



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
10 December 2021

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

First regular session 2022

8–11 February 2022

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Country programme document

Malaysia

Summary

The country programme document (CPD) for Malaysia is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$3,412,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$26,400,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period March 2022 to December 2025.

* E/ICEF/2022/1.



Programme rationale

1. Malaysia is an upper-middle-income and culturally diverse country, and is home to 32.7 million people, of whom 9.2 million are children.¹ In 2021, 69.8 per cent of its citizens are estimated to be Malay or other *Bumiputera*,² 22.4 per cent Chinese, 6.8 per cent Indian and 1 per cent other ethnicities.³ At least 8.2 per cent of the population, and 4.2 per cent of all children, are non-citizens.⁴ Malaysia has a rapidly ageing population, with a rising old age dependency ratio. Over 77 per cent of Malaysian households live in urban areas,⁵ a proportion that is expected to reach 85 to 90 per cent by 2050.

2. The per capita income of Malaysia has increased nearly fourfold since the early 1990s, and the country is expected to achieve high-income status in the near future.⁶ Ranking 62 of 189 countries on the Human Development Index, Malaysia has also attained “very high human development” status.⁷ The country’s Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 and Twelfth Malaysia Plan 2021–2025 chart the way to achievement of the country’s commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. Malaysia has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, although all with reservations. These commitments are reflected in strong performance across a range of human development indicators. Infant and under-five mortality rates have dropped to 6.4 and 7.7 per 1,000 live births, respectively, since 2011, with little difference when disaggregated by sex.⁸ The maternal mortality ratio slightly increased from 21.1 to 24.9 per 100,000 live births between 2020 and 2021.⁹ In 2020, enrolment rates for Malaysian children in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education had reached 98.2 per cent, 95.3 per cent and 87.6 per cent, respectively.¹⁰ Girls outperform boys in the Programme for International Student Assessment and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and represent 61.04 per cent of students in higher education (2020).¹¹

4. Despite these achievements, gaps in the legal, regulatory and policy framework of Malaysia, comparatively low levels of public expenditure on social protection and social services, limited capacity in the public sector to meet the demands of the country’s aspirations for more inclusive development and the continuation of harmful

¹ Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), *Children Statistics*, Malaysia, 2020.

² “Bumiputera” refers to Malays and other indigenous peoples of Peninsula Malaysia (Orang Asli) and the indigenous peoples of Sabah and Sarawak.

³ DOSM, *Current Population Estimates*, Malaysia, 2021.

⁴ Author’s calculations based on Current Population Estimates, Malaysia, 2021, DOSM. See also Malaysia: Estimating the Number of Foreign Workers (World Bank, 2019), for discussion of likely undercounting of non-citizens in the Malaysian census. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/953091562223517841/pdf/Malaysia-Estimating-the-Number-of-Foreign-Workers-A-Report-from-the-Labor-Market-Data-for-Monetary-Policy-Task.pdf>.

⁵ DOSM, *Evolution of Migration for Urban and Rural*, Malaysia, 2020.

⁶ World Bank, *Aiming High: Navigating the Next Stage of Malaysia’s Development*, Country Economic Memorandum, Washington, D.C., 2021.

⁷ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2020: The Next Frontier – Human Development and the Anthropocene*, New York, 2020.

⁸ DOSM, *Pocket Stats Q2 2021*, Putrajaya, Malaysia, August 2021.

⁹ DOSM, *Vital Statistics*, Malaysia, 2021, October 2021 and *Vital Statistics*, Malaysia, 2020, November 2020.

¹⁰ Ministry of Education, *Laporan Tahunan*, 2020.

¹¹ Ministry of Education, *Quick Facts 2020: Malaysia Educational Statistics*, July 2020.

social norms and practices in both the public and private sectors have resulted in persistent deprivation across a wide range of child rights domains.

