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## United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

### **Draft country programme document\*\***

#### **Dominican Republic**

##### *Summary*

The draft country programme document (CPD) for the Dominican Republic is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and comment. The draft CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$4,000,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$19,200,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period from March 2023 to December 2027.

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\* E/ICEF/2023/1.

\*\* In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, country programme documents (CPDs) are considered and approved in one session, on a no-objection basis. This draft CPD, and a costed evaluation plan, will be presented to the Executive Board for review from 15 November to 5 December 2022. The final CPD will be posted to the Executive Board web page in English six weeks in advance of the 2023 first regular session and in the other designated languages four weeks in advance.

## Programme rationale<sup>1</sup>

1. The Dominican Republic is an upper-middle-income country with an estimated population of more than 10 million inhabitants in 2021,<sup>2</sup> of whom 32 per cent were under the age of 18 years. A high proportion of the population (82 per cent) lives in urban areas,<sup>3</sup> and more than 5 per cent are immigrants, mainly of Haitian or Venezuelan origin.<sup>4</sup> In 2019, 10 per cent of children<sup>5</sup> aged 2 to 17 years lived with a disability.<sup>6</sup>

2. As a small island developing State with a geographic position traversed by numerous seismic faults, the country is vulnerable to extreme climate-related events and earthquakes. In 2018, the Climate Shock Vulnerability Index estimated that 80 per cent of children lived in intermediate vulnerable areas.<sup>7</sup> The State has adequate capacity to respond immediately to disasters caused by climatic shocks, but prevention, preparedness and response to other emergencies and crises are limited.

3. For two decades the country maintained steady growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) of around 5.4 per cent, and its economy had the second largest growth in the region. In 2021, the economy recovered following the onset of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, with GDP rebounding by 12 per cent in 2021. Official estimates indicate that the country's annual growth rate will be 5 per cent of real GDP in 2022–2025.<sup>8</sup>

4. The country has made significant efforts to improve the development of every child: public investment for children's human rights has increased; health-care coverage has grown; the quality of food and nutrition has improved; and school attendance has increased. In 2021, child marriage was legally prohibited, and a national policy to prevent teenage pregnancy and early unions<sup>9</sup> was approved. The country is moving towards the construction of a national care system. Despite these advances, major challenges remain.

5. Child poverty is a persistent challenge.<sup>10</sup> In 2020, 33 per cent of children lived in monetary poverty and up to 5 per cent in extreme poverty. Pre-pandemic data indicate that multidimensional poverty affected 24 per cent of children, with higher figures for those living in rural areas (32 per cent) and the southwest border with Haiti (46 per cent). Although social protection for poor children has grown since 2005, challenges of inclusion and universality persist.

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, data cited in this section come from the national multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) (Encuesta Nacional de Hogares de Propósitos Múltiples, ENHOGAR), 2019, <<https://uni.cf/3Rqd0gZ>>, accessed on 27 October.

<sup>2</sup> National Statistics Office estimates for 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Social Policies and Development Observatory of the Cabinet of Coordination of Social Policies.

<sup>4</sup> National Statistics Office, National Survey of Immigrants, Santo Domingo, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the term children refers to people under 18 years of age.

<sup>6</sup> National Statistics Office, O&M Medical School, CONADIS and UNICEF, *Disability in Children and Adolescents in the Dominican Republic*, 2019, <<https://uni.cf/3B1ZLvV>>, accessed on 27 October 2022.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Development Programme, *Climate Shock Vulnerability Index*, UNDP, New York, 2018, <[www.undp.org/es/dominican-republic/publications/indice-de-vulnerabilidad-ante-choques-climáticos](http://www.undp.org/es/dominican-republic/publications/indice-de-vulnerabilidad-ante-choques-climáticos)>, accessed on 27 October 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, *Macroeconomic Outlook 2022–2026*, Santo Domingo, 2022, <<https://bit.ly/3BiN80T>>, accessed on 27 October 2022.

<sup>9</sup> The term “early union” refers to formal child marriage or any informal union between a child under the age of 18 years and an adult.

