



A Malawi Red Cross volunteer disinfects incoming vehicles at Songwe border in northern Malawi
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MALAWI

COVID-19

Situation Report



Reporting Period: 01 - 07 October 2020

Situation in Numbers as of 7 October 2020

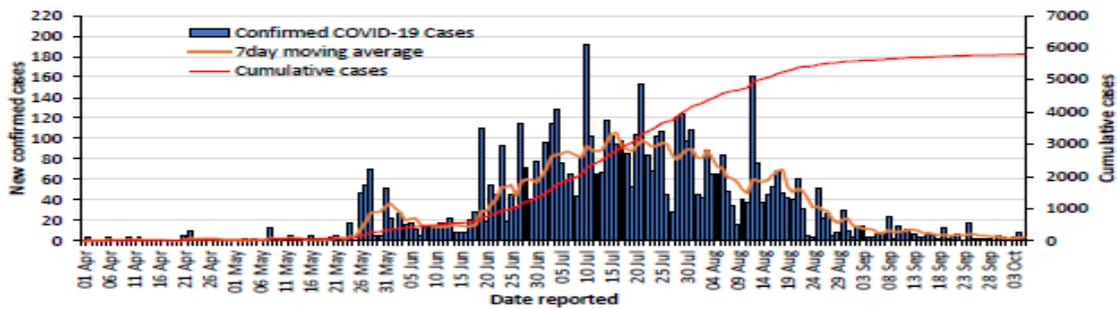
5,803 confirmed cases
4,575 recoveries
180 deaths
54,727 tested samples
1,048 active cases

Source: 2020/10/07 Malawi COVID-19 Situation report, Public Health

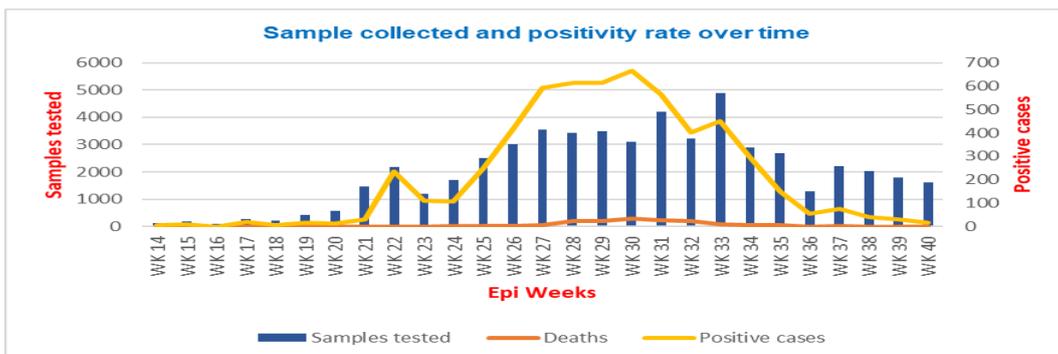
Highlights

- Through UNICEF partnership with Clinton Health Access Initiative, 968 health workers from 12 districts of the 29 local councils have been trained in infection prevention and control.
- During the reporting period, about 236,200 people were reached with COVID-19 messages through door to door campaigns, mobile van and community drama sessions and social media. This includes 378 people with disabilities. The total number of people reached with the messages since the beginning of the pandemic is at about 1.13 million.
- To date, 15,147 people in Dedza, Salima and Mangochi have been reached with messages on continuity of education, adolescent nutrition, eliminating child marriages with support from UNICEF.

Epidemic curve of COVID-19 in Malawi of 6 October 2020



Sample collected and positivity rate over time



Situation Overview

As of 7 October, 5,796 cases of COVID-19 have been registered in Malawi. The overall downward trend continues with 27 new cases registered in the reporting compared to 33 in the previous week. The total number recoveries registered in the reporting week (330), is higher than the number of new cases recoveries (31) over the same period and again, there has been a downward trend recently. Consequently, the total number of active cases is declining and now stands at 1,048, which represents only 18 per cent of all registered cases. Of the total cases, 4,650 are locally transmitted infections and 1,153 are imported. One new death was registered since the last report and the total number of fatalities is at 180 (CFR = 3.1).



