

**Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board**  
**Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents**  
**2024 first regular session**

*Draft country programme document commenting period: 14 November to 4 December 2023 [18:00 hours Eastern Standard Time]*

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

Delegation name: *United States of America*

Draft country programme document: *Philippines*

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.

	<b>Delegation's comments</b>	<b>Response(s)</b>
<b>General comments</b>	<p>The United States strongly recommends that UNICEF ensure that its health programming in the Philippines is, to the extent possible, well-aligned with and responds to the needs of the country and bolsters integrated PHC delivery capacities particularly at decentralized levels.</p> <p>In light of the triple malnutrition burden (underweight, overweight, and micronutrient deficiencies) affecting children in the country's underserved communities, including those where an estimated 637,000 'zero dose' children live, UNICEF should also prioritize efforts to help integrate high-impact nutrition interventions both in childhood vaccination programs as well as an integral part of all routine essential maternal, newborn and child PHC services.</p>	<p>UNICEF thanks the United States for the relevant comment. UNICEF agrees that PHC is the foundation for an effective health system. As highlighted in paragraph 16, the health and nutrition component is focused on the utilization of "primary health care services" and will use a system strengthening approach. Based on a bottleneck analysis, capacities that will particularly be strengthened include information systems, supply chain, and quality improvement mechanisms that enable providers and community platforms at decentralized level to deliver services.</p> <p>Paragraph 16 also highlights that the health and nutrition component will contribute to strengthening multisectoral nutrition platforms and quality primary health care services</p>

		<p>inclusive of nutrition components, nutritious diets, nurturing practices, and essential supplies.</p> <p>UNICEF agrees that integrated health and nutrition services are called for. Paragraph 18 highlights that UNICEF will continue to prioritize “capacity building for scale-up of high-impact nutrition specific interventions within the primary health care”. Specifically, UNICEF will continue to advocate and support integration of nutrition interventions such as vitamin A supplementation and screening of child wasting into existing immunization services. UNICEF will also support targeted Health Systems Strengthening components such as integrated supply chain management (nutrition, immunization, and essential health services), routine health information system, governance and leadership for nutrition, health including immunization.</p>
<p><b>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme documents</b></p>	<p>The United States suggests inserting language into paragraph 22 on child protection supporting engagement with the National Child Care Authority of the Philippines, which has oversight of child welfare and protection matters in the Philippines in addition to carrying out functions as the Central Authority for the Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention.</p>	<p>UNICEF thanks the United States for the relevant comment. Paragraph 22 has now included child protection and ‘care’ and systems to ensure that the care component is included. As part of systems strengthening, UNICEF will be working with the attached offices of the DSWD including the NACC in implementing the Parenting Effectiveness Service Act and in the implementation of the forthcoming National Plan of Action for Children 2024-2028.</p>