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, *Social Indicators System of the Dominican Republic (SISDOM)*, Santo Domingo, 2020, <<https://mepyd.gob.do/sisdom>>, accessed on 27 October 2022.

6. The country's maternal mortality ratio is one of the highest regionally (126 per 100,000 live births),<sup>11</sup> and the neonatal mortality rate (21 per 1,000 live births)<sup>12</sup> is double that of the regional average, with 88 per cent of these deaths being preventable. Mother-to-child transmission of HIV rose from 11 per cent in 2015 to 17 per cent in 2021. Adolescent pregnancy is a structural challenge. Twenty per cent of women aged 20–24 years became mothers before the age of 18 years, rising to 49 per cent for young women with no formal education, while 2 per cent were mothers before the age of 15 years. Significant bottlenecks contribute to this situation: the low quality of maternal and child health-care services and primary health-care coverage, the lack of resilience of the health system and the absence of a public service network for children with disabilities.<sup>13</sup>

7. Pre-pandemic nutrition data show that 7 per cent of children under the age of 5 years presented chronic malnutrition, 2 per cent acute malnutrition and 8 per cent obesity (32 per cent for all schoolchildren). Only 16 per cent of infants under the age of 6 months were exclusively breastfed, while 40 per cent of children aged 6–23 months received the minimum acceptable diet.

8. Forty-eight per cent of children aged 3–5 years attend early childhood programmes/services, and only 36 per cent in rural areas and 33 per cent in the poorest quintile. The underlining causes of this low attendance are the lack of a comprehensive, universal and quality childcare system, the absence of inclusive policies and services for children with disabilities and unstimulating family environments and parenting practices.

9. Low learning outcomes remain the most significant challenge in education. In Grade 3, 88 per cent of children do not have the expected competencies in Spanish nor 73 per cent in mathematics.<sup>14</sup> The low learning level in the first years of primary education leads to academic failure, with students repeating a grade, being overage or dropping out of school. Additionally, 23 per cent of children with disabilities aged 5–17 years do not attend school. The lack of legal documentation, adolescent pregnancy, early childbearing, early unions, violence in schools, emergencies and climate change, including the lack of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in schools, affect learning and exclude the most vulnerable populations from the right to education.

10. Significant challenges persist in protecting children from violence and discrimination. Gender discrimination and accumulated gender inequalities are the root causes of gender-based violence and the persistence of the harmful practice of early unions. Sixty-five per cent of adolescent girls aged 15–17 years have experienced sexual violence at some point in their lives,<sup>15</sup> while 32 per cent of young women under the age of 18 years were married or in an early union. The rate of early unions in rural areas has risen to 38 per cent, in the poorest quintile to 49 per cent, and among young women with no formal education to 65 per cent. Over 63 per cent of children aged 1–14 years have experienced some form of violence at home, with children aged 0–3 years being the most affected group (70 per cent). This is aggravated, among other factors, by social and institutional tolerance and the lack of

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, *National Voluntary Report*, Santo Domingo, 2021, <<https://mepyd.gob.do/publicaciones/informe-nacional-voluntario-2021-crecimiento-con-equidad-y-respeto-al-medioambiente>>, accessed on 4 November 2022.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, Neonatal mortality rate, 2020, <<https://childmortality.org/profile>>, accessed on 27 October 2022.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, *Situation analysis of Children and Adolescents in Dominican Republic*, UNICEF, Santo Domingo, 2021.

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Education, *Third Grade National Diagnostic Evaluation*, Santo Domingo, 2017, <<https://bit.ly/3RHMwqP>>, accessed on 4 November 2022.

<sup>15</sup> National Statistics Office, *Experimental Survey on the Situation of Women*, Santo Domingo, 2018.

an effective protection system that prevents and responds to violence and discrimination.

11. Despite progress in birth registration, 8 per cent of children under the age of 5 years are not registered, which worsens for children of less educated mothers (23 per cent), from poor households (22 per cent) and in rural areas (13 per cent). The pandemic has exacerbated existing disparities.

12. Technical capacity and coordination of childhood- and adolescence-related issues remain challenges for institutions, limiting the coherence, efficiency and equity of policies and budgets, as well as the ability to mainstream a gender perspective in public policies across sectors.

