1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

• Government is implementing a new early childhood development (ECD) programme with a community-based approach still in design through local volunteer promoters, integrating actions from Ministries of Health, Family and Education. A national campaign ‘Amor para los mas Chiquitos’ is being designed to reach every home in Nicaragua with key ECD messages.

• The implementation of norms for inclusive education as part of National Education Strategy led to an increased number of children with disabilities in regular education programmes. Flexible modalities are also being introduced to reach the poorest and most excluded population as part of the “sixth grade battle” strategy, aiming to reach MDG 2 based on an equity approach.

• Changes in roles and responsibilities of the National System for Preparedness and response to Disasters (SINAPRED) are being introduced with the proposal of a new Law. Although not yet approved, the Ministry of Family would be held responsible to protect children in shelters, formerly assigned to Ministry of Education with intensive support from UNICEF. During the last emergency, the flooding of Lake Managua, support to create capacities and transfer of knowledge and resources between institutions was required, delaying adequate response.

• Children demand greater efforts regarding domestic and sexual violence. In all participation spaces, this is their most heartily felt problem. Although several institutions are pursuing different programmes, no national action plan is in place. Children perceive they are not listened nor trusted by their parents and that perpetrators are left with no punishment.

• A new alliance with IMF and UNDP is being built. With the IMF, it was agreed to intensify collaboration through the exchange of information, analysis, and mutual support, in particular regarding social spending, frameworks to analyse its effectiveness and strengthen the visibility of the social component in the Government’s economic program. With UNDP two joint initiatives were agreed to: support the Office of Economic Studies of the Finance Ministry to introduce human development and children’s rights perspective in economic study initiatives. and for a modernisation of the National Assembly project to improve budget analysis by the Economic Commission.

2 COUNTRY SITUATION AS AFFECTING CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Poverty fell from 48.3% to 42.5% and extreme poverty from 17.2% to 14.6% between 2005 and 2009[1]; disparities in rural poverty in the central region and Caribbean Coast reach 76%[2], where the indigenous population is concentrated. Child poverty (deprivation) accounted 56.2% in 2005, often (59.1%) due to inadequate housing. Some improvement in GINI indicators was reported, although unequal distribution of income still means that 20% of homes accumulate just 6.8% of the country’s total income, while
the wealthiest 20% claims 44.5%.3[3] Per capita social public spending rose from US$82 in 2004 to US$140.90 in 2009, mainly in health and education, despite reductions for social services and social welfare. University education increased by 7%; primary and secondary education increased 1.4% and 1.8%, respectively. Public spending on health increased from 6.4% of the GDP in 2004 to 10.5% in 2009, mainly social security. The Ministry of Health’s budget increased from 3.0% to 3.8% of the GDP in the same period. In 2009 preschool services reached 53.3% of young children; net primary schooling 87.1%. for the-three per cent of children starting first grade reached sixth grade; primary school repetition was 10.5%, 44% of which occurred in first grade. Enrolment for children with disabilities4[4] in regular programmes increased from 3,441 in 2007 to 11,233 in 2010. Chronic infant malnutrition fell from 25.8% in 2001 to 21.7% in 2006; with disparities of over 30% in four departments5[5]. Neonatal mortality dropped from 20 per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 16 in 2007, increasing its relative weight with respect to total infant deaths. Mortality among children under five was 35 per 1,000 live births in 2007, although the rate is over the national average in 12 of the country’s departments; the highest rates are found in RAAN and RAAS, Jinotega, Chontales, Carazo and Matagalpa. The national HIV incidence rate doubled from 7.6 per 100,000 in 2006 to 15.1 in 2009. Prevalence is especially high in Chinandega with 34.4, Managua with 27.4, RAAN with 20.8, and Masaya with 19.4. Mother-to-child HIV transmission dropped from 38.5% in 2006 to 13% in 2009. Pregnant women with HIV receiving anti-retrovirals increased from 16.4% in 2006 to 51% in 2009. At the end of 2009, 87% of children and adolescents infected with HIV were still alive and receiving treatment 12 months after initiating antiretroviral therapy (ART); 46% of children born to mothers with HIV had timely access to treatment in line with the clinical protocol, rising from 25% in 2008. According to the Joint Monitoring Programme for 2008, potable water coverage in Nicaragua reaches 85%, and 52% have sanitation services. But disparities are evident: 98% of the urban population, but only 68% of the rural population access drinking water; 68% of the urban population has access sanitation in 2008, compared to just 37% of the rural population. According to National Police data, 62,453 crimes were reported in 2008, of which 57.5% were reported against women, 6.8% against boys and 11.9% against girls under the age of 18. This marks an increase of cases against children of 12.8% compared to 2007. The main crimes against women were misdemeanours (55.5%), injuries (24.6%) and rape (5.1%); 66.4% of rapes were against girls. It is estimated that over 700,000 Nicaraguans are living abroad, 24.5% are children and adolescents between the ages of 0 and 17. Of these, 7.2% are under the age of 13 and 17.3% are between the ages of 13 and 176[6].

### 3 CP ANALYSIS & RESULT

#### 3.1 CP Analysis

##### 3.1.1 CP Overview

During the 2010 Mid-Term Review greater efforts to address disparities though social policies to achieve the MDGs was stressed. Actions included in the Country Programme were: a) increasing capacity building to Autonomous Regional Governments in the Caribbean Coast, where the highest poverty rates are concentrated and which are home to indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant communities; b) promoting access to education for people with disabilities and flexible modalities for children in special
situations; c) increasing health, nutrition, water and sanitation coverage in indigenous communities; d) supporting ‘Programa Amor’ for the restitution of the rights of children in conditions of vulnerability; e) supporting civil society efforts to prevent HIV and violence among vulnerable adolescents.

Support to MINSA was provided to improve the quality of maternal and infant care, implement strategies to reduce chronic malnutrition, improve surveillance of water quality, promote community health care, and successfully scale up the PMTCT strategy and care for children with HIV to the national level. Access to water and sanitation has improved in schools and communities in two indigenous municipalities of the Caribbean Coast, with greater governance of the sector in the autonomous regions.

UNICEF supports the Ministry of Education in the implementation of the National Education Strategy; the ‘Battle for Sixth Grade’ is an effort to achieve the universal education targets spelled out in MDG 2; early childhood education through ‘Programa Amor para los mas Chiquitos’; the implementation of flexible modalities for excluded populations, and education on HIV in public schools. UNICEF also supported the restructuring of the National Teacher Training System.

The Ministry of the Family, Adolescents and Children (MIFAN) expanded its network of social promoters to all of the country’s 153 municipalities, laying the foundations for the restitution of the rights of vulnerable children. Additionally, interventions for the prevention of sexual exploitation and trafficking were strengthened in 19 municipalities.

### 3.1.2 Programme Strategy

#### 3.1.2.1 Capacity Development

Technical assistance to government counterparts aims at strengthening institutional mandates through planning for sustainable results for children. Efforts are being made to consolidate participatory planning processes for children among municipal and regional bodies, to define priorities to be implemented through inter-institutional and community strategies. UNICEF technical assistance with non-governmental partners aims at building conceptualisation processes, strategic consensus, development of methodologies and tools, participatory planning, coordination, advocacy and networking.

