

**Template for delegations providing comments on the
country programme documents**
2020 First Regular Session

Delegation name: **BELGIUM**

Draft country programme document: **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

Delegations are kindly invited to use this template to share their comments on any of the draft CPDs being presented during the forthcoming Board session.

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, country programme documents (CPDs) 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 will be made public on the Executive Board website, and considered by the respective regional office, in close consultation with the country office and the concerned Government.

General comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The goal of the programme (children have equitable, quality and sustainable access to basic social services, especially in the most deprived provinces and in humanitarian settings) is very relevant for the Democratic Republic of Congo. - There is a huge difference between the regular resources (328.010 USD) for a five-year programme 2020-2024, the other resources (760.550 USD) and the estimated annual 326 million USD emergency funds based on the humanitarian action for children appeal. This gives the impression that the country programme document is very ambitious without a guarantee of funding, taking into account that in 2017 the percentage of other resources mobilized against planned resources was 62%.
Comments on specific aspects of the country programme document	<p>Point 9: The net attendance ratio in primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools was 78, 32 and 34 per cent respectively. What is the reason why the net attendance ratio in senior secondary schools is higher than in junior secondary schools?</p> <p>Point 16: The Strategic National Development Plan 2019-2022 of the DRC is not yet finalized</p> <p>Point 17/18: The theory of change of the program is that quality basic social services are delivered at scale. The promotion of the civic participation of the Congolese population through participation in the management of basic social services should get more attention in the theory of change. The communities have to understand the concept of accountability of service providers and local authorities (rights based approach) and help keep public service providers accountable for their role in doing so. The improvement of the management of basic social services through increased involvement of the population in public management at the local level should be stressed in the theory of change.</p> <p>The approach should underpin an assessment of the quality of basic social services – such as education, sanitation, health, safety, electricity, water and administration – involving collaboration between citizens, civil society, local authorities and service providers towards greater transparency and social accountability of these different actors.</p> <p>Point 27: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation. The program should stress the importance of children in armed conflict and the necessity to provide lifesaving temporary services to Children Associated with Non State Groups. Additional funding is</p>

	<p>required to strengthen coordination and capacities of local stakeholders to prevent and respond to violence/abuse against girls and boys, to provide adequate temporary care to children victims of violence but also, and mostly, to ensure the sustainable reintegration of thousands of children in their families and communities. Belgium has been funding projects of UNICEF in this field which are not mentioned in the draft country program.</p> <p>Point 32: the harmonized approach to cash transfers as well as the zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment is only mentioned as a mitigation measure. Given the wide-spread fraud and corruption risks linked with implementing programs in the DRC, a more pro-active approach should be developed.</p> <p>Page 12: the base-line for live births attended by skilled health personnel = 75 per cent. In point 5 it is mentioned that 85 per cent of deliveries were delivered by skilled health professionals</p> <p>Page 13: there is no base-line available for the proportion of adolescent and pregnant woman receiving the minimum acceptable diet. How has the target of 10% been calculated if there is no base-line available.</p> <p>Page 15: apparent survival rate in the fifth grade of primary schools: the base-line has been sex-disaggregated. What is the reason why the target (55%) is not sex-disaggregated?</p>
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Response from the UNICEF Regional/Country Office

- UNICEF appreciates the comments made by the Government of the Belgium on the draft country programme of cooperation between UNICEF and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the opportunity to offer additional information not captured in detail in the 6,000-word country programme document (CPD).

UNICEF's response to emergencies is planned and budgeted through the HAC (Humanitarian Appeal for Children). In the CPD, the estimated annual amount US\$ 326 million in other resources (emergency) funds is based on the Humanitarian Action for Children 2019. The appeal also takes into consideration the current Ebola funding needs. However, from 2020, UNICEF will issue a specific HAC for Ebola.

- The Other Resources planification is based on the funding trend analysis of the previous country programme funded at 96.7% in addition to funding currently in the pipeline.

Point 9: Net attendance ratios for primary to senior secondary education are from MICS 2017-2018 data. All data are currently under last review by HQ and the Country Office is awaiting final feedback to confirm school attendance by level.

Point 16. Correct it is so far validated at the technical level.

Point 17/18: The CPD under para 18: (c) has been reformulated as follows: the strengthening of institutional capacities and community systems **to increase accountability** for quality service **management** and delivery at scale; (d) influencing public investment; and (e) leveraging resources and partners, including the private sector.

Please also note that Paragraph 20 in the CPD includes references to civic participation and accountability, in italic below:

"To demonstrate the synergy of results in several health zones (districts) selected with reference to equity and partnership considerations, the programme will: (a) model a convergence approach to deliver a minimum package of multisectoral interventions across the life cycle of the child (birth registration, immunization, complementary feeding, primary education and water supply) as entry points to improve local governance, service delivery, community systems and citizens' accountability; (b) invest in secondary education, employability skills and the engagement of adolescents as agents of change; and.."

For social services related to Child Protection, such as birth registration, UNICEF collaborates in the DRC with communities through networks of volunteers that are trained and guided by the Child Protection team. Through numerous sensitization activities, notably with local churches, UNICEF will support civic participation and will raise the level of awareness on human rights as part of the rights-based approach that underpins the country programme.

Point 27: Note that this is an output in the CPD results framework and a key UNICEF commitment. The Child Protection programme will continue to provide adequate temporary care as necessary for children separated from their biological families. This includes Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG), Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) and child victims of violence. Furthermore, UNICEF will do its utmost to reunify a maximum of UASC with direct or indirect families and will develop pertinent interventions to ensure individualized and contextualized reintegration. This type of activity will also help to mitigate risks of further violence, such as the re-recruitment by armed groups.

UNICEF very much appreciates the support provided by the Government of Belgium in these areas and has acknowledged Belgium as a main partner in the CPD results framework (p.16).

Point 32: The limitation of the number of words set for CPDs did not allow us to provide further details. UNICEF has already established an internal control unit and is creating a partnership management section to strengthen its oversight function. The overall purpose is to prevent, detect, mitigate and report fraud and misuse of resources and

assets. This will be achieved through capacity building and improving programme monitoring and quality assurance, as well as increasing the accountability of our partners in terms of results' achievements. The Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) used by UNICEF to manage partnerships is also designed to detect fraud and corruption.

With regards to zero tolerance for sexual harassment, UNICEF has taken the following actions:

1. Identification of PSEA as a managerial priority in the 2019 Annual Management Plan
2. Development of a Prevention of SEA plan approved by the Country Management team.
3. Inclusion of a PSEA module into all capacity building activities for implementing partners including national entities for prevention and awareness raising.
4. Use of the revised Project Cooperation Agreement templates which include clauses related to PSEA.
5. Establishment of an interagency task team for PSEA to enhance prevention and reporting mechanisms.
6. Nomination and training of peer support groups in every UNICEF offices in the DRC
7. Recruitment of a counsellor to provide assistance to victims including children.
8. In addition, UNICEF partners will also be assessed on the extent to which they have developed functioning PSEA strategies and controls to determine the eligibility of entering in a potential partnership.

Page 12. Data sources are different: the situation analysis in the CPD used 85% from the last MICS (2018). The baseline in the results framework is uses administrative data, with is aligned with National Health Development Plan and to allow reporting on yearly basis.

To be able to report on a yearly basic, UNICEF is using the admin data as baseline and means of verification.

Page 13: The target is an increase of 10% of the baseline that will be established though surveys.

Page 15: The CPD Results Framework has been edited to include sex-disaggregation.