

**Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: Limited  
23 October 2001

Original: English

**For action**

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**United Nations Children's Fund**

Executive Board

**Second regular session 2001**

10-14 December 2001

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

**Country programme recommendation\*\*****Dominican Republic****Addendum***Summary*

The present addendum to the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2001 contains the final country programme recommendation for Board approval.

It contains a recommendation for funding the country programme of the Dominican Republic which has an annual planning level of \$1,000,000 or less. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the amount of \$3,625,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$5,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2002 to 2006.

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\* E/ICEF/2001/12.

\*\* The original country note provided only indicative figures for estimated programme cooperation. The figures provided in the present addendum are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 2000. They will be contained in the summary of recommendations for regular resources and other resources programmes for 2001 (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.73).



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<i>Basic data<sup>a</sup></i> <i>(1999 unless otherwise stated)</i>	
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	3.4
U5MR (per 1,000 live births) (2000)	48
IMR (per 1,000 live births) (2000)	42
Underweight (% moderate and severe) (2000)	5
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births) (1984)	230
Literacy (% male/female) (2000)	84/84
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (2000)	94/94
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1994)	58
Use of improved drinking water sources (%) (2000)	86
Routine EPI vaccines financed by Government (%)	89
GNP per capita (US\$)	1 920
One-year-olds fully immunized against:	
Tuberculosis	90 per cent
Diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus	56 per cent
Measles	94 per cent
Poliomyelitis	52 per cent
Pregnant women immunized against tetanus	.. per cent

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<sup>a</sup> Excerpted from the publication "Progress since the World Summit for Children: A statistical review", prepared as a supplement to the Secretary-General's report "We the children: End-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children" (A/S-27/3), and therefore may differ from data contained in the text of this document.

## The situation of children and women

1. The analysis of the situation of children and women in the Dominican Republic remains essentially the same as described in the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2001 (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.24). However, new information has emerged which complements the situation analysis.

2. In April 2001, the President of the Republic held a special session of the Cabinet that dealt exclusively with children's and adolescents' issues, and was attended by ministers of all sectors and relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs). UNICEF provided technical support for the session, which resulted in decisions to: (a) formulate an updated National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children for the next five years; (b) revise and update the National Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescents; and (c) revise the structure, functions and composition of the National Protection System.

## Programme cooperation, 1997-2001

3. The current programme of cooperation has made important contributions to the cause of children in the Dominican Republic, providing support in the areas of public policy and legislative and judicial reform at national and local levels. Actions to support the national decentralization policy included the formulation and implementation of provincial action plans for children in 14 provinces. These plans helped to accelerate achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children and to improve coordination between sectors and local institutions. The number of provincial information and statistics offices expanded to cover 24 out of 30 provinces nationwide.

4. Strengthening the Institute of Municipal Studies and the Municipal Training System led to the launching of the Child-Friendly Municipality Initiative. Through this local application of the 20/20 Initiative, 28 town councils committed funds to activities that promote children's and women's rights, with further commitments to gradually increase the allocations until 20 per cent of the annual municipal budgets are used for basic social services. The new provincial statistics and information offices, combined with the training of government personnel, helped to improve the availability and use of information at the local level for programme and planning purposes. Activities to support the decentralization process also contributed to the overall improvement of the technical and planning capacities of the National Planning and Statistics Offices.

5. The health programme provided strong support to the National Mobilization Plan for the Reduction of Infant and Maternal Mortality, which saw 10 out of 37 hospitals certified as baby- and mother-friendly. As a result, exclusive breastfeeding in the first four months of life increased from 10 to 25 per cent. An important element of the expanded Baby- and Mother-Friendly Hospital Initiative is the incorporation of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness strategy at both institutional and community levels, in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO). However, despite these considerable efforts to train health care professionals and support institutional reform, there is no conclusive evidence of significant improvements in health indicators. Thus, another initiative supports sustainable, low-cost, high-impact pilot models that can be replicated by the Government. For example, 1,445 community oral rehydration units (ORUs) were installed and over 6,000 community health volunteers were trained. This contributed to increased knowledge about the prevention and treatment of diarrhoea, and helped to reduce diarrhoea from the first to the third cause of child mortality in the country.

