**Highlights**

- UNICEF Turkey social media channels achieved a total reach of 30 million with COVID-19 information and advocacy. This high reach was made possible by UNICEF’s partnership with Facebook, which places relevant content on their dedicated COVID-19 Info Centre.

- UNICEF supported the Turkish government to procure Personal Protective Equipment for front-line workers, as well as 15,000 refugees/migrants—including 2,000 children—in removal centres.

- UNICEF and the Turkish Red Crescent distributed 5,000 psychosocial support kits to 2,500 vulnerable families in five provinces. The kits are designed to support children formerly accessing community-based PSS services at UNICEF child protection centres.

- UNICEF provided financial and technical support to the Ministry of National Education to ensure national distance learning programmes are meeting the needs of all 19 million learners in Turkey—including 680,000+ Syrian and other refugee children in public schools and temporary education centres.

- The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme for Refugees continued despite the nationwide school closure, reaching more than 500,000 children in March. UNICEF partner Turkish Red Crescent disseminated SMS messages on COVID-19 public health measures to CCTE beneficiaries in Arabic and other languages, reaching an estimated 350,000 households, or 1.7 million individuals.

- UNICEF and partners worked to ensure the continuation of community-based child protection services via alternative approaches including email, SMS, online chat and phone—reaching 22,572 people with remote counselling and 8,612 individuals (including 5,350 children) with case management.

- UNICEF provided online seminars to 472 professionals from six government and NGO partners on how to deliver and adapt child protection services during the pandemic. The topics covered issues such as PSS, GBV and child abuse, positive parenting, and case management.

**Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs**

The first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Turkey on 11 March. According to the Ministry of Health, as of 3 May, 1,135,367 people have been tested nationwide, 126,045 cases have been confirmed, 3,397 people have died, and 63,151 people have recovered. The outbreak emerged amidst the backdrop of a protracted and complex humanitarian crisis that has already significantly strained basic infrastructure and services: four million refugees are registered in Turkey, including 3.6 million Syrians and 1.7 million children—the largest registered refugee population in the world.

The Government of Turkey activated its National Response Plan for Pandemics and fully marshalled national capacities...
to address this new crisis. All 1,200+ public and private hospitals across the country have been mobilized and 114 laboratories are certified to test suspected cases. The government is working to increase this capacity while also expanding treatment and quarantine spaces for infected patients.

As part of social distancing and confinement measures aimed at preventing and containing the spread of COVID-19, all schools (including pre-schools) and universities are shuttered until 31 May, after which date the measure will be re-evaluated. Public gatherings, social, cultural and sport events are also suspended or postponed, and all public places are closed—including restaurants and bars, sport and recreation facilities and cultural institutions.

Virtually all international and domestic flights have been cancelled until 28 May, with exceptions for foreign citizens as well as Turkish citizens living abroad who can benefit from special flights. Public and private transport was also banned in 31 provinces, affecting 76% of the total population in Turkey. Grocery stores and supermarkets remain open and are well-stocked, while other basic services (such as electricity, water and gas) continue to function normally.

Nevertheless, the COVID-19 outbreak is putting the most vulnerable children in Turkey—refugees and migrants, children with disabilities, children of agricultural workers and others living in poor or marginalized households—at risk due to the interruption or significant reduction of essential non-health services like education, child protection and social protection. The effects of prolonged social distancing and confinement measures are also likely to result in increased unemployment and fewer livelihood opportunities for vulnerable families, making it more difficult for them to meet their basic needs and leading to increased negative coping strategies such as child labour and early marriage. Moreover, there is an increased risk of gender-based violence and violence against children, with higher levels of stress within households and many women and children confined at home with their abusers for long periods of time.

**Funding Overview**

UNICEF Turkey requires nearly **US$ 12.2 million until 31 December 2020** to support the national response to the CoVID-19 pandemic.1 As of end April, UNICEF had received $400,000 from the UN Central Emergency Respond Fund (CERF), as well as $70,000 from UNICEF Thematic Education—leaving UNICEF with a **96% funding gap**. Additional funding is urgently required to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children and families.

**Partnerships and Coordination**

UNICEF is closely coordinating with government, civil society and private sector partners to support national efforts to address the COVID-19 outbreak in Turkey. UNICEF’s response plan is aligned with the Government’s Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan, WHO’s global Strategic Response Plan (SRP), the UN’s Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 and UNICEF’s COVID-2019 Humanitarian Action for Children appeal.

UNICEF also continues to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis within the framework of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), implemented by the UN and NGO partners and led by the inter-agency Syria Response Group. During the reporting period, UNICEF and 3RP partners engaged in a re-prioritization of activities in light of the impact the outbreak has had—and will continue to have—on refugee and migrant populations, as well as host communities.

