
Reporting Period: 1–30 June

Highlights

- UNICEF Turkey Facebook page reached over 78 million people and engaged 650K people with COVID-19 related messages. Launch of TikTok social media platform in June is expected to further extend the reach of TCO messages among adolescents and young people using new communication mediums.

- UNICEF and partners have distributed a total of 35,441 Covid-19 family hygiene kits reaching more than 177,000 beneficiaries, including at least 106,000 children.

- National distance education ended with the school year on June 19th, 2020, however broadcasting remains operational as part of a summer distance learning programme. UNICEF’s technical and financial support to Ministry of National Education (MoNE) ensured that the national distance learning programmes meets the needs of 17 million learners in Turkey— including over 680,000 Syrian and other refugee children in public schools and temporary education centres.

- UNICEF is working with MoNE to adapt existing national guidelines to ensure safe reopening of schools in September and identify priority areas of support to facilitate the process.

- 433 Turkish and Syrian children (229 girls and 204 boys) were provided with remote homework support and Turkish language courses. Key findings from regular monitoring demonstrate the importance of this type of support to help the most vulnerable children engage with remote learning.

- The 73 UNICEF-supported child protection centres throughout the country were reopened with adapted services in line with national guidelines for safe operations which aim to maintain the necessary social distance by restricting the number of children served at a given time, and with professional teams in Child Friendly Spaces working on a rotational basis.

- UNICEF and partners reached 17,261 people (including 8,318 children) with remote counselling and 10,456 individuals (including 6,200 children) with case management.

- UNICEF reached 465,231 children (232,125 boys, 233,106 girls) with the most recent payment of Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE). 83 vulnerable families of seasonal agriculture workers are receiving cash assistance to mitigate loss of income due to COVID-19, thus preventing over 200 children from being exposed to child labour.

- With UNICEF’s support the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) conducted 39 live You Tube broadcasts dedicated to COVID-19 with health specialists, artists and famous sports people, aiming to promote positive behaviours among young people. By end of June these broadcasts have reached over 180,000 people.

Situation in Numbers (Data as of 30 June)

- 199,906 confirmed cases of COVID-19
- 5,131 reported deaths, 173,111 people recovered
- 17 million learners affected, including 680,000+ refugees
- US $12.2 million required for UNICEF Turkey response
Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Turkey on 11 March. According to the Ministry of Health (MoH), as of 30 June 3,381,650 people have been tested nationwide, 199,906 cases have been confirmed, 5,131 people have died and 173,111 have recovered.

According to the latest report published by the Turkish Ministry of Health (MoH) the recovery rate and death rate of all confirmed cases in Turkey were 86.04% and 2.57% respectively. According to the same source, since the start of the outbreak in Turkey, the highest Covid-19 incidence rates have been recorded in the Istanbul, Eastern Marmara region, South-eastern Anatolia and Western Anatolia. However, in the last week of June, the incidence rates were highest in South Eastern Anatolia and Istanbul (Map 1).

Map 1 - Incidence of COVID-19 cases in last 7 days (including 28 June) per 100,000 population in Turkey (Ministry of Health in Turkey)

Children under 15 years of age constitute 7.3% of all recorded cases of Covid-19 in Turkey, while 13.7% of cases are within the 15 to 24 years age cohort. By far the largest percentage of recorded cases are amongst the 25 – 49 years (49.4%) and 50 – 64 years (18.5%) age cohorts.

Mortality rates in Turkey show that men are disproportionally represented compared to women (62% and 38% respectively) with reported median age of recorded deaths being 71 years. According to the same source only 10 deaths occurred within the under 15 years age cohort.

The Government of Turkey continues with the full mobilization of national capacities to address this new crisis, with more than 1,200 public and private hospitals across the country providing treatment and services to Covid-19 patients and deploying 137 laboratories certified to test suspected cases. According to the latest MoH report, Covid-19 cases were 53.2% of all recorded hospitalizations as of 28 June. Of those hospitalized with COVID-19, 7.3% were intubated, and 93.2% of all hospitalized patients were discharged.

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 were closed. These measures have been revisited with private and public pre-schools authorized to open as of 1 June based on set criteria for safe school operations. Catch-up classes
for students in Turkish public schools will begin on 31 August, while preparations are underway for school reopening with the start of the new academic year in September.

Starting from beginning of June the Government of Turkey started easing restrictive measures related to the Covid-19 pandemic and issued a set of measures to facilitate ‘normalization’ of public services and economy in the country. These measures include resumption of public and private transportations, growing number of domestic and international flights, opening of social amenities and services such as restaurants, cafes and bars as well as easing of the confinement measures put in place for certain age groups.

