The first patient with COVID-19 was diagnosed in Georgia on 26 February 2020. Despite early actions of the Government, the number of confirmed and suspected cases continued to grow. The Government declared a state of emergency on 21 March, closing borders and airports, restricting movement inside the country, banning mass gatherings and maintaining closure of all schools, kindergartens and universities. The state of emergency ended on 23 May, however, several restrictions remain in place. The Parliament of Georgia passed a bill, which allows the Government to impose movement, labor, migration, economic and other restrictions without the declaration of a state of emergency. Travel restrictions have been extended to the end of October.

To date, Abkhazia, Georgia, reported 221 cases, with 80 recoveries and three deaths. A state of emergency was put in place on 28 March and was lifted as of 21 April. On 1 July, kindergartens reopened, most social restrictions eased, and schools are expected to open on 1 September. The border with Russia remains open.
Humanitarian Strategy

UNICEF continues to work closely with the Government, WHO and other United Nations and humanitarian partners to provide technical guidance and support. In line with WHO’s COVID-19 Strategic Response Plan, UNICEF is focusing on limiting human-to-human transmission and mitigating the impact of the outbreak on the health system and communities.

UNICEF’s mix of response and preparedness activities include:

1. Facilitating risk communication as well as learning, play, and positive parenting communications;
2. Provisioning critical hygiene and medical supplies for healthcare;
3. Ensuring children, pregnant, and lactating women are supported with adequate healthcare despite the outbreak;
4. Mitigating secondary effects of the outbreak by facilitating continued access to education, child protection needs, including prevention of violence against children, and advocating for continued access to social protection programmes.

UNICEF’s Response

UNICEF is supporting COVID-19 coordination mechanisms nationally, and in regions, with technical expertise, planning, and communications, including participating in UN coordination groups for health procurement and socio-economic/early recovery and chairing the social protection and education group.

Communication for Social Change (C4SC) and External Communications

• A UNICEF-supported project, Parenting During Pandemic, began on 17 August. The project aims to equip parents of young children and teenagers in dealing with COVID-19-related parenting stress, improve their communication skills with their children and teach them about cyber risks and protection measures.
• From 15 August, nine regional TV stations started broadcasting daily 15-minute COVID-19-related news throughout Georgia, including the Abkhazia region. The project aims to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 spread by delivering the most pressing messages in Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani languages. The project is being implemented by the UNICEF partner organization - Journalism Resource Center, with financial support from USAID.
• During the period of broadcasting, UNICEF-supported TV programs for parents, which were adapted and translated in Azerbaijani and Armenian languages, reached 8,000 users through the Parvana TV Facebook page and 23,000 users through the Marneuli TV Facebook page on COVID-19-related topics.
• UNICEF’s media campaign, Voices of Children, continues. A series of videos are being published where children talk about how COVID-19 changed their lives and their new normal.
• UNICEF reached 47,076 people and engaged 4,248 people on topics about COVID-19 through Facebook.

Health, Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

• UNICEF’s virtual antenatal care programme is expanding, increasing its reach to 14,035 pregnant women, of which 34% participated in virtual medical consultations. Registered pregnant women in Marneuli, Gardabani, Vani, and Tbilisi municipalities, as well as in Adjara, Guria and Imereti regions are fully covered. The programme is expanding to Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region.
• UNICEF delivered PPE supplies to Abkhazia region, including 29,000 medical masks, 58,000 surgical gloves, 500 dressing gowns, 655 liters of liquid soap, 670 liters of hand antiseptic, 1,085 liters of universal surface sanitizer, and 80 contactless thermometers. PPEs
were distributed to health centers in all districts of the Abkhazia region, including PHC level facilities, key child departments/policlincs, as well as the COVID-19 designated hospital in Gudauta. PPE and sanitizers were also delivered to the Central Maternity of the Republican Hospital of the Abkhazia region.

**Adolescents/youth**

- UNICEF partner, Helping Hand, completed the second phase of training for 80 volunteers. Training sessions included the following topics: Volunteering and Coronavirus Support, Promotion of Youth Volunteer Roles Related to the COVID-19 Response, storytelling in volunteer engagement and types of volunteer project management reports.
- During the reporting period, youth volunteers contributed more than 734 hours to peer learning, online training, workshops, film screening, organized activities for older people, making new friends and breaking out of the cycle of social isolation and loneliness, and more.
- Visual materials and volunteers’ stories were prepared and disseminated through Facebook, reaching 12,981 people. Young volunteer, Mariam Beshidze, presented her project “Peer to peer learning” at Radio Talk show in the Racha-Lechkumi region.
- A new group of 30 adolescents from various regions of Georgia were engaged in interactive zoom sessions by Kant’s Academy, covering the following topics: types of leadership, planning and implementing business companies, stress management, and relationships between parents and children.
- UNICEF’s partner, Global Initiative in Psychiatry (GIP), continues a series of online webinars for adolescents and their parents, covering the following topic: Sexual harassment: a problem that is difficult for a child to talk about, but parents cannot believe it, delivered by an invited expert in child and adolescent psychology.
- Thematic videos and training modules are being developed on (1) Adolescents’ Positive Parenting in times of COVID-19 Pandemic, and (2) Adolescents’ mental health and psychosocial wellbeing.
- UNICEF facilitated trainings for the Youth Center and local NGOs in Akhalkalaki to strengthen understanding and capacities of the local non-governmental actors in their roles in upholding and protecting the rights of the child, including in emergencies. Through the interactive sessions, participants articulated the main challenges for youth in Akhalkalaki, in the context of COVID-19 and beyond, and identified possible ways to respond to these emerging needs in culturally appropriate and evidence-based manners.

