

**Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board**  
**Template for delegations commenting on the draft country programme documents**  
**2023 second regular session**

*Draft country programme document commenting period: 13 June to 3 July 2023 [18:00 EST]*

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

Delegation name: *Kingdom of the Netherlands*

Draft country programme document: *Burundi*

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>	We appreciate the thorough analysis in the CPD and the clear results and resources framework.	We thank you for comments and acknowledgments of the analysis.
	The CPD puts a strong focus on the direct needs and direct impact of proposed activities on the health and wellbeing of children in Burundi. However, it could benefit from a stronger focus on the root causes and long-term impact of problems identified.	UNICEF appreciates the interest in addressing the root causes and would like to highlight that prior to the Country Programme Development, UNICEF has developed a comprehensive causal analysis for the main deprivations faced by the children in the country as well as a bottleneck analysis. Due to the word count limit, we have not been able to reflect all the causes in the CPD situation analysis, but remain available to discuss this further.
	With a high fertility rate of at least 5,2 children per women, and given the current GDP, most children will be born into poverty, and will not have access to sufficient food, health	The Government acknowledges the high fertility rate and its impact on the development of the country. UNICEF and the rest of the UN system also recognizes the demographic pressure on resources and social services and the need for investments to support Burundi so that it can ensure the demographics becomes a development dividend. The importance of reducing unmet need for family planning services is seen as part of a comprehensive

	<p>care or education. The increasing number of street children can be seen as a direct consequence of this fact. Adequate access to contraceptives, not only for couples but also for adolescent girls and boys, as well as comprehensive sexuality education that starts at a young age, is the cornerstone of an effective policy to reduce poverty among (future) children and to eradicate teenage pregnancies. We expect UNICEF to work jointly with UNFPA, WHO and other partners, to ensure that this message is part of all policies.</p>	<p>approach to sexual and reproductive health. UNICEF is working with partners on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNFPA is working with the Government on a new Strategic Plan on Family Planning (<i>Plan Stratégique Planification Familiale</i>) for 2023-2027 and UNICEF is contributing to this plan.</li> <li>• To support maternal and child health, while aligned with national Family Planning Strategy, UNICEF reinforces the capacity of health providers and promotes social and behavior change that helps prevent rapid repeat pregnancy, through pre-nuptial consultation and early post-natal care.</li> <li>• Furthermore, UNICEF is also collaborating with WHO to develop and roll out a comprehensive School Health and Nutrition Policy. UNICEF is working with WHO and UNFPA to support the Ministry of Health to set up Adolescent and Youth Friendly sexual and reproductive health Services.</li> <li>• UNICEF is implementing a programme on lifeskills for in and out of school adolescents which includes a component on sexual and reproductive health and rights.</li> <li>• For many years, UNICEF has been working with Forum of African Women Educationist (FAWE) to improve reproductive health, including preventing early and unintended pregnancies, in collaboration with the “Zero pregnancy” unit from the Ministry of Education. Thanks to UNICEF advocacy and support, an increased number of adolescent mothers have been able to reintegrate school and were provided with parenting education, including on family planning.</li> <li>• Since 2022, UNICEF has been working with UNFPA as well as NGOs (e.g., FAWE) to support the Ministry of Education to mainstream aspects related to health and wellbeing into the basic education curricula to empower adolescents, in particular girls, to make informed decisions including to avoid early and unintended pregnancy.</li> </ul>
	<p>Another example is the fact that a high percentage of malnutrition in the country not only leads to direct suffering, it also deprives a country from generations of talented young people. We expect UNICEF to work with the WFP and others, to emphasize the fact that in order to</p>	<p>UNICEF Burundi agrees with the comment and has been actively engaging and advocating for investments in sustainable solutions to address malnutrition. Extensive work has been done on evidence generation including on the returns on investment for adolescents and young children (early childhood development). Inclusive and sustainable food systems is the first pillar of the UNSDCF for Burundi and all agencies will collaborate in its implementation, including WFP and FAO. Furthermore, a new joint programme on food systems has been developed and a consultation was organized with partners in June. UNICEF will further reinforce multi-sectoral approaches in tackling</p>

	combat malnutrition, countries need to investment in sustainable solutions.	malnutrition including through an integrated early childhood development package with a strong focus on social protection to lift families out of poverty and quality health and WASH services.
	We applaud the fact that UNICEF makes thorough analysis of public investments of the government of Burundi vis-a-vis education, health and nutrition. We however also note with concern UNICEF's significant demand for additional resources, while the government budget lines for health and education have declined over the course of the last few years. How do you continue conversations with the government about domestic resource allocation?	<p>The needs of children in Burundi remain extremely high and therefore UNICEF's budget has been adjusted slightly in line with potential for resource mobilization. Over the current CPD, the CO has managed to mobilize more other resources than anticipated and the estimations for the new CPD have been based on current fundraising trends. We do recognize the new challenges that will come with the global funding environment and are hoping to diversify funding sources including with non-traditional donors. In alignment with the other UN agencies and working within the framework of the MPTF, UNICEF is confident competition will be reduced and issue-based discussions could help increase fundraising.</p> <p>However, UNICEF agrees that the domestic resource allocation is key and will allow addressing children's issues at scale over time.</p> <p>Acknowledging the limited fiscal space in Burundi, UNICEF will pursue the conversation with the Government both on increasing government allocation for social sectors and improving efficiency in the already existing financing. This will be supported by exercises like public expenditures reviews, participation in the open budget survey, capacity building of finance and line ministry on effective budget execution</p> <p>UNICEF will also support the Government in implementing its ongoing programme-based budgeting reform at central and local levels with a focus on social sector ministries. This will contribute to more alignment between national policies and budget allocation for social sectors</p> <p>Finally, during this CPD, UNICEF will start exploring new options for social sector financing at local level with the communes as a pivotal element to ensure adequate investments in children at all levels.</p>
<b>Comments on specific aspects of the draft country programme documents</b>		