**Funding Overview**

UNICEF Turkey requires US $12.2 million until 31 December 2020 to support the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the reporting period, UNICEF Turkey received $550,000 from the dedicated UNICEF Thematic Pool for Humanitarian Response - COVID-19. Together with previous contributions from the UN Central Emergency Respond Fund (CERF), UNICEF Thematic Education, Germany, Canada and Denmark, UNICEF Turkey still faces a 62% funding gap. Additional funding is required to meet the needs on the ground and UNICEF is engaging with key donors—including the EU, the Nordic states, the United States, Germany, the UK and UNICEF National Committees—to mobilise more resources.

**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 revision of planned activities within the 3RP framework in order to reflect the additional needs of affected populations in the context of Covid-19 outbreak and impact it has on refugee and migrant populations, as well as host communities.

**Summary of UNICEF’s Preparedness and Response Actions**

**Supplies**

Since the start of the outbreak, UNICEF Turkey has been undertaking a continuous assessment of needs for the provision of essential supplies to support infection prevention and control efforts in vulnerable households in Turkey, as well as for UN staff and UNICEF partners’ front-line workers.

During the reporting period:

- **Hygiene Kits:** By end June, UNICEF has distributed a total of 35,441 Covid-19 family hygiene kits in partnership with MoNE, MoYS, Kilis Municipality, Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) and ASAM (NGO partner) reaching more than 177,000 beneficiaries, of whom at least 106,000 children.

- **Psychosocial Support (PSS) Kits:** By end June UNICEF and partners have distributed 16,157 PSS kits, reaching 36,205 vulnerable Turkish and Syrian refugee children (13,738 boys, 22,467 girls) across 33 provinces in Turkey. The PSS kits target children who were formerly accessing community-based psycho-social support services and aim to help parents continue supporting their children during the confinement period.

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

UNICEF COVID-19 RCCE response plans maintains a wide range of activities that target both Turkish and refugees and migrant children and families and is implemented closely with government and civil society partners. The month key highlights include:

- **UNICEF Turkey Facebook page** has reached over 78 million people with COVID-19 related information and engaged more than 650,000 people. The high numbers of people reached and engaged through the UNICEF’s social media is largely owing to the ongoing partnership between UNICEF and Facebook, which places relevant content on their dedicated COVID-19 Info Centre.

- **TCO official account on TikTok** social media platform was launched, aiming to further extend the reach of TCO messages among adolescents and young people using new communication mediums.
• The UNICEF-supported “Community Participation and Volunteerism” course with the Izmir University of Economics has concluded. As part of this semester’s course, students developed and implemented social responsibility projects related to Covid-19 and children, including a webinar series with experts and academics to better inform children and their parents about COVID-19.

• UNICEF supported a “Being Young during COVID-19: Volunteerism, Participation and Communication” 8-week online training that benefited 30 (70% female) youth volunteers from Izmir Metropolitan Municipality who were supported to design youth-driven solutions to emerging community challenges related to the pandemic.

Continued Access to Essential Services for Children

Education

• **Remote learning:** The school semester ended on June 19, with children engaged in remote learning for 16 of the total 180 academic weeks. However, the online EBA system is still broadcasting as part of summer distance learning programmes. UNICEF continued supporting the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) both financially and technically to ensure that national distance learning programmes can meet the needs of all 17 million learners in Turkey—including over 680,000 Syrian and other refugee children in public schools and temporary education centres.

• Together with the Kilis and Gaziantep municipalities, UNICEF has been providing support to distance learning services to 740 children and youth. During the reporting period 433 Turkish and Syrian children (229 girls and 204 boys) were provided with remote homework support and Turkish language courses.

• UNICEF also provided support to MoNE in preparing 315 class videos in 35 vocational fields to expand the national distance learning programmes to include vocational training, ensuring that the 1.8 million Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students will be able to access distance learning in the future.

• **Safe reopening of schools:** Schools are expected to re-open in mid-September 2020, and UNICEF is working with MoNE to adapt existing national guidelines to ensure a safe reopening process. Priority areas identified for UNICEF’s support include safe school operations, a back to school campaign preparation, and tailored efforts to ensure continuity of learning and children’s wellbeing and protection in the school environment.

• **Early Childhood Education:** Syrian and vulnerable Turkish families across Southeast Turkey continued to receive daily phone calls or WhatsApp messages from a network of more than 200 teachers containing tips, instructions and guidance for parents and caregivers on key early learning activities. These interventions benefitted almost 5,500 young children in June.¹

Child Protection

• **Child protection services:** 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 provided by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS) through a network of 332 Social Services Centres, which are operating with reduced capacity and a strict prioritization of activities to mitigate the risk of infection.

