Country Office Annual Report 2019
Honduras

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<div style="background:#29ABE2;color:#fff;font-weight:bold;padding:4px">Update on the context and situation of children</div>

The political polarisation that has been plaguing the country for years continued to be felt in 2019. Various sectors continue opposing the government, which complicates the ability to govern. This situation exacerbates the institutional fragility affecting the State of Honduras and its capacity to effectively implement development programmes to protect children's rights.

In the economic and social sphere, the recently published Social Panorama of Latin America[1] indicates that the worst incidence of poverty and extreme poverty as of 2018 were found in Mexico, Bolivia and Honduras.[2] This is a rather severe situation as there were no significant changes in poverty levels between 2002 and 2017. Furthermore, in countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua, more than 70% of the population is composed of households with per capita income less than 1.8 times the poverty line, which means they are at risk of falling into poverty in the face of external factors such as loss of employment[3].

In general, social programmes do not seem to favour conditions for improving the living conditions of Hondurans. For example, there is a decrease in income from non-contributory public transfers that are made by States to alleviate poverty and reduce vulnerability and that generally include conditional transfers[4]. In addition, Honduras is one of the countries in the region that most reduced the central government's public social spending between 2016 and 2018 (10%)[5] and one of the countries with the lowest per capita resources allocated to financing social policies, with less than USD 230 compared to Chile and Uruguay, which allocated just over USD 2,500 or Costa Rica in the same sub region with 1,209 USD in recent years[6]. Similarly, Honduras, Jamaica and Nicaragua all allocated less than 1% of GDP to social protection, while the region as a whole averaged 3.9%, and Brazil, which was the country that invested the most, allocated 13.1%[7]. In terms of public investment in children, which maintained a consistent downward trend, falling from 8.5% of GDP in 2013 to 5.8% in 2017, in 2018 it rose slightly to 6.0 per cent[8].

However, Honduras stands out as one of the countries that allocates more resources of its GDP to education (around 5%). In Honduras, 62% of its social spending is allocated to education, although this distribution does not necessarily reflect the quality of the results. In addition, Honduras invests 29.9% of social spending to healthcare[9]. However, in Honduras, social spending would have to increase by 125% to cover the income gap of all those in poverty, making it the country in the region that would have to make the largest effort in this regard[10].

This whole outlook has an impact on the UNICEF Programme of Cooperation being able to achieve its results, since the contributions made from the Programme may not be as effective if other conditions in the economic, social and political context are not favourable. For example, there are indications in 2019 that violence is increasing, as preliminary police data through November show an increase from 3,369 homicides up to that month in 2018 to 3,585 in 2019[11]. In addition, psychological and sexual violence continue to be common with children: 44% of girls and 37% of boys state that they have been victims of this type of violence on a national level[12].

In addition, this year the phenomenon of mass mobilisations called "migrant caravans" continued, which exacerbated the challenges of protecting human rights in countries of origin, transit and destination, as the highest number of migrants were deported in recent years. In the case of children, 20,193 have been deported as of 11/12/2019, of which 27% were unaccompanied[13]. This has made it difficult for the government to respond, as the capacity of the care centres has sometimes been overstretched. In the countries of northern Central America, main factors of emigration include insufficient productive capacity combined with scarcity of employment, and the extensive negative impacts of natural disasters and climate change[14]. These factors are intertwined with violence and insecurity.

In education, the school coverage rate for children aged 3 to 17 rose slightly from 52.7% in 2018 to 62.8% in 2019. It rose similarly in each educational cycles [15]. However, preliminary data from the University Observatory of National and International Education[16] shows that the decline in terms of efficiency of the system continues as the number of dropouts in all educational cycles increased from 78,773 in 2018 to 88,379. Similarly, the number of students who had to repeat the year increased from 80,776 to 102,401 and the number of students who failed increased from 122,503 to 135,916 in the same period.

