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Reporting Period: 1 January to 28 February 2021

Uganda Country Office

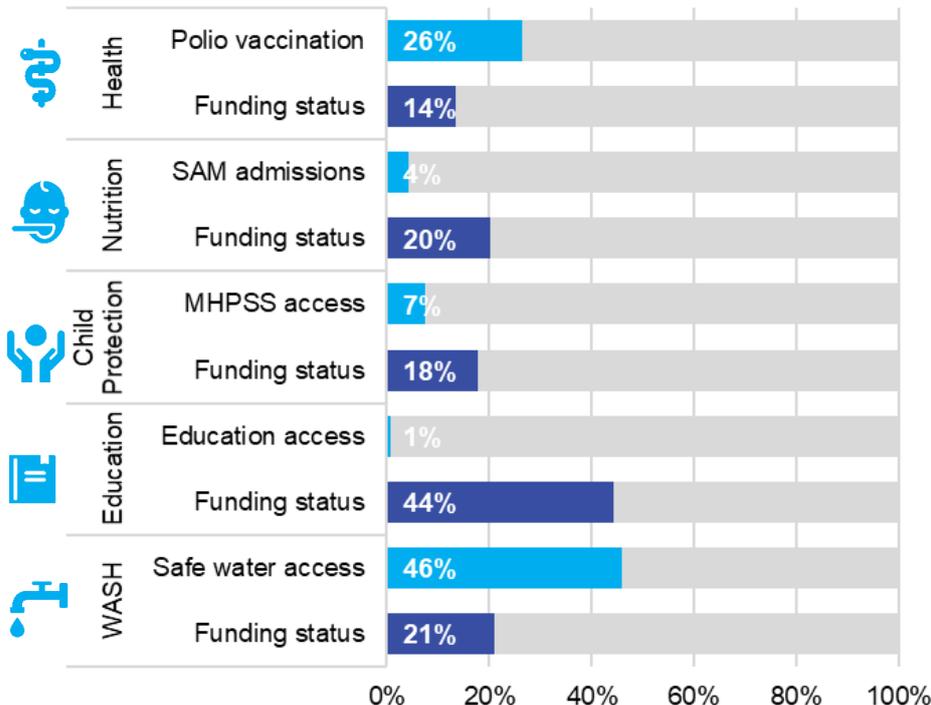
Humanitarian Situation Report No. 1 January - February 2021

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Highlights

- With schools reopening in a phased manner beginning in March 2021, about two million out-of-school children will remain in need of education assistance following the Government's closure of schools to contain and prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- UNICEF's health in emergencies programme remains grossly underfunded (87 per cent) with only 33,259 children (26 per cent of the target) vaccinated against polio as of February 2021.
- Recreational and psychosocial support services continued to be provided through mobile teams reaching 1,797 children (966 boys and 831 girls) and caregivers with home-based mental health and psychosocial support services.

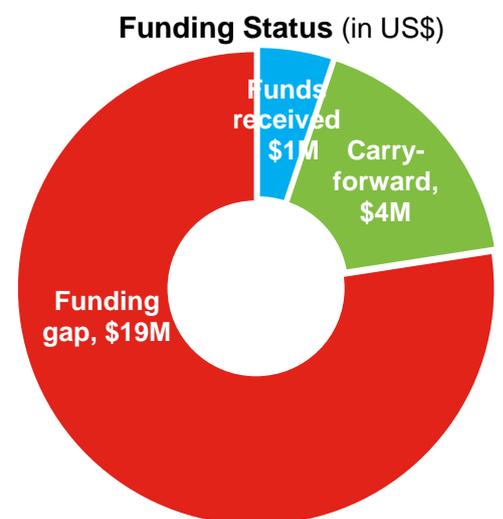
UNICEF's Response and Funding Status*



Situation in Numbers

-  **8,200,000**
of children in need of humanitarian assistance (UNICEF HAC 2021)
-  **15,200,000**
of people in need (UNICEF HAC 2021)
-  **855,600**
of refugees and asylum-seekers who are children (OPM, Progress V4, 31 January 2021)
-  **1,450,300**
of refugees and asylum-seekers (OPM, Progress V4, 31 January 2021)

