**Update on the context and situation of children**

Nicaragua has been in a situation of continuous economic recession in the last three years, since the sociopolitical crisis of 2018. Gross domestic product (GDP) suffered negative growth in three consecutive years: 2017 (4.6%); 2018 (-4%); 2019 (-3.9%) and 2020 (-2.7%) in the third quarter (source National Central Bank), and this context might persist in 2021, an electoral year that could generate political unrest and insecurity, affecting investment and economic performance. The COVID19 pandemic, which practically paralyzed non-essential economic activities in the country, contributed to worsen the social and economic crisis and exacerbated the already vulnerable situation of children and adolescents. According to official data as of 29 December 2020, 4,829 people were diagnosed positive for COVID19 and were treated by the Ministry of Health (MoH), and 220 people died. There are other unofficial sources that indicate a greater impact, but apparently the situation has never reached the severity of other countries in the LAC Region.

The passage of ETA/IOTA hurricanes affected approximately 1.8 million people. According to national authorities, some 370,000 families were affected by flooding and landslides, 160,000 people were evacuated and 59,964 forced into shelters. The North Caribbean Region concentrates 91 per cent of damages. Official reports indicate that at least 41,836 houses were damaged, 21 per cent of them were destroyed. The total estimated damages amount to US$ 738.6 million (6.2% of GDP), including $361.9 million in infrastructure, US$ 183.7 million in the social sector. A needs assessment conducted by UNICEF partners revealed an increase in respiratory and diarrheal diseases in some of the affected communities. The UN System and Government launched a Flash Appeal, which identifies 730,600 people in need, a target population of 287,000 people, and a funding requirement of US$ 50.9 million.

The persistent social, political and economic crisis, COVID19 pandemic and the hurricanes suggest a further deterioration of children and adolescents’ situation in the short and medium term, especially in the most vulnerable regions such as the Caribbean Coast.

The report “Measurement of Public Investment on Children and Adolescents in Nicaragua” (source: Ministry of Finance and Public Credit) shows that total investment on children in the State General Budget decreased from 7.6% to 7.5% of GDP and the daily per capita investment on children went down from 1.2 to 1.1 dollars between 2018-2019. However, direct investment on children increased from 3.2% to 3.4% of GDP in the same period, which means an improvement in government programs, specifically oriented to children. The analysis is disaggregated by four child rights: development, survival, protection and participation. The right to participation is the one that receives the least attention from the point of view of direct investment (0.1% of GDP), followed by the right to protection (9.2%) in 2019. In the analysis by age, direct investment on children between 0-5 years is the lowest of all age ranges, being 7% in last two years. The report shows gender parity as investment remains at 50-50 between boys and girls. The Managua Department, where most of the country’s population is concentrated, receives 40% of the investment in children.

Under-five mortality fell from 21.0 to 12.3 per 1,000 between 2011-2019 (source:HDS-MoH). Despite maternal mortality reduced from 96.0 to 32.4 per hundred thousand live births from 2006-2019 (source:MoH, 19 Digital, February 2020), there remain challenges to be addressed, such as cultural beliefs and practices that prevent the use of services, geographic barriers to access, gender violence and teenage pregnancy.

The MoH’s nutrition national survey (2018) indicates that overweight among under-5 children decreased from 8.1 to 6.1 percent between 2017-2020. Obesity rate is 2.6 percent, and obesity in fertile women has increased in 17.2 percent from 2009-2018, with relevant presence in urban areas (66%). Chronic malnutrition fell from 13.7 to 10 percent and acute malnutrition decreased from 5.8 to 4.6 percent from 2016 to 2020 at national level. Early initiation of breastfeeding (within one hour of birth) increased from 54.4 to 77.3 percent and exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of a child’s life...
is at 46 percent. While Early Child Development (ECD) services provided by the MoH cover 100 percent of children under 1 year and 62 percent of children under 4 years, more effort is required in early stimulation and comprehensive care. The barriers are: inadequate interinstitutional coordination mechanisms and poor coverage of protection services.