In addition to the challenges presented in the development context, there are also crises that call for humanitarian responses. During 2019, two events took place that warranted the government declaring an emergency. UNICEF was involved in the response to both. The first was declared on 15 June due to an increase in cases of dengue[17]. It has been difficult to contain this situation, and therefore during epidemiological week 47 (23/11/2019) 103,444 cases have accumulated, of which 19,296 cases were diagnosed as severe dengue. The epidemic has left 170 laboratory-confirmed deaths, of which 57.6% were children under the age of 15[18]. Honduras, with an incidence rate of 995.5 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, ranks third in the region according to PAHO[19].

The President of the Republic declared the second emergency on 05/09/2019 due to the drought, which has been a recurring situation in recent years. According to data from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, between 50% and 60% of production would be lost in several departments of the country[20].

A great opportunity that arose in 2019 for various sectors of Honduran society to strengthen a development agenda in the coming years with the aim of not leaving any child behind is the National Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). This agenda was built with the participation of various national development stakeholders and prioritises in the 17 objectives 68 of the 169 goals and 99 of the 233 indicators, which will help focus and harmonise the efforts of the different collaborating agencies.

[1]ECLAC 2019. Social Panorama of Latin America 2019. https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/44969-panorama-social-america-latina-2019

[2] Idem, p. 99.

[3] Idem, p. 59.

[4] Idem, p. 118

[5] Idem, p. 132

[6] Idem, p. 133-134

[7] Idem, p. 138

[8] Preliminary data from the report "La inversion pública dirigida a la niñez y adolescencia en Honduras - 2018" [Public Investment Allocated to Children and Adolescents in Honduras - 2018].

[9] Idem, p. 139

[10] Idem, p. 148

[11]SEPOL online. COMPARISON OF HOMICIDES ON A NATIONAL LEVEL. https://www.sepol.hn/artisistem/images/sepol-images/files/Estadistica%20Mensual%20Noviembre%202019.xlsx.pdf

[12]Government of Honduras 2019. Survey on violence against children and adolescents - Honduras 2017.

[13]CENISS - SIAMIR online. http://www.ceniss.gob.hn/migrantes/DatosMigrantes.aspx

[14]ECLAC 2019. Social Panorama of Latin America 2019, p. 176

[15] INE [National Statistics Institute]. Multi-Purpose Permanent Household Survey. 2019

[16]OUDENI [National and International Education Observatory]. Presentation December 2019

[17]Executive Decree Number PCM-028-2019. Government of the Republic of Honduras

[18]Ministry of Health. Health Surveillance Unit. Epidemiological Situation of Dengue up to Epidemiological Week 47, according to data collected by Alerta Respuesta. Latest newsletter available.

[19] See https://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=15593:dengue-in-the-americas-reaches-highest-number-of-cases-recorded&Itemid=1926&lang=es

[20] See https://presidencia.gob.hn/index.php/sala-de-prensa/6278-gobierno-declara-emergencia-por-sequia

Major contributions and drivers of results

1. **Early Childhood Development**

The expected outcome for the Early Childhood Development component is, "By 2021, children aged 0 to 6 years and their

families in municipalities selected from six departments access 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 of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2021 "Excluded populations in priority municipalities have access to comprehensive, quality health services, focusing on the social determinants of health to advance the right to health".

The mid-year review of the cooperation programme established some adjustments in the early childhood strategy, mainly due to the challenges presented by the rapid expansion of coverage of the community strategy Criando con Amor. UNICEF is integrating this programme with the recently approved SIGADENAH and deepening a C4D strategy to reduce gender stereotypes when developing parenting skills.

UNICEF developed a tool kit to work with parents and caregivers on parenting skills, advises on the development of comprehensive early childhood care paths with government institutions and strengthens the management skills of the Inter-Institutional Commissions by contributing to strategic and integrated planning and budgeting so that the Honduran State can deliver the 15 identified services in a timely manner.

The combined result of these actions has been that the proportion of children under six years of age who are "developmentally safe" or able to carry out activities according to their chronological age has increased from 34% to 49%, according to the Child Development Scale (EDIN, for its Spanish acronym), in the departments where the Criando con Amor strategy is implemented. This is a hard-earned, welcome result.

