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Draft country programme document**

Gambia

Summary

The draft country programme document (CPD) for the Gambia is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and comment. The draft CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$10,185,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$27,096,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period March 2024 to December 2028.

* [E/ICEF/2024/1](#).

** 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 14 November to 4 December 2023. The final CPD will be posted to the Executive Board web page in English six weeks in advance of the 2024 first regular session and in the other designated languages four weeks in advance.

Programme rationale

1. The Gambia has undergone substantial social-political changes since 2017, leading to democratic transition and significant reforms.¹ According to the World Bank, the national poverty rate decreased from 48.6 per cent in 2015 to 45.8 per cent in 2019. This progress, however, was reversed due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.² In 2022, the poverty rate climbed to 53.4 per cent and inequality registered at 0.33 (Gini coefficient). The global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023 indicates that 41.7 per cent of the population in the Gambia, including children, are poor³ across dimensions, in particular in terms of access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), nutrition and education.⁴ According to estimates from the Government, by 2027 the poverty rate is expected to improve to its 2015 level of 48 per cent and inequality is expected to decline to 0.28 per cent.

2. The Gambia is one of the smallest countries in West Africa, with an estimated population of 2.6 million in 2021 and a population density of 203 people per square km, thereby characterized as one of the most densely populated countries in Africa.⁵ According to the most recent 2013 census, children aged 0–17 years account for 49.4 per cent of the population. Additionally, the overall prevalence of disability was 1.2 per cent.⁶ People with disabilities, especially children and adolescents, have limited access to basic social services.⁷ The Gambia is ranked 174 out of 191 countries on the Human Development Index⁸ and is among the African countries where children and adolescents are most exposed to the risks of climate change.⁹ The country is characterized by low-lying topography, combined with a high dependence on subsistence rain-fed agriculture and inadequate drainage and storm water management systems and rapid urbanization. In 2022, the Gambia experienced the worst flooding in its history, affecting 95,609 people, including children and adolescents.¹⁰

3. The draft National Development Plan (NDP) 2023–2027 articulates commitment towards a democratic transition and the achievement of sustainable development. The Plan seeks to promote collaboration among the Government, the United Nations system and other partners, including civil society organizations, through the new 2024–2028 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) to advance progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The Gambia has also ratified several human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and submitted reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 1999 (initial report) and 2011 (combined report). In 2015, in its concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the Gambia, the Committee noted that considerable progress in advancing children’s rights in the Gambia had been achieved over the years. However, the concerning global economic outlook, coupled with increased instability in the Sahel region and

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the sources for the programme rationale section are the situation analysis of children and adolescents in the Gambia, 2021; United Nations Common Country Analysis, 2021; Revised Draft of the Gambia National Development Plan 2023–2027; and Gambia Statistical Yearbook, 2021.

² World Bank, “COVID-19 elevated poverty in Gambia”, press release, 2022.

³ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Multidimensional Poverty Index: the Gambia, 2023.

⁴ UNICEF Gambia, *Children in the Gambia: Multidimensional Analysis of Child Poverty*, 2022.

⁵ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Gambia, “Population trends”, 2022.

⁶ Gambia Bureau of Statistics, Population and Housing Census, 2013.

⁷ United Nations, Situational analysis of the rights of persons with disabilities: the Gambia country report, 2021.

⁸ UNDP, *Human Development Report 2021/2022*.

⁹ UNICEF, *The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children’s Climate Risk Index*, 2021.

¹⁰ Republic of the Gambia, National Disaster Management Agency, 2022.

exposure to climate change and environmental degradation, threatens the economic and social integrity of the Gambia. This calls for risk-informed resilience and adaptive programming.

4. In contribution to Sustainable Development Goal 3, the Gambia has made considerable gains in promoting maternal and child health. From 2013 to 2020, the maternal mortality rate decreased from 433 to 289 per 100,000 live births, and the child mortality (1–5 years) rate decreased from 20 to 15 per 1,000 live births. In addition, trends at the national level show that there was a decline in adolescent childbearing, from 18 per cent in 2013 to 14 per cent in 2020.¹¹ Additionally, the country has successfully maintained above 79 per cent immunization coverage of children who received the third dose of diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis (DTP) vaccine.¹² In terms of Sustainable Development Goal 2, exclusive breastfeeding increased from 47 per cent in 2013 to 54 per cent in 2020, contributing to a decline in stunting prevalence in children under the age of 5 years from 25 per cent to 18 per cent during the same period. Furthermore, in terms of Sustainable Development Goal 4, the primary school completion rate increased from 79 per cent in 2017 to 96 per cent in 2022.¹³ These positive trends have been achieved despite the challenges brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, acceleration of evidence-based, sustainable and equitable strategies to realize the rights of children and adolescents across sectors, especially the most vulnerable, remains critical in the coming years.

