

## Eastern Caribbean Area

### Update on the context and situation of children

The Eastern Caribbean experienced a surge in COVID-19 infections in 2022 due to the more infectious Omicron variant; however, the number of COVID-19 cases across the subregion progressively declined following over 18 months of sporadic spikes. Governments continued to relax travel protocols to mitigate the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic. With many countries suspending the reporting of positive cases, the focus shifted to vaccination rates following the rollout of national vaccine programmes in 2021. At the end of December 2022, the average vaccination rate across the countries and territories of the Eastern Caribbean Area (ECA) was 50%, ranging from 33% in Saint Lucia to 65% in Antigua and Barbuda.

The year was marked by slow and uneven recovery for ECA countries and territories as they began to rebound from the negative impact of COVID-19 on their already fragile economies. Post-pandemic, most countries experienced a downward trajectory in public debt in 2022, averaging 82% of gross domestic product (GDP). Despite this overall trend, several countries maintained high public debt-to-GDP ratios, such as Antigua and Barbuda (102%), Barbados (126%), Dominica (106%), Saint Lucia (94%), and Trinidad and Tobago (72%). In contrast, the public debt-to-GDP ratio of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines increased from 68% of GDP in 2021 to 72% in 2022. Notable exceptions include Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, with negligible levels of public debt (less than 2% of GDP).

The overweight prevalence of children and adolescents (aged 5 to 19) across the ECA is approximately 30%. The over-consumption of ultra-processed foods and sugary drinks, as well as the lack of physical activity, are the main drivers of the problem contributing to increased non-communicable diseases (NCDs) among this population. During the pandemic, the problem has been magnified by limited access to healthy food and reduced purchasing power. In a post-COVID-19 environment, children across the ECA also still face the impact of the pandemic on their mental health and well-being. Globally, there is a wealth of research suggesting that a considerable number of children and young people are still experiencing mental health disorders exacerbated by the pandemic. However, the evidence from low- and middle-income countries and developing nations, such as those in the Caribbean, is limited. A regional study reporting data from nine Caribbean countries on adolescents aged 10-18 indicated that 17% saw themselves as sad, angry, or irritated. The literature also confirmed a rise in incidents of depression and suicidal thoughts. Young people in the Caribbean region expressed concerns about this, as well as the inadequacy of mental health services, and called on governments and policymakers to re-evaluate systems to better protect children and youth.

Aside from the public health crisis, children and adolescents continued to face rising violence in their homes, schools and communities, as well as growing inequities and increased climatic threats. With the resumption of face-to-face classes across the subregion, educators expressed concern about the rise in violence among school children in an environment where there has been tremendous learning loss because of prolonged school closures. Before 2020, an estimated 32% of children lived in poverty. The pandemic exacerbated deep-rooted inequalities and pushed hundreds of families further into poverty. Underpinning this is the region's vulnerability to climate change, particularly exposure to rising sea levels, ocean acidification, coastal erosion and tropical cyclones. Though not directly impacted by any major tropical cyclones in 2022, ECA countries faced unseasonal rainfall from September to December, causing flooding and landslides in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

In 2022, the political landscape across the subregion remained stable. Four countries held elections:

Barbados on 19 January, Grenada on 23 June, Saint Kitts and Nevis on 5 August, and Dominica on 6 December. The incumbent administration in Barbados retained a full sweep of all parliamentary seats, while in both Grenada and Saint Kitts and Nevis a new government was elected with a comprehensive victory by the Opposition. In Dominica, elections resulted in the incumbent party being re-elected. There were resulting ministerial changes and some renewed commitments to advancing children's rights. The incoming administrations in Barbados, Grenada and Saint Kitts and Nevis committed to key reforms in their child protection sectors, in addition to the expansion of digital education, while the Government of Dominica promised significant expansion of early childhood education.

