

Paraguay

Update on the context and situation of children

Paraguay has a population of 7.4 million people, 56% of them under 30 years of age, 34% children and adolescents (0- 17 years) and 27% youth (15- 29). About 63% of the country's population lives in urban areas. Although 19 Indigenous groups comprise only 1.7% of the total population, they are the most vulnerable population group. The country's economy has performed well over the past two decades. It grew by an average of 6% between 2013 and 2017, and, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, it grew by 0.2% in 2022 (Banco Central del Paraguay BCP). This sustained growth has not necessarily translated into greater investment for children, which dropped from 4.6% to 4.2% of gross domestic product (GDP) between 2019 and 2021 (Ministry of Finance), due, to a certain extent, to the limited fiscal space for social investment (90% of the national budget goes to fixed government costs). While monetary poverty decreased from 41.6% to 23.5% between 2009 and 2019, it rose to 26.9% in 2021, and 38% of children and adolescents live in poverty (National Institute of Statistics, INE, 2021). The situation is worse for indigenous groups: 73.7% live in poverty, and 40% in extreme poverty (UNICEF, 2018).

While Paraguay has made substantial progress in improving child well-being over the past years, especially in health coverage, access to education, particularly in the early years, and the creation of public policies and programmes for the protection of children and adolescents, persisting gaps continue to impact the rights of children and families, especially among the poorest, those living in rural areas and those of Indigenous background. Although maternal mortality fell between the years 2000 and 2022 from 162 per 100,000 live births to 79 per 100,000 livebirths, it rose again to 160 per 100,000 live births in 2021 (Ministry of Health MoH, 2021). Malnutrition affects 5.3% of children (7.9% in Indigenous populations), and 12.7% of children under 5 years (24.5% in Indigenous populations) have chronic malnutrition (MoH, 2021). Only 31.3% of infants under 6 months are exclusively breastfed (MICS Survey Paraguay, 2016), and 17% of children under 1 year lack birth registration (INE, 2021). It is estimated that 464,000 children and adolescents (5- 17 years) are outside the educational system (Ministry of Education MoE, 2022) and many of them engage in child labour. According to the latest available data (INE, 2011) 22,4% of children and adolescents work. According to MICS Paraguay (2016), data shows that 52% of children suffer violent discipline and corporal punishment (54.8% of boys and 49.3% of girls). In 2021, the Public Ministry reported 2,847 cases of sexual abuse against children and adolescents (Ministry of Public Service, 2021). Furthermore, 13% of live births were to adolescent mothers (MoH, 2021), one of the highest rates in the region, which puts them at high risk of death during childbirth (7.5% of the 159 maternal deaths recorded in 2021 were adolescent mothers aged between 10- 19 years) (MoH, 2021). In 2020, 367 adolescents aged between 10- 19 years old died from external causes (MoH, 2020), 62% of which were road traffic deaths (Annual Statistic Report, 2021), one of the highest rates in the region. Mental health has become a major concern with adolescents aged 10-19 years representing 21% of all suicides in 2020 (MoH, 2020).

Access to safe drinking water remains a major challenge. While coverage in Asunción and other areas reaches 98%, in the Boquerón department (Chaco region) it reaches only 9.5%. About 9% of rural schools do not have access to water (Joint Program OMS/ UNICEF for the Monitoring of Water and Sanitation, 2018), and in many more access is intermittent, which impacts children in multiple ways. Paraguay, considered a medium-risk country for disasters and climate change, is highly vulnerable in some regions due to poverty, low-risk perception, and limited institutional capacity and infrastructure (European Commission, 2018). The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) mission identified that around 90% of the families from the Chaco region are affected by the scarce access to safe drinking water. In the Chaco region, droughts, and poor groundwater quality impact water supplies (SNU Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay & Redes Chaco, 2021), which in turn has an impact on health and nutrition of children. Indigenous communities are seriously affected, as only 15% of them are connected to a water supply network, and 59% have access to safe water (Banco

Interamericano de Desarrollo, 2022).