5. According to the Sustainable Development Report, performance towards Sustainable Development Goals 1, 5 and 16 is moderately improving. For example, under Sustainable Development Goal 5, the ratio of female-to-male mean years of education increased from 60.32 per cent in 2015 to 68.16 per cent in 2021.¹⁴ Performance towards Sustainable Development Goals 2, 3, 4 and 6, however, is stagnating. For instance, despite encouraging trends in the reduction of child mortality, more than half of under-5 mortality occurs during the neonatal and infant periods, with an increase in neonatal and infant mortality rates from 22 to 29 and 34 to 42 per 1,000 live births, respectively.¹⁵ Furthermore, despite the improvements, the maternal mortality rate is considerably above the global target of 70 per 100,000, and there has been a noticeable decline in the percentage of surviving infants who received the third dose of DTP, from 85 per cent in 2020 to 79 per cent in 2022.¹⁶ The national prevalence of HIV remains stable, at 1.52 per cent in 2020, but is still higher than regional and global averages.

6. Stunting and wasting have significantly decreased in children under the age of 5 years; however, the issues remain a public health concern. Notably, early initiation of breastfeeding has decreased, from 51.5 per cent in 2013 to 35.5 per cent in 2020, and only 22 per cent of children under the age of 2 years have access to a diversified diet.¹⁷ In 2020, households' access to at least basic water slightly improved, to 81 per cent from 79 per cent in 2015, with the rural population (69 per cent) lagging behind the urban population (88 per cent). During the same period, access to at least basic sanitation remained unchanged, at 47 per cent compared with 46 per cent, and the country has not yet reached the last mile for ending open defecation. Additionally, the proportion of households with at least basic handwashing facilities also remained

¹¹ Gambia Demographic Health Survey (DHS), 2013, 2019/2020.

¹² UNICEF Data Warehouse, 2022. Available at https://data.unicef.org/resources/data_explorer/unicef_f/?ag=UNICEF&df=GLOBAL_DATAFL_OW&ver=1.0&dq=GMB.IM_DTP3.&startPeriod=1970&endPeriod=2023.

¹³ Gambia Education Management Information System (EMIS), 2022.

¹⁴ Sustainable Development Report, "The Gambia", 2022. Available at <https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles/gambia-the>.

¹⁵ Gambia DHS, 2013, 2019/2020.

¹⁶ WHO/UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage (WUENIC), 2022.

¹⁷ Gambia DHS, 2013, 2019/2020.

unchanged, at 18 per cent in 2020. Schools meeting national WASH standards, including gender- and disability-friendly facilities, account for 83 per cent, although significant disparities remain between urban and rural schools.¹⁸

7. Despite improved access to primary education and advancements in gender parity, the Gambia is experiencing a learning crisis driven by multiple factors. The crisis is compounded by insufficient early childhood education participation, with 69 per cent of children in Grade 1 having had pre-primary exposure; only 50 per cent of Grade 5 students being proficient in English and 32 per cent proficient in mathematics (National Assessment Test 2022); and about 63 per cent of students (57.5 per cent boys and 68 per cent girls) completing lower secondary education and only 42 per cent (38.4 per cent boys and 44.9 per cent girls) completing upper secondary education.¹⁹

8. Most data on child protection covering the areas of birth registration, violence and female genital mutilation (FGM) come from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). Despite progresses in strengthening the national child protection data system, collecting and analysing administrative data remains a challenge. According to the 2018 MICS, the birth registration rate for children under the age of 5 years increased from 52.5 per cent in 2010 to 57.9 per cent in 2018. Analysis of MICS trends shows that the prevalence rate of children experiencing violence remains unchanged, at 89 per cent. Furthermore, 50.6 per cent of girls aged between 0–14 years and 27.3 per cent of girls aged 0–4 years have undergone FGM, with urban and rural disparities.²⁰ The 2019/2020 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) found that 14 per cent of women aged 15–49 years experienced either physical or sexual violence, and 26 per cent of adolescent girls aged 15–19 years who had ever been married experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence committed by their current or most recent spouse.²¹ UNICEF and UNFPA supported the improved reporting of incidents by “one-stop centres”, as well as the response to survivors and their referral to medical, justice, psychosocial, health and other services. The latest available data from 2017 suggest that children in the Gambia continue to be at risk of exploitation and trafficking due to internal, interregional and extra-continental migration.²²

