

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: *BELIZE 2022-2026*

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)
General comments	A strategic and comprehensive UNICEF programme which embraces all the dimensions of childhood issues in Belize from poverty, to nutrition, lack of social protection, violence and abuse prevention, education at early schooling, primary and secondary, lack of job opportunities, lack of access to water/sanitation... and particularly the SDGs which are off track and compounded by COVID. It proposes to develop partnerships with UN family organisations, line Ministries, Development Partners, Private Sectors and CSO which is most welcomed. It also focuses on strengthening the national systems to build sustained outcomes. The UNICEF Programme presents some important points for cooperation/integration on Education/alternative livelihood, access to social services, issues linked to Indigenous Populations and migrants with the EU Priorities for MIP 2021-2027 which would	UNICEF welcomes the review and comments made by European Union on the Belize Country Programme Document (CPD) 2022 -2026 and for reaffirming the linkage to the EU priorities for MIP 2021-2027. UNICEF will ensure to coordinate, align and complement the efforts of European Union and other partners in Belize during the programme implementation. The country office notes the need for TVET as an alternative for out of school adolescents to be further elaborated. Due to word limit of the CPD this narrative was crisp though these are well developed in the programme strategy notes (PSNs) that inform the CPD development.

	<p>need to be further investigated. TVET as an alternative for out of school adolescents is not developed, it could be a good option for job creation/alternative livelihood/reduction of crime among youngsters.</p>	<p>As outlined in the Every Child Learns PSN, the country office will ensure a gender-transformative and human rights-based approach to inclusive, integrated social services across the life cycle through relevant early learning opportunities, pre-schooling, primary and secondary education for lifelong learning skills. This programme will make use of innovative approaches to reverse the effects of COVID-19 by strengthening distance and online learning, whilst supporting creative opportunities to fast-track learning and alternative opportunities for those children left behind, who are now at heightened risk to abuse, exploitation and violence through formal and informal learning spaces. With concentration on the reduction of disparities and elimination of inequities, national frameworks, policies, and standards will be strengthened for effective implementation of inclusive child and adolescent development strategies, with improved planning, monitoring and appropriate. Currently in Belize, mandatory learning is only between the ages of 5-14years, Strong advocacy is ongoing for mandatory education for all children (persons below the age of 18) to ensure equitable access to all forms of learning, especially for adolescents between the ages of 14-17years</p>
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<p>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme document</p>	<p>➤ 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?</p> <p>The document could also develop further on Disaster Preparedness</p>	<p>The Country Office also notes the criticality of refugees, asylum seekers and families on the move, especially children noting an important increase and worrying trend of unaccompanied children over the last year. In Belize, children on the move are particularly vulnerable and face heightened protection risks, especially in transit or destination countries where they may be denied entry at borders, subjected to immigration detention, denied the right to seek asylum and excluded from access to essential services.</p> <p>A key challenge remains their access to a birth certificate. This impacts on their access to education, health care and social protection interventions.</p> <p>On education multi-lingual learning remains a challenge due to gaps in content and teaching competencies. The programme will address these issues as part of its support to the Government for ongoing curriculum reform, improved teaching and learning methods and inclusion of marginalized children as part of the Re-Imagine Education Agenda.</p> <p>With regards social protection, an important requirement is a social security number which can only be accessed with a birth certificate, thereby fostering an unfortunate cycle of deprivation. UNICEF has over the last year provided critical services in ECD, health, legal aid and psychosocial services to 15 of the 70 mapped migrant communities. To foster inclusion, equity and social cohesion support is being provided to both migrant and host communities.</p> <p>The Survive, Thrive and Lives Free of all Forms of Poverty PSN acknowledges the limited integration of shock</p>
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		<p>responsiveness mechanisms into the national social protection system and the need for a coordinated and integrated approach that supports a continuation of services for children and in key areas of interventions (nutrition, health education, child protection). Building on previous strong partnerships and collaboration, the CPD proposes to create an enabling environment and governance mechanisms for a solid social protection system ensuring universality, so that every boy and girl is covered by social protection and lives free of multi-dimensional deprivation risks and resilient in the face of shocks and stressors.</p> <p>Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) UNICEF has been a critical partner and support to the National Emergency Management office (NEMO) as a lead agency in critical areas such as WASH, nutrition, and education. UNICEF Belize will continue to support authorities and communities to identify and manage early warning systems to reduce the risks associated with disasters and climate change, and will help to strengthen partners' capacities for preparedness and humanitarian response at the national and subnational levels. With development partners, UNICEF will provide technical assistance and financial resources to support the Government and communities in scaling up WASH services. It will provide technical support for strengthening policies, strategies and regulations for the integration of climate change into national and decentralized WASH and Education in Emergencies programming in times of emergencies.</p> <p>Overall, these comments are pertinent and timely and will serve to inform the ensuing and work-in-progress processes of elaboration of programme strategy notes, workplans, and advocacy strategies.</p>
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