

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: *European Union*

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)
General comments	<p>1) The document highlights in its bullet point 11 (page 4/16) that UNICEF will focus on <i>'interventions that promote sustainable and resilient development, particularly those that benefit women and young children, while maintaining agility in responding to emergencies and taking into account the nexus approach'</i>. However, through the narrative UNICEF remains to the curative than prevention actions. Example for malnutrition of under five years children, the indicator is related to the <i>'Number of children aged 6–59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment'</i>. <i>What about moderate and chronic malnutrition/stunting?</i></p> <p>A recent investigation done by EC/EU DEL Niger (Nov. 2021) on the mapping of donors in nutrition sector in Niger shows that more funds are used for curative actions versus prevention (eg. <i>In 2020, 57% of funds used for curative interventions against 43% for prevention</i>).</p>	<p>1) UNICEF acknowledges and appreciates the comments on its draft country programme for 2023-27 from the European Union and welcomes the opportunity to provide additional information that could not be adequately covered in a 6000 words document.</p> <p>UNICEF agrees with the importance to integrate both curative and preventive measures for child nutrition in our Country Programmes. While maintaining the efforts on treatment of wasting for life saving imperative, the new Country Programme will make a significant shift to step up prevention of both stunting and wasting. This will be done through multisectoral actions including strengthening health services, improving WASH and guaranteeing social protection to ensure that children and women have access to nutritious diets and that caregivers are equipped to follow best practices on maternal and child nutrition. UNICEF will leverage on existing and new partnerships with other UN agencies, CSOs and communities to increase access of young children to locally made nutritious food.</p>

	<p>2) Looking to the Summary budget table (page 9/16), it is clear that ‘other resources’ is more than 2 times the ‘regular resources’ and its availability is subject to the specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2023 to 2027. What is the experience of UNICEF in its funding system? Is there any probability of not covering some programme component?</p> <p>Per instance, two topics (<i>Every child lives in a safe and sustainable environment</i> and <i>Every child lives free from poverty</i>) are mainly expected to be funded by the ‘other resources’, which represents 6 times the ‘regular resources’</p>	<p>The Niger draft CPD’s Results Framework features two indicators at the outcome level which are connected to child nutrition. In line with the approach of integrating curative and preventive actions, one of these indicators reflects UNICEF’s effort on treatment (Number of children aged 6 –59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment) and the other (Exclusive breastfeeding rate) reflects UNICEF’s work on prevention. Furthermore, UNICEF has additional indicators at the output level to track progress on the prevention front including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The proportion of young children who have access to diversified diet; b) The proportion of pregnant women and adolescent girls reached with iron folic acid supplements; and c) The proportion of children 6-59 month reached with Vitamin A supplement and deworming. <p>These indicators are not featured in the draft CPD but are monitored in our annual workplans.</p> <p>2) UNICEF recognizes the importance of guaranteeing a constant flow of funds for the Country Programme. In 2021 and 2022, the Niger CO budget reached US\$ 165 million per year compared to 95 million in 2020. The ceiling of the CO Programme was raised accordingly. The proposed budget from the draft CPD 2023-2027 is about US\$ 75 million per year - an average of US\$ 20 million Regular Resources and US\$ 55 million of Other Resources: hence a very reasonable level given our track record in resource mobilisation.</p> <p>In addition, a resource mobilisation strategy has been developed to raise the proposed level of “Other Resources” of the draft CPD. The Country Office has been successful in mobilising twice the proposed yearly amount for the last 2 years and we are confident we can secure the required US\$ 372 million for the next 5 years. Funding is already available for 2023 and efforts are ongoing to mobilise the remaining US\$ 217 million in Other Resources for the period 2024-2027.</p>
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	<p>The document doesn't refer to the SNAEFF- <i>la stratégie nationale d'accélération de l'éducation et de la formation des filles et des femmes</i> (if put in action this strategy could have a huge impact on improving gender equality (and the protection of girls) in education.</p>	<p>In addition, UNICEF will continue its efforts to leverage national budgets at central and local levels, by partnering with key IFIs and the Ministry of Finance.</p> <p>UNICEF recognizes the need to contribute to SNAEFF by providing support to the implementation of the education and training sector transition plan for education. Specific references to UNICEF's support to gender-sensitive approaches to reduce the cause of exclusions of girls and women in education and across sectors can be found in paragraphs 28, 29 and 38, pages 7 and 8 of the draft CPD.</p>
<p>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme document</p>	<p>3) Bullet point 23. Page 6/16</p> <p>How UNICEF will contribute to improve the management of <i>food security stocks</i>?</p> <p>4) Bullet point 25. Page 6/16</p> <p>How UNICEF intends to collaborate with specialized institutions/local and international in order to set up a sustainable mechanism of early warning system for drought and floods.</p>	<p>3) UNICEF appreciates EU's comment on food security stocks. In the context of the UNSDCF, WFP and FAO are focusing on food, while UNICEF focuses on other dimensions of the nutrition agenda. As mentioned in paragraph 21, page 6/16 of the draft CPD UNICEF will support the revision of the National Nutritional Security Policy 2016–2025, the production of data to mobilize additional funds, the conduct of nutrition monitoring surveys, the strengthening of intersectoral coordination encompassing nutrition, health, water and sanitation, the production of fortified foods and the development and implementation of a programme to promote social norms and behaviour change with a particular focus on factors concerning the status of mothers.</p> <p>Jointly with the Food Security Cluster and the Social Protection Working group, UNICEF will advocate for increased Government investment in the procurement of locally produced fortified food which is adapted to young children's nutritional needs.</p> <p>4) Multisectoral collaboration plays a critical role in UNICEF's work. As mentioned in paragraph 25, page 6 of the draft CPD, UNICEF will also contribute to the development of communal investment and management plans for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, as well as the development of the national water and sanitation information system and an early warning system for drought and floods. UNICEF will do so by joining forces with other UN agencies and specialized actors to improve data collection, analysis and scenario development to mitigate the effect of climate change on children.</p>

