Country Office Annual Report 2018

Honduras

Part 1: Situation update in the country

An epidemic of violence, displacement, and migration make growing up very challenging for children and adolescents in Honduras. In 2018, the population of children and adolescents was estimated at almost 3.5 million, or 38.8 per cent of the total population, half of whom were girls. Just over one half (52.9 per cent) lived in urban areas, and 9.3 per cent of children belonged to one of the country's nine indigenous or afro-descendent groups.

The elections at the end of 2017 generated a climate of political instability that was characterized by increasing polarization and public protests organized by opposition parties. Several clashes between security forces and demonstrators and the destruction and looting of public and private property led the Government to impose a curfew and other special measures, some of them remaining in 2018, like military surveillance. The United Nations (UN) system coordinated political dialogue between the main opposition forces and the Government, reaching a series of agreements that are expected to be discussed in the National Congress to become binding agreements. UNICEF's programme implementation was affected due to the unrest that occurred in the country during the first months of the year. There were some restrictions to carry out field visits and undertake other activities essential for the implementation of the country programme. UNICEF partners also faced similar challenges.

In economic terms, the country has three important characteristics. First, remittances are the second most important source of foreign exchange (18 per cent of gross domestic product) and are equivalent to more than three times the value of foreign direct investment, a situation that makes the national economy extremely vulnerable and weakens the social fabric. Second, the country has one of the smallest middle classes in Latin America, at 12 percent. Third, poverty has not declined significantly over the last 18 years: from 63.7 per cent in 2001 to 61.9 per cent in 2018), and the country has one of the highest inequality rates in Latin America (0.53 in 2018).

Honduras has been one of the three countries with the greatest climate risk in the world during the last two decades. According to the Index for Risk Management (INFORM), 144 municipalities in the country (48.3 per cent of the total) present a high or very high level of risk in terms of the local population being exposed to the natural and human hazards that are considered in this index. The municipalities with a very high risk of danger and exposure are in the regions that are considered the centre of development in the country, particularly in the northern and central zone.

In 2017, 77.0 per cent of children and adolescents in Honduras lived in households that were classified as poor based on their income level. It is estimated that three out of five Honduran children live in multidimensional poverty and one out of every four children live in extreme poverty. Only 14 per cent of children do not live in any kind of poverty (multidimensional or income-based). Multidimensional poverty affects 73.9 per cent of children in rural areas and 39.1 per cent of children in urban areas.

Coverage of the education system is low for pre-school and secondary education. In 2018,

coverage in pre-school education was 33.4 per cent (36.6 per cent in 2017), 48.7 per cent in lower secondary (46.7 per cent in 2017) and 29.9 per cent in middle education (28.1 per cent in 2017). In total it is estimated that 1,170,000 children aged 5-17 were not studying in the formal education system.

Data from the University Observatory of National and International Education (OUDENI) show that the efficiency of the education system has been deteriorating in recent years. The number of students dropping out of formal education increased from 58,730 in 2016 to 77,067 in 2018. In the same period, the number of students who repeated the year increased from 39,908 to 83,429, and the number of students who failed the year increased from 62,312 to 93,124. In addition, there were 371,431 over-aged students, which put them at greater risk of dropping out of school before completing their studies.

The main causes of the low coverage and inefficiency of the education system include:
- A lack of financial resources of families which forces children to work. The percentage of child labour rose from 15.2 per cent in 2017 to 16.4 per cent in 2018 among children aged 5-17 years. Half of these children are employed in the agricultural sector. Child labour on coffee plantations is widespread. Throughout the country there are an estimated 110,000 families dedicated to coffee growing, with an estimated 20,000 children working on coffee farms. Parents take their children with them to work on different farms during the coffee harvest season, arguing that if they were left alone in their homes, they would be exposed to danger;
- The perceived insecurity in schools, around schools and in local communities. A recent survey conducted by OUDENI found that 38 per cent of students in grade 8 said they felt unsafe in school, 58 per cent said they felt unsafe on the way to school and 57 per cent felt unsafe in the neighbourhood where the school is located;
- Violence within schools. This is perceived as a social situation that limits access to education. The same OUDENI survey showed that 37 per cent of grade 4, 6 and 8 students had been insulted by other students during 2018. Some 36 per cent reported that other students break, hide or steal their things, and 28 per cent stated that other students hit or push them. In addition, 21 per cent of school principals interviewed reported that they have witnessed students bringing knives to school;
- Insufficient teaching staff in schools. The teacher to pupil ratio in Honduras is higher than the Latin American average;
- Lack of efficiency of public investment in education. Despite representing 65.7 per cent of total public investment in children, this budget is mostly spent on wages and salaries and very little remains to fund the operation of schools.

The number of homicides against children and adolescents reduced from 513 in 2013 (a rate of 13.8 per 100,000 inhabitants) to 263 in 2017 (a rate of 7.5 per 100,000 inhabitants). The levels of sexual violence against children slight increased from 2,419 reported cases in 2016 to 2,431 in 2017: 88 per cent of the victims were girls.

Preliminary findings from the 2018 Survey on Violence Against Children and Adolescents in Honduras indicated that 44 per cent of women between the ages of 18-24 years and 36.7 per cent of men of the same age reported that they had been victims of sexual, physical or emotional violence before the age of 18 years. Most adolescent victims did not receive assistance from public institutions following the assault, mainly because they had no knowledge of them (70 per cent of women and 65 per cent of men). The same survey confirmed that violence is one of the major causes of students dropping out of school: reporting

that 18.2 per cent of females and 16.7 per cent of males missed school as a result of having been victims of physical violence before the age of 18 years.

