Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

Ghana currently has the highest number of confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the West and Central Africa region and is the third country across the WHO Africa region, behind South Africa and Algeria. The Greater Accra region continues to be the epicentre of the pandemic.

In April, around 4.5 per cent of confirmed cases were children under 18 years, and one child death was recorded. While children seem to be less vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus itself, the collateral impact on children, young people and women already affected by poverty, disability or social exclusion is considerable.

In his address to the nation on Sunday 10th May, the President of the Republic of Ghana, H. E. Nana Akufo-Addo announced that between the 7th and 10th of May, additional 24,599 tests had been conducted, which led to an increase in the number of positively confirmed cases of COVID-19. Noting that Ghana had administered more tests per million people than other countries in Africa, the President also highlighted the upcoming establishment of seven additional testing facilities in Ghana, enabling swifter testing. Restrictions on travel (borders closure) and public gatherings continue to be imposed and a soft loan scheme of GH¢600 million will be rolled out to support micro, small and medium scale businesses.

As part of the UN Country Team in Ghana, UNICEF continues to support the Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic and has handed over several pieces of vital equipment to government institutions during this reporting period.
UNICEF in Ghana’s COVID-19 response

Health

On 7th May, UNICEF handed over ten oxygen concentrators and accessories to the Ministry of Health and the Ghana Health Service (GHS). The equipment will be used in treatment centres and other health facilities across the country.

UNICEF handing over 10 oxygen concentrators with requisite accessories to the Ghana Health Service on 7 May 2020. ©UNICEF/620118/ANNANKRA

UNICEF continued to support the government to bolster lab and testing capacity for the coronavirus. UNICEF is supporting the Tamale Public Health Reference Laboratory to accommodate COVID-19 testing, with the Lab already successfully processing approximately 2,500 samples. UNICEF is also supporting the Public Health Reference Lab in Kumasi to assess and support its COVID-19 testing capacity and readiness. The outcomes will inform immediate areas of support.

UNICEF staff visit the Tamale Public Health Laboratory where blood samples are being tested for COVID-19 on 8 May 2020. ©UNICEF/UN433900/BUTA

100 pedal-operated handwashing facilities were fabricated and delivered to support infection prevention and control in health facilities in Upper West Region.

UNICEF also supported GHS to safeguard against the reduction in uptake and provision of health and nutrition services, through guidelines on Maternal and Child Health Nutrition (MCHN) in the context of COVID-19. Standard operating procedures will help operationalize the guidelines in health centres and Community-Based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) compounds.

Under the Safety Net Programme, funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, targeted focus group discussions and specialized home visits were conducted in 174 communities in 12 districts in Northern, North East and Savannah regions.

The initiative reached 3,409 adolescent girls and 2,422 adolescent boys with information, education and counselling on how to access available health and social services, their rights and responsibilities, avoidance of risky behaviours and adherence to the COVID-19 precautionary measures.

Nutrition

UNICEF supported the GHS with the development of food and nutrition guidelines for COVID-19 Isolation Centres. These seek to help improve health and immunity to fight the infection and improve quality management of patients.

Additionally, UNICEF supported the development of general messaging on food and nutrition practices, helping to operationalize the call for healthy diets and lifestyles.

Through the Scaling up Nutrition – Development Partners (SUN-DP), UNICEF is supporting government and partners to define a package of nutrition interventions in response to COVID-19. Additionally, an intersectoral nutrition response plan, led by the GHS and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, is being developed with support from development partners. The inter-agency nutrition response plan is for one year starting in June.

Over 49,209 out-of-school girls aged 10-19 years benefited from iron-folic supplementation in five northern regions, distributed through health
facilities, with support from UNICEF. As a result of ongoing school closures, UNICEF is assessing options to reach schoolgirls with iron-folic acid supplementation through the health facility platforms.

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene**

UNICEF is supporting campaigns in five Northern regions to contain the spread of COVID-19 in 204 small towns of 41 districts, with a focus on handwashing with soap under running water, social distancing and wearing face masks.

A boy holding a bar soap as he washes his hands. ©UNICEF/UN128871/QUARMYNE

A mass sensitization initiative was conducted in four major market centres in the Tamale Metropolis, as part of UNICEF’s Urban Sanitation Programme. A total of 10,100 people were reached with appropriate messages. In addition, 20 environmental health officers responsible for the burial of dead bodies infected by the coronavirus were trained on adequate procedures.

With funding support from Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and assistance from the UNICEF Ghana Country Office, two small towns in Kpandai District in the Northern Region have become Open Defecation Free (ODF). As a result, 10,302 people live in a safe and clean environment.

