

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 (except for the draft CPD for Gabon): 14 June to 5 July 2022 [18:00 EST]

Draft country programme document for Gabon commenting period: 17 June to 11 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: *USA*

Draft country programme document: *Ghana*

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)
General comments	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The United States supports the strengthening of routine immunization as a stated program priority and recommends that UNICEF prioritize polio and yellow fever vaccinations given epidemics of each emerging in Northern Ghana.	<p>UNICEF acknowledges and appreciates the comments from the USA on its draft country programme for 2023-27 and welcomes the opportunity to provide additional information that could not be adequately covered in a 6000 words document.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. UNICEF acknowledges the importance of strengthening routine immunization considering the evolving context especially in Northern-Ghana. <p>In fact, UNICEF will continue to prioritize strengthening of routine immunization, including polio and yellow fever vaccination. Efforts will be pursued to address periodic outbreaks of yellow fever and polio in Northern Ghana and other parts of the country.</p> <p>This will be done through the procurement and deployment of vaccines, strengthening of cold chain capacity, logistics for immunization, expanding Social Behavior Change Communication, ensuring monitoring and supervision and promoting research.</p>

	<p>2. We ask UNICEF to explore digital-based tools for improving prevention, detection, and treatment of online child sexual exploitation and abuse that has increased exponentially in recent years.</p>	<p>UNICEF will also continue to provide technical support to the government in the implementation of Emergency Preparedness and Response plans, the National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS), One Health and International Health Regulation (IHR) and in enhancing core capacities to tackle and mitigate impact of future epidemics and pandemics.</p> <p>The interventions will appear in the more detailed Work Plans, starting in 2023.</p> <p>Specific References in the draft CPD 2023-2027 cover these points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context description of the draft CPD Paragraph 4, page 2 acknowledges the challenges raised by the US Government: ‘Northern Ghana is prone to (...) epidemics such as yellow fever and polio’ • Additionally, on Paragraph 5, page 2 the context provide data on immunization coverage: ‘While the overall coverage of routine immunization is high, only 64 per cent of districts have achieved pentavalent vaccination coverage equal to or above the national rate of 95 per cent, with most under-immunized children found in the underserved urban areas of Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi’. • Strategies to reinforce routine immunization services are mentioned in the draft CPD at paragraph 22, page 6: ‘To increase equitable access to quality health care and ensure an adequate evidence base for decision-making, the country programme will build on past achievements to support: a) sustained efforts by the Government to procure, safely transport and store vaccines, and implement effective, integrated, equity-focused immunization programmes, including in urban and peri-urban settings.’ • Finally, the country programme includes a dedicated indicator measuring progresses against vaccine coverage under the Results and Resources Framework, page 11: ‘Percentage of districts that have at least 80% of children vaccinated with 3 doses of pentavalent vaccines’. <p>2. UNICEF agrees on the importance to use digital based tools for expanding protection of children and adolescents, including with regards to online child sexual abuse and exploitation. Indeed, UNICEF will continue to prioritize the protection of children from all forms of violence through its new Country Programme.</p> <p>Since 2018, UNICEF has been actively partnering with the Government of Ghana through the National Cyber Security Centre (now the Cyber Security Authority) under the Ministry of</p>
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		<p>Communications and Digitalisation, the Ghana Police Service and other Ministries, Departments and Agencies to implement interventions to protect children from all forms online abuse, under the National Child Online Protection Initiative. The initiative is aimed at strengthening the prevention and response to all forms of violence against children within the online space, including online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE).</p> <p>The key results achieved so far include: the passage of the Electronic Transaction Act 2008 and the Cybersecurity Act 2020 (which has specific provisions related to the prevention and response to online child sexual exploitation and abuse), the ratification of the Council of Europe’s Cybercrime Convention (Budapest Convention), the set-up of a dedicated reporting portal to receive reports related online child sexual abuse material, the establishment of a child protection digital forensic laboratory at Police HQ to analyze and assess electronic evidence linked to technology enabled crimes against children, and the development of the Digital Literacy Package for school staff and students. UNICEF also supported a Global Kids Online survey in 2018, which informed programmatic interventions to address online CSEA in a holistic manner, in line with the WeProtect Model National Response.