

Chile

Update on the context and situation of children

On 11 March 2022, there was a change of government in Chile, with Gabriel Boric Font becoming president. UNICEF established contact with the new leadership to report on the work undertaken in recent years and UNICEF's agenda for children and adolescents 2022–2025 based on recommendations from the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the national priorities set in the government's programme.

UNICEF's agenda includes nine priorities and three key priorities: the progressive installation of the new nationwide child protection system; establishment of a national social protection scheme; and recovery of children's educational achievements after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Challenges

Following the civil unrest that started in October 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic increased the challenges for the realization of children's rights, with poverty being a major issue. After three decades of consistently diminishing returns, income poverty was affecting 10.8% of the total population in 2020, according to CASEN national poverty survey, representing 2,112,185 people, with 4.3% living in extreme poverty. The increase in poverty has disproportionately affected children. In 2017, income poverty stood at 8.6% of the population, and at 13.9% for those under 18 years old. However, if considering multidimensional poverty, the proportion rises to 22.9%, and to 30.6% for children from Indigenous backgrounds and 31.9% for children on the move. Due to lockdown restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic, no measure was taken in 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase of school closures and violence against children. The Ministry of Education identified that in 2022, 46.84% (7,552) of the complaints received by the Superintendence of Education at the national level (16,123) were related to student mistreatment. The latest official data on violence against children are from the National Longitudinal Survey for Early Childhood (Ministry of Social Development and Family, 2017); show that 62.5% of primary caregivers practice at least one violent method of discipline, while 32.5% report the use of corporal punishment. In 2021, UNICEF conducted a new study on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of violence against children to investigate to what extent social norms play a role. The study found that 47% of primary caregivers believe in the effectiveness of violent discipline.

The main challenges related to the education sector are: (1) strengthening the educational trajectory of children within the system from early childhood education to the end of secondary education (2) improving educational achievements and life-skills development; and (3) preventing children's exposure to violence in schools and school community environments.

Chile's foreign population has increased considerably recently, and children on the move became an area of paramount importance in recent years. The National Institute of Statistics estimated that 1,482,390 people born outside the country reside in Chile by 2022, representing 7.5% of the population, increasing the total number of foreign residents by more than 14% compared to 2018. The northern zone is the leading unauthorized entry point in the country. There has been an increase of 80% in the number of admissions since 2010, with 35,400 admissions up to 2021, of whom 37.2% are children and adolescents. According to the International Organization for Migration's Displacement Tracking Matrix in Colchane, 50% of them felt unsafe on the journey. A lack of protection and health continue to be crucial issues in addressing the response to migration with consideration to the well-being of children and adolescents.

An ongoing challenge is the periodic supervision of progress against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the progressive establishment of the child protection system. This includes adequate integration of data systems for collecting and monitoring children's overall development, with indicators disaggregated by age, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, nationality, ethnic

background and place of residence (rural or urban and geographical areas), and analysis of relevant gaps and inequalities that must be tackled.

Opportunities

For over 20 years the country has tried to make significant normative, institutional and political changes to create a comprehensive Child Protection System. This has finally been achieved by approving a law that respects, protects, guarantees and safeguards the rights of children aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Such efforts are reflected in the newly created institutions with the specific mandate of coordinating and monitoring children's rights, and the country counts on a consistent and ambitious plan of action for the realization of children's rights for 2022–2025. Within the upcoming country programme, UNICEF could contribute to building the capacities of these institutional and legal frameworks, reviewing the current Country National Plan for Children's Rights, as well as implementing a strong advocacy agenda on financing for children and engaging with the private sector to address new developing areas. Also, UNICEF will advance in integrating the gender transformative approach across its programmes, in line with the findings and recommendations of the recently concluded GPR.

Despite facing a lot of restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF's gross income reached a total of CPL11.388 billion (US\$15.6 million), representing a 45% increase from 2021. Despite the difficult economic situation, with the devaluation of the local currency and high rates of inflation, Chile has been able to deliver excellent results through private fundraising and partnerships. At year end, the financial forecast for UNICEF Chile is a total income of CPL14.703 billion (US\$17 million), representing a 30% increase from 2021. A pledge operation is the cornerstone of local fundraising. With an estimated acquisition of 38,000 new pledge donors, the total number of active donors is now 118,650.

Most of the challenges foreseen for 2023 are based on the economic crisis which may impact people and their capacity to donate. UNICEF will promote its Donor Love strategy, identify new donor audiences and launch cash donation campaigns.

