

## Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board

### Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents

#### 2023 first regular session

Delegations are kindly invited to use this template to share their comments on the draft country programme document being presented to the Executive Board during the forthcoming session.

Delegation name: *United States*

Draft country programme document: *Haiti*

In accordance with Executive Board decision [2014/1](#), draft country programme documents are considered and approved in one session, on a no-objection basis. All comments received by the Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board before the deadline stated above will be posted on the Executive Board website.

	Delegation's comments	Response(s)
<b>General comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– We recommend that UNICEF implement additional climate strategies in their CPD, to help reduce the impact of climate change on children and promote climate adaptation efforts and early warning systems.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ How will UNICEF work with the government and partners to establish climate adaptation and resilience goals that affect children and adolescents?</li></ul></li></ul>	<p>UNICEF appreciates the comments made by the US on the Haiti country programme document (CPD). The comments are pertinent and timely and will serve to inform the ensuing and work-in-progress processes of elaboration of programme strategy notes, workplans and advocacy strategies.</p> <p>UNICEF takes note of the comments related to climate change adaptation and resilience. As part of preparing its new CPD, UNICEF Haiti undertook an analysis on the impact of climate change on children. Recommendations from this analysis will be taken into consideration in the implementation of this CPD. UNICEF will continue to advocate for the inclusion of climate education in the national curriculum and in the rehabilitation or construction of schools by UNICEF using a climate change friendly approach. UNICEF will also support the Government (DINEPA) in updating the technical references for the design</p>

- We recommend UNICEF build on investments/gains made in improving WASH through COVID-19 response system (e.g. through the USAID-funded UNICEF COVID-19 activity in Haiti in 2020, over 10,000 handwashing stations were installed in public spaces, benefitting an estimated 2 million people).
  
- Similarly, we recommend that UNICEF ensure that oxygen concentrators distributed to the COVID-19 public facilities are maintained and wherever feasible made available for critical maternal, newborn and child health care as needed.
  
- We ask that UNICEF/Haiti continue to share information on its health and WASH activities/funding streams.
  
- We encourage UNICEF to establish metrics and benchmarks to ensure every child under age six has access to routine vaccinations and receive the recommended doses for diseases including (but not limited to) polio, measles, and DTP.
  
- Although violence and vulnerability to disasters are highlighted in the problem statement as the main issues, the CPD provides no clear strategic policies and actions to adapt to these challenges.

and construction of climate-resilient WASH infrastructures in communities and institutions (schools and healthcare facilities). In addition, climate adaptation activities such as planting trees to protect springs, upgrading temporary shelters and setting up early warning systems are planned as part of disaster preparedness interventions.

In regards to sustaining WASH gains, UNICEF Haiti recognizes indeed the gains made in improving WASH through the COVID-19 response, particularly those related to hygiene promotion/handwashing, as well as WASH in healthcare facilities and schools. These form part of the priority strategies and interventions identified under this CPD.

In relation to oxygen concentrators, UNICEF Haiti's health programme supports integrated interventions in public health facilities and will continue to support the maintenance of oxygen concentrators that are already used for neonatal and maternal health activities in many health centers. Furthermore, UNICEF Haiti remains committed to continue sharing information on its activities concerning health and WASH, including around funding streams.

Immunization indeed remains a key priority for UNICEF Haiti's new CPD. Within it, UNICEF will continue managing specific strategies through the advanced mobile health teams to reach households who have difficult access to health centers and to vaccinate children. UNICEF also will continue strengthening social mobilization initiatives with community-based organizations and others sectors to promote immunization.

Violence and vulnerability to disasters also remain a key priority within the new CPD. Concrete implementation strategies will be concretely articulated and included in annual workplans, in line with the CPD's overall priorities of strengthening and expanding UNICEF's work in urban

- We recommend adding a focus on provision and strengthening of children's access to electricity, as electricity plays a key role in education.
- The United States notes that recent compounding crises in Haiti have slowed the processing of intercountry adoption cases.

violence areas and strengthening the child protection system, building on education as a catalyzer for strengthening social cohesion around child rights and incorporating resilience as a main consideration, including in WASH and other interventions. UNICEF Haiti has also established the End Violence Against Children Task Force dedicated to implementing and monitoring intersectoral efforts to address issues around violence.