This summary captures challenges that must be addressed to ensure the rights of children and adolescents. These challenges include different forms of violence, exclusion from education, child labour, growing mental health issues and, overall, limited opportunities for the development of children's full potential. They negatively impact children and adolescents across their life cycle, coexist in different parts of the country, especially in the Paraguayan Chaco and in the border area of Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay, and take place in a context of persistent high levels of corruption, growing presence of drug trafficking groups, increasing levels of violence, including domestic and intra-family, discrimination against ethnic groups and increasingly negative political stance on rights and global development. The 2023 political context, with presidential elections to be held in April and the transition to a new government in August, might pose additional challenges to the continuity of key policy and programme priorities for children and adolescents.

Major contributions and drivers of results

The CO's main contributions in 2022 were: 1) Scaling up of the ECD National Strategy (Kunu'ú) from pilots in five municipalities to implementation in 19 municipalities, with an investment by the government of nearly USD 10,000,000, which now serves 139,183 children; 2.) Strengthening of Paraguay's Immunization Programme by strengthening their Cold Chain Equipment (CCE) and increasing storage capacity and distribution of quality vaccines to reach nearly 6,000,000 people; 3.) Implementation of a territorial strategy for coordinated multisectoral interventions (WASH, health, and education) and strengthening of the humanitarian and development nexus in prioritized municipalities, in coordination with local governments and multilateral partners; 4.) and implementation of risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) at scale to promote Covid-19 and routine vaccination among vulnerable populations.

The scaling up of Kunu'ú included support to strengthening capacities of 331 staff members from the Ministry of Children and Adolescents (MINNA) and the Ministry of Education in the evidence-based approach care for child development (CCD) and social and behavioural change strategies to promote early childhood education. These interventions also contributed to inclusion in education, early learning, school attendance and positive parenting practices.

UNICEF's support to the response and management of the Covid-19 pandemic included technical assistance to the MoH, with financial support from the Government of Japan, which led to a significant increase in the country's vaccine storage and distribution capacity (up to 4,453,867 doses). CCE strengthening included the provision of top-of-the-art equipment, solar power operated equipment, the first decentralized high-capacity storage equipment ever installed in remote communities, and capacity-building of 212 technical and 1,129 health-care staff in CCE operation. These interventions contributed to addressing structural public health problems, with an emphasis on strengthening primary health-care.

UNICEF strengthened primary health-care services in priority districts of the Chaco region, where some of the most vulnerable live, by enhancing infrastructure and providing critical supplies to 29 health-care facilities. The CO reached 47,867 people through the provision of equipment in 18 primary health-care facilities (i.e neonatal respirators). Three health-care units received solar panels to address unstable electric energy provision, ensure the cold chain of vaccines, and power their water supply systems. 39,601 people benefited from WASH improvements and hygiene supplies. UNICEF increased the capacities of 175 health-care workers and health community agents who are part of the primary health-care network, and around 2,574 pregnant women benefited from improved prenatal care facilities and parenting skills support.

RCCE strategies to increase Covid-19 vaccination, including among vulnerable populations, contributed to the vaccination of more than 700,000 people (including 423,368 women). 2,543 community leaders were trained to promote positive norms and preventive practices on Covid-19, vaccination promotion, maternal and child health, and WASH. Furthermore, educational podcasts and

radio messages on Covid-19 prevention, maternal health and nutrition, breastfeeding, supplementary nutrition and WASH were produced and delivered through local radio channels, reaching 2,306,290 people. Additionally, 3,955 community volunteers were mobilized and trained to support the communication and promotion efforts.

UNICEF provided technical support for the implementation of the “National Plan to reduce Maternal and Neonatal Mortality”. Around 4,885 newborns and their families had access to improved integrated health services in UNICEF-supported health facilities. Staff members from 102 health-care facilities, 11 hospitals and 91 family health centres were trained in maternal and child health. Furthermore, the facilities of 29 health centres were improved through the provision of equipment. Additionally, CO trained more than 5,000 health-care professionals on maternal and infant health through virtual and on-site events jointly run with the MoH on “World Prematurity Day” and the “Third International Breastfeeding Seminar”.

Concerning nutrition, CO promoted breastfeeding through 166 workshops benefiting 5,625 mothers and pregnant women, and 49 community leaders were also trained and engaged. CO supported the MoH to promote healthy eating practices and physical activity among 4,024 children and 45 teachers. UNICEF and the MoH conducted the first government digital training on “children and adolescents’ obesity”, in which 473 health professionals participated. Technical contributions were made through the publication of handbooks on “healthy school dining facilities”, which benefited more than 5,000 children from 20 schools (two districts); and “healthy lifestyles”, which benefited more than 12 communities (four districts).