**Communication**

The voices and opinions of Ghana’s youth continue to play an important role in the UN response to the COVID-19. Through the UNICEF U-Report platform, an additional rapid assessment poll was disseminated, focusing on gathering feedback on the perceived increase in domestic violence and abuse following school closures, increased unemployment and economic difficulties.

Promotion of the polls and the updated information center has increased the number of U-Reporters to over 112,000 – 60% of them between the ages of 14 and 24 years.

To engage faster and more efficiently with young people, U-Report was configured to run on WhatsApp. Over the following days, a communication plan to promote the new tool will be drafted and implemented.

Young people are adding their voices in support of the fight against the pandemic. 23-year-old Cyril Otabil, created a vlog (COVID-19 Video Diaries) and mobilized others in providing lifesaving resources to children during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was done through an online fundraising concert organized by UNICEF USA, which featured exclusive performances from international stars, including Cher, Sting, and Angelique Kidjo.

A snapshot of Ghana’s Cyril Otabil’s COVID-19 Diary as part of the “UNICEF Won't Stop” campaign.

UNICEF digital platforms continue to be updated with new content, including posters guiding parents, caregivers and the general public on how to navigate the health crisis as well as additional web articles. During the first two weeks of May, UNICEF and partners reached over six million people through social media, with messages on COVID-19. This bring a cumulative figure of more than 11 million since March, highlighting joint efforts to support the Government of Ghana. The website continues to receive more visitors (over 14,000 in May) reading COVID-19 related articles.
**Education**

A young girl uses her computer for school work. ©UNICEF/UN167900/ADEMUWIWA

UNICEF convened various sector stakeholders to support the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ghana Education Service (GES) to lead a coordinated response to COVID-19, with harmonized Development Partner financial and technical resources aligned with an overarching Government plan. UNICEF is also supporting the MoE / GES to conduct a rapid risk assessment of the education system in general and impact of COVID on learners, with a focus on the most vulnerable.

The roll out of distance learning by the MoE / GES for senior high school learners, which started two weeks after school closures, has advanced. Initial evidence gathered from UNICEF’s U-report polls across all 10 regions suggest good progress with 36% respondents indicating their availability to access learning when given the opportunity. Additionally, 42%, 24%, and 20% indicated preference for learning through the internet, short message service (SMS) and television (TV) programmes. The basic education Ghana Learning TV Programmes commenced on the 6th of May through the national TV station, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC).

The rapid risk assessment, when completed by the GES, will provide further insights on gaps and vulnerabilities in the system, and will present wider views of learners, teachers and parents.

**Child Protection**

A UNICEF U-report poll engaged close to 1,500 adolescent and young people and indicated a 32 per cent increase in the prevalence of abusive and violent behaviour at home, compared with February 2020 levels. The number of people accessing child protection and sexual and gender-based violence services from social workers has decreased. Across Ghana, social workers are indeed reporting fewer people reaching them for services.

UNICEF Representative handing over non-medical personal protective supplies to the Births and Deaths Registry in Accra on 14 May 2020. ©UNICEF/UN745220/BADDOO

Staff of Births and Deaths Registry using hand sanitizers provided by UNICEF on 14 May 2020. ©UNICEF/UN731090/PAPPOE

On 14th and 15th of May, UNICEF provided 150,000 non-medical masks, 300,000 gloves, 1500 litres of hand sanitizers and 200 contactless thermometers to the Judicial Service Staff working in the Child-friendly Gender-Based Violence Courts and to the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service.

UNICEF handing over personal protection equipment to His Lordship the Chief Justice of Ghana on 14 May 2020. ©UNICEF/UN510021/BADDOO.
The supplies will reach 750 staff of the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit, 325 staff of the Births and Deaths Registry, and 300 staff of the Judicial Service of Ghana working at the national, regional and district level.

UNICEF is also working with the Department of Social Welfare to reach out to all social workers in the country to make sure that they continue to provide services in all cases, whether by phone (for non-urgent cases) or in person (for most-urgent cases) or through others means (e.g. WhatsApp groups, ZOOM etc.).

Since the start of the crisis, 36 children have been reunified or placed in family-based care by social workers. This represents an increase of 26 children since the last reporting period. Child protection teams have reached 34,898 people (Girls – 11,846, Boys – 8,805, Women – 7,651, Men – 6,596) with better parenting and community-based psychosocial support. Beneficiaries were reached through small gatherings and community information centres. All the activities included standard COVID-19 prevention and mitigation messaging, approved by the GHS.

According to the U-Report poll, 63 per cent of respondents indicated that they did not know where to report incidents of domestic violence and child abuse. To encourage children and parents to report abuse and access services while at home, the national campaign ‘Ghanaians Against Child Abuse’ (GACA), supported by UNICEF, has been reaching people via social media with information on different help lines and important messages on the protection of children. During the last two weeks, social media handles of GACA recorded over 90,000 impressions.

