

## Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board

### Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents

2022 second regular session

*Draft country programme document commenting period: 14 June to 5 July 2022 [18:00 EST]*

Delegations are kindly invited to use this template to share their comments on the draft country programme document being presented to the Executive Board during the forthcoming session.

Delegation name: *BELGIUM*

Draft country programme document: *NIGER*

In accordance with Executive Board decision [2014/1](#), draft country programme documents are considered and approved in one session, on a no-objection basis. All comments received by the Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board before the deadline stated above will be posted on the Executive Board website, and considered by the requesting country, in close consultation with UNICEF.

	Delegation's comments	Response(s)
<b>General comments</b>	<p>The CPD is overall well elaborated and very relevant to the Nigerien context. It responds well to numerous humanitarian and development challenges, including recurrent food and nutrition crises, the consequences of violence and armed conflict, the prevalence of child marriage, child labour and child poverty, as well as high needs in terms of education.</p> <p>The draft CPD is the result of a rather participative process that involved the <i>Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire et du Développement Communautaire</i> as lead ministry for UNICEF, as well as the different levels of the Nigerien government, communities and other UN agencies. While the donor community was to some extent involved in the strategic reflections on the UNSDCF, donors were not consulted for this specific CPD.</p> <p>The CPD is well aligned with both the new Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES) of Niger and the (draft) UNSDCF,</p>	

	<p>notably its Pillar 2 (human capital) and, to some extent, Pillar 3 (modernisation of the rural sector and climate change). Based on the UNSDCF, the CPD equally pays sufficient attention to the coherence and complementarity with other UN agencies, particularly UNFPA, WFP, FAO and WHO. However, no specific reference is made to complementarity or joint approaches with non-UN actors. Nonetheless, the CPD can be considered coherent with Belgian development cooperation priorities for Niger (especially education and protection of girls against violence) and geographically complementary with Enabel's education activities in Niger.</p> <p>The UNICEF CPD could pay more dedicated attention to the specific problem of violence against girls within a school context. The issue remains taboo and despite ample anecdotic evidence, reliable systematic information remains unavailable.</p>	
<p><b>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme document</b></p>	<p><i>(Delegations providing comments may wish to include details, such as the page number, paragraph number, or page of the annexed results and resources framework.</i></p> <p>Paragraph 29: Belgium welcomes the specific reference to education for nomadic children. This indeed remains an essential issue in the Nigerien context that is, however, seriously underfunded.</p> <p>As regards the education activities in general (CPD p. 7), no specific reference is made to the government's ambitious plan to construct boarding schools for girls. Belgium recommends UNICEF Niger to consider supporting this important government programme, which particularly aims to contribute to the education and protection of girls. UNICEF could have added value for the initiative through the development of the pedagogical project of the boarding schools as well as by unrolling activities for the protection and empowerment of girls.</p>	

	<p>Belgium would also welcome a dedicated reflection on the specific challenges for education in emergency situations and how UNICEF aims to link with existing government initiatives in this regard (for instance the <i>Centres de Regroupement</i> in the Tillabéri region). This point is currently not mentioned in the CPD.</p> <p>Belgium welcomes the support foreseen for the revision of legislation governing the age of marriage and encourages UNICEF to do this in full synergy with UNFPA's work on social norms and behavioural change regarding child marriage, notably through the mobilisation of traditional and religious leaders.</p>	
--	--	--