Major contributions and drivers of results

Goal 1: Every child survives and thrives

UNICEF continues to support Chile's early childhood development subsystem, 'Chile Crece Contigo' ('Chile Grows with You'), through technical assistance and advocacy, including the development of materials for caregivers and training for public workers (as public health workers, teachers and early educators) to promote nurturing care and prevention of violence against children.

UNICEF supported analysis of the intersectoral coordination of 'Chile Grows with You', which contributed to the design and improvement of the Local Office for Children (territorial implementation of the Law which creates the Child Protection System). UNICEF also influenced the government's response to empower families to play a more active role in providing care, aligning the "Positive and Respectful Parenting Route" with international standards and a nurturing care approach. A study identifying barriers to positive parenting practices, titled 'Socio-cultural Items regarding Care of Children in Santiago de Chile', was disseminated.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF supported the development of publications such as the 'Active Parenting Guide in COVID-19' and also advocated for the prevention of violence against children and gender-based violence during lockdowns. UNICEF supported the return to school and preschools by training teachers to prevent COVID-19 transmission in schools, activity which received more than 3,000 engagements. Also, technical support was driven to help 15 educational establishments, including documents created for this purpose – *Framework for the reopening of*

schools and Guidelines for the reopening of comprehensive early childhood care services in times of COVID-19). UNICEF also conducted a study titled ‘Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic in Health’, providing evidence and recommendations for recovery actions, such as strengthening the role of the community, adapting the offer of services considering digital strategies, and adequate investment in key areas.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health by reviewing normative documents such as the ‘Technical Standard for the Supervision of the Comprehensive Health of Children’; early identification and first response to commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents, and intimate partner violence; and the National Health Strategy 2020–2030.

UNICEF conducted a case study to identify challenges and opportunities in the urban food environment in Santiago. UNICEF then partnered with BNP Paribas Cardif to develop the ‘Reactivate your school’ project in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, local authorities and the community, aiming to improve nutrition and physical activity habits.

UNICEF also collaborated with various ministries to raise awareness about the importance of children’s mental health and to support a new National Mental Health Policy for Children and Adolescents. UNICEF has been working with the National Service for the Specialized Protection of Children and Adolescents and the Servicio Nacional de Menores to promote health and prevent suicide and violent deaths.

Efforts have been made to promote the participation of children and adolescents by developing technical guidelines to enhance local participation and by supporting the decree that establishes the National Council and regulates its operation.

Targeting migrant families, UNICEF held workshops to enhance parenting skills, including through a gender-based approach, facilitated enrolment in the public health system and provided nutrition assessments and sexual and reproductive health services. UNICEF has also conducted training on the provision of health care from a rights-based perspective.

In the area of children's rights and the role of business (CRB) Unicef focused on actions for advocacy and technical assistance for the incorporation of public policies for the promotion and protection of children's rights, in collaboration with the government and business platforms. Worthy of note are the advances for the recognition of the rights and participation of children and adolescents in the socio-ecological fair transition policy for the decarbonization of thermoelectric plants. Efforts continued to strengthen the promotion of family-friendly policies, in collaboration with business platforms and companies.

Goal 2: Every child learns

UNICEF has worked to reduce school dropout by advocating for the improvement of the ‘second-chance schools’ system which allows out-of-school children to re-enter the education system in inclusive settings with socio-emotional support appropriate to their age. UNICEF participated in the development of the National Strategy for Public Education, which provides a framework for 1,273,530 students in over 4,925 public schools and has advocated for its content to be consistent with the highest standards to fulfil children’s right to education in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF has also pushed for the expansion of service coverage to bridge access gaps.

Faced by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF provided technical support to local government, created and disseminated technical guidelines for the return to education, facilitated the coordination of civil society for the COVID-19 response, and was part of the Technical Support Council for the reopening of schools. In addition, UNICEF conducted a national online survey reaching 20,000 families with

preschool children to learn about their experiences with distance learning and the reopening process for preschools.

UNICEF has advocated for strengthening the National Public Education Strategy for equity, inclusion and quality, recommending the promotion of the right to education in the new constitution, including support for participatory processes such as ‘Let’s Talk About Education’ and ‘The Voice of Children, Adolescents and Young People for the Constituent Process’. UNICEF also developed a public–private partnership to enhance the quality of 11 preschool playgrounds to promote the use of open spaces for learning, to be eventually scaled up by the State.

UNICEF has continued to promote alternative conflict resolution methods in schools and has published the ‘Guide for the development and updating of internal regulations’, as well as a guidance document to actively promote socio-emotional support in educational communities. Insights from a study that reviewed more than 900 schools’ internal regulations were disseminated through the publication and distribution of two additional documents.