As a result, the Ministry of Health strengthened its capacities to implement the ‘Child- and Mother-Friendly Units’ Initiative and overall health promotion in dispersed rural communities, as well as building health personnel’s capacity to improve the quality of health care services provided to vulnerable populations, including victims of violence and children with disabilities and HIV. The institutional strengthening of the Regional Water and Sanitation Units in Regional Governments is improving their capacity to manage the WASH sector in the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast. UNICEF is collaborating with the Ministry of Education for implementation of a new quality public school model, the transformation of the National Teacher Training System and the training of teachers to focus on excluded populations. UNICEF has been developing capacities among municipal and regional governments to introduce a child rights approach in the management of local development and regional autonomy.

UNICEF is advocating for a comprehensive capacity building strategy with the Ministry of the Family for all national institutions responsible of the promotion, protection and restitution of children’s rights. The strategic framework of MIFAM’s ‘Programa Amor’ and ‘Programa Amor para los mas Chiquitos’, and the multi-sectoral approach of the Social Welfare System provide a new opportunity for this, including inter-sectoral linkages at the departmental and local levels.
3.1.2.2 Effective Advocacy

Advocacy for legal reforms focused on incorporating the child rights approach in two reforms. Studies and data were important inputs for the Promotion, Protection and Defence of Human Rights in Response to AIDS, in alliance with associations of people with HIV. The alliance and experience on child registration with Save the Children and Plan International provided evidence on the need to continue advocating for the General Civil Registration System Law. The contents of both laws are still being reviewed.

As a result of the MTR, three advocacy areas were identified and agreed for the second half of the CP: quality and inclusive education, early childhood development and comprehensive adolescent development.

Quality and inclusive education was the central focus of UNICEF’s advocacy strategy in 2010. Social mobilisation actions were carried out by over 40 organisations that work on the rights of children and adolescents and over 5,000 children and adolescents from across the country in municipalities. Social and community organisations, adolescent social movements, churches, and communication media have been key allies in advocacy for children’s rights. Quality and inclusive education was another of the prioritised areas, especially during the 8th Radio and Television Festival in favour of Children, under the slogan ‘All rights for all girls and boys’ in communication media throughout the year. Likewise, quality and inclusive education was the main theme of this year’s National Communication Competition for the Rights of Children, which UNICEF promotes each year among journalists and social communicators. The results of this advocacy were a greater equity approach in the National Education Strategy, the Battle for 6th Grade, and an emphasis on inclusive education by the Ministry of Education.

3.1.2.3 Strategic Partnerships

The alliance with NGOs has been important in advocacy for children rights, broadening the coverage of social services and empowering community processes with rights-holders as part of national strategies. At the beginning of the CP, potential partners were identified through the mapping of NGOs working in the intervention areas. UNICEF has established partnerships with these organisations based on criteria such as their geographical presence, experience working with populations in situations of vulnerability and social exclusion, and human rights-based interventions. During the MTR, given the definition of new intermediate results, changes to implementing strategies and counterparts involved, it was decided to consolidate work through networks.

UNICEF has made important progress towards strengthening interagency coordination. One example is the work with other agencies participating in all of the Joint Programmes being implemented in Caribbean Coast to reduce disparity gaps among indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant communities. The joint economic governance programme allowed an alliance with the UNDP to strengthen the capacities of regional governments in the development of the WASH sector.

With the IMF, it was agreed to intensify collaboration through the exchange of information, analysis, and mutual support, in particular regarding social spending, and frameworks to analyse its effectiveness and strengthen the visibility of the social component in the government’s economic programme. Two joint initiative were agreed with UNDP, to support the Office of Economic Studies of the Finance Ministry to introduce a human development and children rights perspective in economic study initiatives and to modernise the national assembly project to improve budget analysis by the Economic Commission.

UNICEF has also established partnerships with grassroots community organisations and rights-holder organisations, mainly adolescents and indigenous peoples, to strengthen their participation in political dialogue processes with decision-makers. UNICEF’s added
value lies in its capacity for working with state institutions to promote opportunities for dialogue, consensus and synergy with civil society organisations.

3.1.2.4 Knowledge Management

In collaboration with its implementing partners, UNICEF has conducted research projects and studies to provide better knowledge of the situation regarding children’s rights in Nicaragua, particularly for the most excluded children. Universities and research institutions were important allies in the implementation of these studies. A new Situation Analysis of Children 2010 (in progress) summarises the findings of most of those studies.

Analysis of the effectiveness of public policies and national strategies in the national response to the HIV epidemic among children and adolescents (Universal Access and UNGASS Report) has provided the basis for advocacy, social mobilisation and alliances for children’s rights, as well as technical discussions with officials from state institutions.

The current cooperation period has stressed the development of national capacities and the generation of information from the National Statistics System (SEN), as well as updating sectoral statistics and generating evidence based on specific studies, all aimed at collecting data and analysing disparities. There is a need to continue developing national capacities in the information collection activities and the creation of information systems on the situation of children, as well as to strategically use the information to feed evidence-based public policies. One of the MTR’s main conclusions was the need to consolidate a knowledge management strategy that allows broad dissemination of the results of studies and to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation function, stressing the documentation and dissemination of successful experiences. It also concluded that there was a need to conduct rigorous evaluations of interventions, identifying key factors in their success that would allow local initiatives to be scaled-up into public policies.

3.1.2.5 C4D Communication for Development

UNICEF is concluding the design of Communication for Social and Behavioural Change (C4D) strategies for each of the Cooperation Programme’s components. Counterparts, partners and allies are all participating in the process. To prioritise behaviours, multidisciplinary teams of experts were created for each issue, including organisations with extensive experience working with indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples. A specific workshop was also held with adolescent leaders representing different groups, including vulnerable, indigenous and Afro-descendant adolescents, adolescents from rural communities and female leaders. For monitoring and evaluation of the work, 75 sentinel sites were established across the country. The baseline study was conducted, including focus groups with the strategies’ target population. To evaluate the resulting social and behavioural changes, periodic measurements will be taken at the sentinel sites. While these strategies respond to current CP priorities, its design allow the contents to be adapted to new challenges identified in the next cycle.

In coordination with the Regional Office and Headquarters, the Country Office held a training workshop for C4D facilitators to improve counterparts’ competencies and ensure strategies are implemented with greater effectiveness and impact. This year a total of 164 people from 58 counterparts and organisations and UNICEF partners were trained through eight training workshops. In addition, the Coordinating Federation of NGOs Working for Children’s Rights (CODENI) held a workshop on C4D with another 15 member organisations. In 2011, UNICEF will implement the communication strategy with all counterparts.

3.1.3 Normative Principles

3.1.3.1 Human Rights Based Approach to Cooperation

Indigenous peoples and adolescent groups participated in the MTR analysis, to increase the visibility of their situation, and provided inputs on the effectiveness of UNICEF
strategies. As a result, in the definition of Intermediate Results, actions to increase focus on adolescent development and participation, as well as indigenous people’s rights were included. These issues are addressed in two separate strategies, cross-cutting the whole CPAP.

Support of the submission of the IV national and NGO report on the advances and setbacks on the right of the child to the CRC committee was provided during the preparation of the pre-session and formal session with NGOs and Government. Technical assistance was provided to answer additional questions by the committee to the government. Recommendations of the committee are addressed as priorities in the 2011-2012 planning results with main duty bearer national institutions. Follow up meetings are being prepared to build a strategy to address main recommendations with the government.

