



SOUTH AFRICA COVID-19

Situation Report No.18

01 July – 31 August 2021



Situation in Numbers

Confirmed cases: 2,824,093

Recovered: 2,599,667

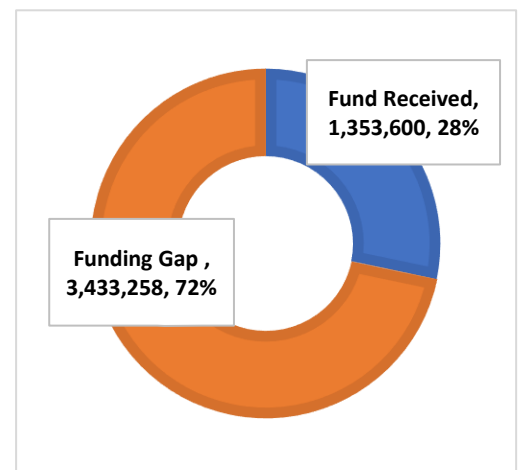
Deaths: 83,617

Tests Conducted: 16,779,074

Vaccine Reach: 13,673,651

(As of 06 September 2021)

FUNDING STATUS (US\$)



UNICEF staff and volunteers help clean up in Alexandra Township, Johannesburg, following widespread looting and violence. ©UNICEFSouthAfrica/2021/Hearfield

Reporting Period: 01 July – 31 August 2021

Highlights

- Schools fully re-opened for the first time in nearly 18-months, following a blended learning approach. UNICEF worked with the DBE on preparations to prepare and keep schools safe, as well as on advocacy work to build confidence among all education stakeholders, pupils, parents and caregivers ahead of the opening of classrooms.
- UNICEF supported the rollout of the vaccination programme in the education sector. Teachers were prioritized for vaccination during the second phase of the rollout and more than 517,000 teaching and non-teaching staff have been vaccinated. UNICEF and the DBE have also developed a campaign to tackle teachers' vaccine hesitancy.
- UNICEF support to routine child immunization and catch-up drives continued across all districts, with the national immunization coverage under one year at 78,4% for quarter 2 – a decline of 5% from quarter 1. Five priority districts for the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) and child health catch-up drives met or exceeded the 90% target during both quarters. Of major concern is the North West Province which is consistently underperforming and experiencing vaccine stockouts.

Situation Overview

- The scheduled 01 September opening of vaccination for the 18-34 year old cohort was moved forward to 20 August in an effort to increase the numbers of vaccinated across South Africa. This has increased momentum, with more than 1.5 million young people getting vaccinated to date, the focus now is to build momentum and to get as many shots in arms as possible ahead of a feared fourth wave of infections in late 2021.
- The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) detected a mutated group of the SARS-CoV-2 viruses in South Africa – identified in all 9 provinces – referred to as the C.1.2 lineage. The mutation's transmissibility, severity of infection and implications for vaccine effectiveness remain the subject of research.
- The implications of the widespread unrest that hit parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces in July continue to be felt at multiple levels, from an increase in child hunger in affected areas and access to education affected through damage and destruction of 144 schools.

Summary of Preparedness and Response Actions

Education

1. UNICEF continues to provide technical support to the DBE through a consultant embedded in the department to aid the coordination and planning of the education sectors COVID-19 emergency response. This included guidance and advice on the recent 02 August re-opening of schools.
2. With the DBE and other partners, UNICEF continues to support the development of content for the COVID-19 Emergency Response through the distribution of videos, posters and pamphlets promoting a safe learning environment for teachers and learners. This includes working with the DBE and Department of Social Development (DSD) on the review and update of the standard operating procedure (SOPs) for Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. UNICEF also supported the development of easy-to-use SOP guides developed to assist learners, teachers and non-teaching staff.
3. The psychosocial support and WASH in schools programme continues as part of the wider sector implementation of the Care and Support in Teaching and Learning (CSTL) pillar. Through UNICEF's partnership with USAID and the Woolworths Foundation, 151 handwashing stations in selected schools and orphan and vulnerable child (OVC) centers have been constructed with a reach of more than 50,503 children.
4. UNICEF is supporting the provision of psychosocial support for learners through a partnership with Childline South Africa, with 38,513 children reached according to latest statistics. The learners receive direct advice and support during the calls, with some referred to additional services.
5. UNICEF continues to support distance and home-based learning for children when they are not physically in class, with more than 539,522 children reached through the *ActiveLearning@Home* series as well as the *2Enable* and *Tshwaragano ka Bana* series.

