

## 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: *Canada*

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.

	Member state comments	UNICEF response
<b>General comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Canada shares member state concerns over the transparency and adequacy of consultations for the development of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for China. Recognising that these are still early days for this new way of working, we wish to highlight the importance of the preparatory process and sequencing of the UNSDCF and CPD in helping to avoid the issues now being raised in connection with the CPD. As with the Framework, we seek assurances that all relevant stakeholders and donors will be fully and transparently consulted during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CPD.</li><li>“Leaving no one behind” and a “human-rights based approach” are among the guiding principles for the preparation of UNSDCFs and CPDs. We find clear reference to the latter to be lacking in this document. We note that the list of “vulnerable groups” does not include ethnic and</li></ul>	<p>UNICEF appreciates the comments made by Canada on the China draft country programme document (CPD). We have taken note of and replied to the points raised, and have amended the text of the CPD in discussion with the Government of China.</p> <p>The China CPD is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 (UNSDCF). Relevant stakeholders and donors will be engaged in the finalization of the results matrix of the UNSDCF, the implementation of the UNSDCF through Joint Annual Reviews, and implementation of the CPD through programme reviews and other forums.</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 and religious minorities. For example, UNICEF recently worked with counterparts to translate messages in</p>

	<p>religious minorities and would seek clarification on how UNICEF under this country program will protect core UN principles of human rights, in particular for these minorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Though the CPDs are intended to align with and support national development plans and priorities, UN and member states need to ensure that the language used in these documents supports core UN principles, and does not undermine a rules-based international system that upholds human rights and democratic governance.</li> <li>• The CPD should be focused on the work of the organisation in China and not their partnership with China, leveraging South-South Cooperation, in other countries. UNICEF has a role to play in promoting best practice in development assistance, including by ensuring that the assistance provided by countries including China, adheres to international standards of, inter alia, human rights, labour, transparency, environmental protection and debt sustainability, and with clear reference to relevant SDGs. We would have expected to see this reflected in this document.</li> </ul> <p>Given China’s international development cooperation activities, we would seek clarification on when China is expected to graduate from UNICEF support. If this is not in the near future, the question could be reasonably asked as to why China is supporting other developing countries globally while receiving UN support.</p>	<p>Yi and Tibetan minority languages to ensure ethnic minority children received COVID-19 prevention information.</p> <p>In UNICEF’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021, UNICEF commits: ‘to realize the rights of all children, everywhere, and to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a world in which no child is left behind.’ This commitment is embedded within the CPD that ‘is aimed at supporting the Government to realize the rights of all children in China, including the most disadvantaged...’, and ‘...by 2025, the rights of more girls and boys, including the most disadvantaged, will be realized so that they survive, live in a safer and healthier environment and develop to their full potential.’ Discussion of child rights is prominent in the CPD in relation to all children in China, including vulnerable groups. The overarching focus on rights provides the framework for UNICEF’s support to child development efforts in China.</p> <p>The majority of the proposed UNICEF country programme 2021-2025 is focussed on programming in China as reflected in the summary budget table. UNICEF also 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>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 and territories, to promote child rights and reach the most disadvantaged children.</p>
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