To date, there are no comprehensive or official figures published about the population of refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers from Venezuela. A 2021 re-registration exercise led by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago resulted in the re-registration of approximately 13,800 people. Based on December 2022 data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Trinidad and Tobago remains home to over 23,000 Venezuelan persons of concern, including over 5,000 children. In 2022, the government also adhered to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

Despite the uncertainties and challenges, the subregion has also been presented with opportunities to rethink public policy and transform development models. UNICEF continued to further position the children's agenda at the highest national and regional levels with new and existing partnerships.

The Caribbean can look forward to key development opportunities with the review of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) New School Model recommitment to pursue Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 for equitable and quality education, and the historic establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund for countries acutely impacted by the warming climate, following COP27. In terms of child and human rights advocacy, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Antigua and Barbuda reported Universal Periodic Reviews in 2022. This presented an opportunity to accelerate child and human rights advocacy with the national administration of each country and to inform national planning processes. The new United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNMSDCF) 2022–2026 and the development of Country Implementation Plans with each government across 12 countries and territories are opportunities to strengthen existing partnership collaboration and commitments, and underscore the accountability of joint commitments to accelerate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Major contributions and drivers of results

In 2022, UNICEF ECA continued its focus on recovery from the impact of COVID-19, ensuring progress against the SDGs and implementing the UNMSDCF 2022–2026. Achievements in strengthening child protection mechanisms, supporting the continuity of education, risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), supporting social protection, responding to emergencies and strengthening the resilience agenda are highlights of UNICEF's work during the past year.

### Every child learns

With the improvement in the COVID-19 situation and the reopening of schools, UNICEF ECA's focus shifted to supporting the emerging needs of learning recovery and child-friendly schools, while continuing efforts around early childhood education (ECD) and digitalization in education.

As part of the global dialogue on the Transforming Education Summit, seven countries – Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – developed national commitments towards reforming their education systems to accelerate progress towards achieving SDG 4 by 2030. Key commitments included the prioritization of

foundational learning, ongoing training for teachers reflecting emerging trends in the labour market, mainstreaming digital education into systems and creating spaces for more meaningful youth engagement in decision-making. The country consultations provided an excellent opportunity for key stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs) and youth, to explore the theme of ‘transforming and reimagining education for the 21st century in a post-COVID-19 environment’.

UNICEF ECA’s continued efforts and initiative around the integration of digitalization in education resulted in the development of digital learning content for 26,668 primary and secondary students and strengthened the capacity of 768 teachers in the development and use of digital learning resources. An estimated 145,000 children and 11,400 teachers are expected to benefit from using these resources, which will contribute to improved learning outcomes for students.

Early childhood policy, regulations and standards frameworks were updated in four countries – Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Montserrat – with significant emphasis on the articulation of integrated approaches to ECD for children aged 0–8 years. Evidence generation was further strengthened through a comprehensive diagnostic review of the status of the ECD sector across the subregion. The review revealed positive progress in key areas such as the implementation of ECD policies, services and capacity, while also emphasizing the need to strengthen integrated approaches for planning, implementing and monitoring ECD programmes and services across sectors. In terms of capacity-building, 5,417 key stakeholders in ECD benefited from professional development sessions in supporting home-based learning and innovative pedagogical methods to respond to children’s differing needs.

In support of implementation of the Caribbean Safe Schools Initiative, particularly ensuring child-friendly environments in schools, UNICEF enhanced the knowledge and skills of 315 parents and teachers on positive behaviour management through capacity-building training.

### **Every child is protected from violence and exploitation**

The subregion registered a surge in gun-related, family and school-based interpersonal violence, sustaining concern over the issue of violence against children. In addition, most governments pledged greater financial investment in social sector reforms over punitive laws and more policing, with overt political commitment.

Consequently, UNICEF ECA’s sustained high-level advocacy and quality technical support resulted in new draft child protection and child justice laws in Barbados which will abolish the practice of corporal punishment in alternative care settings, penal institutions and as a sentence; 17 new or amended draft laws to combat gender-based violence (GBV) and a draft Victims’ Rights policy in Grenada; and an immediate review of longstanding - bottlenecks in the child protection and child justice systems in Saint Kitts and Nevis. The Family Court Division was also opened in Antigua and Barbuda, after longstanding developmental support from UNICEF.