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

Legal Forensic Institute-LFI’s report (2019) shows that 24.4 percent of 121,148 forensic analyses involved cases of physical and psychological violence against women, girls and female adolescents, 27.4 percent of which were classified as sexual violence, being 26.5 percent of them under 13 years. 36.4 percent of cases of sexual abuse against girls and adolescents occurred at home. Sexual violence is a taboo and sexual abuse of children and adolescents is considered a “family matter”. Social perceptions of age and gender condition this type of violence, which is also affected by families’ lack of knowledge on positive parenting practices. The highest risk group for cases of sexual violence includes girls and adolescents of primary schools. The main aggressors are family members (parents, uncles and grandparents).

Major contributions and drivers of results

Early child survival and development:
UNICEF contributed to strengthen the MoH program to improve the quality of maternal and child health. For this, it provided support to updating the normative framework for the clinical management of pregnant women and newborns as well as its methodological manual for analyzing mother and child health complications, including monitoring of community strategies. It also gave technical support for training 1.500 health workers who provide care to newborns and their mothers, on prevention activities and clinical care, according to national standards. As a result, 92 percent of births were attended by qualified personnel, 53 percent (70) of health units supported by UNICEF have standard “newborn care packages”, including the kangaroo mother strategy, breastfeeding, neonatal care, and implement quality standards for maternal care; 100% (7,465) of the children with low weight or prematurity, who were discharged from hospitals, received kangaroo mother care, avoiding cases of neonatal blindness. The strategy is being extended to reach all newborn children as part of care interventions for child development.

With UNICEF support, the MoH, Ministry of Family (MoF) and the Association of children with disabilities “Los Pipitos” were able to scale up the approach of child development care (CDC). The MoH trained 2,699 health personnel on CDC and the MoF trained 1,444 technicians. Through municipal workshops, the trained staff was able to reach 11,856 health workers and provided counseling on CDC to 74,834 parents via different strategies, including monthly sessions with parents in child development centers, home-to-home visits and community meetings. In addition, 10,361 mothers and fathers received specific training sessions on parenting skills. These sessions allowed MoF to have “male” participation in Family Day celebration events in two consecutive years. Also, the MoH took the “Kangaroo Family” strategy to scale. With UNICEF support, 70 of the 153 municipalities of the country implemented the strategy for taking care of premature children and low
birth weight newborns at home. To that end, the health establishments of the first care level prepared a
census to ensure the monitoring of each child. During 2020, 7,465 (100%) children had access to the
strategy.
In 2020 the evaluation of the emblematic Love for the Smallest Ones Program, with a very strong
focus on ECD under the logic of Parenting with Tenderness, has been concluded. The special and
important thing about this programming is that it is intersectoral, involving different institutions such as:
MoE, MoH, and MoF. The evaluation aimed at relaunching the Program to reinforce inter-
institutional articulation, the monitoring and reporting system, and decision-making towards producing
changes.

**Quality and inclusive education:**
To better reach children with disabilities, 700 teachers completed the course on the Nicaraguan sign
language, providing them with skills and social awareness towards inclusive education. Also, the
technical and pedagogical skills of the MoE’s staff were strengthened to elaborate audiovisual didactic
materials in the “universal design format” by producing 10 video-books on Nicaraguan literary works.
Some 400 mothers and fathers also participated in early development and stimulation trainings. To that
end, various didactic materials on early childhood development, developmental disorders and
disability, were produced. 653 teachers were trained to guarantee quality learning and 5,000 textbooks
were provided to 2,500 children and adolescents who cannot attend regular school.

UNICEF supported the implementation of the “Plan for the promotion of values, human rights and a
culture of peace”, by incorporating children’s rights in the curriculum. About 300 public officials were
trained in the conceptual bases of human rights approach. The plan included raising awareness of the
educational community on human and children’s rights, and about the need to provide healthy, safe and
protected spaces for children.

UNICEF contributed to strengthen the MoE’s Educational strategy, that promote educational care in
any setting, to address challenges derived from the COVID19 emergency, ensuring continuity of the
learning process, with actions such as: equipping the institution with technology for virtual
performance; providing at least 6,150 schools with hygiene kits; training teachers on issues related to
education in emergencies (socio-emotional support, COVID19 protocols, learning strategies at home).
Educational technological equipment was also provided, allowing the MoE to produce audiovisual
materials, through which 120,000 students of primary and secondary education accessed tele-classes
and at least 120 academic audiovisual products for school reinforcement.

