

## Cuba

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### Executive summary

Although Cuba was hit by Hurricane Irma in October, affecting over 9 million people in 13 of 15 provinces, the economy grew by 1.6 per cent in 2017 while tourism grew by 4.4 per cent. The most outstanding result for children was the reduction of infant mortality, which reached a historic low of four deaths per 1,000 live births thanks to such factors as maternal milk banks, immunization and certification of baby-friendly hospitals, with UNICEF Cuba support.

The main threat to children caused by Hurricane Irma was caused by damage to water and sanitation systems and school infrastructure. After the immediate government response, ensuring safety in shelters and homes, rehabilitation of water systems became the priority. On average, children returned to school within one week, although shifts were modified where school buildings lost portions of their ceilings. UNICEF Cuba is part of the interagency response plan for WASH and education, providing water storage bins and chlorine tablets, hygiene kits for cleaning and communications material to ensure proper water treatment. School material, recreational kits and waterproof covers to rehabilitate damaged school ceilings were also provided to support children's return to school. During the recovery phase, the major threat for children is food security, since agriculture was severely damaged in some regions.

A modern centre for adolescents was inaugurated in Old Havana. It will host existing and new workshops for adolescents developed by a network of artists, educators and institutions as part of the efforts of the office of the Havana City historian (OHCH) to build a stronger and more resilient community in the historic city. After six years of successful alliance with the European Union (EU), investment in adolescents has become a priority.

The interagency Sustainable Development Goal Fund (SDG-F) continued in 2017 to support the population in Santiago de Cuba in overcoming the severe, six-year drought, with strong results in preventing child illness associated with hygiene conditions. An integrated approach to ensure that houses and schools have better access to water and safe storage; raise children's and communities' awareness about climate change and the need to adapt; as well as strengthen food security and weather forecasts are some of the programme components that UNICEF Cuba shares with the World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Development Programme (UNDP).

Although sexual and reproductive education in Cuba is part of school curricula and the comprehensive health system includes a maternal, child and adolescent programme, teenage pregnancy continues to be a concern. In 2015, 52.5 of every 1,000 women under the age of 20 became mothers, an increase from 41.8 in 2006. Approximately 17,600 women under 20 became mothers in one year alone. The gap between knowledge and practice is associated with sociocultural issues, gender norms and high-risk behaviours, and is being addressed jointly by UNFPA and UNICEF Cuba in support of efforts by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and through alliances with other institutions.

Social security programmes ensure one year of maternal leave, and a national breastfeeding programme implemented by the MoPH (with no commercial promotion of artificial substitutes) makes human milk banks (HMBs) available for at-risk newborns. Yet only 33 per cent of children receive exclusive breastfeeding during their first six months. Greater understanding of social norms and gender dimensions is required to support breastfeeding women. Involving families, community leaders and other allies is part of the current support provided by UNICEF Cuba to the national programme, with continued support through training for health professionals, especially to evaluate and re-certify the baby-friendly hospital Initiative (BFHI) and realize the potential of human milk banks.

A new state report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child was being prepared by a multidisciplinary group in end-2017, to be submitted in 2018. It includes measures taken to implement previous recommendations, particularly regarding key challenges such as the legal age for marriage, criminal responsibility and specialized courts, child labour and children with disabilities.

New alliances with the Automobile Federation Foundation, Sherritt and the National Road Safety Commission were established in 2017. With UNICEF Cuba support, a technical committee was formed to improve safety and protection of children and adolescents from road traffic injuries.

UNICEF Cuba developed an alliance to generate information on children with the National Statistics Office and the Havana-based Latin American Faculty for Social Sciences. With UNICEF support, the first *Child and Adolescent Atlas of Cuba* was finalized in 2017. Based on 2012 census data, the Atlas facilitates town-by-town analysis of the heterogeneous situation of children.

### **Humanitarian assistance**

Hurricane Irma, a Category 5 storm on the Saffir-Simpson scale, struck Cuba between 8–10 September, leaving behind significant devastation and 10 casualties. Over 1.5 million people (15 per cent of the total Cuban population) were evacuated either to shelters or homes of friends and relatives, in accordance with Civil Defence guidance. More than 9 million people were directly affected in 13 of the country's 15 provinces, with severe damage to housing, social services infrastructure and agriculture. The most significant devastation affected 33 municipalities in the provinces of Camagüey, Ciego de Ávila, Villa Clara, Sancti Spíritus, Matanzas, Mayabeque and Havana.

The United Nations (UN) System developed a US\$55.8 million action plan to support national response efforts. To date, UNICEF Cuba, as sector lead for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and education, had mobilized US\$3.6 million for these two sectors, amounting to approximately 43 per cent of the required budget. The main funding sources were the central emergency response fund (CERF), emergency global thematic funds, the emergency programme fund (EPF) and a regional contribution from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). By end-2017, relief and recovery interventions had reached 560,315 people (49 per cent women), in the 14 most-affected municipalities in Villa Clara, Sancti Spíritus, Ciego de Ávila and Camagüey provinces. Additional funding from the Government of Canada and the Spanish Committee for UNICEF is expected to help maintain recovery efforts in 2018.

Although 2,262 schools were affected, the Ministry of Education (MoE), in partnership with local authorities, community-based organizations and families, managed to gradually re-start the school year. To support the establishment of a protective learning environment, UNICEF Cuba procured 697 ECD kits, 1,833 school-in-a-box kits and 805 recreation kits to support the learning environment for 53,261 girls and 54,879 boys in the 14 prioritized municipalities. In addition, to contribute to rehabilitation of the education infrastructure, UNICEF Cuba procured 46,000 m<sup>2</sup> of waterproof covers for 50 schools and kindergartens in Villa Clara and Ciego de Ávila provinces.

UNICEF Cuba also worked closely with key sector experts from the MoE and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to develop guidelines for teachers to support the socio-emotional recovery of children during both preparedness and response stages.

The joint UNICEF Cuba-MoE ongoing disaster risk reduction (DRR) programme, which this year focused on two of the most affected municipalities, yielded positive results. During a monitoring visit programme participants highlighted the usefulness of the intervention as they prepared to face Hurricane Irma and then returned to their school settings.

The UNICEF Cuba WASH response reached a total of 560,315 people (274,554 women and girls) in 14 priority municipalities with safe water treatment and storage. Included were water purification tablets, water containers and hygiene kits, as well as communication materials to ensure their proper use and promote safe hygiene practices, with a view to preventing water and vector-borne diseases. The plan of action also included interventions to provide more long-term solutions for water storage, seeking to increase resilience in affected communities.

In addition, UNICEF Cuba continued to implement interventions in response to Hurricane Matthew, which had struck Guantánamo Province in 2016. With funds from the United Kingdom National Committee, UNICEF Cuba supported the rehabilitation of schools by procuring carpentry and bathroom supplies for 73 schools in Baracoa municipality and four schools in Maisí municipality. These funds were also instrumental to providing safe water storage for 2,490 families in Guantánamo.

With support from the Russian Federation, and in close collaboration with local authorities and the National Institute for Hydraulic Resources (NIHR), UNICEF Cuba is procuring a desalinization plant for the Punta de Maisí community. This long-term solution will support this drought and hurricane-affected community's recovery efforts and improve its resilience to natural disasters. The intervention is coupled with the promotion of safe hygiene practices.

## **Equity in practice**

N/A

## **Strategic Plan 2018-2021**

The Cuban Government requested a one-year extension of both the United Nations Development Framework (UNDAF) and agency country programme documents (CPDs). UNICEF Cuba will initiate its planning process for the upcoming country programme cycle in 2018. The 2017 approval and entry into force of the new UNICEF Strategic Plan (SP) will allow coherent harmonization. As such, UNICEF Cuba has begun disseminating the most relevant elements of the Plan at key multi-stakeholder platforms, such as the 2017 mid-year and annual reviews. In addition, an internal results-based management (RBM) training in 2017 served to

reinforce concepts that will be incorporated in planning discussions with government partners throughout the planning stage to achieve a satisfactory and realistic formulation of outcomes and outputs, as well as the design of the theory of change.

A preliminary assessment of the programmatic context shows that the Government of Cuba will maintain social services as one of its top priorities, consistent with its current practices and development plans, as well as with the goals of the UNICEF Strategic Plan. With above-average indicators in most child-related social services, it can be assumed that access indicators will continue to be universal and have a strong equity focus.

In this context, lessons learned from the current country programme point to demand-side bottlenecks, which require long-term behaviour-change initiatives. Thus the Plan's emphasis on behaviour change and children as change agents will prove to be key change strategies for the new programme cycle. Both strategies build on current and past experience, as the UNICEF Cuba sectoral programme priorities incorporate strong elements of communication for development (C4D) processes, methodologies and messages, as well as community-level child participation linked to sector goals, such as the promotion of hygiene practices and disaster risk reduction. A challenge in this regard might arise in relation to carrying out micro-level data-gathering processes.

Two additional opportunities identified in the 2018-2021 related to the use of cross-sectoral programming and South-South cooperation as implementation strategies. Regarding the former, the multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach seen in child-related government priorities such as early childhood development (ECD), child health and nutrition, as well as child protection are of particular important. Although these interventions continue to be a budgetary priority for the Cuban Government, which dedicates about 70 per cent of its total budget to social services, limitations on its ability to procure essential commodities for service delivery will continue to be a challenge. The latter (South-South cooperation), taking into account the high demand from many countries in the region and beyond to replicate Cuban good practices in the coverage of basic social services through bilateral technical assistance.

### **Emerging areas of importance**

**The second decade.** During the reporting year, UNICEF Cuba sharpened its focus on the second decade of life by enhancing cross-sectoral synergies to develop programmes for adolescents with an emphasis on meaningful participation across programme components. Adolescent participation initiatives highlight elements of empowerment and community mobilisation.

In relation to WASH, UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with ProSalud, coordinated and ensured the implementation of the C4D initiative 'always safe water' with community and multisectoral participation, and integrated school-community-family actions, in two communities – Chicharrones (Santiago de Cuba) and La Timba (Havana). Approximately 615 participants were involved; children, adolescents, teachers, pregnant women, stay-at-home mothers and community leaders improved their knowledge and skills in hygiene, use and management of safe water, health promotion and prevention of water-borne diseases, and children played a key role as agents of change in their communities.

UNICEF Cuba, in coordination with ProSalud, continued to support training for 151 adolescents as health promotion facilitators for the prevention of sexually transmission infections, HIV/AIDS and promotion of healthy sexual behaviours among peers. Some 14,408 adolescents in 14

municipalities of Havana Province were reached through this intervention, which focuses on adolescent empowerment and participation. Scaling-up this initiative to contribute to reducing early pregnancy was a challenge.

Knowledge exchange and South-South cooperation continued to be essential strategies, particularly in relation to adolescent health, where UNICEF Cuba, WHO and UNFPA supported an international conference organized by the MoPH, where professionals from the region focused on issues related to the needs and health of adolescents and young people.

Cuban schools' impressive disaster risk reduction response was a result of Cuba's multidisciplinary and long-standing commitment to introducing disaster risk reduction in daily school life. The Cuban Civil Defence and MoE-driven initiative, supported by UNICEF, incorporates disaster risk reduction in the school curriculum through innovative tools, alternative teaching and extracurricular activities. As part of this initiative, schools foster child participation and family commitment to disaster risk reduction plans developed together with children and adolescents, under supervision by local governments, with Civil Defence and other organizations. This educational programme, which continues to effectively strengthen children's resilience and cross-sectoral partnerships in risk reduction plans and its approach, is framed in the CP education component. Given that climate change is a priority emerging issue, UNICEF aims to eventually cover all provinces of the country using a multi-sectoral approach. In 2017 incremental coverage of the MoE-UNICEF disaster risk reduction programme included three municipalities in Ciego de Avila Province affected by Hurricane Irma; Chambas, Morón and Majagua; covering 10,134 children (5,177 girls and 276 children with disabilities) and 542 teachers at 42 schools located in 15 vulnerable communities, strengthening their resilience. Residents acknowledged the programme's contribution to their preparedness as they planned to face and respond to the hurricane.

