

**MEMBER STATE COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT FOR
THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

First regular session 2020

Comments by Belgium	UNFPA regional/country office response
<p>The proposed UNFPA indicative UNFPA assistance for the DRC = 150,3 MUSD, with 32,3 MUSD from regular resources and 118 MUSD through co-financing modalities and other resources. Taking into account the experience from the past, is it a realistic approach that the estimated amount for co-financing is 5 times higher than the regular resources?</p>	<p>The UNFPA CO in DRC thanks Belgium for the comments on the country programme document.</p> <p>In 2018, the CO budget was approximately 30 million USD, of which UNFPA regular resources was 5.8 million (less than 20%). In 2019, the annual budget was around 40 million USD of which the regular resource was 5.8 Million USD (around 15%). Additionally, UNFPA has secured multi-year funding from Sweden, Canada, the World Bank and the UK (through UNFPA Supplies). A dedicated Partnership Specialist will also join the team, strengthening the capacity of the country office to mobilize additional resources and identify opportunities for innovative financing. In this regard, the CO expects to meet the resource mobilization targets.</p>
<p>Point 12: the draft country programme mentions that the proposed programme is aligned to the National Strategic Development Plan for 2020-2024. According to our information, the National Strategic Development Plan for the DRC for the years 2018-2022 is not yet finalized.</p>	<p>The National Development Plan 2020-2024 was in draft form and was developed with the involvement of key development actors in the country. However, due to the complexities of the political context, no formal endorsement of the document has taken place as yet. This document, along with sectoral plans, has been used by the UN system to develop the new UN Cooperation Framework in the DRC for the next five years.</p> <p>A recent workshop was organised by the Ministry of Planning to validate and align the vision of the new Government of the country with the National Development Plan 2020-2024 and the UN Cooperation Framework, and it has been noted that the priority areas of the new Government are addressed in the UN Cooperation Framework (new UNDAF) which has been used as the main reference for developing the UNFPA country programme. All the results in the new UNDAF will remain unchanged.</p>
<p>Who are the key national and development partners that have been consulted before developing the proposed UNFPA indicative UNFPA assistance for the DRC?</p>	<p>The process of developing the new UNFPA country programme document started at the annual review meeting with key partners in December 2018. This review was organised by the Ministry of Development Cooperation and brought together all the line ministries (Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Education, National Statistical Institute, among others). Representatives from the provinces and approximately 20 NGOs participated in the review, alongside development and bilateral partners, which resulted in the first draft version of the country programme results framework. The consultation</p>

	<p>process has since continued with the development of the new UNDAF, and the related country programme documents were updated to reflect emerging strategic priorities at national level.</p>
<p>What is the link between the proposed draft country programme and the UNDAF for the DRC?</p>	<p>The link between the UNDAF and the UNFPA programme is highlighted across the document, including country context analysis and interventions, but specifically in the results and resources framework sections. Essentially, the CPD is derived based on the strategic priorities of UNDAF and requisite indicators. All the results presented in the UNFPA programme reflect the UNFPA contribution to the achievement of the new UNDAF results framework.</p>
<p>17: adolescents and youth: the proposal focuses specifically on adolescent girls but it is also important to engage with adolescent boys and young men on sexual and reproductive health and rights and to question stereotypes about masculinity and male risk-taking behaviour and to promote their understanding of and support for reproductive rights, and gender equality</p>	<p>Paragraph 18, page 4 of the document underscores the inclusion of men and boys in sexual and reproductive health and rights. One of the strategic interventions highlighted in achieving the output on gender is: <i>(c) engaging communities and networks, including religious and traditional leaders, <u>men and boys</u> to promote positive masculinity and empowerment of women, and monitoring implementation of the roadmap for the call to action to end gender-based violence in conflicts.</i></p>
<p>25: can we get more information on the strengthening of the UNFPA-office in the DRC?</p>	<p>UNFPA has its main office in Kinshasa and three decentralized offices (in Goma, Kalemie and Kinshasa). In addition to those offices, UNFPA has presence in Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi, Tsikapa, Bukavu, Uvira, Bunia and Lubumbashi). In line with the evolving situation in the country, UNFPA plans to strengthen its presence in Kananga and its human resources to respond better to the needs of the programme implementation. The programme will also benefit from the technical support of the Regional Office for East and Southern Africa and UNFPA headquarters.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: population dynamics: the outcome indicator is the proportion of the population expected to be counted as per 2020 census: the baseline is 25% and the target 50 %. How is the baseline calculated?</p>	<p>The baseline was not calculated. The country office reflected on the proportion of the population counted in the last census in 1984. It is reported that 25% of the population was enumerated and their data collected and analysed. Given the recent developments in DRC, and based on the technical mission report (25th November 2019 review of census progress with World Bank, African Development Bank, UNFPA, Ministry of Planning, National Institute of Statistics and National Census Bureau), the optimized test (methodology for census mapping to be adopted in the entire country) has been postponed to 2020; this means the census enumeration will take place in 2021 at best. In summary, the baseline reflects the 1984 situation and we hope to cover at minimum 50% of the population. UNFPA is currently working with World Population to develop modelling techniques, using high-resolution satellite imagery to be used to estimate population in the other 50% remaining areas (in areas not reachable either because of security or logistics). This will provide population estimates for the entire country.</p>