5. Child physical and mental health indicators are particularly concerning. Stunting has risen to 21.8 per cent, while the prevalence of wasting among children under age 5 stands at 9.7 per cent.¹² Obesity among children aged 5–17 years more than doubled between 2011 and 2019, from 6.1 to 14.8 per cent.¹³ Rates of mental ill-health have also climbed, with 7.9 per cent of children aged 5–15 years found to have mental health problems in 2019¹⁴ and 18.3 per cent of those aged 13–17 years experiencing depression in 2017.¹⁵ Finally, volatile weather systems, pollution¹⁶ and deforestation¹⁷ are increasingly exposing children to health risks.¹⁸

6. Despite substantial progress towards universal primary enrolment, learning poverty (the inability to read or comprehend a simple text by age 10) was estimated at 13 per cent in 2019, reflecting 11.7 per cent of primary-school-age children not achieving minimum proficiency in reading and a further 1.4 per cent of primary-age children not in school.¹⁹ These challenges appear most concentrated among children living in poverty,²⁰ children from marginalized groups²¹ and children with disabilities.²² Despite multiple initiatives to ensure continuity of learning, the prolonged closure of schools sparked by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic appears to have exacerbated educational disparities. Key bottlenecks include unequal access to appropriate devices and inadequate preparation of both students and teachers for online learning.²³

7. Children in Malaysia are exposed to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation across a range of settings. Malaysia recorded 1,705 sexual abuse cases in 2018, 1,865 in 2019 and 1,373 in the first nine months of 2020.²⁴ The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child

¹² Institute for Public Health, National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia, *National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019: Volume I – NCDs – Non-Communicable Diseases: Risk Factors and Other Health Problems*, 2020.

¹³ Institute for Public Health, National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia, *National Health and Morbidity Survey 2011: Volume II – Non-Communicable Diseases*, 2011 and *National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019: Volume I – NCDs – Non-Communicable Diseases: Risk Factors and Other Health Problems*, 2020.

¹⁴ National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia, *Fact Sheet: National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019 – Non-communicable diseases, healthcare demand, and health literacy*, 2020.

¹⁵ Institute for Public Health, *National Health and Morbidity Survey 2017: Adolescent Mental Health (DASS-21)*, 2017.

¹⁶ See: <www.doe.gov.my/portalv1/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Chronology-of-Haze-Episodes-in-Malaysia.pdf>.

¹⁷ See: <www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/MYS>.

¹⁸ Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change, Third National Communication and Second Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC, 2018; Seoul National University and UNICEF, *Children's Environment and Health in East Asia and the Pacific: Situation Analysis and Call for Action*, discussion paper, Bangkok, 2020; Abdullah, Rozaini, "Malaysia: Country Report on Children's Environmental Health", *Reviews on Environmental Health*, vol. 35, no. 1, 26 March 2020, pp. 49–52.

¹⁹ EduAnalytics, Malaysia Learning Poverty Brief, 2019.

²⁰ UNICEF, *Children Without: A Study of Urban Child Poverty and Deprivation in Low-Cost Flats in Kuala Lumpur*, 2018.

²¹ UNICEF, *Children Out of School: Malaysia – The Sabah Context*, 2019.

²² UNICEF, *Childhood Disability in Malaysia: A Study of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices*, 2017.

²³ See: <www.krinstitute.org/Views-@-Covid-19_and_Unequal_Learning.aspx and <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/seac/2020/11/04/covid-19-and-southeast-asia-covid-19-and-malaysias-lessons-in-digital-applications/>>.

²⁴ See: <www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2020/12/14/3875-child-abuse-cases-up-to-september-lower-than-previous-years/>.

prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material found that the “phenomena of sale of children, child sexual abuse and exploitation are vast and real in Malaysia against the backdrop of stateless, asylum seeking and refugee population”.²⁵ In schools, corporal punishment is permitted against boys,²⁶ while some 43 per cent of parents of children aged 12–23 months report the use of physical punishment at home.²⁷ In 2017, 16.2 per cent of adolescents reported having been physically bullied,²⁸ while another study found that one in four students experienced cyberbullying.²⁹

8. Although many of these challenges affect children across all segments of Malaysian society, certain groups are particularly at risk. Child poverty continues to underpin a range of child rights deprivations and is associated with a higher risk of malnutrition, developmental delay, disability, school dropout, early pregnancy and child marriage. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 5.6 per cent of Malaysian households lived in absolute poverty and 16.9 per cent lived in relative poverty (2019).³⁰ Child poverty has been shown to be significantly higher than the household poverty rate.³¹ There is considerable geographic variation in poverty, with higher absolute poverty rates in rural areas (12.4 per cent) and in some states, including Sabah (19.5 per cent), Kelantan (12.4 per cent) and Sarawak (9 per cent).³²

9. According to projections from the 2010 census, Malaysia is home to around 384,000 children on the move, stateless children and other undocumented children.³³ These include: children of migrant workers; children born to Malaysian mothers outside of Malaysia; 45,750 child refugees;³⁴ descendants of former refugees; undocumented children in institutional care; and children living in undocumented, indigenous communities and stateless populations. These children are at high risk of poverty,³⁵ have limited access to quality education;³⁶ face financial and supply-side barriers to accessing essential health care, including vaccination;³⁷ are more

²⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, End of mission statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, on her visit to Malaysia (24 September–1 October 2018), Kuala Lumpur, 1 October 2018.