**Social Policy**

UNICEF worked with the Ghana Statistical Service and the World Bank to draft a questionnaire for monthly phone interviews with 3,000 caregivers on the impact of COVID-19 on children, including issues related to food security, mental health, access to WASH, health, and educational services as well as violence at home and in the community.

UNICEF also organized a Public Finance Management social accountability validation workshop with the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, the National Development Planning Commissions and the GHS to endorse templates.

This tool will be utilized in town hall meetings to promote dialogue between the local government and citizens regarding district planning, budgeting, and monitoring of expenditures. The workshop also allowed for discussion and expansion of topical areas to address COVID-19 responses.

UNICEF worked closely with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the World Bank to ensure the remaining disbursement of payments to recipient households of cash transfers under the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme.

This brings the total number of households that are received advance payments in April and May to 322,000 households (about 1,500,000 beneficiaries, including more than 800,000 children). These payments are intended to help alleviate economic pressures on very poor and vulnerable households, and to enable them to apply safe health and hygiene behaviours.
Supply and Logistics

UNICEF completed the procurement processes for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and sanitation supplies from local sources. Over 3,000 sets of PPEs were handed over to the Social Welfare Department of the Ghana police to equip frontline legal officers protecting young children and women from all forms of abuse and violence. An additional 10,000 PPEs face masks have been procured for the UN to fulfill the duty of care to all staff. Efforts are ongoing to diversify and expand the local sources of supply of PPEs and sanitation supplies to more sustainable products and businesses that are being developed to feed the COVID-19 response needs.

Adaptations to ongoing UNICEF programmes

UNICEF is working with partners to ensure the continuity of services and programmes to deliver key results for children in Ghana. To this end, Work Plans were revised in consultation with line Ministries and INGOs/NGOs and in coordination with the UN Country Team to identify and adjust activities and budgets to best support the COVID-19 response.

Policy and Evidence: UNICEF is assessing the actual and potential secondary impacts of COVID-19 on children in Ghana to generate suggestions on potential short- and long-term policy and programme solutions to mitigate the potentially devastating impact on children considering vulnerabilities and spill-over effects across all relevant sectors. UNICEF continues to support capacity building of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in relation to State Reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Health: UNICEF has been working with government and partners to strengthen the national immunization programme and address the reduced coverage due to COVID-19. For example, the UN engaged with health workers to understand the challenges faced in immunization and how to better address them, including through the provision of necessary PPEs for frontline health workers.

Nutrition: UNICEF is continuing to provide Vitamin A to children and Iron Folic Acid to out-of-school girls through health facilities. In addition, UNICEF is partnering with WFP, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the GHS to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on food and nutrition.

Water Sanitation & Hygiene: In the Tatale area, UNICEF supported 29 poor households to complete their latrines under the Sanitation Social Fund (SSF), with funding from Canada. Under the Urban Sanitation Programme, 208 urban poor households in the Tamale Metropolis now have access to improved latrines with funding from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Education: The closure of Ghana's schools has substantively impacted the implementation of country programme activities in the Education sector. Nevertheless, efforts are focused on the continued access to quality and inclusive education during the COVID-19 epidemic through support to distance and remote learning. Planning is underway to increase support to implementation of the Re-entry Policy and safe schools programming with a focus on getting girls back to school, once schools re-open.

Child Protection: UNICEF provides technical and financial support to the Government of Ghana in strengthening the child protection case management system. Joint programmes aim at preventing violence, sexual abuse, teenage pregnancies and child marriage. Across sectors, UNICEF also supports the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MoELR) to assess the situation of children who are exploited in the agriculture sector, especially in cocoa growing areas, and develop a Framework for Action.
Partnerships and Funding Overview

At country level, under the leadership of the Government of Ghana, UNICEF coordinates with the United Nations Country Team, especially the UNRCO and WHO, Development Partners, INGOs and civil society organizations, to protect children and their families from exposure to COVID-19, minimize mortality and support the continuity of services. UN Response Plans have been developed to identify priorities. In line with the UN Programme Criticality Assessment results, UNICEF ensures that its staff and implementing partners can safely continue delivering critical activities to respond to COVID-19, taking all precautions required.

At HQ level, a revised UNICEF Covid-19 Global Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal was launched to meet the needs of children, communities, health systems and health structures, to protect them against the disease and address its immediate health and socio-economic impacts. All UNICEF offices report against this appeal through Situation Reports, as one of the global requirements.