While active tracing and monitoring of contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases are ongoing, the country continues to experience shortage of test kits. During the reporting period, there has been a small improvement in tracing contacts and reporting of alerts from 556 in the previous week to 773. However, this is still inadequate. As of October 6, Malawi had 5,786 reagents across all the eight testing sites, these reagents can support the country to test symptomatic suspected cases for a period of seven days. UNICEF is in the process of procuring of consumables worth US\$ 360,000 that will enable testing of additional 65,000 samples. Also, the MoH through College of Medicine have initiated the validation of Antigen-detection assays that were recently prequalified by WHO to expand the testing capacity.

Programme response by UNICEF and partners

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

Humanitarian Strategy

UNICEF Malawi is working in the following areas of strategic priority against COVID-19:

- Public health response to reduce coronavirus transmission and mortality
- Continuity of health, education, nutrition and protection services
- Assessing and responding to the immediate secondary impacts of COVID-19
- Strengthening Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

UNICEF maintains critical preparedness and response operations, including operational humanitarian access corridors, and delivery of services in Health, Education, Child and Social Protection, WASH, Nutrition and Communication for Development (C4D). This is being done to prevent and control infections, ensure continuity of education, promote positive behaviours, preventing transmission and ensuring the protection of children rights, especially of the most vulnerable ones.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

- The National Disaster Preparedness and Relief Committee continues to meet to review COVID-19 related recommendations from the cluster system.
- Clusters continue to hold meetings for better response coordination. Information relating to COVID-19 resource mobilization, allocation, programmatic implementation is regularly being updated.

- UNICEF is the co-lead agency for the Education, Nutrition, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Protection Clusters, while also playing a key role in the Health Cluster.
- UNICEF participates in Humanitarian Country Team and the Inter-Cluster Coordination meetings which provide a platform for cross-sectoral coordination. The meetings are now taking place once every fortnight.

Malawi COVID-19 Supply Chain system

During the reporting period, UNICEF, through United Purpose, distributed 400 female sanitary pads to Mwanza District Health Office. These will be provided to returnees at Mwanza border.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Public health response to reduce coronavirus transmission and mortality

UNICEF is playing a major role in enhancing the knowledge and skills of healthcare facility staff and community health workers in the area of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC). Through partnership with Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) 968 health workers from 12 districts of the 29 health districts have been trained in infection prevention and control. The MoH through its Quality Management Department with support from Malawi Council of Doctors and nursing association delivered trainings that were mostly hospital based to ensure that the health workers appreciate the practical nature of IPC. The trainings targeted doctors/clinicians, nurses, laboratory technicians, surveillance officers and support staff from 56 health facilities including all the five central hospitals.

Further to strengthening the capacity of surveillance officers to build capacity for detection of COVID-19 cases, UNICEF is supporting the screening of travellers into the country at entry points. In the past week, UNICEF's partner Malawi Red Cross (MRCS) supported MoH to screen 1,012 returnees from South Africa who entered through Mwanza border. Out of the 1,012 screened, 428 were found to be symptomatic and their samples were tested from which one tested positive for COVID-19. This is an indication of reduced positivity rate among returnees. In addition, MRCS supported the screening of 13,355 travellers that entered the country through other points of entry (Kamuzu International Airport (KIA) Mchinji, Dedza, Chitipa, Mwanza, Karonga and Dzaleka).

Support in the provision of critical WASH supplies and services as part of infection prevention and control is another area that UNICEF has been supporting since the commencement of the COVID-19 response. Thanks to FCDO, in the past week UNICEF in partnership with United Purpose reached over 40,000 additional people with COVID-19 related WASH messages through mobile van promotions. The messages are aimed at improving infection prevention and control among the population.

Support to the enhancement of infection prevention and control at emergency treatment centres (ETUs), border posts and other public places is also continuing. To ensure availability of safe water at these facilities, UNICEF has been supporting water quality testing and treatment of contaminated waterpoints at and around hospitals and the emergency treatment units. Since the onset of the COVID-19 preparedness and response interventions, a total of 47 water sources with capacity to serve a population of 11,750 people have been tested. Out of these, nine test results that showed bacterial contamination (presence of faecal coliforms) were all treated (flush chlorinated) and are now providing safe drinking water. Also, during the week, installation of backup water storage tanks was completed at Kasinthula Emergency Treatment Unit (ETU) in Chikwawa and is ongoing at Chitipa ETU with minor rehabilitation of plumbing works.

Strengthening Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

UNICEF continued to support implementation of risk communication and community engagement interventions using various delivery platforms. During the reporting period alone, about 236,200 people- including 378 with disabilities- were reached with COVID-19 messages through door to door campaigns, mobile van and community drama sessions as well as social media. This brings the total number of people reached with the messages since the beginning of the pandemic to about 1.1 million.