UNICEF Appeal 2021 US\$ 24.9 million



* UNICEF results are attributed to both ORE funding received as well as other resources, reprogrammed funds and regular resources.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

UNICEF is appealing for US\$24.9 million to sustain the provision of life-saving services for women and children in Uganda. In 2021 so far, Japan, Liechtenstein, Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and the United States Bureau of Population, Refugee and Migration (BPRM) have generously contributed to UNICEF Uganda's humanitarian response. UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all public and private donors for the contributions received. However, the 2021 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) still has a funding gap of 77 per cent. Without sufficient funding, over 1.9 million women and children will not have access to essential health care.

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

Uganda registered a steady decline in new cases of COVID-19 across the country between January and February 2021. As of 28 February 2021, Uganda had a cumulative total of 40,367 COVID-19 cases and 14,989 recoveries. Cumulatively, 333 deaths were recorded with a case fatality rate of 0.8 per cent.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Uganda is home to 1,450,317 refugees and asylum-seekers as of 31 January 2021, over 59 per cent of whom are vulnerable children.

According to OPM, floods remained a threat to communities in flood-prone districts. In 2020, a total of 140,210 people or 26,415 households were affected 54 per cent of whom were women and 38 per cent children. The Government of Uganda, with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), launched the National Risk Atlas in February 2021. The Atlas is designed to guide early warning and risk-informed programming at the district level for threats such as floods.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Health

During the reporting period, there was a decline in reported malaria cases from 184,034 cases to 162,307. However, the reported cases represent an overall increase compared to the same period in 2020. The increase could be attributed to an improved reporting rate in 2021 alongside a change in weather, with intermittent rains and hot spells, which support mosquito breeding. UNICEF and its implementing partner Malaria Consortium supported the Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Health in planning for and monitoring a campaign to distribute insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) across the country, which concluded in February 2021. The campaign reached 48,820,453 people (97.52 per cent) in 9,690,635 (95.5 per cent) households.

UNICEF procured and distributed 44 filled oxygen cylinders and accessories to 10 district hospitals in West Nile, Arua Regional Referral Hospital, and Kawempe National Referral Hospital to support critical care for mothers who experience complications related to pregnancy and childbirth.

UNICEF supported MoH in proposal development for a campaign to introduce a new yellow fever vaccine, which was then submitted to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. UNICEF teams participated in Gavi multi-stakeholder engagement meetings on developing the 2021 plan. UNICEF supported the training of routine immunization, support supervision and mentorship teams at eight regional referral hospitals.

Nutrition

In partnership with MoH, UNICEF continued to provide preventive and curative services to children and their caregivers. In January 2021, UNICEF reached 126,147 caregivers with infant feeding counseling through health facility platforms. The number of children treated for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in this same period was 1,677, out of which 920 were from Karamoja. In refugee-hosting districts in the West Nile sub-region, a total of 167 health workers received on-site mentorship and support supervision from joint UNICEF and MoH teams with a focus on care for children with SAM. At the national level, UNICEF has continued to provide technical assistance to MoH to integrate family mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) into the national system. This support includes harmonizing the different materials used by stakeholders and developing a coordinated strategy for rollout. Under the UNICEF-WHO joint partnership to improve

the national nutrition information system, UNICEF provided technical guidance to review existing data elements and indicators for nutrition to align them with the global nutrition monitoring framework¹ of the same.