Strong support to increase right holders capacity to advocate for the right to quality and inclusive education is a specific component of the CPAP as well as part of the Local Development Strategy. UNICEF is supporting the UNCT Indigenous and Afro descendent Council to include children rights in their agenda. This is leading to a closer relationship with indigenous groups, which needs to consolidate in strengthening their capacity to claim children rights.

To increase national capacity of duty-bearers, 947 national officers working in the Ministry of Family were trained in child protection and restitution of rights, to identify and address cases as part of a prevention and protection model based on the Children’s Code. Three postgraduate courses on children rights are supported, covering HIV, Communication and Public Policy.

UNICEF continues supporting capacity building to monitor children’s rights with NGOs, observatories and information system with the national statistics institute, and CRC recommendations with MIFAN.

3.1.3.2 Gender Equality and Mainstreaming

UNICEF revised its gender perspective in all programme components as part of the MTR process. In health, sharing of responsibilities among fathers is being included during pregnancy, child-birth, breastfeeding and upbringing, as part of the early childhood development approach. In education, gender equality is part of the quality education model and included in teacher training. In the WASH component, women’s participation permeates all facets of the project cycle and WASH committees. Knowledge and gender-based data is being promoted, especially for protection, prevention and attention to domestic and sexual violence victims. Responsible parenting is promoted among adolescents, along with HIV prevention. The initiatives emphasise empowerment of female adolescents and the building of a new vision of masculinity among male adolescents. The development of these initiatives allows male and female adolescents to learn how to relate to each other as equals, through transformative processes in which they acquire skills for personal and social development.

UNICEF is one of the agencies in charge of implementing the MDG-F Joint Programme on gender equality, leading the definition of municipal information systems with the National Institute of Statistics. Gender equality indicators are being introduced in all Intermediate Results, allowing a more comprehensive monitoring of UNICEF’s contribution to gender equality.

3.1.3.3 Environmental Sustainability

A study on the impact of climate change on children by Donna Goodman, promoted by the Regional Office, provided very important inputs to start looking at this issue with
national authorities. The study has not been yet published. With this document, UNICEF will start working on a new advocacy strategy.

3.2 Programme Components

Title: Quality education for all

Purpose

This component will help children and adolescents—particularly those from excluded populations—improve their access to quality education and complete primary school, participating along with the community in school management. Support will be provided for national efforts aimed at developing a quality public school model that guarantees: significant learning; the participation of students, fathers, mothers, educators and communities in education management; the monitoring of achievements on the community and municipal levels; and the implementation of comprehensive and culturally appropriate family- and community-based childhood development programmes for children under the age of six. This will allow a reduction of gaps in access, retention and completion among vulnerable populations resulting from ethnicity, gender, disability and child labour.

Resources Used

(in thousands of US$)

Other Resources: US$1,913.2
CPD ceiling: US$110 RR; US$1,240 OR

Results Achieved

Through the National Education Strategy and 'Battle for Sixth Grade,' UNICEF has helped generalise good practices from child-friendly schools, which have become part of education policy, including a School Infrastructure Census recently applied to 100% of the country's schools, and the restructuring of the National Teacher Training System. The emphasis of new educational policy allowed UNICEF to accompany the process, particularly in the design and organisation of flexible modalities and strategies for identifying and attending to the population excluded for reasons of ethnicity, gender, disability, and child labour, among others.

UNICEF contributed to the early childhood development policy through technical assistance to MINED for the design of a family- and community-based comprehensive attention model. Actions were implemented with parents in homes of children under the age of six in 14 prioritised municipalities, reaching 2,200 families as a pilot experience. UNICEF supported the training of professionals from MINED, MINSA, MIFAN on the new approach of the Early Education Campaign 'Programa Amor para los mas Chiquitos' and the development and implementation of the new curriculum for formal and community preschools.

Support to children affected by Hurricane Ida was provided to ensure schooling in 20 rural primary schools serving 1,000 children. A total of 140,000 copies of the H1N1 prevention booklet were reproduced for all of the country's teachers; training workshops are planned during the first quarter of 2011.

UNICEF supported the updating of National Regulations for Attention to Educational Needs Associated with Disability in a participatory way; and contributed to improving educational quality and learning conditions for children with disability with the training of 3,608 educators on 'Inclusive Education – Equal in Diversity' in 63 municipalities from 13 departments. Los Pipitos, MINED and NGOs conducted new rounds of the campaign to
increase the enrolment of children with disabilities. These activities also generate the social mobilisation of families of children with HIV and public opinion. The enrolment of children with disabilities increased from 10,800 children and adolescents in 2009 to 11,233 in 2010.

With the Joint Culture and Development Programme (MDG-F) UNICEF supported the Regional Education Autonomy System (SEAR) in producing and contextualizing the first-to-sixth grade curriculum in six autochthonous languages. The structure of the SEAR was strengthened by developing the capacities of the region’s education authorities in the areas of planning, risk management and curricular reform.

Civil society improved its representation and input to the Education Roundtables dialogue and in the bodies for municipal and school participation. At the municipal level, UNICEF collaborated with the Education Forum FEDH on establishing and consolidating 45 municipal education roundtables. The School Democracy Network made progress, fostering a new relationship of dialogue and participation between teachers and students, establishing agile consultation mechanisms in 66 educational nuclei from the 15 prioritised municipalities, which include the Caribbean Coast.

The main constraints faced were adjustments in the education policy and changes in MINED’s organisational structures, along with the lack of definition and institutionalisation of mechanisms for civil society participation in the design of national policies. The lesson learned was the effectiveness of strengthening non-formal participation arenas at the local level, given the scarcity of institutionalised arenas.

Several studies were conducted: School Enrolment and Retention in Basic Education; Gender and Education; Reading Competencies of First Grade; and the Household Survey, which has a child labour module. The studies will provide advocacy and technical inputs for designing strategies to improve education quality.

**Future Workplan**

- Support the design of the Education Sector’s Strategic Plan, advocating attention for excluded groups in policy options
- Support the Schooling Campaign to increase coverage and retention and the Battle for Sixth Grade in the 15 priority municipalities
- Support for the Early Childhood Attention educational component in the framework of the ‘Programa amor para los mas chiquitos’
- Application of the EIB curricula in the Caribbean Coast at teacher training schools and in schools with large indigenous and Afro-descendant populations
- Support for implementation of the Teacher Training System
- Approval of the regulations for attending educational needs associated with disability and its implementation in 15 municipalities.

**Title: HIV/AIDS and children**

**Purpose**

In support of the 2006-2010 HIV National Strategic Plan, this programme component aims to strengthen the capacity of the state and civil society to guarantee children, adolescents and pregnant women universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The programme will: i) strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Health for prevention of mother-to-child transmission, ensuring 80% HIV testing in pregnant women and appropriate health care when found positive; ii) promote formal and non-formal education strategies and community-based networks for the prevention of HIV among adolescents, with special attention to girls and vulnerable populations; iii) protect
children made vulnerable by HIV, including orphans and strengthen the capacity of their families, including psychological and community support.

**Resources Used:**

(In thousands of US$)

- Regular Resources: US$ 98.3
- Other resources: US$549.7
- Total: US$648.0
- CPD Ceiling: US$110 RR; US$620 OR

**Results Achieved**

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to make HIV diagnosis and treatment more accessible to children in six of the country’s departments and its two autonomous regions, based on their greater HIV prevalence, concentration of indigenous and Afro-descendant populations, and conditions of social vulnerability. These departments have experienced significant improvement in their indicators for access to PMTCT and treatment for children with HIV when compared to the country’s other SILAIS7[1]. The coverage of rapid HIV diagnosis for pregnant women is 78% in these departments and autonomous regions and these results and the good practices followed have started to spread to the rest of the country.

