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## United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

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Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

### Country programme document

#### Belarus

#### *Summary*

The country programme document (CPD) for Belarus 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 \$4,250,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$10,500,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2021 to 2025.

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\* E/ICEF/2020/17.



## Programme rationale

1. For many years, Belarus invested in socially-oriented strategies, transitioning to an upper-middle income country with the State maintaining a dominant role in the design and implementation of policies. In 2018, the human development value advanced to 0.817,<sup>1</sup> retaining a low degree of income inequality. The Gender Gap Index<sup>2</sup> ranked Belarus 29 out of 153 countries, mainly because of high female participation in the labour force. Within the index, a much lower score was given for political empowerment. Belarus has maintained a strong commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, and to implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international treaties.

2. Child poverty decreased to 10.4 per cent in 2018 but remained significantly higher than the rate for the general population at 5.6 per cent.<sup>3</sup> Every fifth child lives in a single parent household,<sup>4</sup> with greater risks of poverty, especially if the child has a complex disability. Existing unstable economic prospects, exacerbated by coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), will likely threaten expenditure levels in social protection, education and health. Despite the equalizing effects of public spending and taxation,<sup>5</sup> underutilized performance-based budgeting limits the fiscal space to prevent and address child vulnerabilities.

3. Birth rates decreased by 25.6 per cent from 2015 to 2019.<sup>6</sup> The current working-age population is larger than the dependent one, resulting in higher budgets per capita. Wise investments today could mitigate the demographic crisis expected in 15 to 20 years, where a smaller workforce will have to support a much larger dependent elderly population. Policies must now support the resourcefulness of children and youth in schooling and employment; and make it easier for parents to balance work and family life. These changes call for wider partnerships across public and private actors.

4. Family policy and assistance in early childhood are generally sufficient, and Belarus is improving interventions for children with developmental delays. However, identification of cases usually starts at 2 years old, which often is too late for critical interventions. In 2019, 91 per cent of children aged 3 to 5 years were covered by early childhood education (ECE), with the quality of services remaining an ongoing challenge. Access to ECE is more limited for children from low-income families (80 per cent), in rural areas (84.8 per cent), and for children whose mothers have lower levels of education (66 per cent).<sup>7</sup> Children who do not attend ECE are less on track in literacy-numeracy and socio-emotional domains.<sup>8</sup>

5. Many parents do not understand how their lifestyles affect their children. In every third home with children, one or more person smokes indoors.<sup>9</sup> Only 21.7

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report* (2019).

<sup>2</sup> World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report* (2020).

<sup>3</sup> National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (Belstat), *Social conditions and standard of living* (2019).

<sup>4</sup> Belstat, UNICEF in Belarus, *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of the Situation of Children and Women in the Republic of Belarus (MICS6)* (2020).

<sup>5</sup> Bornukova K., Shymanovich G., and A. Chubrik, *Fiscal incidence in Belarus: a commitment to equity analysis (English)*. Policy Research working paper; no. WPS 8216. Washington, D.C. World Bank Group (2017).

<sup>6</sup> Belstat, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus, *Health care of the Republic of Belarus* (2020).

<sup>7</sup> MICS6.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> UNICEF in Belarus, *Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices: Assessment of Early Childhood Development and Parenting in Belarus (KAP)*(2019).

per cent of mothers exclusively breastfeed for five months.<sup>10</sup> Only 14 per cent of fathers habitually read to their children.<sup>11</sup> Fathers were dissatisfied with the amount of time they played with their children, suggesting readiness towards more equal parenting roles. Parents of adolescents found it challenging to maintain a balanced relationship and wished to learn how to better resolve conflict within families, speak with adolescents about self-esteem and better respond to their risky behaviours.<sup>12</sup>

6. While the Government recognizes that the family provides the best care and opportunities for children, support to vulnerable families needs to be improved. Children are placed in state care when there has been abuse or neglect in the family, where specialized institutions are providing rehabilitation services for children with disabilities or, when children have been in conflict with the law. Belarus has introduced fostering and family-type group homes, but 7,058 children still live in residential institutions.<sup>13</sup> A precondition of institutionalization is deprivation of parental rights. While the rate of termination of parental rights has decreased (2,674 parents in 2019<sup>14</sup>), termination of parental rights has increased for families with four and more children as well as among families with children aged 7 to 10 years.

