United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda[*]

Multi-country programme document

Eastern Caribbean Area

Summary

> The multi-country programme document (MCPD) for the Eastern Caribbean Area is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The MCPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of $31,625,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $18,201,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period March 2022 to December 2026.

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[*] E/ICEF/2022/1.

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Programme rationale

1.   The Eastern Caribbean Area (ECA) comprises eight independent States and four overseas territories,[1] each of which is classified either as high or upper middle income. The combined population of ECA is estimated to be 2,214,000.[2] Children under 18 years of age in ECA make up 27.2 per cent of the population. Trinidad and Tobago has the largest child population, representing 57 per cent of all children in ECA. Five of the 12 countries and territories in ECA account for over 86 per cent of all children aged 11–18 years in the region: Barbados, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.[3]

2.   Notwithstanding the income status of the countries and territories in ECA, an estimated one in three children live in poverty – notably child poverty rates are 30 per cent higher than adult poverty rates. Likewise, adolescent poverty rates are also higher than adult poverty rates.[4] Over 50,000 children in total are estimated to be living in poverty in just three countries: Barbados, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago; five countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, have a total of over 10,000 children living in poverty, and four territories: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands have in total less than 10,000 children living in poverty.

3.   The countries and territories in ECA have historically been among the highest performers in the Caribbean region in terms of human development, with a ranking of either "very high" or "high".[5] However, the impressive development gains disguise significant disparities within and between countries and territories. The Common Multi-Country Analysis shows that while some progress has been made, including for the 12 countries and territories in which UNICEF operates, major challenges remain in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.[6]

4.   Given the unique characteristics of the Eastern Caribbean region, UNICEF will continue to use differentiated and context-specific approaches, with some region-wide programmes and strategies, and others specific to one or a cluster of countries and territories. As such, some programmes will have national coverage and others will focus on specific at-risk and vulnerable children at the subnational level.

5.   The situation of children in ECA has changed significantly over the course of the current multi-country programme (MCP) due to multiple and compounding external shocks, including slow economic growth, several natural disasters, accelerated climate and environmental degradation and regional instability. The coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic continues to severely impact the tourism and service economies on which most countries and territories in ECA rely, and has increased child deprivation.[7]

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[1] Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and four British Overseas Territories: Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

[2] Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, CEPALSTAT Statistical Databases and Publications, 2021, <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/dashboard.html?indicator_id=1&area_id=1&lang=en>.

[3] UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean, Situation analysis of children in the Eastern Caribbean, December 2019.

[4] Commission of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and UNICEF, Child poverty in the Eastern Caribbean Area, Final report, 2017, p. 59.

[5] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Index 2020, pp. 241–242.

[6] United Nations Caribbean, Caribbean Common Multi-Country Analysis (CMCA) 2021, May 2021.

[7] Wood, J., A. Nartea and S. Bishop, 'The socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on children and young people in the Eastern Caribbean Area', United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and UNICEF, April 2020.

6.   Lessons learned from the formative evaluation of the UNICEF Eastern Caribbean multi-country programme 2017–2021 have informed the design of the new programme. These include the need for UNICEF to: (a) strengthen its alignment with the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNMSDCF);[8] (b) strengthen programmes to prevent, mitigate and respond more effectively to the multiple external shocks facing ECA; (c) expand strategic partnerships with civil society and the private sector; (d) focus financial and human resources on children experiencing the most severe deprivations; (e) more purposively address key gender bottlenecks and harmful gender norms; (f) address emerging issues in the region, including mental health, well-being and obesity.

7.   The ECA is among the regions most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, health emergencies and extreme weather events.[9] In 2017, several hurricanes had catastrophic social, economic and infrastructural impacts across Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Over 143,000 people were affected, including 39,000 children. Natural disasters have disproportionately affected poor and vulnerable populations, including children.[10]

8.   The pandemic has required ECA states to mitigate its immediate health, socioeconomic, mental health and psychosocial impacts across all sectors. It has exposed the long-standing fragility of the region's economies, exacerbated negative historic economic trends and inequalities, and highlighted weaknesses in the provision of essential social services.[11]

9.   The pandemic has hit the region's economies hard, with gross domestic product (GDP) estimated to have contracted by 16 per cent in 2020 and public debt projected to reach 90 per cent of GDP in 2021. Economic recovery is expected to be slow and may require reduced government spending, negatively impacting the availability of basic social services.[12]

10.   Natural disasters and climate change displace children and their families, as seen following Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and most recently the La Soufrière volcano. Political and economic instability in neighbouring countries in Latin America have resulted in population movements into ECA. As of September 2021, there were approximately 21,000 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Trinidad and Tobago[13], 18 per cent of them children. Despite arrangements in some territories[14], most children on the move do not have access to basic protection nor access to national services.