UNICEF has also been supporting the development and broadcast of messages and information on COVID-19 through social media, radio broadcasts, and other channels. So far, through the partnership, 5,785 radio and TV spots have been broadcast on Malawi Institute of Journalism radio. To get an indication of the uptake of the messages being disseminated UNICEF engaged radio monitors in the 12 target districts who are interviewing the radio listeners to understand their knowledge of COVID-19 as heard from the radio. So far, 3,167 have been interviewed out of which 2,904 were able to recall the messages representing 92% of the interviewees.

Continuity of health, education, nutrition and protection services

Face to face learning resumed on September 7 only for those sitting for final examinations and final year college students, while the lower classes will begin in October. UNICEF continues to support distance learning programmes. In a recent U-report poll, 73 per cent of learners who accessed distance learning described the program as effective and 58 percent felt that such platforms should still be available after schools reopen to support learning even after children are back to school.

Following the opening of schools, the Malawi Police have started moving complaints boxes from strategic places in the communities to schools to ensure that learners continue to have access to violence reporting mechanisms. This is being accompanied by orientation of learners on the complaints' boxes and awareness/engagement on issues of early/forced marriages, school dropouts and COVID-19 prevention measures among others. Under the Safe Schools Programme, Malawi Law Commission has printed 13,500 comic books on child related laws which are currently being distributed in schools.

UNICEF also continues to support message dissemination to bring children back into the school system and enable them to continue accessing various services. To date, 15,147 people (4,708 girls, 4,087 women, 3381 boys, 2,495 men, 308 chiefs, 168 extension workers) in Dedza, Salima and Mangochi have been reached with messages on continuity of education, adolescent nutrition, eliminating child marriages. A further 16,343 people have been reached with back to school messages through mobile van messaging in Ntchisi, Mzimba, Chikwawa and Nkhatabay.

UNICEF also continues to support strengthening of reporting and referral mechanisms for child protection as well as violence cases, including sexual exploitation and abuse and negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage.

Forty-nine callers to the national child helpline and gender-based violence (GBV) crisis line received Psychological first aid (PFA) during the reporting period bringing the total number of callers so far provided with PFA to more than 4,200. This time, cases reported through the calls included 47 GBV related calls and 29 child protection related cases (15 on defilement and 14 on child marriage). In line

with the procedure, the cases were referred to the relevant service providers, including police, social welfare, judiciary and health.

UNICEF's partner in this intervention, YONECO, assisted in the follow-up of cases by providing logistical and technical support. During the reporting period, YONECO facilitated follow up visits by Malawi Police Service in Mangochi, Machinga, Balaka, and Phalombe districts to support and investigate GBV related cases. Awareness raising on how to report violence cases through helplines and on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse through SMS continued with 10,000 people receiving the messages during the reporting week.

Furthermore, during the period of 24-30 September, over 2,600 people including around 1,200 children, received Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Blantyre and Machinga districts. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 response, with support from UNICEF, over 18,000 people in 6 districts (Blantyre, Machinga, Dowa, Mchinji, Zomba, Mulanje) have been reached by District Social Welfare Offices (DSWOs) with community based MHPSS. In addition, around 1,900 people diagnosed as COVID-19 positive and their close relatives, were also provided with MHPSS in Machinga, Chitipa, Zomba, and Blantyre districts, including around 160 people supported during the same period. Also, MHPSS has been also provided to returnees from South Africa. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 response, over 2,300 returnees have been provided with Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) upon their arrival, including around 300 people supported in Machinga during the reporting period.

UNICEF also continues to provide financial and technical support to facilitate the follow up and provision of necessary assistance to vulnerable people, including children living or working on the streets, children without parental or family care by DSWOs. In Blantyre district 32 children have been supported during the reporting period bringing the total number of children that have to date received this assistance to over 550 children without parental or family care who have been provided with appropriate alternative care arrangements and support. This includes children in the Child Care Institutions (CCIs), and children reintegrated from CCIs in their families. Similarly, around 740 children living or working on the streets children in Blantyre, Machinga, Dedza, and Zomba districts have been provided with Psychosocial Support (PSS) and necessary material support since the beginning of the response, including 21 children supported during the reporting period in Blantyre and Machinga districts. Also, Machinga DSWO facilitated the annulment of 144 child marriages in the period of 16 to 29 September.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

Following the announcement of the top five finalists of the COVID-19 youth challenge, the winner, Sam Masikini was featured on [BBC Focus on Africa](#)

UNICEF hosted the visiting UK minister for Africa and issued a [press release](#) on the announcement of the additional funding for COVID-19. This was covered by the major news outlets including MBC, [The Nation](#), [Times](#), [Malawi 24](#) and [Nyasatimes](#).