9. Limited availability of quality and disaggregated data remains a challenge in the Gambia, making it difficult to understand the situation of girls, boys and adolescents, especially the most vulnerable, including children with disabilities. Also, the effective tracking of expenditures in the social sectors need to be strengthened, despite positive trends in terms of child-friendly budget allocations, such as in education (14 per cent in 2022 and 17 per cent in 2023). Additionally, progress towards digital transformation remains limited, with inequitable access to digital connectivity by children and adolescents. The encouraging dynamic represents an opportunity to engage the private sector to invest in child-friendly social services and technology for development strategies.

10. The new country programme is informed by the NDP, Common Country Analysis 2021, and situation analysis of children and adolescents in the Gambia 2021, which identified critical barriers to advancing child rights. These include: (a) at the enabling environment level, high levels of poverty and inequity, low enforcement of laws, insufficient public financing for children, and insufficient policy support for reaching the most disadvantaged; (b) at the supply level, limited availability of quality

¹⁸ WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), 2021.

¹⁹ EMIS, 2022.

²⁰ MICS, 2018.

²¹ Gambia DHS, 2013, 2019/2020.

²² UNICEF, Child protection situation analysis of children, 2022.

social services, particularly in rural areas, and inadequate motivation and capacity of social service providers; and (c) at the demand level, the persistence of harmful practices, especially against girls, and limited engagement and participation of communities, including adolescents, to increase access to and the use of available services and adoption of positive behaviours.

11. Lessons learned from the use of U-Report during the COVID-19 pandemic show that leveraging technology and online platforms can improve adolescent engagement to enhance access to services including digital learning. During the pandemic, adolescents acted as social mobilizers to promote vaccine uptake and preventive behaviours, proving to be drivers of change and contributors to decision-making. Adolescent participation and engagement, especially that of girls, including through the active Children’s National Assembly, remain fundamental to realizing the right of adolescents to participate in decision-making. UNICEF and partners will continue to provide platforms to amplify adolescent voices on issues affecting their well-being, including climate change, gender-based violence and skills for the future.

12. Learning from the previous country programme also shows that despite encouraging progress in the coverage of social services, sustained investment in strengthening decentralized structures and the promotion of community engagement remains essential. While 63 per cent of the population is concentrated in urban areas, multiple deprivation analysis indicates that children and adolescents in rural areas are the most vulnerable.²³ The potential for improving convergence and coordination for the efficient delivery of child-friendly social services will require UNICEF to foster bold partnerships and support innovative monitoring mechanisms at the local level. In support of decentralization, the comparative advantage of UNICEF lies in promoting parenting practices and behaviour change through a multisectoral approach, and especially around the first 1,000 days. According to a UNICEF 2019 evaluation, parenting interventions resulted in a favourable impact on fathers’ engagement and increased practical childcare support to mothers, among other positive outcomes.²⁴

Programme priorities and partnerships

13. UNICEF in the Gambia plans to accelerate progress on the realization of child rights, including for adolescents, through the implementation of sustainable and equitable strategies based on the guiding principles of gender equality and non-discrimination, leave no one behind and humanitarian action. The country programme will give priority to the NDP pillars centred on building community resilience to address shocks and crisis, governance reform, human capital development and empowerment, and social inclusion. The country programme will contribute to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the progressive realization of child rights, building on the 2015 concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

14. The country programme will also contribute to the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including through the acceleration of the West and Central African Key Results for Children agenda. Additionally, the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2022–2025 will inform all aspects of the programme, emphasizing structural and normative changes to address the underlying drivers of gender inequality. The voice and agency of women and girls, as well as of men and boys, will be integral to programme planning and implementation.

²³ UNICEF, *Children in the Gambia: Multidimensional Analysis of Child Poverty*, 2022.

²⁴ UNICEF, *Parenting Practices for Early Childhood Development (ECD) in the Gambia: Project Stock-taking Review*, February 2020.