</p> <p>Under the next draft Country Programme (2023-2027), UNICEF will continue to support the Government in strengthening institutional capacity and an enabling environment for the prevention of and response to all forms of online abuse, including Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. More specifically, the focus will be in supporting the operationalization of the child online protection provisions in the Cybers Security Act, 2020 (1038), strengthen reporting and law enforcement, including effective investigation and prosecution, support coordination mechanism for the implementation of the National Child Online Protection Framework and explore additional digital-based tools for improving prevention, detection, and treatment of online child sexual exploitation and abuse.</p> <p>The interventions will appear in the more detailed Work Plans, starting in 2023.</p> <p><i>Specific References in the draft CPD 2023-2027 covering these points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context description of the draft CPD paragraph 14, page 4 acknowledges the importance of the issue raised by stating: ‘Online child sexual exploitation and abuse is on the rise, with over 19,700 reported instances in 2021, up from 750 in 2016’. • UNICEF overall strategy to address violence against children, including online violence, is introduced in Paragraph 27, page 7, stating: ‘UNICEF will contribute to strengthened systems to better prevent and respond to child protection issues, including (...) child
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	<p>3. We ask UNICEF to consider adding access to HIV screening for infants as a program priority given the need for improvement in this area and the already high percentage of children living with HIV.</p>	<p>exploitation’ and on paragraph 28, page 7: ‘Systems will be strengthened for child protection, social welfare, criminal justice’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finally, the country programme document includes a dedicated indicative output in the Results and Resources Framework, page 13, quoting: ‘National and decentralized service delivery systems are strengthened to improve access, responsiveness, resilience and quality of social welfare, criminal justice and birth registration services to prevent and respond to violence against children, including online child sexual exploitation an abuse and child marriage’. <p>3. UNICEF agrees on the need to continue prioritizing prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS especially among children and women. HIV/AIDS related interventions will be addressed in the framework of UNICEF support to health system strengthening as reflected in Outcome 1 of the draft CPD.</p> <p>Access to HIV screening for infants is currently being done through Family HIV Testing and Point of Care Diagnosis for Early Infant Diagnosis for HIV and Viral Load technologies. UNICEF will continue supporting the Government in strengthening the quality of paediatric HIV service delivery and Eliminating Mother to Child Transmission (EMTCT). UNICEF will also support research and quality data analysis to fill data gaps on the uptake of EMTCT services and will strengthen laboratory systems to improve access to services.</p> <p>The key interventions will appear in the more detailed Work Plans, starting in 2023.</p> <p><i>Specific References in the draft CPD 2023-2027 covering these points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context description of the draft CPD acknowledges the importance of the issue on Paragraph 6, page 3 by stating: ‘Less than 40 per cent of children living with HIV are on antiretroviral therapy, and only 73 per cent of the HIV-exposed infants were screened for HIV. Early infant diagnosis faces challenges related to the quality of care and service integration’. • UNICEF overall strategy to address Health priorities including HIV/AIDS services is introduced in Paragraph 20, page 6: ‘UNICEF will support health and nutrition systems strengthening to deliver equitable, evidence-based and quality services for women and children, including adolescents. • Detailed strategies are described in Paragraph 22, page 6 stating: ‘To increase equitable access to quality health care and ensure an adequate evidence base for decision-making, the country programme will build on past achievements to support: (...) b) the scale-up of
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		<p>evidence-based, high impact maternal, child and new-born care interventions’; (...) f) improved data management, including the introduction of denominator-based planning in health service delivery’. These will include HIV/AIDS services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finally, the country programme includes a dedicated outcome that makes reference to quality primary health care, which encompasses HIV/AIDS services. The Results and Resources Framework, page 11 states: ‘By 2027, children, including new-borns and adolescents, and women in Ghana increasingly survive and thrive through increased access to nutritious diets, quality primary health care, nurturing practices and essential supplies.’
<p>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme document</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>	