Research conducted by UNICEF in November 2019 showed that only 9% of children under the age of 6 are at high risk (i.e., three or more of the developmental milestones were not met by chronological age in the developmental evaluation), 13% are at medium risk (two developmental milestones not met), 30% are at low risk (one developmental milestone not met), and 49% of children have a developmental evaluation appropriate to their chronological age. This measurement was also taken in the community child care intervention, and non-clinical family support to children with disabilities, in order to measure developmental progress during the intervention. The results of the measurement show that 56% of the children identified made progress in the area of social and emotional development, 55% in gross motor function, 53% in fine motor function, 41% in the cognitive area and 59% in the area of communication and language development.

In 39 Municipalities in the country where the methodology of progressive eradication of physical punishment and humiliating treatment in early childhood is being implemented, 2,146 families participated systematically in the training process that lasts three months on average (one session a week for 10 weeks), changing patterns of behaviour in 2,060 (96%) mothers and 86 (4%) fathers. A total of 1,513 boys and 1,706 girls benefitted from this. The qualitative study on the contribution of the multi-component intervention for the prevention of physical punishment and humiliating treatment found that with no exception, mothers recognise the need to "improve", i.e. to be more tolerant and spend more time and give more affection. They identify resorting to physical punishment to discipline their children as the main issue that they need to change. They became aware of the effect of negative words, based on their own experience. Most recognise that a word can be even more painful than physical punishment. However, there is still another group that still believes that "moderate" physical punishment is necessary for the upbringing of children and therefore does not violate any right.

The community-based intervention implemented by the Ministry of Health, UNICEF and ChildFund in response to Zika contributed to consolidating an early intervention model in the Departmental Health Regions for child care and family support for children with Congenital Zika Sindrom or other congenital malformations, using a family-centred, community approach linked to first-level healthcare. Out of all of the 137 affected families from the areas of the country where the epidemic was most prevalent, 65% improved parenting skills according to the Positive Parenting Scale (E2P).

2. Inclusive and Quality Education

The expected result for the Inclusive and Quality Education component was changed to "By 2021, the most disadvantaged children and adolescents, mainly those affected by violence, forced displacement and migration, have access to safe, inclusive, flexible and innovative forms of quality education". This programme component contributes to SDG 4 "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", as well as UNDAF Outcome 1 2017-2021 "The most vulnerable children and adolescents in priority municipalities in pre-basic, basic and middle education have access to inclusive and quality education".

This component had the most adjustments to its strategy in the mid-year review, moving towards the concept of safe learning environments. The alliance with IDB and the financial support of Korea and Canada allowed this programme's staff to be strengthened with a P4 Education Specialist, a WASH Officer and a programme assistant. This recruitment process allowed them to incorporate in the last quarter of the year. The new team, in addition to the existing education officer, started preparatory activities for the implementation of this strategic adjustment over the next two years.

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The Peacebuilding Programme, aiming to reduce violence in educational centers (EC) and to create safe learning spaces, was implemented by SEDUC with UNICEF support and scaled up from 130 to 260 EC. In 70 percent of the ECs where the Programme was implemented, families and community members refer to actively participated in the school management; 80 percent prepared a school situational analyses and developed a violence response plan; 72 percent cut down acts of violence against girls, boys and adolescents; 83 percent promote participation and listening to the views of the children. 1950 children and adolescents interviewed from 130 ECs report feeling safer because the number of disputes amongst students has reduced, as have the punishments against them, thus improving relations between them. This expansion, undertaken by SEDUC, used a tool kit developed and distributed by UNICEF which includes methodology, intervention roadmap, and capacity building in the education sector. As a result of this expansion, 91,000 children and adolescents were benefitted.

In the area of intervention, 70% of schools and 70% of families and community members actively participated in the management of school coexistence. Regarding educational centres, 80% carried out participatory assessments and created plans for peace, coexistence and citizenship; 72% reduced acts of violence against children and adolescents; and 83% comprehensively managed school coexistence. The teaching directors lead the strengthening of the PEC with a focus on the comprehensive management of coexistence.

During 2019, UNICEF has provided Humanitarian Assistance to families affected by the drought, increasing access to safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services for 3,500 families (14,700 people) in 10 affected municipalities.