In relation to access to electricity, UNICEF Haiti incorporated the installation of solar panels in schools as part of the school construction model. Sustainable financing models will be explored for schools to sell electricity to communities to generate income.

UNICEF will be developing an EVAC strategy and plan in 2023 to be implemented and to respond to challenges of violence against children. UNICEF will continue to work with the National counterpart in monitoring children in need of protection and those without care and/or in institutions, and will provide support in enhancing alternative care solutions for children, including adoption always in line with the principle of best interest of the child and their protection.

**Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme document**

*(Delegations providing comments may wish to include details, such as the page number, paragraph number, or page of the annexed results and resources framework.*

- Under ‘Survive and Thrive’ line 21, UNICEF states that UNICEF Haiti will establish a humanitarian cash transfer system for health and nutrition services. Can UNICEF provide more details entailing their capacity and experience implementing cash transfers for health and nutrition?

UNICEF Haiti’s aim to establish a humanitarian cash transfer is guided by global evidence that indicates that cash transfers can be effective in improving health and nutrition outcomes, including in reducing stunting, wasting and a decline in the incidence of diarrhea. The current situation of conflict and loss of income will likely lead to an increase in the poverty of families to the point of not being able to afford health and nutrition expenses as a consequence of the significant economic hardship. The provision of direct cash assistance will empower individuals and households to demand health and nutrition services. UNICEF has a track record across countries on how to deploy cash for enhanced health and nutrition outcomes. In Haiti, UNICEF is working closely with the inter-agency Cash Working Group (coordinated by OCHA) and is working jointly with WFP to design a humanitarian cash transfer response and strengthening the national social protection system.

In addition to being able to draw on its global expertise and experience from other contexts, UNICEF Haiti also has direct experience implementing cash transfer in country. Shortly after the earthquake on 14 August 2021 and tropical storm Grace, UNICEF Haiti redirected programmatic efforts towards humanitarian response and transferred multipurpose cash to 1,000 households according to moderate and severe acute malnutrition indicators through the mobile operating network MonCash (DIGICEL). The multipurpose cash transfers to the most affected households in Pestel (including Cayemites Islands) and Corail for food and other basic needs were coupled with training of community trainers in nutrition reaching 376 women. Other cash-based interventions were also implemented with the same range of success when it comes to education outcomes in contexts of populations affected by urban violence

and sociopolitical crises, with a focus on reaching the hardest to reach.

UNICEF will continue supporting the strengthening of existing national social protection systems to appropriately target and swiftly scale-up cash transfers, including in the health and nutrition sectors to increase access to enhanced integrated outreach health service components of maternal and neonatal health, immunization, and child and adolescent health.

The cash-based interventions could be deployed through two streams: a) providing top-up cash payments to existing beneficiaries of the national single registry of beneficiaries – SIMAST (vertical expansion) and b) complementary registration of vulnerable households, including through the existing national platforms and providing direct cash assistance to the heads of households (horizontal expansion), combining it with effective communication, engagement, and families empowerment and participation.

UNICEF will ensure that a two-way communication/grievance/information and feedback mechanism is established (even if with basic communication channels) and that feedback informs the services systematically. Targeting criteria and benefit levels will follow the recommendations of the cash working group and will take into account equity and protection concerns.

UNICEF has revised the Haiti CPD draft to include direct reference to internally displaced (See revised paragraph 29).

