

The [Latin American and Caribbean Chapter of the Global Movement for Children \(MMI-CLAC\)](#) held its annual technical meeting on June 15 and 16th in Panama where the Plan of Action for the upcoming six months was approved. Led by this year's rotating lead of the Chapter, UNICEF, the meeting was attended by all MMI-CLAC constituents, including the regional network of child-rights news agencies Red Andi, where it became an official member after a year as an observer, and Child Fund, who has recently joined as one.

The agenda for the meeting opened with a review of the [I Subregional UNVAC Follow-up Meeting in Paraguay last April by Plan International](#)

. The overall assessment was very positive, highlighting the direct involvement of the national government in the organization of the event, the active and meaningful participation of children, and the participation of MERCOSUR in the meeting. As a result of this first-hand involvement by both the Paraguayan Government and the regional trade organization, the issue has been included in the MERCOSUR agenda and the Paraguayan Government signed the Declaration whereby it commits to promoting the road map set out at the gathering to fight violence against children in the region.

The following item on the agenda was the upcoming II Subregional Meeting on the UNVAC study in Central America, which will be led by World Vision. Originally planned in El Salvador the event will finally take place in the Dominican Republic. Taking over the Paraguay-based event team, the organizing committee of this second event will also seek to engage the national government and ensure the participation of children from the planning stages to post-event assessments.

The meeting continued with a presentation of the two main projects the GMC is working on at global level: the [Commitment to Children Audit \(CCA\)](#) and Children on the Move. The aim was to get the feedback from the region and engage MMI-CLAC organizations in the definition of the CCA and volunteer a country to run a pilot test. Delegates agreed that they would study the proposal in further detail.

Another paramount issue discussed was the need for an integral communications strategy for the regional chapter. This section was presented by Red Andi and called for better coordinated communication activities encompassing the participation of children and putting communications around the violence issue as an example of success. It was proposed that a specific communications strategy for the investment on children theme be drafted and more resources be allocated to communication efforts. The Chapter commissioned Red Andi to set

up a regional team to draft a strategic communications plan.

Furthremore, Save the Children, currently leading the Working Group on Investment on Children, explained that following the group's agreements at the February meeting, it is working on a handbook to add a chapter on investment on children in the periodic reports on the CRC. This handbook would include the general guidelines, the indicators and a draft general comment on Article 4 of the CRC. Finally, some time was dedicated to discussing the advocacy processes at regional level in view of the cancellation of issue-specific ministerial summits. Delegates agreed on the increased need to follow-up on the commitments made in such summits as well as to endorse one candidate from the region in the next election to the CRC.

It is expected that the second annual meeting of the MMI-CLAC will take place in December.