UNICEF ECA advanced efforts to expand the role of community involvement in child protection through local government, the private sector and community service organizations. In Trinidad and Tobago, UNICEF supported the development of a Family Violence Prevention and Response Strategy with local government to enhance its role in family violence programming; worked with local sporting associations, faith-based organizations and other community-based organizations to prevent and respond to violence against children; agreed child safeguarding programming in the tourism sector in Barbados for rollout in 2023; and, in collaboration with the United Nations interagency- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Task Force, supported the distribution of PSEA materials to government and CSO personnel.

Considering the increasing intensity and frequency of natural hazard-related disasters in the region, and

to promote preparedness and resilience actions, UNICEF brought elements of its psychosocial programming, 'Return to Happiness', online so that facilitators could quickly train, reorient and gain access to resources in the event of a humanitarian crisis. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, a Child Protection in Emergencies toolkit was also developed to enhance response and sustain preparedness measures in the aftermath of the 2021 La Soufriere volcanic eruption.

UNICEF also commenced a mapping of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in the Eastern Caribbean, while continuing enhanced access to mental health interventions through international e-counselling services in collaboration with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) as part of the extensive COVID-19 response. In Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, UNICEF supported the rollout of the MyChild Helpline mobile application, which provides children with child-friendly resources, access to MHPSS, national toll-free hotlines, and emergency and child protection services in the palm of their hands. Seven additional countries committed to supporting the scale-up of the app in 2023.

### **Every child has an equitable chance in life**

In 2022, UNICEF ECA contributed to improvements in the availability of more effective and comprehensive social protection systems to deliver programmes that children - including children on the move - can rely on to support their access to essential services, reduce their poverty and deprivation, and mitigate impacts following a protracted crisis. This was achieved by supporting the further establishment of rights-based social protection legal and policy frameworks in Dominica and Saint Lucia through consultative processes (including the use of U-Report) and by supporting the production of a regional framework to assist more countries and territories.

UNICEF seized the opportunity created by restructuring in the British Virgin Islands, following the Commission of Inquiry report, to support the Draft Reform Plan for Social Assistance that is expected to remove discretionary grants, thereby making the system more accountable, and proposing a new universal child grant and universal social pension to indirectly benefit children. UNICEF further contributed to improving childrens' lives in the subregion and ensuring that they do not fall deeper into poverty due to large-scale shocks, by supporting systems-strengthening, programme design and delivery, and temporary expansion in response to shocks in 8 of the 12 countries and territories.

The adaptation and temporary expansion of social assistance in Antigua and Barbuda was successfully supported to mitigate the persisting socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19. Some 389 households, including 380 children, benefited from top-ups through the national system, with the use of UNICEF's ecosystem HOPE, which will inform the development of the national management information system. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 456 households, in addition to 490 households in 2021, were provided with Cash Plus support as part of the government's recovery programme following the volcanic eruption. Cash transfers linked to the national family learning programme were delivered to help address the financial and non-financial barriers to recovery.

UNICEF's work on public finance for children (PF4C) focused on the institutional strengthening of key national stakeholders from seven countries, including from ministries of finance and key child-focused social sectors, and the launch of a regional Community of Practice on PF4C, promoting regional public financial management knowledge-sharing, influencing public financial decision-making processes and leveraging domestic resources for children.

### **Climate action and resilience**

In 2022, UNICEF ECA continued to support countries and territories in climate action and resilience. In partnership with the Ministry of Planning in Dominica, UNICEF supported climate adaptation and engagement, and resilience to climate change. UNICEF, in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organization, (FAO) PAHO and the Government of Dominica, continued its support for

the development of a joint concept note for the Green Climate Fund with a focus on the Multi-Sectoral Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resilience project to improve the resilience of the agricultural, education and health sectors, which will be submitted in 2023.