Building on learnings from the Covid-19 pandemic response, UNICEF continued supporting the MoE through the resilient schools' model to increase the capacity of school staff to respond to emergencies. UNICEF provided hygiene kits (including menstrual hygiene kits), recreational kits, and teaching materials for schools to ensure the implementation of health protocol and the provision of socio-emotional support to children. As a result, 28 schools increased their emergency-preparedness capacity, and 39 community leaders and teachers were trained, benefiting 3,209 children and adolescents. Additionally, information on water collection technologies for droughts was gathered and adopted in 10 schools in the Chaco region.

UNICEF promoted the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups (indigenous children and children with disabilities) in the education system. CO developed pre-primary textbooks and literacy kits in 18 indigenous languages to foster early literacy, benefitting 25,000 children from 535 Indigenous schools. Also, UNICEF reached 8,406 adolescents through education materials in Indigenous languages for lower and upper secondary education as part of the continuity of the “Ñahendumi” audio series. UNICEF supported the MoE to advance inclusive learning design with the development of two accessible digital textbooks (ADT) using the Universal Design for Learning approach and supported the implementation of a training plan to develop institutional capacities for adequate implementation and use of ADT, thus promoting the inclusion of all students.

Key evidence was generated through a study about out-of-school-children (OOSC) that included updating current data about OOSC and adolescents at-risk, and identification of the main barriers of exclusion. This contributed to the development of strategies to bring 30,000 children back to school over the next three years. As part of this initiative, UNICEF strengthened the skills of the MoE’s staff and started the implementation of the OOSC project in six departments.

UNICEF collaborated with governmental institutions, stakeholders in the education sector and local communities to address violence against children and adolescents. The CO contributed to the strengthening of the “National System for the Promotion and Protection of Children and Adolescents” in gender-based violence prevention. Interventions focused on strengthening local government capacities in six selected districts of the Chaco region. Capacities of nearly 700 stakeholders of the childhood protection system were strengthened to prevent and respond to violence against children and adolescents, with the potential of reaching approximately 35,000 children and adolescents.

Additionally, UNICEF supported the testing and use of handbooks for violence prevention among peers in three districts.

Also, UNICEF supported municipalities in the creation of five safe spaces for adolescents (addressing key issues such as communication, self-esteem and leadership skills) and the development of seven

municipal action plans for violence prevention.

Another significant contribution was the establishment of the Child and Adolescent Protection Training Centre of the Ministry of Children and Adolescents (MINNA), which began its operations in 2022. Three curricula for postgraduate training on Adolescence and Basic Competencies for Early Years were approved and 234 professionals were trained on the use of the “Protection Toolkits”, which seek to prevent and address violence.

UNICEF promoted mental health through psychosocial interventions. As a result, 213 children and adolescents, 50 young people and 73 adults from two districts benefited from UNICEF’s “I support my friends” approach to equip adolescents with the skills and knowledge to support their peers under the guidance of trusted adults. UNICEF will replicate this experience in 2023 in the safe spaces operating at local levels, managed by MINNA and UNICEF under the National Strategy for Adolescents. This is extremely relevant as the suicide rate in the country is extremely alarming (70% of the 465 suicide cases in 2022 were young people).

CO strengthened local governmental institutions’ capacities for the implementation of results-based programmes. As part of the Child-Friendly Municipalities Initiative, five Action and Monitoring Local Plans for Childhood were completed to address persistent inequalities. A project to improve road safety for children and adolescents started in 2022 engaged 1,169 students who participated in training workshops on road safety. One school benefited from interventions for road safety for children with disabilities and two kits for the assessment of road infrastructure were created using the Universal Design for Learning approach. These interventions are supporting the development and implementation of local government programmes that support children and adolescents.

UNICEF leveraged youth participation platforms, engaging 1,423 adolescents as U-Reporters and developed guidelines for the implementation of the UPSHIFT methodology. About 40 undergraduate university students collaborated with UNICEF to promote mental health awareness through this methodology. UNICEF collaborated in the development of a Youth Camp on Leadership, Self-Esteem and Environment. Additionally, UNICEF supported youth participation in climate change governance space with the training of 85 members of the Youth for Climate Action Network in a Climate Academy. They elaborated a position statement later presented at the National Climate Summit, which was included in Paraguay’s position for COP-17. UNICEF supported the participation of three young people in COP-27.