²⁶ See Section 89 of the Penal Code and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education (Surat Pekeliling ikhtisas Bil.7/2003: Kuasa Guru Merotan Murid).

²⁷ Institute for Public Health, National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia, *National Health and Morbidity Survey 2016: Maternal and Child Health – Volume II: Findings*, 2016.

²⁸ Institute of Public Health, National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia, *National Health and Morbidity Survey 2017: Adolescent Health Survey 2017*, 2017.

²⁹ See: <www.telenor.com/media/press-release/telenor-group-supports-stop-cyberbullying-day-2016/>.

³⁰ DOSM, *Penemuan Utama: The Key Findings*, 2019.

³¹ Redmond, Gerry, Rodrigo Praino and Noore Siddiquee, *Child Deprivation in Malaysia: Final Report for UNICEF*, School of Social and Policy Studies, Flinders University, Adelaide, 2017.

³² DOSM, *Household Income and Basic Amenities Survey*, Malaysia, 2019.

³³ Author’s calculation based on DOSM Current Population Estimates 2021; see also footnote 4 on the issue of the accuracy of census projections relating to non-citizens. See UNICEF Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move for a definition of “children on the move”. Available at: <www.unicef.org/media/62986/file>.

³⁴ See: <www.unhcr.org/en-my/figures-at-a-glance-in-malaysia.html>. Malaysia is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, and child asylum-seekers are not entitled to access social protection or free public services.

³⁵ World Bank, *Malaysia: Estimating the Number of Foreign Workers*, Washington, D.C., 2019.

³⁶ UNICEF, *Children Out of School: Malaysia – The Sabah Context*.

³⁷ Non-citizens are not entitled to access free public health care and, as a result, access to essential healthcare is patchy, as evidenced by recent outbreaks of polio in Sabah.

vulnerable to harmful labour practices,³⁸ sexual exploitation, early marriage,³⁹ violence and abuse; and are at risk of arrest and detention.

10. The Orang Asli children of Peninsular Malaysia as well as certain indigenous children in East Malaysia are particularly disadvantaged in a number of domains.⁴⁰ The under-five mortality rate among the Orang Asli is estimated to be about three times higher than the national average in 2012,⁴¹ while small-scale studies have also repeatedly found high rates of malnutrition,⁴² low wages and/or poverty,⁴³ school dropout⁴⁴ and low access to safe water and sanitation facilities among this group. In East Malaysia, children often have limited access to essential services: for example, 37.4 per cent of rural households in Sabah live more than 9 kilometres away from secondary schools.⁴⁵ Finally, domestic violence among indigenous families appears common and is often associated with mental ill-health, alcohol abuse and stress linked to financial instability.⁴⁶

11. In 2019, 4.7 per cent of children aged 2–17 years (approximately 360,000 children) were reported to be living with disabilities.⁴⁷ However, in 2018, only 133,583 children were registered in the national disability registration system.⁴⁸ A UNICEF study conducted in Sabah found that at least half of children registered with disabilities do not attend school;⁴⁹ throughout Malaysia, children with disabilities face uncertain future employment prospects, high medical costs and difficulties in accessing services, transportation and housing and face discrimination in their daily lives.⁵⁰

12. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated child rights and well-being challenges in Malaysia. The absolute poverty rate for households headed by Malaysian citizens is estimated to have risen from 5.6 per cent in 2019 to 8.4 per cent in 2020.⁵¹ Research suggests that this increased poverty and income insecurity are having significant multidimensional effects, ranging from increased food and nutrition insecurity⁵² to increased parental stress, domestic violence and violence

³⁸ Earthworm Foundation, *Children in the Plantations of Sabah: Stakeholder Consultation Workshop Report*, 2017.

³⁹ Universiti Sains Malaysia, *A study of the incidences of child marriages in Malaysia and an in-depth study of their causes and consequences*, 2014.

