

Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board

Template for delegations commenting on the country programme documents

2021 First Regular Session

Country programme document posting period: 17 November to 7 December 2020

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

Delegation name: Estonia

Draft country programme document: Georgia

In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, 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 will be made public on the Executive Board website, and considered by the requesting country, in close consultation with UNICEF.

Category	Comments	UNICEF Response
General comments	<p>We commend the ambitious reforms, which Georgia has carried out over the past years. We hope, however, that the Country Programme Document will allow to focus on matters that have not yet shown the desired results.</p> <p>In our view, there should be a bigger emphasis on digital transformation of services provided in Georgia, playing a significant role in health care, education and social policy. The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on the digital divide in societies and the urgent need to support this digital transformation. Solutions for e-health, distance learning, telemedicine and tracking viruses will not only help during the pandemic, but will support the resilience and development of Georgia for years to come.</p> <p>We would like to point out that that the situation in conflict-affected areas of Georgia (occupied territories) is much worse than in Tbilisi Administered Territories and that the needs of the children living in those areas should be adequately addressed.</p>	<p>Digital transformation is an important part of the COVID emergency response as well as for delivery of the new Country Programme. UNICEF Georgia is supporting the real-time electronic Management Information System (Birth Registry); a virtual antenatal care programme; tele-practice to link doctors and families for well-baby check-ups; development of a digital communication platform for rural primary healthcare professionals to support effective management of suspected paediatric cases of COVID-19; and development of a mapping tool for COVID-19 cases in Abkhazia, Georgia.</p> <p>With support from Estonia, UNICEF developed the first digital programme for children in primary grades called “We Learn By Play” and training teachers for the use of this programme. UNICEF has also supported the development of online learning platforms, including in Abkhazia, Georgia.</p>

		<p>These digital platforms and resources are expected to support the continued strengthening and delivery of health, education and social services in Georgia for years to come.</p>
<p>Comments on specific aspects of the country programme document</p>	<p><i>(Delegations providing comments may wish to include details, such as the page number, paragraph number, or page of the annexed results and resources framework.</i></p> <p>Health and Nutrition: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights should be an integral part of the programme priorities, especially when it comes to raising the awareness of girls on SRHR.</p> <p>Education: Estonia has been very active when it comes to the development cooperation with Georgia, especially in the field of education. As a response and long-term strategy to build resilience of the education sector to function during crises, it is important to expand learning opportunities. Thus, it is necessary to incorporate into the programme also the enhancement of distance learning, with a focus on accessibility, digital literacy and teacher training. This would also help reduce the digital divide among children.</p> <p>Child Protection: The whole of society approach in the field of child protection is very important. Child Rights Education should be included on all levels of the school curricula.</p>	<p>As part of the maternal and child health (MCH) programme, UNICEF is contributing to SRHR including through support to eMTCT of HIV and syphilis, antenatal care (ANC), and SRHR in schools. In addition, UNICEF Georgia is also supporting activities to address violence against girls including sexual violence. The support for SRHR is articulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and shows that UNICEF is a contributing agency.</p> <p>The support of Estonia has been critical in moving education reforms forward in Georgia. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the digital divide, putting education out of reach for many children in Georgia. UNICEF Georgia continues advocating for all children to have access to internet to contribute to fulfilling their right to education. In addition, UNICEF is supporting the training of teachers to improve their digital literacy and improve their online teaching techniques to enable better learning outcomes for children.</p> <p>Child rights in education is a fundamental part of the work that UNICEF Georgia is supporting. The focus will be on incorporating the rights of the child into educational programmes and curricula of</p>

		<p>universities (bachelor and masters level programmes) to capacitate and prepare future teachers. The support of Estonia has been important in developing the foundation for these university programmes.</p>
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