

## Equatorial Guinea

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### Executive summary

Equatorial Guinea Country Programme (CP) 2013–2018 is aligned with the current United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the National Plan for Economic and Social Development, Horizonte 2020; it was extended one year to allow a better harmonization with the next UNDAF and the 2030 Agenda.

Equatorial Guinea continues to be heavily dependent on an oil-economy, which accounts for 60 per cent of the GDP and 80 per cent of fiscal revenue. With the decline of oil prices, the GDP has averaged negative growth from 2010–2015 with a contraction of 7.4 per cent in 2015 (IMF, 2016). The Government of Equatorial Guinea has prioritized economic and infrastructural development (57 per cent of total investment compared to 14 per cent for social sectors). The country is ranked 135 in the latest Human Development Report (UNDP, 2017); the number of people living in poverty declined from 77 per cent to 44 per cent between 2006 and 2011 (DHS, 2011). Under-five mortality was estimated at 113/1000 (DHS, 2011) and more recently at 91/1000 (IGME, 2016).

Vaccination coverage has shown some signs of improvement with DPT3 and measles coverage increasing from 36 per cent and 30 per cent respectively in 2016 to 47 per cent and 50 per cent respectively in 2017. HIV prevalence remains a major challenge at 6.2 per cent, the highest in West and Central Africa (WCA); women's HIV rate is 8.3 per cent, more than double that of men. On the island of Bioko, where a malaria project is being implemented, malaria prevalence is estimated at 8 per cent, while in the Continental Region it is estimated at 50 per cent (MINSABS, 2016).

Twenty-six per cent of children under five years of age are stunted and 3 per cent are classified as wasted, which means Equatorial Guinea is on course to end malnutrition by 2020. However, only 7 per cent of children are exclusively breastfed. Drinking water coverage has improved over the past 20 years, but around 50 per cent of households continue to rely on unimproved water sources. Inequities persist in rural households as access to improved water decreased from 41 per cent to 31 per cent. The sanitation coverage is one of the highest in West and Central Africa at over 70 per cent.

The number of children attending preschool and primary school has increased from 42,108 and 93,396 children respectively in 2014/15 to 51,824 and 102,812 children in 2015/16, with full gender parity. However, learning outcomes are still below West and Central Africa standards as only 8 per cent of preschool and 51 per cent of primary school teachers have formal training. Only 54 per cent of children obtained birth certificates and 9 per cent of girls were married by the age of 15, increasing to 30 per cent by the age of 18. Girls' experience of violence is widespread with 63 per cent of women from the age of 15 having experienced physical violence, and 32 per cent of women reporting that they have been victims of sexual violence.

The drafting of the social protection legislation was developed with strong ownership from the Government, as highlighted by the Presidential Decree that appointed the National Commission to draft the law. Using intensification strategies, immunization rates improved by at least 30 per cent from 2016 to 2017. The attainment of a prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) coverage of 90 per cent is one of the highest in the region, the result of fruitful collaboration between the Ministry of Health, the United Nations, civil society organizations (CSO), and international cooperation. The capacity building of 2,000 preschool teachers in performance evaluation will be a key asset to improve education quality at pre- and primary school levels. The advocacy work done – in partnership with the National Child Rights Committee, key government ministries, CSOs, and private sector partners during the African Child Day fortnight, Convention on the Rights of the Child celebration and State of the World's Children Report launch – has increased awareness and put child rights in the centre of the development agenda.

The financial management capacity and related risks linked to the lack of a decentralization policy/reform continues to be a major bottleneck to accelerating the implementation of social programmes in the country. UNICEF continues to consolidate the implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) and has worked with key ministries (Finance, Health, Education and Social Affairs) to improve assurance activities and reduce the risks. National staff motivation and limited competencies continue to affect efficiency levels in the delivery of social services, which are rated as some of the lowest in the region.

The partnership with the Government and the United Nations in the implementation of the current UNDAF continues to be the most relevant collaboration, particularly in the areas of health, education and social protection. Other important partnerships have also been developed with CSOs in the areas of child protection and HIV/AIDS (prevention and PMTCT) with encouraging results.

## Humanitarian assistance

Since 2014, when five polio cases were confirmed in different locations in Equatorial Guinea, the country has been focused on stopping transmission to achieve a polio free status. The response of the Government to the situation has been coordinated by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MINSABS), with technical and financial support from the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF Rotary International and CSOs. UNICEF has demonstrated its capacity to be on the frontline by securing the needed vaccines for this humanitarian emergency, providing technical assistance in social mobilization and logistics and funding some activities, particularly social mobilization.

The last case of wild polio virus (WPV) was reported in May 2014; as of the last week of December 2017, no new case of either WPV or circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus has been reported in the country. An external evaluation by independent evaluators in June 2015 on the polio outbreak response showed that Equatorial Guinea had been able to stop polio circulation throughout the national territory. In order to maintain this condition and continue working towards eliminating polio in the country, assistance was provided for the implementation of polio supplementary immunization activities (SIA). In 2017, two national immunization days (NIDs) were planned but only one was carried out in August, with more than 169,000 children under 5 years old vaccinated (99 per cent). Due to general and local elections that were planned for the last quarter of 2017, the missing NID is planned for the first quarter of 2018.

In 2017 inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) was introduced into the national immunization calendar and the switch was made from trivalent Oral Polio Vaccine (tOPV) to bivalent OPV (bOPV). The UNICEF Country Office received technical and financial support from headquarters and the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) in providing this assistance. The Country Office also received financial contributions from the Rotary Club International. These funds were crucial in supporting the two temporary assignment polio positions (technical coordination and social mobilization and communication).

To diminish polio circulation, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) recommends the strengthening of routine immunization. For a country to be declared polio free, its routine immunization coverage must be acceptable (DPT3 coverage above 80 per cent). Even with improvement in coverage (47 per cent in 2017, up from 36 per cent in 2016), Equatorial Guinea's routine immunization performance is very poor, leaving it at risk of another polio virus outbreak, despite the 14 NIDs carried out since 2014.

To support the country in improving its immunization performance, the international immunization community pushed for Equatorial Guinea to organize two important meetings in the country in 2017. During the organization of the African Regional Certification Committee (ARCC) for polio eradication meeting (in Malabo in June 2017), the ARCC noted, with concern, that Equatorial Guinea had failed to achieve certification standards. The second meeting was the expanded programme on immunization (EPI) managers' meeting for central Africa, held in September 2017. Both meetings aimed to put pressure on and raise advocacy with the Government to improve routine immunization coverage, essential for polio eradication. UNICEF will continue supporting the Government in 2018 in its efforts toward polio eradication through increased routine immunization coverage.

### Equity in practice

In 2014, the UNICEF Country Office undertook a Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) to support equity refocus as proposed in the Strategic Plan 2014–2017. The analysis (single and multiple deprivations) was done with technical support from Innocenti Research Centre. Data were collected in the programme areas of health, nutrition, water, sanitation and housing for two groups: 1) children aged 0–4 years and 2) children aged 5–17 years.

The analysis showed that 56 per cent of children aged 0–4 years did not have access to adequate food (which explains the 26 per cent rate of stunting) and did not receive three doses of DPT. Around 50 per cent of them did not have access to improved sanitation. About 44–46 per cent of children aged 5–17 years did not have access to potable drinking water and improved sanitation, and 38 per cent of them did not complete primary school.

The deprivations were more severe for children living in rural areas, in the poorest households, with mothers without education. The multiple deprivation analysis showed that only 10 per cent of children aged 0–4 years did not suffer any form of deprivation; for children aged 5–17 years, the score was 27 per cent, with children in rural areas significantly more affected. In terms of overlapping deprivations, 20 per cent of children aged 0–4 years and 5 per cent of those aged 5–17 years suffered from multiple deprivations in health, water and sanitation.

This analysis was able to pinpoint the programmatic areas and regions/provinces where the UNICEF Country Office can more effectively support government efforts to address child deprivations and inequities in the delivery and utilization of social services. The main conclusions were that: 1) deprivations and inequities affect more children living in rural areas; 2)

the Province of Bioko Norte, where the capital is located, is the least deprived; 3) three provinces in the Continental Region (representing 57 per cent of the country's population) are the most deprived (Centro Sur, Litoral and WeleNzas); 4) the education level of mothers plays a key role in the level and magnitude of deprivations; 5) water and sanitation is one of the key deprivations, particularly in the Continental Region and rural areas; 6) health and nutrition continue to be serious deprivations, particularly for children aged 0–4 years and in the three most deprived provinces.

Based on this analysis, complemented by a decentralized monitoring approach, UNICEF identified key programmatic priorities for intervention in the current country programme, namely: health (immunization, HIV/AIDS, nutrition/stunting, and malaria); education (preschool and primary education); and social and child protection systems. UNICEF CO has also been testing an integrated basic social service model in four target districts with high deprivation scores, based on an integrated analysis of health and education indicators, ensuring a geographically balanced intervention.

Progress has been made with a stronger equity focus in the past two years to improve equitable and inclusive access to preschool and primary education. The number of school children has increased yearly by about 20 per cent for preschool and 10 per cent for primary school, with full gender parity. However, learning outcomes have not improved as passing rates—less than 80 per cent for girls and boys—are still below the regional standards.

Vaccination coverage has improved by at least 30 per cent for the key antigens (DPT3 and measles) but is still not fully sustained. More work is needed to improve the cold chain, effective vaccine management, communication (including interpersonal) and community engagement to improve demand. Paediatric treatment of HIV/AIDS coverage for young children increased from 10 to 16 per cent (2015–2017). Coverage for PMTCT increased from 75 to 90 per cent for women who are pregnant and HIV-positive, and the coverage of health centres with PMTCT services reached 100 per cent in the Island Region and 74 per cent in the Continental Region.