⁴⁰ UNDP and Economic Planning Unit Malaysia, *Study and review of the socio-economic status of Aboriginal people (Orang Asli) in Peninsular Malaysia for the formulation of a National Development Plan for the Orang Asli*, Malaysia, 2011.

⁴¹ Government of Malaysia and United Nations Malaysia, *Malaysia Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, Kuala Lumpur, 2016.

⁴² Child Rights Coalition Malaysia, *Status Report on Child Rights in Malaysia 2019*, 2019.

⁴³ Ooi Kiah Hui, *Poverty, inequality, and the lack of basic rights experienced by the Orang Asli in Malaysia*, 2019.

⁴⁴ Kamaruddin, Kamarulzaman and Osman Jusoh, “Educational Policy and Opportunities of Orang Asli: A Study on Indigenous People in Malaysia”, *The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning*, vol. 4, no. 1, June 2008.

⁴⁵ UNICEF, *Children Out of School: Malaysia – The Sabah Context*.

⁴⁶ Warfe, Mark R. et al., “A foundational community health needs assessment of three local indigenous communities in Sabah”, *Sabah Society Journal*, vol. 31, La Trobe University Australia in partnership with PACOS Trust, 2014.

⁴⁷ National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia, *Fact Sheet: National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019 – Non-communicable diseases, healthcare demand, and health literacy*, 2020.

⁴⁸ Data provided by Jabatan Pembangunan Orang Kurang Upaya (JPOKU), Government of Malaysia.

⁴⁹ UNICEF, *Children Out of School: Malaysia – The Sabah Context*.

⁵⁰ UNICEF, *Childhood Disability in Malaysia: A Study of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices*.

⁵¹ DOSM, *Household Income Estimates and Incidence of Poverty Report 2020*, Malaysia, 2021.

⁵² UNICEF and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *Families on the Edge*, Issue 3, 2021.

against children.⁵³ Female-headed households, households affected by disability and households reliant on informal sector employment – which includes a large proportion of non-citizen workers – have been particularly affected.⁵⁴ Despite strong efforts to support home-based learning during periods of school closure, there are significant barriers to learning among marginalized children and children from low-income families.⁵⁵ Physical confinement linked to the pandemic has reportedly exacerbated mental health challenges, particularly among children in low-income families.⁵⁶

13. The 2018 midterm review of the previous country programme affirmed that its key priorities remained relevant, with additional focus required on malnutrition; inclusion and quality in education; adolescent mental health; climate change; young people's participation; and private sector engagement. The Gender Programmatic Review identified key deprivations for boys and girls, capacity gaps and targeted approaches. The evaluation of the #ThisAbility Flagship Initiative of UNICEF highlighted the need to strengthen disability-inclusive programming. The evaluation on Innovation for Children recommended strengthening the use of innovations as a key driver for results as well as pursuing partnerships that can take innovations to scale. Finally, evidence and lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic have been reflected in this country programme document (CPD) to address ongoing challenges.

Programme priorities and partnerships

14. The overarching vision of the country programme is to deliver positive change for the most vulnerable and marginalized children in Malaysia, including: (a) reduced child poverty; (b) improved child health and nutrition outcomes; (c) improved education outcomes; (d) enhanced adolescent psychosocial well-being and participation; and (e) reduced levels of violence against children and institutionalization of children.

15. The UNICEF country programme has been designed in partnership with the Government of Malaysia and is aligned with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 and the Twelfth Malaysia Plan 2021–2025. The programme responds directly to the 2030 Agenda and to the leaving no one behind and build back better agendas of the United Nations, and it forms an integral part of the United Nation Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), 2021–2025.

16. The overarching theory of change for the country programme is that accelerated progress for children can only be achieved if: (a) an enabling environment is sustained that provides leadership, guidance and resources and encourages partnerships for scaled-up action to reach deprived children, regardless of location, race, religion, sex, disability, citizenship or legal migration status; (b) service providers are motivated and equipped to provide quality services, cooperate with others and innovate, and are held accountable for their work; and (c) children, families and communities are empowered with the knowledge, positive attitudes, skills and values to practice healthy, caring and protective behaviours. If these conditions are achieved, then all children in Malaysia – including the most vulnerable – can realize their rights and

⁵³ See: <https://penanginstitute.org/publications/covid-19-crisis-assessments/domestic-violence-and-the-safety-of-women-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>.