The a+ adolescent spaces programme in 2017 resulted in the strengthening of local capacities to ensure the quality of comprehensive care of adolescents and their participation, with a focus on human rights and equity. UNICEF and the OHCH managed capacity building initiatives to prepare all 113 members of the network to contribute to the consolidation of appropriate and adolescent-friendly services. In addition, UNICEF and OHCH reached over 200 specialists with capacity-building efforts through workshops on gender, violence against children and comprehensive protection. Overall, these actions reached about 900 adolescents (65 per cent girls) through 63 workshops, and actively involved them on several topics – ranging from national heritage, arts, crafts history and science – contributing to the development of life skills. The programme also included sports activities, emphasizing fair play and inclusion, involving approximately 250 adolescents from the community. The 'Contigo Somos Más' (With You We are More) programme, a weekly 1-hour radio show with national outreach, broadcast 50 shows developed and conducted by adolescents attending the radio workshop led by Habana Radio's young journalists.

On the occasion of World Children's Day, the Centre for Adolescents of Old Havana was officially inaugurated, with spaces for intellectual and spiritual growth, rights promotion and child participation. In parallel, efforts were geared toward the development of a funding proposal to ensure the continuity, expansion and strengthening of this facility.

### **Summary notes and acronyms**

AMP - annual management plan

BFHI – baby-friendly hospital initiative

BGAM - broadband global area network  
C4D - communication for development  
CERF - Central emergency response fund  
CNFH - Centre for Nutrition and Food Hygiene  
COHA - cash on hand  
CPD - Country programme document  
CRC - Committee on the Rights of the Child  
CRC - contract review committee  
DRR - disaster risk reduction  
ECD - early childhood development  
EPF - Emergency programme fund  
ETH - Educa a tu hijo (educate your child)  
EU – European Union  
EWEA - early warning/early action  
FAO - Food and Agricultural Organization  
FIA - Federation Internationale de l'Automobile  
GSSC - Global Shared Service Centre  
HACT - harmonized approach to cash transfers  
HIV/AIDS - Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome  
HMB - human milk banks  
HR – human resources  
IB - Institutional budget  
ICT - information and communication technology  
INDER - National Institute of Sports, Physical Culture and Recreation  
IT - information technology  
JP – joint programme  
LACRO - UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office  
LAFSS - Latin American Faculty for Social Sciences  
LARCSE - Latin American Reference Centre for Special Education  
MCNP – Maternal-child national programme  
MCSF – multi-country services facility  
MICS - multiple indicators cluster survey  
MMR - measles, mumps and rubella vaccines  
MoE - Ministry of Education  
MoI - Ministry of Interior  
MoPH - Ministry of Public Health  
MOSS - Minimum operating security standards  
MPO – monthly payment order  
NatCom –National Committee for UNICEF  
NCSE - National Centre of Sexual Education  
NIHR - National Institute of Hydraulic Resources  
NPB - National Programme for Breastfeeding  
NRSC - National Road Safety Commission  
NSIO - National Statistics and Information Office  
NYHQ - New York Headquarters (UNICEF)  
OHCH - Office of the Havana City Historian  
OMT – operations management team  
ORE - Other resources - emergency  
ORR - Other resources - regular  
PBR – programme budget review  
PER - performance evaluation report

PRIME - plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation  
RBM – results-based management  
RR - Regular resources  
SDG - Sustainable Development Goals  
SDG-F - Sustainable Development Goals Fund  
SIDA - Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency  
SP - Strategic Plan  
TA - travel authorization  
UN - United Nations  
UNCARES - System-wide workplace programme on HIV  
UNCT – United Nation Country Team  
UNDAF - United Nations Development Framework  
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme  
UNDSS - United Nations Department of Safety and Security  
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund  
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund  
VAC - violence against children  
VHF - very high frequency  
VSAT - very small aperture technology (Satellite System)  
WASH - water, sanitation and hygiene  
WFP - World Food Programme

### Capacity development

To ensure an effective response to the Zika virus, UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH partnered to increase the knowledge of 155 health specialists in four prioritized provinces. To enable a holistic approach to breastfeeding in hospitals, UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH trained 17 breastfeeding managers in Havana on the potential life-saving impact of these facilities. This partnership yielded results by providing necessary skills to 720 primary health professionals in nine provinces, ensuring quality standards during childcare consultations and monitoring of well-being indicators. At the community level, 105 grassroots leaders gained knowledge on hygiene promotion and disease prevention in Santiago. These empowered leaders are disseminating vital messages on water safety in their drought-affected communities.

With the MoE, UNICEF Cuba focused its capacity-strengthening efforts on ensuring that 97 per cent of all key actors involved in updating school curricula have the necessary skills to implement it in accordance with new ECD methodologies. To address challenges documented as part of the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools, UNICEF Cuba and the Latin American Reference Centre for Special Education (LARCSE) rolled-out a training package on inclusive practices for children with disabilities for 90 specialists in selected provinces (Sancti Spíritus, Ciego de Ávila and Las Tunas). As part of the on-going disaster risk reduction programme, MoE and UNICEF Cuba also strengthened preparedness capacities of 10,134 children, 324 teachers and community-based leaders in the Ciego de Avila province on preparedness, which enabled them to face Hurricane Irma.

The III International Conference on Child Protection was a framework to strengthen capacities of 94 specialists who participated in 5-day pre-event courses facilitated by Cuban and international specialists. The prevention of violence was also emphasized in trainings with the MoE professionals from all foster homes in Cuba.

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

With UNICEF Cuba's technical and financial support, the Centre for Nutrition and Food Hygiene (CNFH) continues to evaluate the impact of the use of nutritional guidelines for children under two years on families' knowledge and nutritional practices. Evidence from Sancti Spiritus revealed bottlenecks related to inadequate feeding patterns that will be tackled through evidence-based C4D materials.

With the National Road Safety Commission (NRSC) and the International Automobile Federation (FIA), UNICEF Cuba advocated for a review of accident-related data for people under the age of 20. Evidence revealed the need for multi-sectoral coordination to reduce risk factors. The findings were integrated into the design of joint interventions as part of the UNICEF Cuba-NRSC-FIA road safety initiative.

In its work with the MoE, UNICEF Cuba identified and capitalized on advocacy opportunities to influence decision-makers regarding the need to generate a policy on transitioning children with disabilities to inclusive learning spaces within mainstream schools. A study on inclusion in mainstream schools provided key evidence on risks and opportunities, which were incorporated in real-time through on-going capacity development initiatives for teachers in mainstream schools and integrated into the MoE's institutional monitoring. As part of these advocacy efforts, UNICEF Cuba convened key decision makers to the launch of an illustrated, child-friendly and accessible version of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which also helped to raise awareness and knowledge about the importance of an inclusive society to overcome social norms and stigma.

UNICEF Cuba engaged in continuous policy dialogue around child protection issues, with an emphasis in 2017 on preventing violence against children, targeting sector decision makers. The III International Conference on Child Protection held by the Ministry of the Interior (Mol), with UNICEF Cuba support, provided a good platform for advocacy dialogue, South-South cooperation and knowledge exchange around violence prevention, with support from UNICEF LACRO and other country offices in the region.

## **Partnerships**

During the reporting year, UNICEF Cuba partnered with youth clubs, a nationwide network of 600 state-run public computer centres to include key information for over 163,000 users of the Mochila – an offline free digital entertainment and educational package aimed at youth and families. UNICEF Cuba provided global and local content on children's rights as well as attractive C4D materials. In addition, an ongoing partnership with the National Centre for Sex Education (NCSE) zoomed into the development of behaviour change C4D materials to encourage increased participation by fathers in their children's education.

UNICEF Cuba worked with UNESCO to develop guidelines for teachers to address the socio-emotional needs of children affected by natural disasters. Further, the joint programme (JP) to strengthen the resilience of families affected by drought in Santiago de Cuba catalysed partnerships with local institutions, the WFP and UNDP to reduce the impact on children, enabling synergies and information-exchange and enhancing coordination.

The partnership with the OHCH and the EU was strengthened with the inauguration of the Centre for Adolescents after six years of construction. The Centre is part of the wider A+ adolescent spaces programme, linked to local activities focused on adolescents. UNICEF Cuba aims to document and replicate this initiative in other major cities.

Continued importance was placed on interactions with the private sector, resulting in advances for children with the launch of new partnerships with the FIA Foundation and Sherritt International supporting road traffic safety for children in Cuba.

### **External communication and public advocacy**

At the dawn of Cuba's own digital age, UNICEF Cuba's content for target audiences experienced a significant shift in the format and platforms used, resulting in a 30 per cent increase in the number of Facebook followers; a surge in the presence of quality digital content on global platforms such as UNICEF Connect or Medium; an agreement with off-line, free and nationally accessible entertainment; an alternative educational television package (La Mochila; the Bacpack) to integrate C4D materials, reaching more than 163,000 weekly users; and participation in regional/global initiatives that amplify Cuban children's voices, e.g., the climate comic contest or the climate bloggers initiative with UNICEF Haiti on the 'Timounyo' website.

Advocacy efforts focused on: responsible paternity and the 'early moments matter' campaign, and included UNICEF participation in a national conference on maternity and paternity, led by the NCSE. These efforts led to the joint production of TV spots with key celebrity influencers and contributions to a documentary on fatherhood by a local filmmaker; inclusion of children with disabilities, with the launch of the innovative, child-friendly version of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability as a pivotal moment; breastfeeding promotion around World Breastfeeding Week; and celebration of World Children's Day, which set a precedent for children's participation in critical spaces, such as traditional mass media and the Parliament.

As traditional media remains the main source of information - where UNICEF Cuba features prominently (around 150 mentions in high-tier media) - organic ties with new digital media are positioning key messages for millennials on their own platforms. Collaboration with the Ministry of Communications to produce a retrospective on Cuba's information and communication technology (ICTs) and connectivity history and current trends among children for this year's *State of the World's Children* report opened potential opportunities to work together on children's online safety and digital engagement.

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

With continued interest in some of Cuba's successful interventions to ensure universal coverage of social services and above-average child well-being indicators, UNICEF Cuba constantly acts as a broker between other interested countries and the Government of Cuba to exchange knowledge and experience, with a view achieving results for children at the government-to-government level.

In ECD, UNICEF Cuba helped to facilitate two exchanges in 2017 in which high-level Cuban education authorities shared their community-based and formal ECD models with the Governments of Bolivia and Panama, in partnership with the respective UNICEF country offices. During these exchanges, the vice-minister of education shared key contextual elements that should be considered as the Cuban model is replicated elsewhere, based on past best practices and lessons learned, while emphasizing the need for cross-sectoral integration. Following the exchange in Bolivia, the country's parliamentary network on children's issues prioritized ECD as a key area of intervention.

