

Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board
Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents
2025 second regular session

*Draft country programme document commenting period for: Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Liberia, North Macedonia, Oman, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan: **10–30 June 2025** [18:00 hours Eastern Daylight Time]*

*Draft country programme document commenting period for: Serbia, including RRF and CEP for Kosovo, under United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999): **11 June–1 July 2025** [18:00 hours Eastern Daylight 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: *France*

Draft country programme document: *Kosovo*

	Delegation's comments	Response(s)
General comments	We would like more details on the aims of the projects implemented in Kosovo on two specific topics: 1/ To what extent do they take into account the issue of the Serb minority in Kosovo? Are there specific projects for this community? 2/ Are there any projects aimed at promoting reconciliation between young Serbs and Albanians?	1/ The goal of the UNICEF Kosovo programme is to ensure that all children, adolescents, and young people—especially the most marginalized—fully realize their rights and reach their potential in a protective and inclusive environment. Developed with a rights-based, equity- and gender-focused approach, the Kosovo programme has a strong equity focus which entails prioritizing interventions aimed at empowering marginalized communities, including the Serb minority in Kosovo. In order to advance evidence based and impactful programming in non-majority communities, UNICEF has maintained a zone office in North Mitrovica. UNICEF's approach to advance inclusion of all children is grounded on evidence generation and situation analysis and support to children from the Serb minority, along with all other minorities, is mainstreamed throughout all programmatic areas. For example, this year, UNICEF is supporting the implementation of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) which provides quality and comparable estimates on the situation of children, adolescents and families in Kosovo. The survey collects representative data and among others includes the Serb minority population as well.

		UNICEF’s vision for all young children in Kosovo to thrive is anchored in building a sustainable foundation for children’s holistic development. These efforts will ensure that young children are provided with increased access to early childhood education for all children including the Serb minority. The inclusion of Serb minority children with disabilities remains a key priority and is mainstreamed across programmes. In the area of education, UNICEF will support schools to enhance quality assurance, planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational practices. A whole-school approach will be piloted, emphasizing internal school evaluation, climate resilience, and inclusive practices to foster collaboration and continuous learning outcome improvement. To further advance equity in education, UNICEF will work closely with partners for a more efficient education financing. Beyond schools, UNICEF aims to strengthen the school-to-work transition by equipping adolescents and young people with relevant skills for the labor market. This will involve expanding career-relevant learning opportunities and strengthening institutional frameworks for youth participation. To enhance youth engagement, funding and mentorship opportunities will be provided to civil society organizations and young individuals, promoting volunteerism as a tool for societal development. 2/ As indicated in output “2.2 By 2030, young people, especially those in vulnerable situation, are engaged, empowered and connected through gender-responsive programmes on skills, mental health, climate action and social cohesion”, fostering social cohesion among young people in Kosovo has been identified as a priority for UNICEF Kosovo programme. This is mainstreamed throughout all adolescents’ programmes where engagement of all adolescents and young people, including the Serb minority, is a priority. A specific example includes UNICEF ongoing partnership with the UN Peacebuilding Fund implementing the project “Youth Empowered through Inclusive Schools and Societies (YESS)”. The first phase of the project which ends in December 2025 demonstrated the strong potential of school-based peacebuilding initiatives to foster youth leadership, intercultural understanding, and conflict resolution in 11 municipalities. By training teachers in inclusive and complex thinking pedagogies, establishing student councils and peer mediation clubs, the project enabled students to engage in democratic processes and contribute to decision-making at school and municipal levels. Student councils, especially in multi-ethnic schools, became platforms
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		for inclusion, with students from non-majority communities elected for the first time in municipalities like Obiliq, Prizren, South Mitrovica, Kamenica, Gjilan, and Dragash. UNICEF has prepared a concept for phase 2 of YESS and will continue to explore different funding streams to advance programming on social cohesion in Kosovo. The second phase proposes a holistic, multi-layered methodology that strengthens peacebuilding systems at both school and community levels by integrating four interlinked pillars. First, youth empowerment and civic engagement will be deepened through student councils, peer mediation, civic education initiatives, and inter-school and inter-community exchanges, youth-led initiatives and cooperation with media. These platforms provide young people with opportunities to participate meaningfully in decision-making and to take on leadership roles in promoting peace and inclusion. Second, in response to a growing demand for emotional support services, the project will build school and municipal-level capacities for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support. This includes equipping teachers, psychologists, and peer support structures with the knowledge and tools needed to address mental health concerns and to foster psychological resilience among students across all communities. Third, recognizing the influential role of families and the wider community, the project will promote parental and community engagement to strengthen inclusive values, reduce stigma, and cultivate a shared sense of responsibility for conflict prevention and social cohesion. At the fourth level, facing the lack of workplace inclusivity and gender sensitivity employment practices, the project will continue to empower youth from diverse backgrounds by providing skills development and training in collaboration with the private sector aiming equal access to employment opportunities.
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