13. There is a need for more and better-disaggregated data, especially of administrative records, and evaluations of public policies to inform decision-making.<sup>16</sup>

14. The following lessons learned from the current programme cycle contributed to the design of this country programme:<sup>17</sup>

(a) The sequential combination of different strategies, starting with robust evidence generation, its use for advocacy and social mobilization, multi-stakeholder partnerships and technical assistance to key institutions, has a meaningful impact for achieving greater results in addressing structural challenges.

(b) Developing the technical capacities of public institutions, by promoting behaviour change and transforming institutional practices by adopting a gender-transformative approach is critical to accelerate sustainable changes in favour of children's rights.

## Programme priorities and partnerships

15. The country programme contributes to the national priorities outlined in the National Development Strategy 2030, the National Multi-year Plan for the Public Sector 2021–2024 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The country programme strongly aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), 2023–2027 in three cooperation areas: equality and social inclusion; climate change, risk and environmental sustainability; human rights, citizen security and institutionality. Aligned with UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, the country programme will align with the recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2015, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2022 and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2015, including the universal periodic review (third cycle) in 2019.

16. The country programme is aimed at supporting national efforts to restore and accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals related to the rights of children, focusing on critical areas where significant challenges persist and where UNICEF can maximize its impact to contribute to overcoming them. The programme is strategically based on results achieved in the previous cycle to underpin their scalability and institutionalization in the present cycle.

17. The country programme will have the following components:

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF, *Situation Analysis of Children and Adolescents in Dominican Republic*, 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Evaluation of United Nations Development Assistance Framework, 2018–2022 and the contribution of UNICEF; Gender programmatic review; UNICEF *Real-Time Assessment (RTA) of UNICEF's Response to COVID-19 in Dominican Republic*, 2021.

- (a) Health and nutrition;
- (b) Quality and inclusive education;
- (c) Protection from violence;
- (d) Inclusive social protection and sustainable environment;
- (e) Programme effectiveness.

18. In line with the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2022–2025, the country programme places girls, including adolescent girls, at the centre of its programming, promoting a gender perspective throughout all components and a gender-transformative approach in integrated interventions for a greater impact. UNICEF will focus on eliminating discrimination and promoting the rights of the most vulnerable children, while fostering the inclusion of children with disabilities as a cross-cutting priority. Efforts will be directed at building resilient systems through informed programming to enhance risk management and climate action, facilitating the humanitarian–development nexus.

19. The country programme will implement three intersectoral programmatic priorities to which all components contribute from a multidimensional perspective:

- (a) Early childhood development;
- (b) Prevention of early unions;
- (c) Prevention of and response to violence.

20. The programme will encourage the participation and empowerment of adolescents in all components. UNICEF will enhance partnerships with the private sector, civil society, universities, media, communities, families, caregivers and adolescents and other United Nations agencies.

### **Health and nutrition**

21. The country programme will help children, especially the most vulnerable, to survive and thrive with access to quality, inclusive, resilient, and gender-responsive health and nutrition services, including sexual and reproductive health services. This programme component will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1 and 2 and Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 3 and 5.

22. UNICEF will support the public health system to improve the quality of and access to health services, reduce mistreatment and obstetric violence against women, prevent maternal, neonatal and child mortality and adolescent pregnancy, and improve treatment and care for persons with disabilities, while increasing resilience to global threats, emergencies and climate change. In partnership with public and private institutions, the following interventions will be implemented:

- (a) Provide technical assistance to health managers and providers to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system of qualitative and inclusive maternal and neonatal health care, aligning with protocols with a gender perspective. Communication and information for women using health services on their right to receive quality care and treatment free from obstetric violence,<sup>18</sup> integrated HIV services to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV and strengthening services for child victims of violence will be central.

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<sup>18</sup> “Obstetric violence” comprises institutional abuse, disrespect and neglect against women, including adolescents, during childbirth; UNICEF and University of Edinburgh, *Violence against Children in Latin American and the Caribbean 2015–2021: a systematic review*, 2021.

(b) Provide technical assistance to strengthen primary health care in selected territories, including health promotion, the first 1,000 days of a child's life and quality improvement of maternal and neonatal care, and to advocate for its adequate financing.