<p>The percentage of births registered with civil registration services is 25 % and the baseline of the proportion of children who benefit from birth certificates is 14%. What is the reason for this gap and why do births registered by civil registration services do not benefit from birth certificates?</p>	<p>Registering children is the first step in the process of acquiring birth certificates. Not all parents of children whose births are registered will apply for a birth certificate, and it is only those parents who apply that will be issued with birth certificates. UNFPA is implementing a project on civil registration in the DRC funded by the World Bank, with an objective of registering 2.4 million children, out of which 600.000 will receive the birth certificate by 2020. With this in mind, there would be approximately 25% of the registered children (not of all children in the country) who will have birth certificates (this is the baseline in the outcome indicator of the country programme). The programme will contribute to ensuring that around 50% of those registered will receive their birth certificate.</p> <p>The proportion of 14% is captured in the output indicator and reflects the estimate of the proportion of children who have birth certificates among the total number of children in the country. This percentage will increase to 28% by the end of the programme.</p>
<p>Comments by France</p>	<p>UNFPA regional/country office response</p>
<p>We urge UNFPA, in its country programs and actions, not to weaken the reference to the sexual and reproductive rights, rather than referring only to sexual and reproductive health. France therefore strongly supports the outcomes 1 and 2 of the draft country program for DRC, which are ambitious and comprehensive.</p>	<p>The country office thanks France for these comments which are very well noted.</p>
<p>However, the 3rd outcome on gender equality and women's empowerment should be strengthened in this regard. The mention of the Maputo Protocole is a relevant element but the reference to the sexual rights has been excluded – even though these are essential to genuine empowerment of women and girls. (item 19) <i>“Strengthened policy, legal, and accountability frameworks to advance gender equality and empower women and girls to exercise their reproductive [add: and sexual] rights and end child marriage.”</i></p>	<p>The CO will ensure that the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment is further strengthened throughout the implementation of the country programme.</p> <p>We note that reproductive rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. The CO fully agrees that empowering women and girls to exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights and ending child marriage are fundamentally important.</p>
<p>(item 23) In accordance with the BAPA+40 conference, accountability and transparency requirements for the south-south and triangular cooperations is being established, as well as the necessity to collect quality data on the financings provided, including via the official development assistance declarations to the OECD, and within the</p>	<p>UNFPA commits to transparency through the regular sharing of information with partners, outlining criteria for how core and unearmarked funding are allocated (for example: urgent needs, emergency preparedness, improved management) and setting the stage for more participatory delivery while supporting and complementing national coordination mechanisms.</p>