• UNICEF 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. The 73 UNICEF-supported child protection centres throughout the country were reopened with adapted services in line with national guidelines for safe operations which aim to maintain the necessary social distance by restricting the number of children served at a given time, and with professional teams in Child Friendly Spaces working on a rotational basis. Community-Based Child Protection program partners continued using alternative communication channels and approaches, including email, text messaging, online chat, or mobile phone—reaching 17,261 people (including 8,318 children) with remote counselling and 10,456 individuals (including 6,200 children) with case management.

• UNICEF is providing support to MoFLSS for the establishment of a National Hotline for Turkish and non-Turkish citizens to enhance provision of psychosocial support during the coronavirus pandemic. The hotline will be operated by MoFLSS staff, based in 81 provinces, who have received training with UNICEF’s support. Currently, the Ministry has been working with on the establishment the technical infrastructure of the hotline system.

¹ 2,767 girls, 2,655 boys.
• **Capacity building** for UNICEF partners on COVID-19 child protection programming continues in collaboration with the Mersin Bar Association. Thus far, UNICEF provided online seminars for more than 200 lawyers on child-friendly legal aid and legal procedures. In addition, 35 outreach team members (31 women, 4 men) of the Municipality of Kilis were trained on the minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action and outreach to children, while 22 psychologists, youth workers and translators (20 women, 2 men) received specialized webinars on supporting parents, working with vulnerable groups, and the provision of psychosocial support for children and families.

• UNICEF partners GAP and TKV received online trainings on how to conduct remote sessions with vulnerable parents, focusing on psychosocial support and resilience. Following the trainings, GAP and TKV teams prepared and distributed brochures for parents on anger management and family communication, reaching 295 families.

• As the co-chair of the Southeast Turkey Child Protection Sub-Working Group, UNICEF supported a series of online seminars on mitigating GBV and child abuse risks, positive parenting, and case management which reached 78 humanitarian workers from 21 NGOs and UN agencies.

### Social Protection

• The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme for Refugee Children continued and 465,231 children (232,125 boys, 233,106 girls) benefited from the May payment. The CCTE call centre system, managed by TRC, continued providing services during the pandemic and is accessible in Turkish, English, Arabic, Farsi and Pashto. An automatic message on Covid-19 was integrated to the 168 Call Center waiting line and informs callers on recommended hygiene and social distancing measures, potential symptoms and access to health facilities.

• UNICEF and partners continued to provide services to children and families at risk of child labour. To date, 736 families have been supported with remote case management, awareness raising, and counselling services through phone calls and messaging platforms delivered in multiple languages, enabling callers to receive information about available governmental and NGO services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

• In Şanlıurfa, cash assistance has been provided to 83 seasonal agricultural worker families who lost their income due to COVID-19, thus preventing child labour for over 200 children.

### Adolescent and Youth Engagement

• **Youth volunteerism:** Youth continue to be critical partners in the Covid-19 response. As part of the “Mahalle Support Mechanism” (MSM) initiative, 151 Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) youth volunteers completed the distribution of hygiene and education (“Learn at home”) kits to the most disadvantaged adolescents and their families across 25 provinces in Turkey. MSM focal points prepared videos of their first encounter with adolescents and their families and shared them through youth centres’ social media accounts to showcase the important role youth are playing in contributing to the COVID-19 response.

• **Youth-centered communications:** UNICEF also continued to support the MoYS to broadcast youth-centred communication programming amplifying key messages on COVID-19. With UNICEF support Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) conducted 39 live You Tube broadcasts mobilizing various public figures, including health specialists, artists and famous sports people, to help shape and influence positive behaviours among young people. In each broadcast, key messages on COVID-19 were amplified and online sessions on mental health, handicrafts, sports and social cohesion have been organized. The live MoYS sessions have reached over 180,000 people by the end of June.

### 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 **story** was produced highlighting UNICEF and its national partners support to vulnerable refugee and Turkish children to access Early Childhood Education (ECE) services, reaching an estimated 3 million people.

• A **story** was produced highlighting UNICEF distribution of Family Hygiene kits and Learn at Home kits in partnership with its national partners to the most vulnerable Turkish and Refugee children. This story reached 3.3 million people.

• An **article**, in English and Turkish, entitled “Breast feeding safely during COVID-19.”

• An **article**, in English and Turkish, entitled “Indoor play ideas to stimulate young children at home.”
• An article, in English and Turkish, entitled “Tips for parenting during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak”

Who to contact for further information:

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