Summary of midterm reviews of country programmes

Latin America and Caribbean region

Summary

This regional summary of midterm reviews of country programmes conducted in 2010 was prepared in response to Executive Board decision 1995/8. The Executive Board is invited to comment on the report and provide guidance to the secretariat.
Introduction

1. During 2010, the Latin America and Caribbean region conducted midterm reviews (MTRs) of nine programmes of cooperation: Plurinational State of Bolivia, Costa Rica, Colombia, Cuba, Haiti, Mexico and Nicaragua, as well as the Eastern Caribbean multi-country programme and the Proinclusion subregional programme. This report summarizes these MTRs. They highlight the contributions made by UNICEF and partners to address major challenges for children and women and achieve the medium-term strategic plan and the Millennium Development Goals with equity, in very different socio-economic and programme environments.

2. Encouraging progress for children has been achieved in most countries, although unfinished agendas remain, as highlighted in the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.\(^1\) In Haiti, the main challenges remain inextricably associated with the structural causes of widespread poverty and exclusion, which were exacerbated by the 2010 earthquake. Throughout the region, important lessons were learned on monitoring children’s rights, capacity development, addressing the rights of indigenous and excluded populations, and influencing policies at national and subnational levels. These lessons will be reflected in the continuation of the country programmes and the development of new programmes.

Midterm reviews

Plurinational State of Bolivia

Introduction

3. The MTR of the country programme in the Plurinational State of Bolivia (2008-2012) was organized through discussions within sectoral reference committees. It benefited from the participation of all relevant ministries, civil society and international cooperation agencies.

Update of the situation of children and women

4. The country shows good progress towards achievement of several of the child-related Millennium Development Goals. Particular achievements have been noted in reducing child mortality (Goal 4) and malnutrition (Goal 1) and increasing access to improved water sources (Goal 7). However, coverage rates of social services are much lower in remote rural areas. With an adequate sanitation coverage rate of only 25 per cent, the country is not on track to achieve the sanitation target of Goal 7.

5. Extreme poverty has been reduced, but it still stands at 26 per cent. Maternal mortality remains high (180 per 100,000 live births) and access to antenatal care remains limited in rural areas. Overall, 94 per cent of children are enrolled in primary education. Yet there are challenges in improving the quality of education and access to secondary education. An estimated 34 per cent of boys and 28 per cent of girls aged 14-17 are working in urban areas.

6. Around 80 per cent of mothers report that their child has been a victim of domestic violence, ranging from physical to verbal abuse, while 40 per cent of students claim to be victims of physical violence in school. In response, the

\(^1\) Six countries in the Eastern Caribbean and Haiti are still overdue in reporting.
Government approved a new law for the legal protection of children and adolescents. Seventy four per cent of children under 5 have been registered.

**Progress and key results at midterm**

7. Good progress was observed in improving access to quality maternal and child care through mother-friendly and child-friendly hospitals. This contributed to a reduction of child mortality in two departments and to immunization of over 90 per cent of children under the age of 1 year in three departments. The programme also contributed to prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, with 85 per cent of HIV-positive pregnant women now accessing antiretroviral treatment. Efforts continued to increase access to sanitation facilities in 56 rural municipalities; a total of 2,364 families benefited from the construction of latrines and bathrooms. Bathrooms were also constructed in 263 schools. These efforts were accompanied by hygiene education, particularly aimed at hand-washing.

8. In the education component, 32 per cent of children nationally now have access to preschool education. Technical support was provided for the design of early learning standards. In 46 prioritized rural municipalities, targeted support in the roll-out of the child-friendly school initiative resulted in a 16 per cent increase in primary school enrolment and a 6 per cent increase in completion.

9. At the subnational level, substantial support was provided to create 48 intersectoral municipal committees and 3 intersectoral departmental committees that contribute to better coordination of social sector and child-oriented interventions by local governments. The programme supported establishment of child and adolescent protection offices in half of the 48 prioritized municipalities.

**Resources used**

10. The country programme 2008-2012 has an approved funding ceiling of $72,470,000 ($6,470,000 in regular resources and $66,000,000 in other resources) and has obtained substantial funding from a wide range of donors. A total of $45,400,000 was spent in the period 2008-2010.

**Constraints and opportunities affecting progress**

11. The new constitution, approved in 2009, provides good opportunities to continue work on strengthening the capacity of the state and other actors to increase access to social services and to ensure that child rights are fully addressed in national policies and programmes. With approval of the autonomy and decentralization law in 2010, further progress could be made on child-focused actions through strategic planning, budgeting and monitoring at the local level.

**Adjustments made**

12. The MTR concluded that strategies and resources need to be further targeted to the most excluded populations in the Andes, El Chaco and the Amazon areas. The approach to working at the municipal level, including the private sector, will be changed to accelerate progress. Substantive support will be provided to municipal capacity development through the child-friendly municipalities strategy. In particular, the programme will emphasize support for monitoring the situation of children and implementation of social protection programmes.
Costa Rica

Introduction

13. The MTR of the country programme (2008-2012) was conducted together with the Ministry of National Planning. The review was carried out through a participatory process involving the Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The MTR process also benefited from a UNICEF programme performance assessment.