Some of the causes that foster contexts of violence and insecurity for children include:
- Lack of staff specialized in the protection of children's rights, such as judges, prosecutors, psychologists and social workers;
- Lack of offices of government agencies that are close to where people live so that they can file reports, combined with a lack of suitable information on available services;
- Limited coordination between public institutions, civil society and the private sector, as well as uncertainty regarding the implementation of local protection mechanisms and a lack of information systems for case management;
- Insufficient public investment in protecting children from violence. Only 7.9 per cent of total investment in children goes to protection against violence, 90.4 per cent of which is indirect investment in initiatives that are focused on the general population.

On 15 August, the Government declared an emergency in the drought-affected 'Dry Corridor' region. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA), more than 327,000 people (65,500 families) in 74 municipalities had been severely affected by the drought,259,000 people (51,800 families) in 34 municipalities had been moderately affected,while 265,000 people (53,000 families) in 37 municipalities were slightly affected. With the support of the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF monitored the food and nutritional security situation in the affected region, identifying that the nutritional situation of children aged under five years was not severely impacted by the drought. Of the children who were evaluated, only 1.3 per cent presented a degree of acute malnutrition. The availability of water for human consumption, sanitation and hygiene was not affected for 80 per cent of families, who said they had enough water at the time of being interviewed, although half said they had less water compared to the same period in the previous year. In both cases, it was important to engage in monitoring and surveillance of nutrition and water-related diseases in children due to the slowly evolving nature of the drought.

On October 6, the Government declared a Red Alert due to heavy rains that affected three departments, and a green alert for the country's other 15 departments. As of October 17, the Standing Committee for Contingencies reported that 8,373 families and 32,949 people had been affected, 4,343 families were evacuated and 87 families were in shelters. Of the country's 94 shelters, 13 had been activated, 172 schools suffered damage and eight water systems were affected across 10 departments, in addition to other damage. Through the Humanitarian Network, UNICEF monitored the humanitarian assistance provided by the relevant institutions and organizations to the affected population, which consisted of basic items such as mattresses, blankets, and hygiene kits. The sudden nature of the floods meant that the immediate effects included damages to agricultural production, the disruption of classes due to the use of schools as emergency shelters and the collapse or contamination of drinking water sources, water supply systems and sanitation facilities. The floods have negative effects on medium-term food and nutritional security, school absenteeism, good hygiene practices and the use of water that is fit for human consumption.

Child migration, because it is so volatile and clandestine, is a complex issue that is very difficult to measure. The return of migrant children has been used as the main proxy indicator to measure the magnitude of child migration in Honduras, through administrative records collected in the returned migrant reception centres. As of November 2018, a total of 67,913 migrants had returned to the country, representing an increase of 41.4 per cent from 2017. Of

these, 8,587 were children and adolescents, or 12.6 per cent of the total number of returnees. The majority of returned migrants came from Mexico, followed by the United States of America. A study conducted in schools across the nation showed that 19 per cent of grade 6 and 8 students are always or sometimes planning to migrate while 11.8 per cent do what is needed to migrate.

During the year, Honduras experienced a phenomenon of mass migration called 'migrant caravans: large groups of migrants travelling together towards Mexico and the United States. These caravans are examples of mixed migratory flows that have represented real challenges in terms of the protection of migrants' human rights in the countries of origin, transit and destination. A migrant caravan started on 13 October in San Pedro Sula (Honduras). The number of people who formed part of the caravan was difficult to confirm as national authorities across Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico reported different estimations. By the end of October, over 9,300 people who formed this migrant caravan had crossed into Mexico, including nearly 2,300 children. Total deportation flows are difficult to ascertain, as different entities are managing different datasets and have not yet been able to reconcile these figures into one official set of national data. UNICEF redirected programme funds to support the Government to provide immediate child protection services to returned children and their families.

Government officials reported the return of 7,077 Hondurans, who are assumed to have formed part of the caravans between October 15 and November 16. Some 62 per cent returned from Guatemala and the rest from Mexico, with 44 per cent of all returnees being children under the age of 18 years. A preliminary analysis carried out by International Organization for Migration (IOM) based on the Displacement Tracking Matrix methodology facilitated a partial characterization of the participants in the caravans, with the following comparison made to the profile of traditional returnees:
- More family group migration;
- Increased presence of children and women;
- Significant increase in adults who did not have any type of educational qualification and had not completed secondary education;
- A greater number of people who stated that violence was their motive for migration.

This situation presents a challenging scenario for the implementation of the UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation, as strategies need to be reviewed in order to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency. This is especially the case with the work of institutional strengthening, framed in the installation of a system for guaranteeing the rights of children and adolescents that will have to focus much more on municipal protection mechanisms, given that these have the highest levels of incidence in the lives of Honduran children.

Part 2: Major Results including in humanitarian action and gender, against the results in the Country Programme Documents

1. Early childhood development

The expected outcome of early childhood development (ECD) component in the UNICEF Honduras Country Programme 2017-2021 is "children aged 0-6 years and their families have access to comprehensive services linked to early childhood development with a gender-based and intercultural perspective". This programme component contributes to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages" as

well as Outcome 2 in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017–2021 "Excluded populations in priority municipalities have access to integrated, quality health services using an approach focused on social determinants of health to make advances in the right to health".