11.   All ECA countries and territories experienced a decline in maternal mortality between 2000 and 2017, except Saint Lucia which saw an increase between 2005 and

[8] Common Multi-Country Assessment Final Draft Report/Evaluation, version 2.5, May 2021.

[9] Pegram, J. and Knaute D., Caribbean Children Facing the Climate Crisis: UNICEF Climate, Environment and Energy (CEE) Landscape Analysis for Children - Eastern Caribbean, November 2019, p 11.

[10] Knight, P., 'Hurricane Maria aftermath: Children's education on hold in Dominica', UNICEF, 13 October 2017.

[11] UNDP, UNICEF and United Nations Entity for Gender (UN-Women), COVID-19 Heat Reports, Human and Economic Assessment of Impact, June 2020.

[12] Eastern Caribbean Currency Union: IMF Staff Concluding Statement of the 2021 Discussion on Common Policies of Member Countries, 12 February 2021.

[13] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Progress Database for Trinidad and Tobago, accessed on 30 September 2021.

[14] For OECS territories, such access is supported by the OECS Policy on Rights Contingent on the Right to Freedom of Movement within the Economic Union, signed into being as part of the Revised Treaty of Basseterre.

2017.[15] As noted in the UNICEF 2019 strategic moment of reflection report, there are two emerging areas of concern that affect the well-being of children and young people: increasing levels of obesity among children and adolescents; and the deteriorating mental health and well-being of adolescents. In ECA, on average, as many as one fifth of adolescents have considered attempting suicide.[16]

12.   The ECA countries and territories have long pursued regional integration in education. Primary and secondary education is compulsory up to the age of 16. However, early childhood development (ECD) and early childhood education (ECE) are not compulsory. Key barriers are access, quality of services, multisectoral coordination and up-to-date disaggregated data, with only 3 out of 12 ECA countries and territories having Early Childhood Index data.[17] Almost all ECA states have achieved universal primary and secondary education.[18] Despite this progress, significant challenges remain in ensuring equitable access to education.

13.   The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) characterizes education as an area in which there are significant pockets of underperformance, which result in inadequate access to jobs, exacerbated by underlying gender, poverty and socioeconomic determinants.[19] There are marked gender disparities in educational attainment and retention, with increasing numbers of adolescent males dropping out of school.[20] Many students leave school after 11 years of formal education without a school-leaving certificate or any marketable skills.[21]

14.   The education programme component will be crucial to ensure that gender equity analysis moves beyond equality in access and attainment and focuses on the underlying structural gendered determinants. The COVID-19 pandemic has offered an opportunity to accelerate implementation of the Reimagine Education agenda in ECA with teaching and learning offered remotely through the use of new digital technologies and the adaptation of pedagogical methods.

15.   Violence against children and women and girls is pervasive in ECA, fuelled by social inequalities.[22] Gender inequality and harmful social norms are key drivers of violence and child poverty. A survey conducted in Trinidad and Tobago found that just under one in three women (31.1 per cent) had ever experienced sexual violence.[23] UNICEF, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the European Union, through the Spotlight Initiative, support gender transformative programming to address violence against women and girls and entrenched and harmful social and gender norms.

16.   Physical abuse and corporal punishment of children are ubiquitous in ECA. The multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) 2011–2012 found that 60 to 70 per cent of children experienced some form of physical and/or psychological violence in the

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[15] UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean, Situation Analysis of Children in the Eastern Caribbean, December 2019, p.34.

[16] Ibid, p.50.

[17] Ibid., p. 46.

[18] OECS Commission, OECS Education Sector Strategy (OECS), 2012–2021.

[19] CARICOM Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy, 2017.

[20] OECS Commission, Education Statistics Digest: Statistics on education for the academic year 2018–2019.

[21] CARICOM, Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy, 2017.

[22] United Nations, Towards a people centred UNSDCF 2022–2026, 4 June 2021.