The Health Ministry consolidated the integration of HIV management into Comprehensive Health Care for Diseases Prevalent in Infancy (AIEPI), particularly in primary-level healthcare units (health posts and centres). The aim of these actions is to improve children’s access to the early diagnosis and timely treatment of HIV.

Family and community-based strategies allowed an increase in the coverage of PMTCT services, mainly in hard-to-access rural communities, as well as among indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant communities of the Caribbean Coast. In these communities, 864 midwives carry out community counselling activities on PMTCT through home visits to pregnant women and their families. The community PMTCT strategy has also extended to the country’s 60 Maternal Houses.

The Ministry of Education initiated the implementation of education on sexuality and HIV in the country’s public schools. Teachers’ educational activities are complemented by non-formal education activities implemented by 1,360 trained student leaders. The students also access updated, scientific information through educational fairs that combine learning activities with reflection on issues of interest.

With NGO participation, HIV prevention actions are being implemented for indigenous and Afro-descendent adolescents and most at-risk adolescents. A total of 1,823 adolescent promoters are currently implementing educational activities on HIV with 21,614 adolescents from 22 municipalities. Sports, music, other cultural expressions and ‘knowledge league’ quiz competitions are used to generate reflection processes.

Technical assistance to MIFAN was provided to develop special protection capacities for children orphaned or vulnerable due to AIDS, including the production of a comprehensive treatment protocol (health, education, protection) for vulnerable children in the framework of the ‘Programa Amor’.

An alliance with the Theological and Social Research Centre and Accion Medica Cristiano, an NGO, to promote theological-pastoral reflection on the HIV epidemic has succeeded in
mobilising churches regarding the rights of people living with HIV, mainly on the Caribbean Coast. Prominent Nicaraguan theologians produced a book on the theological foundation for church participation in the national response to the epidemic. Theological educators from 10 biblical institutes and religious leaders from 200 churches were trained on the theological approach to the HIV epidemic.

With the aim of fostering an arena for dialogue and reflection on children´s rights in the context of the HIV epidemic, a National Forum was held in 2010. At the end of the event, the Nicaraguan AIDS Commission and over 50 NGOs signed a declaration of commitment to promote and protect the rights of children in the context of the HIV epidemic.

**Future Workplan**

- Increase quality management of health care for children, adolescents and pregnant women with HIV, based on the implementation of MINSA-approved regulations and clinical protocols
- Technical assistance for the integration of training on HIV into the competencies-based Permanent Education Plan of Ministry of Health
- Implementation of communication strategies on HIV, employing C4D methodology and tools
- Scale-up community strategies for the PMTCT work implemented by midwives, the Maternal House Network, and the Nicaraguan Community Movement in the framework of the Family-and Community-based Healthcare Model (MOSAFC)
- Strengthen the participation of churches and faith-based organisations of the Caribbean Coast in the special protection of children made vulnerable by AIDS, including orphans
- Strengthen the inter-institutional coordination links and networks for providing care and attention to vulnerable children in the ‘Programa Amor’ intervention municipalities
- Strengthen MINED’s capacities for following up on local-level educational management and the implementation of HIV education in priority municipalities.
- Support HIV prevention efforts with at-risk and highly vulnerable adolescents by social and community organisations.

**Title: End violence against children**

**Purpose**

The component was designed to help eliminate domestic, institutional and community violence against children, adolescents and women, increasing capacities for prevention and the restitution of rights.

**Resources Used**

(in thousands of US$)

Regular Resources: US$66.4
Other Resources: US$468.9
CPD ceiling: US$100: US$ 700 OR

**Results Achieved**

*Redress System:* The Ministry of the Family has strengthened its planning and management competencies with a child rights-based approach. It has also been consolidating its strategic leadership for the implementation of the Special Protection Policy and the "Programa Amor".
With the aim of strengthening the system to redress rights in neighbourhoods and communities of the country’s 153 municipalities, MIFAN has incorporated 765 social promoters (volunteer young people) who help officials with the restitution of child rights. Furthermore, a national network of 150 families is working in close collaboration with the MIFAN delegations. One important result was the coordination developed with Family Courts for rapid and timely processing in 92 cases of child adoption.

**Juvenile Justice:** The capacities of justice operators have improved for the protection of children and adolescents that participate in judicial proceedings as victims or perpetrators. A total of 74 justice staff working in juvenile or family penal justice in Central America, Mexico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic strengthening their knowledge and analysis of mechanisms to protect child and adolescent rights, stressing judicial reasoning and the study of comparative legislation and jurisprudence through the 1st Regional Course on Jurisdictional Protection held in Managua, with the participation of nine countries. Also, through 12 training modules on juvenile penal justice, it was possible to provide 35 justice staff with specialised knowledge, including 22 prosecutors from the Public Ministry’s Specialised Child and Adolescent Unit, penal juvenile judges and prison guards from Managua.

**Abuse, commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking:** The Nicaraguan Institute of Tourism (INTUR) has strengthened its mechanisms and strategies for preventing sexual exploitation in eight municipalities prioritised for their flow of tourism, with support from a network of 200 university promoters—students of the bachelor’s degree in tourism. With the participation of NGOs, family- and community-based actions have been implemented for the prevention of situations of abuse, CSE and trafficking in 15 municipalities. As a result, 953 children and adolescents in conditions of risk have acquired competencies for CSE prevention.

**Actions for the civil registration of children and adolescents:** A total of 11,734 children and adolescents from La Cruz de Río Grande (RAAS) are in the process of registering (currently in the process of *rastreo* in the Central Civil Registration Directorate); 1,517 boys and girls under one year were registered directly, in accordance with the law. Conditions have also been created in El Ayote (RAAS) for the registration of 4,500 children and adolescents, which involved advocacy work, communication, and the training of municipal technicians and a community network.

**Future Workplan**

- Strengthen MIFAN’s leadership and capacity to link key actors for the implementation of the "Programa Amor" in priority municipalities
- Lay foundations for urban defence in Managua, due to the high concentration of children and adolescents in that city, where in certain districts the population exceeds that of a rural town
- Follow up the process of approving the Family Code, which prohibits the use of physical punishment and humiliating treatment as disciplinary measures
- Technical support to the process of approving the new Civil Registration Law and preparing the conditions for its application; also, in coordination with the judicial branch and non-governmental and governmental organisations, initiate actions for the reform of article 155 of the Penal Code and leave it clearly specified in the penal classification that corporal punishment and other forms of punishment are not acceptable as a form of disciplinary correction
- Technical support for the Children’ Ombudsperson (Proniñez) in exercising the role of overseeing and defending the rights of children and adolescents, stressing situations of violence
• Strengthen the capacities of officials (police, administrative, judicial), both in juvenile penal justice and in the rapid detection of sexual violence and referral to the respective authority for prompt protection
• Strengthen special protection actions in emergencies, particularly in the Caribbean Coast area and in MIFAN.

**Title: Cross-sectoral costs**

**Purpose:**
The cross-sectoral component includes all activities that support the general implementation of the programme, such as administrative actions to purchase supplies, monitoring and evaluation activities and technical assistance for local development. Also includes all cross-cutting communication strategies for the achievement of key results, focusing on child and adolescent participation, behaviour change, informed demand by rights-holders and advocacy with duty-bearers.