Child Protection

UNICEF continued to provide critical child protection services in refugee settlements. During the reporting period, 412 children (198 boys and 214 girls) who registered as unaccompanied or separated received appropriate alternative care services, including seven children with disabilities. A total of 915 children (413 boys and 502 girls), including 30 children with disabilities, were identified and provided with individual case management services. Additionally, 16 girls who experienced sexual violence were assisted with multi-sectoral support services. Recreational and psychosocial support services continued to be provided through mobile teams that visited children directly in their communities as child-friendly spaces remained closed in line with government regulations on COVID-19. A total of 1,797 children (966 boys and 831 girls) benefitted from home-based mental health and psychosocial support services, while 2,142 individuals (including 929 women, 535 girls, and 678 boys) were reached with messages about child protection, including some on different types of gender-based violence (GBV) against children.

In response to COVID-19, UNICEF continued to provide critical child protection services to children directly and indirectly affected by the disease. During the reporting period, nine children (six boys and three girls) who were registered as unaccompanied or separated as a direct consequence of COVID-19 benefitted from alternative care services. A total of 619 cases of violence against children (277 boys and 342 girls) were reached with social, health and/or justice services. Messages related to the protection of children in the COVID-19 context reached 13,290 individuals, including 13,076 children (5,555 boys and 7,521 girls). UNICEF continued to support community-based structures and social welfare staff to provide children and their caregivers with community-based psychosocial support services.

Education

As of February 2021, over 13 million children across Uganda were still in need of education assistance following COVID-related school closures, including almost 600,000 refugee children and adolescents. Education assistance will include support for safe return to schools and provision of learning materials to those who will continue learning from home. In October 2020, 1.2 million children and adolescents in the exam classes returned to school. With schools reopening in a phased manner for physical classes beginning March 2021, the number of children out of school and in need of education assistance will drop two million children .

UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to review the revised COVID-19 Education Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and develop strategies to enable learners to catch up on missed learning. During the review period, 1,235 children accessed formal or non-formal education including early learning using the Kolibri digital learning platform 4,968 times.

UNICEF participated in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) technical working group meetings to revise the parenting boost guide developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and supported by World Bank. This is aimed at enhancing continuity of learning for children aged 3–5 years and promoting age-appropriate development. Adolescents continued to receive support through the Accelerated Education Programme (AEP). In January and February 2021, a total of 915 refugee learners (388 females and 527 males) attended the AEP. The program continued to support adolescents by providing learners with AEP self-study materials, small group community-based learning sessions and radio programming.

In response to the COVID-19 emergency, UNICEF worked closely with MoES and supported the finalization of the education sector Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19. UNICEF is also supporting the development of District Education Response Plans (DERPs) in 12 refugee-hosting districts. The approval of the plans is a key step towards aligning refugee education response to a decentralized local governance system for better service delivery and accountability.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

During the reporting period, the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector contributed to COVID-19 preparedness and response in health facilities and educational institutions to facilitate the safe re-opening of schools. UNICEF provided

¹ 'Global Nutrition Monitoring Framework: Operational Guidance for Tracking Progress in Meeting Targets for 2025', <<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241513609>>

technical support to The Ministry of Education and Sports through the provision of WASH supplies to 767 schools² benefiting approximately 92,040 students (37,736 boys and 54,304 girls), mainly those in candidate classes in COVID-19 high-risk districts. Similarly, 131 health facilities in high-risk districts were provided with a standard WASH supplies package benefiting 49,496 people (8,117 male, 11,681 female; 12,176 boys and 17,522 girls). 141,536 people were reached with critical WASH supplies and services through health facilities and schools during this reporting period. A total of 57,356 people accessed a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene.

UNICEF continued to respond to the floods in Uganda through the provision of WASH supplies to flood-affected populations in Kasese district. In February 2021, UNICEF delivered five mobilelets and other WASH supplies including handwashing facilities, soap, sanitizers, jerrycans, tarpaulins, boots, bleach, hand sprayers and gloves to Muhokya's camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). UNICEF also provided technical support to flood-affected districts through mentoring and engagement of district disaster management committees (DDMC).