[23] Pemberton, C. and J. Joseph, National Women's Health Survey for Trinidad and Tobago, Final report, Inter-American Development Bank, February 2018.

month prior to the survey.[24] Violence in and around schools is a growing concern. The Global School-based Student Health Survey shows that bullying and physical fighting are common.[25] Although the extent of child sexual violence in ECA is difficult to accurately measure, perception studies found that 57 per cent of adults maintained that child sexual abuse was a major problem.[26]

17.   Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, one in three Caribbean children lived in poverty. The pandemic has brought social protection to the forefront as a key poverty alleviation and crisis-response mechanism. Current social protection mechanisms partly address the risks faced by individuals and households – including in response to shocks – but they remain suboptimal.

18.   There is a need to consolidate the development gains made for children over the past decade and to focus more explicitly on the most excluded groups: children living in poverty, migrant and refugee children, children in female-headed households, children at risk in the criminal justice system, and children with disabilities and special education needs.

19.   Several future trends may impact the new MCP: (a) the effectiveness of the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) the high levels of debt and limited fiscal space for Governments and constraints on social sector spending; (c) increases in natural disasters, health emergencies and extreme weather events; and (d) regional instability, which results in population movements.

20.   The new MCP comprises four programme priorities, complemented by three cross-cutting priorities to address the most severe deprivations facing children in ECA. They are: (1) relevant, equitable and inclusive education; (2) protection from violence against children; (3) social protection to end child poverty, and (4) climate change and resilience. The cross-cutting priorities are: (1) recovery from COVID-19; (2) mental health and well-being; and (3) disaster risk reduction (DRR).

Programme priorities and partnerships

21.   The UNICEF MCP is fully aligned with and contributes to the national development plans of the 12 countries and territories of ECA. It is aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, the Gender Action Plan, 2022–2025, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

22.   The UNMSDCF vision for the Caribbean is that "By 2030 the Caribbean will have achieved all the SDGs and recovered from the impact of COVID-19…and will be a resilient region where people…can reach their full potential." The UNICEF vision for the MCP is an Eastern Caribbean where all children achieve appropriate quality educational qualifications, and live in protective and safe environments free from poverty, violence, exploitation and abuse.

23.   UNICEF will support ECA countries and territories to attain the outcomes set out in the MCPD as part of the overarching UNMSDCF, and will directly contribute to UNMSDCF outcomes 3 to 7.

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[24] Landon B.G. et al., 'Corporal punishment and physical discipline in the Caribbean, Human Rights and Cultural practices', *Caribbean Journal of Psychology*, vol. 9, no. 1, August 2017.

[25] UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean, Situation Analysis of Children in the Eastern Caribbean, December 2019.

[26] Caribbean Development Research Services, CADRES Social Survey Report, 2019.

Relevant, equitable and inclusive education

24.   This programme component will focus on ensuring that children and adolescents, especially those who are excluded, can access and complete quality education and develop the requisite skills to advance to higher education or employment. UNICEF and partners will aim to ensure that ECD centres and primary and secondary schools are safe, climate-smart and inclusive, and deliver quality learning and opportunities for skills development, and that education systems are strengthened and shock-responsive.

25.   Several critical barriers negatively impact equitable and inclusive access, enrolment and completion of ECD, as well as education at all levels: low parental engagement, insufficient awareness and knowledge of nurturing care and positive parenting practices, and inadequate provision of ECD and ECE services. Supply barriers include inadequate provision for struggling learners, insufficient qualified teachers, poor teacher quality and training, and limited vocational and non-formal educational opportunities.

26.   UNICEF will strengthen the education system by enhancing data generation; advancing the digitization of the education sector, including closing the digital divide; building greater education sector resilience through enhanced climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness, and improving shock-responsive mechanisms, i.e., the Safe Schools and Climate-Smart school initiatives with the private sector.[27] In addition, UNICEF will advocate to widen the curriculum to increase certified formal and informal opportunities to develop digital, technical and vocational skills among adolescents not in education, employment, or training. UNICEF will also conduct gender analyses to address disparities in school completion rates and to prevent violence in and around schools.

27.   Communications, advocacy and behaviour change strategies will focus on addressing harmful attitudes that drive violence in schools. In addition to supporting positive parental engagement, knowledge and skills, UNICEF will promote sustainable healthy lifestyles, mental health and well-being, good nutrition, and the prevention of non-communicable diseases. Public finance for children strategies will build evidence and data on inequalities in the allocation of and inefficiencies in public education expenditure.

