



3,015 COVID-19 confirmed cases

43 deaths

2,839 recovered cases



434 children confirmed positive



US \$10M funding required

The youth representative from the community brigade in the village of Dandji shows videos of COVID-19 patients under treatment on his phone as evidence that the virus exists ©UNICEF

Situation overview

As of 26 November 2020, a total of 3,015 COVID-19 confirmed cases have been identified in Benin out of 336,377 tests conducted. 99 new cases were identified in the last week.

There were no new cases of death during the reporting period, the total number of deaths since the start of the pandemic remains at 43 deaths. Fatality rate stands at 1.4% whilst the recovery rate is 94.2%, with 2,839 recovered cases.

Number of children under 18 infected by the virus represent 14.6% of all confirmed cases.

Highlights



4,389,297 million people informed through mass media



854,253 women and children received essential health services



665,545 people benefited from WASH services



1.7 million children supported with distance learning



44,468 children received psychosocial support



A boy creates his own sensitization posters on COVID-19 in one of 9 UNICEF-supported "child friendly spaces" created in the Borgou department ©UNICEF

Key updates

- The most affected departments are all located in the former “cordon sanitaire”, namely, Littoral, Atlantique and Ouémé;
- Compulsory wearing of face masks in public remain in place;
- In addition to mandatory tests upon arrival, the Government announced on 1 September that PCR tests were now required for all passengers departing from Cotonou International Airport. A fee of 50,000 FCFA (90 US\$) must be paid by all travelers.

UNICEF’s COVID-19 response

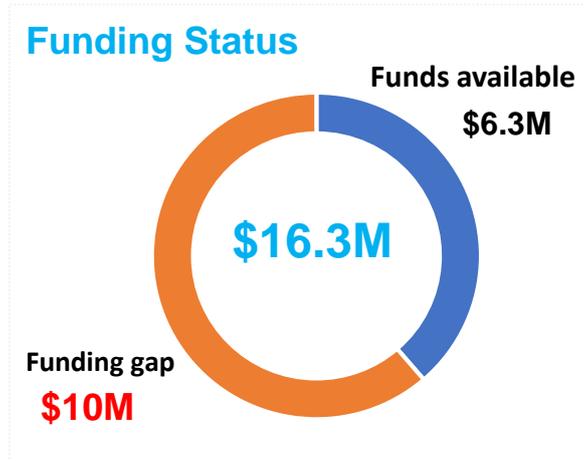
Health and Nutrition

1,437 health workers were trained on infection prevention and control (IPC) and COVID-19 case management during the reporting period, covering 14 health zones. Trained health workers have become key players in monitoring compliance with barrier measures through the establishment of “health brigades”. 31 COVID screening centers were opened in 29 of the country's 77 municipalities.

Awareness-raising efforts by Community Health Workers (CHW) and the reorganization of health services are increasing supply and demand services for children and mothers. The number of women and children receiving essential health services, including immunization, antenatal and postnatal care and HIV care, increased from 738,844 to 854,253. In addition, 4,256 trained CHW supported the identification and monitoring of suspected and contact cases and ensured screening and referral to health facilities for cases of malnutrition.

For comprehensive patient care, UNICEF supported the treatment of 50 hospitalized patients at the COVID-19 treatment center in Cotonou. The Country Office also supported rapid response teams by providing incentive bonus payments for 259 frontline agents involved in the COVID-19 response, through the contribution from the Netherlands in support of the Ministry of Health’s national response plan.

The number of mothers and caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months who received support, counselling and IYCF services increased from 34,604 to 36,400 during the reporting period. Among them, 9,982 mothers of children aged 0 to 5 months were sensitized on exclusive breastfeeding and 26,418 mothers of children aged 6 to 23 months received support to strengthen good practices on breastfeeding, dietary diversification, and healthcare for children.



COVAX Initiative

In accordance with actions underway to make the vaccine against COVAX vaccine available by March 2021, UNICEF and WHO have been tasked with facilitating the introduction of the vaccine in Benin. As a result, an internal UNICEF COVAX committee has been set up and a technical committee with national authorities was established to facilitate the use and update of the VIRAT tool. A country preparation roadmap has been designed and a request for COVAX Technical Assistance has been submitted to support country preparedness in the areas of communication, vaccine and cold chain management, and logistics.