Update of the situation of children and women

14. Costa Rica is on track to achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals. However, inequity appears to be increasing, with growing social gaps and disparities, particularly affecting indigenous groups, Afro-descendant populations and persons with disabilities. The Government has increased provision of childcare programmes and services, which serve 6 per cent of children. While the primary school enrolment rate is over 90 per cent, challenges remain in the quality of education and transition to secondary education. Secondary education completion rates are still low, especially among children from disadvantaged groups. Targeted investment in improving access to social services for these groups remains limited.

15. Progress has been made in implementing local child protection systems. However, the capacity development is needed among local service providers, especially in child protection and at the National Child Welfare Institute. Nearly 20 per cent of all children are born to teenage mothers, and access to reproductive health care services for adolescents remains limited. Increasing knowledge about the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, is a priority.

16. Review of the fourth report of Costa Rica to the Committee on the Rights of the Child was scheduled for June 2011.

Progress and key results at midterm

17. The programme is progressing towards achieving its results through a combination of advocacy for public policies and technical support to implement them and expansion of capacities at national and local levels to increase access to quality social services.

18. The programme contributed to the development of systems for expanding comprehensive early childhood care. Support was provided to establish the department of nutrition and child development in the Ministry of Health. Technical assistance was provided to establish a national network for child care and development. The programme supported efforts to reform the education curriculum; address violence, particularly in secondary schools; and increase retention of secondary school students. The capacity of Ministry of Education staff and local health authorities was strengthened to address reproductive health issues among adolescents and increase their knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention.

19. Technical support was provided to the design of the national policy on children and adolescents (2009-2021). Analysis of social investment in children and adolescents provided an important input in developing the policy. The programme contributed to the effective implementation of integrated local child protection systems at municipal and community levels. Strong government commitment to
child protection was key in laying the foundation for the child-friendly municipalities programme and further strengthening local protection systems. The country programme also engaged with candidates for national and local elections to introduce children’s rights issues into their campaigns.

Resources used
20. The programme has a ceiling of $5,000,000 ($3,000,000 regular resources and $2,000,000 other resources). Implementation rates remained high throughout the first half of the programme. Based on implementation and funding received, the ceiling for other resources was increased from $2,000,000 to $4,615,000.

Constraints and opportunities affecting progress
21. The programme has wide support from all actors in society, as confirmed by the programme performance assessment. This allows it to address policies related to children and women at national and local level and to align these policies with international standards.

Adjustments made
22. The MTR confirmed the added value of the programme in terms of capacity development, the generation of knowledge for evidence-based decision-making by engaging with centres of excellence,\(^2\) social mobilization and attention to the most disadvantaged children, and streamlining decision-making to aid fulfilment of the rights of all children. Some adjustments were made in the strategies for achieving results, including increasing the emphasis on strengthening municipal capacities to implement national policies.

Colombia

Introduction
23. The MTR of the country programme (2008–2012) involved an extensive consultative process with national and local governments, civil society, representatives of the private sector, international organizations and leaders of indigenous populations.

Update of the situation of children and women
24. Colombia is showing good progress in Millennium Development Goal indicators related to children. Child mortality dropped to 19 per 1,000 live births in 2009, and enrolment in primary education stands at 90 per cent. In total, 92 per cent of the population is using improved drinking water sources, but only 74 per cent has access to adequate sanitation. Overall, 90 per cent of children younger than 5 years have a birth certificate, a percentage equal to the regional average.

25. While the situation of children has improved at the national level, there are significant disparities within Colombia. Poverty is hampering the lives of many children, especially those living in rural areas; those from indigenous groups and

\(^2\) Academic or research institutions with expertise in one of the areas strategic to specific country programmes. Centres of excellence are useful partners for knowledge dissemination and transfer.
Afro-descendent populations; and children and women internally displaced as a result of violence. Many children are still being affected by the violence and the action of illegal armed groups. At least 3.5 million people have been affected by natural disasters, including extensive floods in 2010.

26. In 2010, the Committee on the Rights of the Child reviewed the report from Colombia on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its report on the two Optional Protocols. The Committee provided recommendations for further aligning national legislation with the Convention.

Progress and key results at midterm

27. At the national level, efforts continued in mobilizing political will to include children’s rights in the political agenda and influence laws and public policies in favour of children; provide evidence-based technical support; advocate for institutional reform; and strengthen alliances with civil society and the private sector.

28. At the subnational level, pilot projects were supported that have been scaled up by government partners and in some cases led to innovations in national or local policies. Technical assistance was provided to departments and municipalities to strengthen capacities to apply the Code for Children and Adolescents (2006) and other laws, and to implement public policies for children. The “fact and rights” strategy, which aims for coordinated action for children, has now reached 1,103 municipalities in 32 departments. Follow-up will be provided for the design of municipal plans of action in 11 departments.