⁵⁴ UNICEF and UNFPA, *Families on the Edge*, Issue 3, 2021. See also: www.krinstitute.org/assets/contentMS/img/template/editor/The%20Impact%20of%20Covid-19%20on%20the%20Urban%20Poor.pdf.

⁵⁵ See: www.krinstitute.org/assets/contentMS/img/template/editor/20200426_Covid_Education_v3.pdf.

⁵⁶ UNICEF and UNFPA, *Families on the Edge*, Issue 1, 2020.

have an equal opportunity to survive and thrive in a safe, protective and nurturing environment.

17. The programme will prioritize two components: child well-being, equity and inclusion; and ending violence against children. A programme effectiveness component includes communication and public advocacy, communication for behaviour and social norm change, knowledge, monitoring and evaluation and technology for development.

18. The country programme will work to realize its vision for change by deploying key cross-cutting strategies. These include: (a) strategic collaboration with United Nations agencies; (b) promoting evidence-informed policy dialogue; (c) strengthening human rights monitoring mechanisms; (d) public advocacy and communications; (e) technical support to policy implementation, including inclusive digitization of Government; (f) enhancing cooperation with priority states, local governments, private sector partners and civil society organizations; (g) social and behavioural change communications; and (h) creating opportunities for adolescents to participate in decision-making.

19. The country programme will adopt a twin-track strategy that focuses on building inclusive policy frameworks and systems that meet the needs of all children while also supporting the development of targeted interventions tailored to specific groups of vulnerable children, reflecting variations in geography, sex, citizenship, migration status, disability and ethnicity, among other issues.

Child well-being, equity and inclusion

20. The aim of the child well-being, equity and inclusion programme component is that by 2025, children in Malaysia – especially the most marginalized – benefit more equitably from quality social protection systems and public services, and are empowered to address challenges that impact their well-being. The outcome aligns with, and contributes directly to, UNSDCF Strategic Priority Area (SPA) 1: People and SPA 2: Planet.

21. UNICEF will work across government ministries to support the development of social policies, plans, budgets and institutional reforms that reduce socioeconomic disparities and promote social inclusion. In collaboration with development partners, UNICEF will provide multisectoral social policy support to: (a) strengthen evidence-based policymaking; (b) strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system in Malaysia to track implementation of the Twelfth Malaysia Plan 2021–2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals; (c) increase the coverage, adequacy, effectiveness and child-sensitivity of the country's social protection system; (d) strengthen state and municipal capacities to plan for children, including through the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative; (e) promote a more strategic utilization of public resources for equitable development; and (f) strengthen the child rights reporting, governance and policy coordination mechanisms in Malaysia.

22. UNICEF will strengthen national capacities to develop and implement evidence-informed policies, regulations and interventions that address child and maternal malnutrition. This will be achieved by: (a) generating high-quality evidence on nutrition drivers and the effectiveness of current policies; (b) supporting the development of legislation, policy and protocols, such as those governing food fortification, the marketing of unhealthy foods and the management of acute malnutrition; (c) mobilizing resources for community-based nutrition interventions; and (d) promoting innovation in nutrition interventions. Particular attention will be paid to reaching the most vulnerable, including through partnerships with state-level authorities, civil society and the private sector.

23. With a view to reimagining education for every child, UNICEF will strengthen capacity in the public and alternative education sectors to deliver equity-focused, quality education, especially for the most marginalized children. This will be achieved by: (a) enhancing evidence-based education sector strategies and interventions to address inequities, particularly in relation to levels of learning (and learning loss); (b) stakeholder/teacher development, especially in the areas of remote/online learning and mental health and psychosocial support; and (c) increasing partnerships and innovations to support inclusive learning and flexible pathways to learning and skills development, including through the use of digital platforms, particularly for the most marginalized children.

24. UNICEF will help to strengthen the capacity of the Government to identify and manage climate change and environmental risks to children and advocate for child-sensitive environmental legislation, policies, services and disaster risk reduction measures. This will be achieved by: (a) increasing stakeholder awareness of the harmful impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on children; (b) providing technical support to legislative and policy development; (c) supporting the development of a sustainability-focused education curriculum; and (d) empowering children and young people to participate in public dialogue on environmental sustainability.

25. UNICEF, in partnership with Government and other United Nations entities, will support young people, especially the most marginalized, to maximize their psychosocial well-being and participate in informed decision-making processes. This will be achieved through: (a) the establishment of partnerships with government agencies, youth organizations and the private sector; (b) promotion of evidence-informed public and policy dialogue on adolescent mental health; and (c) strengthening child participation mechanisms at all levels.