7. The complexities of child abuse or neglect may mean cases are identified too late to restore safety in families and result in separation of children from their parents. Some professionals and even parents believe that children with disabilities are better cared for in residential institutions. Schools, social services and transport arrangements are not sufficiently adapted for children with disabilities. The child protection system requires continued improvements in reviewing cases of children who are proposed to enter or exit state care.

8. While only 9.4 per cent of caregivers think that corporal punishment is necessary to raise children, 25.7 per cent reported using physical discipline.<sup>15</sup> Bullying by peers or older children was reported by 60.1 per cent of fifth to seventh graders from secondary schools and 82.1 per cent of children in residential care institutions.<sup>16</sup> From 2013 to 2019, the number of sexual-related crimes committed against children rose twentyfold (70 per cent of victims were girls and 30 per cent were boys), with 80 per cent happening over the Internet.<sup>17</sup> The Government has outlined measures to combat trafficking and sexual exploitation, yet no normative provision on the prevention of sexual or cyberviolence against children exists to establish a comprehensive legislative response. Current legislation does not recognize threats such as Internet grooming, and does not criminalize possession of child pornography.

9. The number of children (aged 14 to 17 years) convicted of criminal offences dropped from 1,978 cases in 2011 to 727 in 2019,<sup>18</sup> with 90 children serving prison

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<sup>10</sup> MICS6.

<sup>11</sup> KAP.

<sup>12</sup> UNICEF in Belarus, *Study on Mental Health and Suicidal Behaviour of Adolescents in Belarus* (2019).

<sup>13</sup> Belstat, *Social conditions and standard of living in the Republic of Belarus* (2019).

<sup>14</sup> Supreme Court Data:

[https://court.gov.by/ru/justice\\_rb/statistics/parental\\_rights/b33977aa08304d1d.html](https://court.gov.by/ru/justice_rb/statistics/parental_rights/b33977aa08304d1d.html).

<sup>15</sup> MICS6.

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF in Belarus, *Violence against Children in Belarus* (2018).

<sup>17</sup> Analytical data provided by the General Directorate for Drug Control and Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings.

<sup>18</sup> Supreme Court Data:

[https://court.gov.by/ru/justice\\_rb/statistics/children/06b26806148f4786.html](https://court.gov.by/ru/justice_rb/statistics/children/06b26806148f4786.html).

sentences.<sup>19</sup> Long sentencing of children for drug-related crimes is particularly concerning. As at 1 January 2020, 182 children (aged 11 to 18 years) had been sent to closed educational institutions.<sup>20</sup> Diversion or probation do not exist as options. The possibility of long pre-detention periods also poses a risk. Global evidence shows that only restorative approaches address the root causes and help children to perceive their wrongs. Children's isolation creates risks of stigmatization and exclusion from future opportunities. In 2018, 2,595 girls and 8,650 boys were placed on surveillance lists under the Ministry of Interior, including for being intoxicated in public.

10. In 2019, 6,124 children were registered as using alcohol and psychoactive substances with harmful consequences.<sup>21</sup> Alcohol use by adolescents and youth is greatly influenced by norms and practices in their social environment; adolescents (aged 14 to 17 years) reported adults buying alcohol for them in 22.5 per cent of the cases when they drank.<sup>22</sup> Approximately 18.2 per cent of adolescents (aged 15 to 19 years) have symptoms of depression, and 26.1 per cent have had suicidal thoughts.<sup>23</sup> Depression and suicidal thoughts are positively correlated with strained relations with fathers, physical and psychological violence, alcohol consumption, situational anxiety and an absence of life goals. Available youth-friendly health services and school psychologists do not sufficiently consider the mental health of adolescents and youth, and do not reach the most vulnerable. Lack of knowledge about risk factors is compounded by a lack of skills to manage stress or deal with social pressure.