29. The programme provided crucial technical assistance to improve access to quality health services. The mother- and baby-friendly hospital initiative was expanded through health development plans in 11 departments. Departmental and municipal plans related to food and nutritional security were implemented. Efforts in water and sanitation continued, with specific focus on areas with displaced persons and communities with indigenous and Afro-descendent people. The objective is a 10 per cent increase in access to these services. Capacity development among health staff contributed to a 6 per cent reduction of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

30. Support to the formulation of a policy on quality education aimed at ensuring free education for all children in Colombia. Over 220,000 children are now enrolled in child-friendly schools. The “school searches child” programme supported the reintegration of an additional 3,900 out-of-school children. Models of culturally appropriate and language-appropriate preschool education were developed for indigenous and Afro-descendant populations.

31. The programme provided technical assistance to establish and implement the national policy for the prevention of recruitment of children by illegal armed groups. Nearly 7,550 members of the armed forces and 400 members of the national police were trained on protection of children and adolescents. Support was provided to expanding the reintegration of children demobilized from illegal armed groups, with more than 300 children directly benefiting. The programme was involved in reporting on Security Council resolution 1612 (2005, on protection of children affected by armed conflict). Nearly 53,200 people have received training on mine
risk. Over 155,000 children and women benefited from support provided after natural disasters.

32. Knowledge generation, together with centres of excellence, has been a central aspect of cooperation, along with knowledge dissemination, monitoring the situation of children, and evaluation of key interventions. Together with the Government, Plan International, Save the Children and several other partners, UNICEF supported the creation of the national child rights monitoring and evaluation system. Support was provided to obtain disaggregated statistics on children and women through the national Demographic and Health Survey in 2010. ColombiaInfo was developed to increase access to data for decision-making.

Resources used

33. Initially the programme had a ceiling of $34,450,000 ($4,450,000 regular resources and $30,000,000 other resources). By end-2010, a total of $32,369,000 was received in other resources ($7,560,000 from private sector fundraising) and the ceiling was increased to $45,000,000. Expenditure rates remained high throughout the first half of the programme.

Constraints and opportunities affecting progress

34. The programme benefited from the extensive knowledge generated on the situation of children and women, in collaboration with centres of excellence, along with the Government's strong commitment to children's rights and implementation of the Code for Children and Adolescents. Natural disasters and the ongoing violence required continued attention.

Adjustments made

35. The MTR concluded that the programme remains relevant but that some adjustments in strategies are required to accelerate progress and better address equity. This includes prioritization of nine departments and two geographic regions where many excluded children and women live. The programme will also increase efforts to fill critical knowledge gaps and strengthen capacities for monitoring the situation of children.

Cuba

Introduction

36. The MTR of the country programme (2008-2012) was undertaken in consultation with the national Government, provincial partners and United Nations agencies working in Cuba.

Update of the situation of children and women

37. Cuba is likely to achieve all child-related Millennium Development Goals and has already achieved Goal 2 (universal primary education), Goal 4 (reduce child mortality) and Goal 3 (promote gender equality). While overall mortality rates declined, the proportion of deaths from preventable causes, particularly from traffic accidents and drowning, increased among children aged 5 to 14. The country has also been making significant efforts to address the Millennium Development Goals at the subnational level, but challenges remain in some rural areas and in the Eastern
region. Moreover, Cuba remains vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly hurricanes.

**Progress and key results at midterm**

38. The MTR concluded that the programme is relevant and aligned with national policies, plans and strategies. The early childhood development component contributed to improving comprehensive, community-based health care for pregnant women in the five eastern provinces, with 3,353 women benefiting directly. At the national level support was provided to define standards for evaluating the nutritional status of pregnant women. Continuous support was provided to enhance the epidemiological surveillance system as part of the national immunization programme.

39. The Educate your Child programme, primarily implemented in rural areas, contributed to improved school-readiness of young children. In total, 11,025 boys and girls with special educational and medical needs received care through diagnostic and guidance centres. In rural areas 2,846 boys and girls with special educational needs were able to enrol in regular or specialized primary schools. In the eastern provinces, attention was given to enhancing teacher capacities, to reduce the quality gap between urban and rural schools. The programme also continued promoting recreational activities in schools through sports tournaments and cultural events in a healthy, safe and protective environment.

40. Based on a study that demonstrated an increase in injuries from traffic accidents, road safety education was incorporated into the school curriculum, as were efficient use of water, hygiene practices and disaster risk reduction. After the 2008 hurricane, the country programme contributed to the rehabilitation of 198 schools, and school capacity for emergency preparedness and response was enhanced.

41. On behalf of adolescents, the programme trained 133 teenage health promoters in 8 municipalities on HIV/AIDS prevention and reproductive health issues. They disseminate this knowledge to adolescents in their communities. Adolescent participation was promoted more broadly, and 44,000 adolescents took part in cultural events and creative workshops.