Since 2015, UNICEF has been supporting the Government of Honduras in the implementation of the National 'Parenting with Love' (Criando con Amor) Strategy to promote early childhood development in the most excluded populations. By the end of 2017, the Parenting with Love strategy had reached 64 municipalities in the departments of Lempira, Intibucá and La Paz, the first two with financial support from UNICEF. In the last quarter of 2018, the Government used its own resources to begin implementation in 67 additional municipalities in the departments of Santa Barbara, Copan and Ocotepeque. These six departments have high rates of multidimensional child poverty and majority rural and indigenous populations.

UNICEF continued to support government institutions that are responsible for birth registration, health and nutrition, early education, and protection against violence in selected municipalities to articulate integrated early childhood care mechanisms. These help expand coverage and improve the quality of services for children aged under six years and their families. UNICEF also contributed to the development of parenting skills, teaching positive parenting practices to indigenous peoples.

In the departments of Lempira and Intibuca, where the strategy has been implemented since 2015, an evaluation of child development was carried out using the EDIN scale (Integrated Child Development Scale), which covers five basic development areas: gross motor skills, fine motor skills, cognitive development, socio-affective development and language skills. The percentage of children with language development in accordance with their chronological age increased from 72 per cent in 2015 to 79 per cent in 2018. The proportion of children with age appropriate socio-emotional development increased from 78 per cent to 88 per cent during the same period.

A total of 13,570 parents or caregivers from Intibuca and Lempira participated in the actions for the development of parenting competencies. At the end of 2018, a random sample of parents was selected and the 'E2P Positive Parenting Scale' was applied This assesses four competency areas (bonding, training, protection and reflection) based on three categories: 'Risk Zone' for parents who score between 0 and 29; a 'Monitoring Zone' for those who score between 30 and 49 on the scale; and an 'Optimum Zone' for parents who score 50 or more on the scale. Around 40 per cent of families had developed competencies in terms of reflection, which includes parental self-care, parental self-monitoring, influence on children's development, and the anticipation of relevant life scenarios. However, only 10 per cent of families had developed bonding skills such as parental sensitivity and emotional warmthand training skills such as learning stimulation and positive discipline.

Key strategies to achieve the results were:
- Communication through art, cultural activities and traditional methods. Child communicators, religious leaders and professional communicators who had received training used churches, local radio stations and community activities to spread messages. The communication strategy uses material that is appropriate to the cultural context of participants.

- The Growing Together programme, which has the aim of raising women's self-esteem and

valuing their role in the development of their children. Growing Together brings together women from different generations (grandmothers, mothers and daughters) so that they can share their child raising knowledge and practices. It includes the recovery of traditional skills, handicrafts, customs and games that provide elements of stimulation for children aged 0 to 6 years.

- Family education through home visits. More than 3,000 community volunteers carried out monthly visits to families for the development of parenting skills. The volunteers also have established systems for the coordination of actions with community and religious leaders that generate a supportive environment for children in early childhood, including those with disabilities.

- Child development centres. The child development centres (day-care centres) provide comprehensive care for the children of working mothers who are living in poverty and extreme poverty and require care to meet their basic health, nutrition, early education and protection needs. The centres encourage the adoption of best practices for child care and learning within the families who use the service, promoting the integrated development of their children. The community is involved in the management and supervision of the provision and quality of child care services in the local area. The child development centres are jointly managed by central and municipal governments and communities.

- Development of skills for comprehensive care in health, education, protection and civil registry. The Government has defined a group of 15 key interventions for the comprehensive child care of children aged 0 to 6 years. UNICEF contributed to the development of skills for professionals and provided basic equipment to meet quality standards in the provision of these services, including improvements in the coverage of services in remote and rural populations.

The Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and municipal governments are the main implementing partners. UNICEF established a partnership with ChildFund, the Pan-American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and WFP to develop capacities at a national and municipal level that facilitate the implementation of these strategies.

UNICEF partnered with National Autonomous University of Honduras and Francisco Morazan National Pedagogical University for research on social norms and child-rearing practices among indigenous populations, and capacity building with service providers. Jointly with the Government, UNICEF coordinated the formulation of a behaviour development communication and social change strategy and community-based interventions for the promotion of early childhood development. UNICEF providedtechnical assistance for the capacity development of service providers, the establishment of standards and indicators for monitoring the quality of services and the development of an inter-agency management model for the functioning of the Integrated Service Delivery Network.

2. Quality and inclusive education

The expected outcome of the quality and inclusive education component in the UNICEF Honduras Country Programme 2017-2021 is "children and adolescents suffering most from exclusion access quality and inclusive education at the primary and preschool levels". This programme component contributes to SDG4 "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" as well Outcome 1 in the UNDAF 2017–2021

"The most vulnerable children and adolescents in priority municipalities at pre-basic, basic and middle-level education have access to inclusive, quality education".

UNICEF has been a long-term partner of the Government of Honduras, and a key advocacy and technical partner to the Secretariat of Education. UNICEF's education efforts are focused on working with the Secretariat of Education on the provision of inclusive and quality education. Advances have been noted on advocacy and drawing attention to the children and adolescents suffering severe exclusion from accessing quality and inclusive education.