**Resources Used**
(in thousands of US$)
Regular Resources: US$276.2
CPD ceiling: US$220 RR; US$145 OR

**Results Achieved**
Cross-sectoral costs cover the costs of staff who provide technical assistance in all programme components and that cannot be attributed solely to any specific component. The main result of this component is the implementation of the VII Radio and Television Festival and the preparation of the C4D strategy. All monitoring and evaluation, advocacy, research and local development activities are also promoted with the support of staff included in this component. Another result was the implementation of all supply and procurement activities.

**Future Workplan**
Cross-cutting activities on C4D, monitoring and evaluation and supply will continue to be supported from this component. Gender mainstreaming will be included. Local development will be implemented directly in knowledge management, research and advocacy.

**Title: Knowledge, research and advocacy**

**Purpose**
This component helps incorporate the rights of children and adolescents into national, regional and municipal government policies, laws, programmes and budgets, including emergency situations, through participatory mechanisms.

**Resources Used**
(in thousands of US$)
Regular Resources: US$148.9
Other Resources: US$1,662.5
Total US$1,811.4
CPD Ceiling: US$165 RR US$1,150 OR
**Results Achieved**

UNICEF provides support and technical assistance to the Nicaraguan Institute of Information for Development (INIDE) to *generate information on children* and link the National Information System with other UN agencies. Indicators were standardised as were calculation methods, and a strategic plan to Develop Vital Statistics was concluded in 2010. A Child and Adolescent Information System is being developed by MIFAN on the DevInfo platform to follow-up on CRC Committee recommendations. The national CSO Observatory on children’s rights, with CODENI, is being strengthened and a new initiative for a regional observatory with regional universities is in progress.

Public management of *municipal governments* in the promotion and protection of children’s rights was strengthened through 10 municipal studies on the situation of children. The studies were based on rigorous baseline data collection exercises and the training of public officials on the child rights-based approach. UNICEF facilitated coordination between municipal governments, associations of municipalities, and Child-Friendly Municipal Governments Network in the design of municipal public policies, plans and budgets that respond to assessment studies carried out in 12 of the 15 prioritised municipalities, through a joint initiative with Save the Children, that aims to cover 50 municipalities. The Network strengthened municipal planning capacities with a child rights-based approach with the Central American Circle for the Promotion of the Rights of Children and Adolescents. The Regional Government of the Autonomous Southern Region (RAAS) is developing a policy for children and adolescents, drawn up with broad participation from the region’s 12 municipalities.

Capacities of the *National Disasters Prevention, Mitigation and Response System* (SINAPRED) to coordinate humanitarian actors and response actions in emergencies or disasters were strengthened, with indicators on children and adolescents included in the evaluation assessment instruments. Additional CERF funds for the humanitarian response to Hurricane Ida were utilised by Regional Governments and NGOs for the provision of psychosocial care and re-establishing educational activities for 2,000 affected children and adolescents. They also supported the development of educational materials and a consensually agreed methodology for drawing up school security plans; prevention of diarrhoea, respiratory illnesses and malnutrition with 5,000 people.

NGOs implemented strategies to *empower adolescents* based on reflection-action processes and the use of sports, culture and recreation spaces to enable personal development and social skills with an innovative methodology, given the high percentage of adolescents in conditions of vulnerability. The four Adolescent Networks and Movements developed tools to exercise their advocacy competencies and social mobilization in priority municipalities. As a result, 12 municipalities included the adolescents’ agendas in their local development plans.

To address *indigenous people’s rights*, the CP contributed to the reduction of gaps in the two autonomous regions of the Caribbean Coast. The main results were the curriculum reform of bilingual intercultural education, consolidation of an indigenous community model for food and nutritional security, implementation of the cultural adaptation of childbirth attention, and the provision of water, hygiene and sanitation services. A bi-national project for early childhood development with the Miskito people, with UNESCO and UNICEF Honduras, is being designed to provide support for the school-based cultural and linguistic recovery of the Mayagna people. An institutional strengthening process is underway, concentrated in both regional governments, aimed at consolidating the autonomy of the region with the implementation of four Joint Programmes concentrated in this region. On-going actions are also being developed to support the regionalisation of the Regional Autonomous Education System (SEAR) and Autonomous Health Models.
The main constraint faced to date is the lack of significant participation from the Institute for Municipal Development (INIFOM) in efforts to strengthen the capacities of municipal governments; as a result, municipal associations have had to assume responsibility.

Lessons learned: Municipal governments are less relevant for indigenous peoples than their own territorial governments. Conceptual confusion over adolescence and youth continues, and is being transferred to policy processes which should instead contemplate protective factors: reducing risk, creating a learning environment, and participation and protection in the family, community and institutions. The information available for the situation analysis and possible options contributes to the empowerment of adolescents. NGOs are aware of the need for linkage with state institutions to achieve a greater impact in the comprehensive development of children and adolescents.

Future Workplan

- Technical assistance in planning, monitoring and evaluating of a new national policy for Nicaraguan children in the National Human Development Plan
- Support evidence for monitoring and building of public policies in favour of children, follow up on social spending and consolidate observatory on indigenous children rights
- Strengthen the inter-institutional network in north centre and autonomous regions of the Caribbean Coast for the comprehensive development of adolescents from a human rights perspective
- Strengthen the organisation and leadership of adolescent movements for their participation in dialogue with policy-makers for a comprehensive development strategy for adolescents at the municipal level and in the autonomous regions
- Coordinate actors from the national, regional and municipal levels (including the municipal child and adolescent commissions—CMNAs) for child and adolescent rights.
- Strengthen capacities of indigenous women’s and adolescents’ organisations for their participation in decision-making bodies in priority municipalities to influence indigenous children’s rights.

Title: Health and healthy environment

Purpose

This component was designed to help children, adolescents and women improve their nutrition and health status, including during emergency situations, and to ensure citizens participation in claiming rights to health, water and sanitation. It will help national and municipal institutions increase their capacities in water and sanitation sector management, risk management and a humanitarian response in health, nutrition and water and sanitation, reflecting the needs of children affected by emergencies.

Resources Used:

(in thousands of US$)
Regular Resources: US$143.8
Other resources: US$3.096.8
Total: US$ 3,240.6
CPD Ceiling: US$137 RR; US$1,640 RR

Results Achieved

For implementation of the Family and Community Health Care Model, technical assistance was provided for Child and Mother Friendly Units in four departments. Humanisation of health services and cultural adaptation strategy for childbirth were implemented in hospitals, improving procedures and compliance with health care
protocols and standards for children and pregnant women, as well as linkages between primary and secondary health care units. Health personnel acquired technical and managerial capacities in the implementation of plans to reduce maternal and perinatal mortality, monitor quality standards, ensure compliance with health care protocols, analyse obstetric emergencies and maternal deaths, and strengthen community strategies. In 10 municipalities in three departments training was offered on comprehensive care of domestic violence victims and referral of cases to the corresponding body. With National Network of Maternal Houses, training was conducted for traditional midwives and ‘grandmother counsellors’ networks to promote maternal health in the communities.

