachers planning, evaluation and training sessions, on which, most of the success of the school year depends on.

This year UNICEF continued to serve as the coordinator of the Education Local Group (ELG), a platform that is required by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), to help monitor the design, implementation and evaluation of education plans in countries. During the year, a GPE Washington mission to Nicaragua was facilitated, as well as three meetings of the ELG and coordinating meetings with the Ministry of Education. As result of these meetings, new members to the ELG were incorporated, including representations of local and international civil society. At the end of the year, a new ELG coordinator was elected. UNICEF continues serving as the coordinator for the Education Donors Group.

In line with SDGs 1,3,4,5,8,16 and UNICEF Strategic Plan goal area 3, the child protection against violence programme component is oriented to ensure that children and adolescents, especially the most vulnerable, will grow up in a protective environment that fosters the restitution of rights against all types of violence, abuse and exploitation. In this framework, the programme contributed to strengthen national capacities to prevent all types of violence with emphasis in sexual violence against children. It included strengthening technical skills of institutional officials, generation of evidence on violence against children, reinforcing inter-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination and direct work with children and their families at community level through the volunteer strategy.

In close collaboration with the ECD programme component, it has provided technical and financial support to MoFAC for implementing the "Care for Child Development" package focused on the prevention of violence in early childhood; developing technical staff's competences at the subnational level. UNICEF and MoFAC, have promoted the participation of parents in the caring and receptive care of their under-5 years old children. A total of 4,000 fathers, mothers and caregivers were trained to develop parental skills, which has motivated the involvement of "men" in the upbringing of their children with tenderness and violence prevention.

In collaboration with the Education programme component, it contributed to the implementation of the MoE's [Counseling of Educational Communities Strategy](#), which so far benefited 800 thousand children through training and follow up to the school community (teachers, parents and students) at national, departmental, municipal levels. The training centered around issues such as school violence prevention, emphasizing the promotion of personal values; the prevention of sexual abuse, bullying, the carrying and use of weapons at school, use and consumption of alcohol, drugs and other substances; and the early detection and monitoring of risk situations in the educational community. It also provided technical and financial support for the systematization of the Counseling of Educational Communities (MoE) and Family Counseling programs, looking at children and adolescents as active participants and protagonists. This exercise showed the relevance of the programs in the prevention of violence and the importance of uniting families and the educational community.

In relation to [evidence generation](#), the Legal Forensic Institute (LFI), with UNICEF's technical and financial support, developed and launched a new study on "[Physical, sexual and psychological violence against children and adolescents in Nicaragua. Forensic approach: 2016-2017](#)", which reveals that children between 7 and 12 are the main victims of violence. Girls and adolescent women are the main victims of violence in general (physical, psychological and sexual), in the group of adolescents, women represent 69.9 percent; In the childhood group, girls represent 61.8 percent. In relation to sexual violence, the study reveals that girls and adolescent women represent 72.8 percent of the total victims. Most sexual

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aggressors (94.6 percent) are family members or persons known and trusted by the families.

UNICEF has provided technical and financial assistance to help the Supreme Court of Justice, MoFAC, National Police, LFI, MoH and MoE to work in a more articulated way and to strengthen the system for the protection of children and adolescents against violence, to reinforce the Comprehensive Care Model for children victims of sexual violence, through which 351 children were attended and treated with special measures. In this same context, an inter-institutional commission was summoned to design three protocols: a) On comprehensive care for children and adolescents who have been victims of sexual violence for integral attention and coordination, b) for comprehensive approach and forensic medical evaluation and c) Standardized protocol for judicial action in criminal trials for sexual violence against children or adolescents. The institutions involved in the formulation and application of these protocols are the MoFAC, the Supreme Court of Justice, the LFI, the National Police, the Public Attorney's Office, the MoH, the MoE and other rights-holders entities.

[A C4D strategy to prevent the risk of irregular migration and promote child protection](#) was designed based on the IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) and community diagnoses. The C4D strategy "Yo Camino", which provides relevant information on regular migration processes and on the risks of irregular migration, using ludic methodologies, was implemented putting especial emphasis on the rights of migrant children and adolescents.

UNICEF Nicaragua's volunteering strategy had an important and direct contribution to the prevention of sexual abuse against children. In fact, through interventions designed and carried out by university student volunteers, 1,005 children and adolescents from eight departments and regions improved their knowledge on behaviors and practices to protect themselves from sexual violence. In partnership with eight universities, the CO developed a decentralized model and an [attractive methodology](#) to support 320 volunteers organized into 14 groups in formulating and implementing their interventions. The high level of autonomy of the groups and the responsibilities taken by their coordinators were particularly appreciated by the volunteers and gave them the opportunity to develop new skills and improve their commitment with Children's rights as it has been demonstrated by monitoring and evaluation tools.