Throughout this period, a cross-cutting approach was taken to promote the lead participation of girls and adolescents, collaborating with and fostering networks with youth organizations such as Tremendas, Niñas Valientes, the Association of Young Women for Ideas and Secundarias Feministas in areas such as women in science, gender-focused education and climate change.

Overall, UNICEF has worked to promote access to quality education for all children, especially migrants, children with disabilities, children in residential care and adolescents deprived of liberty. Particularly for children with disabilities, UNICEF conducted a study to describe the main bottlenecks in the educational system that prevent full inclusion of this group of children and adolescents. A policy brief is going to be published and disseminated to address these bottlenecks with educational authorities.

Goal 3: Every child is protected from violence

Over the last four years, UNICEF has actively participated in the discussion of eight legislative initiatives, with more than 70% of its recommendations being incorporated into resulting laws. In 2022 four of such laws were approved, Law No. 21,430 established the Child Protection System; Law No. 21,515 set the age of majority for marriage at 18 years, thereby eliminating child marriage; Law No. 21,522 criminalized the commercial sexual exploitation of children and at last the Law No. 21,527 created the National Juvenile Justice Service. UNICEF contributed to the development of content based on comparative evidence for various laws, and made this content available to the parliament, and also provided technical assistance to the Undersecretariat for Children, for building seven regulatory norms to implement the child protection system (ongoing).

UNICEF prioritized those programmatic interventions contributing to the implementation of Law No. 21,430, which created the child protection system, and Law No. 21,302 (from 2021) which created the National Specialized Protection Service which specifically targets children in alternative care settings.

As a result of the normative and programmatic changes implemented over the past five years, the number of children in alternative care settings has decreased from 15,497 children in alternative care – with 79.7% in alternative residential care – in 2010, to 11,621 children in alternative care – with 64.8% in alternative family care – in 2022.

Since 2018, UNICEF has worked to strengthen ‘Mi Abogado’, a new programme that provides specialized legal representation to children through the use of lawyers, social workers and psychologists. In 2022 UNICEF provided a proposal for specialized defence standards, trained the programme’s human resources, and analysed cases to identify lessons learned and challenges.

UNICEF also worked with the Supreme Court to provide tools for judges handling cases related to the protection of children's rights. In 2022 the ‘Guidelines for the evaluation and determination of the best interests of the child’ were translated into an online platform for the continuous training of judges.

In 2018, the Committee on the Rights of the Child released a report stating that there was a “grave or systematic violation of children's rights in residential protection centres in Chile under the direct or indirect control of SENAME”. In response, the government developed a plan to address the recommendations made in the report, and UNICEF supported the implementation of normative, policy and programmatic changes. UNICEF conducted a study to identify progress and challenges in solidifying a reparation process for child victims of human rights violations. Based on the results of this study, in 2022 UNICEF provided a proposal titled ‘Route of reparation, truth, justice and guarantees of non-repetition’ to the authorities of the Undersecretariats of Justice, Human Rights and Children.

Between 2020 and 2022, the government prepared to submit its periodic review on the fulfilment of the rights of children in the country. UNICEF provided support to the state process and prepared a separate report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. In May 2022, the government participated in constructive dialogue with the committee, which UNICEF took part as an observer.

Humanitarian response to children on the move

Since 2020, UNICEF has worked to raise awareness on the situation of children on the move, exacerbated by the closure of borders due to COVID-19 and the resulting influx of people through unauthorized border crossings. UNICEF provided technical support to the government to address the migration crisis and strengthen its capacity to develop national policies and strategies for children.

In 2021, UNICEF worked on the development of a protocol for unaccompanied or separated children, and this year, UNICEF continued to monitor the implementation of the new migration law and the application of the protocol for unaccompanied or separated children by law enforcement officials and front-line migration authorities (police), advocating for compliance with the Migration Law and the standards of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF also ensured that the child protection authority assumed responsibility for handling cases of unaccompanied, separated and undocumented children, as well as the prohibition of denying entry to families with children at unauthorized borders. UNICEF also provided technical assistance to the judiciary and the ‘Mi Abogado’ programme to ensure that all children impacted by the migration crisis, including unaccompanied and separated children, had access to legal assistance and representation.

Since 2021, UNICEF designed and implemented a model for two first reception centres for children on the move in the northern border, providing a safe and welcoming environment with necessary support, including psychosocial support, food, referrals to public services and access to information on migration. In 2022 this model has been systematized and evaluated and the government will take

over the operation of these centres from March 2023.

