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Summary of midterm reviews of country programmes

Latin America and Caribbean region

Summary

This regional summary of the midterm review of the country programme for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2011) was prepared in response to Executive Board decision 1995/8. The Executive Board is invited to comment on the report and provide guidance to the secretariat.

* E/ICEF/2012/15.



Introduction

1. In 2011, the Latin America region conducted the midterm review of the programme of cooperation for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela which is summarized in this report. This review provided an opportunity for UNICEF and its national counterparts to assess the situation of children and adolescents, reflect on their achievements and challenges and draw on the lessons learned to guide future programming, using as a framework the outcome of the midterm strategic plan and the Millennium Development Goals.

Midterm reviews

Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Introduction

2. The midterm review (MTR) of the country programme 2009-2013 began in February 2011 and concluded in March 2012. It was carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Planning and Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the MTR process, eleven bilateral meetings were held for consultation and review with counterparts from the national Government, the local Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media. Note was taken of achievements, lessons learned between 2009 and 2011 and cooperation agreements within the framework of the country programme for 2012-2013. At the request of the Ministry of Planning and Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the document on agreements arising from the midterm review only includes comments, revisions and joint agreements between national Government institutions and UNICEF.

Update on the situation of children, adolescents and women

3. A review of the official figures published by the national Government in 2010 in its second country report on progress made towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the information submitted by the country during the Universal Periodic Review in 2011, shows a positive trend towards guaranteeing human rights, particularly the rights of children and adolescents, and towards compliance with almost all the Millennium Development Goals. Goal 1, on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and goal 7, on access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, were achieved in 2007. It is expected that the goals of universal primary education, gender equality and empowerment of women will be achieved by 2015.

4. Nevertheless, the information provided in these reports and in other official sources¹ shows that there are challenges in the area of children and adolescents, especially as regards neonatal mortality, teen pregnancy, maternal mortality,

¹ INE. Resumen de Indicadores Sociales, nov. 2011; MPPS. *Anuario de Mortalidad*, 2008; MPPS, Fundación Misión Niño Jesús — Programa Nacional de Atención a la Salud Materna e Infantil. “Cifras de mortalidad materna e infantil, 2010”. Defensoría del Pueblo. *Informe Anual, 2010*; INE. “Nacimientos vivos registrados por grupo de edad de la madres, 2010”.

HIV/AIDS and violence against children and adolescents, especially within the family and the community.

5. Despite the progress made in the generation of statistics and the development of data-dissemination tools to improve the monitoring of compliance with the Millennium Development Goals and the rights of the child, the data need to be further broken down by subnational categories and population groups. A greater effort is also needed to provide timely information on HIV/AIDS, the indigenous population and the population of African descent, breastfeeding, violence against children and adolescents, institutionalized children, teen pregnancy, adolescents in conflict with the law and birth records.

Progress and key results at midterm

6. The cooperation programme of Venezuela has two components: (a) More Protection, Less Violence; (b) More Inclusion, Less Disparity. The midterm review showed that the current UNICEF cooperation programme is still relevant in terms of the issues, strategies and emphases adopted in 2009. In other words, a country programme that focuses on public policies, in particular, the two key issues of prevention of violence and reduction of disparities.

7. **Component on *More Protection, Less Violence*.** With the support of the UNICEF programme, the country has made progress towards strengthening the national statistical system by means of studies, surveys and records designed to generate a better understanding of issues relating to the protection of children. The National Protection System improved its capacity to carry out its duties in compliance with international standards, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protection of Children and Adolescents Act. UNICEF contributed to the creation of the national training programme for judges which was implemented in its entirety by the agency responsible for this area. The adolescent development approach has been adopted by the Ministry of Education and is embodied in its curricula.

8. **Component on *More Inclusion, Less Disparity*.** The programme provided support for the inclusion in the national education policy of strategic areas on education for equality, good treatment of others, respect for cultural diversity, adolescent development and education for comprehensive risk management. Decision makers receive timely high-quality information for monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals and other national policies. For the first time ever, the country is assessing the situation of the population of African descent by including a question on the issue in the 2011 Population and Housing Census. Support was provided for the creation of INEInfo, a national version of DevInfo, which has been adopted by the National Statistical Institute as a tool for disseminating key statistical information. UNICEF helped the Ministry of Education significantly improve the quality of its statistics and the timeframes for disseminating them.

9. The main challenges for the future are: (a) to consolidate the information systems that have been created or strengthened with the cooperation of UNICEF and to work for the broad and timely dissemination of information produced by the country on children and adolescents; (b) to increase the inclusion of results-based management and human rights approaches in the design, implementation and monitoring of public policies targeting children and adolescents; (c) to continue and

consolidate measures to bring the protection system in line with international standards, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protection of Children and Adolescents Act; (d) to incorporate the adolescent development approach in the knowledge, practices and attitudes of different sectors of the country, including the adolescents themselves, and in the design of national public policies; (e) to help improve the capacity of the Ministry of Education to implement the new national educational curriculum.

Resources used

10. The country programme for 2009-2013 began with an initial approved ceiling of \$10,890,000, which was increased to a total of \$13,540,000; of this amount, \$3,750,000 are from regular resources, and \$9,790,000 from other resources (subject to the availability of funds). The programme was also financed by the national business sector and by the sale of cards and gifts. The implementation rate is currently 70 per cent of regular resources and 70 per cent of other resources.

Constraints and opportunities affecting progress

11. Annual planning processes caused some delays in implementation. Since 2009, therefore, the office has followed a strategy of multi-year work plans.

Adjustments made

12. The outcome, strategies and approaches agreed on for the current country programme did not change. The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and UNICEF have agreed to continue and intensify technical assistance during 2012-2013 and to request an extension to 2014, based on the extension of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Some of the issues identified as the main challenges for the future, in line with the transition towards the priorities to be agreed for UNDAF 2015-2019 in the area of human rights and accelerating compliance with the Millennium Development Goals are: (a) to consolidate the information systems that have been created or strengthened with the cooperation of UNICEF cooperation and to work for broad and timely dissemination of information produced by the country on children and adolescents; (b) to increase the inclusion of results-based management and human rights approaches in the design, implementation and monitoring of public policies targeting children and adolescents; (c) to continue and consolidate measures to bring the protection system in line with international standards, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protection of Children and Adolescents Act; (d) to incorporate the adolescent development approach in the knowledge, practices and attitudes of different sectors of the country, including the adolescents themselves, and in the design of national public policies; (e) to improve the capacity of the Ministry of Education to adequately implement the new national educational curriculum.

Conclusion

13. The midterm review referred to in this report highlights the scope of UNICEF cooperation with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and reaffirms the continuing relevance of UNICEF programmes in middle income countries in helping them intensify progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

with equity. It has also stressed the importance of continuing to invest in the compilation of disaggregated data, for which UNICEF will continue to provide its support.

14. In the region, most programmes join in efforts to influence national policies and work to obtain tangible results to benefit children at the subnational level. In particular, the efforts focus on the poorest regions and the municipalities with high percentages of indigenous populations and populations of African descent. Thanks to its ability to enlist cooperation, UNICEF is also helping to improve coordination among development partners, including the agencies of the United Nations system.