15. Derived from the UNSDCF, the country programme was elaborated in close consultation with the Government, children and adolescents, civil society organizations, communities and other key stakeholders, with consideration of the humanitarian development and peace nexus. UNICEF will enhance its joint and complementary work within the United Nations system, contributing to the three priorities of the UNSDCF (2024–2028), namely, green, resilient and inclusive livelihoods; human development, social inclusion and people-centred governance; and innovative and integrated development financing and strategic partnerships.

16. The vision of the new country programme is for vulnerable and excluded children and adolescents in the Gambia, as well as all boys and girls, to survive, learn, be protected, participate in matters affecting them, and thrive in a safe and resilient environment.

17. Taking into account the lessons learned and the priorities identified with partners, the programme's theory of change is that if:

(a) National counterparts increase investment in data for children and adolescents and have capacities to analyse the root causes of vulnerabilities and exclusion of children and adolescents;

(b) Domestic resources and external funding, including those from the private sector, are increased and directed to child-, adolescent- and gender-friendly social services;

(c) Decentralized institutions and actors have resources and capacity to make locally relevant decisions to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable children, adolescents and communities;

(d) National counterparts invest in child- and adolescent-friendly services that are more resilient to shocks and crises, including climate change; and

(e) Programmes consider behavioural and structural determinants through an inclusive social accountability and gender approach and children and adolescents meaningfully participate in national decision-making processes affecting their well-being;

Then, the vision of the country programme for the Gambia will be fulfilled.

18. Overall, the programme will maximize core evidence-based strategies, including: (a) generation, analysis and use of disaggregated data on children and adolescents; (b) advocacy and provision of high-level technical support for increased investment in equitable child-friendly social services for systemic change; (c) leveraging strategic partnerships, including with the private sector and civil society organizations; (d) scale-up of gender-responsive, social and behaviour change strategies, including child and adolescent participation; (e) promotion of resilience-building approaches, risk-informed programming and mainstreaming of emergency preparedness and response; (f) modelling the use of new technologies to reach the most vulnerable children and adolescents; and (g) investment in proof-of-concept of multisectoral approaches such as parenting to scale up interventions addressing multiple child rights deprivations.

Every child survives and thrives

19. The programme will support pillars I, II, IV and VI of the NDP, with a focus on health, nutrition and WASH, and will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1.1, 2.1, 2.2 and 3 by addressing the health, nutrition and WASH needs of vulnerable children and adolescents, particularly those living in rural areas.

20. In alignment with the National Health Policy (2021–2030) and the recommendations from the 2015 concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, alongside partners including Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNFPA, UNICEF will advocate and provide support to strengthen the primary health-care system. In particular, the programme will accelerate support for scaling up skilled workforce to deliver essential maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition services. The programme will strengthen capacities to increase the number of live births delivered in health facilities and ensure quality integrated community management of neonatal and childhood illnesses. To regain the model status for high childhood immunization coverage in the Gambia, it will be critical to reach zero-dose and under-vaccinated children. Therefore, the programme will support improved uptake of routine vaccines for children by strengthening the supply chain and expanding vaccine confidence. It will also include the expansion of human papilloma virus immunization to adolescent girls. In collaboration with UNFPA, UNICEF will support the capacities of the national health system in the fight against HIV/AIDS through provision of technical assistance for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

21. In alignment with the National Nutrition Policy (2021–2025), the programme will contribute to the implementation and monitoring of strategies to prevent all forms of malnutrition in children under the age of 5 years. The programme will be implemented through a multisectoral approach in close collaboration with the health, sanitation and hygiene, education and social protection sectors. The programme will promote the institutionalization of breastfeeding in baby-friendly hospitals. Similarly, breastfeeding counselling on optimal infant and young child feeding practice, including dietary diversity, will be intensified in communities for the promotion and protection of breastfeeding, enhanced nurturing care and parenting practices. The programme will support the adoption of WHO-UNICEF guidelines for the prevention, early detection and management of severe acute malnutrition. Furthermore, UNICEF will support the procurement of life-saving nutrition supplies and scale up engagement of communities for early detection and treatment of severe wasting in children.

22. In the area of WASH, UNICEF and partners will support costing and financing of the national WASH strategy. To improve access to basic water and sanitation, the programme will support the expansion of climate-resilient and environmentally friendly WASH facilities in health and nutrition centres, schools and communities, particularly in rural areas, and accelerate efforts towards ending open defecation. In tandem with education interventions, the programme will promote gender-responsive WASH facilities addressing menstrual health and the hygiene needs of adolescent girls. School and community-based awareness on hygiene and handwashing will be sustained, including through a multisectoral approach. The WASH programme will also strengthen emergency preparedness and response through the prepositioning of essential supplies and support to national emergency response efforts.