UNICEF worked to improve the capacity of public officials and civil society to provide special protection to children on the move and ensure that they receive necessary support and services, raising awareness among local authorities about the rights and protection needs of displaced children. Despite these efforts, effective implementation of the protocol for unaccompanied and separated children (developed in 2021 with UNICEF support) remains a challenge due to a lack of specialization among public officials. In 2022, UNICEF trained 746 law enforcement officials to overcome this challenge.

UNICEF also advocated with the Migration and Foreigners Service to fluidifying documentation requirements for regularizing migratory situation of children and exchanged with UNICEF offices in Ecuador and Colombia to identify alternative mechanisms for verifying identity and filiation for the purpose of eventual adoption in Chile.

Goal 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

UNICEF has supported the government and stakeholders to promote social inclusion for the most vulnerable children and their families, with the aim of achieving SDGs 1 and 10. UNICEF has advocated for the creation of a comprehensive protection system for children, provided technical support, and supported the establishment of the Undersecretariat for Children and the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children (Defensoría de los Derechos de la Niñez). UNICEF has also participated in discussions in congress in support of a recently approved law creating a child protection system.

UNICEF has collaborated with the Undersecretary for Children to enhance its capacity and leadership in children's policy and provided input for the design of LOCs (Local Offices for Children). UNICEF developed graphic material for 14 pilot projects implemented in 2018, and provided workshops and training sessions for public workers, as well as guidelines for the effective inclusion of children to promote a participatory approach. Although UNICEF's work on the implementation of LOCs was interrupted last year by the change in government authorities, it was resumed during the second semester 2022, providing technical assistance in the definition of guidelines and the installation of the first 90 LOCs.

UNICEF has been actively supporting the development of the National Plan of Action for Children and Adolescents 2018–2025. UNICEF has continued to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Social Development and Family to support this initiative, and in the last quarter of 2022 started the mid-term evaluation of the plan.

In partnership with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNICEF has produced a concept note emphasizing the importance of establishing a child-sensitive social protection system to eradicate child poverty, promote the comprehensive well-being of children and ensure a minimum standard of living. In 2022, UNICEF began a technical assistance for the conceptualization and operationalization of the child-centered Social Protection Floor established by the law that creates the NCPS (National Child Protection System) approved in March 2022. This work is part of the technical support that UNICEF has delivered to the UoCh to develop the required norms and regulations, contents, and guidelines to effectively implement the law that creates the NCPS.

UNICEF has also promoted the importance of allocating public funding to children and young people through the development of a manual on the measurement of public investment in children and advocacy for the inclusion of child-related spending in national budget processes ('Public Financing for Children and Child Protection'). In 2022, UNICEF continued with the measurement of public

investment in children, a key exercise for the discussion of the next Budget Law. This exercise was carried out in a study elaborated by UNICEF in 2021, was updated in 2022 and the results were consolidated in a report sent to Congress, making information available for discussion of the next budget Law. This latter action fulfilled the commitment of the UoCh to estimate government's public investment in childhood and adolescence. UNICEF actively collaborated in the incorporation of this gloss again in the Budget Law for 2023.

UNICEF has intensified its efforts to highlight the plight of children on the move. UNICEF has actively participated in the Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela in 2022. UNICEF gave technical support to the Ministry of the Interior and the Undersecretariat for Children in their strategy for crisis response, and during 2022 developed a humanitarian response in agreement with 4 implementing partners to give support to more than 10.000 children, adolescents on the move and their caregivers.

UNICEF launched 'Reactivate Your School' in 2022 in partnership with the University of La Frontera, local government and the Ministry of Health. The project is funded by BNP Paribas Cardif and aims to prevent obesity and promote healthy habits among children.

After that, UNICEF became part of a new alliance called the Pacto Niñez in 2022, a collaborative initiative between more than 80 civil society organizations to work on a roadmap that prioritizes the most urgent issues to improve the lives of children and adolescents in Chile. This project is co-financed by the European Union, and is led by the Fundación Para la Confianza, Hogar de Cristo, CIDENI, la Corporación de Organizaciones Solidarias (COS), and Fundación Colunga.

UNICEF worked effectively with partners to implement a participatory process that included the opinions of adolescents in conflict with the law in the development of the first National Youth Social Reintegration Policy. A partnership was formed with the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the National Service for Minors, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children and the Undersecretariat for Children to implement the initiative.

UNICEF has worked with OHCHR, ILO and the OECD on responsible business providing technical assistance to the Undersecretariat for Human Rights in the second National Action Plan on Human Rights and Business.