6. The education programme is currently supporting the Ministry of Education to improve the quality of and children's access to basic education in rural areas. The innovative multigrade school initiative has been applied in 210 schools, which now offer more grade levels and have shown results in terms of increased access, lower drop-out rates and improved performance in mathematics and language. This approach is a viable alternative for improving the quality of rural education, increasing teachers' commitment, and developing student leadership and family participation. Other innovative pilot models now being replicated include women- and child-friendly police stations, and non-formal early childhood development (ECD) strategies for children under five years of age.

7. The social mobilization and communication programme, in coordination with the child rights project, organized a survey on “The Country We Want”, in which 2.2 million children and adolescents expressed their wishes for the future of their country. Children identified violence, electrical brownouts, pollution, garbage, deforestation, corruption and poverty as the things they disliked most. They said that they would like their country to be clean, free of garbage and have electricity; to be organized and free of violence, especially against children and adolescents; and to have no delinquency and vices. The programme also helped to strengthen children’s rights committees, which monitor the application of children’s rights, create demand mechanisms and work to prevent child abuse at the community level. In addition, the programme supported campaigns to prevent family violence; the training of community leaders, mayors, council members and NGOs to promote children’s and women’s rights; and community mobilization for better child health through the installation of community ORUs.

8. In the area of communication, four editions of *Frente a la Cumbre* — considered to be the main source of information on the situation of women and children in the Dominican Republic — were published each year. In addition to various spots, audio-visual materials and information packages to promote children’s rights, weekly news reports with national coverage were aired on three main television channels.

9. Significant efforts were also made in the areas of salt iodization; combating child labour through the training of supervisors and the diagnosis of the worst forms of child labour, undertaken jointly with the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the International Labour Organization (ILO); and sexual and commercial exploitation through the training of community leaders, teachers and mental health workers, the establishment of a national hotline for child protection, and equipping of institutions for rehabilitation and psychological support to affected children. Nevertheless, additional work will be necessary to identify intervention methodologies that will address cultural barriers for sustainable results in these key areas.

## **Lessons learned from past cooperation**

10. Lessons learned remain essentially the same as described in the country note. Although the programme of cooperation maintained a sectoral structure that was primarily oriented towards support to the central level of Government, successes at the local level helped to change the focus of UNICEF cooperation. The mid-term review (MTR), as well as studies and evaluations carried out during the programme period, concluded that promoting a child rights programming approach requires interventions not only in terms of policy, but also at the cultural level to change knowledge, attitudes and practices, and in civil society to promote participation, responsibility and demand. There is also a need to nurture coordination and conflict resolution at all levels.

### Recommended programme cooperation, 2002-2006

	<i>Estimated annual expenditure (In thousands of United States dollars)</i>					<i>Total</i>
	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	
<b>Regular resources</b>						
Integrated public policies	134.0	133.5	151.1	141.6	137.9	698.1
Local systems for the protection and promotion of child rights	142.8	145.2	174.3	164.3	146.5	773.1
Cross-sectoral costs	448.2	446.3	399.6	419.1	440.6	2 153.8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>725.0</b>	<b>725.0</b>	<b>725.0</b>	<b>725.0</b>	<b>725.0</b>	<b>3 625.0</b>
<b>Other resources</b>						
Integrated public policies	354.1	225.0	187.5	250.0	265.5	1 282.1
Local systems for the protection and promotion of child rights	484.9	500.0	500.0	512.5	525.0	2 522.4
Cross-sectoral costs	161.0	275.0	312.5	237.5	209.5	1 195.5
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 000.0</b>	<b>1 000.0</b>	<b>1 000.0</b>	<b>1 000.0</b>	<b>1 000.0</b>	<b>5 000.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 725.0</b>	<b>1 725.0</b>	<b>1 725.0</b>	<b>1 725.0</b>	<b>1 725.0</b>	<b>8 625.0</b>

### Country programme preparation process

11. The proposed country programme of cooperation was developed under the leadership of the Technical Secretariat of the Presidency, the government agency responsible for overall programme coordination, and the National Planning Office, which coordinates implementation, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the specific programmes and projects.

12. The preparation of the country programme was a participatory process that involved counterparts, NGOs, local representatives and donors. The process began with the MTR of the current programme, followed by the updated situation analysis, the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS), and studies and evaluations by donors. A series of consultative meetings helped to define strategies and priority interventions with a life cycle, gender and rights approach. The priorities arising from the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process have also served as a basis for the programme design, including possible areas for joint interventions with other United Nations agencies.