42. Together with centres of excellence, the programme supported research to increase knowledge of rights, promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its implementation among boys, girls and adolescents, as well as families and teachers. Sixteen referral centres — one in each province — and one at a national level, have played an important role in the promotion of children’s rights.

**Resources used**

43. A total of $4,189,430 (combined other resources and regular resources) was received in the period 2008-2010, and $3,792,124 was received in response to the hurricane emergency in 2008. For this reason, the country programme ceiling for other resources was increased from $6,000,000 to $8,500,000. Implementation rates were high during the first half of the programme.
**Constraints and opportunities affecting progress**

44. UNICEF support is highly valued, especially its technical assistance. The work with research centres in creating evidence provides a good basis for designing more effective responses in addressing children’s rights. Working with rural schools continues to be an important strategy for improving equity.

**Adjustments made**

45. While the overall strategies and desired results of the programme remain unchanged, the MTR led to a greater focus on rural areas, particularly in education. Attention will also be given to monitoring the quality of education and implementation of hygiene education in schools and communities.

**Eastern Caribbean multi-country programme**

**Introduction**

46. The review covered the Eastern Caribbean multi-country programme (2008-2011), which included Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks and Caicos Islands. The MTR for the programme was conducted in a participatory manner, in consultation with governments, civil society and United Nations agencies across the subregion, including Trinidad and Tobago. In Suriname, the process was aligned to the MTR of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

**Update of the situation of children and women**

47. The 10 small island developing states of the Eastern Caribbean and Trinidad and Tobago remain vulnerable to natural disasters and economic shocks. Nevertheless, progress towards attainment of the Millennium Development Goals has been substantive in all countries.

48. The most disadvantaged girls and boys in the Eastern Caribbean and Trinidad and Tobago include an estimated 250,000 children from poor families, rural areas and outlying islands and those at risk of violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination. Average net enrolment in primary education ranges from 73.4 per cent in Antigua and Barbuda to 99 per cent in Saint Lucia.

49. In Suriname, stark disparities remain in development between the coastal zone and the interior of the country, where most of the excluded populations live. For example, 96 per cent of children attend primary school nationwide, but the figure falls to 55 per cent of children in the interior. Across the 12 countries, enrolment rates in secondary school are much lower than in primary school, and rates are higher for girls than for boys.

50. Violence and abuse against girls and boys is reported to be widespread and has gradually increased. Key child rights issues include social exclusion, inequality and violence, along with limited availability of social data, stagnant rates of HIV/AIDS prevalence, teenage pregnancy and access to quality learning, especially for the poor and disadvantaged. In most countries, birth registration rates are well above 90 per cent.
Progress and key results at midterm

51. The programme continued working on the preparation of evidence, providing a clearer understanding of the situation for children, which assisted in advocating for policy changes. Efforts were made to obtain more disaggregated statistical data on children and women. In Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, statistical capacity-building continued through finalization of the multiple indicator cluster survey. In partnership with the Caribbean Community, DevInfo databases were developed to disseminate those statistics.

52. Creating evidence on a range of key issues was a significant focus. Topics included the impact of social assistance on income-poor and disadvantaged children, women and their families; allocation of social budgets; quality of learning in early childhood centres; effects of sexual abuse and corporal punishment; and the spread of HIV among children and women. The evidence obtained, together with the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (based on the reports of the six countries that met their reporting obligations), was used as a framework for policy advocacy and action in all countries, including in the British Overseas Territories covered by the programme.

53. Extensive capacity development efforts were undertaken at national and local level. For example, in Suriname this included in-depth training of all primary school teachers on child-friendly education principles; training of 75 per cent of judges, public prosecutors and lawyers on the Convention on the Rights of the Child; training of all child-care staff on early childhood development standards; and building the capacity of service providers in health and education in the interior of the country. Support was also provided for development of sector-specific models in child protection. The implementation of alternative and government-led early childhood models was supported to provide early stimulation to disadvantaged children in three countries. A child-friendly school approach with an emphasis on alternative disciplinary practices was developed in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica and Saint Lucia, reaching 9,933 children from 33 primary and junior secondary schools.

54. Support to the Turks and Caicos Islands allowed schools to reopen within two weeks of hurricane Ike in 2008. As a response to the floods in 2010 in Trinidad and Tobago, school kits were provided to children from the poorest and most affected areas to facilitate their return to school. In the aftermath of hurricane Tomas (2010), girls, boys and their families in the hardest hit areas in Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines were provided with safe drinking water, hygiene kits, tents for schools and psychosocial support.

Resources used

55. The total approved ceiling for the multi-country programme 2008-2011 amounted to $32,800,000 ($12,800,000 in regular resources and $20,000,000 in other resources). By mid-2010, $13,070,000 was spent ($6,800,000 for the Eastern Caribbean, $4,070,000 for Suriname and $2,200,000 for Trinidad and Tobago).