11. While Belarus has achieved universal enrolment in primary and secondary education, graduates do not necessarily have the skills required to meet twenty-first century challenges with fast digitalization and rapid transformation of the labour market.<sup>24</sup> Children and youth need to acquire skills for learning, life and career development, digital technology, media and financial literacy and engagement in public discourse.

12. Children with special education needs and disabilities are sometimes not included in mainstream services. Few interventions aim to integrate adolescents and youth with disabilities into the labour market. The Government is committed to expand inclusive education, yet staff do not have sufficient capacity. Approximately 62 per cent of children (aged 3 to 17 years) with registered disabilities are in regular primary and secondary schools,<sup>25</sup> most with minor developmental difficulties. There are still 164 special classes in regular schools and 4,892 special education need resource groups.<sup>26</sup> Every ninth child with a disability does not attend any educational institution.<sup>27</sup>

13. There are over 300 youth associations registered in Belarus with more than 600,000 members.<sup>28</sup> Many activities are managed by adults, are highly structured and

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<sup>19</sup> Analytical data provided by the General Prosecutor's Office.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus, Form 1: Narcology.

<sup>22</sup> UNICEF in Belarus, *Study on psychoactive substances use by adolescents and young people (2016)*.

<sup>23</sup> UNICEF in Belarus, *Study on Mental Health and Suicidal Behaviour of Adolescents in Belarus (2019)*.

<sup>24</sup> Strategy for Improving the National Qualifications System, Decree of the Council of Ministers, No. 764.

<sup>25</sup> Belstat, *Main indicators of household survey for a comprehensive assessment of the situation of persons with disabilities in Belarus (2018)*.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus, *Main indicators of the special education development (2019)*.

<sup>27</sup> Belstat, *Main indicators of household survey for a comprehensive assessment of the situation of persons with disabilities in Belarus (2018)*.

<sup>28</sup> Belstat, *Children and Youth in the Republic of Belarus (2018)*.

limit development of adolescents' capacities to think critically or identify their own activities. UNICEF has the know-how to engage adolescents and youth, including through youth parliaments, child- and adolescent-friendly cities (CAFCs) and other forms of participation.

14. Belarus has a well-developed sports infrastructure, with more than 23,000 sports facilities across the country, including in rural areas.<sup>29</sup> Sport is promoted among children and youth. Belarus is developing its volunteer capacity, with establishment of the Republican Volunteer Centre. Sports and volunteerism are two powerful ways for children to engage and shape their future.

15. The National Statistical Committee (Belstat) has made important improvements to the national data system, such as developing a methodology to measure multidimensional poverty. Belarus is rich in administrative data; but data infrastructures on child rights differ among ministries. More formal evaluations assessing the impact of state programmes on children are required.

16. Stronger data collection is needed to enhance performance-based budgeting. Inflexible funding at the local level and overlapping responsibilities of central and local authorities limit communities' participation in prioritizing services. Participatory governance practices, including the advancement of child-oriented budget processes, could better target resources to local communities' specific needs. In the years ahead, important policy and investment choices will determine whether the interests of children, especially the most vulnerable, are safeguarded and advanced.

17. Lessons learned from programming experiences and validated by the 2018 UNICEF thematic evaluation on adolescence<sup>30</sup> reflect the importance of cross-sectoral responses. Children's rights are indivisible and interdependent, and progress in the areas of justice, early childhood development (ECD) or inclusive education require coordinated interventions that comprehensively consider children's needs.

18. The current programme created productive partnerships with the private sector and civil society and contributed to larger collaboration platforms such as the CAFCs. The 2021–2025 programme builds on those investments to address remaining vulnerabilities for children and youth through four interlinked programme components: strengthening family environments; access to justice; future generations; and partnerships and investments for children.