UNICEF was instrumental in advocating for the needs of children in indigenous, rural and violence-affected contexts. Beyond the advocacy work, UNICEF provided the technical leadership to support the Secretariat of Education in developing strategic and pedagogical approaches to best meet the needs of the children excluded from education. Progress was made in bilingual intercultural education coverage in indigenous communities, and through a peacebuilding programme in schools affected by organized crime and violence.

Developments in the areas of bilingual-intercultural education, peacebuilding and rural education feature common modalities used to gain traction with both the Secretary of Education and the communities targeted by UNICEF. This approach required that UNICEF work through these levels regardless of the type of community being targeted (indigenous, organized crime-affected or rural). In practice, this approach valued working with municipal authorities, education department authorities, school clusters, school management committees and student governments. Community, family and student collaboration and participation is upheld through this approach. For example, alongside traditional teacher training, school and teacher improvements were conducted using school-to-school mentoringvia school clusters or school networking.

Through these clusters and networks, schools and teachers improved in the quality of their teaching and on the principles of physically and emotionallysafe schools and inclusivity (for example, multi-grade or multi-lingual). Further, pragmatic peacebuilding efforts – or engaging students to contribute to a culture of peace, coexistence and citizenship - were effective through peer-to-peer exchanges, tutoring and support, particularly in relation to alternative learning for children excluded from the education system, such as those displaced, returnees or over-age. Overall, these common community-based modalities and programmatic strategies were critical to ensure that UNICEF's financial, technical and advocacy investments led to results for boys and girls. Nevertheless, it was evident that the programme is yet robust, given the needs and opportunities in the country.

UNICEF played a critical role in achieving both results at the school level for teachers and students, and at the policy level, ensuring the Secretary of Education's support and approval of efforts towards schools in indigenous, rural and organized crime-affected contexts. There are now clear strategic and programmatic guides and manuals developed with the Secretary of Education on peacebuilding (culture of peace, coexistence and citizenship) and rural education. These are tangible things in which the Secretary of Education can move forward to ensure that more children have access to education that is both inclusive and of quality.

UNICEF's efforts appreciate the value of risk-informed programming in consideration of the interconnectedness and effect of climate change, schools coping with the effects of high-violence due to organized crime and acute poverty in both urban and rural areas. UNICEF made investments in resilience for climate change) with the Ministry of Education's Department

of Environmental Education, Community and Health. UNICEF is increasingly aware of the need to ensure that education is utilized as the vehicle to address or link humanitarian and development programming. Over the second half of this country programme, humanitarian-development coherence will be an area that will be strengthened in education programming cooperation.

3. Child protection against violence

The expected outcome of the child protection against violence component in the UNICEF Honduras Country Programme 2017-2021 is "the country has a better system to protect against violence in its various forms". This programme component contributes to SDG16 "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies" as well Outcome 4 in the UNDAF 2017–2021 "The Honduran population, and in particular the most vulnerable groups in municipalities with high rates of violence and crime, has improved coexistence, citizen security and access to protection mechanisms with broad citizen participation".

Since 2016, UNICEF has supported the Government to develop and strengthen a national child protection system to effectively prevent and reduce all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children. UNICEF has improved access to child protection and justice services through policy support, training, capacity building and targeted delivery of core protection services. During 2018, 50,175 Honduran children and adolescents were reached direct service provision, municipal activities and events to increase competencies for the identification and reporting of violence against children. UNICEF partners with the Honduran Government, civil society organizations, community leaders and municipal networks of children and adolescents to develop integrated pathways for the prevention and protection of children against violence, and to create a culture of protection as a counterbalance to the omnipresent violence to which children and adolescents are exposed to daily, from their early age, within their families, schools and communities.

Child protection results in 2018 included strengthening protection and service delivery in 37 municipalities, and the response to the child migration crisis and migrant caravan.

With support from the Together for Girls Partnership, involving Canada, the USA's Centers for Disease Control/CDC, IOM, UNICEF, and the United States Agency for International Development/USAID) the Ministry of Security led the elaboration of a national Violence Against Children Survey. This focussed on identifying the magnitude and complex origins of violence against children in Honduras, and was the first of its kind in the region. On behalf of the Partnership, UNICEF took the leadership in assisting the Government to utilize the Violence Against Children Survey findings for the elaboration of a National Action Plan and Roadmap to End Violence Against Children, engaging multisectoral participation from both the state and civil society. To accompany this important work to end violence against children, UNICEF offices in Honduras and El Salvador jointly developed a creative communication for development (C4D) strategy in violence prevention, APAPACHAME ('embrace me with affection'). This aims to change social norms and behaviours based on teaching positive parenting practices, non-violent interactions amongst peers and the prevention of sexual abuse.

This strategy was implemented with youth networks and local authorities in 37 municipalities to improve protective factors and increase the capacity of children, adolescents and families to identify, prevent and report violence against children in their communities and municipalities. APAPACHAME messages were mainstreamed through sports for development and cultural

activities including municipal communication campaigns, reaching 22,427 children and adolescents on the promotion of tolerance, conflict resolution strategies. The goal is to help children, adolescents and their communities understand that all children have fundamental rights and that none should be marginalized.

