

Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board
Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents
2023 second regular session

Draft country programme document commenting period: 13 June to 3 July 2023 [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: **BURUNDI**

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"> ● Belgium welcomes the joint presentation of the different CPDs (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP) to the donor community at the end of May. This exercise, which took place at the initiative of the UN Resident Coordinator, is a good example of the One UN Approach so important to us. ● Belgium is also grateful for the many references made about the coherence with the UNSDCF and on how the CPD will contribute to the 5 pillars based on UNICEF's comparative advantage. At the same time, Belgium feels there is still room for improvement in order to reach the full potential of the UNDS reform: it is unclear to what extent prior consultation took place among the different agencies during the development of the CPDs; it appears that all three agencies used different data sources for their analysis; and we would welcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● UNICEF welcomes this acknowledgment and will continue to work closely with UNFPA and UNDP but also all other UN agencies. ● UNICEF appreciates the feedback and would like to reiterate that as part of the UN Reform, the UNSDCF was prepared in a consultative manner and UNICEF CPD was formulated under the common rubric of the CCA and the UNSDCF, while maintaining close and on-going collaboration with sister agencies to ensure complementarity. We would like to reaffirm that the UNICEF CPD's theory of change (TOC) and planned results derive from the broader/higher-level TOC and results of the UNSDCF. Several of the UNSDCF indicators are used in the CPD helping to organically tie the two results frameworks together, while the UNSDCF workplan also includes joint results and indicators. We appreciate Belgium's close observation on the data sources used in agency documents. UNICEF used the latest data sources available to present the child-related indicators for the situation analysis. Prompted by Belgium's observation, UNICEF will

	<p>more uniformity in the development of the theories of change, result frameworks and disaggregated indicators.</p>	<p>suggest to the RCO to review the CCA in order to align even further the data sources.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With regards to evaluations, Belgium is satisfied that the anticipated costs for the CPD evaluation plan reach the 1% of the overall budget threshold, At the same time, Belgium would like to call for further efforts to ensure joint evaluations with sister agencies in order to improve mutual lessons learned and cost-effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF welcomes Belgium’s engagement for the evaluation work which is an area for which it is often difficult to find partners. UNICEF is planning a Joint evaluation focused around the pillar on strengthening the food system (pillar 1 of the UNSDCF, with WFP, FAO etc.) during the next CPD 2024–2027. This was included in the Costed Evaluation Plan and is expected to start in 2025.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belgium is grateful for the broad consultation that took place in the development of the CPD with the many different stakeholders, including the bilateral informal exchanges with our colleagues. Such exchanges are essential to us as a core donor and we would like to encourage UNICEF to continue such proactive dialogues with Belgium. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF equally appreciates the dialogue with Belgium and will be continuing to proactively engage.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belgium encourages to proactively share information about lessons learned and evaluation findings from the previous CPD during the development of the CP, which we consider helpful from a transparency, accountability and information-exchange point of view. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF has included some of the lessons learned of the previous CPD in the CPD document and has done extensive analysis on recommendations from evaluations and research to ensure these are included. One of the main lessons learned is to focus on fewer geographic intervention areas and to deliver a multi-sectoral package for children especially in the area of Early Childhood Development. UNICEF is happy to proactively share relevant information/data on evaluations and others as it relates to child rights.
<p>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget. An overall budget of 154MUSD is foreseen of which 39.6M from regular resources and 114M from other resources. We note that while the overall amount represents an increase compared to the previous CPD, the proportion of anticipated core resources turns out to be significantly lower. As a core donor, Belgium would like to understand better the reasoning behind this approach. Given the current international budgetary context, such a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Belgium is aware, several global factors affect the regular resources (RR) allotment of the CPD. UNICEF headquarters traditionally uses a formula based on: <i>under-five mortality rate, GNI per capita, and child population size</i>. At the same time, the global RR income has been stagnant. In fact, the share of the RR contributions from Member States vis-a-vis total ‘public’ sector income decreased from 9 % in 2021 to 8% in 2022. Further, the ratio of the total RR as a portion of the total UNICEF income has dropped from 40% in 2002 to 14% in 2022. More challenging is the growing earmarking trend of the other resources