Youth voices from the Eastern Caribbean countries were important in climate change discussions, as representatives from Small Island Development States. Following the revision of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), UNICEF provided technical support to Antigua and Barbuda for the establishment of an official platform – the Youth Engagement Strategy on Climate Action (YES-CA) – to facilitate this process. Technical support is also being provided to develop a youth engagement plan on climate change, to be completed in 2023, ensuring the inclusion of youth and children in the NDC implementation plan.

A key result of the Business and Community Resilience Initiative was the collaboration between UNICEF, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the ARISE network and the Caribbean Network of Chambers of Commerce (CARICHAM), to support the development of a Family-friendly Checklist for the workplace, which is now part of the Business and Continuity Plan tool available to over 100,000 CARICHAM members. Further, private sector engagement in humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction has been developed by building relationships with subregional and national business networks such as CARICHAM and the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago to build capacity for emergency response and resilience, and increase national and subregional coordination. A key result in this area has been the development of a landscape analysis by UNICEF on private sector engagement.

### **Social and behaviour change programming**

Social and behaviour change (SBC) continued to be a strategy across all UNICEF ECA sectors to enhance knowledge and change behaviour and attitudes among parents and caregivers. Results were achieved for children in the child protection, health and education sectors across the ECA. The interventions in 2022 included formative studies and research which were used to design and implement evidenced-based SBC communication campaigns.

Building on previous studies, UNICEF developed campaigns to address negative and harmful behaviours. The social norms study conducted in 2021 was used to design campaigns implemented in Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and Dominica to change norms and attitudes that perpetuate physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children. Approximately 900,000 duty-bearers across these countries were also reached with information via traditional and social media and community caravans. These participatory interventions provide opportunities to identify victims of child sexual abuse which might otherwise have gone unnoticed.

A second subregional COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy study was completed in seven countries, and one was completed among the migrant population residing in Trinidad and Tobago. These were all used to develop social mobilization campaigns. In addition, over 280,000 people were reached with messages about COVID-19 prevention, including the importance of vaccination against the virus.

UNICEF supported the design and implementation of campaigns in 10 countries to address NCDs among adolescents and to encourage healthy eating among children, including an advocacy campaign promoting banning the sale of unhealthy foods in schools. These campaigns reached over 3 million people across the wider Caribbean with messages on the importance of healthy school environments for adolescents. More than 100,000 parents also received messages about healthy eating and exercise through health fairs and traditional/social media messages.

Interventions were also designed to support the adoption of positive practices and new norms to prevent violence and abuse. The knowledge and skills of more than 90,000 duty-bearers, including parents with children/wards in conflict with the law, educators and sports coaches, were enhanced and

strengthened to implement positive child-rearing and child interaction practices, through training and sensitization on positive behaviour management techniques in classrooms as teachers returned to face-to-face classes, and training on prevention of child abuse in sports in a post-pandemic environment.

Advocacy and the engagement of children, youth and key stakeholders in the design of interventions were also priorities in 2022. In terms of youth engagement, 300 students from Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados participated in the development of messages for their peers and adults on the prevention of abuse and GBV. Some 3,000 adolescents across Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines were engaged in how to prepare healthy meals using locally grown foods and to reach peers with such information. Additionally, 150 student leaders were trained to engage their peers and school management to address issues of concern for students at their schools. Key action plans will be developed in 2023 by these student leaders. The capacity of 65 students was also enhanced to become Healthy Ambassadors to promote health and wellness at their schools in Grenada. At the community level, over 100,000 people, including parents, health enthusiasts, members of the farming sector and community nurses, were engaged in designing and planning health fairs and promoting healthy eating and exercise.