<p>5) Logframe/Annex: Outcome 3, point 3.</p> <p>For the indicator 2nd indicator “Percentage of the population practising open defecation”, the baseline is 68% while the rate in rural area is about 79%. Even though, to half (T=37.8%) this rate in 2027 seems to be utopic!</p> <p>For all indicators, it would be relevant to have the baselines and its year of reference in parenthesis. It is done for some indicators but not systematically.</p> <p>6) P. 2 Footnote 7 no correct link to demographic growth, Niger experiences amongst the highest demographic growths globally, current language used does not reflect this reality.</p> <p>7) P.2, point 3. Useful to mention the attacks on schools when discussing the accessibility of essential social services (for example in tillabary currently 20% of the schools are closed!)</p> <p>8) P. 4 point 9, important to note that reliability of statistics in a huge concern in Niger and in particular in the sector of education, currently work is being done to address this.</p>	<p>5) UNICEF appreciates the EU’s thorough review of the Results Framework of the draft CPD and recognizes that this was a typo mistake. The expected percentage of the population practising open defecation for 2027 is 63%.</p> <p>The following changes in the RRF page 12/16 will be made:</p> <p>Percentage of the population practising open defecation</p> <p>B: 68% (JMP, 2021) {source added}</p> <p>T: 37.8% 63% {typo mistake corrected}</p> <p>UNICEF acknowledges EU’s comment and, attending to it, the baselines and years of reference will be added in the draft CPD’s RRF.</p> <p>6) Regarding footnote 7, the link will be altered as follows : https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW?locations=NE-ZG-ZQ-1W&year_high_desc=true (accessed on 4 July 2022).</p> <p>7) UNICEF agrees with the comment and this point is already included in draft CPD paragraph 9, page 3/16: “<u>This situation stems from challenges associated with resource utilization and governance and is reflected in the insufficient number of schools, lack of equipment and textbooks, inadequate teacher training and parents’ preference for child labour and sending boys to school. In conflict-affected areas, the situation is exacerbated by the closure of schools and the lack of teachers</u>”.</p> <p>8) As outlined in draft CPD page 9/16, paragraph 43, UNICEF is committed to support the National Institute of Statistics and statistical departments of the social sectors to produce reliable and disaggregated data in order this issue.</p>
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	<p>Also important to notice that there is a gap between primary schools and secondary/TVET education with insufficient schools to absorb the flow of students.</p> <p>9) P. 7 the Education and Training Sector Transition Plan for the Education and Training Sector 2020–2034, dates are wrong, plan is to be implemented between 2020 and 2023 before a decadal sectoral plan will be elaborated.</p> <p>10) P.9 given the poor digital connectivity of the country, e-education will not reach many pupils – alternatives such as education via radio might prove more effective.</p>	<p>Due to word count constraints, the document has focused on new interventions. UNICEF is already working on supporting multiple learning pathways including TVET to absorb the flow of students. This issue is covered in the first output, fourth outcome of the RRF in page 13 of the draft CPD: “Central and decentralized services responsible for primary and non-formal education and vocational training ensure quality teaching and learning in a protective environment”.</p> <p>9) UNICEF acknowledges the typo mistake on page 6, paragraph 28 of the draft CPD. The dates will be changed from 2034 to 2023 in both the draft CPD and in the RRF.</p> <p>10) UNICEF is aware of the poor digital connectivity in the country and appreciates EU’s comment. To ensure continuity of education, UNICEF is already supporting the development of radio and television education programmes. Reference to the use of community radios is made in the draft CPD paragraph 34, page 7-8:</p> <p>“UNICEF will support the development and implementation of strategies to promote social norms and behaviour change to accelerate the reduction of child marriage, child labour and child begging. These strategies will focus on social transformation, gender equality, adolescent participation and positive masculinity. They will rely on coalitions of religious and traditional leaders, community radio stations and children’s groups at the national and subnational levels.”</p>
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