## Programme priorities and partnerships

19. The goals of the country programme are to integrate international child welfare standards into policies and systems and provide more inclusive and participatory processes. UNICEF will expand partnerships at the national and local levels between the Government, development agencies, the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), parents and children. The focus will be on the most vulnerable child and adolescent groups, to end child deprivation and ensure enjoyment of their rights, while safeguarding gender equality and emergency preparedness and responses. The COVID-19 pandemic underscores the importance of ongoing analysis of risks to children and the need to advance greater flexibility and resilience of existing systems and social safety nets for children.

<sup>29</sup> The Official Internet Portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, available at: [president.gov.by/en/sport\\_en/](http://president.gov.by/en/sport_en/), accessed on 29 February 2020.

<sup>30</sup> Arkadi Toritsyn, Lusine Aydinyan and Ludmila Romanovskaya, *Thematic evaluation of Government interventions and UNICEF contribution to reducing vulnerabilities, strengthening resilience and promoting the rights of adolescents in Belarus*, p.66 (2018).

20. The programme was designed in close dialogue with government authorities, CSOs, and children and youth. Building on the comparative advantage of UNICEF as a credible monitor and advocate for child rights, and its recognized ability to convene stakeholders and give children a voice, outcomes are aligned with national priorities such as the National Strategy on Sustainable Development 2035; the National Plan of Action on the Improvement of the Status of Children and Protection of their Rights 2017–2021; the National Plan of Action on the Implementation of the Provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for 2017–2025; the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021; and the 2020 Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Results will contribute directly to four outcomes of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

### **Supportive family environments**

21. This component seeks to enable mothers, fathers and other caregivers to provide better nurturing and protective care for children to thrive, learn and stay safe in a family environment. The component covers three interrelated conditions for a supportive family environment: inclusive ECD services that are coordinated across ministries; state mechanisms identifying families at-risk and deciding on alternative care needs to consider what is best for children; access to community-based support services for parents and caregivers to learn and practice positive parenting.

22. UNICEF will support national and local government bodies to strengthen integrated ECD services to meet the needs of families and young children. For example, the low exclusive breastfeeding rate calls for a national monitoring system and assistance to parents at all stages of ECD. Quality standards for early childhood intervention will expedite identification of developmental delays, and a strong monitoring system will ensure coverage of eligible children. UNICEF will collaborate with the Ministry of Education to enable children with developmental delays to gain greater access to inclusive ECE near their residence. UNICEF will support validation of ECD administrative data to resolve discrepancies and inform investment choices.

23. The Government has taken important steps to reduce the number of children living in institutions by introducing foster care and respite care for families with children with disabilities. Further progress is contingent on stronger coordination of the childcare system. UNICEF will support the three accountable ministries to jointly convene an intersectoral working group to accelerate de-institutionalization and review childcare strategies and new service models in accordance with global child welfare practices and standards. As recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child,<sup>31</sup> the component will strengthen mechanisms for early identification of vulnerable families and enhance the coordination of decisions about children entering or exiting from state care.

24. As CSOs have started to develop specialized community-based alternatives to institutionalization, UNICEF will gather evidence, evaluate and document innovations and prepare investment cases for transforming institutional care to community-based services. Building on the “family for every child” campaign, UNICEF will work with the private sector, civil society and media to expand the public discourse on the harms of institutionalization and the need to support vulnerable families.

25. The component will support authorities, CSOs and media to promote positive parenting practices for children of all ages. The capacity of service providers to counsel parents will be strengthened. The component will convene state institutions

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<sup>31</sup> Committee on the Rights of the Child, *Concluding observations on the fifth and sixth periodic reports of Belarus*, (2020) (unedited version).

and parent groups to stimulate the formation of parents' networks. In alliance with media and interested businesses, the programme will initiate a movement for better parenting practices, exploring the use of digital technology for innovative communication outreach. Topics will include children's development milestones, nutrition, how to address a child's disability, nurturing roles of fathers, positive discipline, effective communication with adolescents, and how to support children on Internet safety.