WASH

UNICEF, in partnership with decentralized directions of hygiene and sanitation, intensified awareness sessions on prevention measures, hand hygiene, water treatment and mask wearing in Littoral, Atlantique and Ouémé. Research on handwashing practices in Benin revealed differential coverage from one region and municipality to another. Handwashing devices could be found in 68 per cent of public spaces in the Littoral. In the Atlantic, only 8 per cent of public spaces and households had handwashing devices and 12 per cent in Ouémé region. At least 46,698 additional women learned how to practice water treatment. A total of 1,648 wells were disinfected. UNICEF reached a total of 291,126 people through wells disinfection and distributed more than 140,000 aquatabs tablets. 665,545 people benefited from critical WASH supply and services.



Pre-school children wash their hands together before eating lunch at a UNICEF-supported childhood space at Boni primary school, Northern Benin ©UNICEF

RCCE

The Country office reached an additional 10,000 people through mass and social media in the last month. During the reporting period, in collaboration with the Departmental Directorates of Social Affairs in charge of Children protection, community relays and volunteers organized home visits and group discussions reaching 189.601 people (148,367 adults and 41,234 children) on COVID-19 protective measures and child protection messages and 3,716 community leaders engaged for sensitizing community members. In the health sector, data provided by 10 Health zones mentioned that 37.288 parents are reached by community relays who integrated COVID-19 protective measures and messages into their routine activities. To date, 1,082,932 people were engaged on COVID-19 prevention activities. In collaboration with 20 local radios and 2 televisions, radio spots on breastfeeding, seeking care and correct use of masks are broadcasted every week in French and local languages from November 2020 to February 2021. Finally, 2,595 people are sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications to the community relays and volunteers about COVID-19 protective measures.



Young entrepreneurs present the UReport Benin app they developed during an innovation bootcamp organized as part of the #HACKCOVID19 hackathon ©UNICEF

Education

The 2020-2021 academic year started on 28 September. UNICEF and its partners provided Ministries of Education with handwashing equipment, sanitizers and sensitization materials to ensure all children could go back to school in a safe secure environment. Through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNICEF, the Swiss Cooperation, EDUCO, Plan International and the World Bank supported the back-to-school campaign and provided school supplies to 214,071 children including 100,943 girls enrolled in primary schools and 32,672 adolescent girls in lower secondary schools in vulnerable districts. As part of the GPE COVID-19 response programme, UNICEF signed an agreement with the Government of Benin to distribute school supplies and handwashing equipment, for a total of US \$ 2,9 million. School supplies will be distributed to 80,605 vulnerable children in nine communes, while 20,440 hand washing stations will be provided to 9.900 schools nationwide.



Primary school children in Zogbodomey who received their school supplies through the national back to school campaign ©UNICEF

Child protection

During the reporting period, 333 social assistants, volunteers and civil society workers from the country's 77 municipalities were trained on the management of child-friendly spaces and positive parenting to strengthen child protection in response to the pandemic. 106 new safe spaces were set up to provide children and parents affected by COVID-19 with mental health and psychosocial support, bringing to 214 the total of safe places established. As a result, 904 new girls and 1,101 new boys, and 143 new adults received appropriate psychosocial support. 98 children (71 girls and 3 boys) and adults (24 women) who survived violence and with acute stress benefited from mental health support thanks to the presence of six integrated care centers for victims of gender-based violence. An assessment of safe spaces revealed their effective operationalization, high levels of children participation and the role of community mobilization. However, training of community facilitators on the management of child-friendly spaces and on positive parenting need to be reinforced. A new tool using KoboCollect is currently being tested to improve the quality of data collected in safe spaces.

At the community level, 1,032 new community leaders (432 women) received information on COVID-19 prevention and protection measures. In turn, they reached out to 4,302 new children (1,995 girls) and 3,159 adults (1,502 women) to prevent and protect children from violence in the COVID-19 context. Through community surveillance mechanisms, 89 suspected and/or confirmed cases of persons infected with COVID-19 (52 children, 37 adults) were identified and referred to health centers.