Constraints and opportunities affecting progress

56. As a neutral and well-respected partner with technical knowledge and the ability to deliver tangible results, UNICEF continues to use its position to advocate
for child-oriented social policies and budgets. However, there is often a long lag between political commitments and action, and frequent rotation of government personnel continues to hamper progress in building the capacities of government institutions. With a lack of social data in most of the 12 countries, the census 2010/2011 and the forthcoming multiple indicator cluster survey provide opportunities to gather and disseminate disaggregated data on children for evidence-based policy formulation.

Adjustments made

57. The multi-country programme will sharpen its engagement in social and economic policy analysis focusing on child poverty and child-sensitive social protection reforms throughout the subregion. It will also advocate for a renewed commitment to prioritize the child rights agenda.

58. The MTR also highlighted the need to enhance management arrangements in the subregion. This resulted in inclusion of Trinidad and Tobago in the Eastern Caribbean Area Programme for 2012-2016 and a two-country programme for Guyana and Suriname for the same period.

Haiti

Introduction

59. The MTR of the country programme (2009-2012) was conducted in the context of the response to the major earthquake of early 2010 and the cholera epidemic in the second half of 2010. The results of the MTR process were discussed with sector partners and presented to the Ministry of Planning.

Update of the situation of children and women

60. Until the earthquake, Haiti was showing slow but accelerating progress in improving the situation of children and women. The child mortality rate had been nearly halved since 1990, though it was still at 87 per 1,000 live births. Much of the progress was undone by the earthquake, which devastated lives and livelihoods, social and government structures, and other infrastructure. The subsequent cholera epidemic (now considered endemic) infected more than 300,000 persons and led to thousands of deaths.

61. Before the earthquake, in 2009, around half of school-aged children were out of school, with more girls accessing education than boys. The earthquake interrupted the schooling of more than 2.5 million children, as nearly 4,000 schools were damaged or destroyed. Public education services are limited in Haiti, and in both government and non-government schools, fees and other costs result in the exclusion of many children.

62. Even before 2010 only 17 per cent of the population had access to adequate sanitation facilities, with lower rates in rural areas. This continues to affect many children. Ensuring the continuity of emergency water and sanitation services for displaced communities remains a challenge in 2011. Already before the earthquake malnutrition was a silent crisis for children: one in five children under 5 years was underweight and one in three suffered chronic malnutrition. Routine vaccination rates of young children only reached around 60 per cent prior to the earthquake, and took an additional dip following accelerated campaigns after the earthquake.
63. Haitian children continue to be vulnerable to violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking and being involved in labour. While reliable statistical data are not available, some evidence demonstrates worsening indicators. Around 90,000 to 300,000 children are estimated to live in domestic servitude, and 50,000 children live in institutional care. Birth registration, which could increase access to social services and protection, is only 81 per cent.

**Progress and key results at midterm**

64. While the programme served as the foundation of UNICEF cooperation in the country, a rapid expansion of emergency relief programmes was required. The UNICEF focus was on education, nutrition and child protection. Recovery action in these key sectors is focused on contributing to the transformation of Haitian society into a place where children thrive and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. The focus to aid this transformation is on strengthening the capacity of ministries, institutions, civil society organizations and communities.

65. At the end of 2010, results included the immunization of more than 1.9 million people in two successive rounds targeting camps for displaced people and surrounding communities; the delivery of safe water (using water trucks) to more than 680,000 displaced persons in camps daily at the height of the emergency; installation of over 11,300 latrines serving more than 804,000 people with safer sanitation; and increasing knowledge of hygiene practices after sensitization efforts reaching more than 710,000 people through a network of 5,185 trained hygiene promoters.

66. In addition, more than 15,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition received treatment in one of 159 outpatient therapeutic feeding programmes or 28 inpatient stabilization centres supported by UNICEF. Close to 49,000 mothers and 102,000 children benefited from counselling on infant and young child feeding and nutrition in 107 “baby-friendly corners”. In addition, more than 1 million children received vitamin A supplements and deworming. These interventions helped to stabilize the nutrition situation, which had been expected to rapidly deteriorate, considering the impact of displacement and livelihood destruction.

67. Support to education was also far-reaching, helping 325,000 children to return to school in April 2010. A further 720,000 children were targeted with teaching and learning materials for the start of the new school year in October 2010. About half were reached by the end of the year and all by March 2011. Around 100 semi-permanent schools were constructed, boosting access to learning spaces for approximately 25,000 children.

68. While the earthquake greatly exacerbated the risk of exposure to violence, abuse and exploitation, around 100,000 children enjoyed daily opportunities for safe recreation and psychosocial support through a network of more than 443 child-friendly spaces opened in 2010. UNICEF and partners also worked to register over 5,088 separated children and reunite over 1,300 of them with their families and primary caregivers. Capacity development was also continued to ensure that norms and legal frameworks were in place to protect children’s rights — and to develop the network of trained social workers and NGOs to professionalize social work throughout the country. Police presence was also reinforced to prevent child trafficking at the borders and the airport in Port-au-Prince.
69. In response to cholera, UNICEF and partners supported lifesaving curative interventions in more than 100 cholera treatment facilities, treating over 150,000 persons. Advocacy to promote best hygiene practices to prevent cholera took place in 5,000 schools, 300 child-friendly nutrition centres and more than 650 residential care centres hosting 50,000 children. Medical supplies were also provided.