UNICEF activities in support of spaces for participation and social dialogue included events about WASH services called “Talks on Water and Sanitation”, which reached 183 stakeholders from regional, national and local government, academia representatives and CSOs members of the Citizen’s Observatory on Water and Sanitation and international organizations. In addition, focus groups were carried out with Indigenous people and rural communities to address menstrual hygiene, and 350 women and girls received menstrual hygiene kits.

UNICEF provided technical support to the Intersectoral Board of Water and Sanitation from Chaco, the National Service for Environmental Sanitation (SENASA) and other institutions on knowledge exchange on appropriate technologies and water management practices in the Chaco region. CO and the MoE conducted a study on WASH in 84 schools in the Chaco region to establish a regular information system on WASH services. This is the first national survey compiling data on handwashing and menstrual hygiene.

UNICEF broadened private sector engagement to change practices and workplace environments to support children’s rights. The CO’s collaboration and technical support to the “Las Tacuaras” business group resulted in the development of the ECD Centre “El Hornerito”, which promotes early childhood care. This is a model of effective integration of businesses into programme planning to contribute to achieving results for children. CO has systematized this private sector engagement initiative which will contribute to inspiring other businesses to make investments in children. Las Tacuaras handed over the ECD centre blueprints to the MoE and the MINNA, which consequently began the construction of 17 ECD Centres in more than 8 districts, scaling up ECD services nationwide.

UNICEF continued supporting the private sector in the establishment of breastfeeding rooms. So far, 60 companies have been acknowledged for setting up breastfeeding rooms and 81 have built their capacities in the installation and management of breastfeeding rooms through online and face-to-face

training workshops. Paraguay participated in consultations, led by UNICEF's regional office and Deloitte, made to the private sector at the regional level as part of the 10th Anniversary of the launching of the "Children's rights and Business Principles" initiative. Information is a snapshot of the progress made in terms of business policies for childhood.

CO continued to expand fundraising efforts and is gradually building a solid base of individual donors (nearly 2,000 to date) towards a long-term, predictable, and sustainable financing alternative for programme planning. Additionally, CO launched the "Businesses for Childhood" programme which targets small and medium-sized businesses. Children's Rights and Business Principles and Business for Results activities will be implemented under this programme both to continue strengthening private sector engagement and to generate opportunities for fundraising and engagement of the private sector to improve business practices.

Regarding communication, the CO supported multiple levels of partnerships, advocacy, policy influencing and resource mobilization to improve outcomes for children and adolescents. The CO contributed to three government social media campaigns by providing support for the development of strategies, and graphical and audiovisual content, as well as by disseminating information: (1.) the 'We are all responsible' campaign, which sought to raise awareness about sexual abuse against children and encourage reporting; (2.) 'Six months of breastfeeding for a lifetime; (3.) promoting children's registration at the Civil Registry. Overall, more than 3 million people were reached on social media through these campaigns.

UNICEF supported the MoE in the National Education Transformation process, facilitating dialogue with key stakeholders through consultation processes and technical notes on ECE, inclusion, and intercultural education. Also, CO has launched a strategy to address educational exclusion. The first steps taken include a study on the public perception around OOSC, which served as input for the design of an evidence-based communication campaign to be launched in 2023. UNICEF carried out a forum on "Childhood, business and the future" to raise awareness about OOSC among private sector stakeholders with support from the Business Advisory Council and to engage business leaders.

CO continued strengthening the capacities of government institutions to generate evidence to inform national programmes. It supported the creation of a road map to collect data on newborns and identity cards. This intervention will promote data exchange between the MoF and the MoH under the 'Kunu'u' ECD Strategy. Moreover, socio-demographic information was collected from 2,100 households in Villeta district using the Integrated Sheet for Social Protection as part of the VAMOS Social Protection System (SPS). Mechanisms for the implementation of the SPS were strengthened in four territories through the creation of local work plans and social service sessions.