Malaria prevalence shows serious inequities due to concentration of a major project funded by the Government and the private sector (Marathon Oil) on the island of Bioko, where prevalence has been reduced to around 8 per cent; in the Continental Region prevalence is still above 50 per cent. UNICEF is drafting a new country programme strategy note in line with the new Strategic Plan 2018–2021 and will adjust its equity strategy to address these challenges; the integrated social protection system under development will be the main catalyst programme.

## **Strategic Plan 2018–2021**

Equatorial Guinea is going through a major economic recession due to the fall of oil prices since 2012/2013. The Government, through the National Plan for Economic and Social Development, Horizonte 2020, has made enormous efforts to build the economic infrastructure (roads, ports, airports, conference centres, hotels) and institutional and social infrastructure (government buildings/ministries, hospitals, health centres, schools, training centres, sports facilities, etc.) representing close to 57 per cent of all investments made, with the social sector accounting for only around 14 per cent. The Government planned a second investment phase to focus more in the social sectors, with human resources development and systems strengthening as the main strategic goals, including the establishment of a social protection system. The United Nations has seen this as an opportunity to strengthen collaboration within and with other partners to have positive multiplier effects and to support the Government to readdress its focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The current UNDAF plan 2013–2017 was extended to 2018, allowing UNICEF to harmonize the new Strategic Plan 2018–2021 with the current country programme. At the same time, the United Nations team will continue to work with the Government to better plan the next UNDAF for cycle 2019–2023, and advocate for the Government to align its current National Strategic Plan and vision with the 2030 Agenda.

In line with the principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first, the new UNDAF strongly advocates: 1) continuing the country's effort to eradicate poverty (reduced from 77 to 44 per cent between 2006 and 2011) through stronger focus on the diversification of the economy, reducing dependence on the extractive industry (over 80 per cent); 2) addressing the climate change challenge as a regional champion, using schools as an entry point, and the most vulnerable families and communities as the catalysts for change; 3) improving adolescent and maternal health, with a particular focus on HIV/AIDS, which affects young women three times more than men; 4) achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, particularly in the areas of education, dignified employment, and elimination of all forms of violence and abuse; 5) ensuring greater availability of disaggregated data, particularly on the situation of the most vulnerable children, adolescents, and women, by undertaking regular surveys such as MICS/DHS and public and housing expenditures analysis.

In this context, UNICEF Equatorial Guinea is implementing the current country programme (CP) 2013–2018 with a balanced upstream/downstream strategic approach. It includes two important programmes: an equity-based social policies, knowledge and advocacy programme and a major focus on showing evidence and lessons learned to expand the child survival, development, and protection programme that uses an integrated package model (health, HIV, preschool and primary education, child protection) targeting four districts. These two programmes are aligned respectively with Goal Area 5 (every child has an equitable chance in life) that underpins Goal Areas 1, 2 and 3 (every child survives, thrives, learns and is protected from violence and exploitation).

The CO, in collaboration with the United Nations team, is supporting the development of an integrated social protection programme. The modernization of the birth registration system is also a major priority. Two additional areas of major collaboration among United Nations agencies are: 1) the effort to eradicate polio and improve routine immunization, being developed with WHO; and 2) the work on HIV/AIDS using the Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free strategy with a major collaboration with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and WHO. It should be noted that the Government of Equatorial Guinea continues to fund the procurement of all vaccines for routine immunization and all testing and anti-retroviral (ARVs), which shows a significant commitment, a result of strong and concerted advocacy from the United Nations team.

Despite the identified economic challenges, the Government of Equatorial Guinea has been supporting UNICEF resource mobilization efforts through direct funding of the UNDAF plans with the goal of accelerating progress for the most vulnerable and marginalized children, in line with Horizonte 2020. In accordance with the Strategic Plan vision, the CO is also providing technical assistance to generate knowledge, develop national policies with an enhanced equity focus, strengthen child finance for equity analysis, foster collaboration in areas of social and child protection, leverage resources for children in the country and advocate to improve child rights. UNICEF is also providing support to strengthen systems and service delivery for disadvantaged children, demonstrating how policies and child-friendly services can be tested, financed and scaled up nationwide.

## Emerging areas of importance

**Urbanization and children.** The final report from the 2015 Census was published in 2017 and confirmed demographic shifts, particularly the movement of young people from rural areas (to the main urban areas Bata and Malabo) and from neighbouring countries (Benin, Cameroon, Gabon, Nigeria) during the period of the economic boom. The number of foreign nationals, mainly young people, represents around 12 per cent of the total population of Equatorial Guinea, estimated at 1,225,377. The 2015 Census builds a population pyramid that is skewed for the age bracket 25–29 years. It is estimated that 76 per cent of the population lives within the provincial capitals, with the vast majority in two main cities, Bata and Malabo (47 per cent in total). Around 44 per cent of the population are children under 18 years old, and even more concerning is that 27 per cent of children are moving from the rural to urban areas to continue primary and secondary education, at times without proper adult supervision. The population density in the capital city of Malabo—450 inhabitants per square kilometre—is 10 times higher than the national average of 45 inhabitants per square kilometre.

This demographic shift, compounded with the economic recession, is posing serious challenges to the Government and its partners regarding equitable access to basic social services (health, education, protection) by adolescents and young people in urban areas. With this backdrop, UNICEF, in partnership with the United Nations, local civil society organizations and international NGOs, is working to address the emerging challenges, principally the increase of children out of school, HIV prevalence among young people, particularly girls, and children in conflict with the law, mainly boys.

A study on children out of school (school abandonment is estimated at 29 per cent) has been commissioned and will be completed in 2018 and will provide fresh data to review the policy, particularly linked to the rights of girls to education (for example, in cases of early pregnancy). UNICEF is also working with the Ministry of Health, the United Nations, and NGOs, on a campaign to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people, reaching every district of the country. UNICEF is supporting the strengthening of the district chapters of the National Commission on the Rights of the Child with capacity building of the community members and leaders on prevention of violence.

The ongoing work to develop a social protection system advocates to put children and adolescents in the centre of the development agenda in line with the Horizonte 2020 and the Agenda 2030. Despite great efforts made by UNICEF and the United Nations to support the development of policies harmonized with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and targeting children and adolescents, the Government has not yet taken adequate steps to approve and implement the policies. These gaps have stalled the necessary reforms to upgrade the child protection system and its consequent strengthening and decentralization.

**Greater focus on the second decade of life.** Adolescents living with HIV in Equatorial Guinea are a growing concern, as the young population continues to expand (44 per cent of the population is under 18 years of age) and HIV prevalence throughout the country is on the rise. HIV prevalence among young people 15–24 years old is 3.1 per cent, with a higher burden among girls and young women (5 per cent) compared to boys and young men (1 per cent). In response, UNICEF worked with the National Technical Team for Multi-sectoral Collaboration for HIV to support and coordinate prevention activities for young people throughout the country.

During 2016–2017, UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, UNDP, and two national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to conduct a National Cultural Tour for HIV Prevention that, in addition to providing information on HIV prevention, testing, and counselling, carried messages about reducing stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV. The tour collaborated with local governments, including hospitals and health centres, and offered events that included music, theatre, and short films about HIV. One of the principal actors in the cultural tour was a woman HIV counsellor who is the focus of one of the short films and provides testimony about living with HIV.

Additionally, UNICEF supported the national non-governmental organization Biriaelat to implement SKILLZ, a well-designed sports-based HIV prevention intervention, in schools. The SKILLZ curriculum focuses on building basic life skills – with a focus on gender, gender-based violence, early pregnancy and other issues that girls face – that help adolescents adopt healthy behaviours and live risk-free. The SKILLZ programme was supported by a peer educator element to promote condom use and HIV counselling and testing.

## Acronyms

|       |   |
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| ACIGE | Equatorial Guinea Cinematographic Association                               |
| ARCC  | African Regional Certification Committee                                    |
| ARV   | antiretroviral  |
| BCP   | business continuity plan  |
| BGAN  | Broadband Global Area Network   |
| BOPV  | bivalent oral polio vaccine   |
| BZO   | Bata Zonal Office   |
| C4D   | communication for development   |
| CCA   | Common Country Assessment   |
| CMT   | country management team   |
| CO    | Country Office (UNICEF)   |
| CP    | Equatorial Guinea Country Programme   |
| CPD   | country programme document  |
| CRVS  | Civil Registration and Vital Statistics                                     |
| CSO   | civil society organization  |
| DHS   | Demographic Health Survey   |
| DPT   | diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis  |
| EPI   | expanded programme on immunization  |
| EU    | European Union  |
| EVM   | effective vaccine management  |
| FAO   | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations                     |
| FCSAI | Spanish Foundation for International Cooperation, Health and Social Affairs |
| FFS   | farmer field schools  |
| GPEI  | Global Polio Eradication Initiative   |
| HACT  | harmonized approach to cash transfers                                       |
| IGME  | Inter-Agency Group on Mortality Estimates                                   |
| IMF   | International Monetary Fund   |
| INEGE | National Institute of Statistics of Equatorial Guinea                       |
| IPV   | inactivated polio vaccine   |
| LTA   | long-term agreement   |
| MCDI  | Medical Care Development International                                      |
| MEC   | Ministry of Education and Science   |
| MICS  | Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey  |