(c) Support health services in selected territories to prevent teenage pregnancies and promote integrated health for adolescent girls, including sexual and reproductive health and menstrual hygiene management, jointly with interventions to prevent early unions. This will foster the meaningful participation and empowerment of teenage girls.

(d) Boost the formulation, approval and implementation of a national policy for the prevention, care, rehabilitation and inclusion of children with disabilities, including the effective application of neonatal screening in the public sector.

(e) Strengthen the resilience of the public health sector by supporting national and provincial WASH platforms and through data and evidence generation to inform decision-making, enhance articulation and ensure the continuity of essential services, including the improvement of WASH services and integrated risk management.

23. UNICEF will support health and early childhood care systems to improve access to prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition services for more children, adolescents and pregnant and lactating women, especially from the most vulnerable groups, focusing on infant feeding and children under the age of 5 years. In partnership with national institutions, the following interventions will be implemented:

(a) Support the National Plan for the Reduction of Acute Malnutrition, its expansion nationwide and improvement of the Nutre MUAC app, a proven digital tool that was developed to register and monitor cases of malnutrition. Capacity-building of health personnel and local managers on clinical management and monitoring of acute malnutrition and nutrition counselling will be key.

(b) Strengthen evidence-based decision-making through supporting the nutrition surveillance system capacities in generating timely and disaggregated data on nutritional status in early childhood and of pregnant women and lactating mothers.

(c) In partnership with other United Nations agencies, UNICEF will promote the elaboration and implementation of legal frameworks for preventing overweight and obesity in children, including the strengthening and effective application of Law 8-95 on the promotion of breastfeeding as a national priority.

(d) Strengthen resilience within the framework of the inter-institutional coordination platform for nutrition preparedness and response to threats and risks, including those related to climate change, and by promoting its articulation with WASH services, and generate evidence to guide decision-making.

24. Partnerships with the private sector, including health insurance companies, will be core to boost their engagement and contributions to maternal, child and adolescent health and nutrition programmes.

### **Quality and inclusive education**

25. The country programme will help every child and adolescent to reach their full potential and achieve adequate age-appropriate learning in inclusive, gender-sensitive, safe and resilient learning environments free from violence and discrimination. This programme component will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1, 2 and 5 and Sustainable Development Goals 1, 4, 5 and 10.

26. UNICEF will support the comprehensive early childhood care system to expand its coverage and improve the quality of services, including parental support programmes with a gender focus, to benefit all children under the age of 5 years, especially those from the most vulnerable households. In partnership with national institutions, the following interventions will be implemented:

(a) Provide technical assistance to expand the coverage and strengthen the quality, inclusion and diversification of early childhood development services, including initial education for children, and to improve the identification, care and referral of cases of children with disabilities, seeking to influence equitable access for the most vulnerable.

(b) Strengthen the early childhood development measurement system to inform evidence-based decision-making, focusing on monitoring and evaluating services received and promoting children's development at each stage.

(c) Improve the capacities of institutional service providers to support families in parenting activities. Social and behaviour change will be promoted to strengthen stimulating and protective institutional and family environments for early childhood, particularly for children with disabilities, that promote co-parenting in childcare and loving, sensitive and gender-equal parenting practices.

27. UNICEF will support the Ministry of Education in improving pedagogical processes to ensure quality learning, promote gender equality and prevent violence in schools, including developing appropriate competencies and skills for children's age and level of development. In partnership with national institutions, the following interventions will be implemented:

(a) Provide technical assistance to strengthen and expand initial literacy in Spanish and mathematics of pre-primary and early primary school students through supporting the implementation, monitoring and upscaling of a teaching-learning policy that promotes transformative pedagogical practices.

(b) Promote social change in schools for peacebuilding, non-violence and gender equality, including comprehensive sexuality education, menstrual hygiene management, mental health and prevention of teenage pregnancy and early unions. This intervention will be implemented with the participation of adolescents and the school community.

(c) Promote digital transformation in educational processes and provide technical assistance to design and implement a certification framework for digital competencies in education centres.