This increased demand linked to UNICEF's work with children, adolescents and their caretakers had to be effectively met with increased and improved child protection services at the municipal level. UNICEF helped 37 municipal governments to install offices for children and adolescents and hiring 37 child protection workers. They provided mental health assistance and counselling to 3,684 girls and boys, including assistance to 183 victims of sexual abuse. Key problems addressed by the municipal offices for children and adolescents included behavioural and learning problems, sexual abuse, abandonment by parents, low self-esteem, anxiety, panic disorders, depression, sexual harassment, suicidal thoughts and self-mutilation. All suspected cases of abuse were reported to the national child welfare agency (DINAF) and/or justice operators for evaluation and judicial action. This model of municipal offices for children and adolescents enabled these 183 children to be accompanied by the municipal social worker throughout the resolution of their administrative case at national level, improving the state's capacity to provide specialized victim care for children and adolescents.

In this conceptualization of a national child protection system, UNICEF worked with the Government to define a first level of child protection services at the municipal level, currently not considered in the national normative framework, and operationalized through the new municipal offices for children. Concurrently, UNICEF supported the design of referral protocols as well as case management systems to improve the articulation of service provision for the protection of children. This new partnership between DINAF, inter-institutional justice commissions and municipalities improved the coordination of child protection services for some 12,044 children and adolescents.

The migrant crisis in Honduras is intrinsically linked to the high rates of violence in the country, keeping girls, boys and adolescents out of schools, forcing them to move out of gang-controlled neighbourhoods and, eventually, migrate north, with hope of a better future. UNICEF prioritized its response towards providing immediate attention and protection services for children, adolescents and families repatriated to Honduras, and in supporting their early recovery and community reintegration.

Special attention was paid to support the reintegration of child migrants through the provision of multi-service safe spaces for the reception of 10,023 returned child migrants at the Belen Centre for Returned Migrant Children and Families, immediate protection and humanitarian assistance at the reception of 1,734 deported children from the migrant caravan (14 October-30 November). UNICEF also worked with community-based partners such as the Honduran Red Cross and the municipal offices for children and adolescents to provide mental health and psychosocial support to 4,291 children, with 1,673 showing significant improvement in at least four out of nine emotional markers. UNICEF worked with another community partner, ACOES, active in some of the most violent communities of Honduras' capital Tegucigalpa, to provide educational bridges, enabling the return to school of 4,787 migrant and internally displaced children. UNICEF partnered with Mujeres en las Artes, a national non-governmental organization (NGO), to implement sports for developmentand cultural activities, including one titled 'Create yourself through art', in communities with some of the highest rates of expulsion of migrant and internally displaced children to improve protective factors and reduce violence through resilience-building activities. This reached an estimated 5,000 children and

adolescents.

Honduras is one of the most vulnerable countries in Latin America to natural disasters and complex emergencies. Municipal fragility and a weak preparation process have rendered children particularly vulnerable to violence and abuse in humanitarian situations. Therefore, UNICEF supported 16 municipalities from Lempira, Intibucá and Tegucigalpa to mitigate risks and increase their capability to respond locally and adopt appropriate measures to protect children during emergencies, following the Core Commitments for Children (CCC) international standard of care. This process achieved the integration between national emergency and contingency platforms and local child protection councils in the 16 municipalities supported in order to develop joint contingency plans. This included developing a situation analysis, planning and preparation action for child protection in emergencies. Thirty-one officers and decision-makers related with emergency responses and other 67 technical staff from municipalities, 16 NGOs, municipal councils, the Permanent Contingency Commission of Honduras (COPECO) and 14 state institutions now have increased competencies to identify protection needs and vulnerabilities in different populations, including children.

4. Social inclusion and child rights monitoring

The expected outcome of Social Inclusion and Child Rights Monitoring component in the UNICEF Honduras Country Programme 2017-2021 is "the context of social policies is based on a rights-based approach and takes gender differences into account, as well as placing an emphasis on children who suffer exclusion". This programme component contributes to SDG1 "End poverty in all its forms everywhere" as well as to Outcome 3 in the UNDAF2017–2021 "The most vulnerable Honduran populations in priority municipalities have improved the exercise of their rights with more effective, inclusive and transparent institutions and broad and effective citizen participation".

Key results were achieved both at municipal and national levels in improving child-friendly social policies. The effectiveness of universal policies, budgets allocated, social protection programmes and special measures were put to the test at the municipal level and constant feedback helps to improve them. It reinforces the importance of strong public management by municipal governments, who must implement them while adapting them to local realities, thus unlocking great potential for transforming the lives of children and adolescents.

In 2018, the proportion of municipalities with a Municipal Management Index in the High and Medium-High category increased to 71 per cent, from 43 per cent in 2017. This change was due to improvements in the dimensions of governance (specifically institutional arrangements, political leadership and citizen participation) as well as in integrated management, especially in planning, the capacity to analyse the state of children and adolescents in the municipality, incorporating a risk analysis and the use of the INFORM tool.

The Municipal Situation Analysis of Children and Adolescents elaborated by each municipal technical team identified the main barriers faced by children in each municipality, with a gender perspective, and including a risk analysis. Some 70 per cent of the prioritized municipalities have undertaken a situation analysis to better evidence the deprivation of rights of almost 700,000 children and adolescents, as a basis to develop targeted responses according to the main rights violations present in each municipality. This experience was systematized in a set of methodological tools and guides for scale-up to all of Honduras' 298 municipalities. An exercise to simulate the effectiveness of the work carried out in 2018 with respect to the baseline of 2017

measured through the Municipal Management Index underscores the significant progress discussed above.