In relation to health, the Government of Cuba shared its knowledge and experience with high-level representatives of the Government of Zimbabwe, in partnership with the UN system in Zimbabwe and Cuba. The focus of this initial contact was on Cuban good practices for

eliminating vertical transmission of HIV/AIDS and congenital syphilis, with a view to developing bilateral agreements for the potential replication in Zimbabwe of Cuban practices related to health services for HIV-positive pregnant and breastfeeding women as well as indicators that form part of the certification process related to the elimination of vertical transmission.

All three exchanges initiated in 2017 continued to be followed up both by governments and UNICEF Cuba with the goal of establishing bilateral agreements in these areas. The challenge will be to integrate these actions in programmes that would also allow Cuba to benefit from other country's experiences.

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

UNICEF Cuba is embarking on various innovations around adolescent participation, applying ICTs to C4D in ECD and evidence generation to support programmatic goals. The a+ programme involves a network of institutions and artists working to develop opportunities for adolescents. To complement these efforts, the Centre for Adolescents of Old Havana was inaugurated within the framework of the holistic and participatory development of adolescents in Old Havana project, implemented by UNICEF Cuba, the OHCH and the EU. The centre was designed with the participation of adolescents over the course of five years; it hosts two outdoor squares and two buildings with a centre of documentation, music and dance classrooms, laboratories and radio and TV recording studios, among others. The space will contribute to vocational orientation, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing, recreation and socialization of the most vulnerable adolescents of Old Havana. Other initiatives for adolescent development include creating protective environments through adolescent spaces in cultural centres in the province of Granma, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture.

Progress towards engaging men in responsible parenting and ECD and increase their participation in their children's educational activities, occurred throughout the year. Progress was achieved through research and multi-sectoral consultations to enable the conceptualization and development of C4D materials (physical and digital formats, in online and offline platforms) and capacity building. Materials tackle knowledge gaps about rights, obligations and benefits, with the objective of increasing demand for services, as well as practical tools for fatherhood to promote sustained behaviour and social change around caretaking roles.

As a result of consistent strategic advocacy, the sixth round of the multiple indicators cluster survey (MICS) will be implemented in 2018. For the first time it will include modules on child functioning, water quality, household energy, access to mass media and use of ICTs and parental involvement.

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

Integration is a fundamental element of UNICEF Cuba's evidence-generation efforts. This was evident in the multi-sectoral dialogues surrounding decision-making for MICS design, for which 21 institutions joined forces to determine the most pressing data gaps to be addressed. In addition, nine statistical systems, with UNICEF Cuba's advocacy and technical support, are undergoing a review process to harmonize child-related indicators and ensure SDG alignment.

The joint programme to strengthen resilience of drought-affected communities in Santiago is also a good practice for cross-sectoral linkages, as it incorporates resilience, climate change adaptation, health (through water and vector-borne disease prevention) adolescent participation, community engagement around WASH and education. A highlight of the programme is the integration and replication of a previously tested WASH grassroots initiative

on child-led campaigns for hygiene promotion with children leading behaviour-change efforts. Efforts used a bottom-up approach – from the family and community level to the education sector – as they promoted WASH issues with peers and school staff, gaining recognition and playing an empowered and informed role that triggered community action.

UNICEF Cuba also played a convening role with multiple sector stakeholders led by Cuba's civil defence agency in the development of a Cuban good practices manual based on UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. The manual emphasizes and clarifies the roles of all actors play at every stage of the risk reduction/preparedness cycle, where synergies can enhance effectiveness during a natural disaster and the actions in which interface with families is recommended for prevention and life-saving actions. The main institutions involved in developing this document are the MoPH, MoE, Red Cross, Cuban Women's Federation and the Ministry of Labour, all of which will establish mechanisms to ensure their implementation.

### **Service delivery**

With support from Spain's Iberia/Amadeus channel for UNICEF donors, UNICEF Cuba procured 70,000 measles mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccines in 2017, which ensured the immunization of 56 per cent of children aged one, carried out by the MoPH. In addition, with the main goal of improving the quality of neonatal care services for at-risk newborns, UNICEF Cuba procured specialized equipment to ensure the full functionality of a human milk bank in Camaguey Province, extending the geographic coverage of this intervention to a tenth province in 2017.

Coupled with a context-specific, grassroots, participatory C4D campaign for the prevention of vector and water-borne diseases, in the framework of a joint programme to strengthen resilience of drought-affected communities in Santiago, UNICEF Cuba procured safe water storage means, reaching 73 per cent of families in targeted communities, while also covering 43 health institutions and 68 schools.

As part of its inclusive education initiatives, UNICEF Cuba also procured equipment for six vocational schools where 875 adolescents with disabilities are enrolled, with a view to ensuring a holistic effort to enhance learning quality and increase teacher/student motivation in Havana, Villa Clara, Camagüey and Las Tunas provinces.

To put the equity approach into practice and reach the most disadvantaged children with concrete interventions, UNICEF Cuba worked with the MoE to procure computers for children in foster homes, enabling them to access information and learning tools, while also supplying specialized toys for children in child protection centres and tools to better equip children at integrated formation schools, where various UNICEF Cuba-supported cultural and sports activities reached about 120 adolescents in contact with the law.

### **Human rights-based approach to cooperation**

During 2017 UNICEF Cuba continued to work systematically with partners to employ a human rights-based approach in initiatives across all sectors. Advocacy around the rights of persons with disabilities gained particular traction and momentum throughout the reporting year, through education programme initiatives promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities through C4D strategies, in tandem with capacity development to provide teachers in mainstream schools with the necessary skills to ensure an inclusive environment. These efforts in 2017, including the publication and launch with key decision-makers of an illustrated, child-friendly and accessible version of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, helped to raise awareness

and knowledge about the importance of inclusive societies for overcoming social norms and stigma, using a rights-based approach.

Child rights promotion was also at the core of the design of all activities undertaken for World Children's Day, which highlighted child and adolescent empowerment in decision-making and public spaces.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was also the conceptual framework of the III International Conference on Child Protection organized by Cuba's MoI, with UNICEF Cuba support and participation by 150 child protection practitioners and academics, including 37 participants from 12 countries.

### **Gender equality**

UNICEF Cuba mainly addresses the global gender priorities of UNICEF's regional framework for action on gender-responsive adolescent health. The gender-sensitive approach has been incorporated into several programmatic interventions.

In partnership with the MoPH and the National Group for Integrated Adolescent Care, UNICEF Cuba provided financial (US\$2,334) and technical support for an international knowledge-sharing event on training future parents. Topics covered in this novel event included discussions of gender stereotypes on motherhood and fatherhood, sexism-free education and prevention of adolescent pregnancy. UNICEF's upcoming workplan with MoPH will support actions that are part of the roadmap that resulted from the event.

As part of the road safety initiative, UNICEF Cuba led a desk review on the prevention of traffic accidents, disaggregated by age and gender. This revealed that adolescent boys are more prone to be involved in accidents due to a lower perception of risk (US\$500 budget).

UNICEF Cuba continued to strengthen a gendered approach in its sports and recreation initiatives by actively promoting girls' participation in co-ed teams during national soccer tournaments at primary schools ('soccer for all') and 'inclusive soccer' at secondary schools. In 2017 some 2,040 children participated in these events, including 736 girls. The combined budget for these two initiatives was US\$29,716.

All capacity-development initiatives with key stakeholders in the three programme components included content on gender equality and prevention of violence against women and girls. These covered a wide range of actors, including teachers in rural schools, vocational schools, early childhood, special education and foster homes with a nationwide reach, as well as the disaster risk reduction programme targeting communities vulnerable to natural disasters and training of the a+ network on adolescents in Old Havana (the combined budget for these initiatives was US\$73,719). The 2016 tool known as 'educating for equality' to prevent gender-based violence in schools (a UNICEF contribution to the Unite campaign), formed an integral part of these efforts. To increase programme reach, two posters based on the tool were developed (US\$7,600 budget).

### **Environmental sustainability**

In 2017, the Government of Cuba approved a National Plan to tackle the effects of climate change, entitled 'Tarea Vida' (Life Task). The ongoing UNICEF Cuba/MoE disaster risk reduction programme was fully aligned with this national priority and expanded its geographic reach in 2017, continuing youth engagement and climate change education priorities. In the

reporting year, the programme reached 10,134 children and 542 teachers in 42 schools located in 15 communities, many of which were among those hard-hit by Hurricane Irma in Ciego de Avila Province. During a monitoring visit after the hurricane, children and teachers highlighted the importance and usefulness of the programme as it provided tools that helped them prepare and recover from Hurricane Irma. The total budget for this initiative in 2017 amounted to approximately US\$52,071.

Through the joint programme on increasing resilience in drought-affected communities in Santiago Province, UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the UNDP, WFP and provincial authorities, included a component involving youth engagement on climate change. A major aim of the joint programme is to increase resilience to improve the immediate response to extreme drought through the provision of safe water storage. The project reached 8,444 children (4,302 female, 4,142 male), 1,008 young people aged 19-24 (461 female, 547 male) and 165 pregnant women, with priority given to children with disabilities, single mothers, families with two or more children and low-income households. Among the interventions for children were the provision of water storage tanks for educational institutions and health centres and the distribution of fresh food at nurseries, boarding and semi-boarding schools. An educational communication campaign, 'Agua Siempre Segura' (Always safe water) promoted hand-washing and responsible use of water among all community members and helped empower adolescents as agents of change. Adolescents also received hygiene kits with water containers, water purification tablets, soap and buckets with lids. The total budget for the programme in 2017 amounted to approximately US\$1.5 million, financed by the SDG Fund.

UNICEF Cuba greening initiatives included temperature control, replacing air conditioner equipment, decreased printing and monitoring electricity usage.

### **Effective leadership**

UNICEF Cuba met the annual fundraising target of US\$ 1million, with a strong contribution from the Russian Federation. UNICEF Cuba maintains close relationships with current donors through national committees (NatComs). Ongoing programmes between UNICEF Cuba and the Spanish Natcom, Iberia/Amadeus, and the Iberostar Foundation will expire at the end of 2017 and 2018, respectively.

Partnerships around the issue of road safety with the private sector include a multi-country programme with the FIA Foundation, managed by UNICEF Headquarters, in coordination with UNICEF LACRO. This programme proved to be fertile ground for the involvement of new stakeholders, as a three-year agreement was signed with Sherritt International, with support from the Canadian Natcom, to improve safety and protection of children from road traffic injuries.

A new proposal for phase II of the adolescent development and participation project in Old Havana is underway, to strengthen administrative capacity to perform its pivotal function among the network of institutions, ensure systematization and pursue replication to other cities. An additional proposal is under discussion with SIDA, focusing on child rights promotion. Potential new government donors include Italy, Canada, Switzerland and United Arab Emirates.

Emergency response became the primary focus of resource mobilization efforts as Hurricane Irma hit Cuba in September. The main sources of funding were CERF, emergency global thematic funds, the EPF, SIDA and the Government of Canada. Additional funding from the Spanish Committee for UNICEF is expected to maintain the response efforts. The support from the Government of Russia was received as a contribution to other resources (OR) for WASH, as

it helped to strengthen recovery efforts following Hurricane Matthew. During the reporting period, UNICEF Cuba submitted eight donor reports and received visits from the Iberia/Amadeus team, as well as the UK and Spanish NatComs.

### **Financial resources management**

According to a 2017 Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) report, UNICEF Cuba was among the top five offices in the region in handling management of payments. Transfers via UNICEF NYHQ and UNICEF LACRO continued to be the main form of payment for providers, resulting in a reduction of the monthly replenishment amount in the US dollar account. Due to the financial and economic embargo on Cuba, the transfers involve an intermediary bank and currency, resulting in additional costs, which may reach up to 4 per cent for each transfer.