28. UNICEF will contribute to capacity-strengthening of the Ministry of Education for improving access to relevant, resilient, inclusive and quality education services for all children, especially the most excluded. In partnership with national institutions, the following interventions will be implemented:

(a) Technical assistance for designing and implementing an inclusive education model to improve access and learning of children with disabilities, including dual education, and framed in the Universal Design for Learning. Advocacy to influence its adequate financing and to guarantee its sustainability will be key.

(b) Technical assistance to implement and strengthen an early warning system for detecting and integrating children already out of school or at risk of dropping out, making use of digital technologies for a more significant impact.

(c) Strengthen the capacities for integrated risk management, resilience, climate change adaptation and environmental/climate education with a focus on safe schools, advocating for WASH improvement, including menstrual hygiene.

29. Mobilize the private sector, including public–private partnerships, to leverage its commitment and contribution to the interventions above, mainly through joint advocacy for quality education and the implementation of inclusive education, promoting the development of science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills with a gender focus, family-friendly policies and labour inclusion of people with disabilities.

#### **Protection from violence**

30. The country programme will help children, especially the most vulnerable, to live in protective environments free from violence, including online and gender-based violence, and free from early unions. Children will be provided with access to legal documentation, even in humanitarian contexts, so that no one is left behind. This programme component will impact UNSDCF outcomes 1 and 5 and Sustainable Development Goals 5, 10 and 16.

31. UNICEF will support the child protection system to improve its capacities for prevention and effective response to violence and early unions, and for the transformation of social and cultural models that promote them. In partnership with national institutions, the following interventions will be implemented:

(a) Technical assistance to strengthen the special protection system’s legal and administrative frameworks and to establish an articulated portfolio of prevention and response services for survivors of violence, with case management and adaptive capacities to emergencies.

(b) National, institutional and community-based strategies for cultural and behaviour change directed to children, as well as families, will be key to improving their attitudes on gender-equal relations, promoting their empowerment against violence, including online violence and early unions, and strengthening the protective role of families, communities and institutions.

(c) Harmonizing the legal and political frameworks on violence against children, including early unions, in line with international standards.

(d) Strategic partnerships will be fostered to prevent violence and early unions and promote positive masculinities, working with the private sector to boost social and behaviour change towards gender violence, prevent sexual exploitation of children in tourism, and facilitate internship opportunities for adolescent girls in private companies as a strategy to prevent early unions.

32. UNICEF will support institutions to manage and improve access to a legal identity and protection for vulnerable children. In partnership with national counterparts, the following interventions will be implemented:

(a) Technical assistance to public bodies to harmonize the legal and policy frameworks on the right to a legal identity with international standards and for implementing inter-institutional agreements.

(b) In partnership with the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF will continue supporting the protection and humanitarian assistance of children on the move and migrant children.

#### **Inclusive social protection and sustainable environment**

33. This programme component will support national efforts to ensure all vulnerable children, especially adolescent girls, have access to social protection and live in a sustainable environment, free from poverty and gender inequality, including in

emergency and other crisis contexts. The component will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1 and 4 and Sustainable Development Goals 1–5, 10 and 13.

34. UNICEF will support the social protection system to expand its coverage to the most vulnerable and excluded households, strengthen its gender focus, prevent early unions as a complementary poverty reduction strategy and increase its capacity to adapt to climate change and emergencies. To this end, the following interventions will be implemented:

(a) Advocacy actions directed to improve coordination and efficiency and to increase the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in social protection programmes and services, focusing on persons with disabilities, without legal documentation and with migratory status.

(b) Technical assistance to strengthen gender-transformative programming for preventing early unions in populations participating in the Supérate social protection programme. Central to these efforts will be partnerships with the private sector and other actors for changing gender and social norms, empowering adolescent girls and constructing conducive family and community environments for their development.

(c) Support for strengthening of a risk-informed, child-sensitive humanitarian–development nexus fostering the social protection system’s capacity to improve adaptive social protection for emergencies, crises and shocks, including the prevention of violence against children in emergency contexts.

(d) Jointly with other United Nations agencies, fostering the resilience of the most vulnerable populations by developing community-based strategies for climate action, emergency prevention, humanitarian assistance and skills strengthening and ensuring accountability to affected populations.