CO finalized a real-time assessment of UNICEF's contribution to the roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccines provided by the Revolving Fund, which is important evidence to strengthen the National Immunization Programme. UNICEF also assessed the differences between public policies for children during the peak of Covid-19 pandemic and the following period, which was used this information to debate the National Budget for Childhood 2022, for a public hearing of the Childhood's Parliamentary Front, and for other public policy discussions around investment for children. Furthermore, a real-time assessment of UNICEF's response in the Chaco Region was completed, including response to Covid-19, health, education, WASH, and child protection interventions. This information will not only be crucial for public policy making, but it will feed into the tri-national process conducted by UNICEF in the Great American Chaco region.

Furthermore, UNICEF completed two publications on the National ECD Plan; a technical document and a user-friendly version for local authorities. Additionally, guidelines for public play and learning centres were published, as well as municipal handbooks for their implementation. UNICEF donated learning kits for the first 10 public play centres inaugurated in 2022.

CO completed a Gender Programmatic Review to assess the extent to which the gender dimension is integrated into programmes. Recommendations will be included in the Country Programme Documents and Annual Work Plan. Additionally, CO followed up on the indicators' scorecard on youth, gender, and disability, and evaluated the level of compliance with the Sexual Harassment Policy.

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

CO collaborated with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in training key government and civil society stakeholders on social protection issues. The CO supported the UN Monitoring and Evaluation Interagency Group to follow up on the SDG and to assess UN's cooperation in Paraguay. It also participated in the Local Committee of Wages Studies and collaborated with the UN Interagency Gender Group to assess the gender scorecard and sexual harassment policy. The CO and the Data Analysis Centre of New York conducted cognitive tests to measure adolescent participation. It also collaborated with other UN agencies and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for the UNDAC mission report. Additionally, CO collaborated with the UN Resident Coordinator Office for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

CO strongly collaborated with the EU, the Government of Japan, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The EU and ILO supported the implementation of the SPS; the Government of Japan funded a large-scale project to strengthen CCE; the World Bank supported the ECD Strategy; and ECHO supported humanitarian activities. CO's engagement with the EU has positioned UNICEF Paraguay as a potential partner of choice for long-term investments. UNICEF received funds from Above All Foundation, which is a non-traditional donor in the LAC region funding a project to bring 30,000 children back to school.

Moreover, UNICEF cooperated with the Stockholm International Water Institute and Sanitation and Water for All Global Alliance on WASH system strengthening initiatives.

At the national level, UNICEF collaborated with the MoH, the MoE and MINNA for capacity strengthening, and policy development, including work with the CODENIS and municipalities.

Moreover, CO worked with the Ministry of Public Defense and the Ministry of Women to prevent violence against children. The CO supported the MoF, the Ministry of Social Development, the National Emergency Secretariat, DAPSAN, SENASA, and the Technical Unit of the Social Cabinet on evidence generation. Additionally, UNICEF collaborated with the Ministry for the Environment and Sustainable Development to engage youth in climate policies.

UNICEF expanded collaboration with key CSOs for interventions on the ground, including: Un Techo para mi País, Habitat for Humanity, Paraguay Educa, Alda, Mingara, CEAMSO, Global Infancia, and Fortaleser.

The Youth for Climate Action Network, the British Embassy, the Youth for Water Network and the Climate Reality Project broadened the engagement and participation of adolescents in climate change.

Regarding academia, CO collaborated with Universidad Iberoamericana del Paraguay, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, National University of Asunción and the Catholic University of Asunción for evidence generation.

Main private sector partners include Itaipu Binational, which continued supporting violence prevention interventions; Las Tacuaras and Colgate, which supported the promotion of breastfeeding rooms, and dental health; Global Compact and the Touring Automóvil Club Paraguayo, which supported evidence generation interventions. Also, the CO participated in the B4R training journey in 2022 that will contribute to integrating business engagement into the CPD planning process in 2023 to accelerate results for children with the private sector.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

Relevant lessons learned focus on continuity of interventions and improvement of efficiency for programmatic implementation, communications, business engagement and advocacy.