In the context of the AH1N1 influenza pandemic, UNICEF cooperation strengthened national diagnostic capacities and education for the population. UNICEF supported the implementation of the Community Health and Nutrition Programme in 12 priority municipalities. Health volunteers and community leaders were trained to implement health and hygiene promotion actions with families with children under the age of five. With FAO, UNICEF leads the MDG-F Joint Programme on Infant Food and Nutritional Security in two indigenous territories of the Caribbean Coast region, improving access of 1,028 indigenous families to health services, nutritional education and means of production. In 12 municipalities UNICEF provided supplies for rehabilitation services for children with disabilities. Educational materials and instruments were produced for community networks and families, including early stimulus and detection of development changes and surveillance and promotion of child development. A post-graduate course with National Autonomous University of Nicaragua on addressing disability aims at teaching staff in charge of curricular transformation at the Medicine Faculty. Quality and sustainability WASH systems in schools was supported in 2010 by UNICEF and MoE to find joint solutions, with donors and institutions, to improving access to safe water, sanitary infrastructure and hygiene promotion programmes in schools. UNICEF provided support in the construction of hygiene and sanitary facilities in 12 schools in indigenous communities serving 3,000 children and provided means to ensure consumption of safe water in 300 classrooms with 6,000 schoolchildren. Hygiene and sanitation facilities for 1,119 indigenous families were provided, in collaboration with FISE, NGOs and local government, in 16 communities belonging to five municipalities. With technical assistance from UNICEF, MoH designed the ‘Healthy Families, Schools and Communities’ methodology for hygiene promotion in schools and communities. It has also strengthened institutional and community networks for water quality surveillance at the community and school levels. Implementing partners trained children and adolescents, teachers, community leaders and members of the WASH committees on hygiene promotion and water system operation and maintenance. Within the UNICEF-led MDG-F programme, institutional strengthening of regional water and sanitation units (URASSs) and technical capacity-building of eight municipal offices for the formulation and implementation of WASH projects, with participation of indigenous peoples, received support. Regional governments are negotiating increased investment and decentralisation functions in the autonomous regions. Cultural adaptation of instruments used in the WASH sector allowed eight priority municipalities to obtain technical conditions to access the new Water and Sanitation Investment Fund (FIAS). Local drinking water committees were created to work closely with municipal government social promoters. The Response to Hurricane IDA was coordinated by the Health Secretariats of Regional Governments North and South (GRAAN and GRAAS) and executed by the local water and sanitation implementing partners. UNICEF improved access to safe water of 840 children in families affected by Hurricane Ida in seven municipalities of the Caribbean Coast. H1N1 and leptospirosis epidemics forced health personnel to focus on response efforts. The study ‘Climate change, child health and nutrition in Nicaragua, with recommendations for the Central America and Caribbean region’ was conducted in 2010, to be used for advocacy on the effects of climate change on the most vulnerable children.
Constraints: The Water and Sanitation Sector Roundtable remains inactive, which limits efforts to define a sectoral strategy. Changes in regional governments following elections led to a six-month delay in implementation.

Key partnerships: MINSA, GRAAN, GRAAS, SILAIS MCN, SoyNica, Juan XXIII Institute, CARE, FISE.

Future Workplan

- Strengthen the institutional capacities of the government, academic institutions and civil society organisations for the implementation of community nutrition strategies, including during emergencies
- Continue implementation of the Joint Programme’s integrated model (with an emphasis on promotion and early childhood) to reduce chronic malnutrition in Miskito and Mayangna indigenous communities
- Provide technical support to health, education and protection institutions for the development of an early childhood approach that stresses prevention/early detection of disabilities and early stimulation
- Support the promotion of women’s health and community strategies for the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality
- Implement and coordinate the Joint Programme for the Economic Governance of the Caribbean Coast Drinking Water and Sanitation Sector
- Build water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in rural communities and schools selected from eight of the country’s municipalities.

4 OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT

4.1 Governance & Systems

4.1.1 Governance Structure

CO governance structure was found satisfactory when assessed by OIA in late 2009. Recommendations were integrated in 2010 AMP, establishing indicators to be monitored by CMT and programme meetings. All audit recommendations were implemented; OIA closed the process in August.

Main audit recommendations related to the new ERM approach in planning and management of CP. The office conducted a participatory exercise at the beginning of the year with assistance of OIA, and prepared the Office’s Risk Library and Risk Profile with a plan of action. Only 10 of the 31 categories were found to present high or medium-high risk. The implementation of the action plan was evaluated at the year-end meeting, proving the importance of the measures taken and including new ones to continue reducing impact. All categories are better assessed; risk has not varied but could increase since 2011 is a national election year.

Main conclusions of the analysis resulted in:
- Comprehensive reorganisation of supply management practices, focused on the construction of a more child-oriented supply assistance component. Low risk is involved in delegating counterparts the purchase of office materials up to US$5,000, in order to concentrate on supplies that add value for the beneficiaries of the program;
- Development of a set of guiding principles and tools for partners’ capacity assessment and strengthening: The risk associated with counterparts’ low capacity remains a serious constraint for the achievement of the CP objectives. The set of tools, developed under the scope of the HACT framework and in line with the new Guidelines for UNICEF programme cooperation agreements, focus on: (i) strengthening the CO’s capacity to assess partners’ capacity and identify needs for
adequate programme implementation at the beginning of the negotiation of the agreement; and (ii) speeding up the process of submission of FACE reports, a problem that has traditionally jeopardised CP implementation.

- The set of tools include: a new Manual for Programme and Financial Management for use by implementing partners; a plan for spot-checks and FACE training/refreshing session and two plans for financial audits.

### 4.1.2 Strategic Risk Management

Both the ERM analysis and the audit recommendations identified counterparts’ low capacities as one of the main risks endangering implementation of the CP. Initiatives to reduce this risks were included in the AMP and discussed by the CMT, as explained above. A set of tools was elaborated to improve partners’ capacity assessment. In annual work plans capacity building is being included with counterparts to ensure sustainability. Micro-assessments are being systematically used by programme officers to prepare dialogue with counterparts and submissions to the PCA committee. Spot-checks are carried out jointly by operations and program staff to provide inputs on capacity building needs, as part of the monitoring done by programme officers.

Contingency plans to cover all CCC in emergency are completed and joint UN contingency plan (UNCETE) includes all actions regarding children rights, needs and priorities. UNICEF and all other UN agencies form part of the Humanitarian network, which strengthened alliances with local and international NGOs that can act immediately in an emergency as a UNICEF counterpart.

Programmed activities to strengthen national committees with Ministries and SINAPRED were included in the AWP, but were not fully implemented given the changes in national SINAPRED and reform to the law, not yet approved.

BCP was rated as satisfactory by the audit. Nevertheless, the CMT decided to take two additional actions to strengthen the level of readiness. One was aimed at the development of an alternative operating location and was successfully completed, including online updating of data; the other sought to strengthen the knowledge of the BCP members with a drill, which was not completed given the rotation of senior staff involved in the BCP team.

### 4.1.3 Evaluation

During 2010 four major evaluations took place on MDG-F Joint Programmes. Consultants were hired by the MDF Secretariat. Field visits, focal group discussions and interviews with national and regional authorities, as well as UN agencies, were conducted. The first two evaluations on Gender and Environment have been concluded; as part of the implementing agency, UNICEF is in the process of preparing an action plan to be presented early 2011. In the second batch, WASH governance (UNICEF is lead agency) and Culture, the evaluation reports have not yet been sent, and the preparation of the action plan is expected to begin in early 2011. Main findings in all evaluations include: weaknesses of monitoring and evaluation plan, need to establish a knowledge management strategy (internal and external), ensure joint results instead of individual execution of plans by agencies and counterparts. Regarding JP on WASH governance, corrective actions need to be in place to ensure strengthening of community capacities to ensure sustainability of actions. In general the programme is valued as highly pertinent and innovative, promoting a comprehensive vision of the sector and aiming to reduce disparities focused on the poorest communities of the region with high presence of indigenous people. UNICEF leadership was greatly appreciated.
In 2010, 15 out of 18 planned studies in the IMEP were carried out. After the definition of new intermediate results, an update of the IMEP needs to take place in 2011.