(e) Promotion of social participation and adolescent empowerment and their proposals for mobilization and action for climate change at the local and national levels.

35. UNICEF will contribute to strengthening policy, data, statistics and financing frameworks for poverty reduction and social development so that they effectively respond to the needs of excluded and marginalized children. In partnership with national institutions, UNICEF will implement the following interventions:

(a) Support capacity strengthening of the national statistics system to produce regular, timely, high-quality, gender-sensitive, disaggregated statistics and data on children, including investment analysis, vulnerability to the effects of climate change, responses to emergencies and regarding childcare services.

(b) Boost the increase and quality improvement of the public investment in children, and the capacities of the authorities involved in the budget cycle to improve resource allocation for child and adolescent-related social programmes.

(c) Advocate and provide technical assistance to define a public policy framework on disability from a child’s perspective, and to create a comprehensive care system with early childhood services.

### **Programme effectiveness**

36. This programme component will support effective programme implementation through organizational structures with clear and demand-driven roles, collaboration in planning, budgeting and component alignment, use of data and information for learning and decision-making, results-based management, knowledge management and programme monitoring and evaluation. This component will also ensure inter-programmatic coordination, system-strengthening, strategic communication,

promotion of social and behaviour change, gender-transformative programming, disability inclusion, holistic funding and advocacy partnerships, and evidence generation. Technology and innovation for development, risk-based programming, accountability and emergency preparedness and response will be crucial.

### 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>
Health and nutrition	1 000	2 300	3 300
Quality and inclusive education	500	7 500	8 000
Protection from violence	1 000	5 470	6 470
Inclusive social protection and sustainable environment	1 300	1 000	2 300
Programme effectiveness	200	2 930	3 130
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 000</b>	<b>19 200</b>	<b>23 200</b>

### Programme and risk management

37. This country programme summarizes UNICEF contributions to national results and is the primary accountability mechanism to the Executive Board regarding the alignment of results and resources allocated for its execution. The responsibilities of administrators nationally, regionally and at headquarters concerning country programmes are defined in the policies and procedures regarding the organization's programmes and operations.

38. UNICEF will participate in the technical committee for UNSDCF monitoring, composed of the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development and the United Nations system, and in the result groups, assuming the leadership of some of these groups.

39. Regular oversight of UNICEF programmes will be carried out with sectoral ministries and the Vice-Ministry of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development.

40. UNICEF will ensure full compliance with the harmonized approach to cash transfers and will participate in implementing measures to guarantee the efficient and transparent use of financial and material resources, to strengthen local stakeholders' capacities, promote partnerships with civil society organizations, drive joint United Nations system programmes and support the implementation of standard operating procedures.

41. The main programme risks are related to large-scale natural disasters, climate change and pandemics. To mitigate these risks, UNICEF will strengthen the resilience capacity of its partners and maintain a comprehensive risk management plan. The risk of resistance to changing social and gender norms will be mitigated by mainstreaming social and behaviour change strategies.

42. Since the Dominican Republic is an upper-middle-income country, a reduction in official development assistance and funding to UNICEF is expected. As a mitigation measure, UNICEF will diversify its multi-donor fundraising strategies,

43. UNICEF will ensure the consideration of the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, invest in capacity-building of implementing partners and service providers to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and boost accountability to affected populations, both in development and humanitarian contexts.

## **Monitoring, learning and evaluation**

44. In collaboration with the Government, other United Nations agencies and civil society, UNICEF will continue to strengthen national capacities to produce, analyse and use quality disaggregated data to inform decision-making.

45. Programme monitoring and evaluation will be based on the results and resources framework (see annex) and implemented through a four-pronged approach:

(a) Field monitoring: reviews with implementing partners, high-frequency visits to selected territories and gathering direct feedback from the affected populations.

(b) Monitoring of programme results: annual reviews with partners and stakeholders, monitoring of results and yearly reviews with United Nations agencies in the UNSDCF.

(c) Situation monitoring: support the National Statistics Office and ministries in developing household surveys, mainly the implementation of the multiple indicator cluster survey and the strengthening of administrative records.