Since bank transfers are not authorized for payment to individuals, UNICEF Cuba uses cash on hand (COHA) for paying national staff and monthly payment orders (MPO) for international staff. Payment to local providers continued via check. An increase in the petty cash ceiling will reduce the number of checks under US\$500 in 2018. There were no delays or obstacles for reconciling the two bank accounts or the COHA account.

UNICEF Cuba continued using LACRO's long-term agreement with travel agents for the purchase of plane tickets, which allowed 100 per cent effectiveness in these transactions. Airlines based in Cuba do not offer credit services for purchasing plane tickets.

Although two UN agencies have begun implementing the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) through third-party payments, the process is taking longer than expected. UNICEF Cuba continues to monitor the results of these efforts and will gather the data necessary to make an informed decision regarding the feasibility of HACT implementation in the upcoming country programme.

Planned financial resources were utilized as follows:

IB: 100 per cent

RR: 99 per cent

OR-R: 98 per cent

OR-E: 99 per cent

### **Fundraising and donor relations**

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### **Evaluation and research**

The evaluation function continues to be a challenge for UNICEF Cuba, amidst different approaches to evaluation concepts and considering that all evaluations and access to data require Government endorsement and action. To address these differences, UNICEF Cuba continued to engage in advocacy efforts.

Through a programmatic partnership with CNFH, UNICEF Cuba supported the data collection process as an on-going, nationally led evaluation process related to the implementation of nutritional guidelines for children under two. It shed light on the knowledge and practices related to healthy nutrition by education practitioners, mothers and caregivers. UNICEF Cuba oversaw the reporting and partial results, and will contribute to finalizing the report and implementing the recommendations that emerge from the process.

UNICEF Cuba uses quality assurance mechanisms to follow up on its integrated monitoring and evaluation plan (IMEP) and duly updated the plan for research, impact monitoring and evaluation (PRIME). The main challenge for UNICEF Cuba is still establishing institutional mechanisms to integrate research findings into knowledge management systems and ensure that institutions address information gaps, bottlenecks and/or barriers to implementing an equity approach and integrate this approach into advocacy and decision-making.

### **Efficiency gains and cost savings**

Implementation of standard operations procedures continued in 2017 with the establishment of interagency task forces defined under the business operating strategy of the operations management team (OMT). UNICEF Cuba participates in the ICT and procurement areas. The process should be finalized by mid-2018. No cost savings occurred during the reporting year.

In line with the eight opportunities for streamlining office management measures, UNICEF Cuba decreased the number of local committees from seven to four, raised the ceiling for contract review committee approval to US\$50,000 and maintained the practice of not printing hard copies of travel authorizations.

The remaining initiatives related to HACT implementation or the use of procurement cards are not applicable to the Cuban context. The former, as UNICEF Cuba operates through direct implementation. The latter, considering that there are no Citibank branches in Cuba. In addition, UNICEF Cuba continues to reduce the number of payments below US\$500 and to increase the pooling of payments. Electricity, water and fuel consumption are regularly monitored to avoid

above-average usage.

Energy-saving measures include control of air conditioning to ensure that is not excessively cold, as well as monitoring that equipment is turned off once staff members have left the premises. UNICEF Cuba will finalize the replacement of all of its air conditioners with more energy efficient models by 2018, with five new units. Staff continued to rationalize the use of lamps by using daylight when appropriate and awareness-raising on decreasing paper printing continued. The results are reported annually in the environment footprint assessment.

## Supply management

UNICEF Cuba finalized its 2017 supply plan in February and established a roadmap for monitoring the processes involved. Imports continued to be brought into the country through the ‘donation’ modality, under which UNICEF Cuba carries out the procurement and contracting processes and Government-designated import enterprises extract and distribute the supplies to ministry warehouses. Supply management in 2017 involved seven import processes serving 11 implementing partners.

The supply process continued to be a high risk for UNICEF Cuba, entailing a mitigation plan revised twice a year and also reporting in the enterprise risk management platform. Supply management was another 2017 priority of the annual management plan (AMP), and was monitored at all country management team meetings.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that effectiveness and timelines for supply management, as related to the port extraction and distribution, improved in 2017 for most imports.

The Government-established fast track import processes for supplies procured as part of the response to Hurricane Irma, which worked well thanks to permanent coordination and follow-up by the Ministry for Foreign Trade and Investment on extracting supplies. Significant bottlenecks related to obtaining information about final delivery of supplies were experienced, due to slow feedback in the Government-led distribution process. These issues were addressed as part of the 2017 annual report and will be closely followed up during a field monitoring mission in 2018.

A market survey revealed that there are no new providers in the country for local procurement. The local market is very limited, which results in the need to import most supplies.

Within its governance bodies, UNICEF Cuba continues to stress the need to reduce the number of sales orders. In total 110 sales orders were issued, linked to 112 purchase orders.

UNICEF Cuba does not have a warehouse for supply management, and is not engaged in procurement services with partners or the Government.

Table 1: Total value of supplies and services received.

Programme supplies	\$ 4,894,775.78
Operational supplies	\$ 36,594.88
Services	\$ 342,358.06
International Freight	\$ 460,079.11
Construction	\$ 0.0
Total supplies and services received	\$ 5,733,807.83

## **Security for staff and premises**

Security conditions in Cuba and for UNICEF Cuba are good, meeting most minimum operating security standards for premises. One minor security incident was reported in 2017, in which an individual accessed a staff member's vehicle parked outside the office building. UNICEF Cuba procured an enhanced surveillance system with eight control points and 24-hour recording to reduce such vulnerabilities.

UNICEF Cuba also co-financed, along with all UN agencies, the recruitment of a local security assistant based at UNDP. The assistant serves all UN agencies in Cuba under the supervision of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) officer based in the Dominican Republic. The UN Country Team has requested that UNDSS absorb this cost in its 2018 budget.

The warden system was periodically updated and tested. A business continuity plan activation exercise took place in May and yielded positive results. The minutes of the exercise were shared with UNICEF LACRO. After Hurricane Irma, the plan was also activated effectively. The review of security conditions at UNICEF premises took place in November, and revealed the lack of a reliable communication system in case of extreme emergency. In such cases, the satellite systems would have to be relocated indoors and offline to secure them, which would result in no Internet access. No progress was made on initiatives related to potential use of VHF radio, since the Government does not approve its use. Agreement with amateur radio broadcasters to use their networks in case of emergencies is still pending.

All staff members have taken and updated the basic and advanced security in the field courses and UNICEF Cuba ensures that TRIP security clearance requests are finalized prior to travel inside and outside the country.

The new UNDSS officer visited UNICEF Cuba and recommended that smoke detectors be installed in all offices currently lacking one.

## **Human resources**

The 2017 programme budget review approved two assistant posts (human resources and administrative) to strengthen operations functions. The recruitment processes concluded in December and the selected candidates will begin their duties February 1 2018.

The Regional human resources adviser facilitated an ethics training and team-building retreat. UNICEF Cuba was selected to run a performance management workshop in 2017, as a result of being the first country office to complete its 2016 performance evaluation review (PER) process. Staff expressed satisfaction with this workshop.

All learning and development plan activities were carried out, and the UNICEF LACRO contribution for such activities was fully utilized.

Human resources management through the GSSC continued in 2017 without difficulties, and the multi-country support facility provided very useful and efficient guidance.

UNICEF Cuba updated its action plan for HIV/AIDS prevention in the workplace in compliance with the 10 basic principles. UNICEF Cuba's support to UNCARES is integrated as part of the OMT workplan, which in 2017 included two inter-agency workshops.

The 2017 results of the global staff survey showed that UNICEF Cuba maintains a positive work environment, showing the best results in the region. UNICEF Cuba developed an action plan to address categories and issues with the least favourable scores and the plan is monitored monthly.

### **Effective use of information and communication technology**

UNICEF Cuba continued to strengthen its use of cloud-based applications (Skype for Business and SharePoint) to enhance efficiency. The Office created a SharePoint Cuba team site to enable continuous follow up of the Hurricane Irma response.

The communication section manages all social media, and UNICEF Cuba is the lead UN agency for numbers of followers on Facebook and Twitter. Contents include news, events, human interest stories, advocacy messages and behaviour-change messages. A quarterly newsletter is sent to all stakeholders with links to all news and human interest stories published on the webpage.

The global migration to Windows10/Windows server 2016, entailed the purchase of five new laptops and two servers. All office computers use Windows 10.

To enable more frequent use of Office 365 tools and better documentation of communication opportunities, the office procured five Smartphones for programme and communication officers.

The server rack was organized to allow for easy access to the equipment and a server was replaced to increase disk capacity for back-up purposes. The IT disaster recovery plan is updated periodically as part of the business continuity plan.

VSAT continues to be the only communication link. Thus UNICEF Cuba continues to be vulnerable to a lack of communication during emergencies. Alternative measures include satellite phones (BGAN e Iridiums) as well as Internet access through the FAO or WFP offices.

Connectivity continues to be severely limited for UNICEF Cuba (2 Mb/1Mb). Potential measures to improve this situation need to be identified and pursued in 2018 in view of the increase in staff members and use of online courses and applications, mainly for the C4D components and communications area.

### **Programme components from RAM**

## **ANALYSIS BY OUTCOME AND OUTPUT RESULTS**

**OUTCOME 1** Support: Effective and Efficient programme management and operations support to programme delivery

### **Analytical statement of progress**

Specific and time-bound mitigation action plans for identified high risks were established and reviewed periodically. The human resource structure was 100 per cent complete at the end of the year. The Office continues to guarantee a good working environment. An action plan for the 2017 global staff survey was created and monitored monthly.

## **OUTPUT 1 Output 1: Effective and efficient Governance and Systems**

### **Analytical statement of progress**

Following the eight global opportunities stated by UNICEF to streamline office management, the Office established only four local committees at the beginning of the year. As part of the annual management plan, the terms of reference for all committees were reviewed. All AMP tasks were completed and financial resources implementation was carried out as planned.

## **OUTPUT 2 Output 3: Effective and efficient management of Human Capacity**

### **Analytical statement of progress**

The final phase of the 2016 PERs was finalized in January 2017. The performance planning phase for 2017 PERs was finished within the deadline. In 2017, learning and development plan activities were accomplished as planned. The budget assigned from UNICEF LACRO was fully implemented.

## **OUTPUT 3 Effective and Efficient management**

### **Analytical statement of progress**

Reconciliation of the two Office bank accounts and COHA were carried out in accordance with the established schedule. Availability of funds in the two bank accounts was guaranteed during the whole year. Periodic review of VISION roles was maintained to avoid or mitigate conflicts. The table of authorities was 100 per cent in compliance with UNICEF financial policy.

## **OUTCOME 2 By 2018, Improved the quality of maternal, child and adolescent care, reduced nutritional problems in children and pregnant women most at risk, and integrated safe hygiene practices, with a focus on equity and gender equality.**

### **Analytical statement of progress**

Cuba maintained its above-average health indicators through universal coverage for basic health services. The reduction of both maternal and child mortality continues to be the top government priority within the sector, for which the MoPH engages in multi-sectoral interventions focusing on management of high-risk cases.

UNICEF Cuba continued to work with key sector stakeholders to improve the quality of care through capacity building in specialized areas such as the standardization of care for at-risk pregnant women and Zika virus response. The response to Zika, due to its particular features, demanded multi-disciplinary action coupled with the strong C4D campaign rolled out in 2017, which prioritized areas where the virus would be most likely to spread: the provinces of Havana, Santiago de Cuba, Guantánamo and Matanzas.