Child and Social Protection

1. The Department of Social Development (DSD), with support from UNICEF and Strategic Analytic Management (SAM), used the Real Time Monitoring Tool (RTMT) in KZN and Gauteng to gauge the impact of the July social unrest on children. The field teams, consisting of child and youth care workers, returned to 53 households in uMgungundlovu and Harry Gwala districts that were involved in an original assessment in December 2020. The real time findings illustrated the extent to which the unrest and riots have impacted children and their households' food security, economic wellbeing and safety. The RTMT findings were presented to the DSD Minister during a UN field mission with lessons from the use of the RTMT presented at an international social development conference assessing the impact of COVID-19 on children.
2. The South African Police Service (SAPS) released the quarter one crime statistics on 20 August. The April to June report demonstrated an increase in crimes related to gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against children (VAC). Incidence of rape and murder for this period increased with some 10,006 people raped and 5,760 murdered between April and June. In response to the high levels of violence and social unrest, UNICEF intensified community engagements, peacebuilding initiatives and community dialogues in Tembisa and Umlazi with partners Action for Conflict Transformation and the Child Protection Faith Based Movement.
3. In addition to high levels of VAC, the Gauteng Health Department announced that there had been 23,000 teenage pregnancies between April 2020 and March 2021, with 934 babies delivered by girls between the ages of 10 and 14. In response to these concerning figures, UNICEF is supporting the DSD and partners to identify support services for these girls and to provide educational information.
4. UNICEF – with partners the Scalabrini centre of Cape Town, Refugee Social Services, Action for Conflict Transformation and Future Families – have continued to help with the registration of births and advocacy for strengthened legal services for migrants in need of documentation.
5. The Children's Institute, with support from UNICEF, is mapping mental health and psychosocial support services for children across the country in preparation of this year's Child Gauge on child and adolescent mental health. This comes as UNICEF supports partners to provide intensified mental health and psychosocial services at scale as children and young people in particular, face a mental health crisis

Health and Nutrition

1. Cold chain consultants appointed by UNICEF are supporting the provincial health authorities in the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out and childhood immunization cold chain activities in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, North West and Gauteng provinces. This is providing critical support to strengthen monitoring and the utilisation of all vaccines.
2. UNICEF – as a member of the National Technical Working Group (NTWG) on COVID-19 Vaccines: Safety & Surveillance – participates in vaccine surveillance related activities and programme manager meetings under the National Department of Health (NDoH) to examine vaccine rollout progress, gaps, challenges and responses.
3. UNICEF continues to support the implementation of routine immunization and child health catch up drive activities in all districts, monitoring and analysing immunization coverage data for action.

WASH

1. UNICEF, with partners EnviroSan, WaterAid, World Vision, MIET and the NECT, have installed a cumulative 424 handwashing with soap stations in 9 provinces, including in vulnerable communities, schools and healthcare facilities. This includes installation of 217 stations during 2021 to that has improved access to handwashing for some 121,411 people. Social distancing markers, and stickers above each tap also encourage optimal handwashing practices.
2. UNICEF worked with World Vision on developing and distributing an end-user monitoring tool to assess quality and end-user satisfaction with the handwashing stations installed in the Free State, Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Western Cape provinces as part of UNICEF South Africa's WASH strategy and RCCE programme. A standout finding is that over 92% of respondents noticed the blue social distancing markers installed around the tanks. Enumerators also observed that 79% of learners observed social distancing around the tanks in schools.
3. WASH kits distributed in the Eastern and Western Cape provinces included information on the importance of ventilation, along with handwashing and other COVID-19 preventive measures, as well as contact details for the emergency and vaccination registration hotline. Messaging is also focusing on encouraging people to access health facilities for routine child vaccination and chronic medical conditions where relevant.
4. The Tippy Tap Challenge and partnership with Zlto has been extended with activities modified to ensure that targets and outcomes are reached. To date 9,771 participants completed nano courses on how to build a Tippy Tap, and 932 Tippy Taps have been built through the challenge, benefiting 13,980 people with improved access to handwashing with soap. A film has also been made to capture the success of Tippy Tap activations.
5. Data analysis related to COVID-19 knowledge, as well as barriers to handwashing and good hygiene in schools, was conducted through the WASH in schools program in KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and Mpumalanga. Interactive materials developed to support the program were finalised and delivered to all schools, and training focused on project champions in schools, other learners and district officials. An end-project compilation wrap-up video is being produced and will be shared with stakeholders and schools. A playlist is also being created with the chants that schools have been creating to highlight the work of the schools over the duration of the project, and to spread the key messages.
6. UNICEF partner, WaterAID, has developed a set of videos based on a behaviour centred approach, highlighting five key hygiene messages. The videos have been aired on eNCA and SABC 1 as well as other social media platforms. WaterAID has also partnered with UNICEF in ensuring that messages around COVID-19 as well as hygiene and sanitation are broadcast in communities in Gauteng, through use of UNICEF's multi-media Truck.