UNICEF contributed to the validation process of a protocol for pregnant adolescents, which is
expected to be implemented at the beginning of 2021. 742 students and 222 secondary school teachers
participated in this process. It emphasizes the need to provide timely accompaniment to the student and
her family, showing respect, empathy and solidarity with everyone involved. The application of this
protocol is expected to allow pregnant students to remain and continue their education.

A special protocol was produced for caring migrant children or children affected by migration, with the
participation of MoE officials and other institutions such as the National Police, the Immigration
Office, the MoH and MoF, with UNICEF and IOM technical support. The protocol aims to provide
better accompaniment to families, offering a range of opportunities for girls and boys to access, stay
and promote school, regardless of their origin or mobility situation.

The evaluation of the emblematic Educational Communities Counseling Program will soon be
completed. The program aims to foster a friendly and secure school and family environment in which
the learning process can take place without major disruptions. The evaluation seeks to find evidence of
its effectiveness and shed lights on how to improve the program in the future.

**Child protection against violence:**
UNICEF continued to develop strategies to prevent all types of violence, with emphasis on sexual abuse against children. It included reinforcing technical capacities of institutional officials and skills of civil society stakeholders, generating evidence, contributing to inter-institutional coordination, working directly with children, their families, and communities through C4D and volunteering strategies. Support was also provided to the Nicaraguan Government and civil society organizations for preventing violence against children affected by ETA and IOTA hurricanes. Support and supplies for institutionalized children and adolescents in conflict with the law were provided to prevent COVID19 including information material for prevention.

In addition, UNICEF continued to strengthen the inter-institutional commission on violence prevention, integrated by the MoE, MoF, MoH, Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ), Legal Forensic Institute (IML), National Police, Public Prosecutor Office and the Public Defender Office. The approval of the "Protocol for Comprehensive Assistance to children and adolescents surviving sexual violence" by a Presidential Decree was a major result of this commission’s work, as it constitutes a state policy in response to sexual violence against children and will facilitate inter-institutional coordination and access to justice. Along with this protocol, other 3 protocols were approved by the CSJ: (i) Protocol on judicial proceedings in criminal law trials for cases of sexual violence against children; (ii) Protocol for comprehensive approach and forensic medical examination of children victims of sexual violence; (iii) Protocol for judicial actions of the public defender specialized on attending children victims of sexual violence. Furthermore, the design of the Protocol for the investigation and comprehensive assistance of children victims of sexual violence for the Public Prosecutor's Office was initiated and will be concluded in early 2021.

UNICEF contributed to strengthening national capacities on specialized care to children and adolescents victims of sexual violence on access to justice, including analysis on children’s best interest, alternative care, irregular migration, criminal justice for adolescents, gender mainstreaming, the generation of data and evidence, psychosocial support during COVID19 pandemic and child protection during ETA/IOTA emergencies. In this regard, 1,296 officials (882 women and 414 men) from MoF, MoE, the Judicial Branch, IML, Family Courts, Public Prosecutor Office, Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution received training and certifications to provide specialized care to children and adolescents.

UNICEF supported programs to develop children, adolescents, parents, families and communities’ life and self-care skills that foster positive behaviors to prevent violence, abuse, and exploitation and generate a harmonious and protective family and community environment. It included designing and diffusion of messages and alternatives to prevent violence and implement positive parenthood methods in the COVID19 pandemic. In this framework, 10,242 (6,789 women and 3,453 men) mothers, fathers, and caregivers participating in the MoF’s "Values Schools", improved their parenting practices and roles, including coronavirus prevention measures and gender-based violence prevention; 36,858 children (19,167 girls and 17,691 boys) were directly impacted by these initiatives.

Based on a child protection needs assessment, UNICEF supported the implementation of child-friendly spaces for girls, boys, and adolescents in the most affected communities by ETA/IOTA emergency, providing psychosocial support, emotional recovery, and positive parenting support. These spaces include prevention, detection, and referral of situations of violence against children, including GBV.

