



**Remarks by the Representative of the Kingdom of Lesotho to the
United Nations, at the UNICEF Executive Board Second Regular
Session**

09/06/23

Madam President,

First and foremost, I am pleased to participate in this Executive Board's session, which among other things is aimed at reviewing and endorsing the UNICEF Country Program Document (CPD) for Lesotho for the years 2024 to 2028.

As the government of Lesotho, we noted with appreciation that the new Country program was created following a thorough evaluation of the previous country program 2019-23. Again we observed that the assessment considered the post-COVID economic downturn, and conducted a comprehensive analysis of the present program in Lesotho, and further identified important takeaways and evaluated contributions to outcomes.

Madam President

We also note that the new CPD prioritizes reaching the most vulnerable while adhering to the principle of "leaving no one behind". It has also adopted a life cycle approach to social protection, focusing programs on the most vulnerable people at various life stages and providing children in their first and second decades with a comprehensive set of basic services complemented by substantial investments in social behaviour change interventions.

In an effort to build on our previous successes in strengthening the plight of children, the government of Lesotho is committed in investing in the following three areas:

- Firstly, as highlighted in the inaugural speech of the Right Honourable the Prime Minister in November 2022, there is a dire need for reinforcing good parenting techniques, reducing violence and neglect, and enhancing community health services, particularly those delivered by Village Health Workers (VHW). This in essence covers children in the first decade.
- Secondly, regarding the second decade, we are committed to the transforming education initiative, working towards a stronger focus on learning outcomes, adolescent leadership engagement, and improved coordination among sectors.
- Thirdly, the National Information System for Social Assistance, or NISSA, serves as a social registry across various sectors and is an area for investment in child protection, adolescents' meaningful participation, and social protection to ensure that children are protected and given opportunities to grow and thrive. Through this procedure, the Child Grant Program and the development of a shock-responsive social protection system are two social protection programs that are unified under the NISSA.

Madam President

We are equally happy to see that the planned UNICEF country program supports the National Strategic Development Plan II for 2023-2028 particularly priorities 1 on enhancing human capital; 2 on sustainable infrastructure, and 3 on domestic governance and accountability mechanisms. It is also important to mention that this CPD is indeed derived from the three outcomes of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2024–2028) championed by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, and furthermore it aligns with the gender action plan (2022-2025) and UNICEF strategic plan (2022-2025).

Madam President

I wish to conclude by reiterating our support for UNICEF and request for the Board to approve the new Country Program Document 2024-28, which we are confident will help Lesotho advance her national social development goals.

I thank you for your attention!