Delegations are kindly invited to use this template to share their comments on any of the draft country programme documents being presented to the Executive Board during the second regular session.

**Delegation name: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia**

**Draft country programme document:** *Kazakhstan*

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, 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 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

Estonia appreciates the CPD bringing forward children’s rights and gender equality as cross-cutting priorities and emphasizing the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and adolescents.

We commend UNICEF and Kazakhstan on the progress achieved in key areas, such as immunization as well as the decrease in child and maternal mortality rates.

In addition, we commend the partnerships brought forward, especially the aim to implement the common chapter of the strategic plans 2018-2021 which have proven to be very effective. Moreover, as the COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the well-being of children, we welcome bringing forward the need to ensure continued service delivery for all and the further strengthening of social safety nets. Nonetheless, the activities dealing with the setbacks caused by the pandemic should be addressed more clearly, including the exacerbated inequalities caused by the unequal access to education.

### Comments on specific aspects of the country programme document

**Every child grows up healthy, well-nourished and safely:** the programme brings forward the importance of addressing violence against children, however, the CPD should also address gender-based violence and sexual exploitation of children.

Another issue that has seen slow progress is child labour. Although Kazakhstan has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labour, the enforcement of child labour laws continues to be insufficient.

**Every child is educated, skilled and resilient:** to address inequalities in education, the greatly unequal quality of education in private and public schools should be thoroughly dealt with.
To support the Government's Digital Kazakhstan strategy and build resilient education systems and their ability to adjust to crises, we suggest incorporating into the programme the enhancement of distance learning opportunities and the digitalization of the education system in general. Digital literacy and skills of teachers, parents and children need to be improved and digital disparities addressed.