To redouble efforts on road injury prevention, UNICEF Cuba expanded partnerships with key national and international allies for the design and implementation of specific actions at the national and local levels that integrate multi-sectoral initiatives and incorporate multiple strategies to ensure effectiveness – such as communication campaigns, capacity building, advocacy and service delivery. FIA and Sherritt are new partners to this programmatic area, which continues to gain traction as it is a priority area for the Government, since it is among the

leading causes of mortality in Cuba, a country with above-average indicators for health and child development. As part of its policy dialogue UNICEF Cuba and the National Road Safety Commission established a multi-sectoral technical coordination group involving the health, education and transport sectors, as well as local governments and the media.

With the main goal of ensuring quality health services through technical assistance, UNICEF Cuba joined forces with the national maternal breastfeeding committee to revitalize the BFHI at 24 health institutions located in 11 Cuban provinces, where 80 per cent of births occur. All 24 health institutions were evaluated and re-certified.

Knowledge exchange and South-South cooperation continued to be essential strategies for the advancement of sectoral priorities. This was particularly evident in relation to adolescent health, for which UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH supported an international conference bringing professionals from the region together to discuss issues related to the needs and health of adolescents and young people.

Several initiatives were undertaken on the effects of climate change, with the main objective of strengthening resilience and empowering communities to take action on mitigation measures. These included a joint programme financed by the SDG Fund entitled 'strengthening the resilience of families and vulnerable groups affected by the drought in Santiago de Cuba', which focused on linking interventions to improve access to safe water and those seeking to improve knowledge of hygiene practices in homes, health centres and schools. This initiative capitalized on past experience in WASH promotion and enhanced synergies with other sectors, such as disaster risk reduction and education.

Continued partnership around nutrition outcomes focused around evidence-generation to feed into targeted community-level campaigns with the main objective of enhancing demand and behaviour change for healthy nutrition practices, as well as implementation of the 'Practical Guide for the Management of Food and Nutrition in Emergency Situations'.

In response to Hurricane Irma, which made landfall in northern and central Cuba, UNICEF led the WASH sector humanitarian response, in partnership with PAHO/WHO and UNDP and in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment focusing on the 14 most affected municipalities in four provinces: Villa Clara, Sancti Spiritus, Ciego de Ávila and Camagüey. Actions were geared toward improving access to safe water, to prevent water-borne diseases to approximately 560,315 people (274,554 women, 100,856 children and adolescents), by supplying water purification tablets, water storage tanks, hygiene kits and C4D materials.

## **OUTPUT 1** By 2018, basic health services have the capacities for quality care.

### **Analytical statement of progress**

UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the national maternal-child programme, developed standard guidelines and protocols to ensure the quality of services at the country's 62 delivery institutions. The inputs improved delivery conditions for at-risk pregnant women, providing recommendations for action in case of complications and standardizing attention to critical obstetric patients, including guidelines for managing haemorrhagic shock and follow-up of *Código Rojo* (code red) and immediate puerperium.

Some 155 health professionals improved their knowledge about the Zika virus and the response of the maternal and child health programme. Another 300 health professionals from different disciplines improved their knowledge of community genetics and epidemiological surveillance of

birth defects associated with Zika and other causes. UNICEF coordinated three regional workshops and a symposium in Havana on this topic, to ensure that all decision makers in the primary health care system gain better understanding of the steps to follow in cases of pregnant women with Zika.

UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the MoPH, procured specialized equipment for the HMB in Cienfuegos Province. A total of 10 human milk banks have been created, one in 2017, and are fully operational across the country.

UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the national maternal breastfeeding committee successfully advocated for and launched an evaluation of the BFHI, with a previously agreed quality assurance checklist, resulting in the re-certification of 24 health institutions (eight in Havana and 16 in the eastern and central region of the country). The quality assurance process also included training for 17 managers of the breastfeeding programme in the requirements of the BFHI and the potential of HMBs.

In partnership with the National Group on Childcare, UNICEF Cuba facilitated implementation of the quality assessment guide for childcare consultation, by re-publishing the guide and supporting key professionals to monitor compliance: 92 health areas (76 per cent of 121 areas evaluated) achieved favourable results. This contributed to increased surveillance and follow-up on children's health, strengthening comprehensive care in the first 1,000 days and extending attention to adolescents.

Expanding geographical coverage of a continuing intervention, 720 professionals from Cuba's primary health care system improved their knowledge in: neurodevelopmental alterations, breastfeeding, timely introduction of food, and obesity prevention among other topics, through coordinated joint MoPH-UNICEF training in eight additional provinces. In parallel, 60 primary health care decision-makers from all provinces strengthened their knowledge of comprehensive management of diarrhoeal diseases and cholera, and 50 on the prevention, diagnosis and management of acute respiratory infections. The capacity building used a training-of-trainers approach to ensure that knowledge is shared with other practitioners at the provincial and municipal levels.

UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with MoPH, ensured that 56 per cent of children aged one year (approx. 68,600) were immunized against mumps, rubella and measles with the triple viral vaccine not produced in Cuba, through the procurement and distribution of 70,000 doses.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2018, families of the most vulnerable areas have knowledge and capacities on hygiene practices, responsible sexuality, HIV and unintentional injuries prevention.

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

UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with ProSalud, coordinated and ensured the implementation of the C4D initiative 'always safe water' with community and multi-sectoral participation, and integrated school-community-family actions, in two communities – Chicharrones (Santiago de Cuba) and La Timba (Havana). Approximately 615 participants were involved; children, adolescents, teachers, pregnant women, stay-at-home mothers and community leaders improved their knowledge and skills in hygiene, use and management of safe water, health promotion and prevention of water-borne diseases, and children played a key role as agents of change in their communities.

In collaboration with the UNDP, WFP and Cuban Government, UNICEF implemented the joint programme ‘strengthening the resilience of families and vulnerable groups affected by the drought in Santiago de Cuba’, funded by the SDG Fund. The programme supplied water tanks and other basic hygiene means to 9,820 families in the Abel Santamaría urban centre, reaching 30,525 people (4,142 children and 4,302 girls) and 111 centres (43 health-related centres and 68 educational centres) resulting in family capacity building and maintaining the quality of health care service and education.

Linking the supplies with critical information on their use, the community embraced the C4D initiative ‘Always safe water’, with the participation of students and community leader. A total of 277 participants (202 women and 75 men) improved their knowledge about safe water, positive behaviours in the areas of hygiene and diseases prevention.

UNICEF Cuba, in coordination with ProSalud, continued to support training for 151 adolescents as health promotion facilitators for the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS and promotion of healthy sexual behaviours among peers. Some 14,408 adolescents in 14 municipalities of Havana Province were reached through this intervention, which focuses on adolescent empowerment and participation..

In the context of its work on preventing accident-related injuries UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the national maternal-child programme, coordinated training and courses for 150 health professionals (66 per cent from the primary health care system) in Cienfuegos, Camagüey and Granma provinces, to improve their knowledge about initial care of injured paediatric patients. UNICEF Cuba procured specialized equipment to enhance the quality of a training space created by the MoPH for pre-hospital care of paediatric road injury victims in Havana Province.

To prevent injuries at home, UNICEF Cuba and the MoPH developed a capacity-building programme for 35 nurses, who were trained in preventing home-based early childhood accidents. The training resulted in the development of cross-sectoral linkages with Cuba’s ‘educate your child’ programme, as well as in improving the knowledge of families in the province of Cienfuegos.

UNICEF established new alliances with the FIA Foundation, Sherritt and national institutions such as the National Road Safety Commission. Under the leadership of UNICEF Cuba, a technical committee was formed to improve safety and protection of children and adolescents from road traffic injuries, coordinate initiatives, enhance synergies and prioritize actions on this topic.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2018, families of the most vulnerable areas have knowledge and capacities on healthy nutrition of children under two and pregnant women.

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

As part of the evaluation of the implementation of dietary guidelines for children up to two years of age, UNICEF Cuba partnered with the CNFH to gather evidence on consumption habits of children two years old and under (490 respondents) in the province of Sancti Spiritus. The data show that recommended portions for a healthy diet in this age group were not met, and a large percentage of children had excessive energy intakes, a predisposing factor to obesity from the early stages of life.

Also in coordination with CNFH, UNICEF supported a study of non-nutritional risk factors related

to anaemia prevalence in pre-schoolers in the central region of Cuba (covering 369 children between six and 59 months of age). The study is ongoing, and a correlation found between infection and anaemia will be disseminated to key audiences to shape community-level practices through C4D campaigns.

As part of on-going joint UNICEF-CNFH efforts on developing dietary guidelines for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, expert groups meetings were held in 10 provinces, involving 108 health professionals linked to the maternal-child national programme and 118 pregnant women through 10 focus groups. These gatherings helped to validate the design of educational messages, while also improving participants' knowledge about healthy nutritional habits.

UNICEF Cuba collaborated with the CNFH to develop capacity in the municipality of Menendez in Las Tunas Province (selected due to its vulnerability to weather-related emergencies and complex social profile; population: 49,030) for managing food and nutrition in emergency situations through participatory processes, training and local empowerment. Approximately 24,024 women participated, learning to become social communicators, along with girls and adolescents, in charge of brigades and school groups. The training promoted a culture of prevention and improved the knowledge of teachers, children and adolescents. This targeted and contextualized municipal-level intervention will be documented for further analysis to consider potential scalability.

Also in coordination with the CNFH, UNICEF continued to support improved knowledge about healthy nutritional practices, targeting mothers, pregnant women and teachers as priority stakeholders. A monitoring visit that assessed community-based interventions found both provincial- and municipal-level commitment to promoting these practices in the provinces of Pinar del Rio, Artemisa, Mayabeque, Las Tunas and Guantánamo. Altogether, information disseminate to these priority groups reached about 12,657 nutrition and health practitioners and 8,8816 others. Follow-up activities will focus on monitoring vitamin A status in participating provinces and municipalities.

## **OUTCOME 3 Global Thematic Humanitarian Funds received from LACRO to support**

### **Analytical statement of progress**

Changes to the comprehensive early childhood educational curriculum were implemented experimentally in the remaining nine provinces of the country (Matanzas, Sancti Spíritus, Cienfuegos, Ciego de Avila, Camagüey, Las Tunas, Holguín, Granma and Guantanomo) as well as Isla de la Juventud municipality. Adjustments were made to planning, programming and methodological guidelines targeting the 1st, 2nd and 4th year of the life cycle. UNICEF Cuba supported this process by building the capacity of 96.9 per cent of the educators at the centres selected for the trial. Validation and subsequent adjustments will be carried out by the MoE in 2018, and the third stage of experimentation will be launched for other age groups.

At the national level, 95.1 per cent (121,781) of children aged five or six years showed satisfactory results during the transition from pre-school to primary education (similar to the 2016 level). The rural sector and the 'Educa tu hijo' (ETH, educate your child) programme showed results as high as 97.4 per cent and 93 per cent, respectively.

Some 16,991 children with disabilities participate in educational programmes (via the two existing ECD modalities), with special education professionals under the guidance of the Centre for Diagnosis and Guidance. Evaluations of curricular adjustments showed that 75.8 per cent of

children with disabilities (12,875) were progressing according to the objectives, and 24.2 per cent (4,116) were not.

According to the MoE, the quality of care received by children with disabilities is being negatively impacted by the lack of training, preparation and stability of educators and the limited availability of didactic materials to support early stimulation and families' preparedness.