Every child learns and develops

23. The programme will support pillars II, IV and VI of the NDP and will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 2.1, 2.2 and 3, with a focus on education and skills development. In alignment with the National Education Policy (2016–2030) and the recommendations from the 2015 concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the programme will support building a resilient, gender-responsive and inclusive education system with a focus on policy reviews, improved sector coordination and leveraging partnerships for education financing.

24. UNICEF and partners, including civil society organizations, will develop gender-responsive pathways for out-of-school children and adolescents, including those with disabilities, leverage digital technology, and empower children, adolescents and communities for increased access and quality learning. UNICEF and partners will also expand school readiness opportunities and promote improved quality of early childhood education.

25. To support the commitment of the Government to the Transforming Education Summit and in collaboration with the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Education and local education groups, the programme will focus on learning outcomes. In particular, the programme will support the strengthening of the capacities of teachers and education managers to improve proficiency in foundational literacy and numeracy and acquisition of twenty-first-century skills and behaviours, including climate awareness. The programme will prioritize curricula improvement and promotion of safe and protective learning environments.

Every child is protected from violence, exploitation and harmful practices and has a legal identity

26. The programme will support pillars II, IV and VI of the NDP and will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes, 2.1, 2.2 and 3. The programme will strive to accelerate universal birth registration and enhancing prevention and response to violence against children, particularly sexual violence, as well as continue to address harmful practices, particularly FGM, that affect children and adolescents.

27. The programme will build on the Children's Act (2005), the recommendations from the 2015 concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and the National Child Protection Strategy (2023–2028) and implemented in partnership with the National Child Protection Steering Committee. The programme will prioritize advancing legal and policy reforms such as the Children's Act (2005) and Women's Act Amendment (2015), strengthening enforcement of laws, and improving child protection administration data systems. Additionally, the programme will improve multisectoral coordination with health, education and justice systems and strengthen the national social service workforce and the national child protection case management system. Building on the Sexual Offence Act (2013), the programme will focus on generating evidence, raising awareness, facilitating legal support for survivors, and promoting community-led actions against sexual violence.

28. In line with the National FGM Strategy (2020) and in close collaboration with UNFPA, the programme will accelerate efforts towards ending FGM. UNICEF and partners, including civil society organizations, will support the improvement and enforcement of existing laws, promote social and behaviour change to foster gender equality, and help to accelerate efforts to end FGM and other harmful practices, especially in rural areas.

29. In alignment with the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act (1990) and in collaboration with stakeholders, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, the programme will accelerate efforts for children's birth registration and ensuring that every child is issued a birth certificate. The programme will focus on aligning the birth registration legal and policy frameworks with international standards and support the shift towards the digital registration system and its interoperability with the health system through the civil registration and vital statistics system.

Every child lives free from poverty

30. The programme will support pillars I, II and VI of the NDP and will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1.1, 2.1, 2.2 and 3. The programme will focus on expanding public finance and strengthening the social protection system for the most vulnerable children and adolescents in the Gambia.

31. Building on the recommendations from the 2015 concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the National Social Protection Policy (2015–2025), the programme will prioritize gender- and child-friendly budget planning, allocation and expenditure through institutional strengthening, improved coordination, and monitoring at national and decentralized levels. UNICEF, in collaboration with partners including the World Bank, will support child poverty data management towards increased investment in shock-responsive social sectors. The programme will promote right holder participation and engagement in budget planning, particularly at the decentralized level.

32. The programme will strengthen the national social protection system to address the needs of vulnerable children and adolescents, parents and caregivers, helping to mitigate the effects of intergenerational transmission of poverty. Strategic partnerships with the World Bank, the European Union and other actors will be sustained for an inclusive and functional social registry in connection with other existing child-related data systems.

Programme effectiveness

33. The programme will be managed in accordance with organizational standards and promote gender-responsive and age-appropriate multisectoral approaches and resilient systems, amplify social and behaviour change strategies, and mainstream emergency preparedness and response across sectors, specifically climate-related risks.

