

**MEMBER STATE COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT FOR MALI**

*First regular session 2020*

Comments by France	UNFPA regional/country office response
<p>The program is designed around 4 main topics: Sexual and reproductive health, adolescents and youth, gender equality and women’s empowerment and population dynamics. These four angles address the challenges Mali faces, especially on sensitive subjects such as excision, family planning, gender-based violence. However, this document does not mention the issue of sexual orientation.</p>	<p>UNFPA appreciates the comment and will strengthen the sexual and reproductive rights in the country programme and its implementation in all areas of intervention. UNFPA will continue to advance human rights for all, including access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, ensuring non-discrimination and that no one is left behind through the country programme and engagements in the Spotlight Initiative.</p>
<p>We urge UNFPA, in its country programs and actions, not to weaken the reference to the sexual and reproductive <b>rights</b>, rather than referring only to sexual and reproductive health.</p>	<p>UNFPA appreciates the comments. UNFPA continues to strive to uphold sexual and reproductive health and rights, especially for women and girls.</p>
<p>(item 17) In accordance with the BAPA+40 conference, accountability and transparency requirements for the south-south and triangular cooperation’s 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 context of the new instrument for development finance TOSSD. We therefore would like to ask the UNFPA how it plans to declare its data on the south-south and triangular cooperation’s in Mali.</p>	<p>The CDP mentions that the Program will be managed according to the national execution modality. The Directorate of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is in charge of the general coordination of the UNFPA CP8. UNFPA aligns CP8 with the National Policy Document for Development Cooperation-NPPDDC (2019-2023), which will be approved by the Government of Mali and its Technical and Financial Partners. All UNFPA data on the south-south and triangular cooperation in Mali will be declared directly in the NPDDC, which is the most actual and relevant Government Framework on Aid.</p>
<p>(item 15) The reference to a “rights-based approach” is appreciated. However, it is still weakened by the reference to “culturally-sensitive approach” which contradicts the universal dimension of human rights.</p>	<p>UNFPA acknowledges the comments. UNFPA will continue to advance programming upon rights-based approaches while also engaging and working with communities, traditional and religious leaders to change harmful social norms.</p>
<p>(Outcomes 1 and 2) Propositions can be relevant but they are incomplete because they tend to exclude key populations such as girls and young women. The scope of the sexual and reproductive health must be broadened in order to include girls and young women in issues regarding maternal and child health for example.</p>	<p>UNFPA appreciates the comments. UNFPA will strengthen the coverage of the most vulnerable populations, such as girls and young women, through programme implementation, including ensuring the outcomes, related outputs and interventions are packaged to address barriers and ensure essential sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services are available for vulnerable populations, such as girls and young women. The programme takes into account maternal and child health in different “Safe spaces” put in place with Muskoka, which will be scaled up in different regions.</p>