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| MINASIG  | Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality             |
| MININTER | Ministry of Interior and Local Corporations                |
| MINJUST  | Ministry of Justice, Worship and Penitentiary Institutions |
| MINSABS  | Ministry of Health and Social Welfare                      |
| MODA     | Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis                  |
| MoES     | Ministry of Education and Science                          |
| MoHSW    | Minister of Health and Social Welfare                      |
| NCRC     | National Child Rights Committee                            |
| NID      | national immunization day                                  |
| OMT      | Operations Management Team                                 |
| PBR      | programme and budget review                                |
| PC       | Parliament of Children                                     |
| PCA      | programme cooperation agreement                            |
| PF4C     | Public Finance for Children                                |
| PMT      | programme management team                                  |
| PMTCT    | prevention of mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)        |
| ProVATE  | Protocol on Violence, Abuse, Trafficking and Exploitation  |
| RI       | routine immunization                                       |
| SC-ISCI  | Spanish Cooperation- Carlos III Health Institute           |
| SMR      | Strategic Moment of Reflection                             |
| SPS      | social protection systems                                  |
| SSC      | South-South cooperation                                    |
| SSFA     | small-scale funding agreement                              |
| SSTC     | South-South and Triangular Cooperation                     |
| tOPV     | Trivalent Oral Polio Vaccine                               |
| TOR      | terms of reference   |
| UN       | United Nations   |
| UNAIDS   | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS                 |
| UNDAF    | United Nations Development Assistance Framework            |
| UNDP     | United Nations Development Programme                       |
| UNDSS    | United Nations Department for Safety and Security          |
| UNFPA    | United Nations Population Fund                             |
| UNICEF   | United Nations Children's Fund                             |
| VoIP     | Voice over Internet Protocol                               |
| WCA      | West and Central Africa                                    |
| WCARO    | West and Central Africa Regional Office                    |
| WHO      | World Health Organization                                  |
| WPV      | wild polio virus   |

## Capacity development

In coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality (MINASIG), UNICEF Equatorial Guinea trained 170 community leaders to promote awareness on the Rights of the Child and gender equality. As part of the social protection joint programme, UNICEF and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) carried out a capacity building initiative on financial inclusion targeting mainly rural female entrepreneurs. The 80 beneficiaries of the FAO's three farmer field schools, located in the Province of Bioko Norte, were provided with basic theoretical knowledge and practical training on savings management, entrepreneurship, and cooperatives.



UNICEF collaborated with the MINSABS and the Spanish Foundation for International Cooperation, Health and Social Affairs (FCSAI) to implement the national strategy to decentralize PMTCT and integrate Option B+ in all antenatal care settings. Four recently graduated doctors were selected to receive specific PMTCT training and support the decentralization process as PMTCT specialists. With their support, more than 208 doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacy staff, laboratory staff, and health centre/hospital directors in the Continental Region received a two-day intensive training followed by four onsite support visits to monitor and supervise implementation of the new strategy, covering 70 per cent of all antenatal care services in the country. UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC), implemented a training plan for 2,000 preschool teachers on formative evaluation to strengthen education quality at preschool and primary school levels.

An integrated community intervention took place in Mbini district. In order to reinforce local capacity and empower rural communities, the two secondary school theatre groups were identified and trained on participatory theatre techniques and immunization calendars. Moreover, the local social mobilizers—around 180 people from nine rural communities—received a training on demonstration techniques of handwashing, use of impregnated bed nets and preparation of oral rehydration salts.

### **Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy**

As a result of UNICEF advocacy and technical assistance, the country is better prepared to make more equitable budgetary decisions on public finance for children. UNICEF is conducting an important study on public finance for children (PF4C), including information on social budget tracking in health, education and child and social protection. This initiative will be an important tool to tackle inequality in the country. Additionally, the National Institute of Statistics of Equatorial Guinea (INEGE), being an active part of the UNICEF-Government team, developed and included a manual for monitoring fieldwork during the four phases of the study.

Through two national workshops, with support from UNICEF-Nigeria, UNICEF in Equatorial Guinea brought together decision makers, stakeholders and experts to learn about social protection systems (SPS) and public finance for children (PF4C), and to discuss and share evidence on policy interventions and costing related to children's well-being.

To generate evidence on the prevalence of malaria at the subnational level, UNICEF—in partnership with MINSABS, Medical Care Development International (MCDI), WHO, and Roll Back Malaria—conducted a study in the country that demonstrated the need to improve MINSABS's strategy to successfully fight this disease based on a more equitable mobilization and utilization of resources.

As part of efforts to improve polio and other routine immunizations (RI) in Equatorial Guinea, two important meetings were arranged. The first was the African Regional Certification Committee (ARCC) for Polio Eradication Meeting, organized in Malabo in June 2017, where the ARCC noted with concern problems related to the inability of the country to achieve certification standards; the second was the EPI managers' meeting for Central Africa, held in September 2017. For Equatorial Guinea in particular, these meetings contributed to advocacy for improved performance, based on combined efforts from the national government and the international community.

## Partnerships

In the area of health, collaborative relations were developed under MINSABS leadership with the following partners: FCSAI to ensure successful implementation of the national strategy to decentralize PMTCT and integrate Option B+ in all antenatal care settings (trained 4 national doctors and 162 health workers); Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Enfermería (Foundation for the Development of Nursing) in midwives' training; and Religious Foundation for Health working in the programme on health statistics assistants and strengthening of the health district committees.

Furthermore, a collaboration with the Cuban Medical Brigade was established in immunization, communication for development (C4D) and during the polio NID. In the case of malaria, MCDI collaborated in the rapid malaria survey. In education, the partnerships with one national institution (ASAMA) and another international (a public-private partnership between the national government and the Hess Corporation, the Program for Education Development of Equatorial Guinea, managed by FHI 360), contributed to community engagement in school management and improved education data generation.

The collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and Local Corporations (MININTER) was instrumental in raising awareness and improving knowledge of HIV among young people. The Civil Society Department actively participated in the HIV sensitizing campaign during its two phases (Continental and Insular regions). UNICEF established collaborations with various other ministries and government institutions, namely Ministries of Justice, Information and Communication, Youth and Sports, Economy and Planning, National Child Rights Committee, and Presidency of Government.

UNICEF also strengthened strategic collaborations (PCAs and SSFAs, particularly with national NGOs, such as Equatorial Guinea Cinematographic Association (ACIGE), Brialelat, Bocamandja, Sports Links, Red Cross and AfricaHuna) on HIV prevention, social protection, immunization, child protection and young people engagement.

## External communication and public advocacy

In line with the global communication and public advocacy strategy and the SDGs, UNICEF Equatorial Guinea supported all relevant child rights-related advocacy events (including International Women's Day, Day of the African Child, World Breastfeeding Week, International AIDS Day, launch of the Start Free, Stay Free, Aids Free Strategy, World Children's Day – Convention on the Rights of the Child celebration and launch of the State of the World's Children Report) with effective participation of high-level authorities and partners (First Lady, government ministers, parliamentarians, senators).

Furthermore, UNICEF supported youth engagement activities in partnership with government and civil society organizations, particularly to address HIV/AIDS prevention, stigma and discrimination, violence against children and women and child justice emerging challenges. The Office senior management also used all the 17 public speeches and engagement opportunities to raise the voice for child rights with a stronger equity focus. The main strategic programmatic areas of advocacy were: establishment of a social protection system; modernization of the birth registration system and justice for children; engagement with community leaders to end violence against children and women; strengthening of routine immunization; and increasing accountability in public finance for children.

The Country Office also collaborated with the Ministry of Information Press and Radio to strengthen the capacity of public and private sector journalists (60) to integrate issues of child rights in the national communication strategy and the production of radio and television programmes in the official and local languages of the country. The launch of the State of the World's Children Report 2017 was also an opportunity to address the issue of benefits and risks of digital media for young children and adolescents and advocate with the Government, CSOs and the private sector for the need to adjust policies to make the digital world more equitable and safe, contributing to reduction of poverty and achievement of the SDGs.

### **South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation**

UNICEF exchanged best practices and lessons learned on child-friendly schools and children with disabilities during an Education International Conference held in Havana, accompanying and facilitating the participation of a Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) delegation. This was an opportunity to exchange possibilities of cooperation and collaboration with the Cuban Ministry of Education, most importantly on education for children with disabilities.

Two members of the Equatorial Guinea Parliament participated in the Inter-Regional Parliamentarian Seminar in Ouagadougou, to Promote Child Nutrition in Western and Central Africa, organized by Inter-Parliamentary Union in collaboration with Alive & Thrive and by BurkinaFaso's Parliament.

UNICEF contributed to the participation of Equatorial Guinea's delegation at a Child Rights International Conference in Havana. The Human Rights National Director and the Secretary of the NCRC were given the opportunity to exchange on the Cuban contribution, which is working on child rights through specialists providing technical assistance for government interventions on justice for children.

UNICEF received technical assistance in social policy and public finance for children (PF4C) from the UNICEF Nigeria social policy section, both for training of national cadres for social protection and for the ongoing study on public finance for children. The UNICEF WCARO technical collaboration in social policy allowed the CO to improve the manuals, exercise notebooks and guidelines of courses for financial inclusion of rural female entrepreneurs, to revise the draft of the law of SPS and to raise capacity for impact evaluations of future interventions.

UNICEF Equatorial Guinea provided support to the Cabo Verde government on the preparation of the communication for development component of the Comprehensive Multi-year Plan (for EPI) and on the development of a plan for malaria outbreak. Moreover, inputs were provided to the Liberia communication for development strategy in collaboration with the national government and on the concept note on child's participation on radio programmes in Myanmar.

### **Identification and promotion of innovation**

In the framework of the social protection joint programme, collaboration was established between UNICEF and the office of the Prime Minister, including key ministries and legislation experts, for the coordination of approaches for the development of a Single Social Registry concept note. This innovation will allow (through its implementation in 2018) the different actors and sectors of the Government to have solid and reliable administrative data and a child birth registration system for the most vulnerable populations.

The Government, UNICEF, and FAO collaborated to implement an innovative intervention on financial inclusion targeting rural women entrepreneurs, benefiting them and their children for the long term. This initiative was held in three FAO farmer field schools in the Province of Bioko Norte, where the capacities of rural women were reinforced in savings management, entrepreneurship, and cooperatives. They received educational materials on basic entrepreneurship to put their learnings into daily practice. On immunization, UNICEF contributed to improvement of vaccination storage capacity of the MINSABS by procuring, financing and installing 19 solar panel refrigerators in 19 vaccination centres in the Continental Region and on the island of Corisco. The latter is an important contribution to reach disadvantaged children, considering the difficult access to health services for this island's population.