Communication, Risk Communication and Community Engagement & Partnerships

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

1. "The Multi-media Truck" is focusing on engaging and supporting communities to get vaccinated against COVID-19. People 18 years and above are the target of the vaccination rollout and the truck messaging is focussed on this population. During the previous two provincial engagements – more than 90 ground staff were deployed, with about 8,400 people engaged and 172,339 reached. The campaign will cover all provinces by end October. A highlight includes the truck's support of Gauteng's mobile vaccination drive from 6-9 July where a total of 3,369 older persons

were encouraged to register in Johannesburg alone. WaterAID partnered with UNICEF to support the production of multimedia content for this campaign in partnership with the provincial department.

2. The weekly social listening report continues to be distributed through online channels, including the SACoronavirus website, and presented to, among others, the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Social and Behaviour Change. It serves as a strong baseline for content development and creative work streams in crafting communications.
3. Results from the 3rd round of the Community Rapid Assessment have been shared through the RCCE TWG and the weekly Provincial Communicators' Forum, to help inform vaccine demand programming. UNICEF is part of a team that is consolidating various research studies looking into vaccine perceptions, hesitancy, as well as willingness towards uptake. Further surveys are planned to target specific sectors, including young people.
4. A U-Report poll was conducted to gauge the views of the 18-34 year age group on the vaccine. This covered young people's perceptions of the importance of vaccines, hesitancy and willingness towards vaccine uptake and influencing factors in decision making. This was conducted through the U-Report platform via Facebook and the Internet of Good Things – both accessible on mobile phones. The poll had 5,089 responders and showed that 55% of young people would take the vaccine. Results have been shared through the RCCE TWG and the weekly social listening sub-stream to help inform vaccine demand programming and communications content development.
5. Emergency support is being provided to rebuild 4 community radio stations damaged during recent unrest, with planning in place for the development of peace-building dialogues across 8 provinces in partnership with the Children's Radio Foundation. A training curriculum for youth-led peacebuilding dialogues has been developed to support youth reporters and community radio facilitators from 12 stations to explore and address the impact of the July protests on individuals and communities. Recordings of the interactions will be edited to capture key themes, and produce these into radio and other assets for broadcast and wider impact.
6. The health workers' communication guide – developed in partnership with Heartlines to support health workers to engage with vaccine hesitant youth around vaccine uptake – is being finalised. It will be translated into five languages for printing and WhatsApp distribution.
7. Data analysis has been completed and a report compiled to reflect on findings from the project conducted with the South African Red Cross Society (SARCS). The report has been used to shape activities for the next phase of work.
8. UNICEF continues to support 3 vaccine confidence campaigns, the "Myth or Vax" campaign with the African Union, ONE Campaign, as well as Tik Tok, as well as the Zwakala campaign, which is now being broadcast across TV and radio channels alongside digital materials and finally Gen V, which is on television and digital platforms. Partner, Project Last Mile, has amplified the campaigns through the purchasing of broadcasting airtime on television and radio and all are running as part of the National Department of Health RCCE strategy.