34. Programme implementation will be supported by strategic advocacy and external communication, including through expanded leveraging of digital technology. Public-private partnerships will be pursued to support connectivity expansion for increased access to digital education and technology-based child and adolescent content. Evidence generation and knowledge management will inform the advocacy strategy and strategic partnerships with the United Nations system, the private sector, academia and international financial institutions, and bilateral and multilateral entities will be leveraged to advance the agenda for children and adolescents in the Gambia.

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>
Every child survives and thrives	3 995	10 812	14 807
Every child learns and develops	1 206	4 674	5 880
Every child is protected from violence, exploitation and harmful practices and has a legal identity	1 122	7 446	8 568
Every child lives free from poverty	391	3 771	4 162
Programme effectiveness	3 471	393	3 864
Total	10 185	27 096	37 281

Programme and risk management

35. This country programme outlines UNICEF contributions to the Gambia NDP 2023–2027, the UNSDCF and the Sustainable Development Goals. It serves as the primary mechanism of accountability to the Executive Board for achievement of results and resources assigned to the programme.

36. The programme will be coordinated as part of the UNSDCF and implemented in cooperation with the Government of the Gambia under the leadership of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs. UNICEF will co-lead and support United Nations country team coordination mechanisms.

37. The key risks that could affect programme implementation include the impact of global and regional political instability on investment in the child rights agenda. In consideration of climate- and health-related risks, the programme has been prepared under the framework of risk-informed programming and will include business continuity management.

38. UNICEF will continue to strengthen the capacities of partners on the harmonized approach to cash transfers and protection of sexual exploitation and abuse measures and standards.

Monitoring, learning and evaluation

39. The integrated results and resources framework, the costed evaluation plan and the integrated monitoring and evaluation plan form the basis for programme monitoring, learning and reporting, aligned with the UNSDCF, the NDP 2023–2027 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

40. Joint workplans with national counterparts will translate the vision of the new country programme and identify midterm targets for increased adaptability as the situation of children evolves. Programme reviews will be planned with a focus on updating progress towards systemic change and outcome-level results. During the country programme, evaluations will prioritize the sustainability of immunization coverage and progress towards reduction of out-of-school children. UNICEF will contribute to strengthening the national evaluation capacity to support learning for scale-up of high-impact interventions and build the capacity of partners for evidence-based planning to focus on vulnerable children and adolescents.

41. The learning from evaluations and other studies as well as the final country programme evaluation will be used to improve advocacy and implementation of ongoing and future programmes. UNICEF will work with partners including academia, research organizations and the Gambia Bureau of Statistics to strengthen national capacity for child rights monitoring and data collection, analysis and use to inform policy advocacy and development. UNICEF will support data collection initiatives such as the national census, MICS, DHS and Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition (SMART) surveys, with a focus on disaggregated data on children and adolescents to address equity gaps.

42. In line with the UNICEF mandate, continuous advocacy and support will be provided for the regular monitoring of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including through periodic reporting as planned. UNICEF will collaborate with the United Nations system and national partners for the monitoring of implementation of other human rights instruments such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Gambia – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, March 2024–December 2028

Convention on the Rights of the Child articles 1–3, 6–9, 13–15, 19, 23–24, 28–29, 31–35, 37, 40 National priorities: Sustainable Development Goals 1–6, 10, 13, 16–17 and NDP pillars I, II, IV and VI
UNSDCF outcomes involving UNICEF: 1.1, 2.1, 2.2 and 3
Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 Goal Areas: 1–5