### Country programme goals and objectives

13. The overall goal of the proposed country programme is to promote the rights of children and adolescents in the Dominican Republic through developing national capacities to formulate and apply equitable and sustainable policies, while at the same time creating an enabling environment for the participation and empowerment of families, communities and organized groups at the local level in the exercise of and demand for these rights. The programme will contribute to the design and

implementation of sustainable and efficient public policies that prioritize the interests of children as rights-holders within a wider human rights framework.

14. The two clusters of intervention identified in the country note have been further refined, resulting in the definition of two programmes. The programme for integrated public policies aims to contribute to the definition and implementation of national policies focusing on children and adolescents. The second programme, local systems for the protection and promotion of child rights, will contribute to the establishment and strengthening of sustainable mechanisms and conditions to guarantee respect for the rights of children, adolescents and women at the local level. Together, these two programmes aim to achieve five interrelated country programme objectives: (a) to support the achievement of the unmet goals of the World Summit for Children; (b) to contribute to structural reform of the National Protection System for Children and Adolescents; (c) to support new and existing social mobilization mechanisms for the demand of rights; (d) to support the increased availability, reliability and use of essential data on children and adolescents for planning, programming and monitoring; and (e) to contribute to inter-agency emergency preparedness efforts.

## **Relation to national and international priorities**

15. The proposed country programme will continue to support the Government in its efforts to achieve the objectives of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the NPA. UNICEF will work closely with governmental authorities to support the national priorities identified in the Poverty Alleviation Programme and the Presidential Social Plan, ensuring that an emergency preparedness component is also included. The recently elected Government has announced its commitment to formulate and implement a new NPA for children, incorporating pending goals as well as such emerging problem areas as basic education, early childhood care and development (ECCD), food security, reform of the health and justice sectors, decentralization and poverty alleviation. These areas have been key influences in formulating the programme's strategy and priorities.

16. The UNDAF process and the elaboration of the Common Country Assessment have helped to identify priority action areas for United Nations agencies, including birth registration; the reduction of maternal, infant and child mortality; the prevention of HIV/AIDS; reproductive health; gender equity; basic education, with a special emphasis on girls and disparity reduction; ECCD; food security; information and statistics; decentralization; and emergency preparedness. The United Nations agencies are committed to implementing complementary actions in these areas, as reflected in the country programme's objectives and priorities.

17. The proposed country programme is also in line with the global priorities of UNICEF and with the regional priorities articulated in the Kingston Consensus and the Panama Declaration. The programme will include a strong HIV/AIDS prevention component through participation in the work of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the UNICEF multi-country HIV/AIDS initiative for the region for 2002-2006 (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.62).

## Programme strategy

18. The programme strategy remains essentially the same as described in the country note, centring on providing support at both policy and local levels to ensure coherence with the universal realization of children's and women's rights. The programme will focus on strengthening national capacities to formulate and apply sustainable, equitable policies within a rights-based perspective; and on creating an enabling environment for the empowerment and participation of children, youth, families, NGOs, communities and organized groups at the local level in the exercise and demand of children's and women's rights.

19. The programme aims to forge alliances among the Government, NGOs and civil society to promote effective and sustainable actions at all levels, and to promote the shared responsibility of the State, community and family to respect and enforce the rights of children and adolescents. Fostering exchanges of experience and information on best practices at national and local levels will encourage the integration of vertical and horizontal programmes. The programme will strengthen alliances and partnerships within the newly created municipal and provincial development councils, which include representatives from civil society, local authorities and NGOs. Inter-agency support will emphasize the development of an information system to monitor rights compliance and achievement of goals.

20. The programme for integrated public policies, including advocacy and support to ensure the sustainability of achievements, will be carried out at the national level. The second programme, local systems for the protection and promotion of child rights, will be implemented at the local level in specified target areas, including the border provinces of Monte Cristi, Dajabon, Elias Piña and Independencia y Pedernales. The latter will include interventions coordinated with UNICEF Haiti on issues related to health, education and child protection, particularly child labour and trafficking. Criteria used to identify the target areas include the complementarity of interventions with those of other donors working in the same geographical area, poverty levels and the need for child protection, the comparative advantage of the UNICEF-supported interventions, and local capacity and interest in programme participation and sustainability. Although there will not be direct interventions in all of the target areas of the previous country programme, the sustainability of these achievements will be assured through long-term coordination of support by local government, community organizations and donors. UNICEF will monitor progress and offer technical support if required.