### **Access to justice**

26. This component aims to generate a paradigm shift in the justice system for children towards restorative practices, regardless of the offence committed, child's age, migration status, or recurring offenses. Child-friendly procedures shall also be applied to child victims and witnesses. This shift will be achieved through expanding restorative responses and defining referral and coordination mechanisms across institutions; developing specialized services that protect children, youth and their families from violence or re-traumatization, supporting reintegration into their communities; and creating greater understanding and solidarity among policymakers, practitioners and the public for restorative responses for children and stronger rejection of any type of violence against children.

27. Crime reduction, safety and public order take precedence in Belarus; deterrence and control are key principles of the justice system. Procedures and institutions need to better consider the specific needs of children who come into contact with the justice system. This component will support law enforcement and social service authorities to adjust current approaches to safeguarding public order while being fair to child offenders. Over recent years, government agencies have discussed how to integrate restorative responses into policies and procedures. UNICEF will enrich this exchange by sharing widely accepted standards, tested tools and good practices from comparable countries, contributing to legislative revisions. Better approaches will be subsequently introduced for children who are victims or witnesses of crime, also considering how differently boys and girls experience violence.

28. In line with the Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child,<sup>32</sup> the programme will assist authorities to develop rehabilitation services, enabling legal professionals and courts to refer children to community services instead of sending them to closed institutions. The package will include diversion mechanisms to avoid criminal records for child offenders, victim-offender mediation and probation. Child-sensitive interviewing techniques will be introduced for child offenders, victims and witnesses. The component will work with universities and institutes to support practitioners in applying restorative approaches.

29. The shift towards restorative interventions requires buy-in from society. Development of restorative practices will reduce the number of children in closed institutions and enable resource reallocation from special educational facilities to alternative restorative approaches. A heightened public dialogue on restorative approaches and the effects of violence, based on evidence and led by a growing number of justice professionals, will contribute to reduced misconceptions. Together with local administrations, UNICEF will seek to demonstrate that restorative practices make economic sense. To enhance the skills of children and adolescents on non-violent communication and conflict resolution, the component will develop interventions in schools and online. Building on global experience and involving children themselves, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child,<sup>33</sup> UNICEF will work with the Ministry of Education, local administrations and civil

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

society to test and evaluate community violence prevention programmes. Together with the Ministry of Interior, the Investigative Committee and helpline operators, the component aims to build networks supporting increased, cross-border cybersafety.

30. To measure progress and demonstrate compliance with international standards, UNICEF will support adjustment of administrative data collection, such as how swiftly a child in contact with the law benefits from restorative services, or the conditions that contribute to exclusion and offending.

### **Future generations**

31. This component's vision is to provide vulnerable children and youth with twenty-first century skills to formulate positive behaviour models and engage in society. Specifically, it seeks to address inconsistencies between skills taught in school and labour market demands; make the education system more inclusive for children with disabilities; strengthen primary health services to reach out to adolescents and youth on mental health issues; and enable adolescents and youth to engage more in decisions affecting their lives.

32. Involving adolescents and youth in the process, UNICEF will work with the Ministries of Education, and Labour and Social Protection and the private sector to define skills needed for the realities of the twenty-first century, adapting formal and informal education methods, including the use of digital technologies. In cooperation with state employers and the private sector, the component will seek to create better employment opportunities for adolescents and youth with disabilities and the most marginalized, and support the engagement of young women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

33. The Ministry of Education has integrated children with disabilities into mainstream education, although more needs to be done for a fully inclusive approach, as observed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.<sup>34</sup> The programme will introduce relevant standards in the content, teaching methods, teacher training, and structures of the pre-school through upper secondary education system. Systematic monitoring will be institutionalized through the regional resource centres for inclusive education. Academia and civil society will be encouraged to monitor that the needs of children and adolescents with disabilities are addressed in an inclusive way, including employment opportunities for youth with disabilities.

