

Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board

Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents

2023 first regular session

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: *United States*

Draft country programme document: *Nepal*

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.

	Delegation's comments	Response(s)
General comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- UNICEF prioritizes children with disabilities (CWD) in their outcomes, yet there are no indicators associated with CWD to examine whether the country program is supporting access and quality of education for this group. The United States recommends adding such indicators.- The UNICEF country program prioritizes early childhood education, yet there are no indicators to measure progress in this area, or they are at least absent from the performance table. The United States recommends adding such indicators.- It will be helpful for UNICEF to share specific geographic focus down to the school level once established in order to ensure there is no duplication of resources in the education sector with other interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agreed. Please see the added baselines and targets for children with functional difficulties under the key progress indicators of proportion of children who demonstrate foundational reading and proportion of children who demonstrate foundational numeracy.- Agreed. Please see the added indicator for New entrants with experience of Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED), together with baseline and target figures for boys and girls.- Noted. UNICEF is working to ensure there is no duplication of resources by strengthening coordination and oversight at the level of the 753 municipalities rather than the approximately 35,000 schools.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the capacity of the Government of Nepal to fulfill reporting requirements to donors, as required under the Joint Financing Arrangement? How is UNICEF working to ensure that the GON's capacity is built up, and that UNICEF plays a supporting rather than leading role?
 - We recommend that UNICEF leverage gains made in Nepal in improving newborn and child health survival to support the Government's efforts to accelerate reductions in preventable maternal mortality – including by prioritizing delivery of integrated maternal and child health and nutrition services in underserved communities.
 - The U.S. recommends using “gender-based violence” (GBV) terminology throughout to better capture multiple forms of GBV (i.e. sexual violence, child, early and forced marriage, trafficking, etc), which are experienced by children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Education Management Information System (EMIS) provides timely and reliable data, including two annual Flash reports, that are trusted by local development partners and are used for reporting to development partners as well as evidence-based planning in the Ministry of Education. The working group tasked with making further improvements to EMIS is led by a Director General and supported by a broad group of experts, consultants and development partners, including UNICEF.
 - UNICEF appreciates the confirmation of this critical priority for children in Nepal as highlighted in paras 20 and 21 of the CPD noting that the UNICEF focus in this regard will be to support modeling of integrated service delivery approaches and contribute to strengthening primary health-care and health-seeking behaviour, which will be targeting underserved communities, using immunization zero dose children and missed communities as tracers.
 - The UNICEF child protection programme will include a strong focus on different aspects of gender-based violence (including sexual violence, domestic violence, etc) considering that the majority of the reported gender-based violence incidents in Nepal are children (under 18 year-olds). Beyond the focus on the high prevalence of GBV, the programme will further seek to address other forms of violence affecting children such as highly prevalent corporal punishment in schools and families, related psychological violence leading to increasing mental health concerns both of which affect all children indiscriminately. The programme will further address a range of child protection concerns that are not primarily gender-based starting with child |
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		<p>marriage which is not limited to girls in Nepal, as well as different forms of exploitation of children such as child labor and trafficking,</p>
<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The indicators for progress under foundational learning are unclear. - - What age groups/grades do these indicators refer to? - - Are they the percentage of learners passing national exams, and if so in what subject areas? - The result area refers to learners in early childhood development (ECD) through grade 12 but there is only one indicator. Should all grades meet this metric? - Does UNICEF plan to have different metrics for literacy and numeracy? - - It is unclear whether UNICEF only plans to work in the education sector in Sudurpaschim and Madesh provinces. In the table on page 16, this seems to be the case; however, currently UNICEF is working more broadly. Is this a change in strategy? - On p.4, #10, the U.S. recommends referencing gender-based violence specifically: “Despite progressive legislation and policies, violence, including gender- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noted. We have refined the wording of the indicator, which is taken from the 2019 Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS) - NMICS tests children between the ages of 7 and 14 years in reading and mathematics. - We do not use national exams as these only cover children in school whereas the NMICS, as a household survey, covers all children. - Survival rate refers to the proportion of children who progress to the given grade without dropping out. The indicator used measures the proportion of children who complete a full 12 years of schooling. - UNICEF will continue to use the foundational literacy and numeracy data from NMICS but also takes account of national testing data. - UNICEF works in all areas of Nepal but focuses on the four most disadvantaged provinces: Madesh Pradesh, Lumbini, Karnali, and Sudarpashim. We have now included indicators for all four provinces in the Results and Resources Framework. - Please see changes incorporated on pages 4, 5, and 8

based violence, and exploitation affecting children, especially girls, remain major concerns.”

- On p. 5, #15(b) and p.8, #32, the U.S. recommends using “gender-based violence” terminology instead of “harmful practices.”