21. **Integrated public policies.** The programme will promote the rights of children, as well as the availability of quality and relevant information that contributes to a vision of children and adolescents as subjects of rights, and the shared responsibility of the State, community and family to guarantee those rights. It is composed of two related projects: (a) public policies and state reform; and (b) research and information systems.

22. The project on public policies and state reform will aim to create demand for legislative and policy reforms that focus on the rights of children and adolescents in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It will support the formulation and implementation of national policies and the establishment of mechanisms to strengthen coordination between institutions and within civil society to realize the rights of children and adolescents. The two major components of the

project are: (a) technical support for the redefinition of the role and scope of the National Protection System for Children and Adolescents; and (b) strengthening of alliances among mass media, NGOs, civil society, universities and professional associations to widen the demand for legislative and policy reform. Specific actions will include the provision of technical assistance for the definition and implementation of policies and processes in support of children's rights, and support for the development of structures for their implementation. The strengthening of mechanisms to enable the participation of local-level actors in national-level policy decisions and vice versa, and the promotion of a rights culture with an integral view of children and their needs will also be prioritized. The Governing Body of the National Protection System will coordinate the project, with the active support of other participating government institutions, the Congressional Commissions for Children and Women, and NGOs. Regular resources will be used for staff costs and core technical support, and other resources for additional advocacy and alliance-building functions.

23. The project on research and information systems will promote research and studies with a gender, life cycle and rights perspective in order to produce accurate and timely information on the situation of children and adolescents that will serve as a base for planning and decision-making. Two main areas of intervention have been identified. First, in cooperation with universities and research centres, the project will support research to identify emerging issues and strategic alternatives for intervention. The systematic analysis of the situation of child rights and results achieved in rights promotion will facilitate informed decision-making for the Government, NGOs and donors. Secondly, the project will support the definition of national indicators and data gathering at provincial, municipal and local levels to ensure coordination between the different sectoral subsystems and the national database, aiming for accuracy and reliability of national statistics. The Office of the Technical Secretariat of the Presidency, the Governing Body of the National Protection System, the National Planning Office and the National Statistics Office will provide guidance and support to the project in coordination with sectoral ministries, NGOs and donors. Regular resources will be used to develop a base of information and define key national indicators and systems, while other resources will support coordination among partners and wider alliance-building.

24. **Local systems for the protection and promotion of child rights.** The programme will provide technical assistance and institutional support to ensure local-level compliance with and implementation of national policies in selected provinces. It will focus on the functioning of local systems for rights protection and involve a variety of civil society actors, including children and adolescents. This programme will also support the decentralization process, empowering local authorities and civil society, particularly children and adolescents, to demand rights and access to justice, and implement national laws and policies in favour of child rights. UNICEF will support the replication of this local-level work in other parts of the country and ensure the sustainability of interventions by linking all efforts into new and existing local networks. The programme will focus on two project areas: (a) institutional capacity-building; and (b) civil society participation.

25. The objective of the project for institutional capacity-building is to establish and strengthen community-based mechanisms that work to guarantee the rights of children and adolescents. Technical and logistical support will facilitate the application of public policies and programmes in favour of children's and



adolescents' rights at the local level, particularly laws that promote a good start in life, access to quality health and education, and the elimination of sexual and commercial exploitation and child labour. The project will emphasize the involvement of civil society in the design, administration and monitoring of local development plans, and the use of information to orient the elaboration of local plans and decision-making. Specific actions will include the formulation and coordination of provincial and municipal plans of action for children, in coordination with the health, education, judicial and women's sectors, local NGOs and civil society; and technical support and capacity-building for local institutions and systems. This support will focus on such areas as expanding the Child-Friendly Municipalities Initiative; technical support to municipal information and statistics offices; the training of municipal and provincial staff in participatory planning and budgeting; and local programmes to prevent HIV/AIDS.

26. Regular resources will be used for training, capacity-building and staff costs. Other resources will be used for wider advocacy and alliance-building and to support actions in HIV/AIDS programming, in conjunction with the regional multi-country HIV/AIDS initiative, although initial actions in this area will be supported with regular resources.

27. The project for civil society participation aims to increase the informed and active participation of local actors to create new alliances, volunteer groups and support networks in the demand for human rights. It will include social communication, information and education; and the training of members of civil society to participate in local decision-making, targeting journalists, adolescents and the general public, while building alliances that support compliance with child rights. Regular resources will be used to develop capacities of local partners and for materials for communication and mobilization activities.