34. The component will encourage adolescents and youth to articulate their aspirations and have their views acknowledged through initiatives such as youth parliaments and the coordinating unit for youth resource centres. Convening local authorities, technology and telecommunication businesses, civil society and the media, the component will foster networks that support adolescents and youth to connect, voice their concerns, and contribute innovative solutions for issues such as cyberbullying, climate change, transition to a sustainable and green economy, career development, and attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

35. In line with the observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child,<sup>35</sup> UNICEF will generate and share evidence on the causes and prevention of mental health issues for adolescents. Adolescents need to know how to cope better with stress and anxieties, and to avoid risky behaviours. Peer counselling and youth-friendly health services, including reproductive health, will be strengthened to be more comprehensive by including mental health. Social pedagogues, school psychologists, nurses, parents and adolescents will learn about comprehensive psychosocial responses to adolescents' crisis situations. A strengthened referral system between

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.



education and health professionals will identify adolescents needing psychosocial support in a timelier manner.

36. Adolescents and youth increasingly rely on digital networks. UNICEF will support the development of online learning, e-counselling and digital aids that can make education and social systems more flexible to changing circumstances, address psychological distress, promote healthy lifestyles and support engagement in public discourse. Together with the World Health Organization and engaging celebrities, goodwill ambassadors and influencers, the component will seek to reduce stigma towards adolescents living in poverty, living with HIV or having mental health disorders.

### **Partnerships and investments for children**

37. With UNICEF as a catalyser, the programme aims to generate public-private partnerships built on shared values that include attention to children, equal opportunities, and care for the vulnerable.

38. UNICEF has been successfully promoting coalitions for children, particularly with sport institutions. With its universal appeal, sports will remain an entry point for social engagement of children, youth and the private sector. With growing volunteerism, UNICEF will systematically engage adolescents and youth and involve athletes, coaches, sponsors and media to reach out and address stigma and misperceptions about children with disabilities, children in poverty or those in contact with the law. The alliance will be supported by public discourse based on factual information and the views of children and youth.

39. Tapping into the global experience of UNICEF, the component will encourage partnerships in corporate social responsibility. Partnerships with businesses will combine fundraising with co-creating projects for children, such as a local strategy for employing vulnerable young people, seed money by businesses for start-ups or apprenticeship programmes. The component will encourage companies to assess internal business policies and practices to ensure they are family-friendly. Building on past successes, the private sector will remain a partner in reaching out to citizens for individual pledges, benefiting children with disabilities, family support systems and social inclusion.

40. With UNICEF support, Belstat has made data more accessible, including through the universal data portal on child-related statistics and the national platform for reporting on the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals. Together with Belstat, the component will review procedures for systematic collection and analysis of child protection data, validation of administrative data, harmonization of data across institutions, alignment with international quality assurance standards and reporting on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF will support research and visualization of data with user-friendly infographics, policy briefs and fact sheets, turning insights from data into policy recommendations. Similarly, UNICEF will evaluate, document and share Belarusian good practices where policy and programmes lead to significant achievements.

41. In line with the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child,<sup>36</sup> UNICEF will partner with authorities, academia, think tanks and private research companies to prepare investment cases that identify cost effective ways to provide equitable services for children. Using a child-focused public expenditure measurement framework, recommendations will be made to allocate public spending to reduce multidimensional child poverty. Performance-based budgeting will be integrated into training programmes for civil servants.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

### Programme effectiveness

42. This component supports expenditures related to management, coordination, quality assurance, monitoring, evaluation and documentation of activities that span the programme. These activities include policy support, costs of reviews and conferences, external relations and technology to facilitate communication with stakeholders. UNICEF will continue to invest in the effectiveness of governance and management systems, the stewardship of financial resources and human resource management.

### 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>
Supportive family environments	875	2 670	3 545
Access to justice	610	3 070	3 680
Future generations	875	4 000	4 875
Partnerships and investments for children	1 380	650	2 030
Programme effectiveness	510	110	620
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 250</b>	<b>10 500</b>	<b>14 750</b>

### Programme and risk management

43. While the CPD outlines UNICEF contributions to national results, it also serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme in Belarus. Accountabilities of managers at the country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to the country programme are prescribed in the organization's programme and operations policies and procedures.

