

Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board

Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents

2023 first regular session

Draft country programme document commenting period for Cabo Verde common country programme document: 7 to 25 November 2022 [18:00 EST]

Draft country programme document commenting period for Algeria; Bolivia (Plurinational State of); Central African Republic; Costa Rica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; Haiti; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Lebanon; Nepal; Pacific Islands (multi-country programme); Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the State of Palestine (area programme); Sao Tome and Principe: 15 November to 5 December 2022 [18:00 EST]

Draft country programme for Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of): 18 November to 8 December 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: **CPD Iran**

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	A. Belgium has the highest regard and appreciation for the work of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA in Iran and thanks them for the efforts in the development of new country program documents for Iran. Especially given the challenging and evolving context of daily and long-term operations in Iran we	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNICEF appreciates the comments made by the Belgian Delegation to the UN.• UNICEF remains committed to UN principles and values which are mainstreamed in all our operations and programmes. These are reflected in our regular programme reviews. CPD development at UNICEF follows a set of standards to ensure adherence of the

	<p>wish to stress our appreciation for the hard work of the organisations on the terrain.</p> <p>B. Though the CPDs are intended to align with and support national development plans and priorities, the UN and Member States need to ensure that the language used in these documents supports core UN principles and values and does not undermine a rules-based international system that upholds human rights and democratic governance.</p> <p>C. This oversight function on the respect of these very basic core UN principles is one of the essential roles of the Executive Boards. A role that as a long-standing donor with a key priority to core funding is, with an eye for pragmatism, a necessity to demonstrate the fit-for-purpose of the system overall. It are these basic tasks of oversight that allows member states to check and attest that, amongst many other objectives, organisations work to uphold the Charter, notwithstanding the specific context that might exist.</p> <p>D. While the overall deteriorating situation of human rights in Iran remains deeply concerning, current developments in the country demonstrate the profound plight of women’s human rights. We encourage the UN to continue to work towards advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as the most effective way to eliminate poverty, create lasting peace, and achieve sustainable development.</p> <p>E. Although we recognize that in some aspects the CPDs have evolved for the better (amongst other things a more integrated approach and the overall attention that is given to women) we urge the agencies to more clearly bring the CPDs in line with the overall core UN principles and values based on wider and more transparent consultations with all stakeholders and partners in-country, such as women’s rights organizations. This especially regarding their contribution to gender equality</p>	<p>organisation to the governing/guiding principles, including but not limited to, the UN Charter and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Iran, in addition to the context as a major determinant of the needs. The current CPD is based on a comprehensive analysis of needs and deprivations of children and adolescents living in Iran and these are summarised in the programme rationale section. This was followed by a bottleneck analysis and a prioritisation exercise to ensure the most critical disparities are at the centre of the UNICEF programme for the next five years; this is summarised in para 3 of the Programme Rationale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the programme rationale outlines the needs and deprivations, the UNICEF actions are aimed at addressing the root causes, as well as the shifts in strategies and policies required to overcome those deprivations. The programme components detailed in the CPD are aligned with UNICEF global Strategic Plan 2022-25 as well as the UNSDCF to mainstream equity, inclusiveness and resilience in the programme design towards addressing deprivations of the most vulnerable target populations at both national and provincial levels. • The CPD is a framework document spanning a five-year period and the actual implementation of programmatic priorities are carried out through annual work plans with individual line ministries. Given that UNICEF is working with multiple line ministries (currently nine) and given that the disparities and needs may be different across sectors, the specific aspects on rights, vulnerable groups and gender will be identified and prioritised and reflected in these annual workplans. • Gender considerations, or in other words, the needs of both boys and girls are an unquestionable principle for all UNICEF interventions in all our programmatic areas and which are designed to be gender responsive based on needs.
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	<p>and the respect and promotion of human rights and also with an eye to better adjust implementation of the CPD to the evolving context, leaving no one behind.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The results matrix makes clear reference in its Outcomes and Outputs to build disaggregated evidence generation: 3.1. National capacity for routine disaggregated child-sensitive evidence generation and analysis is increased for informed decision-making towards development pathway for children. <i>(Contributing to UNSDCF intermediate outcomes 1.1–1.5)</i> - UNICEF’s support to nutrition programmes commit to addressing micronutrient deficiencies (anaemia has been highlighted by the country office since 2018 with higher rates for girls (up to 93%), but also concerning rates for boys (53%). This is a priority for UNICEF in Iran through support for the development of a multisectoral plan to address all forms of malnutrition, during the CPD period. - Programming around adolescent life skills and psychosocial mental health has been and will continue to be a priority for UNICEF in Iran. The programme has reached boys and girls in ways that respond to gendered risks and vulnerabilities . Here are a few examples as reported in the UNICEF 2021 Annual Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. UNICEF in Iran continued its support to enhance the technical and practical capacity of service providers working on the prevention and treatment of drug use and social harm prevention. Training is provided to affiliated organizations on evidenced based preventive and treatment approaches for children and adolescents as follows, considering the differentiated needs of boys and girls. b. UNICEF is also supporting the Ministry of Sports & Youth (MoSY) to establish adolescents and youth empowerment centers targeting both boys and girls. These centres aim to support adolescents and youth resiliency development and empowerment through life/social skills programmes, MHPSS services and
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		<p>technical and skills building programmes to enhance future employability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The UNICEF Iran country office has met the 15% corporate benchmark on Gender Expenditures that are Gender transformative. - UNICEF's will continue and expand differentiated approaches for boys and girls in all sectors and these will be elaborated in each work plan. • In addition, UNICEF's aspiration to contribute to sustainable and resilient development and social systems and reducing child poverty is elaborated across the document, particularly under Social Protection. • UNICEF's work on social protection aims to address multi-dimensional poverty and the contributing factors through support towards enhancing the social protection systems for greater efficiency, effectiveness and resilience. • UNICEF assures the Belgian delegation that UNICEF's work in the country has always been and will continue to be in line with the UN Charter, its principles and values. • The UNICEF CPD also highlights UNICEF's commitment to be responsive and nimble to changing circumstances, as we demonstrated in our multisectoral response to the latest influx of Afghan refugees into Iran since August 2021. We therefore aim to be fit for purpose to respond to current and future risks and challenges faced by boys and girls in the country.
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Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme document	<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>	
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