<p>(Item 19) Carrying out actions in strengthening capacities in family planning is important. We should however ask for the strengthening of “(c) <i>supporting demand creation through behavioural change communication</i>” through more concrete action to increase demand for family planning services. An action only centred on the improvement of services (supply) does not guarantee an increasing of recipients (demand).</p>	<p>The point is well-noted with thanks. UNFPA with WB and AFDB, in the second phase of SWEDD project, will develop and strongly reinforce Component 1 and 2 of this project to support demand creation through behavioural change communication. The CPD8 will align with this strategy and bolster working with religious and traditional communicators as a concrete step to addressing social norms constraints</p>
<p>(Item 21) It would be therefore interesting to strengthen the link between Outcome 3 – action (b) supporting the empowerment of young people to have skills and capabilities to make informed choices in relation to HIV prevention and their sexual and reproductive health and rights and to build youth resilience and item 19.</p>	<p>The point is well-taken with thanks. The programme design also identified and established these linkages through the theories of change and will be carried through to implementation.</p>
<p><b>Comments by USA</b></p>	<p><b>UNFPA regional/country office response</b></p>
<p>The United States would like to thank UNFPA for sharing its draft program document outlining UNFPA assistance to Mali for 2020-2024, and recognizes that the program focus, key program components, and proposed outputs fit well with Mali’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>Noted with thanks.</p>
<p><i>1. Regarding the Programme Rationale</i></p> <p>Items 1 and 2 identify two gaps in meeting the reproductive health needs of Malian women; Item 1 notes that 74 percent of women live in rural hard-to-reach areas, and Item 2 notes that ongoing humanitarian crises in Mali continue to challenge health programming. However, the barriers posed in these two environments are not addressed throughout the document. We encourage UNFPA to consider the specific needs of women and other vulnerable populations in hard-to-reach and fragile settings.</p>	<p>The needs of women and vulnerable populations are central to the programme design. They will be reinforced further during implementation, given the focus and principles of the programme intervention on “Leaving no One Behind.” The target population are women, adolescent girls, young people living and people with disability in rural areas, and northern and central Mali affected by humanitarian crises. The strengthening of community’s health facilities and the use of mobile teams will allow reaching out to the hardest-to-reach population. All the outputs and strategies of programme, particularly Item 14, Item 15, Item 18 explain these options.</p>
<p><i>2. Regarding the Programme Priorities and Partnerships</i></p> <p>Overall, UNFPA’s processes of coordination with other donors, partners, and organizations are unclear. We encourage UNFPA to consider coordination efforts with other donors, 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</p>	<p>Collaboration and partnerships with other partners on the ground are essential to the country programme. For instance, UNFPA leads the health technical partners group, over the past two years, the gender-based violence sub-cluster, and Muskoka partners. UNFPA works collaboratively with donors and implementing partners on supply chain management and several capacity-building initiatives, including embarking on joint provision of technical assistance, procurement and distribution of equipment, training and community outreach and mobilization. Items 13 and 16 summarize these essential</p>

<p>mobilization which will require close and informed collaboration with existing and new partners.</p>	<p>approaches. Moreover, the document was improved to respond to this question. UNFPA will build on the gains of all existing partnership donors platform to facilitate coordination, harmonization and efficiency of the program implementation.</p>
<p>Related to Outcome 3, the document lays out plans to support survivors of gender-based violence in humanitarian settings, but does not address the causal factors of gender-based violence and harmful norms. Additionally, humanitarian crises often exacerbate gender-based violence. We thus encourage UNFPA to review how to best structure gender-based violence programs considering women's increased vulnerability in fragile humanitarian settings.</p>	<p>Social factors and harmful norms at the root of gender-based violence will be addressed. Item 21 describes strategies and interventions aimed at preventing and responding to gender-based violence, including strengthening the capacity of national institutions and civil society for response and prevention of harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation and child marriage. Essentially, the programme aims at tackling unfavourable social norms at the root of gender-based violence and other harmful practices through engaging transformative communication against negative social factors, including strengthening capacity (and increased role) of faith-based organisations and traditional communicators. While supporting positive coping strategies for women and sex workers in humanitarian settings, other interventions include strengthening legal and policy frameworks for the empowerment and protection of women and girls. Furthermore, Item 20 speaks to strengthening youth leadership and participation in programme implementation, particularly in peacebuilding and countering violent extremism.</p>
<p><i>3. Regarding the Programme Rationale and the Results and Resources Framework</i></p> <p>Related to Item 5 of the Programme Rationale, the output indicator regarding the targeted number of new users of modern contraceptive methods 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 and informed choice. We thus encourage UNFPA to carefully consider the program structure and the indicator.</p>	<p>UNFPA will pay attention to this aspect during the implementation of the programme. The principle of voluntary and informed choice "by choice" will be respected. While the unmet needs for contraceptives rate is very high ( 24%) and the target of national family planning programme is twice more than the UNFPA programme, UNFPA will strengthen the free access of family planning service, promote volunteer utilization of methods, without coercion in line with national policy.</p>
<p>Related to Outcome 1, Output 2, we support UNFPA's focus on reducing contraceptive stock-outs.</p>	<p>Noted with thanks.</p>