UNICEF actively contributed to position the rights of children with disabilities in the public agenda, which demanded an inter-programmatic and intersectoral approach, involving government institutions, nongovernment organizations, as well as parents and families at community level. In this framework, UNICEF provided support to the MoE to develop didactic materials, among them, [10 video-books](#) aimed at bringing national literature closer to the children with hearing disabilities. These video-books are meant to be used in regular schools, for children with or without disabilities, to enjoy tales, poems, stories from one of the most famous Nicaraguan poet, Ruben Dario. The stories are told in the Nicaraguan sign language and in Spanish, and they are also closed captioned, so that, in an inclusive environment, everybody can enjoy the readings. With this initiative, Nicaragua opens up to the possibility to develop textbooks using the [universal design](#).

Besides this, UNICEF supported the MoE, through the UNAN, to design and implement a postgraduate training for 31 teachers and key education staff from municipal and departmental education offices. The training sought to, among other things, identifying and/or creating and putting into practice pedagogical methods and tools to improve the learning outcomes of [children](#) with visual and hearing impairment, children with attention deficit hyperactivity and autism spectrum disorders, children with dyslexia, [among others](#).

Additionally, 475 fathers and mothers with children with disabilities were trained to provide early stimulation to children aged 0 to 5, at home, observing the stages of child development. To this end, the MoE trained 43 teachers and developed a teacher's guide and a manual for parents on child development and developmental disorders and / or disability.

Moreover, UNICEF and a local NGO-the Association of Parents with children with disabilities "Los Pipitos" developed the strategy "Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID)" in departments with the highest registered number of cases of Zika or Congenital Zika Syndrome (CZS). The strategy focused on "family empowerment", creating a stimulating, sensitive and loving family environment that promotes children's development, by exploring and maximizing the use of resources from their everyday life. As result, out of the proposed target population, 90 percent (180) of children have improved their socio emotional, sensorial and motor development, and have had access to Los Pipitos specialized services for rehabilitation in their family environment. Also, 100 percent (200) of families now carry out disability prevention activities at home, 156 community leaders developed rehabilitation skills, and, as the intervention promoted the participation of fathers/grandfathers to care for their children, 100 percent (128) of them were actively engaged.

UNICEF programme of cooperation also contributed to strengthen the country's capacities in emergency preparedness as a cross-cutting interinstitutional issue. To strengthen the country's capacity to ensure that the rights of children are met during emergencies, UNICEF Nicaragua, with LACRO support, invested in conducting 5 workshops to train 330 government officials from various institutions (the MoE, the MoH, the MoFAC, the National System for Emergency Prevention, Mitigation and Response - SINAPRED) and staff from the NGOs members of the Global Movement for Children, in the following areas: [Education in Emergencies](#) - [how to ensure education to children as soon as possible after an emergency hits](#); [Early](#)

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Childhood in Emergencies – how to plan for comprehensive care; Child protection in Emergencies – Psycho-social activities to reduce stress during emergencies; and Disaster Risk Reduction Management – how to use tools for damage assessment and needs analysis (DANA).

The following additional results can be highlighted: i) The relevant work UNICEF developed in emergency preparedness has been recognized by government and nongovernment institutions. For this, it was invited to organize a [child protection emergency scenario](#) in the regional (Central America and Dominican Republic) emergency response simulation exercise, led by SINAPRED; ii) It contributed to reinforce the SINAPRED's Emergency Preparedness National Institute (INPAE) with equipment and development of the first online course on Emergencies Journalistic Coverage with a child rights approach; iii) SINAPRED's C4D Strategy was designed aiming at promoting a comprehensive risk prevention culture, providing communicational tools to promote social and personal behaviors to act in a consistent manner for protecting human lives. Implementation of the strategy starts in 2020. Internally, the UNICEF Nicaragua office has updated the Emergency Preparedness Platform (EPP), which now includes a social crisis risk.

The CO contributed strengthening results-based management capacities of implementing partners. This has reinforced partner institutions' ownership and interest to measure programme performance based on established indicators and goals. As a result, UNICEF was asked to support the evaluation of the emblematic Program "Love for the Smallest Ones" in 2020, which aims to provide integrated care to children under five. Also, the mid-year and end-year Programme reviews were improved, introducing innovative methodologies, with greater participation of partners and generating greater government ownership around the Programme of Cooperation.

With UNICEF technical support: i) Ministry of Finance and Public Credit (MHCP) started to develop a system to measure and monitor public investment in children; ii) National Institute for Development Information (INIDE) and Central Bank of Nicaragua (BCN) have made important steps towards implementing the Multi-indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and; iii) Nicaragua is now part of the Regional Working Group on Children Statistics, which allows it to be aware of regional trends and dynamics.