Communications for Development (C4D), Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) and Localization

COVID-19 vaccination in Uganda is set to begin on 10 March 2021. The UNICEF C4D team has supported the development of the communication strategy for demand generation and vaccine acceptance including the National Vaccine Deployment Plan and budget. UNICEF is supporting the development, finalization and printing of key messages and Information Education Communication (IEC) materials including Frequently Asked Questions on COVID-19 Vaccines for the general public and for health workers. This includes the provision of posters to be displayed at vaccination points or sites and talking points for various groups to support mobilization efforts for vaccine demand and uptake. IEC materials will be complemented with radio spots, TV spots and radio-talk shows in English and 30 local languages. UNICEF will also support MoH with social listening, rumor tracking and media monitoring services.

UNICEF supported three studies to establish factors that may affect decision-making, vaccine acceptance and uptake at individual and societal levels. The first rapid assessment exercise focused on the views of health workers on vaccination, and was conducted in January 2021 in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Makerere School of Public Health. A total of 338 out of 362 health workers assessed (93 per cent) agreed that they are at higher risk of being infected with COVID-19. However, only 294 out of 362 (81 per cent) reported that they were willing to take the vaccine, and while six per cent (20 out of 362) were unsure whether they would take the vaccine. A high proportion of health workers agreed the vaccine is effective (93 per cent) and an equally high proportion said it is safe (91 per cent).³ Views from the public indicate a high willingness to be vaccinated (72 per cent)⁴, while the voices of young people via a U-Report poll indicate slightly lower levels of enthusiasm with 53 per cent reflecting no hesitation towards getting vaccinated against COVID-19, 36 per cent a willing but with hesitancy, and 11 per cent with no intent at all. In light of these findings, intensive communication and reassurance about the COVID-19 vaccines are needed.

In February, a total of 19,530 people (13,671 male and 5,859 female) participated in a U-Report poll aimed at soliciting feedback from beneficiaries about humanitarian assistance provided by UNICEF and partners. From the poll, access to safe drinking water was reported as the top need for respondents. It was also reported that respondents were stocking up on food to mitigate the negative impacts of another potential lockdown. Despite being aware of UNICEF's mandate and activities within their communities, poll respondents reported not being aware of their entitlements. This explains in part the low percentage of individuals reporting that they received humanitarian assistance following an emergency. As a result of this feedback, UNICEF technical teams will be discussing how to further sensitize communities about their entitlements and strengthen engagement with districts on the ground to monitor the back-end of humanitarian response.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

In line with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the UNICEF Uganda Country Programme Document 2021–2025, UNICEF complements direct implementation through partners with a district system strengthening approach. District actors are supported to incorporate humanitarian preparedness and response into their annual and mid-term district plans to support the provision of vital nutrition, activities related to health, WASH, child protection, education and social protection services to Uganda's most vulnerable, while also increasing the synergies between humanitarian action and development programs.

² Kamwenge (42), Kasese (70), Mubende (40), Hoima (35), Kikuube (42), Isingiro (90), Kyegegwa (70) and Kagadi (38), Madi-Okollo (40), Terego (55), Obongi (26) and Ntugamo (60)

³ KAP COVID-19 among Health Workers in Uganda; MOH - Makerere University School of Public Health Jan. 2021

⁴ KAP2 Results COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy, MoH-UNICEF, Viamo (February 2021)

The COVID-19 National Response Plan builds on the significant investments made by UNICEF and partners in recent years to support national health systems and incorporate learning from previous health emergencies (e.g., Ebola outbreaks). UNICEF continues to support the government in the areas of risk communication and community engagement, coordination and leadership, supplies and logistics, information and communication technology, innovation and case management. UNICEF is focusing on WASH services and psychosocial support through the newly established sub-committee on the prevention of and response to gender-based violence and violence against children among other means. Gender-based violence survivor assistance and prevention interventions are integrated into child protection programs. UNICEF is mainstreaming gender-based violence risk mitigation, gender sensitivity, HIV and AIDS, accountability to affected populations, conflict sensitivity and communication for development into all interventions.