UNICEF partnered with USAID to finance and implement a successful education programme called School-based Violence Prevention Activity (SBVPA) - which was fulfilled, reaching an additional 43,905 children and adolescents in 82 educational centres with the following interventions: i) A **School Safety Study**, in which the project, jointly with students, educators and administrator in all 82 schools analyses and shares the results of the study with school officials and stakeholders, enabling them to design cost-effective violence prevention measures in each school; ii) An **Executive Leadership Program for Principals (PELE),** where the project offered orientation and skills to administrators from 20 new schools in an effort to help them gain the knowledge and leadership skills already acquired by the administrators of the other 62 schools; iii) A teacher professional programme, **Educators for Peace**, where the team advanced by training 395 educators in Module II (Rights, Violence and Gender) using the Training of Teachers (ToT) method and prepared 16 Ministry of Education (SEDUC) technical facilitators in Module III (Social-Emotional Learning) in the San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba regions. ToTs and SEDUC technical facilitators lead the delivery of Module III to most (if not all) teachers in the 82 target schools. Equipped educators with additional skills and tools reduce school-based violence and create more harmonious learning environments; iv) A **Social Emotional Learning Program (PASE),** where the project trained 55 physical education teachers in strategies to help students understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions; v) **School Community Committees**, where project staff and fellows have formed and restructured 26 SCCs, actively engaging 151 students, 42 parents, and 43 educators. Once fully trained, SCCs will identity the drivers of violence in and around schools, draft a violence-prevention action plan to address these needs, and implement interventions that mitigate conflict in the schools; and vi) A **Teacher Wellbeing Program,** which has trained 97 educators on self-care and crisis management skills for Teacher Wellbeing in San Pedro Sula, Choloma, and La Ceiba municipalities known for high levels of violence. The project promotes educator wellbeing with the aim of building groups of healthier teachers and school officials who, in turn, can create healthier, safer learning spaces. Appropriation of the project by SEDUC will depend on the achieved results and the evaluation. The project began on October 2019 and is implemented in three municipalities with high levels of violence (Choloma, San Pedro Sula and La Ceiba).

Finally, during the second half of the year, UNICEF led the Education Round Table, MERECE. During this period, it was able to re-establish a high-level dialogue at the round table with the Minister of Education. It helped secure in the donation of AME/WB for USD 10.2 million to support the government of Honduras in the preparation of the conditions for the Pre-Basic Education Programme; it created an online platform for communication and coordination between MERECE and the Ministry of Education that will bring relations and follow-up on national education agreements and priorities; and it established an informative bulletin that will communicate actions, achievements, challenges, and follow-up on agreements between cooperation and the Ministry of Education on a monthly basis.

3. Protecting Children from Violence

The expected result for the Protecting Children from Violence component is "By 2021, the country has a better system to protect against violence in its various forms in the selected municipalities and departments". This programme component contributes to SDG 16, "Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies", as well as UNDAF 2017-2021 Outcome 4 "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". This programme component contributes to ODS 4 "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", as well as UNDAF Outcome 1 2017-2021 "The most vulnerable children and adolescents in

priority municipalities in pre-basic, basic and middle education have access to inclusive and quality education".

UNICEF Honduras' child protection and violence prevention strategy targets 4 key sectors, seeking to (1) improve protective factors in the home, school and community to reduce violence and homicide against children and adolescents; (2) improve the juvenile justice system to ensure adolescents have the support and tools to escape a life of criminality and exclusion; (3) improve case management and the delivery of specialised protective services for child victims of violence and abuse, including internally displaced and returned child migrants; (4) improve protection of migrant children, including consular protection, reception and reintegration services.

In 2019, UNICEF partnered with 40 out of 298 municipal governments, community leaders and youth-led organisations of children and adolescents to build up a national child protection system and develop integrated pathways for the prevention and protection of children against violence, reaching some 6,411 Honduran children, adolescents and adults through direct service provision, and an additional 70,670 children, adolescents, their caretakers and local authorities in 2019 through local, community-based actions for the prevention and reduction of violence against children.