Resources used

70. Due to the significant change in the situation and the one-year extension to align with the United Nations Integrated Strategic Framework for Haiti, the programme had to more than double its funding ceiling for other resources from $51,450,000 to $112,450,000. This amount is apart from the resources received for immediate emergency response. Implementation rates were high throughout the programme, despite the challenging programming environment.

Constraints and opportunities affecting progress

71. Limited capacity of institutions, constraints in national social budgets and an incomplete legal framework are among the factors that provide the Haiti programme with significant challenges. Nevertheless, the recognized position of UNICEF as a leader for children’s rights as well as solid relations with the Government and the many NGOs help in achieving results at both national and subnational levels.

Adjustments made

72. Based on discussions among the United Nations agencies and the Government, the programme was extended through the end of 2012. Though the components do not need to change, the scope of the programme has increased significantly. It is gradually transitioning from emergency to recovery and regular programming. While support to the population affected by the earthquake in Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas will continue, the programme will also address some of the poorest provinces of Haiti. Supported areas will benefit from a mix of strategies, including a solid effort to build the capacities of key local institutions and NGOs. At the national level, the programme will also continue supporting capacity-building of institutions and increase its emphasis on knowledge generation through a strong research and evaluation agenda. This will be implemented by centres of excellence, which will be instrumental in further supporting the design, adjustment and implementation of policies and programmes.

Mexico

Introduction

73. The MTR of the country programme (2008-2012) was based on consultations with stakeholders from the Government and civil society at national and subnational levels. It assessed the UNICEF added value in an upper-middle-income country where an unfinished child rights agenda coexists with new and emerging issues, threatening the fulfilment of children’s rights.

Update of the situation of children and women

74. Mexico, an upper-middle-income country, was hit hard by the global economic crisis in 2008 and 2009. Aggregated indicators at the national level demonstrate
good progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, but progress is unequal throughout the country. The national child mortality rate stands at 14 deaths per 1,000 live births, but it is much higher in the municipalities with the lowest Human Development Index, which are home to many people from indigenous groups. A similar pattern is found in other indicators such as malnutrition.

75. Preschool attendance has increased significantly since it was made compulsory in the 2004/2005 school year. Around 3 million children between 5 and 17 years of age are not attending school, and large differences exist in the quality of education. Children from indigenous groups in particular demonstrate low educational outcomes.

76. The country aligned its juvenile justice system with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and has enforced national laws to protect children from violence and abuse. However, so far there is no legislation prohibiting corporal punishment at home or in schools and institutions. An estimated 900,000 children under the age of 14 are working. For girls this mostly involves domestic activities. Mexico also has a growing number of unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents, both from the country and from other Central American countries, who travel to reunite with their families or seek a better future. Between 5,000 and 6,000 children, 60 per cent of them unaccompanied, are repatriated each year.

Progress and key results at midterm

77. The All Children in School initiative has become a platform to promote inclusive education in 188 of the most disadvantaged municipalities. Extensive support to intercultural bilingual education has contributed to the design of culturally sensitive education in states with high percentages of indigenous populations. The “Construye-T” initiative supported life skills development in 1,716 schools, reaching more than 1.3 million adolescents aged 15 to 18 years. This programme was jointly implemented with the Ministry of Education, United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Technical assistance was provided for the design of an early childhood development module for a conditional cash transfer programme targeting children up to age 5 from excluded communities. It will benefit more than 3.5 million children.

78. The programme developed a protection model for unaccompanied migrant children and supported capacity-building of child protection officers to implement the model. This approach also contributes broadly to the capacities of child protection officers in Central American countries. The private sector provided in-kind donations in the form of free telephone lines and calls to help these children to contact their families while in migration facilities. Specific attention was given to reducing child labour in agricultural production, and ensuring that children of migrant farm workers not only do not work, but gain access to education in local schools. In the Federal District and Yucatan State, UNICEF contributed to implementation of alternative juvenile justice systems, expanding the use of non-custodial sentences.

79. New evidence on the situation of children was generated through several studies, including on child poverty and the impact of the economic crisis on households with children. The results of these studies served to advocate for maintaining adequate social budgets. Funding for the Oportunidades conditional
cash transfer programme was expanded to 1 million additional families, and new benefits were provided for children up to 9 years old. The programme contributed to dissemination of 279 disaggregated child-related indicators, using DevInfo. The objective was to increase the use of data for evidence-based policy development.