As part of efforts to ensure the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream education, UNICEF Cuba, in partnership with the Latin American Reference Centre for Special Education, contributed to preparing and raising the awareness of teachers and families. Advocacy efforts also targeted the Government in an effort to reverse current trends and promote the transition to regular education with specialized attention. Evidence generation will be paramount to show results in terms of educational inclusion. In 2017, 158 specialists from Sancti Spíritus, Ciego de Avila and Las Tunas provinces strengthened their capacities to provide inclusive education.

In 2017 the Government of Cuba approved the 'life task' national plan for tackling the effects of climate change. The plan outlines goals for increasing risk perception among the entire population. The MoE's responsibility is to include elements related to climate change within school curricula and extracurricular activities. In previous years, UNICEF Cuba and the MoE have implemented a disaster risk reduction programme at schools in several provinces. This work demonstrated its effectiveness during Hurricane Irma in September 2017. The good practices from this programme were presented to the global disaster reduction platform held in Mexico and were selected as a case study for UNICEF's 2017 Global Education Report.

During the emergency UNICEF Cuba supplied educational materials to 53,261 girls and 54,879 boys based in the 14 affected municipalities in the provinces of Villa Clara, Sancti Spíritus, Ciego de Avila and Camagüey. More than 50 schools and daycare centres benefited from waterproof fabric to protect the roofs of schools, ensuring safer and effective educational spaces.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2018, the initial education curriculum model has been updated for formal and non formal care modalities of children under 5.

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

UNICEF Cuba supported the MoE in an experimental procedure for capacity building around the second stage of the curricular adjustment process. A total of 708 (96.9 per cent of teachers involved in the process) were trained on topics related to the early childhood educational plan as well as programmes and methodological guidelines for the 1st, 2nd and 4th years of life. Those trained represented 2.2 per cent of the total number of early childhood teachers nationwide. The experimental sample included 18 daycare centres, preschool classrooms and the ETH programme, through which 159 children aged 0-1, 146 aged 1-2 and 218 aged 3-4 from 15 provinces and Isla de la Juventud municipality were involved. All actions were carried out with the participation of different sectors and specialists to ensure an intersectoral and multidisciplinary lens.

In addition, as part of regular training, UNICEF supported more than 31,000 early childhood teachers with tools and methodological guidelines to provide better care to 696,939 children (340,094 girls) aged between 0 and 6 years.

UNICEF and the MoE continued to roll out training of trainer programmes for 25 provincial promoters, who in turn reached 3,058 teachers involved in the educate your child programme in

15 provinces, developing their skills to strengthen the coordination role of education and apply an intersectoral perspective to their work. Information exchanges through workshops revealed bottlenecks related to managing statistical information and violence prevention. These issues arose during various training sessions mapping children's vulnerabilities at this stage of their lives. As a response, the MoE will seek strengthen data collection systems at the lowest administrative level, which should inform national-level actions.

UNICEF Cuba provided financial support to enable the effective monitoring of the ETH. 20 specialists from the ETH programme strengthened intersectoral work through monitoring visits to 39 popular councils (eight from the rural sector, five from the Turquino Plan and seven from socially complex zones) in 26 municipalities of Pinar del Río, Artemisa, Havana, Mayabeque, Villa Clara, Ciego de Ávila, Camagüey, Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo provinces. These monitoring visits were key to obtaining feedback and ensuring continuous review of the programme. They included interviews with 675 families, showing the need for greater advocacy around father's participation. Of the 112 fathers interviewed, 48.3 per cent said they actively participate in the education of their children.

To address these findings, UNICEF Cuba is designing C4D materials dedicated especially to fathers encompassing various existing services, tools and legal norms, with the aim of encouraging their active participation in their child's development.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2018, the inclusive education process in regular education is strengthened to stimulate the learning development of children and adolescents with special educational needs.

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

Interventions to advance this output results expanded in 2017 to three new provinces (Sancti Spíritus, Ciego de Avila and Las Tunas). Teachers in these provinces have acquired new capacity to provide inclusive education, allowing 1,258 girls, boys and adolescents with disabilities attending regular classes to receive specialized attention according to their needs.

In partnership with the Latin American Reference Centre for Special Education, UNICEF Cuba strengthened the capacity of 158 teachers and specialists from the three provinces by disseminating useful tools for adequate care, developed based on curricular adjustments required for each child. UNICEF also assisted in the development of guidelines and supported the organization of 12 training-of-trainers (TOT) workshops. The newly trained specialists are committed to training an additional 1,337 teachers who work with children with a disability in mainstream schools.

During monitoring by UNICEF Cuba and the MoE at centres hosting children with disabilities, lessons learned were drawn based on student achievements, opportunities and needs and the appropriate provision of pedagogical support. Among the challenges identified was the need to strengthen classroom management, establish indicators and provide further advice on applying curriculum adjustments, taking into account children's needs. UNICEF Cuba will continue to strengthen capacities to ensure that teachers in mainstream schools are equipped with the necessary knowledge to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

In line with educational inclusion, UNICEF Cuba supported capacity-strengthening efforts reaching 65 teachers in Havana, Villa Clara, Camagüey and Las Tunas provinces, thus supporting enhanced quality of education for 2,369 adolescents (875 with disabilities) – 50 per cent of all adolescents who study at these centres. Consistent with the ToT approach, these

teachers will carry out additional training efforts to cover an additional 1,079 teachers in vocational schools and 42 multipurpose workshops. UNICEF Cuba also procured equipment for six targeted schools, to ensure a holistic effort to enhance quality and increase teacher/student motivation.

Sport continues to be an effective tool for inclusion. With the celebration of the inclusive soccer event at the national level and the TV program 'Juguemos' (Let's Play), 3,012 children (934 with disabilities) enjoyed their right to participate in sports and recreation.

As part of efforts to recognize and advocate for the respect of the rights of persons with a disability, UNICEF's C4D team developed an accessible version (including in Braille) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The material was presented to policymakers to raise awareness about the need to improve the quality of life of persons with a disability. UNICEF Cuba will continue to identify opportunities for advocacy on inclusive education.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2018, mixed, boarding and rural areas primary and secondary schools have better conditions and better trained directors and teachers.

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

Strengthening the quality of education in rural areas continues to be a priority for the MoE. Mixed (multilevel) and boarding schools are mainly concentrated in rural areas. UNICEF Cuba contributed to the capacity of 242 trainers to provide education that responds to the needs of 168,900 students, of whom 166,387 are from the rural sector. This knowledge will be disseminated to 12,062 schools heads and teachers at mixed (multilevel) and boarding schools in rural areas.

This knowledge-sharing helped to better prepare teachers in rural areas, meeting key MoE objectives related to the quality of education for physical education, computing and English, as well as preventing violence against children in educational settings.

In addition to the capacity building provided by the Latin American Reference Centre for Special Education, particular attention was paid to preparing 9,615 rural teachers who serve more than 1,200 children with disabilities in schools and multi-grade classrooms – with the objective of providing them with specialized educational support for taking into account children's needs.

UNICEF Cuba provided data-collection and analysis supplies to provincial educational authorities in Pinar del Rio, Matanzas, Villa Clara, Sancti Spíritus, Ciego de Avila, Camagüey and Granma provinces to strengthen the capacity of provincial educational entities to generate statistics and undertake teaching planning processes.

Joint MoE-UNICEF monitoring of rural schools in Manzanillo, Buey Arriba and Media Luna municipalities reviewed curricular implementation through classroom audits, interviews and surveys, which revealed the need to continue training families to become more involved in their children's educational development. UNICEF will continue to address the issue of family and fathers' involvement in education and care through schools for parents, a long-standing part of the Cuban education system, where teachers engage with families on education quality, violence prevention and inclusion of children with disabilities, among other topics.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018, schools and communities of the most vulnerable areas to disasters strengthened their resilience capacities.

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

As a step in its year-to-year incremental coverage, the MoE-UNICEF Cuba disaster risk reduction programme included in 2017 three municipalities in Ciego de Avila Province affected by Hurricane Irma: Chambas, Morón and Majagua. Resilience was strengthened among 10,134 children (5,177 girls and 276 children with disabilities of whom 21.4 per cent are in mainstream schools) and 542 teachers at 42 schools located in 15 vulnerable communities, who acknowledged the programme's contribution to their preparedness as they planned to face and respond to the hurricane.

During the preparation stage, the schools were able to assess risks and vulnerabilities through a child-led risk-mapping exercise, with the participation of several organizations (Cuban Civil Defence, Red Cross, MoPH, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment).

Through this programme, schools updated their disaster risk reduction plans and no loss of human lives was registered as a result of Hurricane Irma, despite heavy damage to the centres.

The importance of envisioning roles for both women and men in these contexts was stressed during the preparation phase, during which 324 teachers and community members were trained in gender-focused issues.

Despite the short implementation period of this educational programme in the area, UNICEF Cuba and the MoE monitored 17 participating schools (40.2 per cent of the total) where commitment by local governments was witnessed in relation to preparing and protecting the population. Bottlenecks related to risk perception were identified among the population, indicating a need for further training and reference to the Government's climate-change initiative, especially since these populations live along the coastline and are thus vulnerable to flooding. The next steps for the disaster risk reduction programme will be documentation for potential replication and developing child participation mechanisms in local decision-making bodies.

UNICEF Cuba also worked together with the National Institute of Hydraulic Resources to promote a culture of water conservation. Some 4,700 girls, boys and adolescents participated in related national drawing competitions, and more than 4,000 children belong to 160 interest circles (i.e. community-based after-school activities) related to saving water.

As a result of efforts on inclusive education, 65 children with physical disabilities strengthened their knowledge and capacity for saving water through four water measurement workshops.

**OUTCOME 4** By 2018, children and adolescents enjoy improved comprehensive protection, strengthening mechanisms, and implementation of innovative forms of participation, rights promotion and violence prevention and other risk behaviours.

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

In 2017 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) coordinated the drafting of the State Party Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report was due on 19 March 2017 and will be presented to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2018, according to Government reports. MoFA established a multi-disciplinary working group that

underwent a consultation process to determine the way forward on legal harmonization. According to official reports, the State report will emphasize measures taken with a view to implement past CRC recommendations, particularly around key challenges such as the legal age for marriage, criminal responsibility and work, as well as other aspects related to children with disabilities and specialized courts for children. UNICEF Cuba continues to express its willingness and availability to support the report-drafting process.

Throughout the year, UNICEF Cuba continued to expand and deepen its partnerships with the OHCH, the National Institute of Sports, Physical Culture and Recreation (INDER) and the ministries of culture, education, justice and interior, to strengthen advocacy, awareness-raising and capacity building among various social actors for the promotion of rights and meaningful participation of children and adolescents through culture, sports, recreation and social communication.

In parallel, UNICEF continued to support social investigation and knowledge-sharing about children and adolescents and their environments through recognized scientific institutions such as the Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research, Centre for Youth Studies (CESJ) and Juan Marinello Cuban Cultural Research Institute. Research at these institutions feeds into UNICEF's country programme implementation and supports advocacy on key and emerging issues, such as social constructions related to violence and adolescents' use of ICTs.

With an equity focus, UNICEF Cuba worked with key partners at the national and sub-national level in programmes that promote child participation in the cultural sector, as well as social integration of groups of children and adolescents who are vulnerable due to a lack of services, the nature of their disability or place of residence in provinces such as Havana and Granma. Interventions in Granma Province in 2017 expanded their geographic reach through community-based 'culture houses'.

In relation to child protection, UNICEF focused its efforts on advocacy initiatives and strengthening the technical capacity of key partners such as the MoE and Mol, on issues such as violence prevention and attention to groups in disadvantaged situations (i.e., children and adolescents without parental support who live in institutions, children who committed acts that the law designates as crimes and children requiring the support of protection centres) in accordance with international standards, while promoting synergies with other allies and social actors.