UNICEF has strengthened its relationship with municipalities and 57.1% of prioritised municipalities now have a functioning child protection mechanism, including violence reduction action plans. Moreover, 40 mental health workers hired by the municipal governments were trained by UNICEF and the National University's Psychology Department on child-specific clinical interventions and are actively providing mental health and psychosocial support to 648 child victims of violence. According to a 2019 UNICEF study, 83.8% (31) of prioritised municipalities now implement community mechanisms to protect children against violence, abuse and negligence. Additionally, 40.5% (15) of the same municipalities implement at least one alternative model to resolve conflicts.

UNICEF adopted the Cure Violence methodology, training volunteer Violence Interrupters and strengthening community-based organisations to identify risk factors, understand power dynamics, apply techniques to stop violence and prevent homicide, mediating conflicts through cooperation, adolescent and youth participation and community mobilisation. A total of 70,670 children, their caretakers, community members and local authorities improve protective factors in their communities and reduce violence against children through resilience-building activities and improved abilities to identify and report violence against children to competent authorities in 40 of the most violent communities.

Prioritising a response towards ensuring the safe return of migrant children and supporting their early recovery and community reintegration, UNICEF assisted the government of Honduras in providing multi-service safe spaces to 22,733 deported children at the Belen Centre for Returned Migrant Children and Families, of which 15,123 received immediate protection information services and humanitarian assistance at reception. UNICEF and community partners also provided mental health and psychosocial support to an additional 3,768 returned migrant children and/or children affected by migration, and case management for community reintegration services for 200 children and their families with special protection needs.

UNICEF has also worked with justice system operators to improve interaction, response and case management for 1,851 children and adolescents, coordinating interventions with local, municipal and national institutions to guarantee comprehensive care within a child protection systems approach, promoting a restorative justice approach and favouring non-custodial measures when possible. UNICEF technical assistance helped the government elaborate a final draft for the national policy on juvenile justice which is expected to be approved and implemented in 2020. The proportion of adolescents sentenced to custodial measures under the juvenile justice system has reduced from 48% in 2017 to 21% in October 2019.

4. Social Inclusion

The expected outcome for the Social Inclusion component is "By 2021, the social policy environment is based on a child rights approach, is gender sensitive and emphasises excluded children". This programme component contributes to SDG 1 "End poverty in all its forms everywhere" as well as to Outcome 3 in UNDAF 2017-2021 "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".

This programme component contributes to increasing comprehensive care for children and adolescents living in greater poverty and social exclusion, promoting an articulated institutional response, based on evidence, duly financed, monitored and evaluated, with a participatory approach and centred on guaranteeing children's rights. In the mid-term review, the component reported having completed the Finance Output for Children. The achievement will be sustainable it if is combined with the result of component 1, referring to the production of evidence in order to monitor the situation of children.

In 2019, strengthened capacities of selected municipalities in public management for children has contributed to better

implementation of national and local public policies as reflected in their annual planning and budgeting exercise. The proportion of municipalities with a score in the Municipal Management Index in the "High" and "Medium High" categories rose from 43% in 2017 to 100% in 2019 with 43% (16 out of 37) in the "High" category. Powerful "downstream" work generating impressive "upstream" commitments.

Having completed the training of the 37 municipalities in the dimensions of Local Governance and Public Management, the Municipal Management Capabilities Index showed that the proportion of Municipalities in the "High" and "Medium High" capacity categories increased from 43% in 2017 to 71% in 2018 and 100% in 2019. Last year, 43% (16 out of 37 municipalities) were in the "High" category. Powerful "downstream" work generating "upstream" commitments.

Similarly, the Municipal Council Performance Index showed that the proportion of municipalities with Municipal Councils scoring "High" and "Medium High" increased from 62% in 2017 to 81% in 2018 and to 92% in 2019. This Index assesses the quality of their performance based on six criteria supported by UNICEF: frequency of meetings, existence of a work plan, leadership of the municipality, accountability, participation of children and frequency in monitoring the situation of children. At the municipal level, DINAF and MMI continued to expand the system until they reached 135 Municipal Councils (45% of the total).