	<p>heavy dependence on additional fundraising through other resources also raises the question on how realistic the proposed budget actually is, how competition for scarce resources between UN agencies will be avoided, and on what basis possible program adjustment will take place in the event of funding gaps.</p>	<p>(OR), which hinders the balanced attainment of CPD results. At the global level UNICEF, together with other UN agencies, is advocating for the Member States to meet their Funding Compact commitments to increase the RR. Donor partner’s country-level flexible OR support is extremely valuable in this context, in achieving CPD’s results together. Burundi CO would like to take this opportunity to thank the Belgium Government and its people for their ongoing support to UNICEF, especially for core resources. Given their overall decline, their importance is becoming increasingly crucial to allow the country office in Burundi to be flexible and swift in protecting and promoting the right of children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the current CPD, the CO has managed to mobilize much more OR and our estimations have been based on current fundraising trends. We do recognize the new challenges that will come with the constraint global funding environment and are hoping to diversify our sources including with non-traditional donors for Burundi. In alignment with the other UN agencies and working within the framework of the MPTF, we are confident competition will be reduced and issue-based discussions could help increase our funding.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child protection. Belgium notes that even though an overall budget increase is foreseen, the program component relates to child protection is the only area where the budget would decrease compared to the previous CPD. Given the importance we attach to this area and also taking into account that – as mentioned under §50 – children themselves have emphasized the importance of social protection, Belgium would like to understand better the reasoning behind this approach and would like to emphasize its attachment to this field of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social protection interventions are included in the Social policy and Advocacy outcome and will be one of the main approaches to be used to address children vulnerabilities. The child protection budget has indeed not increased as much as other sectors but remains at USD 3.8mio per year about the same as in the current CPD (USD 3.6mio per year). Both areas of social protection and child protection remain areas difficult to fundraise for and thus any additional support from donors is welcome.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent empowerment and community resilience. Belgium noted that this field is no longer considered as a separate program component. Given the particular challenges for adolescents and young people, in particular adolescent girls, BE would like 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adolescent empowerment is mainly included under the education outcome to ensure a better linkage with skilling of in- and out-of-school children. However, mainstreaming adolescent development and participation across all programs remains a UNICEF priority, notably in the area of health and nutrition in terms of sexual and reproductive

	<p>UNICEF to elaborate further how such issues will be taken up under the other program components.</p>	<p>health and optimal nutrition. UNICEF will maintain a consistent focus in promoting youth led-climate change and Youth 4 Children initiative by engaging adolescents in actions for promoting early childhood development. Moreover, under child protection, the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence which disproportionately affects adolescent girls will be addressed through targeted social and behaviour change interventions and multisectoral response programming.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and behavioral change/climate change/gender. Belgium underlines the importance it attaches to these areas. We understand that work on these key issues will now take place under the programme effectiveness component, but would like UNICEF to elaborate better on how these activities will be spelled out and how it will be assured they receive sufficient funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and behavioral change/climate change/gender: UNICEF will continue strengthening its work in this area including with a reinforced staffing structure. <p>SBC will be used as a core strategy to change social norms in relation to gender inequalities, contribute to prevent and eliminate Gender Based Violence and promote positive masculinity. Overall, SBC will be integrated across all programs and will continue to reinforce community engagement via the key family practices, promote positive practices (including parenting) as well as create demand for basic services (child protection, health, education, wash, social protection).</p> <p>Climate Change is a priority and UNICEF has issued a 'Situation Analysis on the impact of Climate Change on Children in Burundi'. UNICEF is integrating climate change aspects into all of its programming to ensure that social services are climate resilient and to respond to shocks induced by natural disasters (exacerbated by climate change). The new CPD will focus on both community and institutional resilience in both adaptation and mitigation (including renewable energy, solar cooking, solar lamps etc.) and an overall reduction of the carbon footprint of UNICEF programming. UNICEF is also planning advocacy actions to raise community awareness and to support the government in mobilizing climate funds. These cross-cutting areas are indeed not easy to fundraise for. UNICEF will continue to integrate these areas in proposals but also allocate regular resources to ensure adequate programming. Further commitment from donors to these areas will be welcome including also for reinforced programming for children living with disabilities.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belgium would like to emphasize the importance of a continued strengthening of its work with the development partners, CSOs and other third party stakeholders, including our own implementation agency Enabel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF takes note of the continued strengthening of work with development partners and CSOs and confirms that this is indeed a priority in terms of coordination with development partners and also capacity building of CSOs including national partners.