Children playing in a child friendly space in Bantè, Collines department ©UNICEF

Concerning the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, 38 new partners (15 women and 23 men) were trained and now have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse. As a result, 675 people are equipped to report sexual exploitation and abuse using safe and accessible channels. 56 UNICEF staff also underwent a refresher training on PSEA, UNICEF updated norms on child safeguarding and UNICEF Benin internal notification alert mechanism on PSEA. 150 actors (90 community leaders, 60 heads of organizations) trained on PSEA and notification and reporting mechanisms sensitized 16,703 community members (6,703 students and apprentices including 3,304 girls, 3,399 boys, 8,200 women and 1,800 men).

Funding Overview and Partnerships

Based on the national plan and its assessment of priority needs, UNICEF Benin submitted a COVID-19 response proposal to its Regional Office amounting to **US\$ 16,325,000** and which is integrated into UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children Novel Coronavirus (COVID-2019) Global Response. Innovative partnerships are being established, including the "Innov Covid-19 Benin Taskforce", a coalition of government, UN agencies, NGOs, CSOs, private sector companies and start-ups to develop emergency solutions to the crisis.

External Media



Adolescent girls receiving cash transfers as part of the FAABA-COVID project participate in a photography and vlogging workshop in Kandi ©UNICEF

Social Protection & Cash-based assistance

UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Social Affairs and CARE Benin-Togo to **implement a cash-based intervention for vulnerable families and children** focusing on preventing school drop out of adolescent girls impacted by school closures and at risk of child marriage. The cash transfer program named "Faaba-COVID" and funded by the Netherlands has been officially launched by the Minister of Social Affairs on 19 November. Payments are underway to cover 26,000 girls (eq. 20,000 households) in eight targeted communes. Payments are expected to be finalized by mid-December 2020.

As part of World Children's Day celebrations, the Country Office organized takeovers by children with influential figures (Prefect of the Borgou department, national broadcaster editor-in-chief), a social media #GoBlue campaign, a celebration with journalists specialized on children's rights and sensitized 500,000 people on the need to protect children from violence through SMS messages, in partnership with MTN. Within the framework of the Faaba-COVID project to eradicate child marriage and keep girls in school, UNICEF Benin also organized two photography, storytelling and vlogging workshops for adolescent girls who are receiving cash transfers as part of the programme.

- [L'Unicef oriente les enfants du Bénin à mieux exposer leur priorité](#)
- [Djibril Mama Cissé, préfet du Borgou: Un champion de la lutte contre le mariage des enfants](#)
- [Quarante relais communautaires formés pour sensibiliser les ménages sur la pandémie du Covid-19](#)
- [Lancement du projet FAABA-COVID Cash+Care à Tchaourou \(à partir de 30'30\)](#)
- [Atelier de formation en photographie, storytelling et vlogging pour 30 filles de Kandi et Tchaourou](#)

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Summary of Programme Results

UNICEF and IPs Response

Sector	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	4,389,297
Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions	500,000	1,082,932
Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms	30,000	31,453
WASH and IPC		
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	500,000	665,545
Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	3,000	1,385
Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)	6,750	5379
Health		
Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women	1,500	1,437
Number of children & women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV & GBV care in UNICEF supported facilities	500,000	854253
Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms.	20,000	36,400
Nutrition		
Number of children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)	15,000	18,474
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	11,342
Child Protection and GBV		
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements	1,800	2,679
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support	25,000	44,468
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA	800	759
Number of children and adults that have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse	400	675
Social Protection		
Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs	20,000	7367

Funding Status

Sector	Funding requirements	Funds available	Funding gap \$	Gap %
C4D / RCCE	2,500,000	123,042	2,376,958	95
WASH & IPC	6,000,000	558,390	5,441,610	91
Health & Nutrition	165,000	718,157	0	0
Continued education, child protection, GBV services & social protection	6,300,000	4,903,316	1,396,684	22
Research	60,000	0	60,000	100
Coordination, technical & operational costs	1,300,000	24,700	1,275,300	98
Total	16,325,000	6,327,605	9,997,395	61