Another outstanding result was that all of UNICEF's 37 focus municipalities installed Municipal Councils for Childhood and Adolescence to coordinate public services and forge strategic alliances with public, private and community-based institutions and organizations working in their territory on children's issues. The proportion of municipalities with high and medium-high performance went from 62 per cent in 2017 to 81 per cent in 2018, leaving only seven of them in the medium-low and low categories. In 2017 there were 14 who were medium-low or low. This progress was measured by the Municipal Councils for Childhood and Adolescence Performance Index which assesses these councils based on six criteria: frequency of meetings, existence of a work plan, leadership exercised by the municipal government, accountability, participation of children, and periodicity in monitoring the situation of children. This process was scaled up with the Global Movement for Children, with whom 91 additional municipalities have now installed their Municipal Councils, 43 per cent of the total municipalities in the country. A Guide for the Functioning of Municipal Councils for Childhood and Adolescence is being implemented to achieve a more efficient performance of this deliberative body.

Another important result in 2018 was to achieve a growing and legitimate interest to include the participation of children in public management processes. At the municipal level, the generation of 90 spaces for dialogue between adolescents and local authorities in the 37 municipalities resulted in 24 municipal governments (65 per cent of the total) adopting resolutions in favour of children and adolescents, in accordance with their demands and proposals. Some examples were opening of safe recreational spaces, supervision in the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages, inclusion of adolescents in decision-making spaces, opening of schools for different sports disciplines, promotion of artistic-cultural activities, and the implementation of measures for the inclusion of children with disabilities, among others.

At the national level, Honduras established a permanent, high-level political dialogue on children's finances with key actors such as the Congress Parliamentary Committee on Children and Adolescents, the National Council for Children and Adolescents, which steers the National Child Protection System in Honduras, and the International Monetary Fund. This was possible due to the institutionalization of the analysis of finances for children that, in 2018, is completing its fifth year of uninterrupted measurement of public investment for children, and the implementation of a new advocacy strategy.

Under the coordination of the National Institute of Statistics, the country agreed on a monitoring framework consisting of 106 indicators validated by the institutions that make up the Information System on Children, Adolescents and Women (SISNAM), which will be the basis for monitoring of compliance with the rights of children and adolescents at the national level. It includes 41 gender-sensitive indicators. UNICEF is providing technical assistance to the Government for the implementation of the ENDESA / Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2018/2019. The results will be available at the end of 2019 and fill a substantial gap in information on different issues related to children and adolescents in the country.

UNICEF helped develop capacities in planning and budgeting with a children´s rights approach in 37 cities. This included the development of guidelines on children's participation in municipal governance processes and the elaboration of city-led municipal situation analyses in all 37 cities, providing for the first-time solid data on problems affecting children in their municipalities as a basis of evidence-based municipal public financial management processes. UNICEF

helped develop the guidelines, indicators and trained municipal staff to carry-out the surveys and plan the public consultations with children and adolescents. UNICEF accompanied closely these stakeholder-led processes through permanent field staff presence in five departments and constant monitoring and technical support from the countryoffice. UNICEF provided internal technical assistance as well as expertise from the UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office and headquarters for the development of the national public survey ENDESA/MICS, providing expert assessment and quality assurance at every step of the process. UNICEF also lobbied the Government through an evidence-based advocacy strategy and political dialogue to carry-out a national public finance for children (PF4C) process, succeeding in guaranteeing a fifth consecutive year of Honduras analysing and reporting publicly on its PF4C.

Part 3: Lessons learned and constraints

1. Education in crisis

The efforts over the past year in education have been mainly strategic – working with the Secretary of Education to further inclusive and community-based approaches to strategically address education needs in rural contexts, with indigenous populations, in violent contexts and in addressing the 400,000 children remaining outside of the basic education (1st to 9th grade).

Much pedagogical progress and strategic thinking occurred within these four areas. However, UNICEF Honduras' education effort is spread across multiple areas, addressing the needs of multiple marginalized child populations, resulting in the results for children being contained to smaller numbers across the four areas. At the mid-term juncture of the country programme, UNICEF has an opportune moment to re-evaluate how to build on these experiences and scale-up a more targeted and focused education approach that is relevant and responsive to the current challenges and needs facing the education sector.These constraints are many, and include a lack of structural components, such as secondary schools, poverty, inequity, youth unemployment, weak institutional capacity and a manifestation of violence due to organized crime.

Since Honduras has one of the highest homicide rates in the world and organized crime controls large areas of the country's main cities, with education being the one social sector that remains intact, UNICEF Honduras could better position itself to leverage its education expertise. Children face particularly high risks of gang-related recruitment, violence and extortion. Forced displacement, threats, kidnapping, sexual violence and homicides are commonplace. For a child growing up, such circumstances can be likened to growing up in a conflict situation: violence, school-related gang violence and migration caused by violence have devastating impacts on their lives. In these communities affected by extreme violence, on average one child per household is out-of-school and at least one of every three children drop out after finishing grade 6. These indicators on out-of-school-children and drop-out rates starkly highlight that education is in crisis.