28.   UNICEF will focus on strengthening the capacity of ministries of education to expand equitable, inclusive and affordable access to quality ECD and ECE services by improving the regulation and oversight of facilities, ensuring they are safe and meet international standards, and by promoting the benefits of such services to children, parents, families and communities.

29.   Ensuring schools are free from violence and provide a protective environment for children is fundamental to learning. This was a key recommendation of the 2021 evaluation of the implementation of the Child Friendly Schools/Effective Schools Framework in three Eastern Caribbean countries. Working with UN-Women and UNFPA through the Spotlight Initiative and focused communication for development approaches, UNICEF will address entrenched social and gender norms. UNICEF, the CARICOM Secretariat and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission will increase the knowledge of and influence the attitudes among parents, families and communities on the benefits of nurturing care and positive parenting.

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[27] UNICEF, Evaluation of the implementation of the Child Friendly Schools/Effective Schools Framework in three Eastern Caribbean countries, 2021.

30. In collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre and the private sector, UNICEF will strengthen the resilience of the education sector to shocks and improve education preparedness plans and climate change adaptation measures to address climate and environmental threats and provide psychological support for students and teachers.

31. UNICEF will build on innovations such as the Giga initiative to expand the digitization of the education sectors and will model, pilot and evaluate new initiatives that enhance learning and skills development, collaborating with information and communications technology providers and the private sector.

Protection from violence against children

32. Violence against children is pervasive across ECA and has significant costs.[28] It is intrinsically linked to violence against women and girls. This programme component will contribute to the vision that children and adolescents, in all settings, grow up in a safe and protective environment with enhanced, child-friendly systems and appropriate and effective institutional response mechanisms.

33. While UNICEF social surveys show that the use of and support for corporal punishment in schools is waning, it has high support among households. There is an increasing concern about child trafficking, most often of adolescent girls, and about sexual abuse, including online sexual abuse. Through the innovative Giga initiative, UNICEF has partnered with the International Telecommunication Union, UN-Women, UNFPA and the private sector, and developing guidelines and safety protocols to better protect the online presence of children.

34. UNICEF will continue its work on child justice, including law and institutional reform and the development of family courts. An assessment of justice systems undertaken by UNICEF and OECS found that several ECA countries have legislation and policies to protect children from violence and abuse and on child justice, but the level of implementation varies due to staff capacity issues, and delays in adapting and adopting models of practice and in the drafting of child protection guidance.

35. The key bottlenecks and barriers that impede the prevention and response to violence against children and violence against women and girls include entrenched cultural and social norms; social acceptance of physical discipline in the home and schools; commonplace sexual abuse of girls, boys and women; concerns around anonymity; inadequate capacity of service providers; and poor quality of care for victims of violence. The main intervention strategies will be: system strengthening, in partnership with regional institutions; generating the evidence base on the magnitude and impacts of violence against children and violence against women and girls, including those related to climate change and natural disasters; enhancing community-based mechanisms to effectively prevent and respond to violence through positive parenting, and the provision of tools and guidance.

Social protection to end child poverty

36. This component will ensure that more families, including those of the poorest and most deprived children and adolescents in ECA, benefit from comprehensive and integrated social protection coverage, including in humanitarian situations.

37. The level of poverty – especially child poverty – in ECA is concerning. Yet the data on poverty are outdated. Without timely, disaggregated data, Governments are not able to design and implement evidence-based programmes to effectively address

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[28] Wodon, Q. et al, 'Ending Violence in Schools: An investment case, World Bank and the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, 2021.

child poverty. UNICEF will advocate for the routine generation and utilization of multidimensional deprivation analyses; the inclusion of child poverty and sex-disaggregated data utilizing the experience of the recent MICS; and strengthen administrative and programme data capture and usage.

38.   Social protection is key to systematically preventing and reducing poverty, vulnerability, exclusion and inequalities in all settings. Key bottlenecks include outdated legal and policy frameworks, suboptimal social protection coverage as well as inefficient implementation. Other key challenges include negative attitudes. Social protection programmes remain fragmented and lack integrated data management systems such as social registries. Insufficient financing and ineffective targeting of funds remain critical barriers to scaling up comprehensive social protection systems.