In high-risk communities, UNICEF is scaling up field monitoring to incorporate beneficiary feedback through civil engagement mechanisms such as U-Report, among others, promote accountability to affected populations in line with the Grand Bargain commitments, build linkages between communities and local governments, improve the demand for and delivery of targeted protection and basic services and guide responsive district and sub-district planning and budgeting.

UNICEF is co-leading three sectors and one area of responsibility (AoR). UNICEF co-leads both the child protection AoR and the education sector with Save the Children, the nutrition sector with Concern, Action Against Hunger (ACF) and the World Food Program (WFP) and the WASH sector with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). Memorandums of Understanding have been signed between UNICEF and each co-lead agency at the country level to guide effective and efficient coordination and ensure clear roles and responsibilities of each party. UNICEF co-led clusters and AoR are all part of the Inter-Cluster Working Group (ICWG) led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at the national and sub-national levels. UNICEF participates in the in-country interagency Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Task Force.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

<<https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories-field>>

UNICEF Uganda human interest story: <<https://www.unicef.org/uganda/stories/more-schools-and-health-centres-supported-wash-services-northern-uganda>>

Next SitRep: May 2021

UNICEF Uganda: <<https://www.unicef.org/uganda/>>

Uganda Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal: <<https://www.unicef.org/uganda/reports/uganda-humanitarian-action-children-hac-appeal-2021>>

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Annex A

(i) Summary of Programme Results

			UNICEF and Implementing Partners Response	
Indicator	Sector Disaggregation	Total needs	2021 target	Total results
Health and HIV and AIDS				
Children under five years vaccinated against polio	Girls	1,258,276	125,828	33,259
	Boys			
Children and women receiving essential health care including prenatal, delivery and post-natal care, essential newborn care, immunization treatment for childhood illness and HIV care	Girls	7,069,005	1,923,861	803,993
	Boys			
	Women			
Nutrition				
Primary caregivers of children aged 0-23 months who received Infant and Young Child Feeding IYCF counseling	Women	2,506,560	1,628,015	126,147
Children aged 6 to 59 months with severe acute malnutrition admitted for treatment	Girls	85,780	40,265	1,677
	Boys			
Child Protection				
Children registered as unaccompanied or separated who received appropriate alternative care services	Girls	83,528	2,585	421
	Boys			
Children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support	Girls		27,712	2,056
	Boys			
	Women			
Women, girls, and boys accessing gender-based violence risk mitigation, prevention or response interventions	Girls		80,712	2,142
	Boys			
	Women			
People with access to safe channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse*	Women		1,565,680	0
Education				
Children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning	Refugee girls		156,412	1,235
	Host girls			
	Refugee boys			
	Host boys			
WASH				
People reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	Girls		280,000	141,536
	Boys			
	Women			
	Men			
People accessing a sufficient quantity of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene	Girls		125,000	57,356
	Boys			
	Women			
	Men			
People accessing safe and appropriate sanitation facilities*	Girls		35,000	0
	Boys			
	Women			
	Men			
Communication for Development (C4D)				
People reached with messages on access to services	Girls		9,096,271	466,725
	Boys			
	Women			
	Men			

			UNICEF and Implementing Partners Response		
Indicator	Sector	Disaggregation	Total needs	2021 target	Total results
People who shared their concerns and asked questions/clarifications to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms		Girls		1,819,254	54,191
		Boys			
		Women			
		Men			

*To be updated in the next situation report.

Annex B

Funding Status*

Funding requirements 2021					
Sector	Requirements	Funds available		Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received in 2021	Resources available from 2020 (carry-over)	US\$	%
Nutrition	3,412,058	323,698	365,969	2,722,391	80
Health	8,758,312	684,942	495,464	7,577,906	87
Water, sanitation & hygiene	5,594,508	250,431	924,143	4,419,934	79
Child protection, GBViE and PSEA	2,379,122	16,200	407,652	1,955,270	82
Education	4,855,995	0	2,168,128	2,687,867	55
Total	24,999,995	1,275,272	4,361,356	19,363,367	77

* As defined in Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal of 03/12/2020 for 12 months.