An initiative on global rights led by the Ministry of Justice (For a world of rights) continues to promote the rights articulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and national legislation, mainly through intersectoral work, capacity building and C4D.

**OUTPUT 1** By 2018, children and adolescents in Old Havana and other municipalities of the capital have spaces and services for their meaningful participation and the development of life skills.

### **Analytical statement of progress**

The initiative in Old Havana resulted in strengthening local capacity to ensure the quality of integrated care for adolescents and adolescent participation, with a focus on human rights and equity. UNICEF and the OHCH ran capacity-building initiatives to prepare all 113 members of the network to contribute to the consolidation of appropriate and adolescent-friendly services. In

addition, UNICEF and OHCH reached over 200 specialists with capacity-building efforts on managing workshops, gender, violence against children and comprehensive protection. Results and experiences were also shared during various national and international events, such as the III Conference on Integrated Child Protection, which enhanced the cross-sectoral nature of this initiative.

Overall, these actions reached about 900 adolescents (65 per cent girls) through 63 workshops (23 and 40 regular and summer sessions, respectively), with their active participation on several topics ranging from national heritage, arts, crafts, history and sciences, contributing to the development of life skills. The programme also included sports activities emphasizing fair play and inclusion, involving some 250 adolescents from the community.

The 'Contigo Somo Más' programme, a weekly one-hour radio programme with national outreach, broadcast 50 shows developed and conducted by adolescents who attended the radio workshop led by Habana Radio's young journalists.

UNICEF and the OHCH also disseminated information on cultural events through two editions of the 'Adolescent Cultural Agenda', reaching 1,700 adolescents with the aim of enhancing their sense of community and participation. A print version of a service guide containing information about health, education, culture, sports, protection and environment (3,000 copies) was distributed to adolescents in Old Havana through over 100 culture-related institutions as well as at the adolescent centre.

During the celebration of World Children's Day, the Centre for Adolescents of Old Havana was officially inaugurated, with designated areas for intellectual and spiritual growth, rights promotion and child participation. In parallel, efforts were geared toward the development of a proposal to ensure the continuity, expansion and strengthening of this initiative.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2018 cultural, sports and recreational spaces of different territories, have capabilities to deliver quality services that promote the meaningful participation of children and adolescents.

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

UNICEF Cuba worked with the National Museum of Fine Arts to promote child rights and participation in the cultural sector through three workshops of appreciation and artistic creation in which 570 children and adolescents from different municipalities participated. The Museum was active in three projects involving groups from disadvantaged situations. UNICEF supported these initiatives with technical advice, supplies and communication materials on rights, child protection and inclusion. These initiatives were captured in exhibitions at the museum and art magazines. The interactions with families were fruitful and hold promise.

UNICEF partnered with Cuba's National Library (leading entity of the national library system) to offer appropriate and friendly services to children and adolescents. UNICEF provided supplies to support workshops and other activities, such as updating the digital library for young audiences and activities to promote reading at all provincial libraries. Eight municipal libraries also contributed to the Ministry of Justice initiative on rights. These initiatives combined, reached 69,016 children and 6,340 early childhood practitioners involved in the community-based ETH programme.

In partnership with the National Council of Cultural Centres, UNICEF engaged in institutional capacity strengthening for art instructors and cultural promoters in their day-to-day work with

900 children and adolescents enrolled in appreciation and artistic creation workshops, using a gender equality and rights-based approach. Of particular relevance was the psycho-ballet initiative for vulnerable groups carried out in partnership with community-based institutions (120 children and adolescents with disabilities, health issues or from disadvantaged social situations).

Geographical focus has shown significant results in the field of culture in Granma Province (eastern part of the country) through the 'communities in favour of children and adolescents' rights' initiative to improve access to quality cultural and social services. In 2017 this initiative was expanded to new municipalities and reached 32,585 children, including 14,073 adolescents and 232 with special educational needs (23,119 girls). UNICEF Cuba supported training initiatives through technical assistance, fostering synergies with other sectors and providing communication materials, which reached local decision makers, art instructors and officials from the cultural sector to promote meaningful participation. This work took place through artistic creation workshops and reading, sports and recreational activities at the community level with a human rights, equity and cross-sectoral approach.

In partnership with INDER, UNICEF Cuba contributed to the organization of the national soccer for all tournament, involving the formation of co-ed soccer teams at schools. More than 2,000 primary school students (c. one third girls) competed at the provincial level; 192 students (64 female) participated in the finals at the national level, on mixed teams. This project promotes sports as well as values and life skills. Physical education teachers and families received C4D materials on children rights, participation, gender and violence prevention.

In line with its overall triangular cooperation goals, UNICEF Cuba provided financial support to enable the participation of a sector expert at the VII International Symposium on Physical Activity.

**OUTPUT 3** By 2018, homes for children without parental care across the country have the capacities for quality care.

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

UNICEF Cuba procured supplies, such as computers and recreation kits, to improve living conditions for 460 children and adolescents without parental care (234 female) living in 49 foster homes throughout the country. Further, in partnership with MoE, UNICEF coordinated capacity-building workshops for over 250 professionals working in these foster homes (mostly women), including directors of special education and pre-school education, heads of households and social workers, to continue expanding knowledge-sharing and use of international standards and national regulations on children without parental care in their daily practice, using a rights-based approach. This year, the initiative placed special emphasis on gender issues and violence against children. Joint MoE-UNICEF efforts seek to foster synergies and knowledge-exchange initiatives with key actors in the culture sector, which enabled participation by children living in foster homes in cultural activities, promoting their right to recreation and meaningful participation.

**OUTPUT 4** By 2018 , prevention, evaluation, treatment, rehabilitation and protection services for children and adolescents at risk, juvenile offenders or victims of crime, have the capacity to provide comprehensive care.

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

UNICEF Cuba continued to contribute to the improvement of protective environments for over 100 adolescents who committed acts that the law classifies as crimes and those studying at the country's 12 vocational centres. UNICEF Cuba provided technical assistance through information-sharing and training, as well as supplies for recreation and vocational training, to these centres to assist in facilitating social re-insertion. UNICEF Cuba also supported the strengthening of cross-sectoral linkages by establishing synergies with the a+ initiative. This entailed participation by children in Integral Formation schools in a+ cultural, sports and recreational activities to promote socialization and well-being.

Communication materials related to child rights, participation, nonviolent coexistence and prevention of abuse were used in the various activities with adolescents, protection agents and families. UNICEF Cuba continued to promote synergies with other aid and cooperation interventions (such as the Old Havana programme on adolescent development and participation) to expand options for educational attention and social integration of adolescents who receive community-level care in Cuba's capital.

Through UNICEF Cuba's financial and technical support for the design of knowledge exchange/South-South cooperation, the Mol organized the III International Conference on Child Protection, which took place in May and brought together 150 delegates, including 37 participants from 12 countries. The event provided a good platform for advocacy, dialogue, South-South cooperation and knowledge exchange around violence prevention, with support from UNICEF LACRO and other UNICEF country offices in the region. The event also served as a framework for capacity building of 113 Cuban specialists, of whom 94 participated in five-day pre-event courses facilitated by a Cuban specialist and four guests from other countries. These courses focused on integrating priority child protection issues and knowledge on emerging topics into the practices of protection professionals. Among the topics covered were prevention of risky behaviours, cyberbullying, care and attention models for adolescents in conflict with the law and determinants of violence. Participants included professionals working in Mol protection centres.

**OUTPUT 5** By 2018, children, adolescents and adults of selected communities and prioritized groups have knowledge of the Convention of the Child Rights and the national legislation.

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

UNICEF Cuba continued to work with the Justice Ministry on its 'For a World of Rights' initiative which strengthens national capacities through research, training and communication on child rights. In 2017, the initiative reached 103 professionals (provincial project coordinators, justice officials, researchers, social communicators and managers) through a refresher course and a symposium on integrated protection and communication.

As part of advocacy efforts to promote a culture of rights, UNICEF Cuba and the Ministry of Justice held another national 'For a world of rights' contest in 2017. Some 1,456 children and adolescents participated through different means of artistic expression, from plastic arts to literature featuring their understanding of children's rights.

Additionally, within the framework of this initiative UNICEF Cuba provided child-friendly C4D materials on child rights and violence prevention to 185 interest circles (community-based after-school activities) in 60 municipalities, involving 1,439 children and 902 adolescents. The project's provincial coordination team selected the municipalities in coordination with the education sector.

As part of the knowledge management element of this initiative, UNICEF Cuba shared technical knowledge on gender and comprehensive child protection, in partnership with the Union of Jurists of Cuba. The child rights module of the Mediation, Gender and Law Diploma, reached 30 specialists, including justice sector professionals and psychologists. UNICEF Cuba also shared relevant materials on the SDGs and children's rights with the University of Havana for use in its optional course on child rights. In 2017 the courses emphasized gender equality, violence prevention, protective environments and results-based approaches, using UNICEF materials as a knowledge base.

CESJ findings related to Cuban adolescents revealed increasing trends in ICT use and associated risks. As part of this partnership, UNICEF Cuba shared the findings with key stakeholders, such as a network of researchers on child-related topics as well as specialists involved in the 'For a World of Rights' initiative. This initiative included capacity-building activities on child participation from a rights perspective that reached 2,852 children (1,449 girls) and 2,358 adolescents (1,235 female) from both urban (54 per cent) and rural (46 per cent) areas. With technical and financial support from UNICEF Cuba, they study findings nurtured the generation of knowledge and training with a rights-based approach of 2,313 adults (1,363 female) working with youths, such as researchers, trainees and university students. Findings were made available at several international scientific events.

## **OUTCOME 5 Monitoring and evaluation, C4D and Supplies and Logistics.**

### **Analytical statement of progress**

In mid-2017, the Government of Cuba requested an extension of the UNDAF and agency-specific CPD cycles. Although the programme cycle will be extended, UNICEF had already begun some planning and activities, including drafting of documents that will form the basis for strategy notes, programmatic context consultations with experts, RBM training and the introduction of planning elements to counterparts at both the mid-year and annual review meetings. A participatory process to define AMP priorities resulted in the inclusion of planning and gender priorities. The field monitoring plan was carried out as designed and recommendations were implemented.

Integration is a fundamental element of UNICEF Cuba's evidence-generation efforts. This was evident in multi-sectoral dialogues surrounding the decision-making process for MICS design, for which 21 institutions joined forces to determine the most pressing data gaps to be addressed. In addition, UNICEF Cuba's advocacy and support facilitated reviews of nine statistical systems to harmonize child-related indicators and ensure SDG alignment.

The joint programme to strengthen resilience in drought-affected communities in Santiago is a good practice on cross-sectoral linkages, as it incorporates resilience, climate change adaptation, health (through water and vector-borne disease prevention) adolescent participation and community engagement around WASH and education. A highlight of the programme is the integration and replication of a previously tested grassroots WASH initiative on child-led hygiene promotion campaigns, with children leading behaviour-change efforts using a bottom-up

approach. Beginning at the family and community levels, children promoted these issues with peers and school staff, gaining recognition and playing an empowered and informed role that triggered community action.

UNICEF Cuba also played a convening role with multiple sector stakeholders led by Cuban Civil Defence on the development of a good practices manual for Cuba, based on UNICEF's *Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action*. The manual describes clearly the role of all actors at every stage of the risk reduction/preparedness cycle, where synergies enhance effectiveness when facing a natural disaster, as well as actions with families is recommended for prevention and life-saving actions. The main institutions involved in producing this manual were the MoPH, MoE, Red Cross, Cuban Women's Federation and the Ministry of Labour, all of which will take steps to ensure implementation.