### **Humanitarian action**

While children on the move continue to experience legal, administrative and financial barriers to accessing basic social services, UNICEF and its partners have reached approximately 4 in every 10 Venezuelan migrant children and their families in Trinidad and Tobago with integrated life-cycle programming in nutrition, education, child protection and social protection.

Inflation in the cost of living impacted the purchasing power of many people, including migrant families with children aged 0–5 years, resulting in the provision of emergency nutritional support to almost 50% of families. A Real Time Review was conducted to improve the quality of services and collect feedback from affected populations. Similarly, adolescents benefiting from the scale-up of online education provided feedback about their experience, describing it as very good/excellent, and more than half indicated that they have increased their interest in learning. A significant milestone was the registration of unaccompanied and separated children for online learning with support from the Children's Authority and

Archdiocese Ministry for Migrants and Refugees. A hybrid approach to Child-friendly Spaces had a significant positive impact on the delivery of MHPSS services, GBV risk mitigation and PSEA awareness activities at the community level.

The 2022 Atlantic hurricane season intensified UNICEF's efforts to improve its capacity to support disaster preparedness and response to improve community and institutional resilience. Training in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in Emergencies (WiE) was implemented in Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, and Dominica, jointly with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and national WASH committees, resulting in the development of a draft action plan and improving the capacity of approximately 60 technical personnel in WiE coordination. Internally, UNICEF continued to review emergency preparedness actions and conducted an After-Action Review of Hurricane Fiona to identify gaps and actions to address ahead of the 2023 hurricane season.

## UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

UNICEF ECA is an active member of three United Nations Country Teams: Barbados and OECS, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. UNICEF worked closely with other United Nations agencies in implementing the current cooperation framework with governments. Together with WFP, UN Women and ILO, UNICEF concluded the SDG Joint Programme, 'Enhancing Resilience and Acceleration of the SDGs in the Eastern Caribbean: Universal adaptive social protection' modelled at the community, national and subregional levels. The joint efforts supported the provision of predictable access to adaptive universal social protection for poor and vulnerable people in Saint Lucia and Barbados. An evaluation of the Joint Programme was conducted and finalized, and a joint management response agreed.

UNICEF also worked with ILO, UNESCO and WFP under the Sustainable Development Fund to implement the first year of the two-year 'Resilient Caribbean: Engaging and Training, Strengthening Integrated Social Protection Services' project. The Joint Programme was launched in August 2022 and has supported social assistance reform in the British Virgin Islands, including a transition towards a digital system for operationalization and data management, as well as the development of pragmatic and user-friendly tools to support the implementation of social assistance programmes, including making their social protection systems more shock- and gender-responsive.

Furthermore, UNICEF also worked with UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and PAHO in implementing the European Union-funded Spotlight Initiative in Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago: supporting governments and CSOs to prevent domestic violence by raising awareness and continuing to advocate for and support laws and policies, as well as improving quality essential services for survivors.

In the lead-up to the Secretary-General's Transforming Education Summit, UNICEF supported ministries of education in conducting their national consultations and submitting their commitment statements and national consultation reports. UNICEF supported the participation of two UNICEF Youth Advocates at the first-ever UNICEF Youth Advocates Mobilization Lab, which also linked closely with the United Nations General Assembly 2022, which had a strong focus on the learning crisis and fed into the Summits

In partnership with the Ashley Lashley Foundation, UNICEF supported the first Barbados Youth Climate Action Summit and Expo, which saw more than 3,000 children and youth participating in marches, panel discussions and activities related to improving climate change awareness and adaptation. In partnership with CDEMA, UNICEF supported the involvement and engagement of youth at two key forums: 'My Island, My Voice' at the Caribbean School Safety Initiative, featuring the participation of 49 youths who directly contributed to the Regional Road Map for the Caribbean Safe School Initiative; and the 12th Caribbean Conference on Comprehensive Disaster Management with approximately 2,000 participants, in which UNICEF supported the practical session with youth on mapping, preventing and responding to sites of violence in school.