Communication

1. UNICEF released 2 videos about the impact of 'The Multimedia Truck and its support to South Africa's vaccination registration drive at SASSA paypoints.
2. An Op-Ed by the Representative calling for children and young people to be put first in the rebuilding and recovery efforts following the unrest in Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal was placed in the Daily Maverick.
3. UNICEF volunteers took to the streets on Nelson Mandela day to support clean up efforts following the unrest and looting and they continue to support the registration of elderly for the COVID-19 vaccine.
4. A press release on the impact of COVID-19 related school closures on children's education received significant media coverage ahead of the re-openign of schools, including on SABC, eNCA and Newzroom Afrika among many other outlets.
5. UNICEF worked with the UN Communications Group to support the high-level impact assessment mission to KZN following the unrest. The related media and social media work received widespread pick-up.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

- UNICEF mobilized R3.6M from Standard Bank, Nedbank and Grey Advertising to respond to the unrest in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and further afield. In collaboration with implementing partners, the funds are being used to support:
 - Disaster relief through provision of food supplies, hygiene and sanitary ware.
 - Small businesses to replenish lost consignments.
 - The promotion of peace through community engagement on community radio stations as well as public forums through peace dialogues.

- The 2nd UNICEF South Africa CEO network session of the year was held on 18 August with over 31 private sector organisations represented. The topic of discussion was nutrition, with Brave Ndisale, country representative for the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) providing an outlook of the food and nutrition situation in South Africa, with UNICEF, Woolworths, Tiger Brands and Do More foundation providing an overview of how they are engaged in supporting the nutrition agenda in the country.

Challenges

- Youth hesitancy to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and hesitancy expressed by men in particular poses a challenges to the vaccine roll-out and is concerning ahead of the coming summer months and a potential fourth wave of the virus. UNICEF is engaged in vaccine confidence campaigns to counter misinformation, respond to legitimate concerns with evidence and build vaccine demand among this group.

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Annex A

2021 Response Plan Monitoring Framework, UNICEF South Africa

Indicators	Target (Jan - Jun 2021)	May 2021 Results
Education		
Number of children supported to continue their learning through distance/home-based learning/ mixed of school-based/home-based learning	2,400,000	3,204,402
Child Protection		
Number of children without parental or family care provided with appropriate ALTERNATIVE CARE ARRANGEMENTS	5,000	700
Number of children, parents and primary caregivers provided with community based MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT	50,000	35,000
Number of UNICEF personnel & partners that have completed TRAINING ON GBV RISK MITIGATION & REFERRALS FOR SURVIVORS	250	150
Number of children and adults that have access to a SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE CHANNEL TO REPORT SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE	500,000	8,060,000
Social Protection		
Number of households (affected by COVID-19) receiving humanitarian MULTI-SECTOR CASH GRANT	7,200,000	5,000,000
WASH		
Number of people reached with CRITICAL WASH SUPPLIES (INCLUDING HYGIENE ITEMS) AND SERVICES	135,000	161,411
Health and Nutrition		
Number of children and women receiving ESSENTIAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES in UNICEF supported facilities	1,050,000	172,195
Number of children 6-59 months admitted for TREATMENT OF SEVERE ACUTE MALNUTRITION (SAM)	10,000	4,520
Risk Communication & Community Engagement		
Number of people reached on COVID-19 through MESSAGING ON PREVENTION AND ACCESS TO SERVICES	4,840,000	2,687,126
Number of people engaged on COVID-19 through RCCE ACTIONS	100,000	33,427
Number of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established FEEDBACK MECHANISMS	50,000	11,706

1. Number of children and women receiving ESSENTIAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES in UNICEF supported facilities- this data uses the DHIS data, which is two months behind, the annual target will only be reached in 2022 February. For September; the data is not available
2. Number of people reached on COVID-19 through MESSAGING ON PREVENTION AND ACCESS TO SERVICES- this indicator is reported by two sections (which are Education and RCCE); they each have their own target and result for each month. Which we combine to one.

Annex B

2021 Funding Requirement, UNICEF South Africa

Thematic Area	Required	Available	Gap
Coordination and leadership	395,858	92,600	303,258
Risk communication and community engagement	893,000	522,000	371,000
COVID-19 vaccination support	610,000	134,000	476,000
Infection prevention and control through WASH	160,000	0	0
Continuity of essential services/mitigation of unintended consequences	1,887,000	0	0
Health, nutrition and HIV services	490,000	485,000	5,000
Child protection (incl. MHPSS, GBV & PSEA)	490,000	120,000	370,000
Social policy	50,000	0	0
Education	745,000	0	0
Logistics and Operations	841,000	0	0
SACO Programmable Total	4,786,858	1,353,600	3,433,258