39.   UNICEF, in partnership with key stakeholders such as UNDP, the International Labour Organization, the World Food Programme and international financial institutions, will support the expansion of inclusive and shock-responsive programmes; and develop more comprehensive responses through cash plus access to quality essential services. These services will provide more systematic linkages to line ministry services, to more effectively prevent, mitigate and respond to poverty, violence, health, climate and environment-related shocks, leveraging social protection systems and drawing on the lessons from the Dominica evaluation on humanitarian cash in emergencies.[29]

40.   UNICEF will support the generation of research, evidence and data, including on public finance. In addition, it will increase advocacy to highlight the magnitude and severity of child poverty, and mobilize support from strategic partners, including from the private sector and civil society, to build greater political commitment to end child poverty and to increase human and financial resources devoted to social protection.

41.   Children on the move experience deprivations in access to health, protection, education and participation, and only a few national programmes provide support. UNICEF, in collaboration with key stakeholders, will continue to provide direct support and work towards the removal of the legal, administrative and financial barriers preventing the integration of migrant children in national systems. This will be accompanied by behaviour change communication support to influence attitudes, knowledge and practices, particularly among decision makers, service providers and the public. UNICEF will support the migrant population with skills development opportunities and provide critical local guidance, ranging from life-saving information to information that will support their integration and build social cohesion.

Climate change and resilience

42.   The Eastern Caribbean is among the world's most vulnerable regions to the impacts of climate change, given its geographic location, small size and reliance on climate-sensitive economic sectors. Multiple climate projection scenarios indicate an increase in climate, natural disaster and emergency health impacts in ECA, as well as slow-onset events such as rising sea levels. Children are at increasing risk, especially those whose resilience has been eroded due to high levels of child poverty.[30]

43.   Children and adolescents are overlooked in climate, emergency health, environmental and energy-related policies, strategies and responses. Similarly, they

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[29] UNICEF, Country report Dominica: Evaluation of approaches to social protection programming in humanitarian situations, focusing on cash-based programming, 2021.

[30] UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area, 'Caribbean children facing the climate crisis', Policy Brief, November 2019, p. 2.

do not meaningfully participate in the design and implementation of strategies and plans. These omissions are exacerbated by limited disaggregated data and child-specific information to meet their needs, build their resilience and protect them from repeated climate-related and other shocks.

44. To prevent and address the mental health and psychosocial needs of children and families and build their resilience, UNICEF will develop innovative, multilayered and intersectoral approaches, in partnership with specialized agencies; advocate for the strengthening of national mental health and psychosocial support systems and services; as well as generate evidence on effective school and community-based approaches to enhance well-being and resilience.

45. In addition to its vulnerability to natural disasters, the region is also vulnerable to health emergencies – some also linked to climate change – and pandemics. Children are deprived of their right to an education, health and protection when health emergencies and pandemics occur.

46. To bolster national disaster preparedness, UNICEF will strengthen the capacities of government ministries by providing technical assistance and tools and sharing best practices. UNICEF will advocate for child-sensitive climate change policies and stronger preparedness measures. It will strengthen child-sensitive monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms in the ministries with responsibilities for children.

47. UNICEF will support communities, especially young people, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to prepare for, mitigate and respond to climate-related events, health emergencies and disasters. In selected hazard-prone countries and territories, UNICEF will support the relevant disaster management authorities and line ministries to ensure increased levels of readiness are maintained so that existing vulnerabilities are not worsened during crisis. Investments will be made to ensure that strengthened assessment systems, robust sector coordination mechanisms, scalable life-saving services and solid monitoring processes are in place prior to any disaster.

48. UNICEF will support communities to become more resilient to health emergencies by ensuring that parents and children have enhanced knowledge and skills to prevent and appropriately respond to such emergencies. In collaboration with PAHO, UNICEF will also strengthen the capacity of relevant ministries and civil society organizations to better respond to these emergencies using a child-focused lens.

49. UNICEF will work with adolescents and young people as change agents, empowering them to act on climate change, environmental degradation and energy use and to champion actions to prevent and respond to health-related emergencies. UNICEF will equip children and adolescents with the knowledge and skills required to build resilience and to strengthen their engagement and meaningful participation in climate change and DRR action, and will empower them as activists in strengthening community resilience.

Programme effectiveness

50. The programme effectiveness pillar is designed to support effective cross-sectoral, intersectional and operational coordination to enhance the implementation of risk-informed programmes. This will include equipping staff and partners with: (a) the tools to promote and advocate for greater political action to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and outcomes of the MCP; and (b) the capacities and resources to design and implement innovative programmes for children.