44. As Belarus has established strong systems monitoring its national goals and international commitments, the main external risk remains weakening of the economic growth that is necessary to sustain and expand social services. Key assumptions are that the Government will continue its socially-oriented policies with the needs of children and adolescents as a priority, and that ministries, local governments and other partners will collaborate across sectors. UNICEF will monitor the fiscal situation, taking into account the impact of COVID-19, develop proposals to increase spending efficiency, and promote public-private partnerships. UNICEF works closely with financial institutions and other agencies to provide technical assistance to achieve synergies and resource allocation for effective results for children.

45. The country programme will be implemented within the 2021–2025 UNSDCF, contributing directly to outcomes 1, and 3 to 5. The United Nations country team works directly with the National Coordinator on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and with the Council on Sustainable Development, to ensure national ownership and accountability. For each priority, a results group will be established that is chaired by the head of a United Nations agency. UNICEF will lead the group on future generation orientation and will actively participate in the other results groups.

46. The management of the harmonized approach to cash transfers will be strengthened to mitigate risks associated with programme implementation.

## Monitoring and evaluation

47. Progress will be monitored using indicators contained in the integrated results and resources framework. Complementing the costed evaluation plan, results will be monitored by an online planning, monitoring and reporting platform based on a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework developed with Belstat. This framework enables the use of existing government systems for collecting, analysing and managing data. UNICEF will work with ministries to review and refine data collection systems to include indicators that better track programme output progress. Surveys, including the multiple indicator cluster survey, will be supported to gain insights on various child rights issues and the reach of communication initiatives. UNICEF will continue to work with the Government to provide and update a full TransMonEE database. Updated administrative and survey data obtained in the first year will feed into a rolling situation analysis.

48. UNICEF will participate in annual reviews with partners including children, supporting joint planning, assessment and adjustments in the country programme. Reviews will be coordinated with the UNSDCF, identifying bottlenecks and changing programme conditions. Through these reviews, UNICEF will reassess and adjust the relevant theories of change and feed lessons learned into the country office annual report.

## Annex

### Results and resources framework

#### Belarus – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2021–2025

<p><b>Convention on the Rights of the Child:</b> Articles 2, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24, 28, 34, 37, 39, 40</p> <p><b>Recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child for Belarus (2020):</b> 8, 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 21, 23, 26, 28, 31, 33, 36, 43</p> <p><b>National priorities:</b> National Strategy on Sustainable Development 2035, National Plan of Action on the Improvement of the Status of Children and Protection of their Rights 2017–2021, National Plan of Action on the Implementation of the Provision of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2017–2025</p>
<p><b>United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework outcomes involving UNICEF:</b> UNSDCF Outcomes 1, 3 to 5</p> <p><b>Outcome indicators measuring change that reflect UNICEF contribution (SDG National Indicators 1.2.2.2, 1.3.1.2, 1.3.1.3, 1.3.1.4, 3.3.1, 8.5.1, 4.3.1, 4.5.1, 16.1.3.1)</b></p>
<p><b>Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 Goal Areas:</b> Goal Areas 1–5</p>

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
1. By 2025, children's and adolescents' development and safety in family environments are enhanced through social services and improved capacities of caregivers.	Proportion of children aged 1 to 14 years who experienced physical punishment or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month B: 57.0% (2019) T: 40.0% (2025)	Multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS)	State agencies have improved capacity, inter-sectoral coordination and budgeting mechanisms to plan, deliver, fund and monitor early childhood policies and services.	Ministries of Health; Education; Labour and Social Protection; Interior; and Finance  Civil society organizations (CSOs)  Parent groups  Research institutions	875	2 670	3 545
	Percentage of children aged 24 to 59 months engaged in four or more activities to provide early stimulation and responsive care in the last 3 days: (a) an adult household member and (b) father.	MICS	Monitoring system for state care and unified decision-making for placements are strengthened.  Parents and caregivers have access to quality community-based services to have capacity for practicing positive parenting.				