(d) Evaluation: strengthen child-responsive monitoring and evaluation systems, focusing on compliance with child-related recommendations issued by United Nations human rights treaty bodies. During this programme cycle, an evaluation of the country programme and three other thematic evaluations are planned, as outlined in the costed evaluation plan.

## Annex

## Results and resources framework

## Dominican Republic – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, March 2023–December 2027

<p><b>Convention on the Rights of the Child:</b> Articles 2–7, 12–13, 18, 23–24, 27–31, 34–37, 39–40</p> <p><b>National priorities:</b> National Development Strategy 2030: Area 1. Social and the democratic rule of law, and Area 2. A society with equal rights and opportunities; Sustainable Development Goals 1–5, 10, 13, 16 and 17; National Multi-year Plan for the Public Sector 2021–2024: Creation of opportunities, gender equality, youth, universal health, social security, quality education and digital transformation</p>
<p><b>United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) outcomes involving UNICEF:</b></p> <p>Outcome 1: The State strengthens a comprehensive response to reduce poverty and inequalities with a multidimensional, rights-based, gender-equality and territorial approach, leaving no one behind.</p> <p>Outcome 2: The population, particularly the most vulnerable, have greater access to quality, universal, inclusive and resilient social goods and services, without discrimination throughout the territory.</p> <p>Outcome 4: People, communities, national and local institutions and strategic sectors manage disaster risk from a multidimensional approach, face the challenges of climate change and promote the sustainable management of ecosystems and urban and rural human settlements in an environment that is resilient, inclusive, gender-equitable and responsible for the planet and for future generations.</p> <p>Outcome 5: People in the territory, especially women, girls, adolescents and other disadvantaged groups, have greater access to comprehensive human rights protection and to environments free of violence and discrimination in all its manifestations.</p>
<p><b>Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 Goal Areas:</b> 1–3 and 5</p>

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators <sup>a</sup> , 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
Outcomes 1 and 2	1. Children, especially the most vulnerable, survive and thrive with access to quality, inclusive, resilient, and gender-	Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births <sup>a</sup> B: 126 (2021) T: 69.7 (2025)	United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation	1.1. By 2027, the public health system will have improved quality and inclusion of health services and reduced mistreatment and obstetric violence against women to prevent maternal, neonatal and child mortality and adolescent pregnancy and improve treatment and care	Ministry of Public Health  National Health Service  Civil society  Private sector  Academia	1 000	2 300	3300
		Neonatal mortality rate per 1,000 live births <sup>a</sup> B: 21 (2020)	National Household Survey (Encuesta					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators <sup>a</sup> , 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
	responsive health and nutrition services, including sexual and reproductive health service,s.	T: 19 (2027)	Nacional de Hogares, ENHOGAR) -multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS)	for people with disabilities, while increasing resilience to global threats, emergencies and climate change.  1.2. By 2027, health and early childhood care systems will have improved access to prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition services to more children, adolescents and pregnant and lactating women, especially from the most vulnerable groups, including through promotion of healthy eating habits in families.	United Nations agencies			
Percentage of women aged 20–24 years that had at least one child before the age of 18 years, disaggregated by location and wealth quintile  B: Total: 20%; quintile 1: 34%; quintile 5: 6% ; rural: 24%; urban: 19% (2019)  T: Total: 18%; quintile 1: 30%; quintile 5: 4%; rural: 20%; urban: 17% (2025)		ENHOGAR						
Children aged 0–5 months who are exclusively breastfed, disaggregated by location  B: Total: 15.8%; rural: 12.6; urban: 17% (2019)  T: Total: 22%; rural: 22%; urban: 24% (2027)		ENHOGAR						