UNICEF also supported the development of a mascot to promote EPI. The idea is to replace ad hoc and inconsistent information, education and communication materials with a permanent, congenial character, which will interact with families, especially children and their mothers. The character, validated by the Government, is coming to life through the production of a jingle and a 3D TV spot. The idea is that the mascot could go beyond immunization and promote other child rights, such as birth registration and early childhood development interventions.

### **Support to integration and cross-sectoral linkages**

The current financial situation of the country underlines the need to optimize resources by promoting integration, as discussed during a social protection system national seminar aiming to develop a new SPS legislation. Several ministries and NGOs participated in this event; a key resolution was the creation of the Single Social Registry for identifying the beneficiaries of the future system.

UNICEF, in collaboration with NGO Biriaelat, MEC and MINSABS, developed the Peer Educators and SKILLZ Initiative to promote best practices to prevent HIV among 80 adolescents in Mbini district. UNICEF, in collaboration with various NGOs, MININTER and MINASBS, developed the Cultural Tour for HIV prevention in all critical districts.

During 2017, UNICEF developed a pilot project in Mbini district aiming at the integration of public services for children. Its purpose was to integrate awareness creation with service providers from health, education and protection sectors, including the Medical Cuban Brigade. The initiative involved around 180 people from nine rural communities with demonstration and provision of the following services: immunization, medical consultation, long lasting impregnated bed nets, breastfeeding, handwashing, HIV/AIDS prevention (a local video clip disseminated) and educative material distribution. Based on this experience and others at district level, a community-based model was developed and discussed internally.

Another example of integration was the establishment of training and practice with the counterparts on HACT system planning, financing and accountability, which will allow them to achieve better practices for responsible financial management and improve their accountability internally and externally.

The beginning of a political dialogue and advocacy on topics such as bullying and the influence of early child marriages in health, education and social affairs sectors was another result of cross-sectoral efforts made in 2017.

## Service delivery

Despite the conditions in which the country programme document (CPD) was established, based on providing more assistance, advocacy, and policy dialogue as its main conception, the characteristics of the national context in which UNICEF is intervening made it necessary to make extra efforts in service delivery, most importantly in health, education and child protection areas.

In health, the CO contributed to the procurement and distribution of child development and TB paediatric diagnostics materials in all health centres. In these interventions, UNICEF participated in the training of 83 health workers on the new guidance of child growth and development. As part of the immunization focus, interpersonal communication trainings have been developed (reinforced by supervision shared with WHO), along with the procurement of social mobilization and cold chain materials. UNICEF procured the vaccines and communication for development materials used during polio NIDs. The value of these procurements surpassed \$300,000.

In education, UNICEF contributed to the distribution of materials (sports, health, pedagogic, didactic kits) and equipped 286 classrooms for about 100,000 preschool and primary school children. This process also included training of teachers in use of these items.

In child protection, diverse informatics items were procured to establish a computerized data registering system (CRVS), including, most importantly, a child birth registration system. This procurement, valued at more than US\$60,000 and provided by the European Union (EU), consisted of purchase, distribution and installation of equipment. The process was affected by delays in the approval procedures in the MINJUST and is expected to be finalized in 2018.

## Human rights-based approach to cooperation

UNICEF Equatorial Guinea and other United Nations agencies have contributed to the dissemination of information on international human rights principles that the country has ratified. In an effort to raise the population's awareness of these principles, certain international commemorations (such as the United Nations Day, International Women's Day, African Children's Day, the Commemoration of the Convention on the Rights of Child, Day to End Violence Against Women and Girls and World HIV Day) were used as an opportunity to promote human rights.

UNICEF printed 800 copies of legislation material and contributed to dissemination of the Law for the Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Persons, the Law for Prevention of Torture, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. These materials were distributed to local authorities and community leaders throughout the country.

At least nine high-level meetings with members of the government took place during 2017, focused on the protection of children and women. These have revolved around the modernization of basic legislation and policies for the protection of children and promotion of gender equality as essential human rights.

Important progress has been made in the preparation of the Country Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Currently, the report draft is

available and its presentation and defence before the Committee in Geneva is scheduled for the first semester of 2018.

The Government approved Decree 50/2017, which extends the family and guardianship courts for minors to all provincial head offices. These advances are significant in terms of judicial guarantees in favour of mothers and children.

During 2017, UNICEF worked with the government on the conception and creation of a civil registry system, in order to guarantee access to the birth registry for all families as a basic and universal right, thus guaranteeing the legal existence of minors, access to basic services such as health and education and prevention and protection against early-marriage, illicit child trafficking and child labour.

## Gender equality

UNICEF Equatorial Guinea has promoted the gender equality perspective in the country, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other United Nations agencies. The framework of holding important commemorations related to gender, such as International Women's Day, Day to End Violence Against Women and Girls and World HIV Day, served to highlight the importance and need for intersectoral coordinated gender work.

UNICEF actively contributed to the evaluation of the Multisectoral Gender Plan, coordinated by UNFPA and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Gender Equality (MINASIG), in which the different gender focal points of the government departments as well as CSOs took part. The new plan seeks to articulate four fundamental axes: 1) strengthening of the legal and institutional framework on gender equality; 2) empowerment of women; 3) equitable access to basic social services; and 4) strengthening of institutional mechanisms for the protection of women's rights. This process has served to reflect on the country's inequities and how to achieve greater gender equality in access to basic services.

UNICEF contributed technically and financially to the national implementation of the elimination strategy of vertical mother-to-child transmissions of HIV, with active participation in the Multisectoral Technical Committee. A number of the mothers who benefited are adolescents, under 18 years old. Another significant intervention of 2017 in the gender and equity focus has been the training of 80 female rural entrepreneurs on financial inclusion provided by UNICEF to three FAO farmer field schools.

UNICEF has worked on strengthening the country's human resources in collaboration with the Government based on the values of gender equality enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Held in the Government Delegations and administrative complexes of the seven Provincial Heads, the training (of 170 community leaders from different sectors) included modules on social coexistence; mediation of marital, family and community conflicts; and prevention of violence, abuse and sexual exploitation and trafficking of minors and women. These trainings provided an opportunity to distribute documentation with a gender focus.

## Environmental sustainability

Equatorial Guinea has one of the most biodiverse ecosystems in the world; it is at immediate risk due to rapid population growth and active bush meat markets. The CO recognizes the importance of protecting the biodiversity of the country and the role that youth will play in its future. Therefore, UNICEF worked with FAO in a project that trained 80 women for a better use

of financial and environmental resources. In this design, these small farm farmers learned to use organic pesticides, optimize irrigation systems, value multi-crops instead of monocultures and replace traditional harmful techniques with environmentally correct ones.

UNICEF took some measures to reduce its environmental footprint. In 2016, UNICEF's main impact was related to transportation. To contribute to reducing CO2 emissions, the office started using shorter flights (especially between Malabo and Dakar) and sharing vehicles between UNICEF and WHO in the Continental Region. Moreover, UNICEF installed solar panels at the Malabo and Bata offices. This in turn contributed to the installation of the business continuity plan (BCP) in Bata, which had been affected by lack of electric power for more than 40 days in 2017. With the solar panel system installed, the Bata Zonal Office (BZO) continued its activities. The same approach has been used in Malabo, allowing the main office to be ready in case of a similar situation. The CO has established a policy aiming to reduce UNICEF's carbon footprint and energy costs, including use of recycled papers for printing, use of LED lights and motion lights, and air-conditioning shut-offs on holidays and non-working days.

### Effective leadership

One of the major achievements of 2017 was the approval of the Integrated Budget for the period 2018-2021, which will strengthen the staffing at operational level and make adjustment at the programme level. In 2018, the CO will have a complete operations team for the first time since its inception, in 2013, as a full office (including operations manager, human resources officer, finance assistant, administrative assistant and information and communications technology assistant). This human resources change-up will imply the end of the Operations Service Centre agreement with Gabon Area Office. An exit strategy was approved in the last joint operation meeting to minimize risks and facilitate the integration of new staff to be recruited during the first quarter of 2018.

The frequency of country management team (CMT) meetings was increased from quarterly to every two months; meetings focused on analysis of management indicators and programme priorities as defined in the Annual Management Plans 2017 and using the Scorecard and Key Performance Indicators and Budget Cube Analysis from the Insight management platform. As a relatively new CO in the consolidation phase, the Office's tracking of programme and management indicators and business continuity issues is still not being effectively addressed, including risks assessment and management.

The business continuity plan was updated and the two sites are operational, but still not reliable in terms of Internet connectivity, which will be improved in 2018. All the 2013 audit recommendations were reviewed and addressed. The salary survey process is still ongoing, as it is an inter-agency activity and needs more coordinated efforts. Another major achievement in 2017 was the implementation of HACT assurance activities with an achievement of 100 per cent of programme visits, micro-assessment and capacity development activities. With an execution rate of 57 per cent for the spot-check activities in 2017, improvements are planned for 2018.

### Financial resources management

During country management team meetings, the CO conducted an analysis of the Office key performance indicators from Insight to look for solutions to the low performance indicators. In 2017, the office was funded with 11 grants and a non-grant for a total amount of US\$4,086,790. The funds were apportioned as follows: non-grant, 39.4 per cent; Other Resources Regular, 59.1 per cent; Other Resources for Emergency, 1.5 per cent.

The CO worked with 15 partners, of which two thirds are high or significant risk. Micro-assessments have suggested the use of direct payment and reimbursement. Despite difficulties in implementing these modalities, the CO transferred US\$1,003,902 (25 per cent of total budget) to implementing partners: US\$27,064 as reimbursement, US\$62,706 as direct payment and US\$914,132 as direct cash transfer. These cash transfers were made to 15 implementing partners, including 9 government partners and 6 CSOs who received US\$801,331 and US\$202,571 respectively.

As of 31st December 2017, the Office did not have pending direct cash transfers of more than six months, and expiring grants were fully utilized. In 2017, all bank reconciliations were timely and the few pending items are related to current transactions of December 2017 that will be cleared in January 2018.