Ending violence against children

26. The aim of the ending violence against children programme component, is that, by 2025, children, especially the most vulnerable, are empowered and more equitably benefit from quality systems and services that prevent and respond to violence, neglect, exploitation and harmful practices. The outcome aligns with and contributes directly to UNSDCF SPA 1: People and SPA 4: Peace.

27. UNICEF will promote an enabling environment by supporting the development of evidence-based policies, budgets and institutional arrangements aimed at ending violence against children. National surveys will be supported to improve understanding of the magnitude, nature and drivers of violence, harmful practices and exploitation of children; and information management systems will be strengthened to monitor child protection services. This area will inform the design of policy approaches to key challenges that include corporal punishment in schools; access to legal identity and other documentation; child detention; early pregnancy; and protection of children on the move, stateless children and other undocumented children.

28. UNICEF will strengthen service delivery systems to better prevent and address violence against children, including supporting implementation of the Social Work Profession Bill. UNICEF will strengthen implementation of the National Social Work Competency Standards for Social Work Practice and the Social Work Case Management System Manual; and support continuous professional development for other fields of social practice relevant to child protection, such as health and mental health, adoption, refugee programmes and disaster management. UNICEF will also support the design, piloting and scale-up of interventions relating to professional standards, case management, training and supervision of social workers and health,

justice and education professionals, as well as interventions to address disability and gender inequalities. UNICEF will support scale-up of diversion and community-based rehabilitation of young offenders.

29. UNICEF will address knowledge, attitudes and practices of families, service providers and faith and community leaders around violence, abuse, neglect, stigma and discrimination; the organization will also develop evidence-based and culturally appropriate social and behavioural change strategies. Emphasis will be on building and reinforcing a culture of zero tolerance of violence against children; strengthening family, community and peer vigilance; and building the resilience and capacities of children and young people to identify protection threats, report violence and exploitation and receive appropriate support.

Programme effectiveness

30. The programme effectiveness component aims to ensure that, by 2025, the country programme is efficiently designed, coordinated, managed, evaluated and supported to meet quality, integrated programming standards. This component will strengthen multisectoral coordination, results-based planning, monitoring and evaluation while also providing cross-cutting support on: (a) gender and disability; (b) children on the move, stateless children and undocumented children; (c) private sector engagement; (d) social and behavioural change communications; (e) innovation technology for development; (f) disaster risk reduction and emergency response; and (g) public communications and advocacy. UNICEF Malaysia will leverage its status as a hybrid office⁵⁷ to strengthen brand recognition and private sector engagement in support of its advocacy, behaviour change and fundraising targets.

Summary budget table

<i>Programme component</i>	<i>(In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
Child well-being, equity and inclusion	1 760	11 680	13 440
Ending violence against children	720	5 900	6 620
Programme effectiveness	932	8 820	9 752
Total	3 412	26 400	29 812

Programme and risk management

31. The Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department is the principal counterpart for the design, coordination and oversight of the UNSDCF and programmes of the entities in the United Nations Development Group. This country programme document outlines UNICEF contributions to the UNSDCF and national results and serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results and resources assigned to the country programme. UNICEF will collaborate with other United Nations entities on areas of comparative advantage, leveraging joint programmes and pooled funds as appropriate. UNICEF will support the following cross-cutting strategies of the UNSDCF: (a) Sustainable Development Goal progress monitoring and evaluation; (b) support for development planning related to the

⁵⁷ UNICEF Malaysia is both a programme and a private sector fundraising office.

Sustainable Development Goals; (c) promotion of social dialogue and multistakeholder platforms; (d) global partnerships/South-South cooperation; (e) integrated advisory teams; and (f) coordination of integrated One United Nations inputs to national development planning.

32. Key risks to the achievement of results for children relate primarily to challenging inequities and deprivations faced by vulnerable and marginalized groups. Reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women constrain legislation, policy and programme development for these children and data on the situation of vulnerable and marginalized children remain limited. Other risks include the longer-term socioeconomic and fiscal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Risk mitigation measures include strengthening partnerships with child rights non-governmental organizations to support situation monitoring of vulnerable children; joint advocacy with the United Nations country team, civil society and the private sector; engaging young people and influencers to change attitudes and behaviours towards vulnerable groups; and engagement with the Department of Statistics Malaysia to strengthen availability of quality data for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals across sectors. UNICEF will continue monitoring potential external risks using the Emergency Preparedness Platform to anticipate natural and human-made shocks and disasters.