- Under 'Child Protection' line 29, we encourage UNICEF to consider adding Internally Displaced Populations to the list of vulnerable groups that will be prioritized.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The United States recommends the inclusion of African Swine Fever education in UNICEF's programs.</li>   <li>- Page 4, point #8: child trafficking is mentioned to be an issue. What are UNICEF's proposed activities and indicators to reduce child trafficking and the proportion of non-orphan children in orphanages? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The United States would also recommend adding in more specific language on child trafficking in the sex tourism industry and sugar plantations in the border regions.</li> </ul> </li>   <li>- Haitian government and civil society partners have advised the U.S. Embassy that the use of the term "restavek" is often seen as pejorative. The United States would recommend altering usage in official documents, referring to the "restavek system" or "children in restavek situations."</li>   <li>- Page 9, paragraph 1: DINEPA oversees WASH in Haiti. UNICEF should focus on including them and support the existing WASH plan for the country, rather than developing new ones with municipalities.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF takes note of the recommendation to include African Swine Fever education in UNICEF's programs and will ensure it is included in the work plan of the UNICEF Haiti health programme.</p> <p>In the area of child trafficking, UNICEF takes note of this comment. UNICEF will continue to work with National counterparts at the national and departamental levels for the monitoring and identification of children at risk of trafficking, and their protection and care, including psychological medical and legal assistance. Prevention activities will also include community sensitization on child trafficking, the establishment of Protection Committee and family support. This includes specific interventions in border regions, at official and unofficial crossing points.</p> <p>In relation to the terminology related to "restavek", UNICEF Haiti confirms that while the CPD has been developed with and reviewed by the national authorities without further suggestions, UNICEF takes note of this comment and has updated the CPD draft to modify the terminology to clarify that it refers to "children in restavek situations" or children in domesticity situations.</p> <p>Based on the good results of the REGLEAU project implemented by Helvetas and DINEPA in the South-Eastern department, DINEPA plans to progressively scale up ownership by the municipalities in the management of WASH infrastructure and services, including through the development of municipal development plans. UNICEF will therefore indeed work with DINEPA and the OREPAs to support</p>
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- 28b: In addition to preventing adolescent pregnancy, would there be capacity to provide limited support for adolescents who do become parents? Young women who become pregnant are frequently forced out of traditional education paths and have extremely limited career opportunities. Women’s organizations have also highlighted that adolescent parents are underprepared for parenthood and often turn to corporal punishment or other less effective and dangerous parenting strategies.
  
- 29-30: Paragraph 29 says the programme focuses on “migrants” and “returnees”, but could there be a more specific reference to the planned child protection system interventions in border regions somewhere in paragraph 30?

municipal development plans in line with the new 2022-2032 strategic plan of DINEPA.

In the area of adolescent pregnancies, UNICEF developed a proposal to address this issue through non formal education services combined with childcare services in specific departments of the country where the proportion of adolescent pregnancy is higher. In addition, the national social protection policy (PNPSS) that UNICEF is supporting with its development and implementation, contemplates the creation of childcare and home visiting services. One of the criteria would be to prioritize these services, particularly childcare, center-based services, for adolescent mothers/parents and also strengthen positive parenting practices within them. UNICEF Haiti is already providing specialized services including parenting, life skills and livelihood opportunities for pregnant adolescents via the GBV/Women organizations.

UNICEF will work to strengthen the capacity of IBESR and civil society institutions to provide integrated humanitarian and protection assistance (reception, temporary accommodation, medical and psychosocial assistance, family reunification, school reintegration, economic support to parents, reintegration follow-up) for separated, unaccompanied and vulnerable migrant children crossing the Haitian-Dominican border for their sustainable reintegration. Activities will focus on (i) strengthening the functioning of the transit centers across the 4 official borders (including through the procurement of NFIs including beds, mattresses, clothes...); (ii) reinforcing access to the full package of services that includes mental health and psychosocial support, case management, medical and legal support, as well as reunification or placement in foster families for additional 150 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC); and (iii) supporting the Family Tracing and

		<p>Reunification for the Malpasse and Belladere crossing points as these two points are witnessing access issues from the Haitian side.</p>
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