By searching for available international audit firms in Malabo, the Office paid US\$56,972 for financial assurance activities related to cash transferred to implementing partners, instead of paying US\$111,463, saving US\$54,491. This assurance activity was outsourced for capacity reasons. Despite the local and municipal election process, financial assurance activities were not implemented only with the MINSABS. After negotiating with the audit firm, a non-cost extension was agreed upon, and the pending HACT activities will be implemented in 2018.

## Fundraising and donor relations

During 2017, the CO expected to receive additional funding from the Equatorial Guinea Government as per UNDAF plans and the predictable income strategy. However, as in 2016, no funds were received, despite the UNDAF Steering Committee contribution approval of US\$1.3 million (around US\$2.2 million have been received so far out of a total planned budget of US\$4.4 million). The CO has completed utilization of around 93 per cent of the UNDAF funds provided so far. Despite this constraint, the Government was able to provide, by the end of 2107, around US\$460,000 to UNICEF in line with the global HIV/ADS strategy Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free included in a Joint Programme with UNAIDS, WHO, UNFPA, and UNDP.

As in previous years, and with support from UNICEF headquarters and UNICEF WCARO, the CO obtained Other Resources contributions from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (US\$575,000 for polio staff and social mobilization) and from Global Thematic Funds (US\$250,000 for education and US\$107,000 for social inclusion). Additional regional thematic funding for 2018 has been pledged for the child survival and development programme in the amount of US\$1.2 million. In terms of multilateral donors, the CO received a contribution from the EU Delegation in the amount of US\$312,000 for child protection.

Overall, the CO utilized close to 100 per cent of the funds raised and the significant amounts received by December 2017 were allocated to 2018. All necessary extensions of available funds were processed; donor reports (two) were drafted with required quality and submitted on time as per the reporting schedule. The current country programme document (CPD) ceiling for other resources was raised from US\$5 million (board approved) to over US\$11.5 million to accommodate the expected fundraising scenario. So far, around US\$7 million of the ceiling has been absorbed.

## Evaluation and research

The evaluation function in the UNICEF CO has been done through the Shared Service agreement with UNICEF Gabon since 2013. This arrangement has facilitated less than 50 per cent of the activities planned for implementation of the integrated monitoring, evaluation and



research plan (IMERP) for the CO. From 2018 onwards, the evaluation function will be fulfilled by UNICEF to optimize and improve performance. The process of preparation of the MICS has progressed (including the finalization of the terms of reference (TOR) and the budget) with WCARO support; the Government has shown commitment to support the survey in 2018. The final report from the 2015 Population Census was released; the database is still required to reinforce the capacity of the Government in data management and secondary analysis.

The CO, with support from UNICEF WCARO and WHO, undertook an independent evaluation of the effective vaccine management (EVM) process to improve EPI performance. Other relevant surveys and studies in the area of paediatric aids management and malaria were also undertaken to improve resources mobilization and quality of HIV/AIDS service for children. A public finance for children study is in the process of finalization and will be used to support the preparation of the social protection system and more equitable government budgets.

An out-of-school children study was initiated and will be used to improve the education policy and reforms; it will be concluded next year. All these evaluations, studies, and surveys were used to finalize the UNDAF Evaluation, Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the new UNDAF document (2019-2023). Furthermore, these evaluative tools were used in the preparation of the Strategic Moment of Reflection (SMR) and will be instrumental in the finalization of the Programme Strategy Note and new Country Programme Document. The CO invested—for studies and evidence generation—an estimated five per cent of its total budget.

### Efficiency gains and cost savings

The Bata Zonal Office (BZO) experienced several electricity cuts in 2017. In order to avoid humming, cost of fuel and environmental pollution, a small solar power system was installed in the BZO. In August and September 2017, there was no electricity in Bata but BZO activities were not interrupted due to the small solar power system installed to power printers and LED lights. With the solar power system, the office can be connected to the internet 24/7. The solar power system installed is a combined solar kit with a cost of around US\$8,136, close to the cost of a generator.

Using the system tested at the BZO as an example, the CO installed a solar power system that automatically switches on to provide electricity to the server room whenever there is an electricity shortage. The cost of the solar power system for the Office server room was US\$18,741; that represents two years of cost recovery time. In order to get the maximum benefit from the system installed, the Office installed a suitable light system with light-sensitive photocells that are activated automatically.

The VoIP Cisco installed during the 2016 year-end has been fully functioning since January 2017. The Office has avoided costly telephone calls by using Cisco, which automatically selects the lowest-cost provider available in national and international levels. The Equatorial Guinea CO can call other UNICEF country offices via Cisco VoIP.

With implementation of the last programme and budget review (PBR), seven new positions were created, which represents an increase of 30 per cent in actual positions. Despite the increase, the Office has efficiently managed the available space by splitting offices and converting unnecessary hallways into comfortable offices and additional meeting spaces. This will lead to the improvement of office cohesion and productivity.

### Supply management

A long-term agreement (LTA) process was finalized by the Operations Management Team (OMT) under UNICEF leadership. Service providers in the field of travel booking and customer service were selected, and the joint United Nations LTA is under the United Nations Country Team approval. Without another procurement selection process, the Office is dealing with these suppliers selected by the OMT for the procurement of the two services. The use of the OMT selection process reduces our lead time and improves our transparency in the procurement of these two recurrent services.

As the CO is located in a small city with about 300,000 people, the CO usually uses the Supply Division LTA for both programme and operation supplies to effectively cover its needs. For the same reason, the Government, with the assistance of the United Nations, also used United Nations procurement processes to cover procurement needs. More than 50 per cent of supplies were procured through supply division LTAs in 2017.

Of US\$626,495 used for programmatic procurement, 65 per cent (\$407,222) was related to procurement services (vaccines and drugs). Of US\$581,790 used via off-shore procurement, about 70 per cent (\$408,799) was related to procurement services offered by Supply Division to Equatorial Guinea in 2017.

To reinforce the capacity of governments in the use of the procurement services, the UNICEF Regional Office organized a three-day workshop in Libreville, Gabon in September 2017, where government members learned about new tools to fund their procurement needs via the World Bank or Development Banks' financing mechanisms. The workshop was an opportunity for four countries to exchange experiences and challenges with the regional advisors' team.

Compared to last year (2016), our procurement increased by 70 per cent in 2017 (from US\$656,111 to US\$1,113,713). The total CO direct procurement represented around 17 per cent of the total utilized budget.

| <b>Supply and logistics key figures</b>                              | <b>Total cost (USD)</b> |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>PROCURED BY THE OFFICE</b>  | <b>\$531,922.49</b>     |
| Programmatic supplies including those funded by Procurement Services | \$111,936.50            |
| Operational supplies   | \$89,087.78             |
| Services   | \$330,898.21            |
| <b>PROCURED VIA THE SUPPLY DIVISION</b>                              | <b>\$581,790.06</b>     |
| Channelled via regular Procurement Services                          | \$408,799.57            |
| Channelled via Programme (programmatic supplies)                     | \$105,759.26            |
| Operational supplies   | \$19,129.15             |
| International freight  | \$48,102.08             |
| <b>TOTAL supplies and services received</b>                          | <b>\$1,113,712.55</b>   |

With the support from Mali CO through UNICEF WCARO, HF and VHF radio systems were installed in the BZO, and the same system was upgraded in the CO. The office has moved to digital, from the analogic radio system. Communication via radio VHF was tested and three radio checks were done to ensure that colleagues can be reached at their homes in case of any security issue or communication shortfall in the country.

## Safety and security

Several attacks on taxi passengers were reported in 2017; UNICEF staff have also been victims. For security mitigation reasons, the Representative has granted a waiver to staff to use the UNICEF vehicle for all airport pick-up and commuting. For night or early morning work, drivers have been granted motorcycles to avoid using night taxis.

The Office added additional security equipment (like smoke detectors, fire blankets, first-aid kits) and processes (like recycling of fire-extinguishers). An all-staff training was organized with the security advisor who explained and demonstrated these materials and processes.

UNICEF vehicles are equipped with universal telephone chargers, and in the Continental Region there are computer power banks and an internet box for use during field missions. An office WhatsApp group has been created, where all staff can share information. A fire simulation and two building evacuation tests were done in 2017, and two radio-check exercises were done between the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) and security focal points and between UNDSS and representatives. A training was organized by the UNDSS for United Nations drivers for road safety policy.

The CO has two business continuity plan (BCP) sites. The main site, where the Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN) will be installed, is the representative's house, and the alternate BCP site is the Strategic Planning Manager's house (OIC for the CO). The CO could not make the BCP test due to connectivity challenges and the BGAN has not yet been installed.

## Human resources

In 2017, Equatorial Guinea PBR proposals for 2018 were approved, and the following new positions were established: operations manager, human resources (HR) officer, senior finance assistant, information and communications technology assistant and administrative assistant. The contractual status of social policy specialist and programme assistant were approved by the PBR to full-time, and a social policy officer junior professional officer position was submitted to headquarters. The Office will have 19 full-time positions, up from 12, by the end of 2018. The office also recruited a Driver GS-2 on temporary appointment to support BZO and a United Nations volunteer as a monitoring and evaluation officer. In 2017, the CO underwent a transition and reduced its reliance on the Operations Service Centre based in Gabon. The CO provided financial support for recruitment of an HR shared staff member at the Regional Office.

Thirty-four individual trainings were identified in Agora and 19 were completed. Two out of three exchange experiences were completed satisfactorily, HR Focal Point exchange was done with Guinea Bissau, and operations assistant exchange took place in Gabon. CO staff participated in different regional network meetings/workshops and webinars held in 2017.

A total of 17 staff members and one consultant completed the Global Staff Survey, and a plan was developed to improve the low performance areas. Personal evaluation reports were completed in a timely and consistent manner (over 90 per cent).

The staff association is active and contributes to the staff well-being through different informational (HIV/AIDS) and recreational activities. A staff retreat was organized where ethics activities were predominant. The Office participated in an ethics webinar during the month of October and organized a presentation and ethics exercises for all staff. The Office improved the working environment with a new kitchen and additional office spaces.