First, promoting ownership of interventions at the local level has been critical to sustaining work on the ground. This was achieved through participatory approaches, to engage adolescents in technical teams, project development and the validation of project actions and results. UNICEF's RCCE work with

highly vulnerable populations has been crucial and needs to be contextualized to restore the population's confidence in vaccination services and primary health-care. Nonetheless, the RTA 'Gran Chaco' indicates that UNICEF needs to develop alliances with a diverse set of local actors particularly in regions where government presence is limited. Furthermore, availability of territorially disaggregated data is critical to understand local needs. The assessment therefore recommends UNICEF to strengthen municipal government monitoring at local level. Additionally, as highlighted by the RTA of UNICEF's response in the Chaco Region, UNICEF continued local presence in the region was critical to build trust with local actors. Hiring local people further enhances sustainability since it contributes to strengthening local capacities.

A lesson learned has been that the CO needs to sustain a volunteer network, maintain their motivation to engage with UNICEF's initiatives and provide ongoing training on children's rights to develop their capacities to adequately support the interventions. In this regard, UNICEF continued mobilizing and working with volunteers for several interventions such as vaccination against Covid-19 campaigns, the Love for Learning project (ECD) and the Jere Volunteer Programme, which seeks to increase impact and a means to engage civil society. The RTA on the roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccine finds that the community work using volunteers contributed to addressing needs and increasing the demand for health services.

Moreover, to address the mistrust from anti-rights and conservative groups towards UNICEF's agenda, the CO identified the need of using specific language to avoid misinformation and dissipate prejudice in order to encourage joint action with local communities to carry out programmatic activities. For instance "inclusive education" was replaced by "education for children with disabilities and for children with different ways of learning", and gender perspective "education for all children". This has been especially important to address obstacles to the National Education Transformation process and other topics that are causing controversy in the country. However, due to the politicization of the educational policy reform and strong resistance from anti-rights groups, this process will require further technical support to the MoE and engagement with the new government in 2023.

Additionally, initiating an advocacy process towards presidential candidates and their teams will be essential to carry on UNICEF's programmes once the new administration enters office. This will enable the CO to address the current stagnation of political processes before the elections in 2023 and avoid any interruption to UNICEF programmes due to the change of government. In recent years, the CO has learned that presidential candidates are more open to addressing childhood in their government proposals. Hence, UNICEF currently has a significant opportunity to advocate for children's rights towards future government authorities.

Challenges are being faced to secure financial resources for the MICS in 2023. Therefore, the possibility to add selected MICS modules to national household surveys, which allow the collection and updating of information on childhood and adolescent indicators that are not collected by the National Statistics System should be considered. The CO has learned that flexibility is needed to find cost-effective alternatives to conduct MICS.

UNICEF undertook activities on the ground to promote the cross-sectoral integration of SBC, communications and partnerships. These activities enabled UNICEF to address underlying structural barriers that hamper the promotion of children's rights by using SBC to promote COVID-19 vaccination and breastfeeding, following the recommendations of programmatic annual reviews. One instance of this was UNICEF's Resilient Schools model, which seeks to increase resilience to risks related to the drought in the Chaco region.

The crises generated by the pandemic provided the opportunity to start addressing structural problems of the MoH, such as the strengthening of the cold chain system and the population's trust towards health services and recovering the routinary immunization rates.

In terms of innovations, the CO collaborated with partners from the private sector, government and academia to scale up interventions. With respect to innovations with the private sector, the ECD centre implemented in collaboration with Grupo Las Tacuaras has been key to influencing business policies on breastfeeding and child development to advance children's rights. This collaboration has had a significant result, since Grupo Las Tacuaras collaborated with MINNA by donating the blueprints of the ECD centre, contributing to the effective application of Law 5508, which aims to promote and

protect maternity and breastfeeding.

In terms of innovations with government institutions, collaborating with the MoH to develop digital training on child obesity has been a major innovation, since this is the MoH's first digital training on the topic and has allowed it to reach a large number of participants. Moreover, the 'Businesses for Children' initiative will help UNICEF engage more enterprises, with regular financial contributions adapted to the economic context at the national level.

Further developing ownership at the local level, improving strategies to sustain a volunteer network, developing early advocacy processes towards election candidates, utilizing alternatives to implement the MICS and articulating programmatic interventions on the ground have been critical lessons learned in 2022. Innovations for breastfeeding and childcare promotion implemented with the private sector, conducting digital training with government institutions to address children's nutrition, and training on social protection with combined virtual and in-person modalities have proven successful to scale up the impact of the CO's interventions. UNICEF's approaches have enabled further progress according to strategic planning, as well as adaptation to the changing circumstances that affect programme implementation.