**Summary of UNICEF’s Programmatic Response**

**Supplies**

Since the outbreak, UNICEF Turkey has been assessing essential supply needs for vulnerable children in Turkey, as well as UN staff, social workers and front-line workers. During the reporting period:

- UNICEF supported the government to procure essential Personal Protective Equipment—including 40,000 masks, 50,000 latex gloves, 5,000 protective suits and 200 contact-free thermometers—for front-line workers as well as 15,000 refugees and migrants (including 2,000 children) in removal centres.

- In collaboration with the Turkish Red Crescent, UNICEF distributed 5,000 PSS kits (including activity books, art supplies and toys) to 2,500 vulnerable families in Gaziantep.

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1 Given the rapidly evolving outbreak, this appeal may increase further and will be revised accordingly.
Sanlurfa, Hatay, Mersin and Adana. The kits are intended to support children who were formerly accessing community-based PSS services at UNICEF safe spaces.

- UNICEF procured ‘Learn at Home’ and COVID-19 hygiene kits for 15,000 vulnerable Turkish and refugee households in 26 provinces; distributions are scheduled to commence on 8 May, benefitting an estimated 48,000 children. The kits aim to support vulnerable learners who have limited/no access to education while also encouraging safe hygiene practices to prevent or mitigate the risk of infection.

In addition, UNICEF is procuring COVID-19 hygiene kits for 60,000 vulnerable households, benefitting an estimated 300,000 individuals, including some 180,000 children. Distribution of these kits is expected for mid-May.

**Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)**

UNICEF Turkey implements a wide range of RCCE activities targeting Turkish, refugee and migrant children and families. All activities are closely coordinated with the government and aim to provide accurate and up-to-date information on COVID-19 risks and how people can protect themselves, while also providing guidance on secondary effects—such as managing self-isolation, promoting mental health and well-being, and adapting to distance learning.

National Children’s Day, a public holiday on 23 April, provided a strategic opportunity for UNICEF to amplify key messages around COVID-19. Below are key achievements during April:

- UNICEF Turkey social media channels achieved a total reach of 30 million with COVID-19 related information and engaged 100,000. This unprecedented reach was made possible by UNICEF’s partnership with Facebook, which places relevant content on their dedicated COVID-19 Info Centre.

- Via Instagram Live, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Tuba Büyüküstün provided tips to parents on how to spend time with their children at home during the pandemic—reaching more than 60,000 unique viewers.

- An op-ed was published on EuroNews by UNICEF’s Representative entitled “Children’s Day and CoViD-19”, which focused on the implications of the pandemic on children in Turkey and garnered 8.3 million views. [TR/EN]

- A video was produced featuring an adolescent volunteer who talked about how he is coping with the COVID-19 outbreak and its effects, including social distancing and confinement measures.

- UNICEF participated in 15-day online challenge #LearningAtHome #EvdeÖğreniyoruz by disseminating the adapted materials in Turkish, Arabic and English.

**Continued Access to Essential Services for Children**

**Education**

As part of social distancing and confinement measures aimed at preventing and containing the spread of COVID-19, all schools (including pre-schools) remain closed until 31 May, after which date the measure will be re-evaluated. Universities are also closed for spring semester 2020 and have shifted to distance learning where feasible.

On 23 March, MoNE adapted the “Education Information Network (EBA)” for use nationwide. The EBA aims to ensure uninterrupted distance learning (for grades 1-12) via broadcasted lessons on three public TV channels and, as a complimentary catch-up measure, utilizes digital learning and teaching resources to deliver curriculum.

The following results were achieved in April:

- UNICEF provided financial and technical support to MoNE to ensure that national distance learning programmes can meet the needs of all 19 million learners in Turkey—particularly the over 680,000 Syrian and other refugee children in public schools and temporary education centres.
• Over 12,000 Syrian volunteer education personnel spread awareness among refugee communities on COVID-19 risks and mitigation measures.

• Nearly 8,000 Syrian and Turkish parents and caregivers participated in UNICEF early childhood education (ECE) programmes and received essential information on COVID-19 and how to access distant learning.

• Syrian and vulnerable Turkish families across Southeast Turkey received daily phone calls or WhatsApp messages from a network of more than 200 teachers containing instructions and guidance on three key early-learning activities—benefitting over 5,200 young children.

• Together with the Kilis and Gaziantep municipalities, UNICEF supported distance learning services to about 3,500 children and youth, including 800 who are out-of-school. In addition, over 400 children received homework support and Turkish language courses.

