

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: *Australia*

Draft country programme document: *China*

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.

	Comments from the Member State	UNICEF Response
General comments	<p><u>China as a partner for global development and South-South cooperation)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Consistent with Australia's comments on a previous Country Program Document (CPD) draft, Australia notes that CPDs are usually primarily confined to activities in the partner country, rather than activities in third party countries. CPDs are also factual documents, and avoid promoting or endorsing specific programs or signature foreign policy initiatives of any country, donor or recipient. In supporting progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Australia values UNICEF's role in promoting best practice in development assistance. The CPD would be improved through a greater focus on UNICEF's work with China to deliver development cooperation that adheres to international standards, is transparent, meets genuine needs and is financially sustainable, rather than the CPD's current emphasis on	<p>UNICEF appreciates the comments made by Australia on the China draft country programme document (CPD). We have taken note of and replied to points raised by Australia and have amended the text of the CPD in discussion with the Government of China.</p> <p>The 2021-2025 UNICEF country programme for China has been designed to contribute to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development agreed upon by 193 Member States of the United Nations.</p>

<p>UNICEF’s role in facilitating China’s development cooperation in other countries. We recommend the CPD results and resources framework also outlines how UNICEF will measure progress, such as through indicators which assess effectiveness and quality of activities in line with international standards.</p> <p><u>Safeguards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia recommends the CPD includes additional detail on how UNICEF will manage potential risks and apply safeguards, including for activities involving the private sector and those focused on data/data governance. Australia recommends all UN CPDs emphasise the importance of protecting human rights, especially vulnerable groups such as ethnic minorities, and outline how UNICEF will meet commitments to apply and monitor compliance with UN system safeguard policies. • Approaches that are ‘child-centred’ are referred to throughout the CPD. Australia’s position is that child-centred approaches must protect, respect and fulfill the human rights of children. <p><u>Engagement with Member States</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia recommends the CPD outlines UNICEF’s mechanisms for strengthening consultation and coordination with all development partners in China and in third countries, to enhance transparency and effectiveness of activities. <p><u>Resourcing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CPD should provide a more detailed breakdown on “regular resources” and “other resources”, including detail on funding partners and how much funding will be directed to international and/or south-south cooperation. 	<p>UNICEF seeks to provide technical assistance to countries in line with the UN Charter and UNICEF’s Strategic plan 2018-2021, and not to promote any one country’s foreign policy initiatives.</p> <p>UNICEF aims to influence and inform the efforts of the Government of China in line with international norms and standards, through specific institutions such as the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), as they invest in other countries towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) so as to maximize results for all children, leaving no one behind.</p> <p>One of the aims of the UN Charter is ‘to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems’. The UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018-2021 notes that ‘promoting cooperation, sharing lessons learned and fostering innovation and partnerships through South-South and triangular cooperation will also be emphasized’. Therefore, assessing and transparently sharing best practices in child development - that are in line with international norms and standards – to China from other countries, and from China, aims to support sustainable development bi-directionally.</p> <p>UNICEF China acting as a neutral facilitator to influence and inform China’s investments in other countries towards SDG attainment is consistent with the universality and the interconnectivity (between goals, between countries, and between global, regional and national levels) of the SDGs. It is also consistent with the global mandate of UNICEF, which works in more than 190 countries, to promote child rights and reach the most disadvantaged children.</p> <p>The UNICEF China CPD aims first and foremost to uphold and protect the rights of all children in China, including all vulnerable groups that include ethnic minorities. In line with UNICEF’s Child Safeguarding Policy (2016), the UNICEF China country programme will ensure to protect and safeguard children from harm.</p>
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	<p><u>COVID</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF could consider expanding discussion/analysis on the current and long-term impacts of COVID on poverty in China as it relates to children. 	<p>Relevant stakeholders and donors will be engaged in the implementation of the CPD through programme reviews, and other forums.</p> <p>The summary budget table indicates the allocation of funding by programme component and the source. Leveraging resources from public and private sectors in China for both domestic development and for other countries is a priority for the country programme. The majority of the proposed UNICEF country programme 2021-2025 is focussed on programming in China as per the summary budget table and the results and resources framework. UNICEF will advocate with the Government of China the value-add of engaging in South-South cooperation in partnership with UN agencies, including the funding of the UN. This engagement requires both human and financial resources for UNICEF in China and this has been estimated at \$15 million for the period 2021-2025.</p> <p>UNICEF will also provide assistance to prevent a relapse into poverty in China in view of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>The CPD notes new challenges for children such as the risk of obesity and the need for online child protection.</p> <p>UNICEF will enhance delivery of its programme results through its monitoring and evaluation framework. Output indicators will be defined and aligned with global, regional and national priority indicators to the extent possible, and will be assessed during mid- and end-year reviews. The CPD is evidence-based and is informed by the most recent available data.</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><u>Data sources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like the CPD to include more recent data (e.g.: paragraph 6 refers to China committing to eradicate extreme poverty <u>by 2020</u>; paragraph 15 includes data from 2010 on people living with a disability, yet paragraph 12 provides 2018 data on children with disabilities attending mainstream schools). <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for clarification: What does “meeting the <u>ever-growing needs</u> of the country’s 271 million children” mean? (paragraph 4). <p><u>Resources and Results Framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The indicators could better reflect both the outputs and expected outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>[e.g.: Outcome 1 indicators only relate to neonatal mortality and overweight and obesity rates despite the emphasis on malnutrition; For Outcome 2, outputs 2 and 3 are not well reflected in the indicators of progress]</i> 	<p>The CPD notes new challenges for children such as the risk of obesity and the need for online child protection.</p> <p>UNICEF will enhance delivery of its programme results through its monitoring and evaluation framework. Output indicators will be defined and aligned with global, regional and national priority indicators to the extent possible, and will be assessed during mid- and end-year reviews. The CPD is evidence-based and is informed by the most recent available data.</p>