UNICEF engaged in a range of partnerships to support its mission of strengthening civil society in education and upholding the right to education of children and adolescents. This included a partnership with Elige Educar, coordinating dialogue among 24 education organizations. UNICEF also partnered with five academic and civil society institutions to form the Educational Pathways Observatory and a public-private alliance with Google, JUNJI and the Mi Parque Foundation. These partnerships provided funding and technical assistance to facilitate advocacy, knowledge production and investment in education. UNICEF has also formed a strong alliance with the Ministry of Education, leading to the signing of a work agreement that commits the ministry to invest over US\$500,000.

In partnership with the Social Observatory, UNICEF provided technical assistance to two national surveys focused on children that use internationally standardized indicators to measure compliance with the SDGs. methodological advice on the Longitudinal Survey of Early Childhood was provided through UNICEF's participation in the expert round was provided. A cooperation agreement has been developed with the National Statistics Office to strengthen the use of administrative data in the analysis of the situation of migrant children and to improve the methodology for calculating population estimates.

Flexibility, adaptability and clear guidelines to achieve results

One important lesson learned during this country programme period has been the value of having clear long-term priorities while also being flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances. The Country Programme Document for 2018–2022 originally included plans to implement pilot programmes to improve equity and social inclusion in three local governments. However, due to the change in government and its new priorities, it was decided to postpone these pilot programmes and instead work with the government at the local level to create Local Offices for Children. UNICEF provided technical support for the design and implementation of this initiative, identifying both challenges and opportunities for consolidating the child protection system at this level. At the same time, UNICEF continued to advocate for and provide technical support for the passage of a law creating a comprehensive child protection system which was enacted in March 2022.

In 2019, the social unrest and increased involvement of adolescents in protests required further adjustments to UNICEF's workplan, as resources were redirected to support teachers and families with children during the instability and to develop methodologies for promoting children's participation in dialogues. UNICEF also adjusted its actions to provide technical support to the social agenda and other new initiatives.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 also necessitated adjustments to the workplan as the context changed dramatically and many government sectors modified their priorities. UNICEF was able to maintain its long-term priorities while providing technical support in critical areas such as social protection, immigration, juvenile justice and institutionalized children, and advocating with congress on relevant draft bills. Through careful planning and monitoring, UNICEF was able to maintain a coherent balance between the objectives of the Country Programme Document and its humanitarian and development efforts.

Evaluation

Improving the development of the evaluation function was a main subject of the 2022 AWP. As part of the RO recommendations and the incorporation of the new UNICEF evaluation policies, during 2022 the number of evaluations developed during the current CPD increased, reaching a total of 3 with the development of 2 programmatic evaluations in this year: (a) UNICEF contribution to CHCC, (b) evaluation of the implementation of the emergency response. UNICEF's support contributes to the inclusion of a children's rights approach in the actions of institutions such as the Undersecretariat for Children, and in mechanisms for promotion and comprehensive protection such as the Law of Guarantees, adequately identifying the needs of children and adolescents and generating proposals for the gradual incorporation of this perspective (Relevance). In the case of the evaluation of the implementation of the emergency response, among the lessons learned are: (i) the services respond to the needs of the target population (situational analysis); (ii) the right holders widely value the contribution that the services provided make to meet their needs; (iii) the CATs work in coordination with other agencies (e.g., the CATs); (iv) the services provided by the CATs are not only provided to the target population, but also to the community at large. coordination with other actors of the network, constituting a platform to facilitate platform for facilitating the access of its target population to services provided by other partners. partners.

Office of the Ombudsperson for Children

Since 2018, UNICEF has supported the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children, especially during the social unrest in 2019, as an independent human rights institution promoting the monitoring of children's well-being – both those who participated in the demonstrations or were affected by police procedures.

The partnership with the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children has enabled relevant learning for UNICEF regarding the complementary role of both institutions and recognition of the office by state counterparts. The Office of the Ombudsperson for Children and UNICEF complemented their actions

by monitoring the situation of children in alternative residential care settings and advocating for the closure of large care centres.

Throughout 2022, UNICEF, in coordination with the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children, provided technical assistance to the new government and its technical teams to enhance the institutional transformations required to consolidate the establishment of the Child Protection System and ensure specialized protection for children on the move or whose rights have been violated. In this context, the coordination and mutual collaboration between the institutions was critical to strengthen the capacities of human resources, particularly for those protecting adolescents in conflict with the law.

Another relevant area of close work between UNICEF and the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children was the promotion of children's participation. During the first years of implementation, UNICEF provided technical support to build capacities, conducting training and workshops to incorporate a participatory approach as a cross-cutting element in the institution's strategic guidelines. Institutional collaboration was also promoted during the constituent process and during the establishment of regional Ombudsperson offices. This work has been documented as a case study in UNICEF's 'Global Guide', to share the experience and best practices.