• UNICEF and partners compiled a guide to additional resources for adolescent and their teachers, parents, and caregivers interested in supplemental learning and skills development. These resources—in Turkish and Arabic—function as personalized means of learning for different age groups and offer practice exercises, thousands of hours of instructional videos, and learning dashboards that empower learners to study at home.

Child Protection

UNICEF continues to support government and NGO partners to adapt outreach and service delivery to meet the needs of vulnerable children and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. State child protection services are currently being implemented by MoFLSS via a network of 332 Social Services Centres—albeit with reduced capacity and a strict prioritization of activities to mitigate the spread of infection.

NGO partners have had to significantly reduce their community-based services, with continued counselling and case management provided through phone communication and virtual consultations with beneficiaries. Of the 73 UNICEF-supported child protection centres throughout the country, only 19 TRCS centres remain open, with youth workers in Child Friendly Spaces working on a rotational basis and maintaining strict social distancing measures.

During the reporting period, the following results were achieved:

• UNICEF worked with partners to ensure the continuation of community-based child protection services where possible by using alternative communication channels and approaches, including email, text messaging, online chat, or mobile phone—reaching 22,572 children and their families with remote counselling and 8,612 individuals (including 5,350 children) with case management.

• UNICEF provided online seminars on how to deliver and adapt child protection services during the pandemic. Over 470 professionals from six partner organizations attended the seminars, which covered issues such as PSS, GBV and child abuse, positive parenting, and case management.

• UNICEF advocated for the release of children under detention and ensure adequate care and access to health and WASH services for children in state institutions and facilities. Some 750 children were released from prison following the amendment on the Law on Enforcement of Sentences, and UNICEF is providing technical support to the Ministry of Justice to sustain support services, including through online case management.

• Together with the Kilis Municipality, UNICEF provided COVID-19 information and remote case management support to 120 vulnerable Turkish and Syrian children who faced challenges accessing online services. Where feasible, children were referred to specialized services including medical services, PSS and counselling.

Social Protection

UNICEF and NGO partner Development Workshop conducted awareness-raising among state, civil society and private sector stakeholders on the vulnerabilities of seasonal agricultural worker families—many of whom are refugees and

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2 2,079 Turkish, 5,902 Syrian.
3 22,689 girls, 2,545 boys.
4 214 girls, 193 boys.
5 340 women, 132 men.
migrants. The interventions highlighted the risks for children engaged in seasonal agricultural work and advocated for conditions that will safeguard the rights and well-being of working families.

UNICEF NGO partner Support to Life continued to provide children and families at risk of child labour remote case management, awareness raising, and counselling services through phone calls and messaging platforms. During the reporting period, nearly 1,000 families accessed the Support to Life Information and Support Hotline, which operates across multiple languages and allows callers to receive information about STL’s activities for vulnerable Turkish and refugee families and governmental and non-governmental services available for them.

The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme for Refugees continued despite the nationwide school closure, reaching more than 500,000 children during the reporting period. UNICEF partner Turkish Red Crescent disseminated SMS messages on COVID-19 public health measures to CCTE beneficiaries in Arabic and other languages, reaching an estimated 350,000 households (app. 1.7 million individuals).

Adolescent and Youth Engagement
Together with the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), UNICEF developed an integrated ‘youth package’ tailored to the COVID-19 response. The package includes distance learning resources, a ‘Mahalle (neighbourhood) Support Mechanism’ aimed at supporting youth who want to volunteer in their local communities, and a media production concept designed to promote COVID-19 messaging and advocacy using the voices of young people.

During the reporting period, UNICEF and the MoYS identified 250 youth focal points for the Mahalle Support Mechanism; these volunteers will support the rapid distribution of hygiene kits as well as ‘learn at home’ kits to the most disadvantaged adolescents and their families within their communities. UNICEF also supported the MoYS to broadcast youth-centred YouTube programming amplifying key messages on COVID-19, reaching over 40,000 people.

Internal and External Media
During the reporting period, UNICEF Turkey produced a wide range of media content to support efforts to combat the pandemic in Turkey and highlight the situation of vulnerable Turkish, refugee and migrant families. These included:

- A video and story highlighting the distribution of UNICEF psychosocial support (PSS) kits to vulnerable Turkish and refugee children affected by the crisis.
- A video featuring children from all 81 provinces of Turkey to mark National Children’s Day. The video was broadcast on Atakule Tower in Ankara, which ‘turned blue’ as part of the Children’s Day commemorations.
- A YouTube live broadcast organized by the Child Rights Volunteers Organization and featuring the participation of UNICEF’s Representative to Turkey.

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Atakule Tower in Ankara ‘turned blue’ on National Children’s Day while a UNICEF video plays below.