Resources used
80. The approved funding ceiling for the Mexico country programme is $22,640,000 ($3,140,000 in regular resources and $19,500,000 in other resources). During the 2008-2010 period the programme maintained high expenditures rates. A total of $8,961,000 was received through in-country private sector fundraising.

Constraints and opportunities affecting progress
81. Mexico aims to take on a more prominent role in international cooperation, and this has resulted in several opportunities for thematic South-South collaboration. The country’s strong capacity in data collection and analysis and in evaluation offered numerous opportunities for building solid evidence for advocacy and action. Nevertheless, further coordination is needed among national partners in policymaking related to children.

Adjustments made
82. The MTR concluded that the programme will need to sharpen its equity focus, particularly through expanding strategic partnerships. Emphasis will be put on promoting school participation, particularly among indigenous children and the most disadvantaged adolescents. Moreover, technical assistance will address gaps in information systems and policies related to migration, juvenile justice, violence against children and child labour. In addition, efforts will be made to increase birth registration in selected areas to ensure that all children are included in national information systems.

Nicaragua
Introduction
83. The MTR of the country programme (2008-2012) aimed to assess progress and analyse contributions to national priorities, the national development plan and implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The MTR was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and benefited from the active participation of government partners. In addition, consultations were organized with non-governmental organizations.

Update of the situation of children and women
84. As of 2007, Nicaragua had instituted a number of policies benefitting children, including ensuring access to free education and health care. The percentage of people living in poverty decreased from 48.2 per cent in 2005 to 42.5 per cent in 2009, while the child mortality rate declined from 31 per 1,000 live births in 2001 to 26 per 1,000 live births in 2009. Maternal mortality also declined due to efforts to improve prenatal care and improve access to skilled attendance at birth. The number of adolescents living with HIV has more than doubled since 2004.
85. Primary school enrolment increased to 92 per cent in 2009, but fewer than half of children who enrol in school reach fifth grade. Ten per cent of children repeat at least one grade during primary school. The number of children with disabilities enrolled in school increased from 3,340 to 10,800 between 2007 and 2009 as results of efforts to ensure access to school for children with disabilities.

86. Nicaragua is facing increasing levels of various types of violence (sexual violence, corporal punishment and other types of physical violence), and it is recognized that significant efforts are required to address this issue. Around 19 per cent of children under 5 are not registered. This also contributes to the country’s continuing disparities by hindering children’s access to social services.

Progress and key results at midterm

87. Extensive support was provided to generate and disseminate evidence and data. This resulted in preparation of a nationwide information system on the situation of children and adolescents. A child rights observatory was established to monitor the situation of children and the alignment of policies and programmes with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

88. Efforts continued to strengthen the capacities of the health system. The child-friendly hospital initiative was implemented in three departments and two autonomous regions. A network of maternal homes was supported, providing a place to stay before delivery for women living in remote areas. The homes also provide skilled birth assistance, contributing to further reduction of maternal mortality. UNICEF also helped in efforts to improve access to water and sanitation facilities in 8 poor municipalities and 34 communities, including 19 indigenous communities, in the Caribbean Coast. This benefited over 30,000 persons.

89. A total of 30,000 boys and girls are enrolled in 284 child-friendly schools. The country programme also continued efforts to reform the curriculum. As a result, topics including disaster risk reduction, life skills and human rights were incorporated into primary or secondary schooling. By using its convening power, UNICEF also helped to improve coordination in the education sector.

90. Capacity-building efforts resulted in a reduction of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in eight departments and the Caribbean coast. Rapid testing for HIV among pregnant women increased from 21 per cent coverage in 2006 to 76 per cent in 2009. The programme also contributed to improved care and support for children living with HIV, including in areas with difficult access. Through work with the Ministry of Education, sexual health education was introduced in the secondary school curriculum.

91. As part of the government “Amor” programme, child protection systems were established and strengthened in 12 departments. Efforts continued in coordinating the response to violence against children and women and in supporting victims of violence. Through continued capacity development among judges and others in the justice system, Nicaragua now has specialized juvenile justice capacity across the country. In coordination with NGOs, local leaders and municipal governments, an additional 40,000 children were registered in the Caribbean regions.
Resources used
92. The approved funding ceiling for the programme is $30,505,000 ($4,160,000 in regular resources and $26,345,000 in other resources). Significant resources were mobilized in the first half of the programme and implementation rates remained high in this period.

Constraints and opportunities affecting progress
93. The Nicaraguan Government has a strong commitment to realization of child rights. This allows the programme to continue with its major efforts in institutional capacity development.

Adjustments made
94. The MTR concluded that the programme remains relevant and needed no changes. To further sharpen its equity focus, emphasis will be placed on children and women living in the Caribbean Coast, increasing access of children with disabilities to education, and increasing coverage of health, nutrition and water and sanitation services in areas with indigenous populations. Finally, more efforts will be made to prevent HIV/AIDS among adolescents.