Monitoring, learning and evaluation

33. The country programme will be operationalized through rolling multi-year workplans and budgets that are aligned with the UNICEF CPD and the UNSDCF results group workplans. UNICEF will monitor progress with the Government in conjunction with UNSDCF annual reviews to verify achievements, understand constraints and identify actions to enhance programme effectiveness and strategic relevance. Plans will be adjusted based on review findings, evaluations, data emerging from annual updates on the situation of children and government priorities and will be reported on annually.

34. A simplified midterm review may be conducted in 2023 to take stock of achievements and implementation experiences. A country programme evaluation will be undertaken in 2024 to inform the design of the next country programme. The costed evaluation plan also includes a country-led evaluation of the programme on alternatives to detention for unaccompanied and separated children, chosen for its ability to inform potential scale-up of this pilot programme. One additional planned thematic and learning-oriented evaluation is on the implementation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy in the UNICEF country office.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Malaysia – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, March 2022–December 2025

<p>Convention on the Rights of the Child: Articles 2–7, 9–13, 18–20, 22–29, 32–37 and 39–40</p> <p>National priorities: Twelfth Malaysia Plan 2021–2025, Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals 1–5, 13 and 16</p>
<p>United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), 2021–2025 outcomes involving UNICEF:</p> <p>1. Strategic Priority Area (SPA) 1 People: By 2025, poor and vulnerable groups living in Malaysia benefit from more equity-focused and high-quality social services as well as a social protection system that ensures all have an adequate standard of living.</p> <p>2. SPA 2 Planet: By 2025, environmental sustainability and resilience are mainstreamed as priorities within the national development agenda, across all sectors and levels of society.</p> <p>3. SPA 4 Peace: By 2025, Malaysia has strengthened democratic governance, and all people living in Malaysia benefit from a more cohesive society, strengthened governance and participation.</p>
<p>Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 Goal Areas: 1–5</p>

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
SPA 1: Collaborative Output 1.1 – A more efficient, effective and sustainable social protection system is in place that provides increased protection against contingencies	By 2025, children, especially the most marginalized, have more equitable utilization of quality nutrition, education and social protection systems and are empowered to address issues that	Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, disaggregated for children, persons with disabilities and the poor and the vulnerable Baseline: To be determined (TBD) Target: 30% (UNSDCF)	Prime Minister's Department (JPM), Social Security Organization (PERKESO)	1. By 2025, national capacities are strengthened to develop evidence-informed laws, policies, plans, budgets and institutional reforms that reduce gender inequality and socioeconomic disparities and promote social inclusion. 2. By 2025, the Government has	Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM); Ministry of Education (KPM); Ministry of Finance (MOF); Ministry of Health (KKM); Parliament; the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM);	1 760	11 680	13 440
		Proportion of children, under 5 who are wasted Baseline: 9.7% (2019) Target: ≤8% (midterm review of the National Plan of Action for	National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS)					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
<p>throughout the life cycle.</p> <p>Collaborative Output 1.2 – Social services are strengthened to ensure access to high-quality, equity-focused provision that promotes the well-being of all.</p> <p>SPA 2: Collaborative Output 2.2 – Natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems are sustainably managed, adequately protected and conserved for long-term economic and environmental sustainability.</p> <p>Collaborative Output 2.3 – Preparedness and resilience (especially of</p>	<p>impact their mental health and psychosocial well-being.</p>	<p>Nutrition of Malaysia III [NPANM] 2016–2025)</p>		<p>increased capacity to develop and implement evidence-informed policies, regulatory frameworks and interventions that address malnutrition among children and women and promote healthy eating and feeding practices.</p> <p>3. By 2025, education stakeholders have increased capacity in education planning and programme implementation to improve equity-focused and evidence-based quality education, especially for the most marginalized children.</p> <p>4. By 2025, the Government, young people and private sector partners have enhanced capacity to develop and accelerate the implementation of</p>	<p>state and municipal governments; Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM); Economic Planning Unit ; Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS), Ministry of Environment and Water, Malaysian Youth Council (MBM), private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs).</p>			
		<p>Percentage of children under 5 who are stunted</p> <p>Baseline: 21.8% (2019) Target: ≤12.3% (midterm review of the NPANM 2016–2025)</p>	NHMS					
		<p>Prevalence of overweight among children under 5 (BAZ >2SD) [BMI-for-age Z-score is greater than 2 standard deviations]</p> <p>Baseline: 5.6% Target: No increase from baseline (midterm review of the NPANM 2016–2025)</p>	NHMS					
		<p>Educational attainment rate, ages 15–24, by sex, socioeconomic status</p> <p>Baseline: TBD (2020 census data, will be available end of 2021) Target: % TBD (increase from baseline)</p>	Labour Force Survey					
		<p>Number of institutionalized measures for children’s and adolescent’s participation and civic engagement at national and subnational levels</p> <p>Baseline: 2 national Target: 3 national, 1 subnational</p>	Parliamentary reports; reports from the Office of the Children’s Commissioner; line ministry reports;					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
indigenous, poor and vulnerable groups) against climate change, natural hazards, and disaster risks are strengthened.		Number of national-level climate change policies, strategies and plans referencing children and with child-sensitive disaster risk and recovery dimensions to reduce disaster risk Baseline: 0 Target: 3	Line ministry reports; Child-Friendly Cities Initiative reports	child-centred climate, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and actions. 5. By 2025, young people, especially the most marginalized, have increased skills and capacity to maximize their psychosocial well-being, support their transition to employment and meaningfully participate in decision-making that affects their lives.				
SPA 1: Collaborative Output 1.2 – Social services are strengthened to ensure access to high-quality, equity-focused provision that promotes the well-being of all.	By 2025, children, especially the most vulnerable, are empowered and equitably benefit from quality systems and services that effectively prevent and respond to violence, neglect, exploitation	Percentage of men and women who think that physical punishment is necessary to raise/educate children Baseline: 54.8% (2016) Target: 30% (decrease from baseline) Percentage of children in family-based care out of the total number of children in all forms of formal alternative care Baseline: 0 Target: 2.5%	NHMS Department of Social Welfare (JKM)	1. By 2025, national capacities are strengthened to develop evidence-informed laws, policies, plans, budgets and institutional reforms that prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and harmful practices affecting children.	KPWKM, Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW), DOSM, KPM, KKM, CSOs and private sector	720	5 900	6 620