In 2017, the CO completed 6 country management team meetings; 4 joint consultative committee meetings; 2 learning meetings; 2 property survey board meetings; and 26 general programme/operations meetings.

## Effective use of information and communication technology

The UNICEF-standard, cloud-based Office Automation tools implemented since 2015 are now widely and commonly used by the staff.

- OneDrive to backup and share working files, which is useful for business continuity
- Outlook calendar to manage work plans and appointments
- SharePoint to post documentation for review
- Skype for Business for conference calls and multiple webinars, for example the VISION System platform modernization.

UNICEF has set up a new UNICEF office in Bata (BZO), which is the principal city in the Continental Region, where 70 per cent of the population lives. With this, Country Programme staff can work on-site in better conditions with a more reliable internet connection. That allows them to smoothly deploy their activities and reach more children. We have also installed the HF/VHF radio system at Bata and Malabo, allowing colleagues to maintain communication during their missions in the field.

We have also configured Cisco IP telephone system in the CO. The quality of communication has improved. Conference calls through VoIP, free of charge, enable more interactions with colleagues at the Regional Office or other UNICEF offices.

With the upcoming migration to the Windows 10 operating system, staff's laptops have been replaced with the Lenovo Yoga, which can be used as a laptop as well as a tablet; it is user-friendly for staff during travel.

The CO continues to have challenges with internet connectivity, which has implications on office management and efficiency. In 2018, the CO will review options to increase our VSAT bandwidth and look for other providers with better services and costs.

## Programme components from RAM

### Analysis by outcome and output results

**OUTCOME 1.** By the end of 2017, adequate laws, policies and systems, especially a social protection system, for improving the survival, development and protection of children, focusing on the most vulnerable, are adopted and implemented.

### Analytical statement of progress

During 2017, the first draft of the legal framework of the national Social Protection System (SPS) was prepared by the National Commission established by residential Decree 35/2017, with effective leadership from UNICEF. Moreover, the Single Social Registry for the SPS—to have solid and reliable administrative data and a child birth registration system for the most vulnerable populations—was designed in coordination with the Presidency and pertinent ministries.

This progress in the legislative front is a major policy shift to contribute to reduction of poverty (estimated at 44 per cent in 2011) and disparities in access to basic social services. The last Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) done by UNICEF in 2014 estimated that 20 per cent of children suffered from multiple deprivations in health, nutrition and water and sanitation. In addition, according to latest government statistics, over 1,900 children enrolled in preschool and primary school are in need of special education measures.

The release of the final results of the Population Census 2015 is also a positive step forward to improve data management and knowledge for children, which will be complemented by the MICS planned for 2018 and the subsequent secondary analysis. Furthermore, the public finance for children (PF4C) study, which is in an advanced stage, is being developed in straight collaboration with Government at the highest level (Prime Minister's Office and Office of the Minister for Finance, the Economy and Planning). This study is being developed in four phases and aims to improve public spending for children, with an enhanced equity focus.

Information on social-budget tracking in health, education and child and social protection is being collected and analyzed in coordination with the National Institute of Statistics. Recent government estimate (Horizonte 2020 Report, 2016) of expenditures in the social sector is around 14 per cent (health, education, social affairs/gender); economic infra-structure is absorbing around 57 per cent of the planned budget.

The current economic situation of Equatorial Guinea (average negative GDP growth of 5 to 7 per cent), due to the fall of oil prices, further exacerbates the challenges in terms of fiscal space, estimated at less than 20 per cent by the World Bank, to improve social public spending. Nevertheless, the estimated inefficiencies of the social services systems—as exemplified by the health sector, which has the highest per capita spending in our region (US\$900) and one of the lowest outcomes in terms of child survival (under-five mortality rate above 100/1000)—are opportunities that the Government can learn from and use to improve social sector spending. The PF4C study will pinpoint strategic approaches to improved spending for children and related long-term benefits; most importantly, the study will show how to have a more inclusive and sustainable budgeting and financing system.

In the area of child protection, UNICEF continued advocating to guarantee the rights of children. Meetings were held with high-level members of the Government and the nation's First Lady. UNICEF Equatorial Guinea emphasized the necessity of updating basic legislation and policies for the protection of children. Important progress was made in the preparation of the Country Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF also provided technical inputs for the development of the National Plan for Special Education, raising awareness for the importance of inclusive care with fair treatment of children with disabilities in the formal education system; the out-of-school children study is ongoing. In the health area, a rapid survey on malaria was realized which showed malaria treatment inequity in Equatorial Guinea.

The main constraints during the year were related in some degree to government administrative processes: installation of Government in the Continental Region taking more than six months; slowness in decision-making and management of different dossiers by governmental partners; challenges for governmental partners in accessing UNICEF funds (due to lack of mechanisms of leverage at the public treasury institution); pending validation of key documents (national policies, law projects and strategic plans) already elaborated with active UNICEF participation (such as Child Health National Policy, Nutrition National Policy, Malaria Strategic Plan child protection protocols for minors in conflict with the law). Also, the non-publication of the results of the general population census impeded a more thorough analysis of the situation of children and women in the country and a decision on MICS implementation.

As part of the Social Protection System Joint Programme, involving inter-UN agency collaboration (FAO/UNICEF), 80 rural female entrepreneurs of Bioko's Island communities successfully completed the courses for financial inclusion. In this process, UNICEF created manuals and exercise notebooks on basic entrepreneurship. Thus, by strengthening coherence between agricultural production and social protection in Equatorial Guinea, through programmes and activities related to the transfer plus, UNICEF validated a coherent approach to developing small family farms, based on a gender-equity focus.

For 2018, UNICEF CO will continue working to consolidate the work on the Social Protection System (approval of legislation, establishment of the Single Registry System and pilot testing) and conclude and disseminate the PF4C study to all ranks of the government structure. Furthermore, workplans should focus on the acceleration and harmonization of the child protection system and on improved data generation for advancing children's rights.

**OUTPUT 1.** Political decision makers have a better understanding of the situation of children through improved knowledge of disaggregated and updated statistics.

### **Analytical statement of progress**

In line with UNICEF WCARO priority four (evidence generation), UNICEF began to monitor public investments in favor of children and adolescents. Through the Study of Public Finance for Children (PF4C), UNICEF used its influence to obtain data on spending in favor of children as an important means to achieve national development objectives and the SDGs. The team that conducts the study, through a strategic approach in four phases, is composed of members of UNICEF and the National Institute of Statistics of Equatorial Guinea (INEGE).

Phase 1 identifies allocations and grants related to institutional programs and projects in health, education and social protection, examining if there is room for new adjustments that support investments in basic services for children. Phase 2 consists of an Institutional Analysis from the central level to the decentralized level on budget preparation and spending. Phase 3 is on budget monitoring and electronic recording of investments and expenditures by monitoring the budget from the central level to the level of service providers, applying 11 semi-structured questionnaires in 47 cities in 6 of the 8 country's provinces. Phase 4 consists of the analysis and writing of reports and the validation of the results obtained, which was expected to have been completed in the first quarter of 2018.

In the framework of the study and with the technical assistance of UNICEF Nigeria and the INEGE, UNICEF CO held a Seminar-Workshop of Public Finance for Children. Forty-two technicians of the ministries involved were trained in direct, indirect and expanded expenditures of specific budget lines. The institutions worked on the financial monitoring of the allocated budgets, coordinating the field monitoring mechanism.

With support of UNICEF WCARO, technical staff of the social ministries were trained on the creation of a database on children and women in preparation for the MICS. The process of preparation of the MICS has progressed with the finalization of the TOR and the budget. This important exercise has been presented to the highest authorities pending its final approval and implementation.

The final report of the 2015 Census was presented by the President of the Republic in October 2017. However, the data set has not been released and consequently, the secondary analysis

has not been completed. UNICEF will hire an expert to complete phases 2 and 3 of the secondary analysis focusing on children's issues.

To mitigate the possible risks of the country's economic slowdown (to the detriment of investments in the most vulnerable children and adolescents), UNICEF will increase monitoring of the fiscal situation. Terms of reference have been validated to receive technical assistance for a fiscal incidence analysis study in 2018 in collaboration with INEGE, in order to develop or improve data collection capacity and help the country produce, offer and use high-quality data over childhood and adolescence.

**OUTPUT 2.** Plan and programme of education, including special education, and national child health policy developed, is validated and implemented using an equity based approach.

### **Analytical statement of progress**

In accordance with the regional plans of UNICEF on improving the quality of education and achieving progress on SDG 4, UNICEF Equatorial Guinea advocated for the need for a National Plan for Special Education. Its final design and validation is expected in 2018.

The 2nd National Seminar on Special Education was held, which contributed to the debate on the urgency of the creation of an adopted curriculum that takes into account the limitations of this vulnerable student population. Training is ongoing for 40 teachers in techniques for early identification and initial diagnosis of children who need specialized attention.

Regarding the health sector, given the importance of contributing to the respect for children's rights in Equatorial Guinea and in accordance with regional priorities, UNICEF (with the support of WHO, MCDI and Roll Back Malaria), has proposed a project to the authorities of the Ministry of Health—accepted by the Government—for the financing of malaria-control activities for the Continental Region and the Island of Annobon. This advocacy activity has been considered a priority, taking into account (in terms of equity) the limitations of access to malaria-related services between the Island of Bioko and the Continental Region, including Annobon, where the probability of suffering from malaria is seven times higher compared to Bioko Island where there is a containment program already in place.

UNICEF also continued to advocate on the need and importance of validating the National Policy on Child Health prepared in 2014 and the National Nutrition Policy prepared in 2016, which, despite great efforts, have so far not been approved because of difficulties in the agenda of the Directive Council of the MoHSW.

The situation analysis of the National Health Development Plan (PNDS) has been finalized in collaboration with WHO.

