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Situation in Numbers



135 COVID-19 confirmed cases

3 deaths



2,000,000 Children affected by COVID-19 school closures



US\$ 16.3 M funding required

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

Following the confirmation of the first positive case of COVID-19 in Benin on 16 March 2020, UNICEF Benin has been working closely with the Government and its partners to prevent further proliferation of the COVID-19 virus. Although the number of reported cases is still low, it has started increasing relatively faster in the last few days. The transmission of the virus is currently local with more than 80% of confirmed cases being locally acquired. On 19 May 2020, the Government announced it was changing its reporting approach of number of COVID-19 cases: in line with WHO COVID-19 case definition, only cases that tested positive through PCR tests will be reported as “confirmed cases”. As a result, number of confirmed cases in Benin now stands at 135 (down from 339 previously reported), in addition to 238 cases positive only by serologic test (rapid test).

The Government of Benin has prepared a COVID-19 response plan for US\$320,338,983. The national plan focuses on the improvement of health infrastructures and equipment, communication, provision of healthcare and capacity-building for health professionals, journalists and community members. The Government announced a set of prevention measures which remain in place including the closure of religious and cultural sites, extension of school holidays for pre-school and the first 5 years of primary school, compulsory wearing of face masks, and mandatory tests (rapid and PCR) upon arrival for all travellers arriving at Cotonou International Airport.

UNICEF's COVID-19 response

UNICEF Benin is providing support to the Government, and particularly the Ministry of Health, in the field of risk communication, WASH, infection prevention and control, healthcare provision, continuous education and child protection services.

Health and Nutrition

UNICEF supported the construction of the morgue of the main treatment center set up for COVID-19 in Cotonou. The Country Office also donated 3 vehicles to the Ministry of Health to support rapid response teams in 3 departments. To ensure continuous operation of the reference laboratory for the diagnosis of COVID-19, UNICEF provided the Ministry of Health with 4,000 liters of fuel. In UNICEF-supported facilities, 142,907 women and children received essential health services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV care. Guidelines, training and communication tools have been developed to brief community health workers on COVID-19 prevention

measures including child protection aspect, community-based surveillance and the continuity of iCCM services. UNICEF is working to ensure recommended IYCF practices are promoted and adopted in the COVID-19 context. As a result, a cumulative number of 8,488 mothers and caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months received support and counselling to breastfeed and provide diversified complementary food to young children (6 to 23 months).

WASH

UNICEF continues to support IPC through interventions aimed at strengthening hygiene and sanitation. 64 sprayers, 9,240 soap bars and, 6,930 kilos of chlorine were provided to the Ministry of Health to support disinfection efforts in schools, health centres and public places and to improve hygiene practices in health centres in 34 districts. To date, at least 16,654 people, including 16,300 school children from 54 schools and 10 health centers in Mono region benefited from a secure environment thanks to the disinfection of classes,

treatment rooms and latrines. Hygiene promotion campaigns undertaken through advocacy with the mayors of the Zakpota and Zogbodomey municipalities enabled 529 households to get handwashing devices and 2,772 people to have the necessary items, including soap, to wash their hands.

UNICEF provided WASH technical guidance in the set-up of the treatment center. The Country Office also donated protection equipment (gloves, masks, etc) to the treatment center for epidemic disease in Parakou and a selected number of health centers.

RCCE/C4D

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health in finalizing its RCCE Plan and an information guide on COVID-19. Technical support was provided to the Ministry of Health to brief 385 traditional healers, 546 district chiefs, 50 religious leaders from all departments and 40 media professionals on the COVID-19 pandemic. The Country Office provided the Ministry of Health with 60,000 posters, 500,000 flyers and 300 large-size posters to sensitize the public. 56 radios and TV stations are broadcasting audio and video spots produced by UNICEF. Seven NGO were trained on developing COVID-19 prevention and communication materials. The Country Office produced a series of awareness raising videos and audio messages targeting youth, children and parents reaching 1.3 million people online. More than 500 youth also took part in “HackCovid19 Bénin Challenge”, an initiative launched by UNICEF for young innovators to develop solutions in the field of information, education, health, low-cost innovation and social support.



Education

Working with development partners (Swiss Cooperation, French Development Agency, UNESCO, WFP, Educo, Plan International, etc.), and in partnership with the national public service broadcaster, UNICEF is assisting the Government in ensuring continuity of education through radio, TV and digital programmes. With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Preschool and Primary Education continues to broadcast radio educational programmes for children who can't return to schools (preschool until grade 4), in partnership with 36 local community radios. Before the reopening of schools on 11

May, the Government tested hundreds of teachers for COVID-19 and provided masks for children to mitigate the risk of infection in schools. UNICEF and other Technical and Financial Partners assisted the Government in submitting its proposal to the Global Partnership for Education to support “response and early recovery” of the education sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In cooperation with Sèmè City, Epitech, UNFPA, MTN Bénin, PwC and the Benin Bloggers Association, the Country Office is supporting three teams of young innovators to develop a web platform, a TV programme and a radio show to facilitate continuity of learning.



Training of trainers on child friendly spaces in COVID-19 context ©UNICEFBenin

Child protection

UNICEF continued its advocacy efforts and support to national authorities and NGO partners to ensure children at risk and/or victims of violence have timely access to quality prevention and protection services. In five municipalities (Aguègues, Adjohoun, Dangbo, Grand Popo and Athieme), communities were sensitized on violence against children. Local surveillance committees were set up to monitor and denounce cases of violence against children and ensure access to care and support for survivors. A 14-year-old schoolgirl who suffered sexual violence in the Ouinhi department received psychosocial support from the Social Promotion Centre (SPC), with UNICEF support. Her case was reported to the police and referred to Benin Women Lawyers' Association. 126 girls and 1 boy who survived gender-based violence benefited from integrated services including health care, legal and psychosocial support. The social justice services of the Kandi and Parakou courts received hygiene kits and protective items for children facing justice or in detention to mitigate the effects of COVID 19. With UNICEF support, the new-born boy whose mother was tested positive for COVID-19 received healthcare and was reunited with his mother, who received cash assistance and psychosocial support through Parakou SPC. 1,321 children in need of specific protection services benefited from prevention and response services from 15 SPCs, NGOs and the CATE/OCPM in Borgou and Alibori. A mapping of police stations was also initiated to set up an application to track all cases of violence against children received and processed by the police.