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators <sup>a</sup> , 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
Outcomes 1, 2 and 5	2. Every child and adolescent reach its full development and achieve adequate age-appropriate learning in inclusive, gender-sensitive, safe and resilient learning environments free from violence and discrimination.	Percentage of children aged 36–59 months that attend early childhood programmes, disaggregated by sex and location  B: Total: 48.2%; girls: 50.1%; boys: 46.2%; rural: 35.9%; urban: 52.7% (2019) T: Total: 55%; girls: 57%; boys: 53%; rural: 47%; urban: 59% (2027)	ENHOGAR-MICS	2.1. By 2027, the comprehensive early childhood care system will have expanded its coverage and strengthened the quality and inclusion of early childhood development services, including gender-sensitive parental support programmes, for every child under the age of 5 years, especially from the most vulnerable households.	Ministry of Education  National Institute for Comprehensive Early Childhood Care  National Council on Disability  Civil society  Academia  Private sector  United Nations agencies	500	7 500	8 000
		Percentage of children in Grade 3 who achieve the acceptable level of competency in (a) literacy and (b) mathematics. <sup>a</sup>  B: (a): 38%; (b) 28% (2017) T: (a): 50%; (b) 40% (2027)	National Diagnostic Assessment third grade	2.2. By 2027, the Ministry of Education will have improved innovative pedagogical processes to guarantee satisfactory learning outcomes, promote gender equality and prevent violence in children, including by developing appropriate competencies and skills to their age and level of development. 2.3. By 2027, the Ministry of Education will have strengthened its capacities to improve access to relevant, resilient, inclusive and quality education services for every child, especially for children with disabilities.				

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators <sup>a</sup> , 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
Outcomes 1 and 5	3. Every child and adolescent, especially those in the most vulnerable situations, live in protective environments free from violence (online, gender-based violence) and early unions and with access to civil documentation, including in humanitarian contexts, so that no one is left behind.	Percentage of children aged 1–14 years who have been subject to any violent discipline at home  B: 64% (2019) T: 62% (2027)	ENHOGAR-MICS	3.1. By 2027, the country will have an effective child protection system against violence, founded on a robust legal framework, sensitive to gender-based inequalities and discrimination, and provided with human, financial and territorial capacities to prevent and respond to violence and early unions with an adaptive approach to emergencies.  3.2. By 2027, institutions will have improved their capacities to guarantee access to legal identity and protection for vulnerable children, especially girls and adolescents.	National Council for Children and Adolescents  Ministry of Women  Ministry of Education  Public Prosecutor's Office  Supérate programme  Central Electoral Board  Judiciary system  Legislative branch  Civil society  Private sector  Media  United Nations agencies	1 000	5 470	6 470
		Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who are married or in a relationship before the age of (a) 15 years and (b) 18 years <sup>a</sup>  B: (a) 9%; (b) 32%; (2019) T: (a) 8%; (b): 30% (2027)	ENHOGAR-MICS					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators <sup>a</sup> , 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
Outcome 4	4. Children in vulnerable situations, especially adolescent girls, have access to the social protection system and live free from poverty and gender inequality, including in emergencies.	Percentage of children aged 0–17 years living in multidimensional poverty, disaggregated by sex and location <sup>a</sup>  B: Total: 24.2%; females: 24.2%; males: 24.2%; rural: 32.5%; urban: 22.4% (2020) T: Total: 21%; females: 21%; males: 21%; rural: 28%; urban: 19% (2027)	Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development  Poverty report	4.1. By 2027, the social protection system will have expanded its coverage to the most vulnerable and excluded households with children, strengthened its gender focus and the prevention of early unions as a complementary poverty reduction strategy, and increased its capacity for prevention, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and emergencies.	Supérate programme  Unique System of Beneficiaries  General Directorate of Budgeting  Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development	1 300	1 000	2 300
		Extent to which the social protection system is prepared to respond to a crisis  B: Moderate (2022) T: Strong (2027)	Social protection political framework	4.2. By 2027, the country will have institutional, policy, data, statistics and financing frameworks for poverty reduction and social development, well-articulated and based on equity, efficiency, and transparency criteria, to respond to the needs of excluded children.	National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response  National Statistics Office  Civil society  Private sector  United Nations agencies			
5. Programme effectiveness: programme coordination and cross-cutting issues, such as performance monitoring and mainstreaming gender focus, are ensured.						200	2 930	3 130
<b>Total resources</b>						<b>4 000</b>	<b>19 200</b>	<b>23 200</b>

<sup>a</sup> Outcome indicator aligned with UNSDCF outcome indicator.