Reflecting on UNICEF's operational, programmatic and strategic strengths, it becomes evident that the organisation should be more responsive to the violence and migration afflicting the education system, as well as the situation of returnees. There is a clear need to reassess if UNICEF's education interventions are fit for purpose and can help tackle the root causes of forced displacement and migration.

UNICEF Honduras' existing education strategy has an overarching aim: to provide inclusive and quality education. A component of this seeks to ensure that children and adolescents suffering the most severe exclusion access quality and inclusive education. To address this, UNICEF has been focused on helping children start school on-time through early childhood development, reducing school drop-out rates in basic education, preventing drops-outs following the end of the second cycle of basic education and improving the quality and relevance of education, particularly in rural, indigenous and violent contexts. However, in recognition that education is in a state of crisis in contexts of high violence, a shift in the perspective or a new way of working is required to be responsive to the departments and municipalities that exist within such a humanitarian-development-peace nexus in recognition of the connections between sustainable development, humanitarian action and peace and security.

UNICEF recognizes how the education sector is uniquely placed to advance coherence and alignment between humanitarian development policy and practice. Education in emergencies, and its links to child protection, supports access to safe, relevant and quality education and the promotion of psychosocial well-being of students and educators. It provides the foundation for cohesive communities and peaceful societies. Given its comparative advantage as a global lead within education in emergencies, UNICEF Honduras has an opportunity to focus its technical and financial investments to support the Secretary of Education in tackling violence, migration and returnees in the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Concurrently, UNICEF must ensure that it is playing a country leadership role to meaningfully address the state of education in crisis. UNICEF Honduras is well placed to take advantage of developed strategies and resulting gains for children in violent contexts – particularly considering elements from the development of the peace-coexistence-citizenship strategy in schools and the educational bridges strategy to take forward, improve upon and scale-up. The construction of a community-based peace-coexistence-citizenship strategy has shown reductions in violence, particularly measured by children expressing a reduction of weapons in schools, verbally and emotionally abusive teachers and fights between children. Further, children have expressed they felt their opinions were valued and felt empowered to take decisions. For UNICEF moving forward, it will be important for these evidence-based gains to be built on in a more targeted and strategic way.

In this light, a refocus of the overarching aim is planned for the second half of the country programme: that goes beyond inclusion and quality, and addresses safety and relevance. It would aim to provide access to safe, inclusive (with special consideration to the needs of the displaced, returnees, girls, adolescent girls, and children experiencing disabilities), relevant and quality education 'in crisis' to address the needs of those affected by multiple types of violence and abuse, including school-related gender-based violence. It would emphasize leveraging education as an entry point to tackle the root causes of violence and migration, considering the school as a platform. Elements for further development and collaboration would include:
- Schools as an integrated platform: the development of a strategic and operational framework amongst UNICEF sectors - education, child protection, social protection, ECD and communication for development;
- Municipal targeting: targeting high-violence municipalities and working in a cross-sectoral manner at the municipal-level;
- Humanitarian-development coherence: via a sequenced or layered approach amongst humanitarian and development actors; strengthening UN-agency alliances/partnerships (UNESCO, UNHCR, IOM, etc.) providing different sequenced/overlapping forms of

assistance to the same groups or geographical areas;
- Safe learning environments: via a community-based approach, building on the learnings and results from the peace-coexistence-citizenship strategy in school and the educational bridges; utilizing community groups such as student government bodies, sports/recreational clubs and community education clubs to foster safety , with a focus on creating safe spaces for girls and children/adolescents living with disabilities to have a voice;
- Alternative learning and educational bridging: leveraging information technology and innovations to increase access to education and improve learning of marginalized children and adolescents, with a focus on the specific needs of displaced and returnees' children;
- Relevant education: ensuring that learning is holistic, and that learning, psychosocial support and social emotional learning and (life) skills development are relevant and applicable to the unique needs of adolescents, adolescent girls, girl mothers and children/adolescents living with disabilities;
- Systematic monitoring of results: at the municipal level, to use standardized indicators and monitoring systems to better tell the story of results for children over the second half of the country programme. This would include the development of customized indicators on accessfor children on the move, adolescent girls, children/adolescents experiencing disabilities, s (physical and psychological safety) and school-related gender-based violence, amongst others.

2. Community-based model for violence reduction

This year, with support from the Together for Girls Partnership, the Ministry of Security led the elaboration of a national Violence Against Children Survey, the first of its kind in the region to focus on identifying the magnitude and complex origins of violence against children in Honduras. On behalf of the Together for Girls Partnership, UNICEF led with assisting the Government to utilize the survey findings for the elaboration of a National Action Plan and Roadmap to End Violence Against Children, engaging multisectoral participation from both the state and civil society. To accompany this important work to end violence against children, UNICEF offices in Honduras and El Salvador jointly developed a C4D strategy on violence prevention, APAPACHAME (embrace me with affection). This focuses on changing social norms and behaviours based on positive parenting practices, non-violent interactions amongst peers and the prevention of sexual abuse. This strategy is consistent with UNICEF's prioritization of violence reduction at the local level in rural settings, focused on intra-family and community-based physical and sexual violence. Violence reduction is also central to UNICEF's work in protecting migrant children. The Violence Against Children Survey data underscored the nexus between violence and migratory flows and how this interaction perpetuates a cycle of increasing marginalization and human rights violations for children and adolescents.