Cross-cutting areas - communication for development:
In 2020, UNICEF focused on strengthening its presence in traditional media and social media. To that end, it implemented a content strategy and its social media pages registered a reach of 70 million users. In traditional media such as television, radio, print and online it reached more than 12 million people, positioning 165 stories and press release on the central themes of UNICEF's advocacy agenda. UNICEF was recognized by the audience and Facebook as the first source of verified information for preventing COVID19 and the only organization that produced information in the different languages.
In collaboration with the Global Movement for Children (GMC), a Risk Communication Strategy to prevent COVID19 was designed and implemented, producing videos, radio spots and social media package with prevention messages and psychosocial care for children, reaching 3 million people throughout the country.

UNICEF promoted the institutionalization of C4D in the MoH, designing a protocol for the correct use of C4D tools and promote behavioral changes in MoH’s programs. This represents the result of more than 20 years of UNICEF-led capacity building on C4D and a milestone in Nicaragua. Also, UNICEF developed an online training platform on the immunization strategy for health workers, which contains educational materials and contributes to enhance risk communication to prevent COVID19.

Another milestone in 2020 was the launching of the C4D strategy on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Prevention, whose materials and methodologies were used to deal with the emergency caused by hurricanes ETA/IOTA. It was the result of a collaboration between UNICEF, WFP and PAHO under the leadership of the National System for the Prevention, Mitigation and Response to Disasters (SINAPRED).

NCO has progressed on raising the C4D Baseline for measuring CPD planned behavior change results. The Baseline will be available in the first half of 2021.

The volunteering strategy:

In the challenging context of the COVID19 pandemic, the volunteering strategy demonstrated its adaptation capacity and potential to contribute to new programmatic areas. Within UNICEF response to the pandemic, 2,500 hygiene kits that included soap, gel alcohol and liquid alcohol, were produced by industrial chemistry students and distributed to vulnerable communities. Furthermore, prevention messages were spread through the production and dissemination of communication contents in Spanish, Miskito and Creole by the volunteer groups, reach around 84,668 people. Efforts were also made to monitor and combat fake news related to COVID19.

Monitoring and evaluation:

The Government of Nicaragua approved the MICS after a year of advocacy and technical interactions with the Central Bank, the National Institute for Development Information-INIDE and other public institutions. This was an unprecedented achievement that will provide the country with official data about children and adolescents, since the last Demographic Health Survey in 2011/2012. The MICS will be implemented in 2021 and results are expected to be available in the first half of 2022.

Besides, UNICEF contributed to consolidate the automated national monitoring system on the public investment on children and adolescents, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit-MHCP, MoE, MoH, MoF, among others, which allows permanent and real-time monitoring of information related to public spending on children and analysis from different perspectives. A new analytical report on public investment on children was produced based on 2019 public expenses, providing a comparison with the 2018 Report.

UNICEF contributed to develop monitoring and evaluation capacities of government entities that can already be seen in the improvement of reporting quality, as well as in the results of the evaluation processes which provide the NCO with valuable information for programmatic decision making. In this sense, government institutions were trained on results-based management, theory of change and most significant change as well as identification and reporting of changes and the technical approach to the evaluation function.

Response to emergencies:

To prevent COVID19, UNICEF supported the MoE, MoH and MoF for capacity strengthening, providing personal protection equipment (PPE) and hygiene supplies for government officers to deliver services in a safe environment. Hospitals and health centers, schools and child protection centers received cleaning kits, personal and family hygiene kits reaching out to some 3,172,910 people from which 1,071,450 were children. PPE was delivered to 5,300 health workers, and 8,680 health workers were trained on infection prevention and control (IPC).

In association with UNFPA, GMC and the TIGO telecommunications company, UNICEF launched two C4D campaigns, which included digital and printed materials on COVID19 prevention protocols. Also, with active participation from 13 GMC member NGOs, a series of surveys to understand
people’s behaviors, needs, worries regarding the COVID19 pandemic shed light to inform response to the emergency.

UNICEF was able to mobilize around US$8.7 million from USAID, Japan, ECHO and OCHA and to respond to ETA/IOTA emergency, reaching near 100,000 people with WASH, child protection and education services, in the most severely affected areas. For this, UNICEF has worked in partnership with government institutions, as well as with international and national NGOs (Save the Children, World Vision, Plan International, EDUCCO, Nidia White, Christian Medical Action, Caritas, American Nicaraguan Foundation, WaterAid, Action Against Hunger, WeWorld-GVC).