**OUTPUT 3.** A National Social Protection system focusing on the most vulnerable is operational.

### **Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF, since the beginning of the Country Programme in 2013 and in line with priorities 2 and 3 for WCARO, has advocated for the creation of a social protection system (SPS). Participation in programs that link interventions tailored to social protection mechanisms and improve resilience to shocks, protect livelihoods and build productive assets in vulnerable families was a priority in the past few years.

As a crucial first step in the realization of the SPS, a draft of the Law has been prepared. This achievement is a result of the advocacy efforts and follow-up work that UNICEF has had with the Prime Minister's Office resulting in the establishment of a 13-member Commission by Presidential Decree No. 35 / 2017 in which the UNICEF CO social policy specialist serves as a constituent member. Weekly meetings during seven months, with an orderly agenda and the analysis of documents, resulted in the Draft of the Regulatory Law of SPS, with modality guidelines and key interventions of social inclusion.

UNICEF CO, in collaboration with UNICEF Nigeria, organized the Seminar-Workshop II of the SPS with participation of 70 technicians and senior government officials, civil societies, the private sector, bilateral partners and agencies of the United Nations System in areas of modalities, costing and social protection guidelines. As a result of the Seminar-Workshop, recommendations for interventions of transfer programs were given, which were then considered in the drafting of the Law of the SPS.

The SPS Joint Program, within the framework of the Delivery as ONE and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), developed by the United Nations Thematic Group under the coordination of UNICEF, continued to develop, and the implementation and coordination of activities related to social protection were carried out. In the case of the UNICEF- FAO - Government collaboration, work was carried out on financial inclusion courses for rural women entrepreneurs. The 80 female beneficiaries of the three FAO farmer field schools in the towns of Baloeri, Batoicopo and Basupú (Province of Bioko Norte) received courses on savings, entrepreneurship and cooperatives, with manuals and exercise notebooks through the support of UNICEF to the ongoing FAO intervention. In 2018 this SPS Joint Program will be adjusted for its effective implementation in key areas of health, education, economic diversification and governance, with important input from UNICEF.

The work on the SPS continued and UNICEF, utilizing a concept note on a Single Social Registry prepared by a consultant, had ongoing advocacy efforts with the Prime Minister's Office and the pertinent ministries for its adoption. This will allow the different actors and sectors of the Government, through its implementation in 2018, to have solid and reliable administrative data in the development of a database of the most vulnerable populations (e.g., children, adolescents, the disabled and elderly).

**OUTPUT 4.** National Child Protection system on all forms of abuse, exploitation and violence against children is established and operational.

#### **Analytical statement of progress**

In accordance with Regional Priorities 1 (Violence against children) and 5 (Justice for children), important progress was made toward improving the structure of the child's protection system through a modernization of the legislation base and the inclusion of policies for gender equality and the protection of children. These are key elements of institutional strengthening in conformance with the Convention on Children Rights (and its facultative protocols), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and other conventions ratified by the country.

Decree 50/2017, which extends the family and guardianship courts for minors to all provincial capitals, was approved and has been one of the Government's main steps to guarantee child justice. These advances constitute judicial guarantees in favour of children and mothers.



Important progress was made in the drafting of the Country Periodic Report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to be presented to the Geneva Committee on the Rights of the Child during 2018, and the evaluation of the Multisectoral Gender Plan (to be approved in 2018) that is structured around four axes: reinforcement of the legal and institutional framework on gender equality, the empowerment of women, equitable access to basic social services and reinforcement of institutional mechanisms for the protection of women's rights.

Furthermore, the strengthening of institutional capacities continued through the participation of members of the Government in the High-Level meeting on Ending Child Marriage and in the international conference on Child Protection and the Child Disability Measurement Workshop, both in Dakar. These have served to improve national capacities based on best practices of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the protection of children and adolescents.

In spite of these advances, there are deficits in reliable data that would allow monitoring of the situation of the indicators established for this output. It will be important to consolidate integration with other sections of work that would mitigate this problem.

By 2018, UNICEF must advocate for the approval of the laws currently in draft (the ProVATE, Juvenile Justice Protocol and the Multisectoral Gender Plan), and working plans for the structuring of the Child Protection System and the promotion of gender equality.

Furthermore, the essential role of the CNDN must be promoted to consolidate the intersectoral and cross-sectoral coordination that the protection area has initiated with all the related partners to improve performance indicators on protection of the rights of minors and mothers. The generation of evidence on violence, marriage of children, early pregnancies and exploitation and trafficking that affects minors should be increased in collaboration with counterparts, other United Nations agencies, partners and academic institutions of the country.

**OUTCOME 2.** By the end of 2017, the capacities of government institutions, families and communities are strengthened to ensure access to, and use of, a quality minimum package of basic social services, especially for the most vulnerable.

### **Analytical statement of progress**

A significant contribution was provided in the area of child survival with immunization rate for DPT3 increasing from 36 per cent in 2016 to 47 per cent in 2017. The coverage of all other major antigens was also improved (measles, polio) by at least 30 per cent. Another major achievement was the 90 per cent coverage for PMTCT, up from 75 per cent in 2016. However, despite progress in paediatric treatment coverage, the coverage rate is still only at 16 per cent (10 per cent in 2016).

A multi-annual EPI plan (cMYP) was developed, pending final approval by the MoHSW authorities. Other accomplishments include the following: the logistical and operational capacity of the MoHSW regarding immunization was improved after 122 motorcyclists were trained to support routine immunization and polio control activities as part of REC; stabilizers were acquired that have been distributed throughout the country to strengthen the cold chain; vaccinators were trained on community participation and interpersonal communication in the island region; national capacity to fight HIV was improved with the availability of the first version of the paediatric care study to improve care services for children who are HIV-exposed or infected; and the first phase of training of trainers in the field of PMTCT in the Continental

Region was finalized. Support activities are continuing. PMTCT is currently effective in all major provincial hospitals.

The education sector has seen a steady increase in the number of children in preschool (20 per cent increase) and primary school (10 per cent increase), with full gender parity. However, learning outcomes are still below regional standards (passing rates below 80 per cent in primary level) as only 50 per cent of primary teachers and only 8 per cent of preschool teachers have formal training.

UNICEF helped to improve the availability of materials, contributing to enhanced quality of education as part of the child-friendly school initiative. In this period UNICEF donated 2,000 first aid kits and 500 kits to promote sports at school.

On child protection, knowledge on child rights and HIV has increased in the population, especially among young people, who were the main beneficiaries of HIV cultural tour activities in Annobon Island (plays, music, audiovisual films, and testimonies). More than 2,000 people participated in this awareness-raising campaign, which finalized in the second part of 2017.

The main constraints for the year are linked to HACT implementation, planning work and delays in counterpart decisions that impeded a better level of implementation and results.

However for the first time in more than six years, UNICEF was able to disburse funds to the MoHSW, after solving the long standing DCT process (since 2011) due to the lack of justifications. The process was restarted in March, but complex government administrative procedures impeded the possibility of using these funds as planned. This fact constrained the MoHSW capacity to implement planned activities in a timely fashion, a situation that affected the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) as well.

These finance resources were finally at the MoHSW disposition in June (and by September in the case of the MoES) after consistent advocacy by UNICEF with the Treasury Secretary. A better inter-governmental department coordination permitted the distribution of the financial resources to the implementation partners (IPs) and a change in the CO's HACT situation.

In addition, a Focal Point from the Treasury Secretary was designated to process directly UNICEF's DCT. On the other hand, the CO implemented HACT trainings to the IPs and assured control of the activities' implementation. A consistent process of implementation of the HACT assurance plan was a key factor in attaining better results in outcome 2 in comparison with previous years of the current CPD.

Additional collaboration was established with the MoHSW and the CO contributed to the procurement and distribution of child survival and development items and tuberculosis paediatric diagnostics materials and the installation of solar panels in Corisco Island. As part of the polio national intervention days (NIDs), UNICEF procured the vaccines and C4D materials used during polio NIDs. The value of these procurements surpassed \$300,000. In these interventions, UNICEF participated in the health workers' training on the new guidance of child growth and development.

The birth registration (only 54 per cent of children are registered at birth) is one of the major priorities of UNICEF. As an effort to modernize the birth registration system, informatics equipment was procured to support establishment of a digital data registering system and improve the national capacity in CRVS (Civic Registration of Vital Statistics), most importantly a

child registration system. This procurement, valued at more than \$60,000, provided by the EU, consisted of purchase, distribution and installation. The process was affected by delays in the approval procedures in the Ministry of Justice and is expected to be finalized in 2018.

2018 will be the last year of the current Country Programme and it will be indispensable to consolidate the results. There is a need to improve disbursement, utilization and justification of the financial resources provided by UNICEF to the counterparts. Moreover, it will be important to improve UNICEF technical assistance to the different counterparts, building their capacities and achieving results to advance the child rights agenda in Equatorial Guinea. For this last purpose, there is a need to strengthen UNICEF staff capacity (quantity and competencies). Mobilization of resources will be crucial, as will be planning and designing the new business model, considering the needs of the evolving context and the current demands and expectations. This reflection will be taken into consideration during the preparation of the new country programme document.

**OUTPUT 1.** At least 60 per cent of households adopt four essential practices for child survival.

#### **Analytical statement of progress**

The improvement of the population's knowledge of essential family practices has been based on the pilot model of integrated communication activities in Mbini district according to regional office priorities, although at a national level, the interventions of the C4D component has focused on the routine vaccination and NIDs considered as emergency issues.

The pilot model of integrated action for the promotion and provision of services on the five essential practices (exclusive breastfeeding, use of impregnated mosquito nets, handwashing with soap, oral-hydration salts, vaccination) in nine rural communities in Mbini district has generated important evidence for the CO to replicate in the following years. Another integrated model has been developed for the promotion of children's rights and the provision of services in the communities of the priority districts, and a fundraising proposal has been developed for integrated work in the health area in the four priority districts, while the integrated intervention model is still pending validation by the counterpart. In this pilot model experience, UNICEF received support from the MoHSW and the Ministry of Interior and Local Corporations, as well as the Cuban Medical Brigade.