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
	B: (a) 97.3%/ (b) 31.1% (2019) T: (a) 97.3%; (b) 50% (2025)						
	Proportion of infants aged 0 to 5 months who are exclusively breastfed  B: 21.7% (2019) T: 35% (2025)	MICS					
	Percentage of orphans and children left without parental care identified during the year placed in family-based care  B: 81.7% (2018) T: 85% (2025)	Records of Ministries of Health; Education; Labour and Social Protection					
2. By 2025, children and adolescents enjoy increased protection from violence and have access to justice for children.	Existence of criminal legislation regarding child sexual exploitation and abuse (including child pornography on the Internet), in line with international standards and best practices.  B: Does not exist (2020) T: Exists (2025)	Ministry of Interior records	National legislation is developed in compliance with international restorative standards to better protect child victims, witnesses and offenders, including online.  Restorative justice and violence prevention approaches are enhanced and integrated into social and justice institutions.	Ministries of Health; Education; Labour and Social Protection; Interior; and Justice  General Prosecutor;  Investigative Committee;  Supreme Court	610	3 070	3 680
	Rate of children in pre- and post-trial detention  B: 120 (2019) T: 80 (2025)	Ministry of Interior records	Community members understand and support restorative and child-friendly				

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>Percentage of children in conflict with the law who are subject to probation measures as opposed to custodial sentence</p> <p>B: 0 (2019) T: 60% (2025)</p>	Ministry of Interior and Investigative Committee records	approaches in justice system and violence prevention interventions.				
3. By 2025, children, adolescents and youth are better protected; more socially included, prepared for the employment challenges of the future, and engaged in issues of their concern.	<p>Suicide mortality rate among children per 100,000 (aged 10 to 17 years)</p> <p>B: 3.8 (2018) T: 2.0 (2025)</p>	Ministry of Health records	Primary and secondary education system's education programme formulates skills, responding to future needs of the labour market, including needs of the most vulnerable child and adolescent groups.	Ministries of Health, and Education Parliament Child and adolescent friendly cities (CAFCs) CSOs National and regional institutes of Education	875	4 000	4 875
	<p>Existence of system for monitoring adolescent girls and boys social-emotional skills</p> <p>B: Does not exist (2020) T: Exists (2023)</p>	Ministry of Education (Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA))	<p>Children, adolescents and youth with disabilities have increased access to quality inclusive education.</p> <p>Youth-friendly health services are better oriented towards vulnerable adolescents, have greater outreach and cover mental health issues.</p>				
	<p>Percentage of children with special education needs and disabilities who receive education in pre-school; primary/secondary and special schools</p> <p>B: 71.1 (2019) T: 85 (2025)</p>	Ministry of Education records	Adolescents and youth gain greater opportunities to participate in their communities, including through digital networks and media to influence decisions related to their concerns.				

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
4. By 2025, public-private engagement is enhanced and efficiency of spending to better realize the potential of future generations is increased.	Proportion of children living below the national poverty line B: 10.4% (2018) T: 6.6% (2025)	Household Budget Survey (Belstat)	An increasing number of public-private partnerships promote opportunities for future generations.  CSOs and volunteers are mobilized for equitable treatment of the most vulnerable.	Ministries of Finance; Labour and Social Protection;  Private sector  Mayors of CAFCs  World Bank  Research institutions  United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	1 380	650	2 030
	Coverage of children with state benefits, as percentage of the total child population aged 0 to 18 years B: 27.7% (2018) T: 29.1% (2025)	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection records	National child rights monitoring and evaluation system strengthened and integrated to monitor, evaluate and report on achieving Sustainable Development Goals and the realization of child rights.				
	Share of public expenditures allocated to children, including from the Social Protection Fund on education, health and social protection, compared to total public expenditures B: 28% (2018) T: 29% (2025)	Ministry of Finance records	Evidence is provided to strengthen central and local governments' capacities to legislate policies and manage programmes that improve performance-based budgeting of integrated state support and social services for children				
5. Programme effectiveness.					510	110	620
<b>Total resources</b>					<b>4 250</b>	<b>10 500</b>	<b>14 750</b>