Social Protection & Cash-based assistance

UNICEF held discussions with Government and partners on the potential socio-economic impacts of COVID 19 on families, children and vulnerable groups including informal workers and to explore support to the Ministry of Social Affairs to operationalize the National Response Plan.

UNICEF and partners have launched a Cash Working Group “Ad-Hoc Committee on Cash Transfers” as part

of the Working Group on Gender and Social Protection to facilitate the coordination of cash-based interventions in response to impacts of COVID 19. Support from CashCap to ensure coordination of the Group has been secured and started on May 11 remotely. UNICEF is working on designing a cash-based intervention for vulnerable families and children including defining modalities for implementation. Resource mobilisation to support this program is ongoing.

Adaptations to ongoing UNICEF programmes

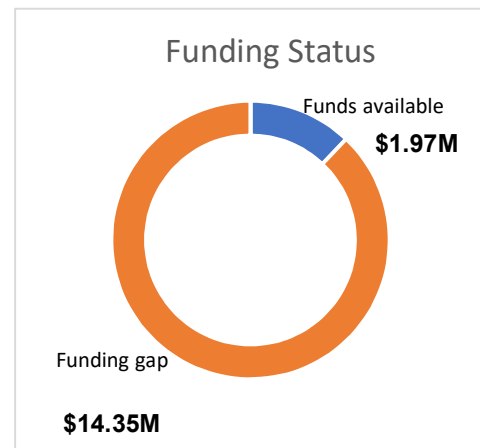
The Country Office is mobilizing other technical and financial partners to ensure continuity of essential services and achieve Key Results for Children. Annual work plans of UNICEF country programmes were revised to identify activities and budget to be reprogrammed and dialogue with financial partners was also initiated to identify projects funding that could be reallocated to support the Government’s efforts.

- In the field of child protection, the Country Office is focusing its efforts on the establishment of safe spaces to provide psychosocial support for children and their families.
- In the field of social protection, priority is given to linking urgent humanitarian cash transfers with long-term social protection programmes and strengthening Government systems.
- In the field of education, efforts to develop distance learning solutions through radio, TV and digital platforms are expected to strengthen the resilience of the education system in the long-term.
- In the field of health, UNICEF supports national health authorities to ensure the continuity of primary and essential health care services for all. In eight UNICEF-supported municipalities of three targeted regions, community approaches to total sanitation interventions were reviewed to adjust to the COVID-19 context and reach at least 400,000 persons. Four consultants based in the targeted districts were mobilized to monitor and ensure quality WASH service delivery.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

On the basis of the national plan and its assessment of priority needs , UNICEF Benin submitted in early March 2020 a COVID-19 response proposal to its Regional Office amounting to US\$ 13.3 million. The Country Office response plan, updated in April 2020, is worth of US\$ **16,325,000** is integrated into UNICEF’s Humanitarian Action for Children Novel Coronavirus (COVID-2019) Global Response.

The Country Office works closely with other Technical and Financial partners to create synergies and mobilize expertise, resources and efforts to support the Government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Innovative partnerships are being established, including the “Innov Covid-19 Benin Taskforce”, a coalition of government, UN agencies, NGOs, CSOs, private sector companies and startups to develop emergency solutions to the crisis.



External Media

UNICEF Benin is mobilizing its « friends of children » journalists’ network and leveraging its social media platforms to share prevention messages. UNICEF global press releases are shared with local media outlets on a regular basis. The Country Office joined forces with UNICEF National Ambassador Zeynab Abib and an 8-year-old local singer, Fifa La Lune, to produce a song for children and the public at large on COVID-19 prevention measures. UNICEF also collaborated with young street artists to create 7 engaging murals and posters with key protection messages.

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Summary of Programme Results

Sector	UNICEF and IPs Response	
	2020 target	Total results*
Risk Communication and Community Engagement		
Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services.	5,553,773	1,380,000
Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions	2,000	1,744
Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms	5,000	2,000
WASH and IPC		
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	1,600,000	32,460
Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	3,000	107
Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)	3,000	0
Health		
Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women	1,500	0
Number of children & women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV & GBV care in UNICEF supported facilities	500,000	142,907
Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms.	20,000	8,488
Nutrition		
Number of children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)	15,000	4,957
Education		
Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning	2,000,000	1,708,617
Number of schools implementing safe school protocols (COVID-19 prevention and control)	15,811	0
Child Protection and GBV		
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements	1,000	279
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support	15,000	19
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA	100	53
Number of children and adults that have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse	100	0
Social Protection		
Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs	20,000	0

Annex B

Funding Status*

Sector	Funding requirements	Funds available	Funding gap \$	Gap %
C4D / RCCE	2,500,000	0	2,500,000	100
WASH & IPC	6,000,000	0	6,000,000	100
Health & Nutrition	165,000	100,000	65,000	39
Continued education, child protection, GBV services & social protection	6,300,000	1,870,000	4,430,000	70
Research	60,000	0	60,000	100
Coordination, technical & operational costs	1,300,000	0	1,300,000	100
Total	16,325,000	1,970,000	14,355,000	88