**4.1.4 Information Technology and Communication**

In coordination with the Regional Office, the CO prepared and signed the *Service Level Agreement* (SLA) for ICT services. The SLA has been monitored throughout the year and all actions included in the plan were implemented. Two particular activities that were urgently required were implemented according to the SLA: upgrade of the telephone system including the VoIP tool, through optical fibre connection and new PBX (under a common service agreement with UNDP), and the upgrade of the radio communications system (five of six obsolete antennas will be changed by mid-2011 under a UN agreement), following BCP and MOSS requirements. A formal evaluation of the SLA will be conducted in 2011, since less than one year has passed since it was signed.

The Office worked in coordination with TACRO and NYHQ to complete the regional/global ICT plans. The activities carried out can be summarized as:

- Updated Lotus server and client systems to version 8.5.
- Updated ProMS to version 9.1, applications of fixes and installation ProMS backup server, as part of the BCP activities.
- Permanent monitoring of the performance of Active Directory, Symantec Endpoint Protection and the Citrix service.

Regarding the Business Continuity Plan, one server (ProMS backup) was installed in a safe location, under a service agreement with Centro de Conocimiento para el Desarrollo, a UN-related organisation that has all the necessary requirements for that purpose. This server is already configured, its data is updated online and it is ready to be used immediately in case of an emergency.

The use of LTA with vendors for the purchase of IT and communications equipment continues, and has proven to be a good practice.

**4.2 Fin Res & Stewardship**

**4.2.1 Fund-raising & Donor Relations**

Fundraising in 2010 was very successful, with the contribution to the Country Programme, since the beginning, by Sweden and Holland of US$12 million. In addition, education and child protection received funds from Italy and Denmark totalling US$5.5 million; DFID, NATCOM Spain, US FUND and AECID contributed to WASH, child registration and disabilities in the amount of US$2 million; regional, set-aside and thematic funding for FA2, FA4, FA5 reached US$3 million; MDG-F funding for nutrition, intercultural education, gender and WASH was US$6 million; and $3.7 million in RR ensured a total commitment of funds by the end of 2010 of US$32.2 million, above the US$30.5 million approved CPD ceiling for the five-year period. After the Mid-Term Review, and with the definition and costing of Intermediate Results, a funding gap of US$5 million is estimated. New donors for education, protection, local development, health and HIV (Luxemburg, European Union and Italy) have been identified and proposals for US$9 million to cover the current and new Country Programme cycle will be submitted to donors in 2011. A request to increase the ceiling to US$37 million will be presented to the Executive Board in 2011.

Donor reporting on MDG-F made it difficult to meet deadlines on the system, since inputs are sent to UNDP as administrative agents and they work according to a different timeline. This factor made it very difficult to report to HQ, and the system indicates ‘overdue’, although reports are sent to the MDG-F secretariats within the agreed timeline.
4.2.2 Management of Financial and Other Assets

Good performance in management of bank reconciliations, timely submission of monthly and year-end reports to headquarters and processing of financial transactions was noted by the audit team in 2009. The table of authority (ToA) was kept up-to-date, allowing staff to implement assigned authorities accordingly. Appropriate management of inventory was kept as a goal, also noted as a good practice in the audit report. The few recommendations noted in the audit report were implemented quickly.

Simplification of business processes was an office priority. The set of Standard Operating Procedures were evaluated and revised to help organise procedures and paperwork and allow time savings. All SOPs were provided with a friendlier format, a new SOP was prepared and another was updated. Audit team recognised this as a good practice highly appreciated by staff. It complements the JD revision exercise and the appropriate running of the mid-management level structure that ensures that the CP is implemented effectively and efficiently.

Office implementation rates have been steadily rising since the beginning of the CP cycle, reaching total implementation of US$8.6 million in 2010 (as of November 30, 2010), 17.9% higher than 2009 and 37.5% higher than 2008. As a result, US$22.2 million (72.9%) of the CP ceiling had already been implemented by the end of the third year of the cycle. This amount is 23% above the entire 2002-2006 cycle.

The office maintained its good performance in 2010 regarding outstanding DCTs for more than nine months, which were kept lower than 1% for a second consecutive year. DCTs outstanding for between six to nine months run between 10% and 15%. Strengthening of implementing partners’ capacity is expected to reduce this problem.

The need to provide additional space to accommodate new staff was identified. Various alternatives to increase office space were sought, with no results, given the limitations of building new areas in joint premises with UNDP, where UNICEF is a rent-free tenant. Joint solutions, with support of HQ and the Regional Office, need to be found early 2011 given that staffing will be complete by March of that year.

4.2.3 Supply

The supply component of the CP decreased slightly compared with 2009 figures. The total value of authorised PGMs in 2010 (179, or 13% of all requisitions processed) was approximately US$1.1 million, which represents a decrease of 12% over 2009. The value of purchase orders have also decreased; only six are valued over US$10,000 in 2010, compared to 23 in 2009 (data as of December 6, 2010). This trend was analysed at the year-end meeting, concluding that the CO needs to add value to the supply component of the CP, leaving aside the practice of procuring stationery, small furniture or some equipment for implementing partners (14% out of all 2010 POs), redirecting the component to highly specialised items complemented by technical assistance, probably procured off-shore given the weak financial capacity of local providers, which depend on imports processed upon request and maintain only very limited stocks locally.

The participation of the local procurement modality in the whole component is very high, despite the local providers' limitations, with 86% of the total value. Furniture, non-specialised equipment and stationery amounted to 14% of the overall CP component in 2010; specialised equipment (mostly for water and sanitation, health, HIV/AIDS and education activities) represented 16% of this year’s CP component; while 17% corresponded to diverse printed materials. Finally, the office was requested to assist in 15 procurement services for a total amount of US$1.7 million, representing a huge
increase compared to last year, when only five service requests were processed for a total of less than US$100 thousand. All of these services were processed for the Red NICASALUD and for descentralised units of the Ministry of Health, a traditional client for supply and procurement.

4.3 Human Resource Capacity

Recruitment processes: Nine were completed: 5 FT positions and 4 TAs, three of which were for IPs. The Representative, Chief of WASH, local development officer and M&E officer all left the office between August and September. A replacement for the Deputy Representative position is under recruitment, the current DR acts as OIC. The appointment of a programme officer in charge of the Bilwi sub-office was completed after several attempts.

Learning and human resources development: Training sessions were conducted in: security measures in dwellings and to prevent street assaults, UN Standard of Conduct, new UNICEF CCCs in Humanitarian Action and coaching skills. The CO also reinforced training in standard operating procedures, considered critical for efficient implementation and reduced misunderstandings that preserve work climate, through discussion sessions with the participation of all staff. There were 10 international training activities in 2010, the most important of which were participation by one staff in the Leadership Development Initiative; Representative in the CRC committee, Deputy Representative in global consultation on Gender, Chief of Health in Knowledge Management for MDG-F on Nutrition, four national staff in preparation of proposals for Japan’s Human Security Fund, Ecological Sanitation Systems and Procurement Services.