While UNICEF's communication for development strategy and community-based programming are effectively targeting the main causes of violence against children in rural homes and communities – physical and humiliating punishment from parents, caretakers and peer-to-peer violence and bullying, and sexual abuse – a different approach is needed to more effectively protect children and adolescents in urban, gang-controlled settings in Honduras' main cities. The need to refocus UNICEF's strategy to Honduras' more violent, gang-afflicted municipalities and communities is also aligned with a formal request from the Government for more targeted support in violence prevention and homicide reduction.

UNICEF will develop strategies and partnerships to implement specialized interventions aimed

at changing norms and interrupting violence, based on levels of violence exposure in each community, looking to reduce violence and homicide, improve protective factors and community resilience through targeted actions within the homes, community spaces and schools. Specifically, UNICEF will define differentiated strategies based on an epidemiological approach that consider the presence of gangs, level of community cohesion, corruption, and the presence/absence of state institutions to reduce chronic violence. This local intervention will be linked with the current municipal and national child protection systems-strengthening work to better connect local actors with child protection services. In doing so, this will better position and scale-up successful local interventions, influence State policies and funding including the elaboration of the National Action Plan and Roadmap to End Violence Against Children, and prioritize actions that directly protect children and adolescents in f these violent, conflict-prone communities. UNICEF's more recent partnership with the Ministry of Security provides a timely opportunity to step up efforts in reducing violence against children and adolescents in these urban contexts. However, new partnerships with local actors and community-based organizations will be required to effectively intervene at the local level.

To achieve this revised vision, UNICEF Honduras will fully integrate its violence reduction work in its core actions, readjusting programming in child protection, education and social inclusion to better respond to the complex realities of urban violence, create protective spaces within schools and communities. In collaboration with key partners, UNICEF will support the implementation of effective local violence and homicide reduction interventions that are monitored and assessed through a robust set of epidemiological indicators.

3. Municipalities as effective spaces for children and adolescents

Municipal governments are potent agents of change in transforming the lives of girls, boys and adolescents due to their closeness to the population, civic mandate and management of plans, budgets and human resources. They are responsive to public opinion, and thus more open to investing effectively in children and adolescents under an imperative to showcase tangible results from their public management as a means for ensuring public satisfaction and eventual re-election.

With UNICEF guidance, this level of government has been providing services to promote and protect children and adolescents' rights with varying degrees of success. However, indicators measuring progress in guaranteeing the fulfilment of the rights of children show there remain serious challenges in ensuring access to and quality of basic social services and protection of children against violence and abuse. It is imperative to accelerate UNICEF's efforts to achieve results for children and adolescents.

UNICEF Honduras has developed a work strategy at subnational level, under the criterion of programmatic comprehensiveness and geographical convergence. The purpose is to install at the municipal level, a coordination mechanism that articulates the participation of public institutions, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector to provide appropriate services and responses to promote and protect children's rights. Through UNICEF's ongoing support of municipal governments to build their public financial management and service provision capacities for children, some key lessons learned were identified.

Although municipal plans integrate specific results for children, such as hiring of teachers, building schools and funding school feeding programmes, these often lack strategic clarity, sustainability in time and indicators for effective performance measurement and results

tracking. Nor have children's voices been considered when prioritizing child-specific municipal results. In addition, the varying capacities and knowledge of municipal employees, combined with limited information available in most municipalities, have made it difficult to adapt training modules and technical support to local realities incorporating an equity lens. Capacity development of local officials requires technical accompaniment closer to the one originally planned, which necessitates greater field presence of UNICEF staff to collaboratively develop the public management for children tools with a focus on learning by doing.

The municipalities have led the establishment of inter-institutional coordination workgroups (Municipal Councils for Childhood and Adolescence) to effectively pool public and private funding and resources to promote programmes, activities and improve municipal service provision for children. A key weakness, however, remains in coordinating an effective response to individual cases of violence and abuse against children. Municipalities underscore a lack of knowledge as to which institutions to contact to respond to specific cases of child vulnerabilities, abuse and violence.

Based on lessons learned, during the second half of the country programme, UNICEF will promote a results-based approach in which the municipalities, in a self-directed manner, generate changes in the lives of children, for which the following adjustments will be made to the current work approach with municipalities. It will encourage a result-based approach to municipal programming that focuses on achieving changes in the lives of girls, boys and adolescents. To achieve this, UNICEF will promote a 'Certification of Results for Children' approach, under the leadership of a collegial body made up of representatives of the academic sector, Government and UNICEF. Transparency in the certification process and accountability by participating municipalities will be pillars of the certification scheme.

UNICEF will also help establish an incentive system that stimulates proactive local management in the progress of selected Public Management for Children indicators with participation of national State authorities. This is indispensable in guaranteeing municipal autonomy aligned with the national law for decentralization of public management, while contributing to innovation and local creativity in the achievement of results through incentives. This could include establishing a small grant facility, eventually managed by an NGO, to support small community initiatives with groups of women, adolescents and/or indigenous and Afro-descendant organizations normally ineligible for other funding mechanisms because they do not have legal status. UNICEF will also help the municipal governments improve their responses in early childhood development, for children out-of-school, victims of violence or abuse, and for the effective reintegration of returned migrants. This will primarily be through the elaboration of operational guidelines defining clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of both local and State actors through the Municipal Councils for Childhood and Adolescence.

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