The CO has strongly progressed towards performance excellence with special emphasis on strengthening staff career development and wellbeing, creating a harmonious, respectful, transparent and productive office environment, in which prevails a horizontal and transparent management, with zero tolerance to unethical behaviors such as abuse of authority, sexual harassment, conflicts of interest and fraud. For this, various staff members were given opportunities to participate in stretch assignments and technical missions to support other COs in the region, as well as in career development courses and workshops. The CO conducted various moments of reflection, including a one-and-half day retreat, on the core values of the organization and ethics, stressing the need for each staff member to incorporate ethical behaviors in their day-to-day relationships with their colleagues in the office, family and counterparts. The new premises to which UNICEF moved in at the beginning of the year, also contributed to improve staff wellbeing, communication and integration among staff members.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

1. Lessons learned and innovations

In a sensitive socio-political context, UNICEF used its outreach power to boost innovative partnerships that created new opportunities to promote Children's rights. The CO reinforced its leading role in diversified alliances with community organizations, the Global Movement for Children, Universities and the private sector. This approach allowed us to implement innovative methodologies with a wide range of players. For instance, 147 children, adolescents, parents and judicial facilitators co-designed playful methodological contents to prevent sexual violence and improve a user-friendly access to justice. And 145 professionals from different organizations, as well as children and adolescents learned about the Sports for Development "Partidi" methodology which aims to promote reflection and learning about values such as nonviolence, nondiscrimination, respect, etc [while playing football](#). Also, the involvement of the private sector proved to be crucial to strengthen the skills of 100 young people during the [Generation Unlimited Youth Challenge](#), intended to promote innovation and entrepreneurship among adolescents and youth.

These new partnerships also gave the possibility for UNICEF to establish a more direct contact with communities and to develop pertinent children's participation initiatives. The alliance with the Global Movement for Children for organizing the [30th anniversary of the CRC](#), allowed for the voice of 1,041 children and adolescents to be heard through a national consultation. The participation of 30 adolescents with disabilities in this national consultation and in the panel discussion and cultural activities of the central event must be highlighted.

The integration of complementary partners under UNICEF's umbrella represents an important opportunity that must be fully exploited in the future to progress towards the CP results, especially those aiming at improving community environment.

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In addition, UNICEF external communication proved to be crucial for positioning children rights through the traditional media, online and social networks. As shown in the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) below, UNICEF has once again stood out as a leader in this matter in the country:

- Leader among the UN System in Nicaragua with more fans and followers in the social networks in Nicaragua.
- Media leader against comparative organizations, with more fans and followers on Twitter and second place on Facebook.
- Reach in social networks with more than 3,000,000 users throughout the year.
- Number of potential impressions in online and print media: 32,820,220 and TV and radio: 1,372,705.
- Share of voice of all stories on children related issues in broadcast media (TV and radio) measured against comparative organizations: 52%, on social media: 42%, and online and print media: 48%.
- Percentage of online coverage of UNICEF that is positive: 72%
- The estimated publicity (the costs if UNICEF had to buy the publications) was around 900 thousand US dollars.

This year UNICEF has played a leadership role in institutionalizing communication for development (C4D) as a key cross-cutting issue for achieving programmatic results for children. The baseline, which is expected to be completed at the beginning of 2020, will be crucial to fine tune strategies and to measure results in terms of behavior changes in coming years. During 2019, the following C4D strategies were designed: (i) "Parenting in Values Strategy" that will be implemented by the MoH and the MoFAC. The communication materials have already been designed and printed. In addition, a strategy on immunizations was designed, which will be implemented in 11 municipalities with lower coverage in the most remote areas of the country; (ii) In partnership with IOM, a digital strategy and community actions were developed for the Prevention of Irregular Migration, aimed at children, adolescents and parents, with emphasis on four municipalities in the South of the country with high migration flow; (iii) together with WFP and PAHO, a comprehensive risk prevention C4D strategy was designed. More than 40 staff members from 17 institutions belonging to SINAPRED were trained on C4D concepts and participated in the entire strategy design process. All strategies will be implemented starting next year.

Besides the achievements described in a previous section, it is important to mention that an evaluation of the [volunteering strategy](#) was carried out. It gave the opportunity to draw interesting lessons learned and identify strong opportunities to be developed in the future. The evaluators positively assessed UNICEF Nicaragua's volunteering strategy and, in their conclusions, defined it as a pertinent, efficient, effective and potentially scalable initiative. They highlighted its contribution to programmatic results in preventing sexual abuse with a strong link and complementarity with C4D interventions. In that regard, they were able to detect behavior changes in children and adolescents who participated in activities implemented by volunteer groups. They also observed that this initiative is forming young change agents who are fully committed with Children's rights. They recommend exploring how the CO's volunteering strategy can contribute to other programmatic priorities and strengthen its link with the Generation Unlimited Agenda.

The celebration of the [30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), in which around 1,041 children and adolescents participated and made their contributions on progress, challenges and opportunities regarding their rights, clearly showed the importance of promoting children and adolescents participation so as their voices are heard. The Final Joint Declaration mentioned the "enrolment in the school up to the very last girl and boy in Nicaragua" as one of the main challenges they face. They also mentioned as challenges: receiving a quality education, timely access to medicines, more public schools for children with disabilities, while prioritising children in rural areas, and the Caribbean Autonomous Region.

In terms of the UN inter-agency collaboration and promotion of the SDGs, some activities on this regard were carried out; However, further efforts need to be done to better position them in the country's strategic development agenda.

The absence of a Resident Coordinator/RC Office since September 2015 did not favor the UN agencies to prepare a joint report to this year's UPR. A total of 341 recommendations were issued to Nicaragua.