UNICEF appeals for US$ 18.2M to facilitate continued access to essential, quality and inclusive social services and the protection of children affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Ghana. Since the beginning of the pandemic, several donors such as DFID, KOICA, EKN have expressed solidarity and support. As of May 12th, US$ 1.1 million has been raised and about US$ 3M has been pledged. UNICEF recently received USAID support to enhance social accountability in the health sector. As part of its reprogramming commitment, the Government of Canada has pledged about US$ 2M to support the national response on child protection and gender-based violence. Thanks to UNICEF UK, interventions are implemented in the education sector. Expressing its sincere gratitude to all public and private donors for their contributions, UNICEF calls for additional funds to fill the continuing gaps in ensuring a comprehensive and effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, for vulnerable children, young people and families in Ghana.

External Media

Fighting COVID-19: Need for tippy taps in communities without water - [https://www.gna.org.gh/1.18262725](https://www.gna.org.gh/1.18262725)
COVID-19: UNICEF donates to Judicial Service/Births and Deaths Registry: [https://www.gna.org.gh/1.18271066](https://www.gna.org.gh/1.18271066)

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## Annex A - Summary of Programme Results

### UNICEF and IPs Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2020 target</th>
<th>Total results*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk Communication and Community Engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 1: Number of people reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services.</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
<td>11,701,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 2: Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions.</td>
<td>1,800,000</td>
<td>678,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCCE Indicator 3: Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>99,668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WASH and IPC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 1: Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 2: Number of healthcare facilities staff and community health workers provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).</td>
<td>2,512</td>
<td>2,212 (200 health workers, 2,012 care givers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPC Indicator 3: Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC).</td>
<td>8800</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 1: Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases among children, pregnant and breastfeeding women.</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 2: Number of children &amp; women receiving essential healthcare services, including immunization, prenatal, postnatal, HIV &amp; GBV* care in UNICEF supported facilities.</td>
<td>403,420</td>
<td>163,692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of Health Care Indicator 3: Number of primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received IYCF counselling through facilities and community platforms.</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>47,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 1: Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning.</td>
<td>9,177,934</td>
<td>5,969,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Protection and GBV</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 3: Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>36 (Girls 25, Boys 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Continuous Education, Child Protection and GBV Services Indicator 4: Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support.</td>
<td>260,000</td>
<td>34,898 people (Girls: 11,846, Boys: 8805, Women: 7,651 Men: 6,596)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Access to Continuous Education, CP & GBV Services

**Indicator 5:** Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed training on GBV risk mitigation & referrals for survivors, including for PSEA.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100</th>
<th>35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Social Protection

**Indicator 1:** Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian multi-sector cash grant for basic needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>300,000</th>
<th>322,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Qualitative Indicators

In the last reporting period, what are the top (up to 3) access issues/constraints due to COVID-19 and related response measures, as identified in feedback mechanisms from affected populations, for each of these service areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| (a) Health services access | 1. Limited testing capacity and delays in test results.  
2. Reduced uptake of preventive and curative health services.  
3. Social distancing measures limit house to house outreach services. |
| (b) Nutrition services: (management of wasting/SAM; nutrition supplements, other services) (List up to 3 issues) | 1. Less growth monitoring and promotion activities at Child Welfare Clinics (CWCs).  
2. Lower demand for CWC services as health facilities visits declines.  
3. Lack of supplies for management of severe acute malnutrition. |
| (c) Access to food (List up to 3 issues) | 1. Reports of increased food prices.  
2. Reports of delayed planting by farmers.  
3. Reports of unavailability of fresh foods. |
| (d) WASH (List up to 3 issues) | 1. Slow sector response due to low capacity and preparedness.  
2. Delays in fabrication and delivery of handwashing stations for public spaces. |
| (e) Education services including continuation of learning options (List up to 3 issues) | 1. Closure of schools and inability to reach learners remotely.  
2. Long lead time to transform teaching and learning curricular content into radio/TV/internet content for all pre-tertiary levels, in all core subject areas and in local languages.  
| (f) Child protection related services (List up to three issues) | 1. Ban on social gatherings hinders the access to critical PSS and case management services.  
2. Temporary closure of the child-friendly gender-based violence court in Accra. All cases set for hearing are delayed by two weeks. |
## Annex B - Funding Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PILLARS</th>
<th>Funding requirements</th>
<th>Funds available</th>
<th>Funding gap</th>
<th>Gap %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordination, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)</td>
<td>$ 2,464,000</td>
<td>$ 60,000</td>
<td>$2,404,000</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infection and Prevention control (IPC) and provision of critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene supplies</td>
<td>$5,100,000</td>
<td>$640,200</td>
<td>$4,459,200</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of continued access to essential health and nutrition services for women, children and vulnerable communities, including case management</td>
<td>$ 4,214,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$4,214,500</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to continuous education, social protection, child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) services</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td>$420,000</td>
<td>$4,580,000</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sectoral (Programme &amp; Operations Support, including Emergency Coordination)</td>
<td>$1,400,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$1,400,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,178,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,120,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,057,700</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>