51. Advocacy, communications and public and private sector partnerships will support all programme components to ensure the rights of children are visible and

central to the UNMSDCF; and to facilitate knowledge dissemination, resource mobilization and engagement with the private sector.

52. UNICEF will expand its public finance for children engagement in national budget processes to ensure increased, inclusive and equitable allocation of resources for child-sensitive, gender-transformative programming.

53. UNICEF will use the Business and Community Resilience Initiative to engage with and leverage the private sector, including the energy, hospitality and tourism sectors, to contribute to emergency preparedness and resilience, climate adaptation and development of green skills.

54. UNICEF and partners will facilitate greater South-to-South research, learning and knowledge-sharing, and through coordinated programming will support the provision of specialized technical assistance.

Summary budget table

Programme component	(In thousands of United States dollars)		
	Regular resources	Other resources	Total
Education	7 827	8 697	16 524
Child protection	5 702	2 267	7 969
Social protection	6 379	3 440	9 819
Climate action and resilience	5 612	2 119	7 731
Programme effectiveness	6 105	1 678	7 783
Total	**31 625**	**18 201**	**49 826**

Programme and risk management

55. This MCPD outlines the UNICEF contributions to the national priorities and results for children and adolescents of all 12 Eastern Caribbean countries and territories and serves, as the primary instrument of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme. Accountabilities of managers at the country and territory, regional and headquarters levels with respect to the MCP are described in the organization's programme and operations policies and procedures.

56. UNICEF will seek to apply environmental and social standards to identify related risks, institute mitigation measures, develop feedback and grievance mechanisms and adopt a project lifecycle risk management approach.

57. The MCP will contribute to the UNMSDCF for the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, 2022–2026. The United Nations will establish results groups aligned with the four pillars and coordination mechanisms for each outcome, and will monitor progress, supported by inter-agency technical groups.

58. UNICEF will continue to invest in developing effective governance and management systems, the oversight of financial resources and the effective management of human resources. The main risks to attaining the planned results and the proposed mitigation actions are as follows:

(a)   The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic poses a risk to programme implementation and operations, which will be managed using business continuity plans and the ECA COVID-19 task force.

(b)   External climate-related and natural hazard shocks disrupt programme implementation and potentially necessitate the reprogramming of financial resources and redeployment of human resources, which will be mitigated by risk-informed programming and operations management.

(c)   A deterioration in the economic situation constrains government finances and fiscal space, leading to structural adjustments that negatively impact essential child-sensitive services. The mitigation actions will be increased advocacy for children, investment case analyses and increased resource mobilization efforts.

Monitoring, learning and evaluation

59.   As part of its monitoring strategy, UNICEF will support ECA Governments and regional and national partners to update statistics, address critical issues such as the need for more timely quality disaggregated data on children and adolescents to better design programmes that are able to focus on the most excluded and optimize the use of resources.

60.   Situation monitoring will track the overall progress of key national Sustainable Development Goal indicators for which UNICEF is custodian or contributor. UNICEF will promote the development of digitized household surveys like MICS Plus, building on innovations in data collection introduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

61.   Outcome-level indicators related to behaviour change will be monitored through the implementation of the costed evaluation plan and qualitative research, while those related to institutional and system performance will be assessed through sectoral routine information systems and special surveys.

62.   In line with the revised UNICEF evaluation policy, the country office will conduct four thematic evaluations. UNICEF will support national evaluation capacity development.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Eastern Caribbean Area – UNICEF multi-country programme of cooperation, March 2022–December 2026

Convention on the Rights of the Child: Articles 6, 19, 26–29, 33, 36, 39–40.

National priorities: Sustainable Development Goal targets: 1.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.c, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 10.4, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3

United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNMSDCF) outcomes involving UNICEF: 3–7

Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 Goal Areas: 2– 5

UNMSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
Outcome 4: People in the Caribbean equitably access and utilize universal, quality and shock-responsive, social protection, education, health, and care services	1. Children, including adolescents, in the Eastern Caribbean Area access and complete quality education, with the skills to advance to employment or higher education.	Number of countries with more than 60% of children and young people at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level* (B) Reading: female 5/7; male 7/7 Mathematics: female 0/7; male 1/7 (2019) (T) 12/12	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Education Statistical Digest	1. Schools are safe, climate-smart, inclusive and deliver quality learning and foundational skills. 2. Families and communities are supported to access education. 3. Education systems are strengthened to meet the challenges of relevance and the changing context.	Ministries in charge of education, OECS, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Caribbean Development Bank, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), International Telecommunication Union, United Nations (agencies; civil society organizations	7 827	8 697	16 524
		Number of countries with the proportion of youth not in education, employment or training under 20%* (B) 4/10 (2020) (T) 12/12	Survey of Living Conditions and Household Budgets					

UNMSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
					(CSOs), business chambers			
Outcome 7: Regional and national laws, policies, systems, and institutions improve access to justice and promote peace, social cohesion, and security.	2. By 2026, children and adolescents in the Eastern Caribbean Area in all settings grow up in a safe and protective environment with enhanced, child friendly justice systems and institutional response mechanisms.	Number of countries with the proportion of females who agree that physical punishment of children is necessary for child-rearing under 40%* (B) 1/8 (2020) (T) 12/12	Knowledge, attitude and practice survey on violence against children	1. Institutions in the social sectors are strengthened to protect children and effectively respond to violence against children. 2. Community-based mechanisms are strengthened to ensure a protective environment for children. 3. Duty-bearer capacities are strengthened to support positive attitudes, behaviours and practices.	Ministries in charge of child protection, INSPIRE Indicator Guidance and Results Framework, CARICOM, United Nations agencies, OECS, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), USAID,FCDO; CSOs, business chambers	5 702	2 267	7 969
Outcome 4:	3. More families, including those of the poorest and most deprived children and adolescents, benefit from more comprehensive social protection, including in humanitarian settings.	Number countries with child population covered by social protection floor/systems above 10%* (B) 0 (T) 4	Multiple indicator cluster survey /social protection programmes management information system	1. Social protection institutions are strengthened to design and deliver inclusive and effective programmes. 2. Social protection systems are strengthened to be more risk-informed and responsive to shocks.	Ministries in charge of social development, planning and finance, United Nations agencies, OECS, international financial institutions, CDEMA, Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), CARICOM.	6 379	3 440	9 819

UNMSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
				3. Caribbean public institutions have strengthened capacities to deliver programmes and promote positive attitudes towards children on the move.				
Outcome 5: Caribbean people, communities, and institutions enhance their adaptive capacity for inclusive, gender responsive DRM [disaster risk management] and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Outcome 6: Caribbean countries manage natural resources and ecosystems to strengthen their resilience and enhance the resilience and prosperity of the people and communities that depend on them.	Outcome 4: Governments and regional institutions implement risk-informed and resilient child-sensitive climate policies, with effective participation of children, young people and communities to promote climate action and resilience, including in emergency contexts.	Number of countries developing, financing and implementing child-sensitive climate policies and programmes. (B) 2 (T) 5 Number of countries tracking delivery and referral information related to mental health and psychosocial support services for children and adolescents (B) 0 (T) 5 Number of countries with an average COVID-19 hesitancy index under 3 (B) 0 (T) 7	SENDAI Monitoring System Assessment of the Mental Health System Reports COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy survey report	1. Government and regional disaster risk reduction institutions capacities are strengthened to support child-sensitive climate policies and programmes. 2. Governments and their partners are supported to enhance the resilience of children and communities. 3. Youth and adolescents are empowered to develop innovative approaches to realize their rights.	OECS, CDEMA, CCCCC, CARICOM, National emergency management offices, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Pan American Health Organization, United Nations agencies, USAID, CSOs, business chambers; World Bank	5 612	2 119	7 731
Outcome 3: National governments and regional	Programme effectiveness outcome: UNICEF	Number of countries with a percentage of 37 child-focused Sustainable	Country Reporting and Validation	1. UNICEF staff and partners are better equipped to strengthen excellence in designing	OECS, ECLAC, CARICOM, University of the	6 105	1 678	7 783

UNMSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
institutions use relevant data to design and adopt laws and policies to eliminate discrimination, address structural inequalities and ensure the advancement of those left furthest behind. Outcome 4 Outcome 5 Outcome 7	programmes are designed, coordinated and effectively supported to generate results for children, especially the most vulnerable	Development Goal indicators reported in past three years above 80%* (B) 1 (T) 4	Exercise Report	and implementing programmes. 2. UNICEF staff and partners have access to tools, guidance, platforms and resources to ensure programme visibility. 3. UNICEF staff and partners have strengthened capacities to generate evidence, monitor and evaluate programmes.	West Indies, United Nation system			
Total resources						**31 625**	**18 201**	**49 826**

*Outcome indicator aligned with the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework indicator.