<i>UNSDCF outcomes</i>	<i>UNICEF outcomes</i>	<i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i>	<i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
						<i>RR</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Total</i>
<p>Collaborative Output 1.3 – Increased adoption of inclusive social norms and values and rejection of harmful practices, particularly against women and girls, and the creation of demand for services.</p> <p>SPA 4: Collaborative Output 4.3 – The system of checks and balances across branches of government is strengthened at national and subnational levels, core government functions are more responsive and efficient, and people have better access to services.</p>	and harmful practices.	<p>Actual case proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence</p> <p>Baseline: 8.73% Target: 6% (UNSDCF)</p>	Global Burden of Disease Study	<p>2. By 2025, national service delivery systems are strengthened to better identify, prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and harmful practices affecting children.</p> <p>3. By 2025, children, families and communities progressively adopt positive attitudes and practices that identify, prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and harmful practices at home, in schools, in communities and online.</p>				

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
Partnerships: Enhancing results through coordination and partnerships.	By 2025, The Government of Malaysia-UNICEF country programme is efficiently designed, coordinated, managed, evaluated and supported to meet quality integrated programming standards for achieving results for children.	Percentage of outcomes and outputs that are annually reported as either on track or achieved Baseline: 60% (2020) Target: 85%	UNICEF reports	1. UNICEF staff and partners are provided guidance, tools and resources to effectively plan, coordinate and monitor programmes, including on disability sensitivity and gender transformation. 2. UNICEF staff and partners are provided disability-sensitive and gender-transformative tools, guidance and resources for effective advocacy and partnerships and social and behaviour change on child rights issues with stakeholders. 3. Strategies to address cross-cutting issues related to child rights are developed and applied.	United Nations country team, media, academia, government ministries, CSOs and private sector	932	8 820	9 752
		Percentage of implementing partners rated low or moderate risk for sexual exploitation and abuse Baseline: 94% Target: 100%	UNICEF reports					
		Percentage of share of voice on child rights issues in media Baseline: 70% (2018) Target: 80%	UNICEF Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division Barometer Survey					
		Number of initiatives that engage civil society partners and/or coalitions to advocate together with UNICEF for children Baseline: 8 Target: 12	UNICEF reports					
Total resources						3 412	26 400	29 812