The strengthening of Integrated Child Protection System in Honduras SIGADENAH locally also included the creation of the Methodology for Measuring Municipal Public Investment in Children and Adolescents. The result of the first measurement in two municipalities has aroused much interest in the Association of Municipalities of Honduras (AMHON), which, after learning about the work done, agreed to follow a process to collect information in the 37 municipalities where SIGADENAH is being modelled.

SIGADENAH was also strengthened nationally with the passing of two Executive Decrees that incorporate it into the institutional life of the country. Once the conceptualisation, architecture and regulatory penalty phase of the System was concluded, the programme focused the second half of the year on its actual operation, so the National Council, in its 5th Ordinary Session held in November 2019, reviewed the progress of two proposals of a comprehensive approach toward children and converged approach with the Sustainable Development Goals: the National Policy for Children and Adolescents, and the Plan of Reduction of Violence emerging from the VAC survey.

As of this year, contributed to create a pedagogical model created for child participation is being used to manage child participation. A total of 2,710 children and adolescents were trained using the pedagogical model. Post-test evaluations applied after completion of the first of five modules show an average increase in "adequate capacity" ranging from 4 percentage points to municipalities that excel with 42 percentage points of capacity increase. In addition, the continued operation of children's networks and platforms meant that 77.8% of local governments this year incorporated initiatives based on proposals made by adolescents and included them in municipal agendas during 2019.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

In the middle of this year, the country office, together with the Foreign Ministry and the Secretariat General of Government Coordination, conducted a Mid-Term Review of the country programme in terms of improving the relevance and validity of the change strategies proposed for the current cooperation cycle 2017-2021. The persistence of extreme poverty, high levels of violence, education in crisis, mass migration phenomena and fragility in the face of emergency situations affecting the country made this adjustment necessary. The lessons learned from previous years and from management that facilitated this change are summarised below:

1. Education in the context of violence and migration.

In order to make education a starting point to address the root causes of violence and migration, viewing the school as an integration platform, the strategy of cooperation in education was reoriented in the following direction:

- **Geographical focus:** in municipalities with high levels of violence[1], an intersectoral approach was proposed that includes interventions in education, protection, social inclusion and communication with a gender and intercultural perspective. The target population is estimated at 425,000 adolescents (220,000 in school and 205,000 out of school).
- **Safe learning environments[2]:** Through a community-based approach and building on the teachings and outcomes of the Education for Peace-Coexistence-Citizenship and Educational Bridges strategy. This included the involvement of community organisations to foster safe environments, the involvement of student governments, the promotion of sports/recreational clubs and community education, and the creation of safe environments for children with disabilities. Strategic alliances were also developed that allowed for rapid advancement in the concept of Safe

Learning Environments (USAID).

- **Alternative learning and educational bridges:** the idea was to take advantage of ICTs and technological and non-technological innovations to increase access to education and improve learning for excluded children and adolescents, focusing on the specific needs of children on the move (displaced by violence and poverty, returning migrants). In partnership with IDB, an Innovation in Education Network was built.
- **Relevant education:** it is important to ensure that learning is holistic and skills-based education is relevant and applicable to the needs of mainly adolescent women, teenage mothers, and adolescents with disabilities. The current administration partnered with the Special Olympics, which is intended to be gradually strengthened to increase visibility of this population that experiences high levels of exclusion.
- **Systematic monitoring of results:** Standardised and disaggregated indicators are being developed to better tell the story of outcomes in children and adolescents, including the development of indicators on access (for children on the move, the most disadvantaged adolescents, children/adolescents with disabilities), safety (physical and psychological), violence reduction, etc.

2. Community-based violence reduction model.

The results of the Violence Against Children survey, which contributed to the development of the National Violence Reduction Plan, identified that the greatest exposure to violent incidents occurs in schools, homes and the community. It is therefore necessary to develop a community strategy for the reduction of violence aimed at changing social norms and interrupting the processes of violence in order to reduce the high rates of homicides and femicides, through actions focused on homes, community spaces and schools.