Furthermore, the communication plan has been developed to promote routine vaccination, including a new brand (mascot) as a new EPI logo. The mapping of social mobilizers has been developed, including their local partners, mainly the presidents of the communities and the counselors of Social Affairs and Gender Equality.

To know and ensure the effectiveness of the work developed by the mobilizers in the vaccination posts, a supervision instrument has been developed, tested in the vaccination posts and communities and approved by the counterpart. Additionally, there is progress on the production of the vaccination poster calendar, which is expected to be implemented in the coming year.

The Penta 1 – Penta 3 dropout rate has decreased significantly between 2016 and 2017, from 21 per cent to 6 per cent. This data shows the low resistance of the population to vaccination when it is offered. In 2017, due to the intensification of routine immunization and social mobilization, it was possible to increase the coverage and reduce the dropout rate.

Additionally, the qualitative study on routine vaccination has been joint reviewed with UNICEF and WHO but has not yet been accepted. In 2018, the Resource Mobilization Plan, based on the initiative of the first 1,000 days of the child's life, will be implemented.

**OUTPUT 2.** In 2017, government education programmes include strategies such as the Child-Friendly School initiative at preschool and primary school levels to promote a basic education of quality, with special attention to girls and boys with disabilities and on children out of the formal school system.

### **Analytical statement of progress**

During the year 2017, UNICEF continued its activities in cooperation with the MoES, consolidating the child-friendly school initiative of Equatorial Guinea, as one of the best alternatives to prioritize the improvement of the quality of education for girls and boys in preschool and elementary schools, equipping them with leadership skills and competencies.

Action plan strategies were prioritized to promote the development of activities and to provide specific educational material for each preschool and primary classroom, such as materials for teaching mathematics, sports kits and school kits. In total 152 educational centres, 76 of preschool and 76 of primary school levels, containing 288 classrooms and 6,118 girls and boys have benefited by receiving these materials and have enjoyed better learning conditions.

This important advance is related to the implementation of the Child-Friendly School Initiative of Equatorial Guinea, which has prioritized its intervention in four districts (Akurenam, Annobón, Mbiniand Riaba). This initiative has helped to strengthen educational development and obtain comparative results that allow achieving a change in the assessment of the integral development of children.

The Manual for the Child-Friendly School of Equatorial Guinea is being promoted at the national level, as the Ministry of Education and Science has made the Child-Friendly School a priority program within the MoES Workplan. However, the MoES does not currently have the necessary financial resources available.

A national training course in educational evaluation was developed to improve the teaching capacities of over 2,000 national preschool teachers. A national tour/campaign was scheduled for February 2018, where a training on school health and educational management will take place in all districts.

A study on children who are out of school is in progress. This study has been considered to be of priority importance for obtaining data that will improve the educational planning of the country, specifically to look for the best strategies to improve the enrollment rates in basic education. To achieve this, the support of a national team is required to systematize the most relevant information on public policies, plans, national studies of the education sector carried out during the last years and to compile and expand on necessary information in educational centres, which will allow identifying the factors associated with the exclusion of schooling.

For 2018, plans include the conduct of a National Training in Management and Administration addressed to directors of preschool, primary and secondary schools, as well as a study to expand the application coverage of this initiative in four more districts. In addition, all the students of the four districts will be provided with school agendas to achieve a better school-family interconnection.

**OUTPUT 3.** In 2017 the system of birth registration is made accessible to all families.

**Analytical statement of progress**

In accordance with Regional Priority 3, UNICEF CO has contributed to the modernization of a birth registration system aligned with the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Following the Road Map of the Civil Registry System, which was agreed upon with the Government, it has been possible to draft the civil registry law and design the digital platform for the collection of civil registry data (SIREC). Among the factors that have made this possible, we mention the support of the EU that allowed the acquisition of computer equipment for the platform. Additionally, intersectoral coordination and the capacities of justice officials in charge of civil registration have been reinforced. These actions were accompanied by the advocacy aimed at political decision makers so that they see the benefits of a modern and universal Civil Registry System.

UNICEF CO offered technical and financial support to the Ministry of Justice for the reinforcement of national capacities. This support has been instrumental for the participation of the Minister and her technical team in the 4th Conference of African Ministers in charge of Civil Registration (Mauritania), which served as an exchange of knowledge on best practices and lessons learned regarding the operation of civil registration systems of countries like Mali and Ghana.

The work meetings and the periodic visits to the provincial delegations allowed to advance in the coordination between offices and technical teams of the Ministry of Justice and territorial delegations of the civil registry of the country, with the purpose of harmonizing the methodology of data collection and revision of books and registration documents.

Community leaders who were trained during 2016–2017 on child rights facilitated the promotion of birth registration among communities and families in the 18 districts of the country.

The coordination work with the technical civil registration team has improved, however, limited commitment from the ministerial authorities created political and administrative difficulties that diminish the achievement of results as foreseen in the roadmap.

In 2018, UNICEF CO will continue supporting the production of the guidelines of the Civil Registry System Roadmap, in order to provide the country with a modern and universal civil registration system, advocate for the approval of the civil registry law and advance in the implementation of the SIREC Digital Platform.

**OUTPUT 4.** Families and communities have knowledge of child rights and are sensitized to take actions against harmful practices (violence, abuse, exploitation and early pregnancy).

**Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Equatorial Guinea, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, development partners and CSOs, has promoted actions aimed at improving the knowledge of communities and families on child rights, gender and practices that are harmful to the dignity of children and women. In this regard, 60 journalists were trained in children's rights promotion and dissemination, in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and the National Committee on the Rights of the Child, aiming to produce radio and TV scripts promoting child rights.

170 community leaders, belonging to different institutions—health, education, social affairs, local communities, youth and CSOs—were trained in coordination with MINASIG as conflict mediators for the prevention of violence affecting children and mothers. Their role is to address all cases of

violence against minors and women, promote social coexistence and contribute to child rights dissemination.

Important international commemorations – such as United Nations Day, the Commemoration of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, International Women's Day, African Children's Day, Day Against Violence against Women and Girls and World HIV Day – were used as an opportunity for families and communities to learn about child rights and to take action against traditional practices that harm children's and women's dignity. In this context, UNICEF produced and contributed (with CNDN and MINASIG) to the distribution of 800 handouts, among which were the Law for the Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Persons, the Law on the Prevention of Torture, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. These materials were distributed to local authorities and community leaders throughout the country. These actions are in accordance with the Violence against Children Regional Priority.

UNICEF CO has supported major campaigns and the CNDN national tour to reinforce the role of national antennas in charge of ensuring the rights and protection of minors in the country and the disclosure of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Important actions were also developed in favor of adolescent pregnancy prevention, in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth, MINASIG, MINSAB and the NGO Bocamandja, ÁfricaHuna and ACIGE.

UNICEF worked with MINSAB, MINASIG, UNDP, Bocamandja and ACIGE to conduct a cultural tour/campaign for HIV Prevention in Bioko Island that conveyed messages on reducing stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV and during which information was given on prevention, testing and counseling on HIV. There were 14 presentations, reaching more than 1,350 young people.

SKILLZ, a sport-based HIV Prevention intervention, was implemented with the NGO Biriaelat. Through a series of interactive activities and discussions, students gain a tangible understanding of HIV and AIDS, early pregnancy, the risks associated with drugs and alcohol, and gender and violence. They also have the opportunity to practice the necessary skills and create a sustainable behavior change.

In 2018, UNICEF will continue contributing to improvement of the knowledge of communities and families about child rights and the prevention of traditional practices contrary to dignity and values enshrined in international conventions. It will also reinforce the coordinated work with the United Nations, its counterparts, development partners and CSOs, to promote a social platform for the protection of children.

## Document centre

### Evaluation and research

| Title   | Sequence Number | Type of Report |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| EncuestaRápida de Paludismo en la Region Continental y Annobon 2017 | 2017/003        | Survey         |
| Estudio Del ManejoPediátrico del VIH en Guinea Equatorial 2017      | 2017/002        | Study          |
| RAPPORT D'EVALUATION DE LA GESTION EFFICACE DES VACCINS             | 2017/001        | Review         |

## Other publications

| Title   |
|---|
| 28051 KilometrosCuadrados (Video/CD)  |
| Uchudi, J.M.; Magadi, M.; Coolican, M. (Forthcoming). 'Household Poverty and Child Malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa.' In CROP Series in International Poverty Studies. Zed Books: London, UK.   |
| UNICEF (2017). Cursos de inclusion financiera para emprendedoras Rurales: Guiadidáctica [Courses of Financial Inclusion for Rural Women Entrepreneurs –Didactic Guide]. UNICEF: Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial   |
| UNICEF (2017). Curso de inclusiónfinanciera para emprendedorasrurales – Cuaderno de ejercicios 2: La cooperativa. [Course of Financial Inclusion for Rural Women Entrepreneurs – Exercise Notebook 3: The Cooperative]. UNICEF: Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial.    |
| UNICEF (2017). Curso de inclusiónfinanciera para emprendedorasrurales – Manual 3: La Cooperativa. [Course of Financial Inclusion for Rural Women Entrepreneurs – Manual 3: The Cooperative]. UNICEF: Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial.                               |
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| UNICEF (2017). Curso de inclusiónfinanciera para emprendedorasrurales – Manual 1: El ahorro. [Course of Financial Inclusion for Rural Women Entrepreneurs – Manual 1: The Savings]. UNICEF: Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial   |

## Lessons learned

| Document Type/Category | Title   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lesson Learned         | Financial inclusion for rural entrepreneurs: Field Schools for Farmers of Baloeri, Basupú and Batoicopo, Equatorial Guinea. UNICEF: Malabo, Guinea Ecuatorial |

## Programme document

| Document Type       | Title                                      | Name                              |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Reference Documents | SMR Report Equatorial Guinea November 2017 | EQG SMR Final Report 2017 PDF.pdf |