**Gender mainstreaming:**

UNICEF continued addressing gender-discriminatory roles and norms, 90 governmental officials (30 males, 60 females) and 22 UNICEF Staff (10 males, 12 females) strengthened their technical capacities on gender mainstreaming through the UN I know Gender Online Certification and completed the PSEA online training provided by LACRO. The online courses strategy allowed to continue reinforcing technical capacities during the COVID19 pandemic.

UNICEF and GMC conducted a consultation on the advances of the Beijing + 25 platforms among 56 girls and female adolescents, who identified the main gaps on: i) the fulfillment of their rights to sexual and reproductive health, ii) the involvement of local authorities in the promotion of children's rights, iii) improvement of care and quality of health services, administration of justice in cases of sexual abuse, and access to school, particularly in rural areas.

The CO also conducted the recruitment process for hiring a consultant to conduct a gender programmatic review of UNICEF program of cooperation. This activity will be carried out in the first quarter of 2021. A rapid gender assessment is in process in the territories affected by ETA and IOTA.
UN Collaboration:
As leader of the Interagency Communication Group, UNICEF conducted a training on C4D to strengthen the capacities of 70 UN staffs in Nicaragua. To respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF developed a Risk Communication plan that involved all UN entities, through which materials were shared with the MoH and MoE.

Under SINAPRED’s leadership, UNICEF, WFP and PAHO collaborated to design and launch the C4D National Strategy on Comprehensive Risk Prevention which will be implemented in the next 4 years. UNICEF, together with WFP, accessed MPTF to support the MoE to be better prepared to emergency situations, by improving access to technology for virtual education, training teachers on education in emergency, equipping schools with better water facilities to help with COVID19 hygiene protocols and providing supplies and training on how to handle school feeding programs in a more hygienic manner. UNICEF, PAHO, UNFPA and IOM jointly delivered medical supplies, hygiene kits and PPE to help the MoH to prevent COVID-19 infections.

UNICEF and IOM continued to work together on implementing a C4D strategy to prevent families and children irregular migration.

After ETA/IOTA hurricanes, UNICEF partnered with UN agencies to prepare US$50.9 million Flash Appeal and a US$ 2 million CERF proposal which was fully financed. UNICEF led WASH, Education and Protection programmatic areas. Around 287 thousand people will benefit from the efforts made by the organization and its partners.

UNICEF actively participated in the Interagency SDG Group. It is worth to mention the collaboration with other UN agencies to promote SDG in National Assembly opening work opportunities with the legislative branch in relation to the SDGs.

Civil society organizations and the private sector:
The collaboration with NGOs, in particular with GMC members, was crucial to prevent COVID19 and respond to the effects of hurricanes ETA/IOTA. Through these partnerships, surveys were implemented to assess the impact of the pandemic on families, children and adolescents. This helped to design informed interventions according to the needs and virus behavior. A communication strategy was designed and implemented through traditional and community media to empower people from the most vulnerable communities and provide them with verified information. Three million people were reached, among them 432,640 boys, girls and adolescents.

Strengthening and extending partnerships with public and private universities contributed to continue engaging young students in the framework of UNICEF volunteering strategy. Furthermore, alliances with BICU, Zamora Teran Foundation, Global Shapers and UNIDO allowed a Nicaraguan team to become one of the eight global GenU Youth challenge Champions.

UNICEF Nicaragua joined the alliance with Millicom-TIGO and for the first time partnered locally with the private sector to generate innovative technology-based solutions that promote the children’s rights online and offline, and adolescent empowerment. UNICEF and TIGO created the Ciberconectados platform to disseminate verified information on COVID19, the safe use of internet and advice for creating content. This platform reached more than three million people countrywide in Spanish and original languages.

Lessons Learned and Innovations
Communication:
The production of communication materials in people’s own languages, representing their cultural practices, was crucial to effectively reach minority groups with behavior change messages. The alliance with Millicom-TIGO allowed for sending SMS messages about measures to prevent COVID19 in all languages spoken in Nicaragua, including Miskito and Creole and more than one million people were reached even in remote communities with limited internet access. The implementation of digital platforms was a great ally to collect information on attitudes and
practices on different topics and carry out trainings. UNICEF held 40 Facebook live to disseminate information on child protection, promotion of homeschooling and health care for COVID-19 prevention. More than 5,000 participants responded the seven surveys implemented to understand adolescents’, youths’ and adults’ risk perception on COVID-19. This allowed to design more effective communication actions.