**Child Protection**

- In partnership with the Parliament and State Care Agency, the UNICEF-supported child hotline “111” continues to provide assistance to children and their families, supporting 678 cases to date, of which 598 already received assistance and were closed accordingly. The majority of the beneficiaries need support in accessing social benefits and services, followed by medical and educational assistance.
- A Facebook page to support parents of children with disabilities, run by UNICEF’s partner organization, MAC Georgia, continues to provide practical information, one-to-one counseling with specialists, and chats for parents and caregivers. During the reporting week, the Facebook page had streaming of UNICEF-supported TV Show Parent Hour.
- Through group and individual sessions, UNICEF partner, Children of Georgia, provided online psychological support to 228 children and 155 caregivers in small group homes and foster care, in all regions of Georgia. During the reporting period, the following topics were covered: distresses caused during and by COVID-19-related restrictions/isolation; emotional state of children; altered daily routine contributing anxiety; conflict management; violence; challenging behavior.
Education

- Interactive TV programmes for parents of young children, developed through the collaboration between UNICEF and Public Broadcasting TV Channel, as well as early child development activities, tips for parents, and picture book reading videos developed through the collaboration between UNICEF and Education Coalition for All, continue to be shared on various web-platforms, including the educational resource web-page of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia.
- Brochures for parents on early childhood development have been prepared for three age groups: infants (birth to 1), toddlers (1 to 3) and preschoolers (3 to 6). Brochures include parenting tips and activities to promote holistic development. Printed brochures will be delivered to the State Care Agency for distribution to vulnerable families with young children.
- With UNICEF support and in partnership with CK-12 Foundation, Education for All Coalition is translating and adapting interactive and online teaching and learning resources for the use by school students and teachers of Georgia during the pandemic and beyond.
- UNICEF provided a two-day online training for local education decision-makers in the Abkhazia region on international practices of ensuring access to continued education during quarantine and new requirements for safe school reopening.

Social Protection

- UNICEF Representative, the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, and the Governor of Kvemo Kartli delivered essential hygiene and food products to 82 vulnerable families in Kharajali village.
- In partnership with the Government, UNICEF produced a microsimulation model for estimating the impact of COVID-19 on population and child poverty in Georgia. UNICEF’s report presented today to NGOs, experts, and the media, finds that cash transfers could halt the rise in poverty, as well as reduce it to below baseline level.

Partnerships

UNICEF-
- is collaborating with the Prime Minister’s Office to provide needs-based support to the most vulnerable children and their families, including national minorities, and children with disabilities.
- has developed and/or strengthened partnerships with public broadcasting and other TV and online channels to further amplify risk communication messages and enhance home-based learning and education.
- continues working with religious leaders to develop and implement COVID-19 response plans.
- continues its partnerships with the Education for All Coalition, an alliance of CSOs working on education, and a network of organizations working with children with disabilities and their families, contributing to distance learning efforts of the Government and provide needed support to families with children with disabilities.
- enhanced its partnership with the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC) on responding to COVID-19 pandemic through a Memorandum of Cooperation.
- partnered with UNHCR to improve the access to safe water and adequate hygiene for children and teachers in six schools in the Abkhazia region.
- is partnering with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to reach selected schools in the Abkhazia region with hygiene materials.
- signed a cooperation agreement with the Czech Development Agency with the goal of strengthening primary health care, especially in emergencies, through a joint programme between UNICEF Georgia and Caritas Georgia.
- is discussing with the National Security Council areas for future cooperation.
- wishes to express its gratitude to donors supporting its response to COVID-19: Bulgaria, Estonia, the European Union, Korea, Norway, SIDA, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, UKAid, and USAID.

Results to Date

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Results</th>
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</thead>
</table>

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Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services | 5,000 | 4,174  
---|---|---
Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) | 800 | 1,050  
Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in infection prevention and control (IPC) | 1,200 | 580  
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support | 5,350 | 7,346  

**Funding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Areas</th>
<th>Funding Needs</th>
<th>Funds Identified</th>
<th>Funding Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>282,100</td>
<td>17,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Development of teaching and learning resources for distance learning  
• Development of resources for parents for early learning and school readiness | | | |
| **Child Protection** | 514,000 | 260,650 | 253,350 |
| • Development of resources to prevent violence against children  
• Support to service providers within the child protection and justice systems to respond to COVID-19 and enable continued service provision  
• Support continued programming for children with disabilities  
• Support social workers in Abkhazia to provide services to vulnerable families | | | |
| **Health, Nutrition and WASH** | 3,001,399 | 1,589,300 | 1,412,099 |
| • Procure essential supplies and equipment including COVID-19 test kits  
• Support telemedicine to enable access to critical health services  
• Training of health professionals through telehealth  
• Development of regulations and standards in all health specialty areas for pregnant women, mothers, newborns and children  
• Improving access to WASH in schools in Abkhazia  
• Adolescent mental health and wellbeing | | | |
| **Social Policy** | 400,000 | 241,950 | 158,050 |
| • Conduct shock-responsive feasibility assessment of the social protection system  
• Conduct assessment of vulnerable and at-risk groups of children  
• Conduct a Real Time Monitoring survey | | | |
| **Risk Communication and Community Engagement** | 200,000 | 200,000 | 0 |
| • Carry out a risk communication campaign  
• Carry out #LearningatHome campaign to help parents in care and early learning opportunities of their children | | | |
| **Grand Total** (Fundraising efforts ongoing to bridge the funding gap) | 4,415,399 | 2,574,000 | 1,841,399 |

Due to UN official holiday in Georgia on 28 August, the next Situation Report will be issued on 4 September 2020

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