UNICEF also partnered with the United States Agency for International Development on programming to prevent and respond to COVID-19 in ECA countries in RCCE, vaccination programming and evidence generation around vaccine hesitancy.

In 2022, UNICEF ECA counted on the United Kingdom, European Union and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit as other key partners.

## Lessons Learned and Innovations

The year was characterized by challenges and lessons learned, presenting opportunities from which



UNICEF will shape future programme implementation of the new Multi-Country Programme.

### **Innovative solutions using Real-Time data for evidence-based decision-making**

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of real-time information and data for evidence-based decision-making. UNICEF has increased investment in systems-strengthening and capacity-building for sustainable solutions, with a focus on technology to strengthen nationally owned systems. For example, UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Ministry of National Mobilization to use Rapid-Pro to do cash payment verifications for affected households following the 2021 volcanic eruption. The tool was used to confirm both receipt of cash payments as well as the amount, and allowed timely corrective actions and follow-up by the Ministry. It provides a practical and sustainable solution to improve results for vulnerable families. Currently, Rapid-Pro is being implemented by the Ministry to do the cash verification process for 4,500 households receiving cash, funded by the World Bank. An online questionnaire on MHPSS was also developed and shared with several national stakeholders to gain a sense of the actual services provided, while continuing to expand service delivery solutions for adolescents through U-Report and MyChild Helpline mobile applications.

### **Promotion of innovations to strengthen efficiencies**

UNICEF promoted innovation using digital public goods (DPGs) for the continuation of education, social protection and child protection services to strengthen efficiencies. In social protection, HOPE was rolled out in Antigua and Barbuda and Trinidad and Tobago. The management information system covers all aspects of cash programme implementation: registration, targeting, payments, monitoring and evaluation. This strategy, which provided UNICEF with data directly from beneficiaries related to the receipt of cash transfers and the value received, was employed by partners (Red Cross in Trinidad and Tobago and the Ministry of Social Development in Antigua and Barbuda). In Antigua and Barbuda, HOPE was used to successfully distribute US\$238,174 to 389 vulnerable households affected by the impacts of COVID-19 through the national social protection system. This grant reached over 1,200 individuals, including 112 people with disabilities, 368 elderly persons and 380 children. Findings from an After-Action Review combined with the deployment of HOPE as a temporary solution are helping to improve regular social assistance, including the development of a national management information system.

Access to child protection services was likewise improved through DPGs. UNICEF ECA began the rollout- of the MyChild Helpline app in four countries, benefiting 498 families with access to direct counselling and child protection services. The app is an agile, scalable and customizable solution which provides children and families with access to MHPSS, an array of child-friendly resources and emergency services. The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court also launched a new and modern way of doing business with the family court through the implementation of an e-litigation portal for family court matters, allowing for more effective and efficient management of cases.

### **Stronger coordination, joint and integrated approaches to programming at country level**

A key shift in programme implementation was related to the placement of UN Volunteer National Coordinators in 6 priority countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), expanding UNICEF's in-country presence to 8 of the 12 countries and territories. This has resulted in strengthened positive relationships with ministries and partners, as well as support for timely information exchange and response. The development of country-specific results and indicators sets the foundation that the Multi-Country Programme will need to shift to focus more on integrated approaches and concentrate on depth rather than breadth to accelerate results. Thus, stronger programme integration at the national level is needed to accelerate results. This will require sharpening the focus of interventions in each country and/or territory. Moving forward, UNICEF ECA will also put greater focus on integrated systems-strengthening and capacity-building. Key entry points for integration identified include Cash Plus Care, early childhood development and education, and child/youth engagement and participation. UNICEF will also



strategize how to further strengthen the capacity of subregional entities, including CDEMA, to have more scalable and sustainable impacts. Key lessons from the joint evaluation on enhancing and accelerating SDGs in the Caribbean emphasized coordination and interaction among partnering UN organisations with government and regional partners and establishing realistic timelines for programming particularly in complex contexts and with the varying levels of capacity among government partners.