The production of firsthand communication contents showing the damages and impact of the hurricanes on the communities and the most urgent needs of affected children and families, was fundamental for advocacy and fundraising. This approach should orient UNICEF emergency preparedness and response in the future.

**Education:**

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of the education system more clearly, showing the country lacks the resources to effectively respond to basic needs in education. It put in evidence that the challenges would only be overcome with the active participation of all actors of the educational community. It showed that the need to work with and fully involve parents in their children’s learning processes is evident. It became clear that UNICEF needs to continue focusing on the most vulnerable to help with service delivery at the local level, as much as resources permit and raise additional resources to support the MoE to design a continuity plan for emergency situations.

In the context of ETA/IOTA emergencies, UNICEF identified plenty of opportunities to collaborate with other UN agencies and civil society organization to work toward the same goals and reach children more effectively in underserved and vulnerable areas. For instance, UNICEF is playing a key role in helping coordinate humanitarian assistance in the absence of the cluster mechanism, especially within the UN system and with international NGOs.

**Early child survival and development:**

In the collaboration with Los Pipitos, one of the most important challenges was to ensure that children with disabilities could continue with their development processes as well as maintaining support for families without spreading COVID-19. For this, it was necessary to adapt the implementation modality of the Community-Based Inclusive Development Model, ensuring the processes of family development and empowerment without home visits by an itinerant interdisciplinary committee. So, the itinerant team modified the methodology and prepared educational materials through videos, infographic posters, cards, audios and digital brochures that contain the therapies for each stage of treatment so they could be shared through WhatsApp with each family. They also recorded educational sessions that were later sent to families through that network.

Furthermore, the families organized themselves into two support networks and began recording and sharing videos. The families with more experience supported the “new families” in preparing their individual development plans. This allowed 281 individual plans to be prepared and 218 men were involved in raising their children. This exchange between networks helped to empower families, seek more information and strengthen knowledge and practices. The suspension of visits had a positive impact because 2,570 of 2,000 targeted attentions were guaranteed. Replacing physical visits to virtual interactions allowed all children to continue their development progress.

**Innovation highlighted:**

In the first weeks after ETA/IOTA hurricanes, UNICEF and GMC were able to quickly conduct an online damage assessment survey. Afterwards, UNICEF hired a British satellite georeferencing company, which helped to visualize the damages on an electronic map, showing flooded areas, population density and exact location of affected communities. This provided useful information for response planning, for resources mobilization and promoting better articulation, coordination and harmonization.

Based on lessons learned from its participation in the first edition of Generation Unlimited Youth Challenge, UNICEF made efforts to improve the experience of youth teams which competed in the GenU YC 2.0. Emphasis was put on strengthening the entrepreneurship focus of projects designed by the participants. To cover this expertise need, partnerships were established and consolidated with Global Shapers, UNIDO and the Zamora Terán Foundation, especially in providing facilitators, mentors and juries for the GenU YC 2.0. They also accompanied the incubation phase of the four
national finalist teams. This technical support was essential to create the conditions that allowed Hydrolution’s, one of the Nicaraguan teams, to become a global GenU Youth Challenge Champion. Hydrolution’s project consists in recycling used cooking oil to produce soaps and includes a whole component to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in rural communities. As a GenU global champion, the team will receive additional financial and technical support in 2021.

Regarding open innovation, a hackathon was organized in the framework of UNICEF response to the COVID19 pandemic. During a 24-hour online design sprint, 28 adolescents and young people, organized in ten teams, formulated innovative ideas to tackle issues related to the impact of the pandemic. A jury selected the two most promising ideas which received UNICEF support to develop their projects further.

It is also worth mentioning that UNICEF supported the SINAPRED to train more than 1,000 members of emergency municipal brigades in charge of protecting civilians during emergencies. The training strengthened their capacities to lead evacuation efforts and proved to be very effective in responding to hurricanes Eta and Iota. Despite the destruction power of the hurricanes, only a small number of human lives were lost.