28. **Cross-sectoral costs** are intended to cover programme implementation costs not completely attributable to either of the programmes. They will be used primarily for salaries of technical support personnel and other operational costs.

## Monitoring and evaluation

29. The master plan of operations includes an integrated monitoring and evaluation plan with two components. The first comprises ongoing programme and project monitoring, tracking annual progress towards long-term goals and the use of funds. This information will be used to analyse the programme's contribution to national development and UNDAF priorities. The second component is an integrated work plan that includes studies, surveys, evaluations, programme reviews, training activities, and relevant monitoring and evaluation activities of counterparts. Specific indicators will include the existence of integrated policies to support the rights of the child throughout the life cycle; increased social investment for children, adolescents and women; prioritization of the theme of children and adolescents in the national agenda; increased data on children and adolescents available and being used for planning at national and local levels; and the number of functioning, community-level organizations for child protection. Data will be gathered nationally and locally, and project staff and counterparts will make regular field visits to monitor programme implementation. Annual reviews will measure progress against objectives and enable the country team to amend programme activities as necessary,

as will the MTR planned for 2004. Other planned evaluations will assess the functioning of the newly designed local system of information and statistics (in 2003), and the implementation of the local system for the promotion and protection of rights (2004).

30. The responsibility for monitoring and evaluation will be shared between UNICEF and counterpart institutions. Within UNICEF, monitoring and evaluation will be done under the leadership of the representative, with the support of the project officer.

31. The Government, with support from UNICEF, conducted a MICS in 2000 to measure achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children. The results have been incorporated into the report submitted by the Government to the United Nations, although they have not yet been officially presented. The results of the MICS provide a baseline for the programme in terms of the World Summit goals. However, due to a lack of information in other aspects of the situation of children, adolescents and women, studies and evaluations will remain an important programme component.

## **Collaboration with partners**

32. The programme of cooperation, including the identification of intervention areas for UNICEF, has been elaborated with the full participation of other partners. Within the context of UNDAF, the following have been identified as potential areas for joint interventions: HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS); healthy municipalities (PAHO/WHO); primary health care (PAHO/WHO); and child labour and sexual and commercial exploitation of children (IPEC/ILO and the United Nations Population Fund). Additional coordination has been established with universities in the country; the United States Agency for International Development, in the area of justice; the Kellogg Foundation, for social mobilization for child rights; Plan International, for the establishment of multigrade schools; CARE and World Vision, in the areas of health and child-friendly municipalities; the European Union, for municipal capacity-building and education; the Inter-American Development Bank, in the areas of education, health and community development; the World Bank, for education, ECD and health; and the Government of Italy, in the area of sexual and commercial exploitation. The German Committee for UNICEF will collaborate in the areas of child abuse and sexual and commercial exploitation. The Spanish Committee will provide technical assistance through volunteers, and the United States Fund for UNICEF will support provincial action plans in all areas of intervention. NGOs, civil society partners and the media will be key partners for project implementation and the demand for rights at the local level, and universities and research institutes throughout the country will be vital counterparts for information collection and analysis.

33. UNICEF contributions to programme implementation in the Dominican Republic are heavily dependent on other resources, and to reach the approved annual levels the office is preparing a systematic fund-raising strategy. For the first year of the new cycle, only 31 per cent of other resources are unfunded, but for the remaining four years, the source of funding must be identified. The office will work to educate donors about the child rights approach and familiarize them with the needs and priorities for UNICEF interventions, which are the outcomes of a

systematic planning process undertaken with key national partners. In addition, the donor base needs to be broadened. Negotiations are under way to increase the Government's participation as part of the efforts to create more sustainable development.

## **Programme management**

34. The Office of the Technical Secretariat of the Presidency is responsible for overall coordination of the programme of cooperation and, in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, for securing the funds necessary to sustain the programme after the five-year period. The National Planning Office is responsible for coordinating the execution, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects, supported by relevant ministries and such bodies as the National Statistics Office, the Supreme Court, the National School for Judges, the Municipal League, the Office of the First Lady and the National Youth Council. The Government will appoint a coordinator for each project, responsible for planning, management and monitoring, in coordination with UNICEF staff.

35. For the second programme, a national coordinating committee will be created under the leadership of the National Planning Office to review progress and identify and solve constraints. Municipal authorities will be responsible for coordinating the formulation and implementation of municipal plans for children. UNICEF will provide technical assistance, advocate for the creation of national and local alliances in favour of children, and support monitoring implementation of the plans.

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