At the dawn of Cuba's own digital age, UNICEF Cuba's content for target audiences experienced a significant shift in the format and platforms used, resulting in a 30 per cent increase in the number of Facebook followers; a surge in the presence of quality digital content on global platforms such as UNICEF Connect or Medium; an agreement with off-line, free and nationally accessible entertainment; an alternative educational television package (*La Mochila*) to integrate C4D materials, reaching more than 163,000 weekly users; and participation in regional/global initiatives that amplify Cuban children's voices, e.g., the climate comic contest or the climate bloggers initiative with UNICEF Haiti on the 'Timouny' website.

Advocacy efforts focused on: responsible paternity and the 'early moments matter' campaign, and included UNICEF participation in a national conference on maternity and paternity, led by the NCSE. These efforts led to the joint production of TV spots with key celebrity influencers and contributions to a documentary on fatherhood by a local filmmaker; inclusion of children with disabilities, with the launch of the innovative, child-friendly version of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability as a pivotal moment; breastfeeding promotion around World Breastfeeding Week; and celebration of World Children's Day, which set a precedent for children's participation in critical spaces, such as traditional mass media and the Parliament

## **OUTPUT 1 Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey- five round: Health & Nutrition Basic indicators**

### **Analytical statement of progress**

Cuba's National Bureau of Statistics and Information, with UNICEF Cuba technical support, created a mechanism for the harmonization of indicators, methodologies and data on children around the SDGs. Key sectors generating statistics on children and adolescents play an integral part in the process.

UNICEF Cuba advocated for Cuba's participation in the CEA-CEPAL's Statistics Group on Children and Adolescents, composed of 15 other countries and a technical secretariat led by LACRO. Both actions enhance national capacity to produce relevant, comparable and disaggregated data for substantive indicators on the situation of children and adolescents with an equity focus.

Technical teams of education and health statisticians – who manage sectoral administrative data on Cuban children, disaggregated at the municipal and provincial levels– updated their data collection tools and means of data verification. Technical capacity at these statistical system levels, thanks to UNICEF Cuba's partnerships with the corresponding ministries, improved the availability of information and use of up-to-date data for decision-making on policies and programmes. This should gradually contribute to improved monitoring of children's

situation in the country.

Planning for the sixth round of the MICS was underway at end-2017. Operational team members strengthened their survey design skills at a regional technical assistance framework workshop, where new global tools were presented. National experts explored data gaps that could potentially be closed with MICS6 during a kick-off workshop coordinated by UNICEF Cuba. The contextualization platform for the global survey was established during the meetings with the steering committee and technical committee. The memorandum of understanding was signed by the Government's implementing agency and UNICEF Cuba. UNICEF continued to support bilateral working sessions between the operational team and national experts from key sectors related to children, and will contribute to finalization of the survey plan and budget documents, expected for the first quarter of 2018.

The main findings contained in the "Atlas of Childhood and Adolescence in Cuba" were disseminated to key national counterparts and stakeholders during the annual country programme review. It is an unprecedented study for Cuba, prepared in partnership with the FLACSO Cuba Programme (University of Havana), the National Bureau of Statistics and Information and UNICEF Cuba. The Atlas, based on population and housing census databases, will be published in 2018. It contains ample evidence to permit analysis of the situation of children, adolescents and women, centred on the spatial heterogeneity of the country's 168 municipalities, through four dimensions of analysis: 1) sociodemographic characteristics of the Cuban population under 18 years; 2) characteristics of households, family, and co-habitation; 3) characteristics of mothers and fathers; and 4) housing characteristics. The *Atlas* will be a key programming tool for UNICEF Cuba throughout the planning phase of the upcoming country programme; a roll-out plan will target key decision-makers to advocate for its use in government planning and policies at both the national and local levels.

**OUTPUT 2** By 2018, communication initiatives have been implemented to promote attitudes and practices on issues related to the right to survival, development, protection and participation of children and adolescents.

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

The number of UNICEF Cuba social network followers outside Cuba continues to be greater than those in the country. UNICEF's website in Cuba was launched in November 2016. From November 24 to December 31 of that year, the website received 25,700 visits from 2,772 users (10.6 per cent were Cubans). During 2017, the website received approximately 25,500 visits by 9,900 users, of whom 22.87 per cent were Cubans.

In 2016 UNICEF Cuba's Facebook page received 3,424 likes and 3,400 followers. In 2017, the numbers increased to 4,978 likes and 4,973 followers. Only 15 per cent of the people are connected from Cuba, most are women between 25 and 34 years of age.

To advance programme priorities, UNICEF Cuba developed C4D materials linked to specific programmes, such as those aimed at promoting safer hygiene practices among the population in drought-affected communities in Santiago (UNDP, WFP, UNICEF Joint Programme), Zika prevention within the framework of the 'Care for your Dream' project, targeting women of childbearing age, as well as actions related to inclusive education. These had a strong media impact and culminated with the publication of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Braille as well as a traditional hard copy version.

The development of audio-visual materials increased significantly in 2017. UNICEF's presence in digital media rose, as did participation in LACRO and Headquarters' initiatives such as ICON, blogs and webpages. Many of these materials were developed in the wake of Hurricane Irma, with the aim of presenting children's views on both its impact and the recovery efforts.

World Children's Day contributed to strengthening partnerships with institutions and relevant public figures. Silvio Rodríguez, well-known singer and composer and UNICEF's Goodwill Ambassador, and La Colmenita, (children's theatre company) performed on World Children's Day with about 1,500 children and relatives present.

UNICEF and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment formed a committee, with the main national institutions linked to children, for the nationwide events related to World Children's Day. The committee coordinated multiple activities to mark the day, with a significant presence in the media, resulting in substantial radio and TV coverage; including through important channels and opinion spaces such as Buenos Días; the Mesa Redonda TV programme and municipal radiostations.

Special morning activities were held at schools across the country to commemorate the day. The National Museum of Fine Arts opened its premises to children, who participated in various activities such as drawing, games and performances conducted by arts students. About 500 children and their families "took over" the Museum and participated in the event.

As chair of the UN Communications group, UNICEF Cuba coordinated interagency activities.

UNICEF also forged new partnerships in the process of developing a case study for the *State of the World's Children* report on connectivity in Cuba. These partnerships with the Ministry of Communications, youthclubs and La Mochila offered the Office new ways to reach children and adolescents with both global and country-specific content through institutional platforms.

### **OUTPUT 3 Effective and Efficient management of supplies and logistics**

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

A total of 110 sales orders were issued during 2017. Of these, 24 were emergency sales orders issued in response to Hurricane Irma; 112 purchase orders were issued. All supplies delivered to implementing partners included a signed Government receipt.

#### **Document centre**

#### **Publications**

<b>Title</b>
Recomendaciones ante complicación no obstétrica de gestantes y puérperas. Reimpresión.
Juego Riesgolandia
Folleto N° 9 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... La sequía
Folleto N° 7 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... Las consecuencias del cambio climático
Folleto N° 8 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... Huracanes, Tornados y descargas eléctricas
Folleto N° 6 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... La elevación del nivel del mar y los eventos de

oleaje extremo
Folleto N° 4 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... la erosión y perdida de suelos y bosques
Folleto N° 5 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... Los ríos crecidos, los torrentes de montaña y las inundaciones
Folleto N° 3 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... Derrumbes y Deslizamientos
Folleto N° 2 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... Terremotos y Tsunamis
Folleto N° 1 de la serie Protege a tu familia de... Aguas contaminadas
Convención de los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, CDPD. Versión en Braille.
Convención de los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, CDPD. Version Hojas sujetadas como abanico.
Convención de los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad, CDPD. Folleto.
5 modelos de postales con dibujos de niños, niñas y adolescentes
Bellas Artes ahora (2016)
Ediciones de la agenda cultural adolescente. 3ro. y 4to. trimestre
Guía de servicios para adolescentes
Folleto ilustrado "Alejandra y su grupo de Mapa Verde cuentan su historia
Almanaque Trazaguas
Libro Trazaguas
Juego Caminata Sísmica
Serie de 5 Infografías para la prevención de desastres
."La educación para la prevención de los desastres y reducción de los riesgos en escuelas, familias y comunidades".
"A prepararnos y protegernos: Educación, Capacitación, Currículo, Integración, Evaluación y Sostenibilidad".
Libro " Sugerencias metodológicas para el trabajo del maestro en el grupo clase multigrado"
Suelto discapacidad visual
Suelto discapacidad motora
Suelto discapacidad auditiva
Díptico sobre discapacidad intelectual
Díptico general con sugerencias prácticas para la atención de NNA con discapacidad en el contexto escolar:
Programa Educa a tu Hijo: 21 años en la práctica educativa cubana
Tríptico sobre Vitamina A
Guía Práctica para el manejo alimentario nutricional de grupos vulnerables en situaciones de emergencias.
Manual Guías alimentarias para profesionales de la salud.
Plegable sobre Preparaciones propias para iniciar la alimentación del menor de 2 años
Cartilla con menú saludable para niños y niñas
Tríptico: Consejos a la familia para evitar accidentes
Pegatina con "Vía a la Vida"
Díptico sobre educación vial para los niños y las familias.
Libro "La Filatelia y el Tránsito
Calendario de mesa de la Dirección Nacional de Transito DNT
Lona Personalizada para promover prácticas saludables en el uso del agua segura en la prevención de las enfermedades diarreicas agudas
Pegatina Agua Segura, Fondo Azul 8 cm de diámetro, imagen redonda, en vinil autoadhesivo.

Tríptico sobre 5 claves para la prevención de las EDA
Tríptico sobre prevención de EDA
Plegable sobre problemas más comunes en la lactancia
Plegable sobre Lactancia Materna dirigido a padres.
Gigantografia sobre lactancia materna, utilización de las SRO y Cinc Para uso en interiores.
Plegable sobre foto protección
Plegable prevención de la Obesidad
Manual de normas higiénico epidemiológicas y de Bioseguridad de los Bancos de Leche Humana
Tríptico de Lactancia materna & BLH
Afiche sobre protocolo de manejo de hemorragia obstétrica
Guías de Actuación ante complicaciones no obstétricas.

### Lessons learned

Document Type/Category	Title
Lesson Learned	Strengthening disaster resilience through education in children and adolescents in vulnerable schools and communities, incorporating a gender focus.

### Programme documents

Document Type	Title	Name
Reference Documents	Plan de acción para seguimiento a la GSS 2017	Cuba_Plan acción seguimiento GSS_2017.pdf
AWP/RWP	Annual Work Plan 2017	Cuba_AWP_2017.pdf
CPAP	CPAP	Cuba_CPAP_2014-2018.pdf
CPMP	CPMP	Cuba_CPMP_2014-2018.pdf
CPD	CPD	Cuba_RM_CPD 2014-2018.pdf
CPD	CPD	Cuba_CPD_2014-2018.pdf
IMEP	IMEP	Cuba_IMEP_2011.pdf
AWP/RWP	AWP	Cuba_AWP_2011_YG.pdf
AWP/RWP	AWP	Cuba_AWP_2011_YE.pdf
AWP/RWP	AWP	Cuba_AWP_2011_YD.pdf
CPMP	CPMP	Cuba CPMP 2008-2012.pdf
CPAP	CPAP	Cuba_CPAP_2008-2012.pdf