

**Office of the Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board**

**Template for delegations commenting on the country programme documents**

**2021 second regular session**

*Country programme document posting period: 16 June to 6 July 2021*

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: UK

Draft country programme document: Bangladesh

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.

<b>General comments</b>	<b>Delegations' comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Comments on specific aspects of the country programme document</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Coordination, collaboration and partnerships with other development partners as a strategy for programme delivery is missing in the document.</i></li> </ul>	<p>First of all, we would like to sincerely thank the Government of UK for its continuous support to UNICEF's work for children and women in Bangladesh.</p> <p>Due to strict word limitation of the CPD as an official document, coordination, collaboration and partnerships with other development partners is described under "<i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i>" column of "<i>Results and resource framework</i>" (Annex) for all the planned outcomes (pp. 11-16 of the draft CPD document). It is very much recognised that strategic partnerships with relevant actors are essential for our assistance to have larger positive impact in the country as a whole.</p>

General comments	Delegations' comments	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The key advocacy agenda such as increased education financing, child marriage, climate change and resilience have not been highlighted or focused in the delivery strategies</i></li> </ul>	<p>A. Regarding financing issue, Paragraph 14 of the draft CPD document states as follows.</p> <p><i>“14. The country programme is aimed at supporting Bangladesh to take maximum advantage of the remaining period of its demographic window of opportunity by making prioritized investments in children for the realization of child rights and sustainable development in Bangladesh.”</i></p> <p>Due to strict word limitation of the CPD as an official document, the “<i>prioritized investments</i>” could not be mentioned for each one of the concerned sectors (eg. Education, Health, Social Protection, etc.) in the draft CPD document itself. However, it is certainly one of the top-most advocacy and policy priorities of UNICEF in Bangladesh as shown in pp. 10-11 of a report titled “<i>PAYING FORWARD AND INVESTING IN CHILDREN NOW: Demographic changes in Bangladesh – Trends and policy implications</i>” (<a href="https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/media/5086/file/brochure_A4_Demographic_web_final.pdf.pdf">https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/media/5086/file/brochure_A4_Demographic_web_final.pdf.pdf</a>) launched in May 2021.</p> <p>B. Regarding child marriage, Paragraph 35 of the draft CPD document states as follows.</p> <p><i>“35. Approaches to prevent child marriage will rely on the latest global evidence and best practices. Behavioural change communication and partnerships with adolescents and families are expected to shift negative social and gender norms and harmful practices while increasing girls’ access to health, education and social protection services.”</i></p> <p>C. Regarding climate change and resilience, the following paragraphs contain the concerned descriptions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paragraph 1 (Programme rationale)</li> <li>Paragraph 23 (Health)</li> <li>Paragraph 28 (Education)</li> <li>Paragraph 34 (Child Protection)</li> <li>Paragraph 37 (WASH)</li> <li>Paragraph 38 (WASH)</li> <li>Paragraph 43 (Programme effectiveness)</li> </ol>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Health (page 6): A separate paragraph on Covid-19 response plan would have been useful. This does not capture the work they are doing on oxygen and other areas to improve capacity of the district level hospitals and there are no relevant KPIs as well.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Due to very strict word limitation of the CPD as an official document, we could not go into the specifics of a range of COVID-19 responses that UNICEF in Bangladesh has been supporting in accordance with the Bangladesh Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19 of the Government of Bangladesh. We will articulate more specific activities and KPIs in our annual work plans that are to be prepared and signed with the government every year to operationalise the contents of the CPD. We thank the Government of UK for taking cognizance of our work in this critical area.</p> <p>For kind information, COVID-19 response is mentioned in the following paragraphs of the draft CPD document. As mentioned above, the details of the concerned activities will be specified in the annual work plans.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Paragraph 1 (Programme rationale)</li> <li>2. Paragraph 4 (Programme rationale)</li> <li>3. Paragraph 8 (Programme rationale)</li> <li>4. Paragraph 9 (Programme rationale)</li> <li>5. Paragraph 15 (Programme priorities and partnership)</li> <li>6. Paragraph 16 (Programme priorities and partnership)</li> <li>7. Paragraph 17 (Programme priorities and partnership)</li> <li>8. Paragraph 21 (Health)</li> <li>9. Paragraph 22 (Health)</li> <li>10. Paragraph 28 (Education)</li> <li>11. Paragraph 39 (WASH)</li> </ol>

General comments	Delegations' comments	Response
		<p>12. Paragraph 41 (Social Policy and Social Protection)</p> <p>13. Paragraph 46 (Programme and risk management)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Outcome indicators (page 11): Recommend to include an outcome indicator to increase access of out-of-school children i.e. Proportion of out of school children reduced.</i></li> <li>• <i>Education. Outcome 3: No KPI set to track increasing participation rate for the primary school age children. This is crucial in a post covid-19 context where it is anticipated that enrolment and retention of children could be negatively affected.</i></li> <li>• <i>Outcome 3: KPI 1: (Participation rate in organized learning one year before the official primary entry age (total; girls; boys) B: 77.4%; 78.8%; 76.1% T:</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Well noted. UNICEF will continuously monitor and support necessary actions regarding out-of-school children in its annual work plans with the Government of Bangladesh and review it in its annual reports. There are also indicators on out-of-school children in UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and data from them will serve as a basis for informed decision-making in this regard.</li> <li>● Restoration of access to essential basic services in the COVID/post-COVID context will be a common theme for many sectors including Education for which indicators such as enrolment, attendance and drop-out rates in primary schools will be closely monitored. We will continue to follow up this matter in our annual work plans that are to be prepared and signed with the government every year to operationalise the contents of the CPD.</li> <li>● On the comment that the achievement of 100% participation in organized learning one year before the official primary entry age is too ambitious in the post-COVID context, UNICEF will have a consultation with the government on it. At the same time, we would also like to highlight that quality early childhood development/early childhood education is one of the most cost-effective development interventions (annual return on investment of 13 per cent based on a leading study from the US, which is much higher than the annual return on equities in the US stock market in the post-Second World War through the 2008 global financial crisis: <a href="https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/12/12/504867570/how-investing-in-preschool-beats-the-stock-market-hands-down">https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/12/12/504867570/how-investing-in-preschool-beats-the-stock-market-hands-down</a>). It is therefore one of the best investments a country can make to reduce the</li> </ul>

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	<i>100% ; 100%; 100%): Too ambitious target (100%) for five years in a post Covid-19 context.</i>	inter-generational transmission of the negative impact of COVID-19 which we are very much worried about.