UNICEF has contributed to improved resilience to the effects of violence in communities it partnered with by implementing strategies to change social norms and strengthen community-based organisations (CBOs) for the prevention and reduction of violence. UNICEF defined differentiated prevention and violence reduction strategies based each community's vulnerabilities to violence, exposure levels and local capacities, prioritising the Cure Violence Global (CVG) violence and homicide interruption in the country's most violent communities, with a focus on reducing and interrupting violence against girls, women and femicide.

CVG has traditionally been more focused on youth and adult homicide reduction. UNICEF has been working with them to develop an innovative intervention that seeks to not only interrupt homicide in target communities, but also interrupt femicide and violence against girls and women. UNICEF and CVG have fine-tuned the measurement instruments and methodology for training and supporting the work of community-based volunteer violence interrupters.

UNICEF and CVG expect to increase coverage in San Pedro Sula, and open new community partnerships in La Ceiba and Tegucigalpa. In the industrial city of Choloma, UNICEF and CVG adopted a different strategy, partnering directly with the municipal government rather than community-based partners, to train and support municipal violence interrupters who work to reduce gang-related and gender-based violence and homicide interruption in the most conflictive neighbourhoods. The idea is that by working with the local government, UNICEF and CVG will achieve greater sustainability once technical support and funding has ceased.

UNICEF promoted partnerships to identify and adopt best practices in sexual and GBV prevention, including promoting joint workshops with national, municipal and local stakeholders to jointly develop and implement local interventions. Part of this work included adapting local methodologies which work on girls' empowerment and develop non-violent masculinity with boys and adolescents.

UNICEF Honduras integrating its community-based violence reduction work, readjusting programming in child protection, education and social inclusion to better respond to the complex realities of urban violence, creating protective spaces within schools, communities and its municipal strengthening strategy. 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. The municipality as a platform for program alignment

UNICEF has favoured a greater local presence with very good results. Municipal governments have shown a high level of political will and program implementation. The Integral System to Guarantee Rights began its operation with the installation of the Municipal Councils and the children's offices, this later escalated to achieve the results discussed in depth in the report.

The local level is the most decentralised level of public management and, therefore, favours the development of a platform for program alignment where the rights of development, survival, protection and participation are forced to align. This level

of government, because of its closeness to communities, is more likely to produce concrete results that promote changes in the lives of Honduran children and adolescents.

The design of the modules taking into account the standards and tools of territorial management of the country, has made the exercise much easier and applicable for municipalities. The approach of "learning by doing" gradually and progressively has been useful to ensure the understanding of the logic behind results-based management by municipal officials, making it possible for tools and products resulting from the application of methodologies to be really useful for public managers.

Municipal officials' level of understanding and ownership of the process of public management for children has qualitatively improved the leadership conditions of the municipality in the Municipal Council. Timely advocacy and high-level technical assistance helped to build relationships with key government authorities to identify UNICEF as the best trusted partner. On-going monitoring of public management, identification and understanding of its strengths, as well as sensitivity to its needs, also helped.

These elements, together with good communication, have favoured the assimilation of abstract concepts related to the Integral System to Guarantee Rights, improvement of information systems, multidimensional poverty measurements, monitoring of institutional results (performance indices) and have also accelerated the assimilation of methodological innovations in child finance, as well as the incorporation of ICTs.

Achievements have brought the management of the Association of Honduran Municipalities closer to UNICEF and through a joint work agreement that will be developed during the next administration. Work with municipalities will move towards measuring changes in the lives of children and adolescents with a monitoring system that includes consensual indicators. The visibility of the results by municipality will make it possible to identify the best experiences around which a learning community will be established along with an associated incentive system. The Education Innovation Network will feed from the most innovative experiences that achieve results in highly challenging contexts. AMHON's Annual Assembly will be the stage where this progress is recognised annually.

[1] La Ceiba, Tela, Santa Rosa de Copán, Nueva Arcadia, San Pedro Sula, Choloma, Omoa, Puerto Cortés, Villanueva, La Lima, Distrito Central (Tegucigalpa), Gracias, Lepaera, San Luis, El Progreso.

[2] A safe learning environment involves every aspect of creating a positive experience for students. Physical space is an important element, but equally important are the relationships between students, teachers and the learning community as a whole.