

## Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board

### Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents

2022 first regular session

*Draft country programme document commenting period: 16 November to 6 December 2021*

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: *European Union*

Draft country programme document: *Eastern Caribbean Area (available at [https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/8331/file/2022-PL7\\_Eastern\\_Caribbean\\_Area\\_draft-MCPD-EN-2021.11.15.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/8331/file/2022-PL7_Eastern_Caribbean_Area_draft-MCPD-EN-2021.11.15.pdf)).*

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, and considered by the requesting country, in close consultation with UNICEF.

	Delegation's comments	Response(s)
<b>General comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ As expected, UNICEF is proposing to continue addressing the key strategic issues prevalent in the region and notably:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ the Safe Schools and Climate-Smart school initiatives; including with the private sector.</li><li>○ to develop digital, technical, and vocational skills among adolescents not in education, employment, or training.</li><li>○ to conduct gender analyses to address disparities in school completion rates.</li><li>○ to prevent violence in and around schools.</li><li>○ the expansion of inclusive and shock-responsive programmes; and develop</li></ul></li></ul>	<p>UNICEF appreciates the comments made by EU on the ECA multi country programme document (MCPD). The comments are pertinent and timely.</p> <p>As EU noted, these are some of the key focus areas included in the programme of cooperation, derived from a wide consultative process, and informed by the most recent evidence.</p>

	<p>more comprehensive responses through cash plus access to quality essential services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ disaster risk reduction and CCA.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme document</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The document lacks sufficient response to refugees, asylum seeker and people on the move. What are UNICEF’s plans to promote their inclusion in education and social protection services?</li> </ul>	<p>Inclusion is a main principle for implementation of all ECA programmes and covers all children inclusive of refugee children, asylum seekers' children and children on the move. Population areas where there is bigger concentration of aforementioned children, special programmes will be implemented with an extended outreach for social services, support, and advocacy, for example the Migrant Response Plan is an integral part of annual programme planning and implementation.</p> <p>UNICEF, in collaboration with key stakeholders, will continue to provide direct support and work towards the removal of the legal, administrative, and financial barriers preventing the integration of refugees, asylum seekers and children that are on the move in ECA.</p> <p>This will be accompanied by behaviour change communication support to influence attitudes, knowledge, and practices, particularly among decision makers, service providers and the public. UNICEF will support the refugees, asylum seekers and children that are on the move with skills development opportunities, language development, psychosocial support, integration into social protection, and provide critical local guidance, ranging from life-saving information to information that will support their integration and build social cohesion.</p> <p>In 2019, Trinidad and Tobago conducted a registration of Venezuelan nationals in irregular circumstances, allowing them to work for a period of one year, and which has been subsequently extended every six months to date to facilitate their access to employment, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, UNICEF recognizes that there are significant challenges related to access to social services. To this end, UNICEF plans to strengthen the capacity of national and community-based child protection systems to prevent, identify, mitigate, respond, and monitor all forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation.</p>

		<p>Based on the current assessment of the education sector in Trinidad and Tobago, the priorities emphasized are early childhood education, scaling-up English as a Second Language (ESL) and developing skills training opportunities for adolescents with heightened risk (trafficked, unaccompanied and separated children, etc). Cross-cutting emphasis will also be given to streamlining support services and social protection. This is needed so that children can transition between educational levels, non-formal, and formal modalities, and academic vs. more skills-oriented programmes.</p> <p>UNICEF will be continuing to monitor child rights and the situation of children, as it is the cornerstone to UNICEF’s mandate. UNICEF ECA conducted a study of the <a href="#">situation of migration and statelessness in the Caribbean Overseas Territories</a> in 2017. It highlights the situation of children on the move, and how they have spread over the region, with approximately 35,000 non-nationals in Anguilla, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos, and the British Virgin Islands. They are mainly nationals from Dominica, Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Guyana. In the territories, migrants contribute substantially to the respective economies, not only through paying taxes and other contributions but also because most of the territories have very low dependency ratios. Nevertheless, migrants are economically vulnerable because of having to pay more for health treatment, not being eligible for social protection and facing bureaucratic issues related to work permits and immigration requirements. UNICEF will continue to advocate for the adoption of a comprehensive rights-based approach to the management of migration for families with children.</p> <p>In addition, UNICEF is actively promoting the inclusion of refugees, asylum seeker and people on the move into social protection, by adapting the approach based on the different contexts, constraints, and opportunities. This includes at the institutional level for example the draft social protection policy for Antigua and Barbuda, supported by UNICEF, which commits the Government to improving the reach of social protection services to undocumented immigrants. At the operational level for example the provision of services in a way that promotes the inclusion of these groups into national social protection</p>
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	<p>➤ The document could also develop further on Disaster Preparedness</p>	<p>programmes and systems in the future, as is being done in Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, this includes the generating key evidence and guidance for example with the OECS to promote equitable access to social protection/security mechanisms in times of humanitarian crises.</p> <p>In terms of Disaster Preparedness, UNICEF will strengthen the capacities of government line ministries at the national levels through the provision of technical assistance, tools and guidance, and sharing of best practice models. This is to ensure that climate change policies throughout the ECA are child sensitive and address stronger preparedness measures. Similarly, UNICEF will support child sensitive climate action and DRR budgeting using its public finance for children (PF4C) initiative. It will develop and integrate child-sensitive targets and indicators; and strengthen child-sensitive monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms, nationally, and in all child-related line ministries.</p> <p>This includes supporting national authorities to strengthen planning for health emergencies and disasters, early warning systems, protecting and enhancing shock-responsive essential services provision (including through social protection); and ensuring that communities, especially young people, have the knowledge, skills and agency to prepare for, mitigate and respond to climate, emergency health and disaster-related events. In selected hazard prone countries, UNICEF will support the relevant disaster management authorities and line ministries to ensure increased levels of readiness are maintained so that existing vulnerabilities are not extenuated during crisis. This includes strengthening the provision of social protection to act as a first layer of protection in times of crises, and preparing the system to be able to rapidly expand in times of crises for efficient and effective support to affected populations, in line with global commitments (i.e. Grand Bargain) and best practices. Investments will be made to ensure that strengthened assessments systems, robust sector coordination mechanisms, scalable life-saving services and solid monitoring processes are in place prior to any a disaster. UNICEF will work with CDEMA and the disaster management authorities in selected hazard prone countries to maintain a standing capacity to respond to at least 10,000 persons across affected countries with lifesaving supplies and services, technical expert deployments and coordination tools.</p>
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