The thorough review of responsibilities and accountabilities at all levels in operations and programme sections concluded with the update of JDs in 66% of the positions in the CO, to be sent for classification to DHR in 2011. This exercise became critical to complete the mid-management level (eight new NO-A positions). It will be finalised in 2011, with an analysis of workloads, mainly affecting the program assistant level. This exercise intends to meet staff productivity goals and improve work/life balance and the work environment in the Office, which was its main purpose since the beginning.

The security environment has been seriously deteriorating in the country. UNICEF colleagues were victims of assaults, including armed robbery and home invasion, as were other UN staff, including one sexual assault in the Caribbean Coast. Joint UN actions intended to improve communication facilities were not successful. By the beginning of 2011, all UNICEF staff members will be equipped with new portable radio devices and radio checks will be carried out.

4.4 Other Issues

4.4.1 Management Areas Requiring Improvement

A new arrangement with cellular companies as of November 2010 will allow the CO to reduce communication costs using a free call system among the UNICEF network. The fixed cost remains the same, but a reduction of costs as a result of cellular communication among staff members is expected.

A new set of Standard Operating Procedures proved effective in reducing the time involved in carrying out administrative processes.

4.4.2 Changes in AMP

Main changes after the MTR process:

- Strengthen social policy section: abolish L4 post for WASH and local development and create new L4 post for Social Policy; to be proposed in PBR
Chief of WASH section replaced by a L3 TA position until the end of CP cycle.
Child Registration IR included in the Child Protection PCR
Propose Executive Board approval of $37 million ceiling: current ceiling $30.5 million; funds raised $32 million; $5 million gap in PCR/IR costing.

5 STUDIES, SURVEYS, EVALUATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

5.1 List of Studies, Surveys & Evaluations
1. Report on the Follow up to the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment
2. Climate change, child health and nutrition in Nicaragua with recommendations for the Central America and Caribbean region (English version concluded, currently being translated into Spanish)
3. Systematization of successful experiences of the Municipal Child and Adolescent Commissions (including Redress Systems)
4. Baseline study on the water/sanitation situation in schools
5. Situation Analysis of Children’s Rights
6. Study on Children and Migration
7. Report on universal access to HIV-related prevention, treatment, care and support services.
8. Children’s Rights Assessment in 10 Municipalities

5.2 List of Other Publications
1. AIEPI-HIV Procedures tables
2. Guides for psychological care for children and adolescents with HIV
3. UNICEF Nicaragua Cooperation Programme
4. Rapid Guidelines for Addressing HIV in Adolescents
5. Code for Children and Adolescents
6. Inclusive Education
7. Nutrition and hygiene guides
8. Technical Operational Standards for school kiosks
9. H1N1 booklet
10. Communication materials on HIV
11. AIEPI and HIV
13. Early stimulation guides
15. Guidelines for the functioning of the multidisciplinary teams in hospitals

6. INNOVATION & LESSONS LEARNED

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Abstract
Nicaragua has important experiences in social mobilisation, sometimes with limited impact due to the fragmented nature of these efforts. In 2008 a group of five NGOs that work on quality education united under a consortium. As a network, they seek to have greater influence on educational policies and improve impact at the local level. The network carried out a participatory process to build a conceptual and methodological framework based on each member’s knowledge of democracy, citizenship and children’s participation in the school arena. In the process they became a learning community that has not only managed to influence education policies, but also scaled-up its innovations and institutionally strengthened itself as a network. The ‘School Democracy Network’
currently works in 25 municipalities, including the Autonomous Regions of Nicaragua’s Caribbean Coast.

**Innovation or Lessons Learned**
The School Democracy Network developed a common conceptual and methodological framework focused on the participation of the educational community in school management processes. It has played a relevant role in promoting the association of fathers, mothers and students at the local level, facilitating communication among the organisations in the network and increasing their influence beyond their own communities. This collective effort has allowed the network to increase its coverage to 25 municipalities and to have a greater influence on decision-makers at the local and national levels. The most innovative element has been its effectiveness in the exchange of information and knowledge among organisations that traditionally compete for funding and visibility.

**Potential Application**
The Network’s experience could be potentially applied in two ways: i) the possibility of becoming a national network that incorporates other relevant social actors from the education sector and advocates more aggressively for children’s right to a comprehensive, quality education, ii) contributing to public policy with evidence-based, proven innovations that can be replicated on the national level by Ministry of Education.

**Issue/Background**
Citizen participation develops as a competency when there are opportunities to practice it. Although the school is a suitable sphere for this, it is considered one of the most authoritarian and adult-led institutions. The decision to suspend “School Autonomy”, arguing that it amounted to privatisation of education, eliminated an earlier participatory model that was not replaced. Parents, students and community leaders were left without any guidelines for participating in school decision-making processes. There are few experiences of community participation, restricted to their own setting, and no mechanisms for advocating with decision-makers or influencing national policy are available.

**Strategy and Implementation**
The Network started off by identifying common issues, instruments, documents and experiences that each organisation had, but were not generally known. This amounted to a mapping and characterisation of the Network’s member organisations: where they worked, what resources they had and what they were doing. UNICEF provided support for the development of a common conceptual and methodological framework, which ensured best practices being available for the member organisations to apply in any of the territories where they work. A common methodology was built and instruments were designed to be used in schools in priority municipalities. Members’ experiences in the following areas were important: gender, prevention of violence, leadership, indigenous and Afro-descendant rights, WASH, and risk management, among others. Constant feedback is provided through monthly meetings and experience-exchange workshops, as well as monitoring of the application of the instruments and their local-level validation. One organisation is elected as coordinator of the network and administrator of cooperation funds. Documentation of this experience was recently concluded.

**Progress and Results**
A methodology was developed to promote the participation of parents’ associations, schoolchildren, and teachers in management for quality education. Meanwhile, ludo-pedagogy (educational entertainment) was incorporated as a method for promoting student and parent leadership. The Network’s member organisations developed innovative work methodologies and instruments to address issues such as gender at school and indigenous rights, among others. MINED has started to incorporate these into formal classroom education. The Network actively participates in educational management in municipal arenas, and advocates for greater social investment in
education in municipal development plans. Network members frequently speak to municipal education authorities about how to improve the quality of education.

**Next Steps**

- Expand the Network’s territorial coverage and incorporation of new organisations
- Formulate a medium-term strategy for the Network, including social mobilisation to demand the approval of a new school management policy
- UNICEF will work with a more local-level focus in which the Network can play a very important role in terms of strengthening the capacities of rights-holders under a more comprehensive rights-based approach.

7 SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Nicaragua’s Government is planning to conduct a massive campaign to promote early childhood development. To provide inputs on this initiative, UNICEF Nicaragua and UNICEF TACRO agreed to host in Managua a regional workshop on ECHD experiences, based on the Cuban model ‘Educa tu Hijo’. The workshop presented experiences from Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Guatemala, México, El Salvador and Costa Rica. The exchange of experiences was very enriching for Nicaragua, since it allowed the identification of good practices to increase service coverage and quality assurance, and analysis of the opportunities and limitations of these types of programmes, as well as the factors contributing to success in different contexts. As a result, the Nicaraguan Government intends to go beyond a massive campaign to build a comprehensive ECHD policy.