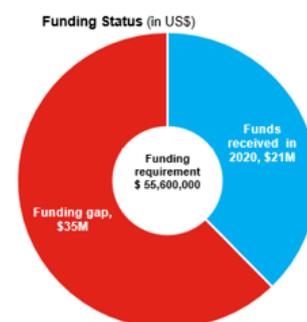
UNICEF published new stories in the reporting period: [Protecting family from COVID-19](#) and [Point of entry staff play their part to fight COVID-19](#)

From the latest U-Report midline poll on COVID-19 knowledge, attitudes and practices, there is increasing awareness among U-Reporters on the pandemic. In the poll, 85% of respondents say they know how COVID-19 can be transmitted as well as its symptoms. This is in sharp contrast to

just 30% of respondents in February who said they had such knowledge. Results of this poll can be accessed [here](#).

Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF needs an estimated US\$ 55,600,000 to respond effectively to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and children to complement the government efforts in Malawi. The proposed geographical coverage aims at targeting high risk as well as vulnerable districts from the North, Central and Southern parts of the country through a balanced approach seeking to leave no one behind. The proposed integrated programme approach will ensure comprehensive and holistic coverage of child needs, especially of the most vulnerable.



To date, UNICEF has received US\$ 20,976,214 contributions from public and private donors. However, a funding gap of 75 per cent remains. Specific funding requirements, resources available so far and the current funding gaps per sector are displayed in Annex B.

Next SitRep: 19 October 2020

UNICEF Malawi COVID-19 website page: <https://www.unicef.org/malawi/coronavirus-disease-19>

Annex A: Summary of Programme Results

Sector	Target	Total results as of 16 September 2020
Health		
Number of healthcare facility staff and community health workers trained in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)	400	600
Number of healthcare providers trained in detecting, referral and appropriate management of COVID-19 cases	400	719
Number of healthcare workers within health facilities and communities provided with PPEs	2,500	2,260
Number of children and women receiving essential healthcare, including prenatal, delivery and postnatal care, essential new-born care, immunization, treatment of childhood illnesses and HIV care through UNICEF supported community health workers and health facilities.	500,000	168,499
WASH		
Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	5000	6,909
C4D		
Number of people reached with COVID-19 messages on prevention and access to services	8,000,000	8,000,000
Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE actions	300,000	1,128,534
Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms	5,000	3,634
Nutrition		

Number of caregivers to children aged 0-23 months reached with messages aiming to promote breastfeeding in the context of COVID-19 through national communication campaigns	500,000	313,284
Number of children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM)"	8,000	11,058
Child Protection		
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based mental health and psychosocial support	21,000*	22,999
Number of children without parental or family care provided with alternative care arrangements	350**	555
Education		
Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning	2,139,311	1,423,396
Social Protection		
Number of households benefitting from new or additional social assistance measures provided by governments to respond to COVID-19 with UNICEF support	457,000	0

*Target increased from 1,500 to 21,000

** Target has been revised from 30 to 350

Annex B: Malawi COVID-19 funding status by sector as of 16 Sept. 2020

Appeal Sector	Funding Requirements	Funds received against the appeal	Funding gap	
			\$	%
Health	\$30,600,000	\$9,337,367	\$21,262,633	69%
WASH	\$8,600,000	\$736,793	\$7,863,207	91%
C4D	\$1,000,000	\$632,054	\$367,946	37%
Education	\$3,200,000	\$ 6,484,529*	\$0	0%
Social Protection	\$7,200,000	\$0	\$7,200,000	100%
Nutrition	\$4,000,000	\$0	\$4,000,000	100%
Child Protection	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000	100%
TOTAL US\$:	\$55,600,000	\$ 17,190,743	\$41,693,786	75%

* The actual amount received from by the education sector is \$10,270,000. Of the total amount, 6,484,529 is what is earmarked for use in 2020 while the rest will be utilised in 2021; hence the revision to reflect only the funding available in 2020

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