Proinclusion subregional programme
Introduction
95. The MTR was conducted using annual reviews and MTRs of the programmes involved in Proinclusion programme. This programme (2008-2012) originally covered nine countries in South-America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela). Thanks to a major contribution from the Government of Spain, the programme covered eight additional countries throughout the region (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama). Proinclusion focuses on strengthening multi-country initiatives for social inclusion and the reduction of racial and ethnic disparities affecting indigenous and Afro-descendent children.

96. The regional component of the programme was recently reviewed. Among the main results were: (a) completion of studies for making disparities visible; (b) inclusion of child’s rights in the agenda of indigenous and Afro-descendant organizations; and (c) strengthening government commitment and capacities towards inclusive public policies.

Update of the situation of children and women
97. The Latin America and Caribbean region continues to be one of the world’s most unequal regions, with large groups of children and women missing out on economic and social gains. These groups include many of the approximately 150 million Afro-descendants and another 30 million indigenous people, who represent nearly 40 per cent of the region’s population.

98. Until recently, lack of disaggregated data was a main obstacle to analysis of the situation of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants and assessment of the scope of inequity. However, more information is becoming available. It is now
known, for example, that chronic malnutrition rates are much higher among indigenous populations; enrolment in primary education and rates of illiteracy vary significantly according to ethnic and racial origin; and infant mortality on average is approximately 60 per cent higher among indigenous peoples.

Progress and key results at midterm

99. As part of Proinclusion, multi-country initiatives have been developed to increase social inclusion and reduce racial and ethnic disparities. These have included several studies: a sociolinguistic atlas of indigenous peoples in Latin America, to contribute to the design of public policies with adequate cultural focus; a study on migration and indigenous children; and, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization and other organizations, a study on child labour and indigenous children. The programme also invested in the empowerment of indigenous peoples.

100. In collaboration with other United Nations agencies, efforts continued to inform civil servants, ombudsperson staff and indigenous organizations from across the region about the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The programme also supported the Consultative Group of Indigenous Leaders, now an inter-agency body that advises regional United Nations agencies on their work with indigenous peoples.

101. At the country level, support aimed at improving the response by the various sectors to improve the lives of indigenous and Afro-descendant children and women. For example, the Peruvian health authorities were supported to develop a culturally sensitive health model, in order to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates in indigenous areas, and in Mexico a programme was implemented for children with disabilities in rural and indigenous communities, who face the possibility of multiple forms of discrimination.

102. In seven countries (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Venezuela) attention was given to the rights of Afro-descendant populations. Efforts included preparation of a situation analysis of Afro-descendant children in Peru and in Costa Rica; a regional study on racism and racial discrimination in the juvenile justice system; a media campaign against racism in Brazil; and a publication on Afro-descendant history and cultural practices.

103. Within the Proinclusion framework, the Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) project was supported in all 17 countries, particularly in the Amazon regions of Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, through the UNICEF/EIBAMAZ project funded by the Finnish government, for the development of educational materials, applied research and teacher training. In Ecuador, all children from nine indigenous groups are receiving education based on a model sensitive to their culture and language. In Ucayali (Peru) 4,000 children have received materials in their indigenous languages, and thousands of teachers in the Plurinational State of Bolivia received materials on intercultural teaching for multigrade classrooms in multi-ethnic contexts.

Resources used

104. The programme has an approved ceiling of $44,500,000 in other resources, and so far has received $13,700,000 by Spain. In the case of Bolivia, Ecuador and
Peru, additional funds were received for the EIBAMAZ project by the Government of Finland to promote intercultural bilingual education.

**Constraints and opportunities affecting progress**

105. Thematic multi-country programmes like Proinclusion provide opportunities to address common issues through a coherent approach while also promoting South-South collaboration among the countries in such programmes. At the same time it provided the frame for other multicounty initiatives. The region also counts on strong advocates of indigenous and Afro-descendant background who have influenced the development agenda, focusing on equity. However, concrete action and investment in areas with large indigenous and Afro-descendant populations are still lagging.

**Adjustments made**

106. Due to the nature of the programme and additional evidence available, the number of countries benefiting from Proinclusion was increased from 9 (in South America) to 17 (including all Central American countries and Mexico).

**Conclusion**

107. The MTRs discussed in this report demonstrate the scope of UNICEF cooperation in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. They highlight the importance of targeted strategies to address equity, focusing on the most excluded populations in each country.

108. The majority of the programmes in the region combine efforts to influence policies at the national level while simultaneously working for tangible results for children at subnational level. They typically work in the poorest regions and municipalities with high percentages of indigenous and Afro-descendant populations. Using its convening power, UNICEF also helps to increase coordination among development partners, including United Nations agencies.

109. While the MTR countries have made progress in terms of aligning their legislative and policy frameworks with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, putting these frameworks and policies into practice in an integrated and sustainable way remains a challenge. Therefore, continued support to capacity-building remains a crucial component of country programmes. As implemented, the programmes and strategies are helping to improve equity and support progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals with equity for all children and women in the region.