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3	Outcome 1 By 2028, children, adolescents and women, especially the most excluded, have equitable access to and use quality and resilient primary health care, nutrition, basic water and sanitation services.	Percentage of pregnant women receiving at least four antenatal visits Baseline: 78.5% (DHS 2019/2020) Target: 85%	DHS/MICS/ Health Management Information System	The health system has increased capacity to improve primary health care for mothers and children, especially newborns. Vulnerable children, adolescents and women use health, nutrition and	Ministry of Health and other ministry departments and agencies Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance United States Agency for International Development Government of Japan United Nations system	3 995	10 812	14 807
		Percentage of infants aged 0–5 months who are exclusively fed with breast milk Baseline: 54% (DHS 2019/2020) Target: 59%	DHS/MICS/ sector reviews					
		Percentage of children under 5 who are stunted Baseline: 18% (DHS 2019/2020) Target: 14.7%	DHS/MICS					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
		Percentage of children 0–11 months vaccinated with three doses of DTP-containing/Penta vaccine nationally Baseline: 79% (WUENIC, 2022) Target: 90%	MICS, Sector Review, Administrative Data, WUENIC	WASH services equitably. Communities have improved capacity and implement key actions for the adoption of essential family practices.	Non-governmental organizations Private sector			
		Proportion of population using at least (a) basic water services and (b) basic sanitation services Baseline: (a) 81%, (b) 47% (2021) Target: (a) 90%, (b) 55%	WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene					
2.1, 2.2, 3	Outcome 2 By 2028, more girls, boys and adolescents, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, have inclusive and equitable access to quality learning outcomes and skills in a safe, protective and resilient education system.	Average learning outcome results in core subjects Baseline: * English (Grade 5): 50%, Male (M) – 49.4%, Female (F) – 50.5% * Mathematics (Grade 5): 32.8% (M – 33.1%, F – 32.6%) (2022) Target: * English (Grade 5): Target: 55% (M – 54%, F – 56%) * Mathematics (Grade 5): Target: 40% (M – 41%, F – 39%)	National Assessment Test	Government capacity and evidence-based coordination and planning are increased and policies for quality learning are implemented. Vulnerable communities and children are engaged to demand their right for quality learning.	Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education and other ministry departments and agencies Education Above All World Bank Global Partnership for Education Local education group	1 206	4 674	5 880
		Proportion of young children enrolled in Grade	EMIS					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
		1 with Pre-Primary exposure Baseline: 69% (M – 78%, F – 64%) (2022) Target: 80% (M – 85%, F – 75%)			United Nations system Non-governmental organizations Private sector			
2.1, 2.2, 3	Outcome 3 By 2028, disadvantaged children and adolescents, especially girls, are registered at birth and benefit from an effective and functional child protection system that protects them from violence and harmful practices.	Percentage of young women and men aged 18–29 who experienced sexual violence by age 18, by sex and age Baseline: 4.9% (F) (DHS 2019/2020) Not available (M) Target: 3% (F) To be defined (M)	MICS, DHS	Government and national actors have improved capacities to enforce legislation, allocate budget and implement policies to increase access to birth registration and child protection services. Vulnerable children, adolescents and communities have improved capacity to prevent and report forms of violence and to demand birth registration services.	Ministry of Gender Children and Social Welfare and other ministry departments and agencies United Nations system Non-governmental organizations Private sector	1 122	7 446	8 568
		Percentage of children under 5 whose births are registered Baseline: 59% (M – 60.3%, F – 57.7%) (DHS, 2019/2020) Target: 75% (M – 76.6%, F – 73.3%)	MICS, DHS					
		Girls 0–14 years undergoing FGM Baseline: 50.6% (MICS, 2018) Target: 40%	MICS, DHS					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
1.1, 2.2, 3	Outcome 4 By 2028, vulnerable children and adolescents enjoy human rights- based social protection programmes through equitable, efficient and transparent budget allocation and execution.	Percentage of government budget allocated to the social sector Baseline: Health: 9.53% Education: 12.8% Welfare: 0.36% (2022) Target: Health: 5% above baseline Education: 5% above baseline Welfare: 10% above baseline	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs annual report	The social protection system have increased capacity to design, implement and monitor social protection services. The Government and national actors have the capacity to prepare, implement and monitor the execution of a child-friendly budget. Communities are engaged and participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection programmes.	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and other ministry departments and agencies National Assembly World Bank European Union International financial institutions United Nations system Non- governmental organizations Private sector	391	3 771	4 162
		Number of children covered by social protection systems Baseline: 78 030 (2023) Target: 100 000	National Social Registry					
1.1, 2.1, 2.2 and 3	Outcome 5 Country programme is planned, coordinated and managed to meet quality programming standards and achieve results for	% of key performance indicators meeting scorecard benchmarks Baseline: 0% Target: 80%	UNICEF inSight	Programme is supported by strategic communication , advocacy and partnerships. Programmes are coordinated and monitored	Ministry of Public Service and other ministry departments and agencies Private sector	3 471	393	3 864

<i>UNSDCF outcomes</i>	<i>UNICEF outcomes</i>	<i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i>	<i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
						<i>RR</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Total</i>
	children in the Gambia			with a gender- responsive, age-appropriate and multisectoral lens. State institutions and departments in charge of planning and forecasting have increased capacity to produce and use data to influence national and sectoral policies for children.	Civil society partners Media United Nations system			
Total resources						10 185	27 096	37 281