<p>context of the new instrument for development finance TOSSD. We therefore would like to ask to UNFPA how it plans to declare its data on the south-south and triangular cooperations in DRC.</p>	<p>In line with its commitment, UNFPA has further refined its reporting through the UNFPA Transparency Portal, a self-reporting mechanism available to the public (http://www.unfpa.org/transparency-portal).</p> <p>Since 2015, UNFPA has presented its income and expenditure figures on the transparency portal, with detailed information on global and country level key results, programme expenses by resources type, proportion expended by UNFPA, government, NGO's and finally donor contributions.</p> <p>The transparency portal shows how funds are spent and whether the source of funds is from UNFPA core resources or from earmarked resources. At CO level, UNFPA also has regular audit activities conducted by External Auditors, in which case, the results are made available to the public.</p> <p>UNFPA will continue to provide such data and make publicly available information on South-South and triangular cooperation in DRC.</p>
<p>Comments by USA</p>	<p>UNFPA regional/country office response</p>
<p>The United States would like to thank UNFPA for sharing its draft program document outlining UNFPA assistance to Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for 2020-2024, and recognizes that the program focus, key program components, and proposed outputs fit well with the DRC's demographic, health, and reproductive health needs.</p> <p>Below are some recommendations and comments, which the authors may wish to consider while finalizing the draft.</p>	<p>The Country Office thanks the United States for providing comments on the draft country programme for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2020-2024).</p>
<p><i>1. Regarding the Programme Rationale and the Results and Resources Framework</i></p> <p>Related to Item 3 of the Programme Rationale, the output indicator regarding the targeted number of new adherents to family planning could lead to unintended consequences and should be carefully designed with those consequences in mind. Specifically, we encourage all activities using targets to consider the indicator being used, how the program is structured, and if targets will be flowed down to the individual service provider level, which could compromise principles of voluntarism. We thus encourage UNFPA to carefully consider the program structure and the indicator.</p>	<p>The principles of voluntarism, no coercion and informed choice are paramount to UNFPA family planning programmes. It is important to note that unmet need for family planning is 27%, and we are aspiring to offer a full range and choice of modern family planning methods to the women of DRC. If we succeed in meeting the unmet need of half of these women, then the voluntary use of modern contraceptives will increase to 30% from the current levels of 18%. Even with this achievement, nearly 1 in 10 women will still have unfulfilled need for family planning. However, we will further strengthen provider training on informed choice, client-centric service delivery and client satisfaction. The targets are intended for high-level planning and budgeting purposes, since we are considering unmet need for family planning. The targets will not be broken down by individual provider or facility, and will not be used as an individual level performance indicator in any programme.</p>

<p><i>2. Regarding Monitoring and Evaluation</i></p> <p>Related to Item 27, UNFPA names the national statistical office as the sole actor targeted for capacity building. We encourage UNFPA to consider coordination efforts with partners and implementing organizations, as there are critical aspects of training and training facilitation, provision of technical assistance, procurement and distribution of equipment, and community outreach and mobilization which will require close and informed collaboration with existing and new partners. In particular, there are other existing institutions affiliated with the Ministries of Health, Gender, and Social Affairs, that could also benefit from capacity building and program strengthening.</p>	<p>The Government and UNFPA will collaborate with other United Nations organizations and key bilateral partners to strengthen the national statistical office and broaden the reach of such planned capacity development initiatives to include data and information management system institutions affiliated with the sectoral ministries, including Health, Education and Gender. Capacity building and programming efforts will seek to address key areas mentioned by the United States, as well as monitoring and evaluation capacities and systems at national and subnational levels, in order to improve the evaluation of the programme.</p>
<p><i>3. Related to the Results and Resources Framework</i></p> <p>Regarding the indicators for Outcome 1, Output 2, the targets for several indicators were ambitious given the DRC context. In particular, for the indicator regarding the number of new adherents to family planning, the target is placed at 10 million, which may not be achievable in the timeframe. We encourage UNFPA to consider the DRC national family planning strategic plan, which aimed to bring 2.1 million new adherents between 2014-2020. Additionally, for the indicators concerning the number of fistula cases repaired and the percentage of service-distribution points without stock-outs for contraceptives, we encourage UNFPA to evaluate targets that consider the DRC context for available and qualified service providers and barriers that challenge the supply chain.</p>	<p>For the indicator regarding the number of new adherents to family planning, the target of 10 million does not appear unrealistic when one considers the latest MICS survey (2018). The 5th UNFPA CPD period is for a five-year period from 2020-2024, and the newly released MICS survey indicates a CPR of 18% (more than double than the CPR of 8% in the 2014 DHS). This means that DRC's CPR has increased by 2 percentage points each year since 2014. Also, 27% of women in DRC have unmet need for family planning. Therefore, with the current trend, by addressing the unmet need for family planning in the next five years, the CPR could reach 28%. During this CPD, we will support the Government to further enhance the current pace of progress to 2.2 percentage points (from the current pace of progress of 2 percentage points).</p> <p>For the indicators concerning the number of fistula cases repaired, the target is also realistic. On average, for the last three years, the number of fistula cases repaired with direct contribution from UNFPA is already close to 1,000.</p> <p>UNFPA has launched intense resource mobilization efforts (both locally through fundraising initiatives involving government, the private sector, mining companies, parliamentarians, telephone companies, embassies, donors) for the elimination of obstetric fistula within the framework of UNFPA DRC's vision to ensure the availability of a team of experts in each of the 26 provincial headquarters capable of repairing simple cases of obstetric fistula by the end of 2021. We therefore anticipate that the average number of fistula cases repaired with direct contribution from UNFPA will be sustained at a minimum of 1,000 a year, which was the rationale for our target of 10,234, from a baseline of 5,234.</p>